

# **The Wisdom of Lewis Sims**

## **a.k.a "Handouts"**

1. *Family Longevity*, May 2010
2. *Deciding to be Thankful*, May 2005
3. *Often Heard*, October 2002
4. *Theta Chi*, May 2011
5. *Same Word, Two Meanings*, Apr 2012
6. *A joyful Book*, January 2011
7. *Our Remarkable Centenarians*, September 2010
8. *Our First Family Car*, July 2009
9. *My Life and Career Under 18 Presidents*, 2009
10. *Remembering the Armistice*, November 2008
11. *A Useful Motto*, October 2008
12. *The Building" Hoo-ray for Maplewood!*, December 2007
13. *Value of Memberships in Professional Associations*, March 2006
14. *The Kennedy Assassination*, November 2005
15. *We build a House*, June 20005
16. *Time Management*, February 2002
17. *Civic Activities of Lewis Sims*, August 1999
18. *Grace W. Sims - Volunteer*, May 1, 1999
19. *Who's Who in the East - Lewis Sims*, 1989-1990

# Family Longevity: My First 100 Years

By Lewis Sims

In my family

- My father lived to be 76.
- My mother lived to be 86.
- Precedent: Uncle Will, mother's brother, lived to be 106.
- Currently, I have lived to be a healthy 100.

## I. PRECEDENT: My Uncle.

Uncle Will, born on an Illinois farm on August 31, 1881, graduated from the University of Illinois in 1902, age 20. He went on for a master's degree, writing his thesis on our American Indians. Later he won his Ph. D. at the University of Wisconsin, specializing in sociology and education.

Dr. William A. Cook taught at the University of Colorado ("Back East" to us Californians), then at the University of South Dakota, then for a long time at the University of Cincinnati. He wrote books and articles, especially about secondary education. He never smoked.

After retiring from the University of Cincinnati, he became the principal of a nearby high school. From there every June, he drove the five most scholarly seniors to Washington, D.C., and toured the institutions, because, like his nephew, he was intensely interested in good government, preferably non-partisan.

The Sims Family annual newsletter covering 1987 said of Uncle Will: "He and Lew had oodles of interests in common, and many people commented even on the family resemblance facially; Lew used to reply, Yep, we both know, and we both apologize."

Now hear this: For fifty (yes 50) years, 1918 - 1968, Uncle Will and his kid sister - Lew's mother - exchanged letters, long letters, every single week. What a rare and wonderful relationship!

Uncle Will lived on, in his house, all alone, for three years, then in a nursing home for his last eleven years, until 1987 and age 106.

Apropos the Sims longevity, well, it's up for grabs.

## II. MY OWN 100 YEARS.

Frequently, now that I've reached 100 (I was born October 9, 1909), I'm asked, "To what do you attribute your successful aging?"

*Continued on page 2*

REPRINTED FROM  
THE MESSENGER, MAY 2010  
(Maplewood Park Place's Newsletter)

Well, there are several reasons.

**First, NO SMOKING.** Growing up no one in my family or my family's friends were smokers. When, in January of 1964, the Public Health Service's Surgeon General issued its monumental anti-smoking report, I thought for sure that people would stop smoking, but they didn't.

**Second, TENNIS.** I played tennis for 81 years – from age 10 to age 91 – never really well, never really poorly, but often. Legs, arms, heart, and lungs propelled me towards 100.

**Third, SINGING.** My UCLA varsity quartet sang three summers in Yosemite National Park, and from 1947 till 2002 I exercised my lungs in three successive, and super-active, barbershop quartets in the metropolitan Washington area, and elsewhere. (Vigorous chorus directing also helped.)

**Fourth, BALANCED DIET.** I have always enjoyed eating a variety of healthful foods. No undue sweets, no undue fats. I like almost all foods, unlike a friend of mine who won't eat any — yeah any — vegetables.

**Fifth, MARRIAGE AND TWO CHILDREN.**

My long life surely is partially attributed to my marriage of almost 64 years to "Gracie Girl" – bird lover and teacher. Before, during, and even after World War II, she was an active volunteer. She had her hobbies, while I had mine, especially tennis, quartetting, civil and church work.

My two children, Marjorie ("Marge") and Robert ("Bob"), have always been interested in my health and welfare, but especially now since I am 100 years old.

Recently, Bob's wife Judy, with her master's degree in nursing, has been uniquely helpful in my path towards 100 years.

Contributing to my longevity is watching and being a part of the lives of my five and my five (soon to be six) great grandchildren. All members of the Sims dynasty live in the Metropolitan Washington area, and they are all SO good to this old man!

I have great joy in following the career of one of the grandchildren, Michael Weiss, twice Olympian and three times a U.S. champion figure skater.

**Sixth, EDUCATION.** I studied at four of America's top universities: UCLA, U. Cal, Berkeley, Chicago, and Harvard. I was hoping to someday be a professor of Political Science, specializing in public administration, I watched both time and health. I was well on the road toward my Ph.D., but as I like to say, "I got "Gracie Girl" instead."

**Seventh, CAREER.** I enjoyed a long, I think, useful career in the Federal Government – 38 years in four agencies, 1935- 1973. All my employment was strictly as a public servant. Never once did I serve as a Democrat or as a Republican. During my 100 years there have been 18 presidents of the United States. During my 47-year career there were nine presidents (five Democratic and four Republican). As a private citizen, I never missed the opportunity to vote. My early desire to teach Public Administration finally came – first a semester at UCLA, then 17 years part- time at the USDA Graduate School.

