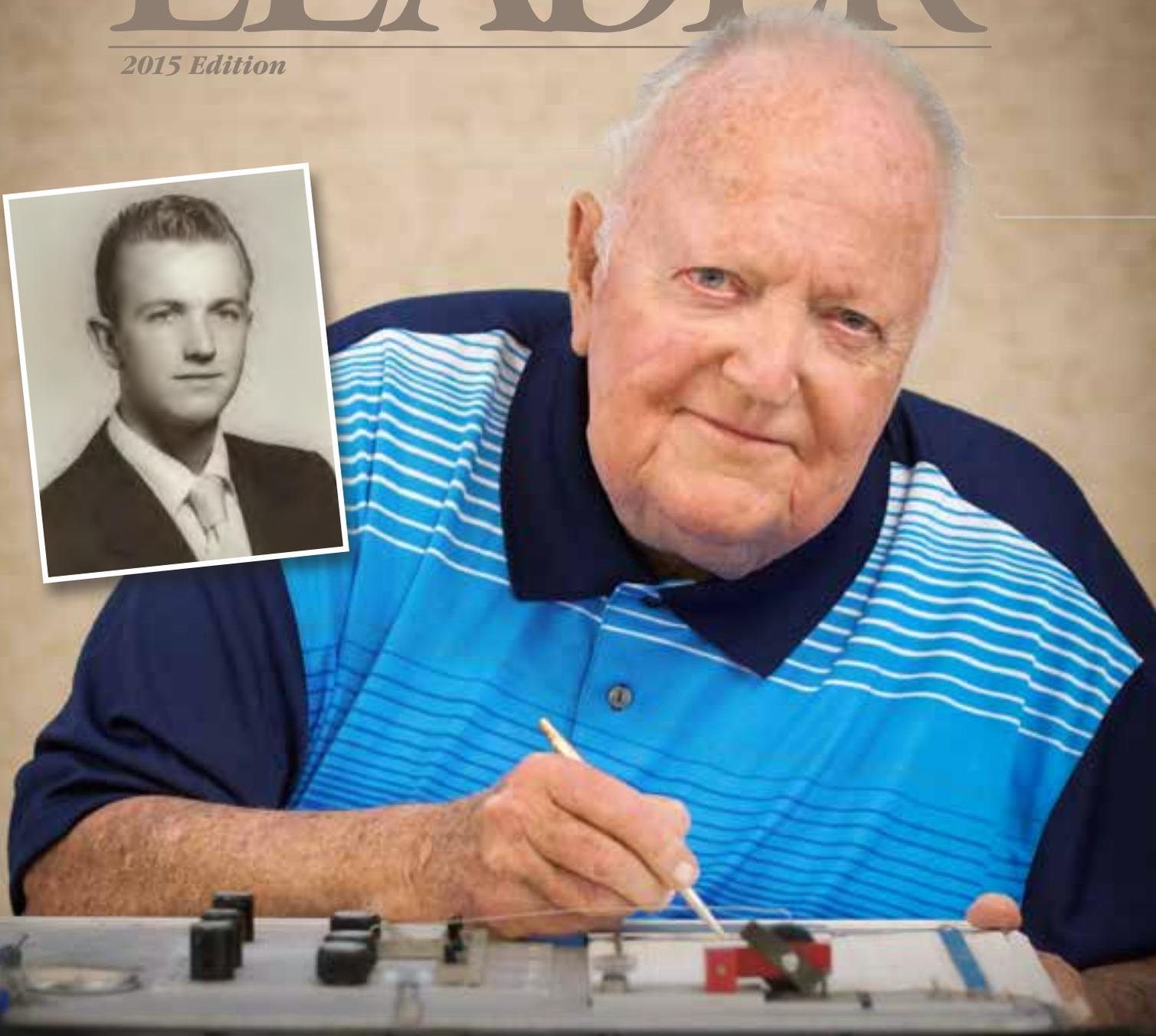


LIFE CARE
LEADER

2015 Edition



Remarkable Vision

Gwendolyn McAlister

A Coach's Legacy

Bill Freeman

**It Stems From
the Truth**

Richard Howell



CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

A man happened upon a limousine broken down along the roadway.

"I can't figure out what's wrong," the driver confessed, so the fellow took a look under the hood.

He quickly spotted the trouble, and in a few minutes the engine was running again.

The driver offered to pay him, but the man refused, saying he was just glad to help out. As he turned to start back to town, the rear window of the limo opened.

"Thank you very much for your help," the passenger called out. "How can I repay you?"

Looking inside, the man recognized a wealthy banker from town. Again, he refused payment, but asked one favor: "Could you send my wife some flowers? She'd be thrilled."

"Consider it done," the banker replied, then asked the man for his address. They parted company, and the man only half expected to ever hear from the banker again.

But the next day, a truck pulled up to the man's house with flowers for his wife.



Attached to the bouquet was a note that read:

"You're lucky to be married to such a caring person. When I offered to pay him for his act of kindness, he thought only of you."

And there was this postscript: "Although he refused any reward, I've canceled the mortgage on your house. Such virtue should be rewarded."

Relationships matter. They formed the platform upon which this company was built and are key to its ongoing success. And the twin building blocks of good relationships are kindness and trust.

Robert Louis Stevenson, the Scottish novelist, poet and essayist, considered that "the

essence of love is kindness." It is a virtue, and is shown in behavior marked by ethical characteristics, a pleasant disposition and concern for others.

And isn't that what our work in Life Care and Century Park is all about?

Edgar Albert Guest, known as "the people's poet," described kindness this way:

*One never knows
How far a word of
kindness goes;*

*One never sees
How far a smile of
friendship flees.*

*Down, through the years,
The deed forgotten reappears.*

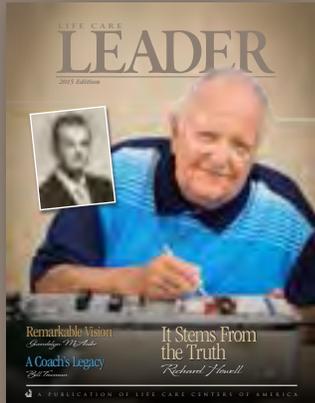
Each day offers many opportunities to extend acts of kindness to others – by what we do professionally and personally. Let's approach them with a renewed energy. 🌱

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Forrest L. Preston".

FORREST L. PRESTON
Chairman

LIFE CARE
LEADER  2015 Edition

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Life Care Leader is published annually by Life Care Centers of America for our residents, the corporate family and friends of Life Care.

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Photo by Vick Laney

REMARKABLE

Vision

By Ivey Lawrence

The speaker on stage started to play Nintendo Wii bowling while her captivated audience watched. She faced the screen, drew the controller back... STRIKE! The audience applauded. The speaker drew back the controller again... STRIKE! Members of the crowd wondered, could she do it again? For a third time, the woman on stage drew back her controller... STRIKE! The entire auditorium erupted in applause because the completely blind speaker, Gwendolyn Denise McAlister, had just bowled with more precision than most of the sighted audience members could. McAlister gave more than a physical display of her unmatched independence to the Knoxville, Tennessee, audience; she began her time on stage by sharing her remarkable story.

McAlister was born in Chattanooga, Tennessee, with anophthalmia, an extremely rare disease that caused her to be born without eyeballs.

While she may have been born with physical challenges, she was adopted into an extremely loving family as a child. Herman and Willie Williamson took her in as their own. Soon after adoption, McAlister's mother went

quickly to work getting her into Tennessee School for the Blind in Nashville. Willie knew that her daughter needed to learn braille if she was going to have any chance of living a full life.

Her mother's desire came to pass. McAlister, now 61 years old, has taken advantage of every opportunity that has come her way, making for an adventurous and robust life.

McAlister has played a myriad of roles in her life. The common thread running through them all is her deep understanding of the vision that God gave her to love others at all times.

Teacher

As an 8-year-old social butterfly, McAlister was happy being busy at Tennessee School for the Blind. The only piece missing from her life was being with her mother. She decided that if she was going to take on the task of learning

braille, she wanted her mother to be able to understand it, too. She started teaching her mother to read and write braille. Soon, it became their own special way of communicating.

"Oh, I just loved it," said McAlister. "I could write to her about anything I wanted, and no one at home knew what I was saying. It was our secret."

Encourager

Life after school took McAlister to Morristown, Tennessee, where she began living in complete independence. She started working at Lions Volunteer Blind Industries. The company employed visually impaired individuals to perform many different tasks, including McAlister's new position of sewing camouflage helmet covers for the U.S. Military.

"I sewed up a few fingers when I started," McAlister said through a laugh. "But I would just yell 'Ouch!' and keep going. I was determined to get the hang of it."

A new employee, Susan Fields, started working beside McAlister on the day that Fields found out she was legally blind. While Fields still had a limited amount of sight, it wouldn't be long until she only saw darkness.





“I was really struggling with it,” said Fields. “Gwen kept encouraging me to keep going and reminded me that I could still be the person I’ve always been. Watching Gwen sew was such a blessing. Seeing a completely blind person sew a perfectly straight line on two pieces of material made such a great impact on me. Not a day goes by that I don’t think of Gwen.”

McAlister’s encouragement went beyond those in the visually impaired community. Her close friend Darlene LaPlue has been encouraged by McAlister through the biggest storms of life and in the smallest moments.

