



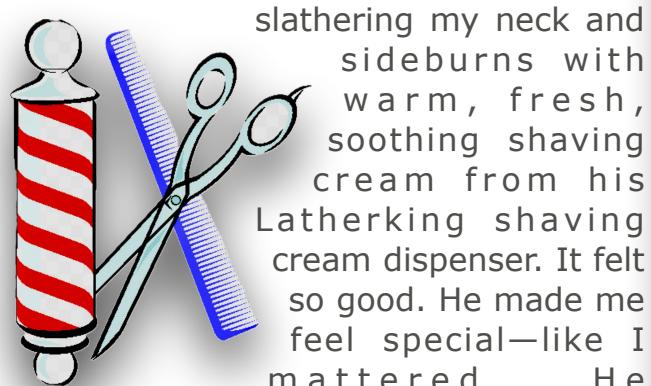
A Life of Love and Benevolent Service  
Alvin Edwin Weeks, My Grandfather

I treasured every moment being in Grandpa's company—he was the essence of all things good. He brightened my life with his presence. His friendship gave me worth. Ever eager to please—anyone, everyone, he often delivered happiness to my young life. His love for me and my siblings knew no boundaries. I am thankful for our deep, endless bond. I'm blessed beyond measure to be his grandson.

Grandpa was the most selfless human I knew—he seemed to spend every waking moment serving others. He projected a sense of authenticity. He had a zest for life that was infectious.

Grandpa Weeks made me laugh when he wiggled his ears—no one did it better. He'd wiggle them on demand; sometimes he simply volunteered. Many a time I looked his way, only to discover him staring at me with his ears swinging back and forth—I'd laugh till I cried. His fun was intoxicating. Each time he came to visit, or we went to Vernal to see him, he gave me a silver dollar, a Kennedy fifty-cent piece, or all the change in his red vinyl coin purse he carried in his left-front dress pants pocket. More than once I received all of the above, and more.

Grandpa cut my hair—for free. If I held still, he rewarded me by



slathering my neck and sideburns with warm, fresh, soothing shaving cream from his Latherking shaving cream dispenser. It felt so good. He made me feel special—like I mattered.

He sharpened his straight razor with the razor strap attached to his upscale hydraulic-assisted barber chair. He then shaved the hair I didn't have off



Grandpa (right) in his barbershop  
Vernal Avenue, Vernal, Utah, 1930's



*Grandpa's barbershop on left, and Uncle Fred's Market,  
700 East Main Street, Vernal, Utah*



He reminded me to pay my tithe. While at lunch each day, he bought me a cold, refreshing bottle of Dr. Pepper, candy, and a Hostess Twinkie at Uncle Fred's store—his younger brother. To this day when I smell a Dr. Pepper, my eyes turn glassy as memories of Grandpa Weeks drench my mind and heart.

Grandpa spoiled all eight of us kids, but my mother was his favorite person to pamper. He regularly brought us one-gallon cans of yummy Miller's Vernal Honey. Time and again he took us out to dinner. He bought me a nice blanket for my bed—I still have that treasure.

Grandpa woke me early each morning by pinching me—he could pinch as hard as needle-nose pliers. The pain rocketed me out of bed.

Grandpa Weeks loved to wrestle with my little brother David and me, even when he was dressed to the nines, which was most of the time. His white,

French cuff shirts were laundered and pressed with double-heavy starch. His luxurious double or triple-pleated dress pants were fit for a prince. I could comb my hair in the reflection of his spit-shined dress shoes. He seemed to enjoy wearing a tie—usually a handsome, striking bow tie. He trimmed his spiffy and elegant appearance with red, black, brown, or yellow suspenders. Yet he wrestled us, sometimes letting us win. David and I pulled his suspenders till they'd stretch no further, and then we'd let go. SMACK!!!



*Grandma and Grandpa  
Elizabeth and Alvin Edwin Weeks*

my neck and side-burns. I was in 7th Heaven.

Grandpa assigned me to clean his barber shop. He let me keep the quarters the men paid me for shining their shoes.



They slapped Grandpa's back or his chest with the sound of a flyswatter hitting the window. That was our signal we were ready for another skirmish.

Mother always giggled as the war began. Grandpa took us to the carpet. Grandma attempted to police the situation, ever committed to protecting Grandpa and his dapper look.

"Now, Grandma, go sit down! We're just playing!" Grandpa would say.

We'd get in another suspender-slap thanks to the distraction. Grandma retreated to her rocker, rested her hands on the arms of the chair, then glared at us with her famous stink eye.

Grandpa Weeks lived the simple life, a life of purpose, of denial, of true nobility. With masterful brushstrokes, he painted



*Grandma Elizabeth Ingles Weeks*



*Grandpa sneaking in a ten-minute power nap on Mother's couch. Notice how he's dressed—a casual visit on a Saturday.*

a handbook on service. He walked the talk. Daily. He led by doing—by serving. He edited and provided updates to his instruction manual about kindheartedness. Sitting still was a waste of time to Grandpa. He only slept at night, or grabbed a power nap, because his body required it. His get-up-and-go refused to be tamed. He jumped out of bed at 5:30 am to beautify his yard. He wore dress shoes inside black rubber galoshes he zipped up with his striped bib overalls tucked in tight. He completed his yard work look with his ever-present fedora—he owned several of them. He usually wore a tie under his coveralls—I have no idea why.

Grandpa taught me to appreciate

the beauty of flowers. He didn't just plant and grow flowers, he planted rows and rows of them. With Mother, Uncle Ernest, and Uncle Melvin married, he removed the grass from the backyard and planted thousands of flowers. He picked those flowers and shared them. He created stunning bouquets, then placed one in the house for Grandma. He delivered them to widows, to fatherless families, to the bank, to his Aunt Fannie, several of his brothers and their families, neighbors, and anyone else he thought needed a pick-me-up. He delighted in making others smile, and he was good at it. How fortunate I was to be his helper as he unselfishly made a few of those deliveries.

Grandpa Alvin Edwin Weeks didn't serve because he had to, because he was encouraged to, or because the Savior told him to. He served because service was in his nature, his every-day disposition. His heart was hard-wired to think of others first. Showing favor and lending a helping hand was as routine to him as inhaling his next breath. He had a warrior's heart and never knew when to quit when someone was in need. He was the one leading the charge to the aid of others. He didn't know how to stop loving his fellowman. His selfless acts warmed his soul and set him free in a way nothing else did. He went to bed tired, achy, and happy, wanting to do it all again tomorrow. He always chose the greater good. It was fruitless on Mother's part when she encouraged him to slow down. Grandpa lived a life of ambition—ambition to give of himself, and then some.

I don't know a lot of the details of Grandpa's youth. He was the oldest of eight children—seven boys that protected one sister with their lives. Alvin Edwin, Otis Heber, Nelson Eugene, Fred Elmer, William Beck, Florence Lamar, Shirley Lewis, and Don Bede. He stepped out of childhood and worked hard and long hours to serve his parents, Alvin Azro Weeks and Martha Ann Beck Weeks, and his seven siblings. He worked odd jobs in his teenage years to help assist and support the family. He was the only one of the eight children fortunate enough to serve a full-time mission—the Northwestern States Mission, 1920-1922. He served in Portland; Seattle; and Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, among other areas.



*Elder Alvin Edwin Weeks  
Northwestern States Mission  
1920-1922*

"I earned and saved my money, and paid for every nickel of my mission," he told me as he gritted his teeth.

Upon return from his mission, he was called to be a counselor in the bishopric. He was twenty-two years old—the "youngest high priest in Vernal," Mother reminded us. It was then he shifted into a higher gear that led to his irresistible and well-paced life of toiling selflessly for others.

He always carried a dream in his heart and a goal in his mind. "I wanted to be a doctor," he told me, "but the well was dry."

With no available funds, he changed course. It was then he mastered the art of doing good, complete with a tangible compassion for those he served with meekness and grace. Grandpa put a human face on doing unto others. His life provided a kaleidoscopic view of the template he engineered, then followed up by wearing out his life by serving his Master, Grandma, his children, us, the church, his neighbors, and his community. He viewed serving others as his imperative duty.

As a young eight-year-old, I witnessed his uncompromising sense of duty—a movie could be made of our experiences. Grandpa deputized me and made me his home teaching junior companion, or so I thought. We went to visit a family where the husband and son died a few days earlier in an explosion. But first we went to Safeway—just the two of us. I felt a smile wanting to spread across my face, so I let it. Selfishly, I was excited—no doubt Grandpa would buy me candy. My stomach flipped with anticipation.

"Grandpa, I didn't know you go to the grocery store when you go home teaching," naively I wondered aloud.



Me, age 8



"I don't normally," he answered. "The father of our first visit, and his son, just died in a bad accident.

Dynamite. So, we're going to do what the Savior would do. We're going to feed them."

"Oh," I said, confused, not knowing what else to say.

Grandpa and I walked up and down the aisles of Safeway. Grandpa filled two shopping carts with what appeared to be the boring necessities. But fun and unselfish Grandpa proved his love and empathy.

"Ronnie, this family has children around your age. They just buried their daddy and big brother. Let's see if we can put a smile on their faces. Let's go up and down the cereal, cookie, and candy aisles. You pick out treats those children will jump up and down about."

"Wow!" I exclaimed as my eyes came unscrewed. "This is better than shopping with my dad!"

I chose every breakfast cereal I wished my mother would buy for me. Grandpa told me to pick out more. I selected all the cookies that looked like they were anxious to be dunked in a cold glass of milk. Several bags of candy. Ice cream. Soda. Honey. Jam. Crackers. I felt like I was on a shopping spree. The faster I filled the carts, the wider Grandpa smiled. We lined up four carts at the cash register. I was having more fun than anyone at Disneyland.



*Charles Mack McConkie and Charles Duane McConkie, back row on right, were the victims of the dynamite accident on August 21, 1964. Grandpa and I attended their funeral. The wife/mother and children pictured are those we delivered the groceries to*

The grief-stricken widow greeted us kindly at the door. Her eyes were dark and glassy —she looked completely defeated. Never will I forget her bittersweet smile. Grandpa carried one paper bag full of groceries from the car. I carried another. We handed them to the children. We were offered a chair. Grandpa removed his formal fedora as we sat down. He hugged the sad children as I stared into their searching, wounded eyes. I saw Grandpa wipe his eyes—it broke my heart. I felt tears gather in my

eyes, burn, and fall. My heartstrings stretched so tight it felt like they were about to pop.