**Eighth, CIVIC ACTIVITIES.** We built a house in Chevy Chase, MD, and promptly in 1941, my numerous civic activities began. They did not end until 2001. In the late 1990's, the Rollingwood Citizens Association honored me with a plaque reading, "Rollingwood's #1 Citizen Activist for over 50 Years."

All the activities were unpaid except for the six years on the County Personnel Board and serving as an election judge at nine elections.

**Ninth, GENERAL OUTLOOK.** During my whole life, I have engaged in many, many activities, and have enjoyed far more than my share of close friends. I have always been an extrovert, with no time for complaining.

From childhood on, there has been no occasion for racial, religious, or gender prejudice.

Just outside my door there is a sign reading "Count Your Blessings". I surely do count mine. My life has been SO satisfactory.

My longevity, I do believe, is partially in response to my general outlook

0

A final thought:

I have survived **ONE** hundred years. If I survive **TWO** hundred years, I'm halfway there!

# Deciding to Be Thankful

by Lewis Sims

(Written for the Memoir Writing class in November 2004)

My first four-score-and-several years were SO satisfactory! However, they left me four years ago.

Lately, especially since America's 2004 Thanksgiving Day, I've been thinking about my current mindset. Should I be thankful for my first four-score-and-several years, or should I be sorry for myself because my subsequent four years are SO inferior by comparison?

I look back with utmost JOY. — because of my superb blessings, as follows:

- Childhood
- Education
- Career
- Wife and two kids
- Civic activities
- Tennis and barbershop quartet
- Physical and mental health

So should I decide in the affirmative? Should I be thankful now as I look back to 2000 and before?

Most aspects of the above blessings now are long gone! The most visible, of course, is my former physical condition. My wonderful tennis days are four years back; now in order just to walk, I must use the ever-so-conspicuous walker.

Well, I've decided! From now on, I'm going to try to adjust. I must accept Dale Carnegie's dictum, "Cooperate With the Inevitable." I'm going to "count my blessings," as I tell other people to count theirs. And yes, I'm going to be thankful.

Perhaps I shouldn't be surprised at my recent decision to be thankful now for the first four-score-and-several years. I've been preaching optimism for some time. In October 2002 *The Messenger* published a list of my sayings "Often Heard . . ." Of the 13, five I now realize, reflect optimism. These five sayings are:

2. Count your blessings!
10. JOY! That's a wonderful word. Use it often both orally and in writing.
11. You can't have everything.
12. Remember, there are others much worse off than you. So keep your "SUNNY SIDE UP, hide the side that gets blue." (1929 song)
13. Maplewood: The right place — at the right time.

REPRINTED FROM

THE MESSENGER, MAY 2005  
(Maplewood Park Place's newsletter)

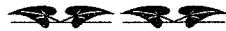
May 2005



A LIFECARE COMMUNITY:

## Often Heard

From Lew Sims (mostly at dinner)



I've been a young man for a long time.

Count your blessings!

Despite the many years, some of us are still O.K.

between the waist and the eyebrows.

Music, especially quartetting, helps your spirits.

Marriage is best served on a 60-60 basis, not 50-50.

Boast not about yourself; boast only slightly about your

children; regarding grandchildren, the door is wide

Open.

Knowing nothing about it, my opinion is.....

In my California youth my uncle taught at the

University of Colorado, which was "Back East."


Being a civic activist is useful - also satisfying.

JOY! That's a wonderful word. Use it often both orally and in writing.

You can't have everything!

"Remember, there are others much worse off than you.

So keep your SUNNY SIDE UP, hide the side that gets

Blue."  (1929 song)

Maplewood: The right place - at the right time.



---Reprinted from THE MESSENGER, Oct. 2002---  
(Maplewood Park Place newsletter)

# Theta Chi at U.C.L.A.: the Earliest Years

by Lewis Sims, U.C.L.A. 1932

Now, in May of 2011, I am 101 years old. I graduated from UCLA 79 years ago, in June 1932. I was the president of the Beta Alpha chapter of Theta Chi from June 1931 till June 1932. I proudly remain a member of this fine fraternity.

In 1930, I was the Pledge Master of the local UCLA fraternity, Delta Mu Sigma, where I abolished hazing. Later, in 1931, I was the Chairman of the Petition Committee, which petitioned the national Theta Chi fraternity to become its Beta Alpha chapter.

In the summer of 1931 I was employed full-time in Yosemite National Park. During the early weeks, I wrote a long letter to every Theta Chi brother and pledge, about 30 men. This was to maintain and improve the morale of every chapter member. This exercise was also to practice good writing, which stood me in good stead for my entire 38-year career in the Federal Government. Part of my various jobs was to edit and write.

Later that summer, I was the Beta Alpha elected delegate to the 75<sup>th</sup> celebration of the Alpha Chapter that was held in Norfield, Vermont, at Norwich University.

While working toward the Ph.D. at the University of Chicago in 1935, a job became available with the Federal Government in Washington, D.C. I could not refuse it. Within three weeks after arrival in D.C., I had a blind date, arranged by the wife of a Beta Alpha brother, John Thompson. Grace and I married five months later and remained married for nearly 64 years--until her passing. We raised two wonderful children, Marjorie and Robert.

In the fall semester of 1952-53, I returned to UCLA, where I served as Visiting Professor of Public Administration.