McAlister has long been a fan of Joni Eareckson Tada, a quadriplegic, cancer survivor and Christian author. McAlister began attending the Knoxville, Tennessee, Joni and Friends camps with LaPlue in 2003. The goal of the camps is to rejuvenate individuals with special needs, and their families, through a variety of Christian encouragement and fun activities.

“I started taking her to Joni and Friends camps in the summer,” LaPlue reminisced

with a smile. “And who made it to the top of the rock climbing wall? Gwen. When it was my turn, I was shaking as I climbed the wall, but I remember her yelling from the bottom, ‘Come on, you can do it!’”

Inspirer

Don Britton, McAlister’s boss for 25 years as a seamstress, thought back to the times when one of his employees would have a really challenging day.

“We would ask Gwen to sing,” said Britton. “[By the end of the song,] there wasn’t a dry eye in the house!”

When McAlister first went to school in Nashville as a girl, she took piano lessons. Eventually, it proved to be too difficult a task without sight, so she stopped. She recalled later hearing a friend play the piano and wishing she could play. She asked God to help her with the challenge, and she soon began teaching herself how to play. Since then, she’s sung and played in many churches throughout Morristown, inspiring others with her happy disposition and praise to God.

“Hearing a blind woman sing, ‘What a day that will be, when my Jesus I shall see. And I look upon His face, the one who saved me by His grace,’ makes you stop and think,” said LaPlue. “Just one encounter with her changes your perspective.”

McAlister didn’t just sing well-known hymns. She also sang and recorded her own music. The cassette tape with her recordings from 1998 was eventually turned into a CD, and it continues to inspire those who listen.

Friend

As McAlister reached her late 50s, she became extremely sick, suffering several strokes and the deterioration of her kidneys between 2010 and 2011.

Throughout her most intense time of sickness, McAlister’s room at the hospital was flooded with friends. McAlister has been just as faithful to her friends during times of sickness and bereavement. While her good friend Lisa Duncan wept through the loss of her baby, McAlister sat by her unwaveringly at the hospital and wept with her.

While her words and actions have elicited friendship in times of serious trouble, McAlister’s



Photo by Vick Laney

life has also been constantly full of laughter and joy.

On a trip to Kentucky with LaPlue, McAlister and two of her blind friends from work stopped at a hog farm to hold baby pigs. McAlister just couldn't understand why the baby pig she was holding was squealing uncontrollably. The pigs that her friends were holding were being perfectly quiet. LaPlue, the only sighted person in the barn, burst into laughter when she saw that McAlister was holding her pig upside down.

"Oh how I loved that baby pig!" McAlister said as she laughed until she cried remembering that hilarious instance.

"Everywhere she goes, she leaves a trail of friends and adoring fans," said LaPlue.

Enthusiast

Since McAlister first began attending Joni and

Friends camps, she has adored the inspirational life that Tada has led, and always dreamt of meeting her.

In 2011, Tada came to an anniversary party for the Joni and Friends Knoxville office. Even though this was in the midst of McAlister's failing health, LaPlue knew they had to get McAlister

"Just one encounter with her changes your perspective."

to the event. A team of health professionals and friends drove McAlister to Knoxville. She listened intently to Tada's speech celebrating life and the ministry of the local office. At the end of the event, the two were brought together, and Tada posed a question to McAlister that only a person with a disability would understand.

"Gwen, would you like to see my face?" asked Tada.

McAlister reached out and placed her hands on Tada's face. Even though McAlister struggled to find words, the two of them cried as they shared in that special moment.

LaPlue told Tada that it was McAlister who recently spoke and bowled at the Knoxville Joni and Friends fundraiser, using her story to raise more money for the office than they had ever raised.

Tada still sends notes to ask about McAlister, including a recent congratulatory note when McAlister was selected as 2014's Resident of the Year at her home since 2010, Life Care Center of Morristown.

"Oh, Gwen, I am so proud of Jesus in you, and this honor

does not surprise me at all," wrote Tada. "Thank you for the simple, humble and winsome way you shine the light of Jesus Christ to everyone you meet. I know I sensed that when I met you years ago."

Messenger

McAlister still shares a smile and tells everyone she encounters that she loves them. Whether it's her roommate at Life Care Center of Morristown or someone sitting beside her in dialysis, it doesn't take long for her to strike up a conversation about how thankful she is for God. She constantly reminds everyone she knows that He loves them.

Through a lifetime of physical darkness, the loss of many loved ones and her failing health, McAlister finds joy and happiness in every situation.

"I just can't help it," said McAlister. "I've got to talk about Jesus! He's helped me through everything."

While most people she meets don't understand why she has joy, McAlister believes that God's vision for her life has been to love everyone.

"Joni has a quote that says it best, 'Sometimes God allows what He hates to accomplish what He loves,'" said LaPlue. "I think God hates Gwen's blindness, but He has allowed it to show others His love through Gwen in such a strong way." 🙌





Photo by Vick Laney

• CHARLES MCKENZIE •



A WORK IN PROGRESS

By Jared Powers

Many significant events occurred during the Civil Rights Movement in America – the Supreme Court’s *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* decision, the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. – but many other small parts were played which may have been just as important in the battle for equal rights.

One such part was lived out by Charles McKenzie, a school teacher in Chattanooga, Tennessee, who lives his life without regard to color. He lives his life as a ministry.

“Situations would arise with students, and yes, there would be fights sometimes,” explained McKenzie. “I had a co-worker

who would ask me, invariably, if there was a fight, ‘What color was it?’ and

my answer to her would be, ‘I don’t know. I don’t see color. All I know is, it was two students fighting.’”

Born on Aug. 14, 1937, to Carl and Judie McKenzie, just outside Chattanooga, McKenzie was the sixth of nine children.

“We were a very poor family, but we had lots of love,” McKenzie stated. “My father worked, but my mom stayed home and cared for the children. She had nine of them – it was a full-time job.”

McKenzie’s father worked as a laborer, even moving to Detroit for a time when work was scarce in Chattanooga.

“Much of my childhood was working at church and helping people in the community,”

McKenzie said. “Sometimes, if a person in our church had a death in the family and the clerk would go to their house to see what she could do to help them, I would go along with her and find out what she did and help write up whatever it was to be written up. As I got older, it fell to me. When anybody in my community died, they called. ‘Charles, will you come and help us write up whatever needs to be written up?’ And I did that from a child – 9 or 10 – until 70-something.”

Booker T. Washington School was the only school in the county McKenzie could attend as a black student, and with parents pushing him to be educated, he attended first through 12th grades there.

McKenzie graduated from Booker T. Washington School in 1956 and was the third student speaker during commencement,

chosen by the faculty. Martin Luther King Sr. was the memorable commencement speaker that day.

A high school education was not enough for McKenzie, and, perhaps spurred on by the words of King, he started at Tennessee Agricultural & Industrial State University, now known as Tennessee State University, in Nashville that fall. He was the first member of his family to go to college.

"I didn't quite know what to expect," McKenzie explained. "I went to Tennessee State University sight unseen – didn't know if I was going to be able to go or not. It was over into July before I started putting forth the efforts to register, get in everything that I needed to get in, find somewhere to live – the whole bit. But, when school opened, I was there."

With a major in elementary education, McKenzie graduated from Tennessee State in 1960.

Upon returning to Chattanooga, McKenzie was ready to begin a career. He applied to Hamilton County Schools as well as Chattanooga Public Schools.

"Hamilton County had very few positions because schools were segregated at that time," McKenzie recalled. "We had a few schools, but the teachers who got those positions stayed in them, for the most part."

However, the Chattanooga Public School System did have an opening.

"I had applied with the city schools and was called for an interview," recalled McKenzie. "I was hired that day. The assistant superintendent who interviewed me said he didn't know where I would be, but I had a job."

The job ended up being at a satellite location of Howard Elementary School.

"I had a combination



fourth and fifth grade [class], and I would go home almost every day with a headache," McKenzie said. "It was a little school; my classroom was in the basement. They did not have a cafeteria, so the children would wash the trays in my classroom because that's where the sink was. They would be over there slopping around washing trays and all, and I'm over here trying to hold class."

In the first few years of McKenzie's teaching career, he was moved around by the school district a few times. With each transfer, he grew as a teacher and took on more responsibilities. He taught for three years at Clara Carpenter School and was then transferred to East Fifth Street School to teach sixth grade.

The next year, McKenzie

taught at Riverside High School while also serving as a vocational counselor and chairman of the special education department. His love of knowledge never ceased, and



he continued to learn all he could about many topics, including religion.

"I was interested in learning about the Catholic Church, not necessarily that I was going to affiliate," said McKenzie, who grew up Baptist.

Waking up at 7:30 for Mass every Sunday morning and helping out with the offering allowed McKenzie an inside look at something he didn't fully understand at the time.

He met Mattie Foster at church. He would discover later that she also worked at Riverside High School.

“I WENT INTO EDUCATION AS A TEACHER, AND I WAS GOING TO TEACH WHEREVER I WENT.”

“She’s Catholic; I’m still Baptist,” McKenzie chuckled. “We clicked, and we have been married a little over 50 years.”

McKenzie and Mattie were married on Saturday, Feb. 27, 1965. The next day, they ate Sunday dinner at her mother’s house, and on Monday, they were both back to Riverside High. There wasn’t money for a honeymoon.

