



Husband **Father**
Healer Soon-to-be Grandfather
Gentleman Rancher
Collector **Author**

Malin Prupas

'71 (premed), '73M.D.

I moved to the Nevada side of south Lake Tahoe as a young boy. Growing up at the lake taught me about the outdoors. The mountains, the lake, the snow!

We were fortunate at Tahoe, but we still had to work. My parents had a great work ethic. My wife and I like to think we passed it on to our kids. You aren't born with a work ethic. You learn it. Then you teach it.

My dad was a big fan of the "Donkey and the Carrot" fable. There's always one more thing you can do. An A minus in school made me try a little harder. My youngest son is starting his career and I just emailed him and asked, "Did you make one extra phone call today?"

In the early part of our marriage, my wife, Barbara, was there for me when I was in school. As I became established in my career, she wanted to go back and grow hers. She got her doctorate in psychology recently. Now I get dinner ready since she has long days at the hospital. I couldn't have done it without her emotional and physical support. I don't think most people can do it all alone.

When I went through my medical training, I wasn't the top student in my class. I got through because of hard work. When it was

time to go into medical practice, I wanted to know one area particularly well. I didn't want to be a generalist. So for me the best thing was to master one area. It fit my personality and needs better. In retrospect, it was a good decision and I'm really happy that I became a rheumatologist.

It's important to start off on the right foot. My wife and I think we're good role models. We set standards. I think continuing to be a father to my daughter (who is about to have my first grandchild) will be the best way I can help her be a better mother.

I want to teach my granddaughter to be a good citizen. I want her to want to learn as much as she can and be close to her family. Sometimes I harp on my kids. I often end phone conversations with, "Have you talked to your brother and/or sister?" I hope my granddaughter communicates well and keeps family close.

I learned that there are different ways to give your wife presents. When my children were young, I had the idea to wake my wife up and surprise her with a lamb on Mother's Day. She wasn't too thrilled at first, but for years after, we enjoyed raising sheep as a family.

Living in the county, my kids were busy and

it kept them out of trouble. Seeing lambs born and then having the responsibility of caring for them and later letting let them go... those are important lessons.

Working hard isn't the most important thing. There's more to life than work. There has to be a happy balance. I do believe that more as I get older, especially after I have had my own medical illnesses. You have to stop and enjoy the little things.

I think it's a necessity to give back for the education you obtain. I never thought I would be in a position to give back. Now that I am, it is important. I owe a lot of my success to my education at the University.

It was hard for me to understand why Barbara wanted to get her doctorate later in life. Now I see that it's so rewarding and exciting for her and in turn, for me. We both continue to love to learn.

I don't think, aside from our faith, that there is anything more important in our community than the University. If we didn't have the University, Reno wouldn't be as exciting and northern Nevada's future wouldn't be as bright. Education is what makes life better for all of us.

From a conversation with Elizabeth Welsh '99 (health education) in May 2008. Prupas, 59, graduated from the School of Medicine in 1973 and was a member of the charter class. He is currently a rheumatology consultant at the Arthritis Center of Reno, which he opened in 2001. He has authored two books on arthritis, Learn about your Arthritis and Arthritis Made Simple. Barbara Prupas earned her master's in counseling and guidance at Nevada in 1986.

Photo by Theresa Danna-Douglas