The camaraderie and brotherhood that I learned and experienced in Theta Chi has carried through the rest of my life, including: much tennis till age 91, local civic activities (always nonpartisan), till 91, and active barbershop quartet performing till 93.

I have lived in Washington, D.C. and the Maryland suburbs for 76 years. Currently at 101, I live comfortably in a Senior Community surrounded by many friends, old and new. To my great fortune, my two children, five grandchildren and six greatgrand children all live in the Metropolitan D.C. area.

In conclusion, two messages from this 101-year old Theta Chi brother:

- (1) Manage your **TIME**; it's totally inelastic.
- (2) Always, be sure to --

**COUNT  
YOUR  
BLESSINGS!**

# SAME WORD, TWO MEANINGS

By Lewis Sims

Imagine you're new to the United States. Imagine you know a little English, and have noticed some words have two or more meanings. Below are some examples. Can you find the one that is not correct?

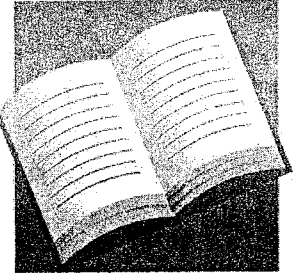
1. Although only 79, she was an invalid.  
- The check was found to be invalid.
2. The bear weighed almost 500 pounds.  
- The pain was hard to bear.
3. Zimmerman didn't check his swing; instead he hit a home run.  
- The check bounced the account.
4. A foot is twelve inches.  
- I kicked the ball with my left foot.
5. She sits mostly in her chair.  
- She is able to chair the meeting on Mondays.
6. He tried to run the marathon.  
- She had a run in her stocking.
7. He had no heart for it.  
- She suffered a heart attack.
8. Each had a special light.  
- It was a light load for everybody.
9. We sat at the table to eat.  
- The two main issues were still on the table.
10. Everybody can play, of course.  
- Every drink came in a different can.
11. Our dessert usually was vanilla ice cream.  
- Despite the heat, we moved to the Mohave desert.
12. Venus went out early to practice her serve.  
- Jack graduated and opened a dental practice.
13. The game begins in one minute.  
- There was a minute speck of dirt on the camera lens.
14. The preparation from the doctor solved the illness.  
- In preparation for the wedding he bought a tuxedo.
15. A Presidential hopeful proposes to revive the space program.  
- There was nowhere near enough space for the game.
16. The change weighed his pocket down.  
- President Obama recommended a change in policy.

REPRINTED FROM  
THE MESSENGER, April 2012  
(Maplewood Park Place's Newsletter)

# A Joyful Book

By Lewis Sims

For many years one of my favorite words is "joy". I tell people to use it often, both orally and in writing. Also, think joy.



Almost all of my life I have been involved in music. No wonder, then, that I should enjoy (yes, enjoy) a book entitled "The Joy of Music", by Leonard Bernstein.

Let's go back to how I came across this delightful book. Both my children were in elementary school. It was in Chevy Chase, Maryland, and the school was called Rollingwood Elementary School. My wife Grace and I had been active in the Parent-Teachers Association for several years, and now (1960-1961) I was the PTA President.

Well, somehow, despite my active life playing tennis frequently and otherwise eating and living right, I caught the flu. I was home—on sick leave—from my employment with the U.S. Public Health Service (no, working for a health agency doesn't necessarily preserve your health).

Our telephone rang. My sweetheart, Grace, answered. I heard her say, "O.K., Betty, I guess; he's about the same; but he's coming along." And then she added, "Lew's general health is real good, as you know."

Who was Betty? Well, Betty was secretary of the Rollingwood PTA. (I was President remember.) She and the other members of the PTA Board had thought I would appreciate some flowers. What would Lew like? Grace would know.

Now comes the good news. Grace told Betty that instead of flowers, of which we had many in our beautiful back yard, Lew would love to have a copy of a current book, with a wonderful title, The Joy of Music.

That afternoon Betty brought me a copy. It was just as good as I thought it would be. Yes, this musical book was a joy.

REPRINTED FROM

THE MESSENGER, January 2011  
(Maplewood Park Place's Newsletter)



# Our Remarkable Centenarians

By Priscilla Tapley

Maplewood Park Place opened in December, 1995, and the first resident who reached the age of one hundred, was a ninety-eight year old lady who arrived in our first season, moving directly into Assisted Living, without previously buying an apartment. The Garden Level staff, delighted to welcome her, described what sort of recreation would soon be available - afternoon tea, Bingo, sing-alongs, etc. and then asked her what she would like to do. It was reported upstairs that this feisty lady cheerfully replied, "Darned if I know." Two years later her family held the first centenarian celebration, with decorations and poetry supplied by many grandchildren.

Quite a long time passed before we had more candidates, then Jean Connor and Esther Ruhoff, shared the honors. They were delighted to talk about their age status while getting their hair done in the beauty shop.

In 2008 it was the men's turn at last. Bernie Locker, a retired librarian with a great smile, became our first male centenarian. Soon after the celebration, however, I found him looking rather glum. "Where's your smile, Bernie?" I asked. "You'd lose your smile too," he said, "if the only thing people ever ask you is 'How does it feel to be a hundred?'" From then on, we talked about books instead.

In 2009, two more men became centenarians, Lew Sims on the 9th of October and Carroll Perry on the 12th. Three 100 year old males in our total Maplewood population of 267 - a remarkable statistic.