On Nov. 5, 1967, McKenzie and Mattie became the proud parents of a daughter, Carol Anne. The birth of McKenzie’s

School system, eager to comply with the Supreme Court’s ruling, created a committee as a first attempt at desegregation in 1955. The unsuccessful effort ended with a heated argument and an unknown person setting off a tear gas bomb.

Chattanooga schools put off further attempts to desegregate until 1960, when James R. Mapp filed a suit against the school board. This historic lawsuit took 26 years to resolve, but it put the school board back into

the motion and hoped this new tactic would solve the segregation issue for good.

As part of the faculty desegregation efforts, McKenzie was transferred to Brainerd High School, previously an all-white school.

“I went into education as a teacher, and I was going to teach wherever I went,” McKenzie explained. “When they transferred me from Riverside to Brainerd, I knew the situation I was going into, but I wasn’t apprehensive about going in no



daughter heightened his passion for teaching, and he returned to Riverside High with renewed determination to make a difference.

Then came 1971. Although the Supreme Court had declared segregation in public schools as unconstitutional some 16 years earlier, many cities’ attempts at desegregation were met with riots. The Chattanooga Public

action, organizing what would be one of the most peaceful desegregation attempts in a Southern city.

Chattanooga city schools continued to work toward the goal of desegregation, trying many new approaches over the years. Finally, in 1971, a proposal was made to try faculty desegregation. The school board approved

more than going into any other school. Anytime I changed from one school to another, I knew that the rules or working conditions would be a little bit different.”

That first year of faculty desegregation was difficult for the school system. Students tried to incite violence by disturbing classrooms. To prevent his class from being involved, McKenzie

would lock the door and provide a safe environment for his students, informing them, "We aren't going anywhere. We came here to learn. We are going to stay in here, have class and learn."

In January 1972, McKenzie's supervisor clued him in on her plans to retire that year, and she encouraged him to apply for her position. He waited until June, but eventually applied, with a little more prodding from his supervisor.

time. He completed a degree in administration and supervision in 1974, which allowed him to be principal of grades one through nine or seven through 12 or supervisor of instruction for grades one through 12. He was also certified to teach elementary school, special education and sociology.

"I worked with students when I went to classrooms," McKenzie explained. "Not so much with the students as the teachers at that time. But if I went into a school, and I saw a child raise his hand in the classroom and the teacher was working with other students, I would go over and see if I could help that student."

McKenzie never wanted a child to have to wait for the teacher, especially if the answer was very simple.

After working for 30 years in the Chattanooga Public School system, McKenzie retired on July 1, 1990. However, retiring didn't slow him down.

"I got tangled up with so many organizations and all," McKenzie said. "I was always one who would see things through – it had to be done right. People saw that in me. So, everybody wanted me on their team.

"People would tell me, 'You're doing too much. You need to put some of it down. But, don't put us down.'" McKenzie laughed.

McKenzie served his community throughout his professional career and continued doing so even after retirement.

McKenzie worked at the church he had attended since

1986, Second Missionary Baptist Church. He served on the finance committee, the kitchen committee and as a member of the choir, attending almost every funeral and choir event.

Prior to that, he attended Mount Calvary Missionary Baptist Church. He served as membership chairman for the Chattanooga Hamilton County Retired Teachers Association for five years. He also served on the organization's calling committee for the yearly picnic and continues to serve on the necrology committee.

McKenzie was very active in the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, being awarded his chapter's Omega Man of the Year four times and the Fifth District Omega Man of the Year once. He was also very active with the Washington Hills Neighborhood Association, serving as secretary for four years.

As time passed, living at home became more and more difficult for McKenzie and Mattie, even with home health care. In April 2014, they made the decision for him to move to Life Care Center of Hixson, Tennessee.

McKenzie's life story is an important chapter in the racial evolution of Chattanooga. His story may not have been abruptly cut short or been the spark which ignited a bus boycott. But, it's the kind of story that slowly turns the tide of public opinion, a work in progress, a man living his life as a ministry to others.

After all, personal connection is what wins in the end. 🙏



"I knew I had a job still at Brainerd High School if I didn't get that supervisory job," McKenzie explained. "I got a call in August from the personnel director. He said, 'If you are still interested in the position, you have it.'"

McKenzie had already begun pursuit of a master's degree, taking classes in the summer and during his free

Photo by Mike Ridinger



• VELDA HOGABOAM •

WORDS TO LIVE BY



By Leigh Atherton

“It was during the depths of the Depression that I was a child, and there’s not much of a story to be told,” shared Velda Hogaboam.

Reflecting upon her life, which began in July 1923, Hogaboam does, in fact, have quite the story to tell. It begins quietly in the Snake River Canyon of Northern Idaho, during a dark time in America’s past, and unfolds quickly, as most good stories do, into a tale of joy, adversity, learning, loving and reflection.

Hogaboam was the oldest of her multiple siblings and grew up in small-town Culdesac, Idaho.

One of her earliest memories is of sleeping on an open porch with her sister. They would bundle up under handmade quilts made by their mother



and grandmother. Those heavy quilts protected them during Idaho’s long winters. They would often wake up with snow on top of the quilts.

Growing up during the Great Depression was hard, and Hogaboam’s childhood memories are laced with traces of the adversity. However, her memories are also laced with tales of strong family ties and sweet, simple times. Much of her childhood was spent on a large farm owned by her maternal grandparents.

“My dad often said it was questionable whether we would have lived through the Depression had it not been for our relationship with that farm,” said Hogaboam.

Her father, a driver for a local flour mill, was often without work to support his large family. Even though work was scarce, they had plenty of flour because of her dad’s job, and the farm provided almost everything else her family needed, including chicken, eggs, fruits and vegetables.

Hogaboam was taught to value the small things and to not let good things go to waste.

“Grandma would put a skillet on the hot stove with a fire in

Little did she know that her love of spelling would lead to a story she still loves to recount.

it, put the popcorn in there and shake the skillet around,” shared Hogaboam. “You couldn’t hold it still; you had to keep the corn moving in the skillet. If it popped, that was great, and we could eat it. If it didn’t pop, she would put the kernels in the coffee grinder and make cereal. That’s what we would have for breakfast was popcorn run through the coffee grinder and made into cereal.”

One of Hogaboam’s favorite memories happened in school. She was a good student with a special

interest in English and spelling. Little did she know that her love of spelling would lead to a story she still loves to recount.

“When I was in the 7th and 8th grades, I won the Nez Perce County Spelling Bee,” said Hogaboam. “I just spelled naturally, and it wasn’t any big thing for me.”

It was quite the accomplishment, though: Hogaboam was competing with all of the schools in the area. The spelling bees were held at the courthouse and broken into two parts, written and oral.

“And both years, I won all the parts of the spelling bee,” she continued. “My reward was a nickel ice cream cone from the dairy. Which was quite a far reach from the prizes they do now.”

When Hogaboam was 13 years old, she met Merrill Hogaboam.

Her father worked for Merrill’s father, and the two were married four years later, shortly before Hogaboam graduated high school. She fondly remembers that her new husband helped her pick out a beautiful gown to wear to graduation. Graduating with honors, she knew she wanted to attend college at some point, but that would wait as she and Merrill settled down and started their story together.

Merril worked outside the home, while she stayed home



and worked – canning food, caring for a garden and running the farm. Hogaboam’s most important job, however, was mother to their five children: Terry, Merrilee, Corky, Rod and Merrill Jr.

When their oldest son, Terry, was around the age of 12, Merrill came down with polio. He was in the hospital for a month and would suffer some effects of the disease for the rest of his life.

“Guess who became the bread winner of the family?” said Hogaboam. “We had a 12-year-

repairing the washing machine when he was only 12 years old. Hogaboam was raised with a strong sense of family, and it’s a lesson she and Merrill instilled in their children. They all rallied together as Merrill recovered.

The biggest change was that Hogaboam had to find work outside the home while her husband recuperated. She had always wanted to attend college, and the opportunity was about to present itself.

As the library grew, so did Hogaboam’s love for books and the students.

old, a 5-year-old and three in between that. There wasn’t any choice but to do something.”

Life changed after Merrill got polio, and Terry became the man of the house as his dad recovered. Hogaboam was quick to share that Terry was

“I applied for work with the Lapwai School District, and that was the best thing that ever happened to me,” said Hogaboam. “The superintendent, Jack Finch, was beloved by a lot of people and took me under his wing.”

Through Finch’s help and guidance, Hogaboam worked as a secretary and began taking college classes like she had always wanted. Finch would have his daughter fill in so Hogaboam could attend classes.

“He said I had the ability to be an excellent teacher, and he wanted to help me get started,” remembered Hogaboam.

Working hard was natural for Hogaboam, and she was committed to excelling in her studies, just as she did in her role as wife, mother and secretary. She joked she would get a credit any way she could, even attending summer classes for 13 summers straight.

“At that time, you could get a teaching degree after two years of college, and there were lots of teachers out there with



two years of college work,” said Hogaboam. “So I met that goal of two years, but I didn’t start teaching then. I just kept going and going.”

Hogaboam earned her teaching degree and began teaching middle school, but she quickly realized her passion was working in a library. She had always loved to read, and English had been a favorite subject when she was growing up.

