

Karl Stoltzfus, EMU graduate and founder of Dynamic Aviation, spoke at the Harrisonburg Rockingham Business & Professional Club Annual Appreciation Luncheon in April 2008. Below is an edited transcript of his words.

EMU has a legacy of truly great presidents ... John R. Mumaw, Myron Augsberger, Joe Lapp and now Loren Swartzendruber.

What you may not know about Loren is that he really is a bit of a risk taker. I know that because he asked me to give a speech and he doesn't know what I am going to say.

I hope when you leave today you will not say what the poet and playwright Oscar Wilde once said as he left a luncheon: "I have had a perfectly delightful luncheon, this just wasn't it."

No Interest in College!

When I got out of high school I had no interest in college. Truthfully, I really didn't have much interest in anything. I became involved in my dad's aviation business in Coatesville, Pa., and received an excellent education in all aspects of aviation.

By my mid-20s, though, I was desperate for more education and at 26 applied to EMU. Based on my high school grades and SAT scores, the admission counselor suggested that I probably would not succeed in college.

If I could cautiously make a suggestion to the academic world it would be that they also measure intellectual curiosity as well as emotional intelligence when they consider SATS and other standardized tests. Although I did not have a clear understanding of the meaning of the words at the time, I wanted very much to study psychology, sociology, and anthropology.

Love of Learning

I would like to share a few reflections of some of the courses I took at EMU and their profound practical application throughout my life. Above all, I was at EMU to learn. **I loved learning, and my EMU years were some of the best years of my life.**

Communication and Rhetoric – Freshman English Class by James Bomberger.

Initially I didn't know what the word rhetoric meant, but I gradually began to understand the power of persuasion of the spoken and written word and how we can potentially convince people of our point of view with rhetoric. Just learning about that was a "heady" experience.

I had Kenton Brubaker for biology. I was probably his worst student. I was invariably ill just before any biology lab that required you to dissect frogs, rats, etc. You could not pay me to do that and I sure wasn't going to be paying to do it! He was, at the same time, one of the smallest people and the biggest people I knew -- he was short in stature but could take an answer that was 10% correct and make you (me, a big guy) look good. He took your good 10% and added to

it as a method of teaching. It was very effective and he made it seem like a form of art. On field trips he taught us about the ecosystem and instilled within me a very strong lifelong desire to do my part in preserving our environment.

Faith in Christ

My faith in Christ was significantly strengthened during my EMU years. After sitting through classes like “Israel Amid the Nations” with the intellectuals G. Irvin Lehman and Herman Reitz, who had significantly different positions on most issues, I determined it was not me who was going to figure out that stuff.

More importantly we had chapel services that really called people to a deeper walk with Christ and during those I committed to be a seven-day-a-week **follower of Christ** rather than a Sunday-morning Christian. Step one was understanding the difference.

Lifelong Lessons

Dilbert Seitz taught many business classes as well as courses in probability and statistics. I have applied the concepts of those classes to many areas of business, but most specifically to aviation risk mitigation. Our company has one of the best safety records of any general aviation company in spite of the fact that we do a lot of high-risk flying.

One practical example:

- We will only operate multiengine turboprop airplanes. Having flown over 300,000 hours in just the last 15 years, we have statistically avoided seven to 12 off-airport emergency landings by operating multiengine turbine aircraft rather than single engine.

The **most profound class** I had was “Developmental Psychology” by professor Arlene May. That should be a required course by every university student. By the time our children became teenagers and exhibited certain unique developmental behavior patterns I knew they were behaving exactly like they were supposed to. Barbara however did not. I took as many courses in psychology as I could and have had a lifelong interest in the subject. One of the greatest God given gifts we as individuals have is the ability to seek to understand and that includes seeking to understand ourselves.

I have found the study of Jungian psychology and Myers Brigg Type Indicator to be extremely helpful in understanding myself and other people. I am a MBTI INFJ, which represents 1.3% of the population.

INFJ’s are very introspective, spend a lot of time in their inner world, thrive on dealing with complex issues and are conceptual thinkers.

My years at EMU helped nurture my interest in being a “lifelong learner” My hobby is reading about history and the study of world cultures, religions, geography and topography. It continues to be absolutely fascinating.

History and World Leaders

My favorite world leader to read about is Winston Churchill. When Joe, Hanna, Barbara and I were in London going through an old bookstore I found an original set of Churchill's six volume "The Second World War," which was 4,700 pages. Churchill could say more in one paragraph than many people could say in one chapter.

In 2000 *Time Magazine* named Albert Einstein man of the century. They were wrong. It was Winston Churchill. Cancel my subscription.

He had a sarcastic wit that he used deftly. He had less than a pleasant relationship with Lady Astor. She once said to him, "Winston, if you were my husband I would poison your tea." He responded, "Lady Astor if I were your husband I would drink it."

Once when they were at a dinner party she said, "Winston, you are drunk." He responded, "And you, Lady Astor, are ugly and at least in the morning I will be sober."

Interestingly enough, Churchill had some profound things to say about war and peace. I quote from volume 1, page 250-251.

"Those whose inclination is to bow their heads, to seek patiently and faithfully for peaceful compromise in the majority of instances are right, not only morally but from a practical standpoint. How many wars have been averted by patience and persisting good will! Religion and virtue alike lend their sanctions to meekness and humility, not only between men but between nations. How many wars have been precipitated by firebrands! How many misunderstandings which led to wars could have been removed by temporizing! How often have countries fought cruel wars and then after a few years of peace found themselves not only friends but allies! The Sermon on the Mount is the last word in Christian ethics. Defense ministers duty is first so to deal with other nations as to avoid strife and war and to eschew aggression in all its forms, whether for nationalistic or ideological objects."

Some might say many universities around the country can provide the same experience to students, so what makes EMU's experience unique?

Perhaps that is best answered with a review of EMU's mission statement.

EMU educates students to live in a global context. Our Anabaptist Christian community challenges students to pursue their life calling through scholarly inquiry, artistic creation, guided practice, and life-changing cross-cultural encounter. We invite each person to experience Christ and follow His call to:

- *witness faithfully,*
- *serve compassionately, and*
- *walk boldly in the way of nonviolence and peace.*

At this point in my life I am a Jefferson Conservative, which means of course that when I was young and a student here at EMU I was a liberal, obviously proving I have both a heart and a brain.

Closing Thought

For a short time only we are God's guests here on Earth.

Thank you, Loren, for allowing me to speak.

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