"I'll go bring in the other bags, Grandpa." I wanted to shed my tears in private. My mind had never been more in need of a distraction.

"Oh, Alvin, you ..."

"It's the least I can do!" Grandpa said to the heavy-hearted mother.

I ran back and forth between the house and Grandpa's green Mercury like I was racing my brother David. I was discovering why Grandpa never stopped smiling when he served others. Listening to the happy responses as the now fatherless family emptied the grocery bags and discovered my selections made my heart stutter. It was such a defining moment. In delivering groceries and compassion, Grandpa also dropped off possibility, hope, and reason to keep putting one foot in front of the other.



Grandpa and I drove back to his home to pick up a flower arrangement he assembled for our next visit—an elderly widow. I made the mistake of asking Grandpa an empty-headed question—seemed like I had lots of those that evening.

"Grandpa, does the church give you your money back for all that stuff you bought?" Grandpa's mouth curled into a slight grin.

"Absolutely not!" he said.

"Well, well ... how come?"

"Because the church and the world owe us nothing! We owe them! They were here first!"

"Huh? I don't get it, Grandpa?"

"Heavenly Father sent us to earth to serve others, Ronnie, and we don't keep score!"

"Oh, okay. I think I understand."

I was lost in thought for a moment. We delivered the flowers and visited the aged widow. The wrinkles on her face rippled with sweet emotion when I handed her the bouquet of summer flowers—red, orange, pink, yellow and purple Zinnias. She studied me for a moment with gentle eyes. Grandpa fixed something in the kitchen. I offered to help but Grandpa said something about it being above my pay grade. Grandpa gave her a blessing of comfort. For some reason I cried and felt comforted myself.

We drove back to Grandpa's again—we picked up more flowers and some tools. We drove to another widow's home. Grandpa carried the flowers. I carried the tools. After visiting a few minutes, in his elegant clothes, Grandpa climbed under the lady's sink and tightened some plumbing—he was too patient with me as I kept handing him the wrong tool. I felt my cheeks warm as Grandpa taught the lady a Book of Mormon story. He asked me to say the prayer. I was nervous, finding it hard to speak past the lump in my throat.



Grandpa and I returned to his home again to pick up yet another bouquet of flowers. Grandma gazed at us like she was watching endless cars pass by on a freeway. She was used to Grandpa's goodness for others. And the countless hours he was away from home.

"Where we going now, Grandpa?"

"Oh, I haven't been to see my aunt yet this week. She's all alone. The doctor amputated one of her legs a few weeks ago. I try to look after her—I need to do better. Let's stop at the store again."

As we returned to Safeway, a rising moon cut into the sky. Grandpa sent me to get the milk, eggs, and ice cream. I ran. Mother taught me how to double-check the eggs to make sure none were broken. Grandpa went his way and picked out the rest. We met at the cash register. Perfect timing. The same cashier checked us through the register. I was surprised to feel tears skating down my cheeks.



"Alvin Weeks, you're the kindest man I know. Who are these groceries for?"

"Aunt Fannie," Grandpa said as he gave her the shush signal.



"Grandpa, this home teaching thing is fun," I said as we drove west toward the edge of Vernal. "My dad's never taken me before. When I'm old enough, I'm gonna be as good as you are at home teaching, Grandpa."

Grandpa smiled.

With one of the bags of groceries in my hands, I jumped out of the car and scrambled up onto the porch. I rang Aunt Fannie's doorbell as if it were a fire alarm. Grandpa followed, knocked, then took out his keys and unlocked her door.

*Aunt Fannie Weeks Winn*

"Aunt Fannie!" he called out. It's your nephew, Alvin, and my grandson, Ronnie."

Aunt Fannie was sitting in her easy chair with a dress on. She attempted to get up. I could see it was almost impossible. Grandpa told her to relax as he leaned over to hug her. His eyes were full of a mixture of sincerity and sorrow. He introduced me to Fannie Weeks Winn, his father's youngest sister.

Grandpa and I put the groceries away in her fridge and kitchen. We sat down and visited. Grandpa was full of love and concern for Aunt Fannie. She was nice and sweet to me. She offered a pleasant smile, though I could see she was miserable. She opened her purse and attempted to reimburse Grandpa for the food.

"Now, Aunt Fannie, we go through this every time. You put your money away."

Aunt Fannie looked at me and giggled.

"Alvin, you're as stubborn as your dad was—in a good way."

There were no fair-ball, foul-ball, yellow foul-poles, or white lines in Grandpa's life. No boundaries. No lines in the sand. Everyone was on his radar to be served as some kind of random act of kindness. And he always seemed to show up when someone was in need of a lifeline.

Grandpa's interpretation of service provided the lens through which he viewed the world. As a young boy, I could see the logic in Grandpa's open-

handed benevolence. He was genuine. Authentic in every way. He saturated every room that night with wall-to-wall goodwill. I witnessed him flooding everyone's emotions with calm. I gazed in awe as though he was beyond compare. He magnified and reflected everything that's right and good in the world. He was like a universe unto himself.

That evening I discovered Superman was no longer some imaginary comic strip superhero I watched on television, or read about in the funny papers. Superman was real, and he was actually my grandfather. And Grandpa didn't pretend by impersonating Clark Kent by day and Superman with a cape in an emergency. Grandpa wore his Superman outfit of service night and day, 24/7.

I marveled at how good I felt inside—my skin was covered in gooseflesh all evening. I didn't want it to end. Grandpa's warmth will never be forgotten by me. That night so long ago, my grandfather taught me too many lessons about compassion to count. After climbing into Grandpa's and Grandma's guest bed, I attempted to fall asleep, but the images of the people we visited and time alone with Grandpa danced through my mind. I felt like I was nestling into a cloud.



Main Street  
Vernal, Utah, 1950's  
Alvin Edwin Weeks

The next morning Grandpa woke me early with his traditional pinches. We wrestled. I lost! We completed his daily routines in his yard. Then, like it was his pleasure, we drove to the same family's home where death had robbed a family of their husband, father, son, and big brother. We mowed their lawn and pulled weeds. To Grandpa, our efforts were routine, like the sun coming up. And for the first and last time in my life, pulling weeds was fun.

Grandpa loved and cared for and nursed Grandma—I watched him feed and dress her like it was a privilege—until she passed away on April 21, 1977. (I was serving a mission in Tulsa, Oklahoma at the time.) Her death left behind extraordinary grief.

Volumes could be written about the way he adored and doted on his princess—my mother—his only daughter. Their love and affection were a gift they treasured.



*Alvin Azro and Martha Ann Beck Weeks Family, 1923*

*Front row: William (Bill) Beck, Alvin Azro, Don (on lap), Martha, Shirley Lewis;  
Back row: Fred Elmer, Otis Heber, Nelson Owen, Alvin Edwin, Florence Lamar*

Grandpa cared for his mother and father all of his adult life. He served them with honor, adoration, and sacrifice. He nursed and cared for his father, Alvin Azro Weeks, in his (Grandpa's) own home for a year until he passed away there in 1955. One of the most difficult acts of service he ever performed—that I know of—was the day he was compelled to drive his beloved mother, Martha Ann Beck Weeks, to the Utah State Mental Hospital in Provo to admit her. She passed away there on July 16, 1957. Dementia had robbed her of her memory and her ability to function on her own. At the time, the working diagnosis was Chronic Brain Syndrome, what modern medicine and research now knows as Alzheimer's.



*Alvin Edwin and Elizabeth Weeks and 12 of their 13 grandchildren, Vernal, Utah, June 1968. Kristine Marie Leavitt, number 13, was born two weeks later*

Grandpa led, loved, protected and served his seven younger siblings with love and devotion. He was a guiding light to each of them. He was the ideal big brother. I was a witness to many of his acts of kindness toward them.

Grandpa cherished and spoiled his thirteen grandchildren. My seven siblings and five cousins might hold one spellbound with their own memories.

Alvin Edwin Weeks never turned down a calling in the Lord's kingdom. He served with distinction and enthusiasm, working his fingers to the bone. Then he'd go serve some more.

Grandpa never wanted a fuss made of his efforts—he stood out by quietly fitting in. He avoided the fanfare when the trumpets sounded, heralding his efforts. Pulling wisdom teeth bare-handed was easier than getting Grandpa to toot his horn or even talk about his relentless goodness he so freely gave.

Grandpa was born, raised, flourished, served, and died a Vernal blue blood. Vernal meant everything to him. To refer to him as Mr. Vernal is a colossal understatement. If something needed to be done that benefitted the community in any way, Grandpa was the first to arrive. And the last to head for home. A search of the Vernal Express newspaper archives might surprise anyone. Schedule several hours, then fasten your seatbelt.

Grandpa Weeks was the chairman of the Vernal Rodeo—oh how he loved animals, especially horses. He was the co-founder and chaired the Vernal Junior Livestock Show. He served as president of the Lions Club. The guest room addition he added to his 100 East home was living proof of his commitment to the Lions and the communities they served. Scores of awards, banners, ribbons, trinkets, souvenirs, keepsakes, trophies, and memorials hung from the ceiling and walls as a tribute to his never-ending efforts.



Grandpa sat on the Board of Directors at the Bank of Vernal—now Zions Bank. For years he served as chairman of the Uintah County Draft Board—during World War II and the Korean Conflict. In his hands rested the power to decide what young man might be sent off to war to offer the ultimate sacrifice. It was a power and authority that weighed heavily on him. When his own mother quietly attempted to pull some strings to help Don Bede Weeks, his youngest brother, avoid being drafted, Grandpa was true to his oath. He lovingly scolded his mother and reminded her that the Weeks Family wasn't exempt from their duty to country. Don was drafted and served in the U.S. Army during World War II.

At the same difficult time, Grandpa served as chairman of the Uintah County Rationing Board during Federal Government-imposed rationing to support World War II war efforts. He alone decided if a family received a rationing card to purchase gas, tires, sugar, metal, even a new car. Mother told me (she was in high school) how difficult it was to listen to her daddy have to tell people no.



*Grandpa and his seven siblings, standing in order of birth, left to right:  
Alvin, Otis, Nelson, Fred, Florence, William (Bill), Shirley, Don*

"And that no was equally applied at his own home," Mother said as she wept.

