

A Memorial Tribute: Eulogy of Duane Faw

by Reverend Susan Farley, United Methodist Church
05 April 2008

The memorial services were held in Laguna Country United Methodist Church on the Saturday, of 26 March 2008. Rev Susan Farley, in the course of her remarks, said of him, "...he modeled for each of us how it is a person of faith first, lives their life and second, understands that each day is an opportunity to grow in our understanding and relationship with God." Is there a greater legacy?

Duane Leslie Faw was born in Lorraine, Texas on July 20, 1920 and died on March 26, 2008. How do you capture in just a few minutes the life of a dynamic, brilliant thinker, good humored man? I think you just must let his life speak for itself.

Duane lived with his parents and two brothers and sister through college in Denton, Texas. His grandfather and father were Baptist ministers. And perhaps because he was raised in a strict home, Duane had a determined side to his personality. His mother would instruct him to wear shoes and Duane often didn't, saving them and making them last longer because the family had little resources. Or so he debated with his mother. Perhaps these were glimpses of his future as a lawyer but that determination was well lived out when the depression hit in 1929. Duane was only 9 years old when he would earn 5 cents a day removing rocks from pastures.

Duane entered N. Texas Teacher's College and worked as an assistant to a magician and a hypnotist to pay for tuition. He became so skilled at magic that he once appeared at the Magic Castle, just because he could. He also published his first written work in the Readers Digest. It told the story of his Sunday school teacher buying him his first pair of Sunday pants. Duane, a man who always was thinking ahead, bought the largest, longest pants he could find. This way he could grow into them and then pass them on to his brothers. This story was the beginning of Duane's published writings.

While at N. Texas he met Lucile on the debate team. Their first date was sharing a 5 cent soda with two straws. He graduated from there in May 1941 and began teaching law at the college. He also received his pilot's license through the Civil Pilot Training program and began a law apprenticeship. In December of that year when Pearl Harbor was attacked, he enlisted in the United States Naval Reserve. All three brothers went together to enlist. Duane was refused because he didn't weigh enough. He was told if he ate lots of bananas and drank milk for his lunch he could come back and see if that made a difference. It did and he enlisted, although he got sick to his stomach immediately after this. Proud of his decision, he wore his uniform to church with Lucile and her mother and the pastor preached, "Mother's don't let your daughters date sailors." It was a little late for Lucile's mother.

Duane had a long and distinguished military career. He became a naval Aviation Cadet at Pensacola, Florida and was commissioned a 2nd lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps in September of 1942.

In February of 1943 Lucile and Duane were married. Their lives were made complete with the births of Cheryl, Bob, Debbie and Melanie. They celebrated 65 years of adventures together. It was a marriage of love and respect. Duane was a high-energy, bright, focused man. Lucile is a nurturer. It takes a mighty woman to live with a man always moving forward. Lucile is such a woman.

In 1943 through 1944 Lt. Faw took part in 79 aerial combat missions in a Douglas Dauntless Dive Bomber. He was promoted to Captain overseas, after being shot down several times and earning two Air Medals.

After the war Capt. Faw went on inactive duty and obtained his law degree in 1947 from Columbia University School of Law. He returned to North Texas State College where he taught law and history and had a private law

practice. He also was a recruiter for the Fleet Marine Corps Reserve, a county volunteer fireman and a part-time crop-dusting pilot.

Capt. Faw was recalled to active duty as a major during the Korean conflict and served as counsel before the general courts-martial in California, Korea and Japan. His career continued and he was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel. Upon completion of Senior School to the 2nd Marine Division he served consecutively as the Commanding Officer Headquarters Battalion; Commanding Officer, 2nd Battalion, 6th Marines and Division Legal Officer.

In 1964 Duane was promoted to Colonel. In 1967, he served in Vietnam for 13 months as Deputy Chief of Staff, III Marine Air Facility and as Force Legal Officer at the same time. During this same period, he maintained liaison with the civilian mayor of Da Nang, Le Chi Cuong. Each of them independently used their official and unofficial resources to approximate when enemy rocket attacks were most probable, compared notes and warned both the various military commands and the innocent countrymen. This joint effort saved many lives and a German hospital ship. Respect between these two men turned into a relationship of deep trust and love. Col Faw later sponsored the American citizenship of Le Chi Cuong and his family of 13. They have remained trusted and dedicated friends to this day.

