

My Spencerian Milestone

Jerry Krase (May 09, 2020)



Remembering my first grandchild in a time of plague reminds me of how grateful I should be for what I've had, and still have.

My first grandchild Spencer Rocco was born when I was much younger. Now he is graduating remotely from Fairfield University's School of Engineering with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Computer Science, and with Minors in Mathematics and Sociology. I don't know why my daughter Kristin named him Spencer.

It certainly wasn't for Herbert Spencer who developed the idea of Social Darwinism in the 19th Century, which continues to haunt the world today. I do know that Spencer's middle name is Rocco



to honor his father John Letizia's dad. Spencer's roots are deep in Calabria, Campania, Sicily, and Central Europe whose descendants have struggled not only to survive beyond Herbert's expectations, but to prosper and excel here in America.

Like the rest of his family, knowing where he came from has given him a sense of what he owes to all those who are struggling today. I am very proud of him not only for his excellence in scholarship but for his unselfish concern for others. Below is something I wrote about him some time ago for The Brooklyn Fee Press and, except for the diaper bit, captures my feelings for him today.

Thanks Giving 1998 by Jerry Krase

Every year I receive in the mail several "Dear Friends: Here's how our year went." letters. One of the heretofore unmentioned minuses of the personal home computer revolution is the excruciatingly increasing length of these tomes. Don't worry I am not going to bore you with one of my own Year that Was because, for the most part, for me 1998 was the pits. That is until July 3rd when Spencer Rocco came into my life. It is amazing how a few pounds of person can change your whole perspective on life. Everything I now plan to do I think of in terms of how it will seem to my grandchild. Grandpa Jerry is trying to recapture the rush of knowing, as I once did, that my own children thought I was more special than anything ever.

When Spencer Rocco comes to the house I put on my tape of Andrea Bocelli's Romanza and lip sync the songs. Not only does he think I have a great voice, to him I am bi-lingual like his paternal grandmother Violetta. Sitting on my head, Spencer Rocco thinks that he is the world's tallest person and that his grandpa can make him fly. Spencer Rocco has no idea what it is that I am saying to him yet it makes him laugh all the same. Most of what I say are things that his mother and my wife don't appreciate, but when we are blowing bubbles and giving each other raspberry greetings what they think really doesn't matter very much. I have yet to change his diaper.

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