“I wanted to teach the kids about a library – how to use a library and what to do with it,” said Hogaboam.

Returning to college, Hogaboam earned a degree in library science.

The school in which Hogaboam worked had burned down and was without a library. Because of this, she was given the opportunity to do what many librarians dream of: create a library from scratch.

“Oh, honey, it was so wonderful,” remembered Hogaboam. “They let me use two or three of the new classrooms

to build my library, which I thought was good of them. I loved teaching, but I loved the library even more.”

As the library grew, so did Hogaboam’s love for books and the students. In fact, the students were her favorite part. She taught all ages, from kindergarteners through 8th grade. Instilling a love of books and reading was always Hogaboam’s goal, but along with that, she wanted to teach her students a respect for the origination of stories. Most good tales came from books, and she always encouraged her students to find the original story and read it before getting sucked into the television or movie version.

Hogaboam had a fulfilling career with many chapters of success and change, and she still loves reading and sharing her love of knowledge with friends and family. These days, her reading choices include many political topics.

“I read everything I can get my hands on about politics. I’m quite well versed when someone comes around and wants to ask about a political question; I’ve got an answer for them!” Hogaboam chuckled.

The family that Merrill and Hogaboam spent so much time nurturing has expanded to include 13 grandchildren, 24 great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild.

Of all the chapters in her story, when asked

about her greatest accomplishment, Hogaboam is quick to share about her five children.

“All five are doing really well, and they’re successful in all sorts of ways,” shared Hogaboam. “I’m really proud of all of them.”

Hogaboam’s four daughters-in-law have always said that she was a hard act to follow as a wife and mother. Hogaboam explained to them that she always demonstrated her love and loyalty to her husband because she had four sons, and she wanted them to have the same love and loyalty when they got married.

Sadly, Merrill passed away after 72 years of marriage. Shortly after his death, Hogaboam moved to Life Care Center of Lewiston, Idaho, where she currently resides.

Hans Christian Andersen sums up the value of one’s stories perfectly: “My life is a lovely story, happy and full of incident.”

Reflecting back through stories she tells, it’s obvious that Hogaboam has, in fact, lived a life worth sharing – a happy life, full of incident. 📖



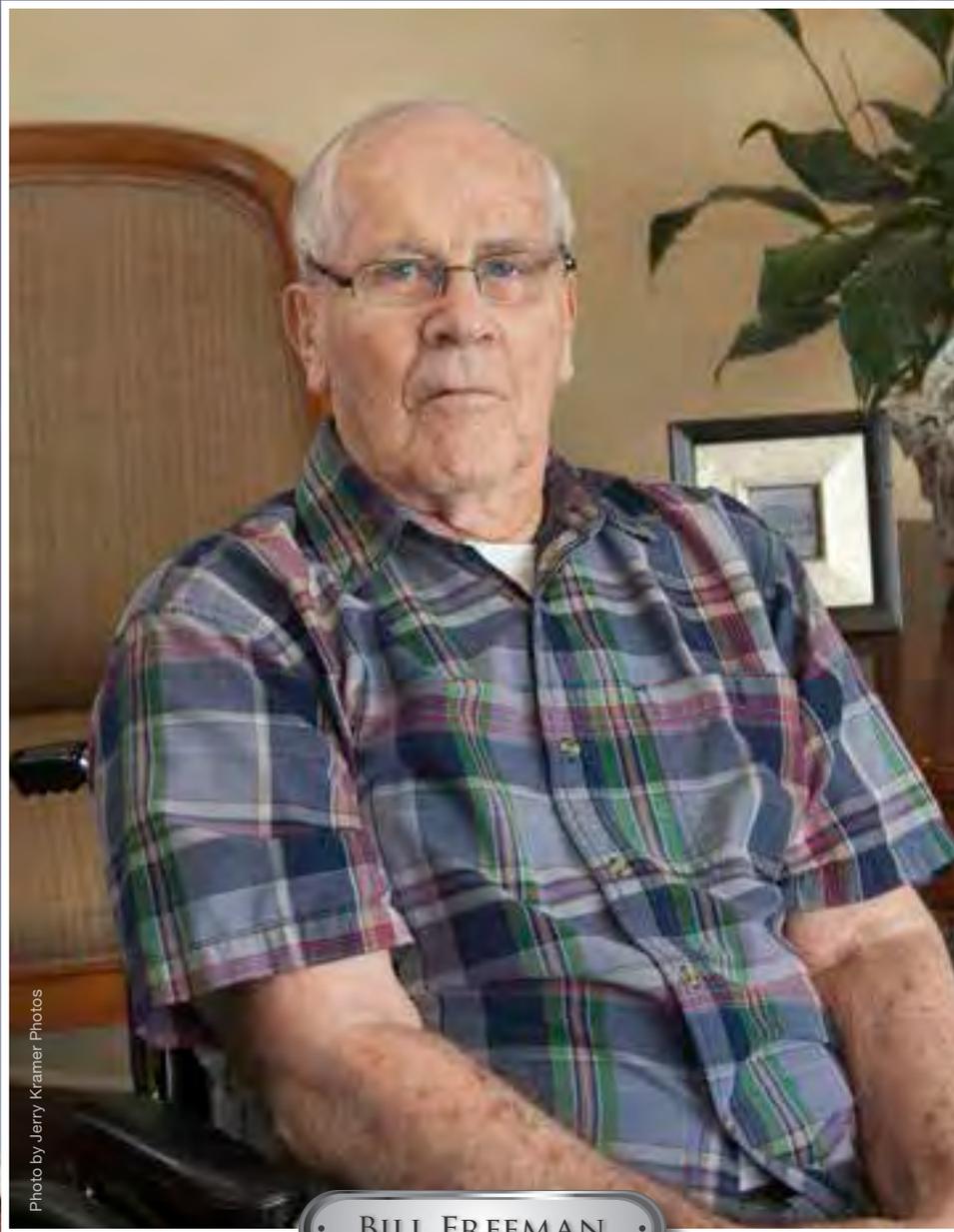
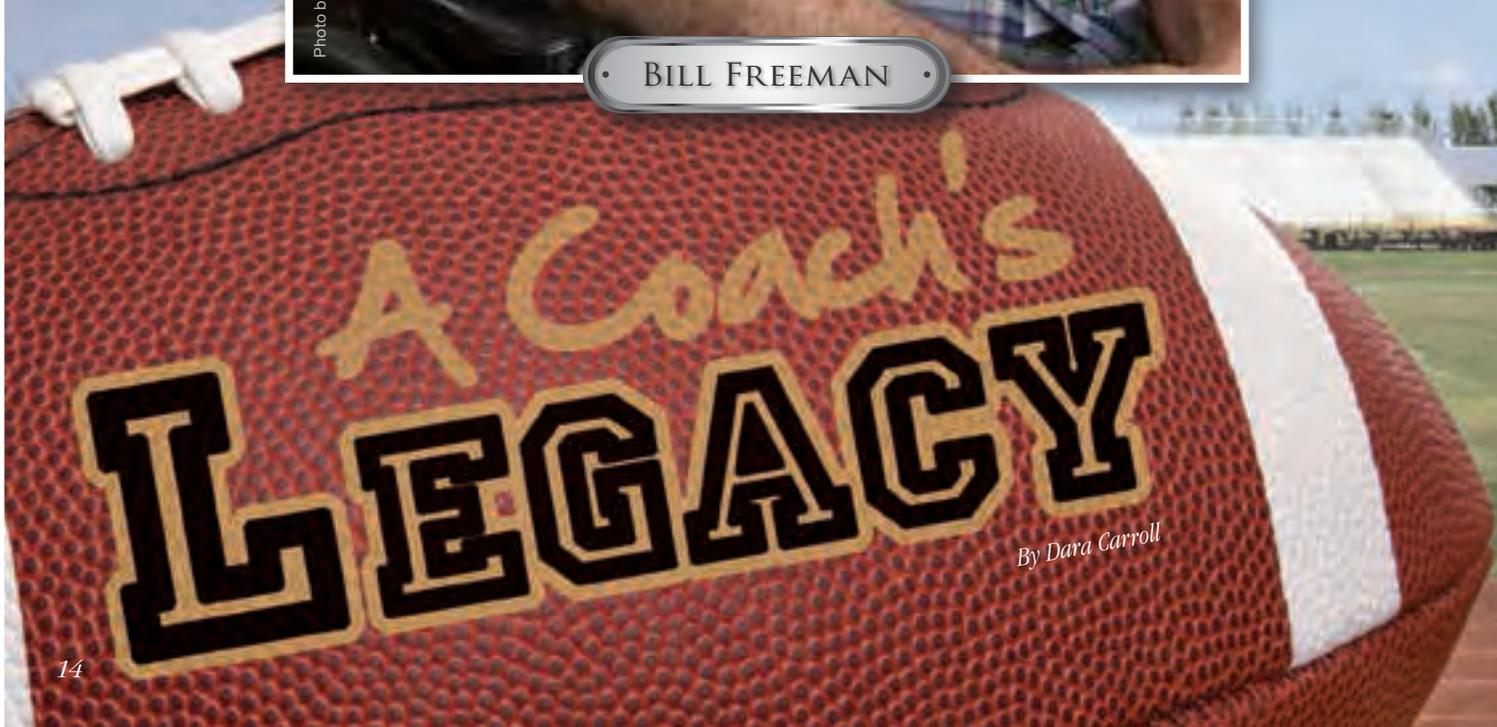


Photo by Jerry Kramer Photos

• BILL FREEMAN •



By Dara Carroll



Do you have “geetus?”

