



Prior to graduating from Liberty High, Al thought about his future and where it would take him. He knew, or at least assumed, that he wasn't smart enough to attend college. That thought ended when a recruiter from Rider College attended his Bookkeeping3 class. Al applied to and was accepted by Rider, graduating in 1965 with a degree in business education.

In his junior year at Rider, Al decided to join the Peace Corps after graduation. After applying, he received a letter from Sargent Shriver, Director of the Peace Corps, that he was accepted and would be sent to Ethiopia. Unfortunately, Al's mother was suffering from terminal breast cancer and his

employment with the Peace Corps had to be deferred. Al found employment teaching business at Henry Hudson Regional High School in Highlands (Atlantic Highlands, N.J.), Fleetwood High School (Fleetwood, Pa.) and Churchman Business College (Easton, Pa.). During this time, he received his master's degree from Rider. After completing his master's, Al went to work for the Peace Corps. In March of 1969, he was sent to Escondido, California for staging and medical, followed by three months of student teaching and language and cultural training in Hilo, Hawaii and Cotabato City, Mindanao, Philippines.

After training, Al taught economics at Notre Dame of Dadingas College in General Santo City, Philippines. He got to know the local Catholic priest and together they established health and nutrition clinics. Volunteers taught mothers how to prepare healthy meals for their families and non-paid physicians and a dentist cared for the people, including children with physical maladies such as cleft lip/cleft palate. Al also recruited teachers who were willing to teach in a nursery school without pay.

After Al completed his work in General Santo City, he continued with the Peace Corps as a management consultant with the T'boli tribe at the Santa Cruise Mission, located in Lake Sebu, Mindanao. The T'boli tribe is one of the indigenous tribes of the Philippines. Al's responsibility was varied; he did, among other things, photography, purchasing, cafeteria set up for employees, and worked with managers to market local products. He also taught mothers how to parent and provide for their families.

At Notre Dame College, Al became good friends with student Prima Guipo. After Prima graduated from Notre Dame, she accepted a teaching job, also at the Santa Cruz Mission. As would have it, a romance blossomed between Al and Prima and they married in 1973. Al and Prima were not only husband and wife, they were professional colleagues. Prima raised funds for the Mission to support its programs of education, health, agriculture and economic development. These programs supported and provided assistance to the 'Tboli' tribes as well as four other native tribes of Mindanao. Al wrote and submitted project proposals to various charitable organizations such as USAID, Catholic Relief Services, Misereor (German Catholic Bishop's Organization for Development, Germany), among others. The project proposals resulted in the funding of a 20-room hospital staffed by volunteer doctors and nurses from the Philippines, Germany and UK. They also brought about the establishment of a high school and college, the expansion of elementary schools for the T'bolis tribes outside the Mission School campus, and funding for various agricultural projects.



In September of 1974, Al and Prima said farewell to the Philippines and flew to Los Angeles, CA. Al purchased a used Volkswagen camper, and with Prima, who was seven months pregnant, set off for a month-long trip back to Pennsylvania. Along the way they visited friends in California, Washington, Wisconsin and Michigan. Driving from Washington to Wisconsin, they drove through Wyoming and it was here that Prima saw her first snowstorm. After a month of travel, they arrived at Al's sister's house in Schoenersville. Three weeks after their arrival, their daughter, Linda, was born at the Allentown General Hospital.

Al needed to find employment, but around this time, teaching jobs in the Lehigh Valley were dwindling. To support his family, Al worked as a salesman. Sales was not his forte, so in 1975, he and Prima packed up their family, crammed the VW camper with all their worldly possessions, and drove to Eagle Butte, South Dakota (population 300). Al taught business for two years at the Eagle Butte High School. In 1977, Al and Prima moved to Tampa, Florida to be near Al's dad and stepmother. Al was hired as an adjunct professor at Hillsborough Community College and St. Leo College (alma mater to actor Lee Marvin). A year after arriving in Tampa, their son Lee was born. Prima, being quite artistic, made crafts that she and Al sold at art and craft shows throughout the southeast states. For the next 27 years, Al and Prima earned their living traveling the arts and crafts circuit.

In 2004, Al and Prima decided to pursue another line of business. Al was hired by a nuclear pharmacy, supervising people who filled needles with radioactive seeds to treat prostate cancer, and Prima worked as the executive assistant to the Dean of the University of South Florida College of Nursing. Five years later, they decided to relocate to Rhode Island to be closer to their

children. Prima moved first and was hired as an administrator, and later Faculty Affairs Coordinator, by the Brown University School of Engineering. Al continued to work in Tampa and retired in February of 2010.

Al and Prima's retired life is dedicated to their children, grandchildren, educational undertakings, and charitable work. Their daughter, Linda Hower Bates, is a graduate of Wellesley College and works in the human resource department of Gilbane Construction, Providence, RI. Their son, Lee, graduated from the University of Pennsylvania and is the Hower family entrepreneur. Lee is a partner in NextView Ventures, a venture capital firm. Prior to founding NextView, he was a founding partner of LinkedIn, a professional networking company. Al and his family sponsor the Hower-Bates Children's Library, the Alvin & Prima Hower Children's Library and four other libraries in the Philippines. They receive donated books from local libraries in Rhode Island and from friends and family which are sent to the Philippines. In 2018 they have sent more than 9,000 pounds of books to the Philippines.

Life is good for Al and Prima. They strive to keep active, stay healthy, and enjoy their family and friends. Al wears a t-shirt that says "I AM NOT RETIRED – I'M A PROFESSIONAL GRANDPA". That proclaims it all.