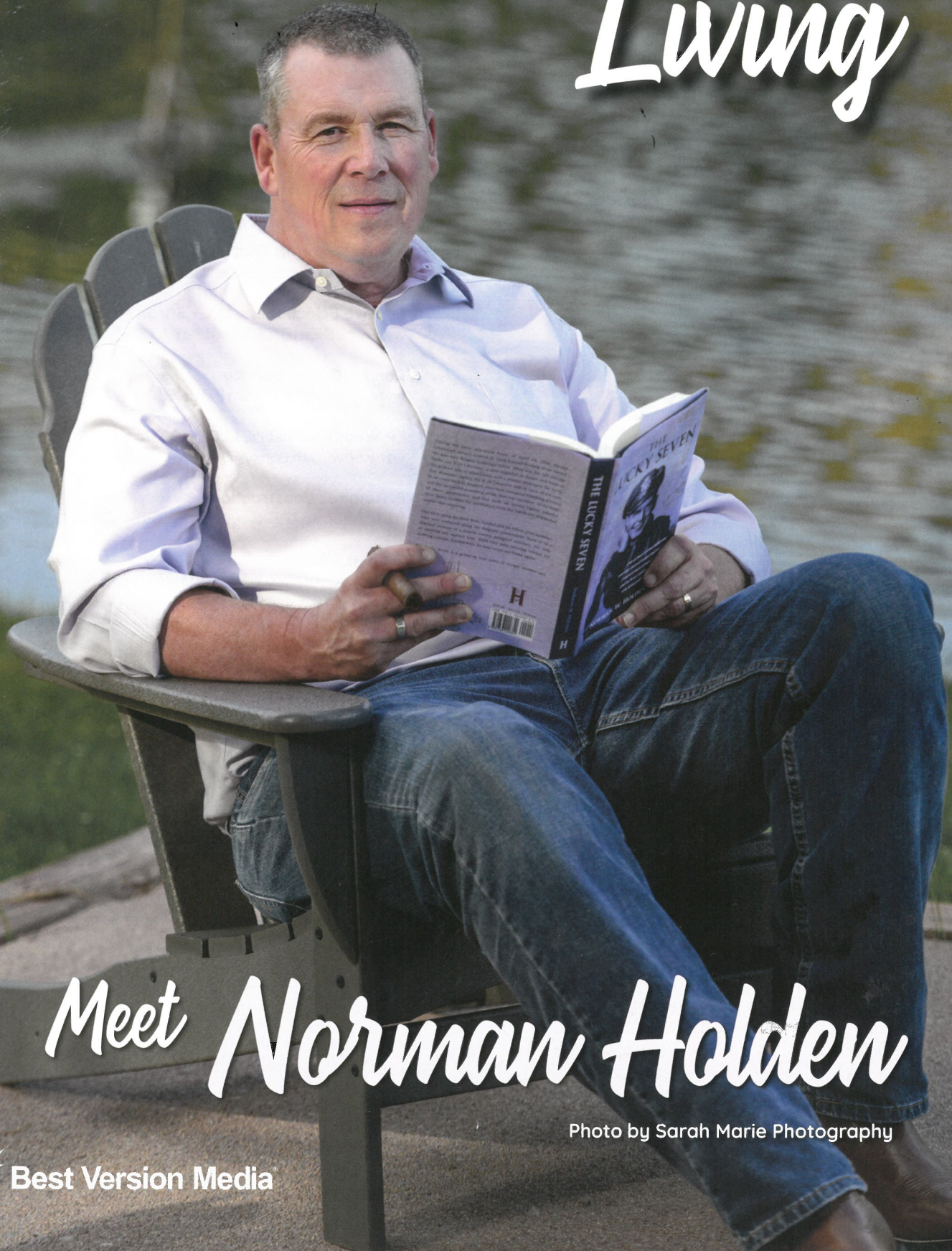


September 2023

CONIFER

Living



Meet Norman Holden

Photo by Sarah Marie Photography



Best Version Media

Meet Norman Holden

By Katie Wray

Photos by Sarah Marie Photography

Twenty-one years ago, Norman and Jean made the decision to relocate from central Florida to Conifer, Colorado. At that time, Norman was working in Miami, but the couple was determined not to raise their family in the busy southern Florida environment. When the opportunity arose to transfer to Colorado, they seized it and embarked on a new chapter in their lives.