If you ever suited up for legendary Coach Bill Freeman, you had to have it. And, you could never have enough.

“In his terms, it meant to get your act together,” said daughter Jennifer Nauertc. “Get some smarts.”

Nauertc isn’t the only Kansan who came of age understanding the importance of geetus. As one of the most successful high school football coaches in Kansas history, Freeman made a lasting imprint on the athletic landscape of the Sunflower State.

In 36 years of coaching, Freeman led track teams to two state championships, and his football teams compiled a 242-81-3 record and claimed eight state championships. Dozens of his players and assistant coaches went on to become head coaches and athletic directors. Seven of his players were drafted by the NFL. Freeman himself was inducted into the Kansas Sports Hall of Fame in 2014. Geetus works.

Freeman hung up his whistle for good in 1990, but retirement is a subjective word. For Freeman, it meant the chance to spend more time with his college sweetheart, Joan, who he’s been married to since 1954. The couple moved full time to their farm in LeRoy, Kansas, where he happily dedicated himself to his crops, prized arrowhead collection, hunting and the First National Bank of LeRoy – a bank he bought and ran for 32 years. He was even LeRoy’s mayor for 21 years, although he never accepted a salary, depositing the money instead into the town’s account.

Even in retirement, Freeman never lost his geetus. It’s a quality he didn’t just seek in others; he demanded it from himself.

‘G’ is for Grit.

The Burlington, Kansas, native was born in 1931, three years after his sister, Helen. He was a natural athlete. After high school, he enrolled at Emporia State University, where he excelled on

the football field, graduating in 1953 as a four-year letterman at offensive guard.

At 160 pounds, Freeman exuded grit on the line. Opposing defenders often dwarfed him in size, but they couldn’t match his intensity.

“I was small,” Freeman told Allen Quakenbush of the *Lawrence-Journal World* in a 1977 interview, “but I was meaner than hell. Because I wasn’t very big, I had to be a little bit tougher. What I lacked in size, I made up for in aggressiveness and attitude.”

The calls didn’t always go Freeman’s way, but he knew how to stay focused in victory and defeat. “Football is like life,” he often said with his squeaky Kansas twang. “There are many disappointments, but if you have a disappointment, you pick yourself up and go on.”

That’s grit. That’s geetus.

‘E’ is for Excellence.

From August until November, Freeman and his assistants worked tirelessly, devouring game film, scouting opponents and



“If you were doing something good, he wanted you to be great. If you were great, he wanted you to be incredible.”



devising plays to accentuate their strengths and hide their weaknesses. He expected the same dedication from his players.

“Dad wasn’t one to be satisfied,” said Nauertc. “He wanted the best for everyone. If you were doing something good, he wanted you to be great. If you were great, he wanted you to be incredible. He always saw room for improvement.”

Even after a win, Freeman found ways to motivate his players and fuel their hunger for excellence.

“All weekend you’d hear how great you were because you’d just won,” explained former player Scott Stidham in a 1990 *Lawrence Journal-World* interview. “But, he was so thorough watching film, he would always find something you did wrong, and he’d show it to you.”

It was Freeman’s job to point out the weaknesses of his players, but he did more than show them how to improve on the field. He gave them the tools to succeed in life.

In a post on a Facebook page dedicated to Freeman, former track team member Kyle Roste wrote: “Coach Freeman has the ability to see potential and draw it out. He was not afraid to put athletes in a position to test their abilities and be successful. I still draw upon those experiences today.”

It’s a sentiment echoed by countless teammates.

“One of the underlying themes behind the love that so many of us have for Coach Freeman is that he inspired each of us to do our best,” wrote former track team member Jason Young. “He provided a wealth of support along the way, and he genuinely cared about each person on the team.”

In fact, watching his students succeed beyond athletics brought Freeman the most joy.

“When they’d come up to me later in life to tell me they were glad I was tough on them, it made me proud,” Freeman told Gary Bedore with the *Journal-World* in 2012. “I knew then I’d helped make a difference.”

‘E’ is for Everybody.

Freeman started his coaching career at Baxter Springs High School, one of the smallest in Kansas, and he finished up at one of the biggest and most storied football programs in the state – Lawrence High School, home of the Chesty Lions.

When Freeman first moved to LHS, the school was torn by racial division and had suffered through several losing football seasons. Within a few years of his arrival, blacks and whites at the school had been united, and the team was winning again. It was no coincidence. Freeman’s

influence played an active role in healing the racial divide and turning the football program around.

“Coach Freeman treated everybody the same,” said former player and assistant coach Bob Lisher in a 2004 interview with the *Osawatomie Graphic*. “The kids knew that, and they respected him for it. He’d get on starters or All-Staters just as much as he would kids on the scout team.”

Freeman’s passion for others always started at home, where his fans included son Jeff, born in 1960, and Nauertc, who Freeman and Joan adopted at three days old in 1971.

“The most important lesson I learned from my dad is to care about others and not put myself first,” said Nauertc.

Freeman’s goal was to bring out the best in everyone around him. And, he had an eye for geetus.

“The players I remember might not have had the best ability, but [they were] the ones who had the biggest heart,” Freeman told *Lawrence Journal-World’s* Kurt Caywood in a 1990 interview. “I’ve had a lot of guys who went on to be great football players, but the ones who played to the best of their ability, those are the ones I remember best.”

‘T’ is for Tenacity.

During one LHS football practice, Freeman was frustrated because his players weren't getting a play right. And, no one could leave until they did. It eventually got so dark that he had his players and assistant coaches pull their vehicles up close around the practice field and leave their lights on. While Freeman read his play sheet by flashlight, his players practiced the play over and over again in the dim glow of headlights until they got it right.

It didn't seem strange to Freeman. "The harder you work, the easier it gets," he often said.

‘U’ is for Understanding.

Much of Freeman's success as a coach came because he had an innate understanding of his players, and he knew what it took to win.

"I don't know if I was ever a really great Xs and Os man," he told Caywood in their 1990 interview. "The most important thing for a head coach is to get the players prepared mentally. Most games are not won or lost physically; they're won or lost mentally."

At Osawatomie High School, Freeman coached gunslinger Lynn Dickey, who was drafted by the NFL in 1971 and spent 13 standout years with the Houston Oilers and Green Bay Packers. Freeman understood the importance of keeping Dickey upright and on the field, so he

devised effective ways to ensure the team protected him.

Every dropped pass meant a lap around the track for the guilty back or receiver. The penalty for giving up a sack during a game was worse. Each time it happened, the responsible offensive lineman had to take a snap at the next practice, and all of the backs and receivers got to tackle him.

"One of the underlying themes behind the love that so many of us have for Coach Freeman is that he inspired each of us to do our best. He provided a wealth of support along the way, and he genuinely cared about each person on the team."

It worked. Dickey didn't get hit much, and the team went on to an undefeated season and state championship.

Strong quarterback or not, defense was the key to every Freeman game plan. He always put his best 11 athletes on defense, satisfied that his opponent couldn't win if they couldn't score.

Freeman understood how to be a supportive parent, too.

"He wrote me a letter one time," said Nauertc. "I still have it. It says, 'Jenny, you are the captain

of your own ship. You control your own destiny, but your mom and I are here for you and always will be.'"

‘S’ is for Smiles.

Freeman loved his sports, but he knew how to escape, too. In the offseason, he found respite on his land in LeRoy, where he loved to be one with nature.

He also enjoyed traveling.

He spent spring breaks going on adventures with his family, journeying from coast to coast, up to Canada and to Hawaii.

During the season, Freeman even found ways to share the game he loved with his family, which now includes three adored grandchildren.

"The team used to call me 'Little Wild Bill Jr.," laughed Nauertc. "I was like Dad's little shadow. I got to ride the team bus. I was at practices, and I even got

to go down on the field before games. As the coaches ran out on the field, I would walk up to my dad and give him a hug. That was our little routine."

Although Freeman had the reputation to be tough, he enjoyed inspiring those around him in ways that would make them think and laugh at the same time.

"He came up with his own sayings to help them get a play right or with their life choices," said Nauertc. "It was another one of his ways of showing he cared

about them and wanted them to be successful.”

His players called them “Freemanisms.”

Spoiled by success? *“Stop wearin’ your headlines on your helmet.”*

Moving too slow? *“You’re slower than a dry creek.”*

Made a mistake that’s affecting those around you? *“You’re a turd in the punch bowl. You ruined it for everybody.”*

Looking too far ahead? *“Don’t run by Peter to block Paul.”*

And it wasn’t just what he said. Sometimes, his actions did the talking.

During the 1981 football season, a running back from Topeka High boasted that he would rush for more than 1,500 yards that season. Freeman was not impressed. When the time came for LHS to play Topeka High in the last game of the season, the cocky running back was just 51 yards shy of his goal.

In the week leading up to the game, Freeman told his players he would shave his head if they kept the back from hitting the 1,500-yard mark. Freeman’s defense met the challenge. They held the running back to only 46 yards, 5 yards short of his prediction.