Lew Sims' article, "Family Longevity: My First 100 Years", appeared in the May, 2010, Messenger. It listed nine contributory aspects, ranging from NO SMOKING to CIVIC ACTIVITIES and GENERAL OUTLOOK. By that time he was our sole remaining full century resident.

But then the extraordinary Centenarian Summer began! On June 28th, Virginia Keany achieved 100. On August 6th, Eileen Morris, who still attends the exercise classes twice a week, reached the goal. Three days later, on August 9th, Dr. Isidor Bernstein was added to the list.

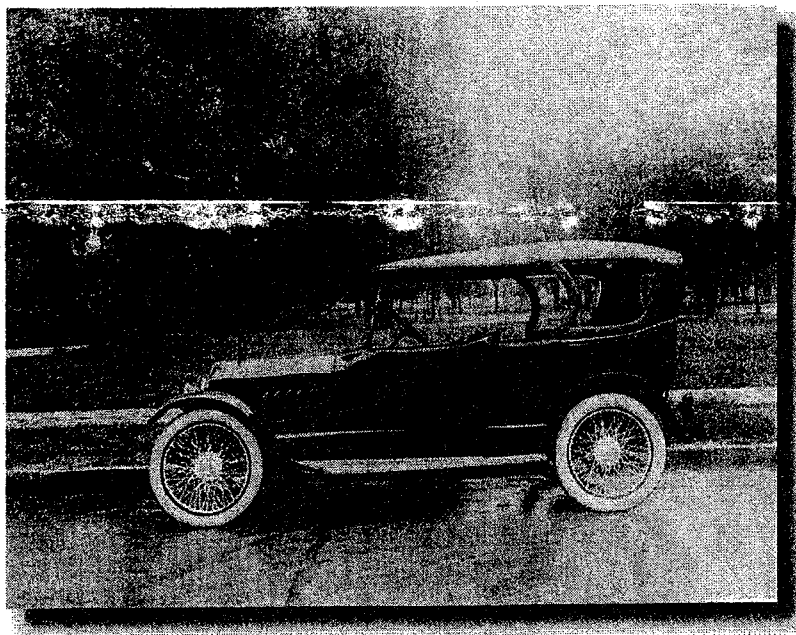
On September 3rd (Indian Summer) Dr. Morris Oxman, already famous at Maplewood for driving himself here from Minnesota in 2009, at the age of ninety-eight, will become a member of this very exclusive club. Five centenarians at once!

Congratulations to every one of you, and thanks to the Maplewood staff and residents who make this retirement residence such a wonderful place to live long lives.

REPRINTED FROM  
THE MESSENGER, September 2010  
(Maplewood Park Place's newsletter)

# Our First Family Car

By Lewis Sims



It was spring of 1916. Where? Pasadena, California.

The Sims Family, of which I was the six-year-old son, was new to California. Mother and I had had pneumonia in cold, cold Minnesota, and our doctor had told the Sims family to move to "a warm climate". In those early days, Florida was barely known and Arizona needed water. What our doctor's instruction really meant was, "Take the train to Southern California".

We had come to California despite the fact that my Dad suffered a terrible accident. Both his arms were broken. He could do no personal activities at all, and of course he couldn't work. In those days, there was no workmen's compensation, no health insurance. So the family had no income.

How did the Sims family make it? Well, my mother's parents, Grandma and Grandpa Cook, sold their little farm in northern Illinois and moved, with the Sims family, to 1281 N. Catalina Ave., in Pasadena.

Shortly thereafter, Grandpa decided to buy a car, his first of course. He took me with him to the automobile sales office in downtown Pasadena, to consider buying a brand new, four cylinder 1916 Maxwell. Naturally, in those days, it was a touring car. It was navy blue. It had skinny tires of course, because "balloon tires" weren't manufactured until the early 'twenties.

The selling-buying went well, Grandpa Cook agreeing that \$600 was appropriate, no additional fees, no sales tax. The sale having been determined, the sales man said, "Now Mr. Cook, would you want a bumper for the car?" "How much would that cost?" Grandpa queried. "Ten dollars," replied the salesman.

Ten dollars was affordable to my grandfather. So what was installed? Something ever so simple. It was a straight piece of pipe two inches in diameter, installed right in front of the engine. That was enough to prevent damage to the car should Grandpa run into something.

A bumper in the back? Such a thing wasn't mentioned.

9

Lewis Sims  
9707 Old Georgetown Rd.  
Apt. 104  
Bethesda, MD 20814

## MY LIFE AND CAREER UNDER 18 PRESIDENTS

<u>Years</u>	<u>President</u>	<u>A Federal Employee</u>	<u>Taught Public Admini- stration</u>
1909-1913	Taft, William		
1913-1921	Wilson, Woodrow		
1921-1923	Harding, Warren		
1923-1929	Coolidge, Calvin		
1929-1933	Hoover, Herbert		
1933-1945	Roosevelt, Franklin	XXX	
1945-1953	Truman, Harry	XXX	XXX*/
1953-1961	Eisenhower, Dwight	XXX	
1961-1963	Kennedy, John	XXX	
1963-1969	Johnson, Lyndon	XXX	XXX
1969-1974	Nixon, Richard	XXX	XXX
1974-1977	Ford, Gerald		XXX
1977-1981	Carter, James		XXX
1981-1989	Reagan, Ronald		XXX
1989-1993	Bush, George (1)		
1993-2001	Clinton, William		
2001-2009	Bush, George (2)		
2009-	Obama, Barack		

\*/ Visiting Professor at U.C.L.A. Otherwise at the USDA Graduate School.