Grandpa Weeks chaired the building committee for the fund raising and construction of the new Vernal 2nd and 4th Ward building. Two of the shovels he painted and stenciled for the ground breaking hung proudly in his guest room. Those were the days when forty percent of the funds to purchase land and construct a new building had to be provided by the local members—sixty percent was paid by church headquarters. Grandpa led the fundraisers. He didn't take a no lightly.

Those were the times when church headquarters hired a contractor to lead the construction of the site; local members provided labor and support. Grandpa led those efforts, too.

Mother drove us from Orem to Vernal on a Saturday to visit Grandpa and Grandma. After three long hours, we arrived at Grandpa's and Grandma's home. No one was home. Mother's eyes squinted with suspicion.



"Oh for heaven's sake!" Mother grumbled. "My daddy's probably at the new building, working. I don't know what I'm going to do with him. He needs to let those younger men do the work!"



*Bryce and Ella Beth Weeks Leavitt Family:  
Janet, David, Dennis, Bryce, Kathleen,  
Ella Beth, Steven, Ron, Bonnie*

We dove back into Mother's 1963 Ford station wagon and headed for the new church. The Vernal 2nd and 4th Ward building was in the framing stage. Mother wouldn't be deterred—no one dared get in her way when she was on a mission! The church construction site was humming with activity. Sure enough, there was my seventy-year-old grandmother, with a scarf over

her hair, in a dress, picking up construction trash. She smiled and waved.

"Mom, look! There's Grandpa! Up on the roof!" David yelled as he pointed. Bonnie and Janet looked at little David like they were proud of him and his discovery. They stared at me with that annoyed face only sisters can reserve for little brothers—like I needed a personality transplant. No doubt I probably deserved it. But I felt their looks all the way to my toes.

It's an understatement to say Mother was fit to be tied. She slammed the gearshift handle into "Park." She jumped out of the car with fire in her eyes. The seven of us sucked in a quick gasp after seeing the absolute fury in her eyes. Several men were on the roof pounding nails into plywood atop the rafters. Dutifully we followed Mother. I was nervous for Grandpa, convinced he was in big trouble. The rafters were steep. There on the roof, hammering away, was Grandpa, dressed in a day's growth, his familiar blue and white striped overalls, his glasses, a white fedora, and his service-happy grin. Grandpa paused to wave at us.

Mother's hands were drawn into fists on her hips. I squeezed my eyes shut, not wanting to see what was about to happen next.

"Daddy! Daddy! Daddy!!! you get down from there right now! You shouldn't be up there!"

We were shocked to hear Mother yelling at Grandpa the same way she got after David and I when we slugged it out. Our family, Grandpa, Grandma, and all the volunteers at the construction site knew my mother was serious as a heart attack.

It was like someone blew a whistle. The temporary silence was mesmerizing. Grandma smiled. Grandpa smiled, but his smile didn't quite reach his eyes. He waved Mother off, as if to tell her to go peddle her papers—he seemed to attempt to keep a tight lip on his thoughts. The silence was suffocating. The workers were spellbound—we all were.

"Who will win this tug-of-war?" I wondered.



*The Vernal 2nd and 4th Ward building, 235 East 600 South, Vernal, UT. This is where David said, "Mom, look! There's Grandpa! Up on the roof!" Built in the early 1960s. All these years later, I think Mother was right—Grandpa had no business being on that steep roof*

Several younger men motioned for Grandpa to take a well-deserved break. Grandpa surrendered, a compromise he wasn't known for. He climbed down the ladder as nimble as a cat. Mother won. We seven kids worked hard to hide our giggles. We ran and offered comfort hugs to Grandpa—he needed them. We knew what it was like to do battle with our mother and lose.



*Ella Beth Weeks at BYU, 1946*

Grandpa kept working—Mother wasn't budging. I wondered if we were getting ready for an old-fashioned duel—I was betting on my mother. Grandpa blinked. He had already logged a hard day. There was an abundance of supporting cast to replace him.



*Grandpa is second from right, groundbreaking for something ...*



*Grandpa, third from left; fundraising for the hospital, Main Street*



*Grandpa, far right, banquet for Lions Club awards*



*Grandpa, second from right*



*Grandpa, seated front left, Vernal Rodeo*



*Grandpa on his horse with the rodeo clown "waterskiing" in the dirt behind*



*Grandpa, middle row, second from right;  
Otis, his brother, middle row, second from left; Vernal Rodeo Committee*



Vernal Junior Livestock Show; Grandpa is in the white shirt fifth from left



Grandpa, back row, second from left; Otis, front row, third from left, Vernal Rodeo



*Grandpa with one of his horses*



HOSPITAL AND NURSES, VERNAL

Lucile Hatch, Alvin Weeks, Roslie De Journett, Sarah Adams, Beth Sweatfield, Vera Gray, Mrs. Marvin Baker, Mrs. Dora Hunting. Insert—Mrs. Constance Thorne.



*The Stake Presidency and High Council; Grandpa is standing, sixth from left*



*Grandpa with one of his race horses*



*Grandpa, seated left*



Grandpa, third from right, honey service project to feed the less fortunate





*Grandpa, on left, Lions Club*



*My Grandfather, Alvin Edwin Weeks*

## Notes—

The day after my 16th birthday, I was fortunate enough to finally obtain my drivers license—something I dreamed of for years. I couldn't wait to legally drive—legally because from the age of twelve to sixteen I drove thousands of miles *illegally*. Grandpa Lawrence Leavitt, Bonnie, Janet, Ralph, Renee, Marlene Crawford, Jenny Olson, Antoine Martineau, and many others let me drive their vehicles. I will never understand how my parents didn't know—perhaps they did and chose to look the other way, which *was not* their parenting style.

I could never satisfy my appetite for driving, a passion I'm infected with to this day. Grandpa and Grandma Weeks lived 180 miles east of us in Vernal. After possessing my drivers license for three months, I informed my mother one Friday morning I'd be back Sunday night!

"Oh no you won't!" she countered in a firm, familiar voice. "Just where do you think you're going for three days?" she demanded like I was out of my mind.

"To Vernal!" confidently I said. "I'm going to see Grandpa and Grandma!"

That was all it took. My travel plans were approved—no fuss, no thirty-minute interrogation, no questions asked. I drove away before Dad got home and put a stop to my nonsense. Alone, I made the short drive to Vernal, through Heber City,

past Strawberry Reservoir, through little Duchesne, Roosevelt, and

down into Vernal. I drove my 1967 Dodge Coronet I had saved for. With cash in my pocket, a tank full of gas, my very own car, alone, and driving—life couldn't get any better. Or so I thought. It got better as soon as I arrived at Grandpa's and Grandma's home at 137 S 100 East in Vernal.



Alvin and Elizabeth Weeks, 1974



My car I drove to Vernal in 1972; 1967 Dodge Coronet

Grandpa and Grandma greeted me at the door like I was the most important visitor they ever entertained. There they stood, like angels, backlit by the light of heaven. Grandpa was chewing on his bottom lip like he was trying to blink back a potential tear. My heart did a flip-flop as it took an

elevator into my throat. For a minute I couldn't remember how to speak. Grandma smiled slightly, encouragingly, approvingly. She held my gaze. Was I in heaven? or Vernal?

Grandpa and I didn't wrestle, and Grandma didn't offer one stink eye. We had a blast. Went out to dinner at the 7-11 Cafe. Went to Uncle Fred's store and had an ice-cold bottled Dr. Pepper, just like the old days—Grandpa insisted on paying. We drove all over the Ashley Valley. They fixed me delicious breakfasts. We talked. We laughed. We picked up a burger at the Polar King. We went to Safeway—the memories brought tears to my eyes. Grandpa and I worked in the yard. We made bouquets of flowers. We delivered them to Grandma, family and friends—Grandma went along this time. We went to church. I was introduced like I was some famous future Hall of Fame ballplayer. I played the piano in Priesthood Meeting—Grandpa about burst the buttons off his white shirt. I went with Grandpa to see a few families that needed to know they mattered. The weekend came to an end way too soon. I drove west to Midvale with a smile on my face and blurry vision as I fought and lost a battle with happy tears.

I repeated the same words to Mother, and the same drive to Vernal the summer after my Junior year of high school, and the summer after my Senior year. All I had to do was inform Mother I was "Headed to Vernal." Instant approval—those were hard to come by and most uncommon. I didn't ask permission the summer after my Freshman year of college—I drove away unannounced.



*Elizabeth Ingles and Alvin Edwin Weeks, 1972*

The time with Grandpa and Grandma was always the same—I was treated like I was the most important person they knew. As Grandpa and I drove around Vernal, with me behind the wheel and him buckled in riding shotgun, Grandpa almost begged me to become a doctor, or a chiropractor, or a dentist, and then move to Vernal, have a family, practice some kind of medicine, and live happily ever after as a Vernalite. He even offered to help pay for school. Grandpa never



stopped promoting Vernal. On one of those occasions, Grandpa motioned for me to turn right into a parking lot. Safeway. *THE* Safeway parking lot. The sight of the place almost made me cry as I thought of the two trips we made there in the same evening so long ago.

Every trip I made to Vernal alone, I reminded Grandpa of the evening when I was eight years old and he took me home teaching and to see his aunt. All I had to do was remind him of the McConkie father and son who died in the dynamite accident. Almost immediately it seemed like Grandpa was watching a movie in his heart of that evening.



*In 1974 and 1975 I drove in style to Vernal in my new 1973 Ford Mustang Mach 1*

Grandpa informed me the people we went to see that night, the McConkie Family, and the two widows, as well as his precious Aunt Fannie, were not his assigned home teaching families—none of them. I was stunned. Shocked. My mind fought for words.

*In 1973 I made the drive to Vernal in my 1966 Pontiac GTO*

"Oh, those good people were not assigned to me. None of them were in our ward, except the McConkie's. Ron, we went to see them because they needed a visit, to be heard, to know they mattered and were loved. And all it cost you and I was a little time and a bundle of flowers. But we had fun, didn't we?" Grandpa had no idea what a treat that was for me, and the impact it would have on my life.

To this day, I can hardly comprehend what he told me. Truly I thought we were fulfilling his "once-a-month duty to visit his families, his obligations, his priesthood responsibilities of home teaching."