In September 1968, Col Faw became a member of the Navy Board of Review in the Office of the Judge Advocate General of the Navy. With its change of function to Navy Court of Military Review, Col Faw became one of the original 12 Navy Appellate Military Judges.

Upon his promotion to rank of Brigadier General, on August 7, 1969, he began his last tour of active duty as Director, Judge Advocate Division, Headquarters, Marine Corps and Staff Judge Advocate for the Commandant of the Marine Corps. For this service Brigadier General Faw was awarded a second Legion of Merit.

Other personal decorations include: the Legion of Merit with Combat V, which is the highest non-combat award that a military person can earn, the Navy Commendation Medal, the Air Medal and gold star in lieu of a second Air Medal, and two Vietnamese Medals.

He was placed on the retired list, on Sept. 1, 1971.

Duane became a professor at Pepperdine University School of Law. Besides being admired for his teaching abilities he also participated in the design and construction of the School of Law. He found so much pleasure working at the school. He retired from Pepperdine in 1992.

In 1975 Duane became the 101st member of the The First Urantia Society of Los Angeles along with Lucile.

Duane authored his compiled work, "The Paramony," which crosses references the Bible and the Urantia Book. He also wrote, "Religion Ought to Make Sense" that is based on the teachings of the Urantia Book. The Urantia Fellowship officially honored Duane and Lucile at the 2002 International Conference at Estes Park. The Fellowship has been an important part of their life.

Duane had 12 years of active service to the Fellowship of Urantia, one he found stimulating and rewarding in his search for truth. In an article he wrote about *The Paramony* he stated, "No one should be afraid of truth, we should all welcome it."

In 1993, the Faws' life traumatically changed. They lost their beloved hillside home in the Malibu fires. They lost nearly everything but what Duane could by himself get out of the house before the fast-moving fire arrived. He was able to get out his manuscripts on which he was still working and only a few possessions in the little car left home. He left a space for the neighbor to leave with him. Duane was quoted in an article about the fire saying, "It's time to leave the 'shake and bake' area of California." He also said, "Besides marrying me, I think

Lucile's 'yes' to the insurance Replacement Cost Coverage was the best yes she ever made. Their one small miracle was when they found Lucile's wedding ring in the dining room area where the second-story bedroom had fallen.

The Faws began again in Leisure World where they found life again and have been richly blessed in this community. Their friendships have sustained them during the last years of health challenges.

One would think that Duane Faw had his hands full with this family, church, law, military, and the Fellowship responsibilities and yet he always was searching, studying learning. He was a Renaissance man who studied philosophy, law, music, education, history, religion. In his younger days he was an artist and later took great interest and developed skills in photography. He was a dynamic man whose life was always forward- looking, charging ahead to the next challenge. And yet, he had this keen ability to connect with people. Whether he was in a casual conversation or he was in a place of authority and feeling strongly about something, there was a respectful gentleness about him that caused people to listen to what he had to say.

This brilliant man was driven to find the truth in life. His faith was his driving force. He loved God as few people do. His life centered on wanting to share with the world what he had uncovered about faith. His last book still waiting to be published, "Salvation in Faith," explores world religions from different faith perspectives. It is written as he lived his life, with deep exploration and with equal respect to perspectives and different realities. Duane had a passion for justice. His sense of right and wrong was so deeply a part of who he was. He brought his passion for truth into his study of law, religion, art, philosophy, and history. He leaves us with a wealth of knowledge. But more importantly he modeled for each of us how it is a person of faith first, lives their life and second, understands that each day is an opportunity to grow in our understanding and relationship with God. Is there a greater legacy? Not for me.

Thank you, God, for the amazing gift of sharing life with this man named Duane Leslie Faw. We each are grateful for your generosity to us. Amen.