## Remembering the Armistice

By Lewis Sims

The "Great War"—August 4, 1914 to November 11, 1918—finally came to an end. Officially the end was called an armistice. It was the eleventh month of the year, the eleventh day of the month, and the eleventh hour of the day, French time.

Twenty countries were involved. The main enemy was Germany. The main "Allies" were France, Great Britain and, beginning in 1917, the United States.

Finally, Germany pleaded for an armistice. The Allies agreed – with no negotiating whatsoever. Devastate Germany was the goal. Hate was in the air.

November 11, 1918, at 11:00 o'clock was the official ending of this bloody war, but the antagonism of the Allies, especially the French, was so profound that the prior 5½ hours saw some of the war's worst fighting, wholly unnecessary. You see, the armistice was actually signed at 5:30 that morning, but it was to take effect 5½ hours later – at 11:00 o'clock. It's been estimated that 10,000 deaths took place in that short period of time, because the Allied officers, especially the French, kept ordering their soldiers to keep on shooting. The actual cease-fire occurred at 11:00 o'clock.

Do I remember all this? Of course not. What I do remember is how I and my California neighbors celebrated the news on that very newsy November 11.

I was a little boy, barely nine years old. I remember the huge headline on the Pasadena Star-News, "WAR OVER". It was in the largest type available, the two words occupying the full width of the newspaper.\*

On our streets in South Pasadena, people rejoiced at the news. Many people tied strings of tin cans to the bumpers of their cars and drove with excitement, relief, and true joy around the

town, making as much noise as possible and flashing multiple American flags.

Little did we know that this "Great War", as it was called then (also the "World War" and "the war to end all wars"), would someday, only twenty years later, be succeeded by another major conflict, World War II, causing the Great War to be forever called World War I.

\*Much like the Chicago Tribune's erroneous headline in November 1948, "DEWEY WINS".



REPRINTED FROM

THE MESSENGER, Nov. 2008  
(Maplewood Park Place's Newsletter)

# A Useful Motto

By Lewis Sims

(Written for the Memoir Writing Class)

When I was twelve years old, I joined the Boy Scouts and promptly learned the scout motto. It's "BE PREPARED."

And what is a motto? My dictionary defines it as "a short expression of a guiding principle." We'll come back to that.

Troop No. 2 of the scouts met at my church, which was located not far from the Sims family home down at the harbor of Los Angeles, where my father was an engineer with the Los Angeles Harbor Department.

In the scout organization I prepared fast. Of the four patrols in Troop 2, I soon became patrol leader of my patrol. The troop was hugely successful, especially because of the competent and experienced scout master. Before long, some decided, a second troop was needed.

So Troop No. 12 was established (about half-full), and I was transferred to become Senior Patrol Leader, because I was prepared. A well-motivated but wholly inexperienced man accepted the job of scout master. Much of his work fell to me, which turned out to be great experience. It also helped me prepare for the future—immediate and distant.

Preparing includes "planning ahead", management of time, which is totally inelastic, as they say. Until the last several years, I think I was fairly good at managing my time, but advanced years slow you down, as we oldies are so often reminded.

Now I look back at my teen-hood and subsequent adulthood, and I realize I was influenced by the scout motto "BE PREPARED". For example, I don't recall any time in my school or college days that I went to class unprepared.

Talk about a "guiding principle", as the dictionary says!

Talk about a useful motto!

REPRINTED FROM

THE MESSENGER, OCT. 2008  
(Maplewood Park Place's Newsletter)

# The Building: Hoo-ray for Maplewood!

By Lewis Sims

*Lewis Sims*

Maplewood Park Place is a delightful twelve-year-old senior living community located in Bethesda, Maryland.

The building sits on 8 ½ acres of land on the corner of Old Georgetown Road and the Washington Beltway (Rt. 495). It was developed by Mitchell and Best and built by Opus in 1994-95.

Maplewood Park place (just "Maplewood" for short) is a beautiful building – and not too tall. There are five floors on the west tower, six on the east, with a long, spacious first floor joining the two towers.

A beautifully designed and convenient entrance-way welcomes residents and guests. There are no steps! Remember, this is a senior-living community.

So much for the outside of the building. What of the inside? Well, as you enter the building, you see the concierge desk off to the left, not dominating the center like a hotel. To the right is a luxurious waiting room. Then on beyond is a beautiful, spacious lobby leading to the almost inconspicuous entry to the dining room. The East-West corridor makes a large jog, an architectural joy.

In Independent Living, which is the main part of the building (located on all eleven floors), there are 207 resident-owned apartments, all with kitchens and bathrooms.

Different apartment designs number 19, a surprisingly large number. The most spacious boasts 1740 square feet, the smallest 730 square feet.

One highly unusual – we might even say "unique" – aspect of Maplewood Park Place is the building's size – yes, its size. The building is big enough to have:

- A swimming pool and an exercise room
- A bank, a beauty salon, and a general store
- A ballroom and a piano lounge
- A library (with copier and computers)
- A health clinic
- A billiard parlor and an art center
- An indoor parking garage

... But small enough to have only one dining room.

Friendships are made early and easily in this classy dining room, and they are maintained almost automatically.

So: Hoo-ray for Maplwood!