Their arrival in Colorado was met with an extraordinary weather event: the infamous 100-year snowstorm that struck in March 2003. Over the course of two and a half days, an astonishing six and a half feet of snow blanketed the region. The heavy snowfall left them snowed in for an entire week. Due to the challenging circumstances, Norman's wife, Jean, may have briefly questioned the wisdom of their decision to move to the lofty elevation of 8,300 feet in the foothills of the Rockies. However, as time passed, they acclimated to their new surroundings, embracing the beauty and uniqueness of life in the mountains.

Their kids, Emily, Owen and Jackson, lived the childhood that their parents sought (and moved across the country!) for. All of the kids went from The Little White Schoolhouse, through to Conifer High School. They all graduated from Colorado State University.

Today, their oldest, Emily, is living and working in Champaign, IL. Their twin sons are both residing in Fort Collins. Jackson is working in the computer industry; Owen is serving as a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army Reserve.

During their time in Conifer, the Holdens have had cats, goldfish, chickens and two labradoodles. They cherish the local wildlife too, with red-tail hawks, turkeys, mule deer, elk, black bears, red foxes, and even moose gracing their property. This year, they were thrilled to witness a mama moose and her calf.

Now a long time Colorado resident, Norman enjoys outdoor activities like camping, hiking, skiing, and riding his Harley on twisting back roads. He's an avid reader, particularly drawn to history and nonfiction, reading a couple of books each month. Years ago, his love for reading morphed into a passion to write. Over the past decade, Norman has honed his writing skills in various professional capacities, including technical writing and formal correspondence. Writing serves as a means to better organize his thoughts and offers him a creative outlet. However, he observes that authentic written communication is becoming a lost art, with much of it succumbing to the shortcuts and slang of modern day electronic communication.

Despite the rise of AI tools like ChatGPT, Norman remains committed to writing as a personal passion. His first book, *Do Better!*, was inspired by his desire to connect with his teenage daughter in the age of social media. Through daily affirmations and heartfelt messages, he found a way to bridge the gap and eventually decided to share this journey with other parents, publishing the book in April 2021.

Norman's second book, *The Lucky Seven*, holds a family origin and recounts the incredible true story of his father-in-law's experiences as a B-24 bomber pilot in World War II. Shot down over Belgium during their first bombing mission, the crew's fate rested on the good citizens on the ground who aided their escape. After years of research, Norman felt compelled to share this remarkable tale, and the book was released in June 2023.

Currently, Norman is working on his third book, *For Love of Country*, with the hope of publishing it in November 2023. With a genuine passion for writing, he continues to explore and express his creativity through the written word.

Norman was born and raised in a small town in northern New Hampshire. He met Jean during the autumn of 1990 in Concord while he was studying architectural engineering at NHTI, Concord's Community College. Jean, a recent transplant to the state, was working at a local tavern, and Norman's roommate, who happened to be a waitress there, suggested that he meet her.

Following his roommate's advice, Norman ventured down to the pub and soon found himself entwined in a love story that would last for decades. The two fell for each other, and in August of 1992, they tied the knot in The Woodlands, Texas. They recently celebrated their 31st wedding anniversary.

Continued on page 8

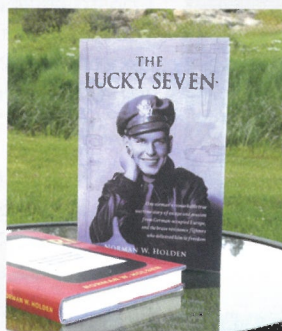
Get a sneak peak into Norman's books below!



