

Walter Lang 99
Battle Creek

Walter was born in Kell, Germany. His father Peter was in WWI, and he hated everything that was happening to him because of that war. In 1927, when Walter was around two years old, Peter took a chance and left for the United States. He found a job as a manager of a restaurant in the York Hotel in York, Pennsylvania. Within three months, he then sent for Walter and his mother Helene. They took a boat to the US and one night Walter was on the top deck and saw the full moon. Thinking it was a ball he wanted it very much. The captain of the ship managed to find a ball for Walter, which delighted him. However, Walter only had it for a short time, when it bounced over the railing and into the ocean.

Walter remembers moving around a bit within the city of York at first, but the family finally settled in a house close to Peter's job and that is when his sister Helga came along. The family couldn't go far and didn't travel much because his father did not have a car, nor did he know how to drive. Walter attended York Catholic school and while there he played baseball, basketball, swimming, and diving with the last two being his favorites. He had a job as a paper boy and used his earnings to purchase a set of encyclopedias and to buy a desk that he still has. After graduating high school in 1943, Walter went on to Villanova College beginning with general studies and eventually declaring engineering as his major.

Walter had only gotten through the first semester of college, when he was called upon to join the army. He spent three years in the Pacific. He was a medic and primarily worked in field hospitals occasionally having to work under chaotic conditions. Once the war ended, he spent some time in Korea and then returned to Villanova College to complete his studies. His sister had a lady friend named Marie that he liked to spend time with. She was studying social work at Duquesne College, but lived in Cleveland, Ohio so he would have travel to visit her there. After several of these visits and as the relationship grew, he felt that if they were going to pursue the relationship, they should get married. After Walter graduated in 1949, he worked in heating and cooling for the York Manufacturing Company.

In 1954, Walter and Marie got married. The couple moved to Royal Oak, Michigan where Walter got a job at General Motors designing parts for automotive air conditioning while Marie looked after their home and children. As their family got bigger, they moved to Troy where they bought a large house to accommodate four children, daughter Patty and sons Robert, Peter, and Jon. This is when Marie decided to return to work and began teaching preschool in a high school voeducation lab for students wanting to learn about childcare. The family liked to go on camping trips around northern Michigan and occasional trips to northern Pennsylvania to visit family. The family settled in Rochester Hills and had a cottage on Lake Bellaire where they spend their summers. The lake was a perfect place for Walter and the family to enjoy their sailboat and powerboat.

After the children were older, Walter and Marie took a trip to Hawaii, the Caribbean, cruised Alaska, and toured the northern US. Marie taught herself puppeteering and she was a great storyteller, often making costumes or accessories to enhance the stories, performing at local libraries. Walter belonged to several men's groups as well as a golf club. Once Walter retired, he would build wood and metal furniture for Marie, his family, friends, and neighbors. After Marie died in 2016, Walter sold his home and moved to

Battle Creek to be closer to his daughter Patty. His advice to the younger generations is *to be careful with your loved ones*.