It's now June of 2025, and I'm still in as much awe of what I witnessed that evening so many generations ago—August of 1964.

Approximately 18 months ago, I wandered off on a journey to write stories and memories about Grandpa's life of service. One of my sisters asked me why I hadn't done so. I dove in with all four feet.

I meandered into the leaves of the Vernal Express newspaper archives, again. My wandering led me into a deep dive of the University of Utah J. Willard

Marriott Library archives. I was overcome, overwhelmed, befuddled, yet not surprised when I discovered over 600 articles on my grandfather, Alvin Edwin Weeks. I took a big breath and began swimming deeper. Coming up for air was a major inconvenience.

Imagine my excitement when I stumbled across scores of photographs of my grandfather I had never seen before. Some of those are above. I scanned every article, downloaded every photo.

After scanning each news article, I inserted an image of the article into a document. The article was then run through OCR software and added to the document—this provided a copy of the article, but also made it convenient to read, review, and study. I am committed to making sure Grandpa's posterity know the depths of his life of service and benevolence.

I studied each article like a final exam would be held in three days—I wasn't going to flunk it! One evening I moved on to the next article. Slowly I read. Read more. With my mind in a tailspin, I leaned back in my chair. I stared at the wall. Stared at a photo of Grandpa. Red in the face, I about exploded. I yelled ...



*Melvin John, age 4; Alvin Ernest, age 6;  
my mother, Ella Beth, age 8; 1935*



*L-R: Ron, Kathleen, Janet, Tamara, Steve,  
Bonnie, David, Dennis, Vickie, Kathryn,  
Joel, JoAlice; Vernal Park, 1968*

"For heaven's sake, Grandpa, when did you have time to eat, sleep, work, spend time with Grandma, and raise your three children!!!???? How did you have time for 13 mischievous-makers called grandchildren? How did you have time to visit as often as you did? How did you have time for me?"

Grandpa's three children and

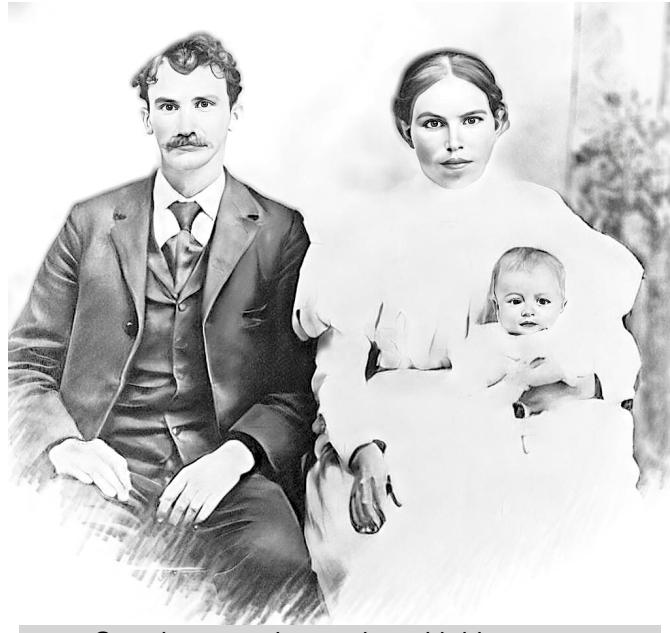
thirteen grandchildren knew about his life of kindness, but I don't believe any of us comprehended the magnitude of his non-stop compassion and good will.

The discovery of those articles and photos are a monumental miracle in my life. They more than validate what I observed as an immature eight year old who spent two weeks tagging along with Grandpa all over Vernal. And an evening carved into my memory when I witnessed Christ-like service and benevolence like never before, or since.

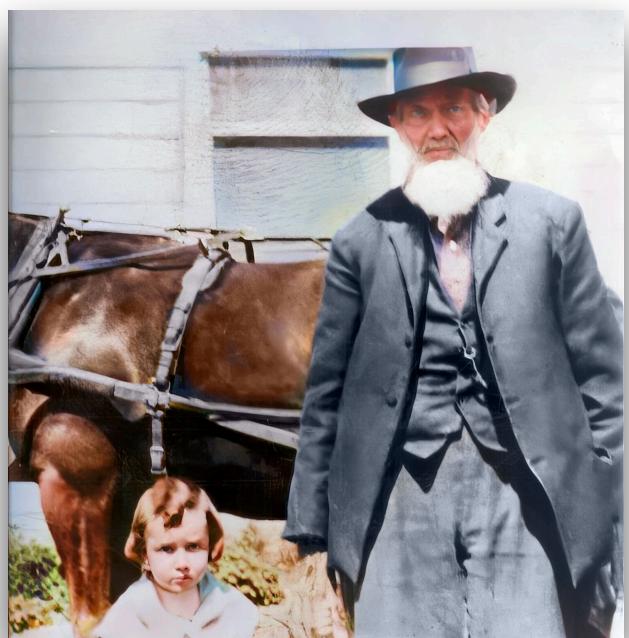
—Ron Leavitt, July 2025



*Grandpa, Jack Frost,  
and my mother, Ella Beth Weeks, 1931*



*Grandpa, age six months, with his parents  
Alvin Azro and Martha Ann Beck Weeks, 1899*



*Alvin Edwin Weeks, age three, with his  
grandfather, Edwin George Weeks, 1902*



*Grandpa Alvin Edwin Weeks,  
age two, 1901*

# Funeral Services Held This Week To Honor 4 Explosion Victims



**FINAL RITES** planned Wednesday and Thursday will honor these four victims of dynamite blast. Left to right are Charles M. McConkie, Robert Hatch, Duane McConkie and Howitz Ross.

Funeral services were held this week for four men who died last Friday in a dynamite explosion at an isolated oil well site southwest of Meeker, Colo.

The victims were Charles M. McConkie, 35, and his son, Duane, 16, both of 122 East Main, Vernal; Robert (Mary Ann) Murphy, Vernal, and George E. McConkie, Los Angeles.

**THE BODIES** were discovered yesterday morning and it was believed that the explosion had occurred Friday, two days previously.

The four had left Vernal together, stopping at a gas station en route to Craig, Colo., to buyout a welder from Equity Oil Co.

Howitz Ross, 34, found Sunday by Rose Rocks of Equity Oil who went to the campsite to make a delivery, said the welder had not been returned.

**RIO BLANCO** County Undersheriff Fred Kraske, who identified the victims, reported that all but the youth had been buried in a shallow grave scattered for 150 feet.

The bodies were taken to Meeker, Rio Blanco County Coroner J. Glen Briggs.

Officer said that the men were preparing to attach a charge on a flatbed truck.

A total of 10 sticks of dynamite detonated. Officer Kraske said, and wrappers were strewn along a nearby creek.

The four had been sent by the New Mexico and Utah Casting Co. to cap a well. The dry well about 100 feet from the dry well badly damaged the truck.

Services for Charles and Duane McConkie were held Wednesday at 11 a.m. in the Vernal Fourth Ward Chapel.

All four were buried in Vernal Memorial Park Cemetery.

America's Best Welding, Wilberick No. 11 performed military rites for Mr. Hatch.

Mr. McConkie was born Dec. 10, 1896, in Moab, Utah, M. Dewey McConkie. He married Valinda Reynolds July 12, 1924, in Vernal. The marriage was solemnized in the Salt Lake Tabernacle.

Mr. McCONKIE was owner and manager of Utah-New Mexico Casting Puller Co. He was a member of the Vernal City Police Officer for several years.

Survivors include his widow, three sons, Garth, Glen and Carl Dean; two daughters, Louise and Verna, all of Vernal; four sisters and two brothers. Mrs. David (Beth) Gundersen, Bruce H.,

(Continued on page 8)

## Explosion...

(Continued from page 1)  
Salt Lake City, Mrs. Ernest (Carol) Betts, Jr., Roosevelt; Sheldon (Orlo) Merrill; Logan; Mrs. Robert (Mary Ann) Murphy, Vernal, and George E. McConkie, Los Angeles.

Duane McConkie was born May 1, 1948 in Vernal to Mr. and Mrs. Charles M. McConkie.

He was a member of Post 245 Vernal Fourth Ward Explorer Troop.

**SURVIVORS** include his brothers and sisters, his mother and stepmother, and Mrs. M. Dewey McConkie, Salt Lake City, and Mrs. Helen Reynolds, Vernal.

Mr. Hatch was born Feb. 13, 1927, in Vernal, to Mr. and Mrs. David Nelson Hatch.

He and his wife, Joan, live in Craig, Colo. They later were divorced.

Mr. Hatch was employed as a butcher and clerk in Vernal and had served in the U.S. Army during a member of the LDS Church.

**SURVIVORS** include a son and two daughters, David Eugene, Robert (Beth) Gundersen, two brothers and a sister, David Keith Lloyd and Charles M. McConkie, all of Vernal.

Mr. Ross was born June 22, 1922 in Vernal to Melvin and Dorothy Collett, Vernal. He was married to Marie Dennis in 1943 and later they were divorced.

Mr. ROSS was a longtime resident of Vernal and had worked in a construction worker. He was a member of the LDS Church.

Survivors include daughter, Mrs. Ray Tullis, Oklahoma City, Okla.; two grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Isaac R. and Ruthie; a grandson and five brothers, Ray, Gerald, Lynn, all of Las Vegas; Gerald, Salt Lake City, and Carl, Vernal.

**SERVICES** for Howitz Ross were held Wednesday at 2 p.m. in the Vernal Mortuary.

Rites for Robert Hatch were conducted Thursday at 11 a.m. in the Vernal Fourth Ward Chapel.

All four were buried in Vernal Memorial Park Cemetery.

America's Best Welding, Wilberick No. 11 performed military rites for Mr. Hatch.

Mr. McConkie was born Dec. 10, 1896, in Moab, Utah, M. Dewey McConkie. He married Valinda Reynolds July 12, 1924, in Vernal. The marriage was solemnized in the Salt Lake Tabernacle.

Mr. McCONKIE was owner and manager of Utah-New Mexico Casting Puller Co. He was a member of the Vernal City Police Officer for several years.