Former player Steve Barbee recalled what happened at practice the following Monday: “I will never forget Coach Freeman’s words: ‘Men, I am a man of my word.’ He pulled off his stocking cap and, yes, Coach Freeman had shaved his head!”

That’s geetus. Doing whatever it takes to motivate your players.

Geetus never dies.

Coach Freeman will never lace up his cleats and jog into the cheers of a jubilant stadium again. The little black ball on top of his stocking cap will never again dance angrily above his head as he determinedly paces a sideline. Alzheimer’s disease has slowly stripped the 84-year-old of his memory and mobility, but he’ll never lose his most prized possession.

“I’ll ask him periodically if he has any geetus,” Nauertc said of her visits with Freeman at Life Care Center of Burlington, Kansas, where he’s lived since 2013. “Every time, he will say, ‘yes.’ But when I ask him if I do, he will say ‘no’ ... and smile.”

Hall of Fame Coach Vince Lombardi said, “Coaches who can outline plays on a black board are a dime a dozen. The ones who win get inside their player and motivate.”

Freeman knew how to win. He knew how to get inside his players. He knew how to motivate them.

His legacy isn’t engraved on trophies or plaques. It beats in the hearts of thousands of former students and athletes who witnessed his passion firsthand. Every success they’ve experienced reflects the influence of Freeman’s motivation.

He taught them the importance of discipline and hard work and perseverance. He believed in them and taught them how to win. He gave them geetus. And, remember – you can never have enough. 🍌

A Coach's Journey

1953-54

Baxter Springs High School, Kansas

1954-56

Parker Rural High School in Parker, Kansas

1957-58

Nickerson High School, Kansas

1958-60

Midland College in Fremont, Nebraska

1960-65

LeRoy High School, Kansas

1965-74

Osawatomie High School, Kansas

1974-90

Lawrence High School, Kansas



By Tanya Bumgardner

Ray Leslie Anders, Ph.D., became fascinated with history the moment he became part of it.

As Anders walked across the stage to receive his high school diploma in 1940, others marched across battlefields to fight the Axis powers. The Second World War had just begun to rage, and he knew U.S. participation was inevitable. On July 17, 1940, the new graduate from Reading, Kansas, enrolled in the Army.

For the first few years of enlistment as a corporal, Anders served as a medic traveling by train

across the United States, helping clear soldiers for future battles abroad. During this time, the future professor and author was transferred to Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri. On one of the train rides back to base, he met a young nanny named Mardellya Soles from Windsor, Missouri. Soles struck up a conversation, and they talked the entire trip.

“As Mother was getting ready to get off at her stop, she asked Daddy if he ever liked to write letters,” recalls Geraldine “Dee” Hunt, their oldest daughter. “He said, ‘Do I!’”

Soles and Anders began a correspondence that blossomed into romance. The two married on Oct. 17, 1942.

In 1944, Anders’ turn on the front lines came when he was sent as a medic for the 63rd Infantry Division to France and Germany. Living this piece of history ignited a passion inside him.

• DR. R. LESLIE ANDERS •

LIVING

History



“The time that he spent walking the ancient sites made famous by great men and great battles ignited a spark of interest in military history,” said Hunt.

After the war ended in 1945, Anders continued as a historian for the Army Office of the Chief of Engineers in Baltimore. At the encouragement of his wife, Anders enrolled in the College Emporia (now Emporia State University

in Emporia, Kansas) to earn a bachelor’s degree. While studying – with two young daughters at home, Hunt and Charlotte – he earned his master’s and doctorate degrees from the University of Missouri in Columbia.

“He first thought he would be teaching in high school,” Hunt recalled. “But Mother had great admiration and faith in his wisdom and talents, so she

“Nearly every student came out He succeeded in imparting the

strongly encouraged him to pursue his master’s and doctorate.”

After graduation, Anders fueled that spark he first felt on the battlefields of Western Europe at Central Missouri State College in Warrensburg, now the University of Central Missouri.

Anders joined the faculty in 1955, teaching primarily world history, military history, and early and modern world civilization. Instead of just teaching his students to memorize significant facts, people and dates, he decided history was best learned when experienced.

“He was credited by most of his students as bringing history alive,” said Hunt. “In many of his class sessions, he would take the voices and postures of the people he was discussing, and then he would stand on the one side of the room and ask a question and then walk to the other side to answer – acting out the conversations of great events. Nearly every student came out of his classes enjoying history. He succeeded in imparting the same joy he had for history.”

While soft-spoken outside the classroom, Anders brought a dynamic spin to history inside the classroom that made him a favorite professor and treasured colleague. As a testament to that fact, the university presented

him with the Byler Distinguished Faculty Award in 1986.

“He was an excellent classroom teacher,” said William Foley, Ph.D., a former student and colleague of Anders. “He interspersed humor, and he had a wealth of anecdotal material he would add in to liven things up. He had a twinkle in his eye almost, and he would slide in these little stories. He was regarded as really an excellent teacher, but he was also a great scholar.”

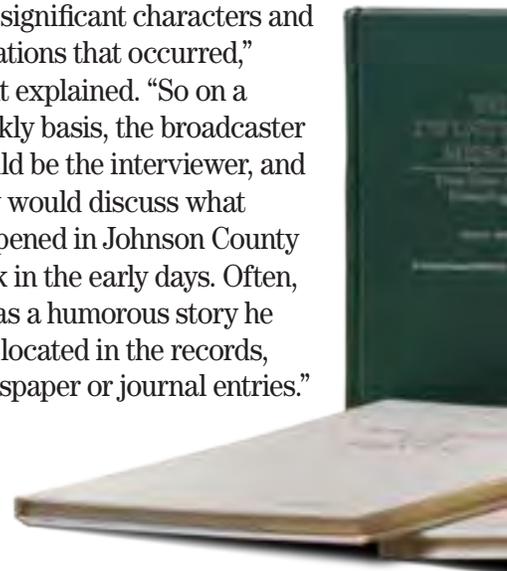
During his tenure at the university, Anders was an avid researcher, and he began to pour his knowledge of military and Missouri Civil War history into books. In 1965, he published his first significant book, *The Ledo Road: General Joseph Stillwell’s Highway to China*. The book was, and still is, a definitive source on the subject.

“Les wrote a book – he’s written several – which was his first major book, a book on the Ledo Road,” said Foley. “Les was a European historian and a military historian, and that book was about the construction of the Ledo Road, which during the Second World War went from Burma to China to give Allies access to China. But that was the first major scholarly book that had been produced by a faculty member for many years on the [Central Missouri State College] campus. At that time,

the emphasis was more on teaching than research. So Les’ book, when it was published, was a pretty big deal.”

After 30 years in the classroom, Anders retired from teaching but continued to research and write, publishing six more works on history. He also put his energy into researching the history of his own state and community, particularly Missouri’s role in the Civil War. Known as a local historical authority, Anders wrote articles for the *Missouri Historical Review* and *The Warrensburg Daily Star Journal* in Warrensburg and discussed local history during a yearlong series of weekly broadcasts on AM 1450 KOKO.

“He enjoyed putting the voices and faces to that time of history by looking at names and significant characters and situations that occurred,” Hunt explained. “So on a weekly basis, the broadcaster would be the interviewer, and they would discuss what happened in Johnson County back in the early days. Often, it was a humorous story he had located in the records, newspaper or journal entries.”



of his classes enjoying history. same joy he had for history.”

Anders was known for his sense of humor as much as he was known for his knowledge of history. He would write weekly letters to his family members, including a riddle in each one. His friends and colleagues called his many puns “Anderisms.”

“He loved to laugh, and his relationship with his co-workers, fellow community members and church members was always one of mutual respect and good humor,” Hunt said.

Along with his charismatic teaching style and vast knowledge, Anders earned respect from his colleagues, as well as from students, community members and family. And through both personal and academic integrity, he has left a lasting impact on all those he has known. Former students

would often write him back years later to tell him what an inspiration he had been. One student – possibly many more – kept the notes he took during Anders’ class for years.