REPRINTED FROM  
THE MESSENGER, Dec. 2007  
(Maplewood Park Place's Newsletter)

**Value of Membership in Professional Associations**  
**American Society for Public Administration: A Stellar Case in Point**

*Wendy Haynes, President-Elect*

*American Society for Public Administration*

*Antoinette A. Samuel, Executive Director*

*American Society for Public Administration*

**PARK UNIVERSITY INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR CIVIC ENGAGEMENT**

**March 2006**

**III. ASPA as an Association –  
 Historical Perspectives and Future  
 Possibilities**

Lewis "Lew" Sims vividly recalls the thrill of joining with ASPA's founders to mark the birth of the American Society for Public Administration at the Wardman Park Hotel in Washington, D.C., in December 1938. He was a young professional surrounded by those who were or would become luminaries in the field: Leonard White, William E. Mosher, Louis Brownlow, Marshall Dimock, and many others. Though perhaps he differed from other charter members by degree of fame, Lew shared with his ASPA compatriots a passion for public service. And it would be that shared passion that sustained Lew's commitment to ASPA and good government over the course of nearly seven decades.

His passion for civic activism continues unabated. During a telephone conversation in March 2006, Lew advised President-elect Wendy Haynes that ASPA faces significant challenges in its pursuit of excellence in public

service. In Lew's judgment, he sees, as well, a crucial role for ASPA in inspiring young professionals.

Indeed, Lew credits ASPA with providing an inspirational environment that supported and encouraged his accomplishments throughout his 38 years of federal service and civic activism at the local level. Although at 96, he's more likely these days to be enjoying supper with one of his many friends than attending an ASPA event,

Lew remains proud of his lifetime ASPA membership and vigorously advocates the importance of engagement in the Society for all public administration professionals at every level of government.

# The Kennedy Assassination

By: Lewis Sims

(Written for the Memoir Writing class in November 2005)

By assassin bullet America had already lost three presidents—Lincoln, Garfield, and McKinley. But that tragedy was long ago—even before I was born. Now this terrible tragedy: President John F. Kennedy assassinated on Friday, November 22, 1963, at 1:30 Eastern Standard Time. He was pronounced dead at exactly two o'clock.

I was at my desk in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare—a federal civil servant with the Public Health Service. The morbid news spread like wildfire, and employees were promptly excused for the weekend. My carpool left downtown almost immediately.

As soon as I arrived home, here in Chevy Chase, Md. I joined my wife and children, who were already glued to the no-commercials television. We saw the plane, Air Force One, leaving Dallas. It would be arriving at Andrews Air Force Base around six o'clock, and the body would be taken, for autopsy, to the Bethesda Naval Hospital, about two miles from where we were sitting. I exclaimed to my wife Grace and to Margie and Bob aged 14 and 12, "This is History in the Making. Let's go!" So we all jumped in the car and scooted over.

We were way early. Hence, we could see a lot. The ambulances-hearse, in a 40-minute drive (the beltway wasn't opened till the next year), came from Andrews along Suitland Parkway, over to downtown Wisconsin Ave., and then north to the Naval Hospital in Bethesda. Out of the ambulance-hearse stepped The First Lady, still in her brand new pink suit and new hat.

This was at the hospital's main entrance, which faces west, right where we four were standing. "Jackie" entered the door. In about five minutes, out she came and re-entered the hearse. Around to the north end of the hospital and out of our sight they went. We didn't then know why. We learned later that the hospital's morgue is at the north entrance, downstairs. That's where the autopsy and the embalming were performed.

That Friday evening and much of Saturday we four Simses were again glued to the television.

The body lay in state in the White House on Saturday. On Sunday the Sims Family drove down to the Capitol and saw the flag-draped coffin approach along Pennsylvania Ave.

Throughout the day and night, 'hundreds of thousands', so it was reported, lined up to view the guarded casket.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Epilogue:** Now, 2010, almost exactly 47 years after November 22, 1963, we wonder how this fourth presidential assassination has affected America--- also the world. We don't know. We'll never know.

REPRINTED FROM  
THE MESSENGER, December 2010  
(Newlewood Park Place's Newsletter)



# We Build a House

by Lewis Sims

We - Gracie Girl and I - broke ground on my 31st birthday. It was October 9, 1940. She had just turned 26: that was September 15.

To start building a house, especially at our young ages, represented a huge event in what would be a long, joyful marriage.

Why were we building - instead of buying a house already built? Well, we had looked around in the District of Columbia, where we had lived, first in a fourth-floor walk-up, then in a somewhat more spacious third-floor walk-up. And we had also looked around in nearby Montgomery County, Maryland. We found nothing that suited us in our price range.

In August, 1940 my parents entrained from far-off California and arrived in Washington to visit the young couple. They offered a solution to our house hunting. "Build!" they suggested.

Both my parents knew what they were talking about. Dad was a civil engineer, and he was teaching structural engineering at the University of Southern California. Mom loved to design floor plans for individual houses, including such details as which way a dining room door should swing. They had painstakingly designed plans for six custom-built houses out in California, one house at a time. Each special house sold for a small profit.

So, with the help of my parents, also with an architect and the builder, blue prints were developed, and our house was under construction.

Where? Montgomery County. More specifically in a new part of Chevy Chase, called Rollingwood, which had been part of the old Cummins farm. Our address was to be, eventually, 7302 Brennon Lane.

The ensuing four-month building process was interesting, also challenging. Both Grace and I paid close attention. We, of course, went out to the site on weekends. Also, about once a week, we rose early and did our inspecting before I went to work. In addition, Grace usually made another weekly visit. Did we find mistakes? Did we make changes? Yes and yes.