Survivors include his widow, three sons, Garth, Glen and Carl Dean; two daughters, Louise and Verna, all of Vernal; four sisters and two brothers. Mrs. David (Beth) Gundersen, Bruce H.,

(Continued on page 8)

## Bodies of Blast Victims Found In Remote Area

**MEEKER**, Colo. (UPI) — A terrific dynamite explosion at a lonely dry gas well in the rugged Colorado mountains killed four Utah men sometime during the past five days, it was discovered Sunday.

Rio Blanco County Sheriff Russ Harp said Ross Rooks, a resident of the area, 14, drove to the oil well Sunday and found the shattered bodies of the oil well workers.

Rooks had gone to the well in rugged country northeast of Meeker but got a welder the man had borrowed but failed to return earlier in the week.

**Tentatively Identified**

Undersheriff Fred Krasch tentatively identified the victims as Howitz Ross, 34, Robert Hatch, 27, Charles McConkie, 35, and his son, Duane McConkie, 16, All were from Vernal, Utah.

The explosion killed the entire crew at the remote oil camp southwest of Meeker. The men were believed to have been hired to cap the well. Dynamite is used in well capping.

Harp said he counted 22

wrappers from sticks of dynamite in the area. He said the sticks were "about the size of a man's little finger."

A nearby truck was heavily damaged.

**Cause Unknown**

The exact cause of the blast was not known. But Harp said it appeared the dynamite was ignited accidentally. The well, which was dry, could not have caused the blast, he said.

Harp said the last entry in the men's work book was made last Tuesday. He said he had not been able to determine when the blast took place but he was trying to find someone in the isolated area who heard it.

Harp said the explosion scene was one of the worst things I've ever encountered during my 10 years as sheriff." He said some airplane crashes had been "messier."

Harp said the bodies were scattered over an area 150-200 feet from the blast site,



Howitz Ross . . . Was one of four men killed in explosion.



Duane McConkie . . . Sixteen-year-old died with his father.



Charles McConkie . . . Blast claims Ex-Vernal policeman.

## Last Rites Readied for 4 Killed in Blast at Well



Robert Hatch . . . Former grocery store clerk dies in blast.

**Special to The Tribune**

**VERNAL** — Funeral services have been scheduled for four Utah workmen, who were killed either Friday or Saturday in a dynamite explosion at a dry camp southwest of Meeker, Colo. Their bodies were discovered Sunday.

**KILLED** were Charles McConkie, 35; his son, Duane, 16; Robert Hatch, 37; and Howitz Ross, 42, all of Vernal.

The men, who were employed by the New Mexico and Utah Casting Co. to cap the well, were apparently attempting to attach a charge on a flatbed truck when the explosion occurred.

**JUNCT FUNERAL** services for Charles and Duane McConkie will be conducted Wednesday at 11 a.m. in the Uintah Stake Center, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Friends may call at the Vernal Mortuary Tuesday from 7 to 9 p.m. and Wednesday prior to services.

Also Wednesday will be funeral services for Howitz Ross, Services will be held at 1 p.m. in the Glines LDS Ward Chapel. Friends may call at the Vernal Mortuary two hours prior to the funeral.

**FUNERAL FOR** Robert Hatch will be conducted Thursday at 11 a.m. in the Vernal Fourth LDS Ward Chapel. Friends may call at the Vernal Mortuary Thursday prior to services.

All four men will be buried in the Vernal Memorial Park Cemetery. Mr. Hatch will be buried with military rites by the

Amesboro Legion Post No. 3.

married Valinda Reynolds July 12, 1947, in Vernal. The marriage was solemnized in the Salt Lake Temple, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Survivors include: son, daughters, Louise, Garth, Glen, Carl Dean, Vernal, all of Vernal; parents, Salt Lake City; sisters, brothers, Mrs. David (Beth) Gundersen, Bruce H., both Salt Lake City; mother, Mrs. (Ora) Beets Jr., Roosevelt; Mrs. Sheldon (Iris) Merrill; Logan; Mrs. Robert (Mary Ann) Murphy, Vernal; George E., Los Angeles.

**MR. MC CONKIE** was owner and manager of the Utah-New Mexico Casing Pullers Co. For several years he was employed on the Vernal police force.

Duane McConkie was born May 1, 1948, in Vernal, to Mr. and Mrs. Charles McConkie.

**HE WAS A MEMBER** of Post 245 Vernal Fourth LDS Ward Explorer Group.

Survivors include: brothers, sisters, Louise, Garth, Glen, Carl Dean, Vernal, all of Vernal; mother, Vernal; grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. M. Dewey McConkie, Salt Lake City.

**MR. HATCH** was born Feb. 13, 1927, in Vernal, to Mr. and Mrs. David Nelson Hatch. In 1952 he married Joan Stewart of Craig, Colo. They later were divorced.

He served in the U.S. Army and was previously employed as a butcher and clerk in a grocery store in Vernal. He was a member of the LDS Church.

**SURVIVORS** include: son, daughters, David Eugene, Roberta Joan, Donna Lorraine, all of Vernal; mother, Dora; brother, David; sister, Diane; Michael, Keith Lloyd; Mrs. Thelbert (Lorraine) Keech, Vernal.

Mr. Ross was born June 22, 1922, in Vernal, to Melvin and Dorothy Collett, Vernal. He was married to Marie Dennis in 1948. They were divorced.

**A LONG-TIME** resident of Vernal, Mr. Ross had previously been employed as a construction worker.

He was a member of the LDS Church.

**SURVIVORS** include a daughter, Terri, Oklahoma City; grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Ross, Roosevelt; one grandson; brothers, Ray, Gerald, Lynn, all of Las Vegas; Herold, Salt Lake City, and Carl, Vernal.

Access the link to a NotebookLM Podcast of  
**Alvin Edwin Weeks: A Life of Benevolent Service - Short Version**  
by scanning this QR code



Podcast Text from NotebookLM:

## Alvin Edwin Weeks: A Life of Benevolent Service - Short Version

The provided text, an excerpt from "Alvin Edwin Weeks: A Life of Benevolent Service" by Ron Leavitt, offers a heartfelt tribute to the author's grandfather. It portrays Alvin Edwin Weeks as an exceptionally selfless and benevolent individual who dedicated his life to serving others. Through personal anecdotes and reflections, the author illustrates his grandfather's unwavering commitment to family, community, and those in need, highlighting his kindness, humor, and profound impact on countless lives. The narrative emphasizes Weeks's humble and purposeful life, marked by acts of service that extended beyond formal obligations, showcasing a man who genuinely embodied compassion. Ultimately, the text paints a portrait of a man whose legacy is defined not by accolades, but by the tangible positive difference he made in the world.

Welcome to the deep dive. This is where we take a whole stack of sources, really sift through them, pull out the key insights, basically give you the fast track to being genuinely well-informed. And today, uh, we're jumping into a really special deep dive, it's about the life of Alvin Edwin Weeks. His story, while you could almost say it was written in service, edited in sacrifice, and bound by love, it's quite a description.

Yeah. And a lot of what we're looking at today comes from his grandson, Ron Leavitt, you know. really personal stuff, cherished memories, but then there's this other layer which is just fascinating. Ron found over 600 newspaper articles about his grandfather.

600. That's uh that's incredible. It gives such a wide view, doesn't it? Beyond just the family memories.

Exactly. So, our mission really is to pull out the um the core nuggets from all this. We want to understand how Alvin Weeks became this this real force for good and how service wasn't just something he did. It was like his essence, right? Who he was.

Not just actions, but identity.

Yeah. So, get ready for some, I think, really compelling stories, some aha moments about this guy whose joy was just, well, contagious.

Mhm. And authentic, too. Unshakable authenticity. And just this relentless enthusiasm for life.

Totally. You read about him and right away, you know, from the first moment, it's clear he was just different. His grandson talks about him like he was the living embodiment of goodness. Someone whose uh whose presence just lit things up.

It's Amazing, isn't it? Can you imagine someone making you laugh just by wiggling his ears?

Yeah. Just out of the blue, apparently just to get a smile

and the coins, handing out silver dollars, 50 cent pieces,

or just emptying his whole little red coin purse for the grandkids.

It paints such a picture, doesn't it? Pure unadulterated joy. Really speaks to that bound by love idea.

It does. And what's striking is how that same feeling, that spirit, it carried over in everything, even the small stuff.

Absolutely. It wasn't just about big public acts. I mean,

the sources show he was a barber, right? And he'd cut his grandson's hair for free. But then, you know, the warm shaving cream on the neck as a treat.

Oh, that's lovely.

And letting the kid clean the shop, keep the quarters from shining shoes, then buying him lunch. A specific lunch.

Dr. Pepper, candy bar, Twinkie. It's so specific.

It is. And it's not just spoiling him, is it? It's showing care. Making him feel important.

Yeah. It's service in those tiny everyday moments.

Exactly. It shows how service wasn't some separate event for him. It was just woven into the fabric of his day.

That personal touch, that attention, it really comes through. I mean, the morning pinches,

even when dressed to the nines, right? French cuffs, pleated trousers,

and still wrestling with the grandkids, suspenders getting pulled and snapped while his wife's trying to keep him looking dapper.

Ah, yeah. What does that say, though, about his authenticity?

Well, it shows he wasn't putting on an act, was he?

Not at all. Fully engaged. Whether he's doing something formal or just playing,

it highlights that core idea. Living simply maybe, but with huge purpose.

And the sources are really clear on this. He wasn't serving because he had to.

No, it was just who he was fundamentally.

We learned he'd get up at 5:30 a.m. put on overalls, galoshes, even a tie under his jacket just to work in his yard.

A tie in the garden. That's commitment.

And planting thousands of flowers. Not for show, not for himself.

But to give away, right, bouquets for widows, neighbors, anyone needing a lift.

Exactly. That phrase written in service,

it wasn't just a nice line. It was his actual daily routine.

Driven by what his grandson called a warrior's heart.

Mhm. Just couldn't walk past someone in need. He'd go to bed exhausted but happy, ready for the next day.

That kind of consistency, that unforced dedication, it's powerful.

It really is.

And it wasn't just people he knew well either. There's that story his grandson tells from when he was only eight. It clearly stuck with him.

Wow. The home teaching one. Yeah,

but not quite the usual assignment.

No, not at all. First, they go to Safeway.

Mhm.

Buy groceries for a family. Gosh, they just lost their father and son in an explosion.