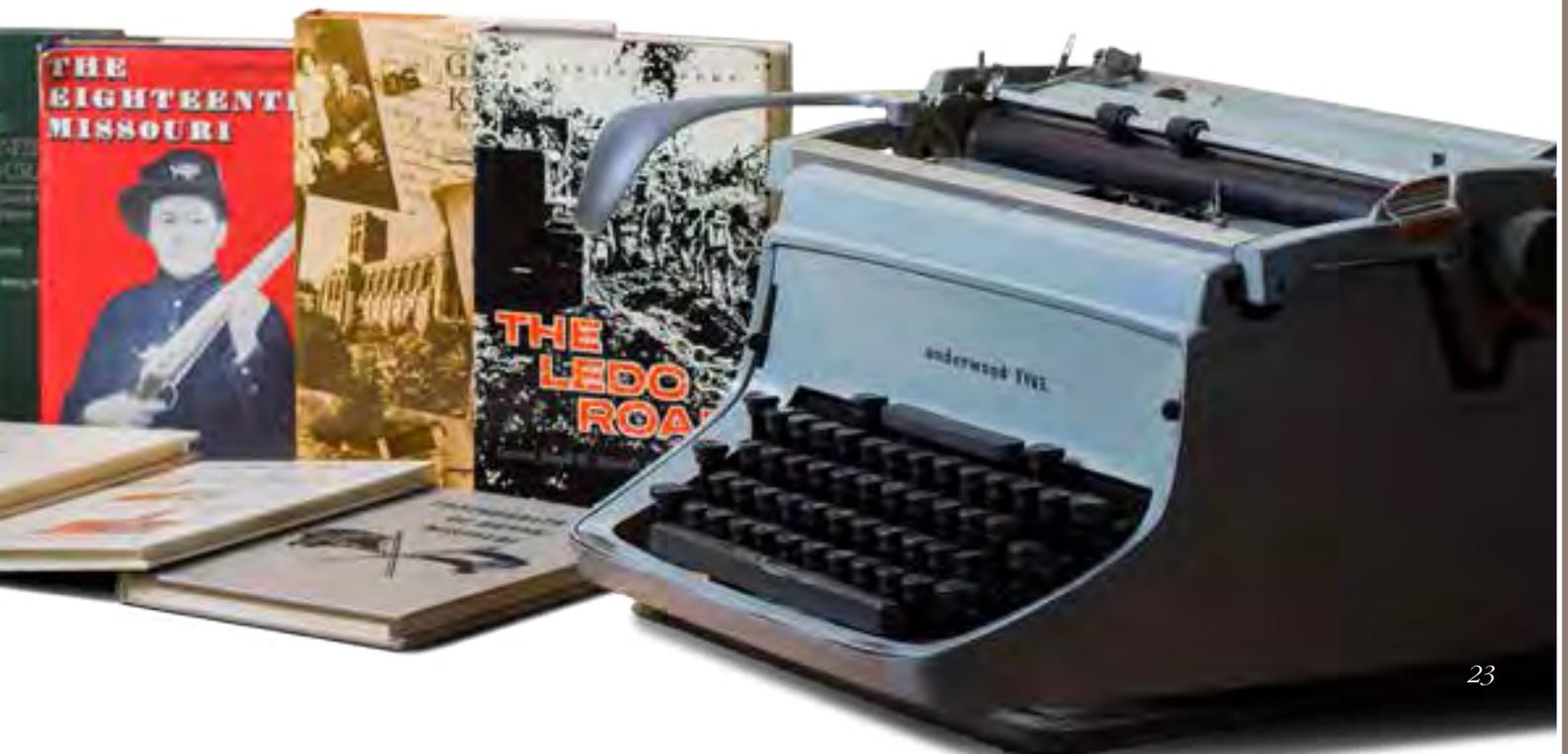
“He was very honorable,” said Hunt. “He never strayed from what he knew. He has always been true to himself all the way through.”

Now Anders’ books grace the shelves of libraries in universities across the country, and his research lives on in the archives of the State Historical Society of Missouri, the Johnson County Historical Society and the West Central Genealogical Society and Library in Warrensburg. He has received countless awards and accolades for his work. Many of his students have gone on to teach history as well, and his

work continues to be referenced in the work of historical scholars.

All of this happened because Anders, 93, and now a resident of Life Care Center of Carrollton, Missouri, recognized his role in history during those years in World War II. He knew he could impart the value of learning about the past if he could help others live it through him. And the legacy he leaves from his 60-year career as a history professor, author and historian is proof that he did. 📖

Editor’s note: Dr. Anders passed away in July 2015, as this publication was being finalized for print. This article is printed in his memory, with the permission of his family.



• BETTY LOU RIDDELL •

ACROSS SAND AND SEA:

A Traveler's Life

By Heidi Tompkins

At first glance, there may not seem to be much in common between Fort Worth, Texas, and Saudi Arabia. In one, you have cowboy hats, jeans and steak; and in the other, you have hijabs, long robes and lamb. Yet oil serves as a link between these two locations that are otherwise worlds apart. And both places have been home to Betty Lou Riddell.

Riddell, now an 85-year-old resident at Garden Terrace of Fort Worth, Texas, has had experiences all over the world— from Canada to Greece to Australia to India. She has ridden trains, planes, boats,

horses, camels and elephants. And she looks back on all of these with a smile.

This world adventurer from Fort Worth first got a small taste for travel in the military. In 1951, during the Korean War, Riddell enlisted to serve stateside, following the steps of her oldest sister, Hazel, who joined as a nurse.

“I was mostly a dental assistant,” Riddell explained.

With the Air Force, Riddell traveled to California and South Carolina. This was just the start of her adventures, however. After the war ended, Riddell started

working as a secretary in the Fort Worth office of Continental Grain, a huge international grain and flour business, and eventually transferred to the company’s headquarters in New York City.

Riddell loved those years of city life and took advantage of all the culture around her.

“She got to see every play that came out on Broadway,” said her niece-in-law, Lisa Payne.

Living in New York also gave Riddell a good feel for the big players in international business, and when she heard in 1964 that Arabian-American Oil Co. (now Aramco) was hiring for its



Photo by Bobby Cornelius Photography

American base in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, she applied and got a job in accounting.

1964 was a pivotal year for the newly established Middle Eastern country (it was officially united and named Saudi Arabia in 1932). A new monarch, King Faisal, took the reins of the government. According to the Saudi Arabian embassy website, Faisal was integral in building up the country and making it a world trade partner to be reckoned with.

Soon, Riddell was on her way across the ocean with a collection of lightweight clothes.

Riddell's first impressions of Saudi Arabia?

"It was dry, and it was hot," she remembered.

She took the change of culture in stride, and the most challenging thing for her was being away from family.

"I'd write letters," Riddell said. "I didn't call much. It was too expensive."

Riddell settled in at the American compound and got to know the others working there. At the time, there were approximately 5,000 U.S. citizens living and working in the city, and they called themselves Dramcans.

"It was pleasant," Riddell remembered of her years there.

The Dramcans were well cared for and had their needs attended to, even the cooking and cleaning, and recreation opportunities for employees abounded. Close to the compound was a golf course with oiled sand used for the greens. Riddell and her co-workers would often play golf, compete in tennis or ride Arabian horses.

Trips to Beirut were common, and of all the places Riddell has been over the years, this Lebanese city is her favorite.



Photo by Bobby Cornelius Photography

“It’s kind of metropolitan,” Riddell explained. “It was a fun place to go. It was like the Paris of the Middle East.”

For Riddell, travel was the best perk to living and working in Saudi Arabia. Arabian-American Oil Co. organized travel groups that would hop on planes and visit places all over the world – from the Mediterranean to the Far East.

It was on one of these trips that Riddell met her husband, John, who was a fellow Dramcan.

“We were on leave, and we met in Bangkok,” Riddell remembered. “He was nice, and real funny. He was a good fellow.”

It was love at first sight. The couple dated for six months before tying the knot in Athens, Greece, in 1970.

“We liked Greece,” said Riddell. “It was a nice place, a beautiful place, so that’s where we wanted to get married.”

After their Greek honeymoon, the couple moved to New York, where John was from originally.

“Couples were not allowed to work at Aramco together, so Betty resigned her position,” said Payne.





Over the years, the Riddells moved several times. They lived in Akron, Ohio; Tulsa, Oklahoma; Hastings on the Hudson, New York; and Kennesaw, Georgia. John worked in logistics and urban and corporate planning, and he worked with the cities on development.

Akron was Riddell's favorite place to live, perhaps because John created something special there.

"They had a basement in their house in Akron, and John fixed it up just like a pub in New York City. They called it Fatso's. That's where all the neighbors and friends gathered."

All during this time, however, the couple kept traveling. They took a trip to Tokyo to visit one of Riddell's friends with whom she had worked at Continental Grain. They took a train across Canada. And they went on many cruises, including to South America.

In 1987, Riddell and John moved to Fort Worth. Though they didn't have children, they became very close to Riddell's four nephews.

"I met my husband in 1990, and when we started seeing each other casually, he kept talking about his Aunt Betty and his Uncle John," Payne remembered fondly. "Finally one day, he said, 'Aunt Betty wants you to come over for dinner,' and I was scared to death. But we went over for dinner and had the most delicious food, and I just fell in love with them the first time I met them."

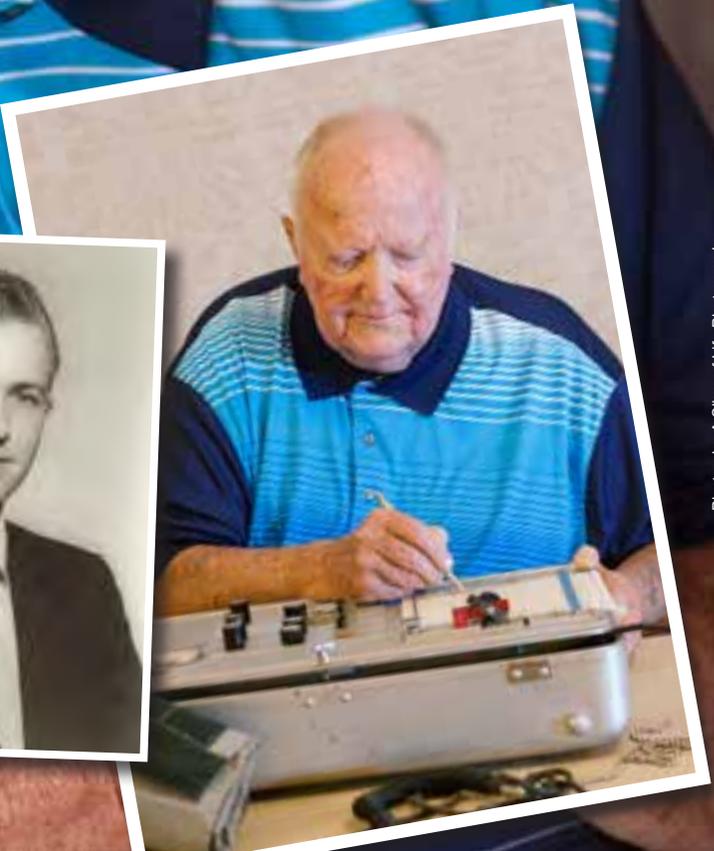
All the family and extended family loved to get together, to eat, to share and to enjoy one another's company.

