

Tales from the Road

By Helen Marketti



A love of travel, a desire to be in the middle of the action, a heart for meeting people and delivering the news and events all have made Neil Zurcher's career span of nearly fifty years all worthwhile.

His latest book, "Tales from the Road" (Gray Publishing) is a memoir that will have readers laughing, pausing and reflecting. Many memorable moments are in this book where Neil was indeed in the thick of things on many occasions. For starters, Neil was part of a day-long high-speed police chase that started in Cleveland and ended in Kentucky, he was tear-gassed at an anti-war protest and almost trapped inside the Ohio Penitentiary during a riot. He tripped and fell on President Gerald Ford, met Prince Charles in a bathroom, raced on an elephant, got lost in the middle of Lake Erie, rode in jet boats, jet fighters and a World War II tank. If that is not enough, he has also been an ordained minister of

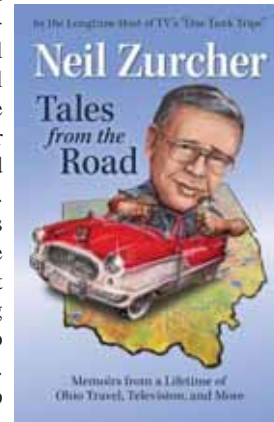
the Free Spirit Association Church and has officiated several weddings, one of which included a carnival couple who got married on a merry-go-round.

Many will remember Neil Zurcher for his "One Tank Trip" segments on Channel 8 News where he traveled far and wide through out Ohio and beyond to bring viewers interesting stories, events and places to go.

"I started out realizing several years ago that the job I had put me in the middle of some pretty interesting things," said Neil. "So, I started making notes, journal entries and so forth to try and keep track of these things. I started carrying a camera with me, too. I had nothing more in mind, really than to just have a record of these events in some sort of file. David Gray, my publisher, approached me about two or three years ago and asked me to consider a memoir since I had done the other books about traveling. (Ohio Oddities, Strange Tales from Ohio and Ohio Road Trips) I didn't really think people would care that much or be interested. My publisher suggested that I write a memoir for my family if nothing else so I finally agreed to do it. The response to the book has been great. It has been received very well."

Neil continues, "I started out being a reporter and then one thing lead to another. Eventually stories started repeating themselves. While every event is different, there are still similarities between them such as when covering political meetings, tornadoes and things like that. I wanted to do something else. So when I was able to do the travel series, "One Tank Trips", it was fun. I was able to go somewhere each week and really enjoyed it. It wasn't planned that way; it just kind of happened and I'm overjoyed that it did."

Today, Neil is working on updating a book of his, Ohio Oddities. "I'm trying to get new material added to make a second book. I still write a travel column (One Tank Trips) for The Cleveland Plain Dealer. There always seems to be something that I am working on. Ohio has so much going on. I need to keep exploring."



Neil has learned a lot on his journey through Ohio, "It may sound simplistic but Ohio is truly a great place to live. Some people wouldn't dream of vacationing in the same state they live in. There is a lot here with the lakes, the islands, the rivers, the history and culture. The best part of what I have done is making friends with so many people. No matter where I go-I know someone. I know there are still places I haven't even discovered yet in Ohio. I haven't explored South West Ohio too much, yet. This all has given me a wonderful career."

"Tales from the Road: Memoirs from a Lifetime of Ohio Travel, Television and More" (soft cover/\$14.95/296 pages). Available at Northeast Ohio Bookstores and on line from Amazon.com

Read a sample chapter from the book:

<http://www.grayco.com/cleveland/books/10645/samplechapter.html>

Visit Neil Zurcher's blog: <http://www.one-tanktrips.com>

Photos are courtesy of Gray Publishing.

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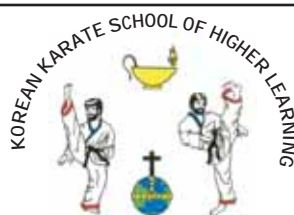
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