And Alvin says to his grandson, "We're going to do what the savior would do." Lets the boy pick out treats for the kids.

Cereals, cookies, candy, trying to bring tiny bit of light into that darkness.

Yeah. And when they deliver the bags, the widow greets them. Sorrow and her smile. Alvin hugs the kids, wipes his own eyes. Just offers comfort.

in a way the grandson had never seen before.

Right. It wasn't an assignment. It was just a human response to suffering. Pure proactive kindness.

And this brings up a really important point, I think.

Yeah.

About how we define success or impact.

Yeah.

Alvin had wanted to be a doctor apparently.

Yeah.

But couldn't afford it. The well was dry as he put it. Right.

So he became something greater. A healer of hearts and souls,

a comforter,

a friend to the forgotten.

Wow, that's a quite a way to frame it.

And that same night, after visiting the grieving family, he didn't stop there.

No, he delivered flowers to an elderly widow, fixed her plumbing,

brought groceries to his aunt who'd just lost a leg.

Yeah.

None of them were assignments.

He just saw needs and answered them.

Exactly. It shows that sometimes the best healing doesn't come from a degree, but just from an open heart and acting now.

That proactive seeing eye, as you called it earlier, that's a huge takeaway.

It really is. for all of us.

You know, reading this, you really do think Superman didn't wear a cape. He wore suspenders and French cuffs.

Oh, that's a good way to put it.

But his service, it went way beyond these uh really personal touching acts, didn't it?

Oh, absolutely.

Yeah.

We know he cared for his wife incredibly tenderly until she died. Served his parents, helped siblings, their families tirelessly.

But then you have those 600 newspaper articles. That's where you see how this personal integrity just scaled up massively.

Yeah. Into major civic and community leadership. He was like Vernal's unofficial mayor in many ways.

The articles really back that up.

They really do. They list his roles. Rodeo chairman, co-founder of the Junior Live Stock Show, Lions Club president, bank board member, chairman of the draft and rationing boards during World War II. That must have been tough.

Incredibly tough. And there's one article from '43 praising his innovative approach to rationing, organizing community drives so nobody got left behind, even in wartime scarcity. So, it wasn't just holding a title. It was active problem solving.

With that same warrior's heart you mentioned, he even led the fundraising and building for a local chapel,

volunteering, labor, painting shovels,

climbing on the roof in his 70s. His daughter apparently had to tell him off.

Get down from there, Dad. Amazing.

And the fact that all these articles existed and the family maybe didn't even know the full extent until later, it just underlines how selfless it all was.

He wasn't doing it for the press clippings.

Definitely not. He just made time for everyone, family, neighbors, strangers, cuz he genuinely believed they mattered.

His grandson asked him later about that night, the one with the unassigned visits when he was eight.

And what did Alvin say?

He just said quietly, "Yeah, they weren't his assignment. We went because they needed a visit and all it cost us was a little time and a bundle of flowers."

Wow. All it cost us. That puts it in perspective,

doesn't it? Just

so when you really boil it down, when you synthesize these core insights from his life

Yeah. It's so clear his impact wasn't measured in, you know, the usual ways, not awards or titles.

No, it was how he consistently touched individual lives profoundly.

And that philosophy wasn't just that service was important. It was, as his grandson said, service wasn't an event for grandpa. It was his essence.

He was just him.

Exactly. Driving that belief. We don't keep score. We just serve. Simple as that.

He didn't just do kindness. He became that healer of hearts and souls, right? That comforter to the weary. Friend to the forgotten.

Yeah. And even though he wanted to be a doctor, he became something arguably far greater by just seeing and answering needs, fixing plumbing, bringing groceries, comforting the grieving, that constant awareness, that immediate response, his life really demonstrated that profound seeing eye.

It really did. And you know, as we wrap up thinking about Alvin Edwin Weeks, his incredible legacy, it feels like a powerful invitation, doesn't it? Very personal. His life written in service, edited in sacrifice and bound by love. It really does show us a path. So the question for all of us, I guess, is what does it actually look like in our own lives to have that warrior's heart? To consciously choose not to walk past someone in need.

It's a big question.

And what does it mean to live a life so bound by love that we're just ready to serve without keeping score?

Yeah. Letting go of a tally sheet.

How can we cultivate that same commitment to really see the needs around us, the quiet ones, often and then just answer them echoing that incredibly simple, powerful idea. All it cost us was a little time in a bundle of flowers.

Makes you think.

It really does. So maybe think about that. What are the little times and the bundles of flowers in your life? The small things you could offer that might make a huge difference to someone else.

—End of Podcast, Alvin Edwin Weeks: A Life of Benevolent Service - Short Version

Access the link to a NotebookLM Podcast of  
**Alvin Edwin Weeks: A Life of Benevolent Service - Long Version**  
by scanning this QR code



Podcast Text from NotebookLM:

## **Alvin Edwin Weeks: A Life of Unbounded Service - Long Version**

The provided text offers a grandson's heartfelt tribute to his grandfather, Alvin Edwin Weeks, portraying him as a selfless and profoundly compassionate individual. Through vivid anecdotes and personal recollections, the author illustrates his grandfather's unwavering commitment to serving others, whether it was through acts of kindness for family, community involvement, or tending to the needs of strangers. The narrative emphasizes Weeks's tireless dedication to benevolence, highlighting his role as a loving patriarch and a pillar of his community in Vernal, Utah, even revealing the author's later discovery of the immense scale of his grandfather's good deeds through historical archives.

So, when you think about a life well-lived, what really comes to mind? Is it, you know, the trophies on the shelf, the recognition, maybe those big headline achievements,

or could it be something deeper, something maybe quieter, woven into just daily life, the sacrifices, the love you share?

Exactly. That's kind of the big question, isn't it? And today, we're not just asking it. We're diving deep into a life that honestly offers a pretty different answer. A really compelling one.

Yeah. We're taking a close look at the life of and Alvin Edwin Weeks.

And what's really special about this deep dive is where we're getting our information. It's not just like dusty records.

No, not at all. We've got these incredibly vivid, cherished memories from his grandson, Ron Leavitt, right? Beautifully personal stuff. And we're weaving that together with historical records that have just recently come to light. So, it feels really intimate almost.

It does. And our goal here, our mission is really to pull out the big insights from Grandpa Weeks's life.

We're focusing on a few key things, right?

His service, which was just immense, boundless really.

His deep love for his family, especially his kids and grandkids, the core of his spirituality, which seemed to, you know, underpin everything.

And maybe the fun part, his sense of humor, which sounds like it was pretty infectious.

It really does. And, you know, looking through all this material, it doesn't just feel like a story. It feels almost like a like a practical handbook.

Yeah. Like this is how you actually live for other people.

Exactly. So, expect warmth. Real authenticity and probably quite a few aha moments as we unpack how these huge virtues can actually feel relatable.

Yeah.

Inspiring.

All right, let's dive in. Where do we start? The foundation, I guess.

Yeah, let's lay that foundation. This life built on service. Alvin Edwin Weeks. He was the oldest of eight kids.

Eight. Wow. That's a big family.

It really is. Alvin Edwin, Otis Heber, Nelson Eugene, Fred Elmer, William Beck, Florence Lamar, Shirley Lewis, and Don Bede.

So, seven boys and one girl, Florence,

right? And as the oldest boy, he apparently felt this huge responsibility to protect her. It wasn't just being a brother, it's like a core duty for him.

That dynamic sets a tone early on, doesn't it? Responsibility.

Definitely. And it wasn't just conceptual childhood. The sources say he was working hard. Yeah.

Taking odd jobs in his teenage years

just to help support the family. His parents, Alvin Azro and Martha Ann Beck Weeks and all those younger siblings.

Exactly. Seven younger siblings. Can you imagine that kind of weight on a teenager?

It's a lot. It really feels like that early. Maybe calling is the right word. It set the stage for the kind of man he became.

Yeah. That selflessness.

And what's striking is it didn't seem to crush him. It seemed to forge his character, right? It wasn't just about money, though that was vital.

It was deeper.

Yeah. It was about building this deep-seated commitment to family, a sense of duty that just permeated everything later on. Like those early challenges really refined his strength. And that foundation, that sense of responsibility, it seemed to push him towards something even deeper, a spiritual commitment,

the mission trip,

right? He was called to serve a full-time mission for his church. So from 1920 to 1922, he was in the Northwestern States Mission,

places like Portland, Seattle, even up into Canada, Vancouver, BC.

Yeah. And what really stands out and says so much about him is how he did it. His self-reliance.

Ah, the quote.

Yes. He said, and you can just picture the determination: "I earned and saved my money and paid for every nickel of my mission."

Wow. To self-fund that given the family situation.

That's extraordinary. Real sacrifice.

Totally. It shows incredible determination, deep faith. It wasn't just checking a box.

No, it was personal. He owned it. And paying his own way like that probably solidified that idea that real contribution comes from your own effort, you know.

Makes sense. And when he came back, he was only 22, but people clearly saw something something special in him. Leadership qualities, spiritual depth.

He was immediately called into the bishopric, right, which is a pretty significant local leadership role in his church.

Yeah. Overseeing the congregation's welfare. And his mom used to proudly say he was the youngest high priest in Vernal,

which is a big deal. A title of real trust and respect in their faith.

So, it wasn't like a slow ramp up for him. It felt like hitting a higher gear, as the source puts it. Launching into this well-paced life of toiling selflessly for others.

He really did hit the ground running. Just embraced service immediately.

But here's something really poignant. Even with this clear path of service opening up, he actually had a different dream first.

Oh, what was that?

He admitted maybe a bit wistfully. I wanted to be a doctor, but the well was dry.

Ah, so lack of funds basically stopped him.

Yeah, no available funds, he said. So he had to change course. And that's a major shift away from a really personal goal.

That's powerful, isn't it? Dreaming of being a doctor, that direct helping profession and it's just out of reach financially.

But instead of getting bitter or just giving up, he recalibrated. The source says he mastered the art of doing good complete with a tangible compassion.

So it wasn't plan B. It was like a refocusing. The method changed, but the goal of serving just got deeper.

That's a great way to put it. Makes you wonder, doesn't it? How often our real purpose comes not from the first plan, but how we handle limitations, closed doors.

Exactly. His inability to go to medical school didn't stop his desire to help. It just redirected it. He created this uh kaleidoscopic view, the source says, of what service could look like.