Any mistakes were corrected on time, mainly via the courtesy of our knowledgeable and well-motivated foreman, Mr. Claggett.

As to the changes, let me cite two examples.

First, one morning when the electrician was installing electric outlets in the various walls, he addressed us saying, "Folks, if you would like to have any more outlets than indicated on the blue prints, now is the time to tell me."

"How much do they cost?" I asked. Answer: \$1.75 each. Without consulting my wife, I exclaimed, "Go ahead!" So for an additional \$19.25 we installed eleven additional outlets in this pre-war house. Lucky us!

A second change concerned the roof. Of the 15 houses on the block (ours was the 16th and last to be built), only one had a multi-colored roof. All the others had Buckingham No. 2 slate, good but also dull gray. Just in time, we selected Vermont slate, multi-colored and beautiful.

We moved in on February 7, 1941. That summer we built a beautiful stone wall, and Grace started planting flowers and shrubs in our backyard. Soon Pearl Harbor was upon us, and there was no building for almost four years. We counted our blessings.

Grace took charge of the backyard, making it the most beautiful backyard on the whole block. She also launched a veritable career as a volunteer in several activities. I promptly engaged in civic affairs - Rollingwood, Montgomery County, and of course our block.

In this well-planned, well-built house, my wife and I lived together for 58 years. We raised two children - a girl and a boy. Grace died in April 1999, and I stayed on by myself for two more years. I sold the house (in five days); then after 60 years - on April 5, 2001 - I moved from one dream house to another, called Maplewood Park Place.

--Reprinted from THE MESSENGER, June 2005--  
(Maplewood Park Place's newsletter)

*Maplewood  
Park Place*

We Build a House, continued on page 11

June 2005

# Time Management

*by Lewis Sims, grandfather of Michael Weiss, Olympic figure skater and twice U.S. National champion*

*"Time is inelastic." ~ Peter Drucker*

**Time** is the great equalizer. Everywhere the minute, the day, the year – yes, everywhere – time is the same. Also, it's the same for everybody. No one has any more – or any less – time than anyone else. Wealth, position, fame – they don't matter, because time is inelastic; it cannot be stretched. What does matter is how one uses his time.

Everyone of us, not just the elderly, is "aging" every day, all the time. An English proverb says: "Time and tide wait for no man."

This philosophy certainly applies to the ambitious athlete, probably more than to others. For example, the ambitious musician or author will compose better when s/he's "in the mood" for composing or, perhaps, suddenly has a new idea or theme.

The ambitious athlete, however, must be "in the mood" almost constantly. He must work out every day, seven days a week. The figure skater, for example, must practice his skills and work with weights every single day. Also, during the hours on the ice, he must consciously and systematically budget his time, both when he's alone and when he's with his coach. He must "seize time by the forelock," as the old saying goes.

And remember with the ever-so-successful Benjamin Franklin: "Do not squander time, for that is the stuff life is made of."

---Reprinted from THE MESSENGER, Feb. 2002---  
(Maplewood Park Place newsletter)

**Lewis B. Sims**  
 7302 Brennon La  
 Chevy Chase MD 20815

December 1992

Updated  
 August 1999

## CIVIC ACTIVITIES

of

Lewis Sims

Active in campaigns for county home rule, Montgomery County,  
 1944 (losing) and 1948 (winning).

Delegate from Rollingwood Citizens Assn. to Montgomery County  
 Civic Fedn., 1943-1949.

Chmn., Comte. on Public Finance and Budget, Montgomery County  
 Civic Fedn., 1944-1949.

Member, Montgomery County Personnel Bd., 1949-1954  
 (chmn., 1949-1951 and 1953-1954).

Member, Salary Advisory Comte., Montgomery County Bd. of Ed., 1955.  
 Pres., Rollingwood Elem. School P-TA, 1960-1961.

Delegate to Montgomery County Council of P-TAs, 1962-1963.  
 Vice Pres., Leland Jr. High School P-TA, 1963-1964.

Member, Montgomery County Charter Revision Commn., 1966-1968.

Chmn.  
Pres., Comte. to Retain Council-Manager Govt., 1968. a  
 Member, Bd. of Directors, Rollingwood Citizens Assn., 1981-  
 Member, Library Advisory Comte., Chevy Chase Branch of Mont-  
 gomery County Dept. of Public Libraries,  
 1982-1990 (chmn., 1984-1986).

Block Captain for Neighborhood Watch, 1982- b  
 Member and song leader, The Fossils (retired but active men), 1991-  
 Election Judge, seven elections, 1992-  
 Driver (sub) for Meals On Wheels, 1991- .

a/ Awarded a plaque reading:

"Rollingwood's #1 <sup>Citizen</sup> Civic Activist  
 for Over 50 Years"

b/ 14 editions prepared and hand-delivered (17 houses),  
 1982-1999. 15th edition in process, August 1999.

Attachment 2  
"Civic Actist"

Grace W. Sims  
Volunteer

Grace W. Sims, 84, a longtime Chevy Chase resident and volunteer who led nature walks in which she would identify birds by appearance and song, died of complications from aspiration pneumonia April 26 at Suburban Hospital.

From 1971 to 1981, Mrs. Sims was employed by the Montgomery County Board of Education to provide seasonal bird walks, mostly in parks along the C & O Canal. She also led similar walks for the National Park Service, and under the auspices of the speakers bureau of the Audubon Naturalist Society, she presented slide lectures on bird identification.