Do Better!: How One Father Gained Wisdom from Texting his Daughter

What father hasn't struggled to communicate with his teenage daughter? Most will say it is not easy on a good day. And with the advent of social media, this undertaking only becomes more complex—a harsh reality, leaving many fathers perplexed and wondering what to do next.

In *Do Better!*, Norman W. Holden (a.k.a. Norm) is the dad that takes the road less traveled. Searching for the solution that will make the difference, this father attempts to bridge the communication gap with his daughter using the very same technology that is designed to distract. After employing a daily texting regimen for more than a year, Norm discovers that the answers aren't as simple as he expected. His unique approach to communicating with his daughter delivers a journey of personal introspection and shared wisdom from a father's perspective.



The Lucky Seven: One airman's remarkable true wartime story of escape and evasion from German-occupied Europe, and the brave resistance fighters who delivered him to freedom.

During the early afternoon hours of April 24, 1944, Second Lieutenant James J. Goebel, Jr. finds himself floating alone toward the war-torn Belgian landscape below. What was his safe passage home, his B-24 Liberator, is now engulfed in flames and hurls to the ground only to report back with a distant thud upon the earth. Just moments earlier, the B-24 and its crew of ten were en route back to England after their inaugural bombing mission and the successful pounding of the Nazi war machine. At the hand of sheer randomness and bad luck, an enemy fighter selected their heavy bomber for retribution from the 230 B-24s dispatched earlier that morning. Forced to jump for their lives, Goebel and his fellow crew members were now scattered along the Belgium countryside. Soon to be a downed airmen in a hostile enemy occupied territory, the odds of survival are against him. With two men running toward his drifting canopy, Goebel fears he may never see home again.

The Lucky Seven is a gripping true story of escape, evasion and resistance.

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Their 30-year-long journey together held numerous treasured memories, but the most indelible ones were woven into their time spent in Colorado during numerous family camping trips. They formed a tightknit group with four other families, all with children around the same age as theirs. These camping escapades were marked by evenings around the campfire, stories, laughter, s'mores, and the warmth of adult beverages, forging a bond that would endure for a lifetime.

For nearly forty years, Norman dedicated himself to the concrete construction sector. He began his career as a laborer and carpenter, gradually climbing the ranks to take on more significant responsibilities as a superintendent and project manager. Over time, he continued to progress and eventually became an executive leader, holding the esteemed positions

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Norman's Favorites

Restaurant :For a nice dining experience, Twin Forks Tavern. For a pizza and beer, Snowpack Taproom & Pizzeria.

Coffee shop: My wife makes the best coffee.

Local gem: The VFW Post #12009 Country Breakfast

Sports team:Denver Broncos

Vacation: Camping in the western states

Holiday tradition: The gift of "unlucky" scratch tickets to my wife.

Most Frequented Local Business: Mountain High Cleaners

of Vice President and Territorial General Manager at Baker Construction Enterprises, the nation's largest specialty concrete subcontractor. Since joining the company he has contributed his expertise to projects across the United States, Canada, and even ventured on a brief assignment in the Middle East. Norman's commitment to the company continues.

Despite his busy professional life, Norman never stopped seeking personal growth and development. In 2016, he made the decision to return to higher education and achieved a significant milestone by earning his MBA from the prestigious University of Denver - Daniels College of Business. This academic pursuit complemented his years of practical experience, equipping him with a well-rounded skill set to excel in his leadership role within the construction industry.

A down-to-earth individual, Norman has found that he has abundant interest, passions and reasons to be joyful. "I think it's important to share the fact that we all have hidden talents and it's our job to discover and attempt to master said talents," he smiled.

On Wednesday, September 27th at 5:00 PM, Norman will be a featured guest on *Conifer Podcast*. Listen to the livestream interview on www.ConiferRadio.com, learn more about his current and upcoming book and his life in Conifer.

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