Finding a different way to heal and help, maybe even a broader way in the end.

Yeah. Sometimes the detour is the path.

Beautifully said. And that template, that tangible compassion, it really showed up personally, especially with his family. His grandson Ron has these amazing memories

like the haircuts.

Yes. Grandpa cutting his hair for free. Yeah.

But it wasn't just a chore. It was like a ritual.

Ron remembers the details, the senses.

Warm, fresh, soothing shaving cream from his Lather King shaving cream dispenser. Then Grandpa carefully shaving his neck and sideburns with a straight razor.

Ooh, a straight razor takes skill.

Totally sharpened on a strap attached to his fancy upscale hydraulic assisted barber chair. Okay.

Ron called the feeling seventh heaven.

Just pure comfort and connection.

It's the care, isn't it? The deliberateness. It wasn't just a haircut. It was making Ron feel important.

Feel special. Like I mattered. Ron said, "Those little things, the warm cream, the careful shaves, created this lasting memory of being seen and cared for."

And it wasn't just pampering, right? There were lessons, too.

Oh, yeah. Grandpa would have Ron clean the shop and let him keep the quarters the men paid me for shining their shoes.

Teaching him about earning money, responsibility.

Exactly. But always, always with that gentle reminder to pay my tithe.

Ah, blending the practical with the spiritual.

Yeah, it was this seamless thing teaching entrepreneurship and faith just through everyday stuff, showing, not just telling.

That's a really holistic way to guide someone. It wasn't just about providing materially. It was about teaching values, contributing back.

And that generosity, that love, it went way beyond haircuts. Ron remembers grandpa always giving them coins. A silver dollar, a Kennedy 50-cent piece, or all the change in his red vinyl coin purse. Sometimes all of it.

Spoiling them a bit.

Oh, definitely spoiled all. All eight of us kids, Ron says. But he had a super special spot for his only daughter, Ron's mom. Really pampered her.

What kind of things?

Bringing one gallon cans of yummy Miller's vernal honey, taking them out for dinner, buying Ron this special blanket he still has.

It sounds like it was consistent everyday kindness, not just big occasional gifts.

Exactly. And you have to ask, how do those small, steady acts build such incredibly strong bonds?

It's the repetition. Maybe the reliability of that love, knowing it's always there, that leaves a deeper mark than one big splashy thing. It's a daily commitment.

Totally. And speaking of deep marks and memories, we have to talk about his sense of humor.

Okay, let's hear it. This sounds fun.

It cuts through all the serious dedication, right? Ron vividly remembers Grandpa's unique talent. Ear wiggling.

Ear wiggling. Seriously,

he can wiggle his ears apparently hilariously. It made Ron laugh till I cried. He'd do it on demand or just randomly to get a reaction.

Okay, I'm picturing that, Grandpa just staring, ears going back and forth. That's pure simple joy,

isn't it? It's that spontaneous fun that sticks with you forever. Shows he didn't take himself too seriously. Could connect with kids on their level.

It shows he valued play just as much as work.

But wait, it gets better. Ron talks about grandpa's love for wrestling with him and his younger brother David.

Okay, roughhousing with the grandkids sounds normal.

Except grandpa would do it even when he was completely dressed to the nines.

Dressed up? Like how dressed up? Picture this. Pristine white French puff shirts with double heavy starch. Luxurious double or triple pleated dress pants impeccably pressed. Spit-shined dress shoes, often a handsome striking bow tie. And always always red, black, brown or yellow suspenders.

Wow. Okay, so this meticulously dressed dapper gentleman is totally ready to roll around on the floor and wrestle with little boys.

That contrast is amazing. It's such a great image, that disciplined exterior. But this playful physical connection underneath, that's a full life right there.

It really is. It shows that seriousness and fun aren't opposites, you know.

Well, he had a game, too, right? The suspenders.

Oh, the iconic suspender slap game. Ron and David would pull his suspenders way back.

Oh.

Until they snapped against his back or chest. Sounded like a fly swatter, Ron says. And that sound was the signal for the wrestling match, the war to begin.

Uh-huh. And what did Grandma think of this?

Hm. Well, Ron's mom would just giggle, but Grandma, she tried to police the situation, trying to protect Grandpa in his nice clothes.

I can imagine.

But Grandpa would just wave her off cheerfully. Now, Grandma, go sit down. We're just playing.

Which probably just encouraged the boys more.

Totally. More suspender slaps. And Grandma would just retreat, giving them her famous stink eye.

That paints such a vivid picture. A house full of love, laughter, playful chaos. He knew how to balance responsibility with pure fun.

Exactly. But beyond the playfulness, His dedication to caring for loved ones was just profound, unyielding.

This is the deeper core, isn't it?

Yeah. He provided lifelong care for his own parents, Alvin Azro and Martha Ann. He actually nursed his father in his own home for a full year until he passed away there in 1955.

A whole year. That's immense. The daily physical, emotional toll.

Incredible commitment. And then maybe one of the hardest things he ever did.

What was that?

He had to drive his own mother, whom he adored, to the Utah State Mental Hospital in Provo. She had dementia. They called it chronic brain syndrome then. Probably Alzheimer's.

Oh, that's heartbreaking to have to make that decision, carry that out.

Yeah. She passed away there in 1957. It just shows the depth of his love, willing to shoulder that kind of emotional weight, make impossible choices out of love.

That quiet devotion speaks volumes.

And it continued. He cared for his wife, Grandma, as she declined. The source says he was feeding and dressing her like it was a privilege.

Like it was a privilege. Wow. That phrase really hits home. It's not duty, it's honor.

Exactly. And it extended beyond his parents and wife. He was apparently an ideal big brother to his seven younger siblings, a guiding light. Ron personally saw many of his acts of kindness toward them.

So it wasn't just his immediate household. It radiated outward, consistent support and care.

Yeah. It solidifies that picture. His love wasn't just obligation. It was active, present, far beyond what you might expect.

That really gets to the heart of this deep dive, that unwavering family devotion, often quiet acts, but they form the bedrock.

And we mentioned his adoration for his daughter, Ron's mom, his princess, and he cherished his grandkids, all 13 of them. Ron Notes the 13th. Kristine Marie Leavitt was born just two weeks after a family photo from 1968.

So this pattern of tireless personal care for family, it paints a picture of love that was just fun, fundamental to who he was.

Definitely. But it wasn't just family. He was also deeply involved in the community.

Ah, Mr. Vernal.

That's him. It wasn't just a nickname. It was earned. If something needed doing in Vernal, he was known as the first to arrive and the last to head for home.

He really embodied that civic engagement spirit.

Totally. His roles were so varied. Chairman of the Vernal Rodeo and the source notes. He loved animals, especially horses.

Fits the western setting.

Co-founder and chairman of the Vernal Junior Livestock Show. Supporting youth agriculture. President of the Lions Club, the service organization,

right? And apparently the guest room addition to his house became like a mini museum filled with scores of awards, banners, ribbons, trinkets, souvenirs, keepsakes, trophies, and memorials from all his community work.

Wow. Living proof of his commitment, as the source says.

He was even on the board of directors at the Bank of Vernal, which became Zion's Bank, showing his influence in the town's core.

The breath is amazing. These weren't just titles. They required real hands-on work, but the wartime responsibilities found particularly heavy.

Oh, incredibly heavy. Chairman of the Uintah County draft board during World War II and the Korean conflict.

Just stop and think about that. Deciding what young man might be sent off to war. The moral weight day after day.

Unimaginable. It shows such a deep sense of duty to country to shoulder that.

And his integrity during that time seems unshakable.

Absolutely. There's this powerful story. His own mother, Martha Ann, tried to subtly pull strings to help his youngest brother, Don Bede, avoid the draft.

Oh, a mother trying to protect her son. Understandable. But

but grandpa, true to his principles, lovingly but firmly scolded her, reminded her the Weeks family wasn't exempt from their duty to country.

Wow.

And Don was drafted and he served honorably in WWII.

That speaks volumes. Principle over personal ties even with his own mother. That's integrity.

And at the same time, he was also chairing the Uintah County Rationing Board during WWII.

So deciding who got scarce resources like gas, tires, sugar, even cars.

Yeah. His daughter, Ron's mom, remembered years later with tears how hard it was for him to say no. But crucially, that no was equally applied at his own home.

So, his own family lived under the same strict rules he had to enforce for everyone else. He felt the impact personally.

Incredible consistency. It wasn't just public service. It was deep internal integrity.

What about the church building committee? That sounds like another huge undertaking.

Monumental. He chaired the committee for fundraising and construction of a new church building, the Vernal 2nd and 4th Ward. And get this, 40% of the funds had to come from local members.

40%. That's a massive local fundraising effort.

Huge ask. And he didn't just manage it from afar. He led by doing

spearheaded the fundraising, right? Didn't take no for an answer.

Apparently not. Relentless.

Yeah.

And he organized and worked alongside the local members providing the labor. Hands-on, getting dirty, leading by example.

That's real leadership. Showing up, doing the work yourself.

And that leads to maybe the most iconic story about him. Really brings his spirit to life, especially his unstoppable energy later on.

Okay, I'm ready for this one.

Ron's mother drove three hours with the seven kids from Orem to Vernal one Saturday to visit. Gets there, nobody home. She grumbles, "My daddy's probably at the new building working. He needs to let those younger men do the work."

Uh-huh. Typical parental frustration. So, they drive over to the construction site, and Ron's little brother, David, spots him first. Mom, Look, there's Grandpa up on the roof.

On the roof. How old was he?

70 years old. Up on the roof hammering away,

dressed in his usual blue and white striped overalls, his glasses, a white fedora, and his service happy grin.

70. Hammering on a roof. That's incredible. The visual, the overalls, the fedora, the grin.

His mother sees this and is, as Ron puts it, fit to be tied. Just absolute fury.

Understandably. She must have been terrified he'd fall.

Oh, yeah. Slams the car in park, jumps out, hands on hips, yelling, "Daddy, Daddy, Daddy, you get down from there right now."

A very public showdown.

Total silence on the construction site, Ron says. Everyone watching this tug-of-war, Grandpa keeps hammering for another second.

Stubborn.

But then, maybe nudged by the younger guys, he makes a rare compromise.

Climbs down the ladder. As nimble as a cat, his daughter won that round.

