

## TIMELINE (#5) LAYOFF & ENGAGEMENT

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. After graduating from the University of Michigan in June, 1958, I went to work for Chrysler Corporation Missile Division (CCMD) outside of Detroit. Barbara Dupuie also worked there in a different department.
2. We started dating on October 26, 1958, and were dating each other exclusively by the end of the year.
3. In February, 1959, I got laid-off after working at CCMD for 8 months. *Barbara did not get laid off.*
4. I searched for an engineering job close to Detroit so I could be near my father and ailing mother (and Barbara too).
5. I found a job in Columbus, Ohio (200 miles south of Detroit) working for the Columbus Division of North American Aviation. I was hired in the Structural Design department to help design the inlet ducts of the XB-70 Valkyrie strategic bomber.
6. To limit costs, the XB-70 was being developed at the same time as the XF-108 Rapier interceptor aircraft at North American Aviation. See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North\\_American\\_XF-108\\_Rapier](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_American_XF-108_Rapier)
7. In February, 1959, I moved into a studio apartment in Columbus. Within a short time, I found a roommate, Jack Housely. (That summer, he played third base and I played second base on our Structural Design softball team.)
8. I drove back and forth from Columbus to Detroit at least every other weekend to visit my parents and Barbara.
9. Although Barbara still had an excellent job at CCMD, she couldn't stand being away from me for those long periods of time.
10. She applied for and got a secretary job (in a different department) at North American Aviation.
11. Barbara moved into an apartment in Columbus with another secretary, Peggy Balsler. Their apartment was about 5 miles from mine and much closer to North American Aviation, which was located adjacent to the Columbus Airport.
12. On several occasions, Barbara and I talked about marriage - but not very seriously.

## STORY

On **September 23, 1959**, the government canceled the XF-108 (*not the XB-70*) program. On the next day, **September 24, 1959**, I was laid off after working there for only 7.5 months. Many of the young engineers from both programs were laid off and the more experienced men took their positions. Once again, *Barbara did not get laid off.*

I was very concerned about my chosen profession, having been laid off twice in 15 months. I started thinking that every job for a aerospace engineer was short-lived before he got laid off and had to start looking for a new job. I decided that moving to the epicenter of aerospace engineering jobs, Los Angeles, California, would be a wise thing to do.

Barbara, who still had a good job, was getting very nervous. That evening (**September 24, 1959**) in my apartment, She was overwhelmed by our predicament and began to cry. What follows below is a verbatim account of our next words:

Barbara (crying): "What will we do? What will we do?"  
Tom (bravely): "**We'll get married and move to California!**"  
Barbara : "Do you mean it?"  
Tom: "Yes"

*Those were the exact words I used to propose.* Although I didn't realize I was proposing at the time, Barbara accepted! Thus, our engagement took place *exactly one year* after we met at a bowling alley near Detroit on 9/24/58 (a nice coincidence!). She instantly stopped crying and was "on top of the world." At this point, it would have been impossible to stop our wedding.

We went to her apartment and announced our engagement news to her roommate, Peggy Balsler, and her friend, Dick Rossomme. The following day, Peggy bought Barbara a beautiful onyx necklace with a cultured pearl cross. (Coincidentally, Peggy and Dick got married on the same day we did (11/21/59), and moved to Florida.)