She was a weekly volunteer at the Audubon Bookshop in Chevy Chase for ten years.

In 1994, she was voted the society's volunteer of the year.

Mrs. Sims, who lived in Chevy Chase for 58 years, was born in Lockland, Ohio, and was raised in Chicago.

In 1934, she came to Washington to become a clerk in the Department of Agriculture and later transferred to the Department of Interior's division of grazing. She spent a year at Radcliffe College while accompanying her husband, Lewis Sims, whom she married in 1935, to Massachusetts, where he took leave from his civil service job to serve as resident consultant at Harvard University's graduate school of public administration.

During World War II, she volunteered as a Gray Lady of the American Red Cross, first at the Naval Medical Center and then at the Office of Strategic Services. She taught Sunday School at Chevy Chase United Methodist Church in the 1950s, served as a Girl Scout leader in the '60s, was active with the Women's Society of Christian Service (the United Methodist Women) in the '70s and delivered Meals On Wheels weekly in Northwest Washington in the '80s.

In addition to her husband of 64 years, survivors include two children, Marjorie Sims Weiss of Fairfax and Robert M. Sims of Kensington; a sister, Alice Pigman of Birmingham; five grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

--The Washington Post, May 1, 1999

†

Memorial contributions may be made to the Audubon Naturalist Society at  
Woodend, 8940 Jones Mill Rd., Chevy Chase, MD 20815.

[From program of  
memorial service, 5-4-99]

LEWIS SIMS  
(LEW)

19

A CALIFORNIAN: FROM FIRST GRADE THROUGH THE M.A. (UCLA AND CAL, BERKELEY)  
A METROPOLITAN WASHINGTONIAN: SINCE 1935.

YEARS: 81 playing tennis; 66 a resident of metro. Wash.; 64 with Gracie Girl, till 1999; 60 in Chevy Chase (same house); 59 a civic activist in Montg. Co.; 54 a member (still) of active barbershop quartet; 52 a father; 38 a Fed. Govt. employee; 17 teaching Public Administration.

MOVED TO MAPLEWOOD PARK PLACE ON APRIL 5, 2001, TWO YEARS AFTER LOSS OF GRACIE GIRL.

FEDERAL EMPLOYEE: CENSUS BUREAU (ASST. CHIEF, STATE AND LOCAL GOVT. DIV.); PUBLIC HEALTH SERV. (MGMT. ANALYST AND ORIENTATION LECTURER).

LOANED OR ON LEAVE: PRES.'S CMTE. ON CIVIL SERVICE IMPROVEMENT; HARVARD UNIV. (RESIDENT CONSULTANT); BOTH HOOVER COMMISSIONS; NEW SECRETARY'S CMTE. TO STUDY THE FDA; UCLA (VISITING PROF. OF PUBLIC ADMIN.).

TWO CHILDREN, FIVE GRANDCHILDREN, FOUR GREAT GRANDCHILDREN--ALL HERE.  
GRANDSON MICHAEL WEISS IS OLYMPIC FIGURE SKATER AND TWICE U.S. CHAMPION.

(Oh, yeah: Director, Singing Capital Chorus (national champions 1954—not 1854.))

MPP libr.

SIMS, LEWIS BURRILL, political scientist: b. Worthington, Minn., Oct. 9, 1909; s. Charles Edward and Pansy Elizabeth (Cook) S.; m. Grace Louise Wolfe, Sept. 14, 1935; children: Marjorie Joan, Robert Michael. BA, UCLA, 1932; MA, U. Calif., Berkeley, 1933; postgrad., U. Chgo., 1933-35, Harvard U., 1937-38. Economist Cen. Statis. Bd., 1935-37, examiner, 1937-38; asst. chief govts. div. U.S. Census Bur., 1938-48; mgmt. analysis officer USPHS, 1948-73; faculty U.S. Dept. Agr. Grad. Sch., Washington, 1965-82, mem. scholarship com., 1982—; research specialist Pres's. Com. on Civil Service Improvement, 1940-41; research analyst 1st Hoover Commn., 1948, 2d Commn., 1954; vis. prof. polit. sci. UCLA, 1952-53. Author: The Scholarship of Junior Professional Appointees in the Government Service, 1941; editor Environment and Health, 1951; contrb. articles on pub. adminstr., personnel and fin. to profl. jours. Chmn. com. on pub. fin. and the budget Montgomery County Civic Fedn., 1944-49; chmn. Montgomery County Personnel Bd., 1949-54; mem. salary adv. com. Montgomery County Bd. Edn., 1955; mem. Charter Revision Commn., 1966-68; pres. Com. to Retain Council-Mgr. Govt., 1968; mem., bd. dirs. Rollingwood Cns. Assn., 1981—; mem., adv. com. Chevy Chase br. Montgomery County Dept. Pub. Libraries, 1982— (chmn. 1984-86). Littauer fellow Harvard U., 1937-38. Mem. Am. Soc. Pub. Adminstrn. (charter), Am. Polit. Sci. Assn., Nat. Mcpl. League, Washington Area Tennis Patrons Found., Soc. for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barbershop Quartet Singing in Am., Fed. City Four (chorus dir. Singing Capital Chorus, internat. quartet judge emeritus 1985, Internat. Champion Barbershop Chorus award 1954), Theta Chi, Pi Sigma Alpha. Methodist. Club: Edgemoor Tennis. Home: 7302 Brennon Ln Chevy Chase MD 20815.

- Who's Who in the East,  
1989-1990, p. 792