Uh-huh. But what a story. It just perfectly shows his commitment, his physical energy, his get up and go refused to be tamed as the source says.

Exactly. He wasn't just directing, he was doing. Yeah.

Even at 70.

But it also hints at the worry his loved ones must have felt, right? Wishing he'd maybe slow down just a little.

True. And all this dedication, it flows right into the spiritual side of his service. Because for him, it wasn't just duty.

No. The source says he didn't serve because he had to. He served because service was in his nature. His heart was hardwired to think of others first.

It was just who he was. An imperative. Not an option.

Which explains why he tackled every church calling with such distinction and enthusiasm, really working his fingers to the bone. It was a spiritual expression for him.

Faith in action.

Totally. And he explained this philosophy so clearly in a chat with Ron. It started with Ron asking a kid's question.

The empty-headed question Ron calls it. He asked if the church ever paid Grandpa back for all the stuff he bought for people.

Uhhuh. Logical question for a kid. What did Grandpa say?

With this knowing little grin, he said, Absolutely not. Because the church and the world owe us nothing. We owe them. They were here first.

Wow. That's a powerful countercultural idea. We owe them.

Yeah.

Ron was confused. So, Grandpa laid out the core lesson. Heavenly Father sent us to earth to serve others, Ronnie. And we don't keep score.

We don't keep score. That just sums it all up, doesn't it? Service is why we're here. Done with meekness, grace, no expectation of return.

It's a total rejection of quid pro quo spirituality.

It wasn't about earning points. It was about love, about obligation in the purest sense.

And that core belief wasn't just talk. It showed up most vividly in his actions. Ron shares this really pivotal story from when he was eight.

Ah, the home teaching experience.

Yeah, he was grandpa's home teaching junior companion, or so he thought.

And Ron admits his first thought was purely selfish. Candy. He even asked Grandpa, "I didn't know you go to the grocery store when you go home teaching."

Kid logic. But Grandpa's answer must have hit hard.

Instantly shifted everything. Grandpa said gravely, "The father of our first visit and his son just died in a bad accident. Dynamite. So, we're going to do what the Savior would do. We're going to feed them."

Oh my goodness. From candy to that kind of tragedy in a second. That's real world empathy right there.

So, forget a quick visit. It began this urgent shopping trip. Grandpa filled two carts with essentials, food, supplies. But then

then what?

Then he turned to Ron. Showed that incredible empathy again. Said, "Ronnie, this family has children around your age. Let's see if we can put a smile on their faces. He told Ron to go down the cereal, cookie, and candy aisles and pick out treats those children will jump up and down about.

Wow. Giving Ron that agency, that role in bringing some small joy amidst grief.

Ron was thrilled. Wow. This is better than shopping with my dad. He picked out all the sugary cereals and cookies he normally wasn't allowed, plus candy, ice cream, soda, a whole basket of kid focused comfort

that is just central to understand. understanding him, isn't it? That uncompromising sense of duty, but putting such a human face on it. Not just food, but comfort, joy, a moment of lightness,

and teaching Ron through doing, not lecturing, making it shared, personal,

a living lesson. How did the delivery go?

It was deeply emotional. Ron describes the grief-stricken widow, her dark and glassy eyes, managing a bittersweet smile. He saw grandpa wipe his own eyes.

He was moved, too.

Yeah. And Ron felt his own heartstrings stretched, bowed tight, crying privately as he carried groceries from Grandpa's green Mercury. It was a raw encounter with sorrow, but also with the power of compassion.

But Ron had a revelation in that moment. Right.

He did. He said, "I was discovering why Grandpa never stopped smiling when he served others." Seeing the family's relief, their gratitude, it made Ron's own heart stutter. He realized Grandpa wasn't just dropping off groceries.

He was dropping off possibility, hope, and reason to keep putting one foot in front of the other.

Exactly. That experience showed Ron the why behind the service. It wasn't a chore. It was the connection, the shared humanity, the lifting of burdens that brought Grandpa joy.

It fueled him. Transformed duty into happiness.

And here's the kicker. This wasn't just about fulfilling assigned home teaching duties. That pattern of spontaneous unassigned service was constant.

So after that intense visit, they kept going.

They did, drove to an elderly widow's house next. Took her a bouquet of bright Zinnias Grandpa had grown himself

uh from his own garden. That's personal.

While there, Grandpa just quietly fixed something in her kitchen. Ron didn't even know what. Then he gave her a blessing, a spiritual comfort. Ron felt it, too.

It's these unassigned acts beyond any formal duty that really define him, isn't it? Pure compassion, seeing a need, and just acting.

Later that same evening, still in his nice, elegant clothes, Grandpa was under another widow's sink, tightening plumbing, patiently guiding Ron, who kept handing him the wrong wrench.

Uh-huh. A plumber in dress clothes.

He even taught the lady a story from the Book of Mormon. Had Ron say the closing prayer, weaving the spiritual into the practical.

Just seamless.

Then they visited his aunt Fannie. She'd recently had a leg amputated. Tough time.

So they brought groceries.

Grandpa sent Ron into Safeway again. Milk, eggs, ice cream, simple comforts. The cashier recognized Grandpa.

Ah, so he did this often quietly.

Seems so, she said, "Alvin Weeks, you're the kindest man I know. Who are these groceries for?" And Grandpa just gave her the shush signal.

Didn't want the attention. Humble.

And Fannie tried to pay him back, but he refused. She said affectionately, "Alvin, you're as stubborn as your dad was in a good way."

Uh-huh. But the most revealing part is Grandpa's explanation later.

Exactly. Ron assumed these were all assigned visits. But Grandpa corrected him. Only the first family was assigned. He said, "Ron, we went to see them because they needed a visit, to be heard, to know they mattered, and were loved.

That's it. Responding to human need.

And all it cost you and I was a little time and a bundle of flowers. But we had fun, didn't we?

Wow. Service as connection, as joy, not a burden. The reward was the act itself.

It perfectly shows his philosophy. No fair ball, foul ball, no boundaries, no lines in the sand. Everyone is potentially someone he could help spontaneously. He just showed up.

His world wasn't divided into duty and life. It was all one integrated flow of service. Organic charity flowing from who he was.

And the impact on eight-year-old Ron that night, huge. He felt goose flesh all evening. Didn't want it to end. Learned too many lessons about compassion to count.

And the Superman realization.

Yeah, Superman was real. And he was actually my grandfather. Not a costume, but his 24/7 reality. Grandpa wore his Superman outfit of service night and day.

That's such a powerful image. His superpower was boundless love and action. It shows the incredible impression he left.

And it wasn't just a feeling that night. The very next morning, after the usual traditional pinches and wrestling,

Back to routine.

They did the yard work. But then, like it was the most natural thing in the world, they drove back to that bereaved family's house.

They did what?

To mow their lawn and pull weeds. Just routine for Grandpa, like the sun coming up. And Ron admits that day pulling weeds was fun for first and last time. It was total immersion and joyful service.

But Ron's understanding kept growing, didn't it? Even years later. Oh yeah. He talks about getting his driver's license at 16. Huge deal, right? Freedom. First thing he does, drives 180 miles to Vernal to see Grandpa and Grandma.

That says a lot about where he felt drawn.

He felt life couldn't get any better than being there and the welcome he got.

What was that like?

Like I was the most important visitor they ever entertained. Like angels backlit by the light of heaven. He remembers Grandpa chewing on his bottom lip like he was trying to blink back a potential tear. Just pure love.

That subtle gesture speaks volumes.

He made those trips often. Just told his mom headed to Vernal. Instant okay. They knew the positive influence.

And Grandpa kept encouraging him, right? Even about careers.

Yeah. Almost begged Ron to become a doctor, chiropractor, or dentist and move to Vernal. Wanted him close. Even offered to help pay for school.

Trying to fulfill his own deferred dream through his grandson perhaps continuing the care.

But the true full scope of Grandpa's life that hit Ron much later. Decades later, the archives discovery.

Exactly. June of 2025, Ron decides to write stories about Grandpa's service. Starts digging in the Vernal Express Archives, the University of Utah Library archives

and finds

Just an overwhelming amount. Over 600 articles specifically about Alvin Edwin Weeks, plus scores of photographs he'd never seen.

600 articles. Wow.

Ron said he just yelled out loud in the archives. For heaven's sake, Grandpa, when did you have time to eat, sleep, work, spend time with Grandma, and raise your three children?

That's the question. Isn't it?

How did you have time for 13 mischief makers called grandchildren? How did you have time to visit as often as you did? How did you have time for me?

It speaks to a life just packed to the brim with doing for others

and finding all that documented proof. It just validated everything Ron remembered from being eight years old that night in 1964.

That night of Christlike service and benevolence like never before or since.

Yeah. It wasn't just memory. It was real and on a scale even Ron hadn't grasped.

It really makes you think how our understanding of someone can just deepen and expand over time, revealing the true magnitude of their impact. The archives didn't just confirm the memories, they amplified them, made a personal story into something much bigger.

What a life.

Alvin Edwin Weeks, unbounded service, deep family love, profound spirituality, and that great sense of humor. He really did give us a handbook on service.

Yeah. His life was about purpose, self-denial in the best sense, true nobility, sitting still was a waste of time for him.

Those selfless acts, they warmed his soul and set him free. Allowed him to be joyful despite the burdens.

And the source says he went to bed tired, achy, and happy, wanting to do it all again tomorrow. That's the sign of a life truly well-lived, isn't it?

It really is. So, as you, listening, think about Grandpa Weeks caring for family, serving his town, living his faith with that twinkle in his eye, maybe ask yourself, what does service mean in my life?

Does it have to be huge things or are those quiet, consistent acts, the loving haircut, the spontaneous groceries, just showing up. Are those the most profound?

In a world that often measures us by what we get, what we accumulate,  
right? Wealth, fame, stuff.

Alvin Weeks showed that real richness, real heroism is in what you give.

So maybe the real superhero measure isn't the cape. Maybe it's just having a heart hardwired to think of others first. Willing to serve without keeping score. 24/7.

So here's the final thought to mull over. What seemingly small act of service maybe inspired by Grandpa Weeks could you do today? Something that might leave that kind of Superman impression on someone's heart.

—End of Podcast, Alvin Edwin Weeks: A Life of Unbounded Service - Long Version