"She entertained the family with stories of her travel and time in Saudi Arabia," said Payne.

"She and John were like a second set of parents for me."

Though John has since passed away, the family remains close, and Riddell always looks forward to visits from nephews, their wives and their children. And as she looks back on all the things she has done throughout her life, it's not the stamps on her passport that give Riddell the most pleasure. It's the people who have been part of her life journey, whether at home or over the sea. 🇺🇸





Photos by A Slice of Life Photography

PNEUMO

G. S. R.

It Stems From the Truth

CARDIO VASCULAR

By Ryan Faricelli

• RICHARD HOWELL •

Richard Howell based his entire career on lies.

He wasn't telling them, however – he was detecting them.

Born in East Los Angeles, California, on Oct. 26, 1936, Richard Howell was the son of Eugene and Frances Howell. Eugene had been a rifleman for the Navy and was a repairman and municipal maintenance worker. Frances was an artist specializing in oil painting and also a housewife.

“East L.A. was a very rough, tough little town,” recalled Howell of his childhood. “My parents brought me up in a way that I had discipline and loyalty. I could get through the gangs and terror going through that town.”

As Howell entered high school, his family moved to Montebello, California, where he was quarterback on the football team and loved fast cars and customizing them. When he graduated in 1955, he attended Pasadena City College before transferring to Long Beach State (now known as California State University, Long Beach).

“Electronics was really the big thing in those days,” Howell remembered. “I went to school

and found I didn't really fit with electronics too well. I found an article in the paper that talked about lie detection and how there was an instrument that would forecast people's emotions on paper at Long Beach State. It was one of the first ones in the world, and that interested me because I liked new adventures.”

Howell graduated with an Associate of Arts degree in 1961, focusing his studies on the polygraph machine, commonly referred to as a lie detector. After college, Howell started his own business, Personnel Research and Development.

“I set up a little office in my home that had a phone,” shared Howell. “My mother would answer it to make it appear that we were bigger than we really were. We started polygraphing, and I was on fire!”

At the time, polygraphs were still a new technology. Most were found in police departments and used to determine if people committed crimes. Though Howell did work with investigators on some criminal cases, he generally took a more unique approach to the new industry: focusing on helping

businesses and organizations prevent thefts.

“I would go to the location with my polygraph and scare the living Dickens out of everybody,” Howell said with a laugh. “We'd bring in the employees one by one and ask everybody what have they taken from the company in the last year. We actually didn't care about what they had done in the past, but, rather, what they were going to do going forward. It's better to prevent than to have to catch. We'd rather have an employee that stole a little promise he would never ever steal again and become a good employee over one who had stolen things and was going to steal again.”

As Howell's renown grew in the polygraph community, he began teaching polygraph classes at his alma mater, lecturing on polygraph techniques. He also collected much higher-profile clients, such as the Denny's and Sizzler Family Steak Houses restaurant chains. He developed several polygraph techniques, including the In-depth Interview Technique, the Personal Denial Factor Grading Scale and the Absolute Answer Technique.

The young field of polygraph examinations paid well and gave him the

Howell also performed employee readings at major sport equipment chains such as Sportmart, clothing companies such as Clothestime and Jeanswest, and even for the Los Angeles Rams.

“When a player got hurt, they could draw disability for a very long time,” Howell explained of his work for the Rams. “My job was to find out if they were just after disability or if they truly wanted to stay with the team.”

The FBI recognized Howell’s expertise and began to utilize his services on some criminal cases. So did the mafia, who approached him on a few occasions wanting help weeding out those who weren’t loyal, though he never accepted their offers. The CIA took similar notice, only their mission was much more specialized. Howell was sent under an oath of secrecy to Japan, working directly under the Japanese Prime Minister.

“They have different laws there,” recalled Howell. “My job was to clear our servicemen who were in Japan and suspected of crimes. You don’t leave their country until the entire crime has been solved. So, I went secretly under oath, and basically helped our people be cleared of the crimes so they could get home. If they didn’t do the crime, why should they stay in the foreign country?”

Howell liked that his life moved at a high speed. The

young field of polygraph examinations paid well and gave him the freedom and connections to travel the world and work with amazing people. He lived on a yacht that he sailed to other countries, trained his dogs to do hundreds of tricks, entertained high-profile guests at lavish parties where he would cook gourmet meals, and enjoyed flying airplanes and racing his Ferrari sports car. Howell also skied all over the world with the Orange County Ski Club, often with World Cup alpine ski racers Phil and Steve Mahre.

“He lived a very fast life,” noted his daughter, Melanie King. “He definitely enjoyed life to its fullest.”

This exuberant life allowed Howell to meet Linda Carter, who played television’s Wonder Woman. (Coincidentally, the comic book character Wonder Woman, who carries the Lasso of Truth, was created by William Marston, the inventor of a major component of the polygraph.) Howell even dated Carter’s sister, Pamela, for several months.

In the 1970s, Howell did demonstrations around the world showing how the polygraph worked, usually by performing examinations. Some of his more renowned polygraph subjects included then California

Governor Ronald Reagan, Los Angeles Mayor Samuel Yorty, entertainer Liberace, “Beverly Hillbillies” star Buddy Ebsen, Oscar-winning actor Walter Brennan and infamous criminal Charles Manson, who was convicted of murder.

Manson was not given a polygraph during his 1970 trial because prosecutors feared he was skilled enough to pass the test and use it against their case. Manson never stopped requesting a polygraph exam, and after the



trial was over and Manson was convicted and in prison, he finally received one. Howell was part of the team that interpreted the results.

“I was never all by myself with him; there was always a guard present,” Howell quipped, preferring to keep the results of Manson’s test to himself in case Manson is ever released from prison.

In 1988, the success of lie detectors became their downfall when the federal government passed the Employee Polygraph

freedom and connections to travel the world and work with amazing people.

Protection Act, essentially removing the polygraph as a tool for businesses.

“The senators voted the lie detector out of existence,” Howell theorized. “The lie detector was capable of being used against executives in our government, and that was not going to be allowed to happen.”

This change in law impacted Howell’s business greatly. He mostly retired and used his business, Digital Health Corporation, to focus on polygraph research and using

rather than a person?” Howell admitted with a chuckle.

Hooking the plant to the polygraph, Howell measured reactions from the plant when it was spoken to nicely. The plant also reacted when threats were spoken to it. Howell’s experiments progressed to include measuring a plant’s ability to tell when a person next to it was having an emotional reaction, lying or telling the truth.

“We set it down over by itself and got reactions from the leaf as to possible emotions from people or other things,” described Howell. “The emotions were noted on the polygraph by an upward swing of the pen showing something had happened to the leaf parallel to something happening to the person. The plant was recognizing what we did or felt.”

At one point in his research, Howell even used plants to measure the emotional states of patients who were in comas.

“The people would react to things even if they were in comas,” Howell asserted. “We would say, ‘Your girlfriend is going to touch your ear,’ and you should have seen the reaction we got. It was wonderful!”

This unexpected phenomenon led to Howell traveling the world giving demonstrations that grew more complex and amazing. One of

them was for James Collins, who owned the Sizzler Family Steak Houses, and was so fascinated that he had Howell do his experiments in most of his restaurants.

Howell was able to measure plants reacting to individuals over great distances, even as far away as the other side of the city. He also showed how the plant could reveal what playing card a person chose based on that person’s anxiety as he called out card numbers one at a time.

“As the individual would become more concerned about the number because I was about to call it out, they would react accordingly,” laughed Howell as he fondly chatted about the 40 years of plant research he had done. “We don’t know if plants actually have feelings themselves, but we do know they can respond to human emotions. Even sense them.”

Howell believes that one day this information will be taken to the next level by scientists, imagining a day when sprinkling systems on farms could be turned on and off automatically when the crop indicates to a polygraph that it is thirsty.

For now, Howell’s polygraph sits in his room at Life Care Center of Escondido, California, a trophy of all he accomplished.

“I traveled the world and did all the fun spots,” Howell concluded. “I enjoyed life.”

And that’s the truth. 🍷



polygraphs for emotional and stress identification purposes. This enabled him to spend eight months at Brea Hospital Neuropsychiatric Center doing behavioral research on psychiatric patients.

It also allowed Howell to focus more on an unusual hobby he had picked up many years earlier: examining the emotional reactions of plants.

“One day I was bored enough to think, ‘I wonder what would happen if I hooked up the polygraph and put it on a plant



• ANN COAKLEY •

In the *Twinkling* of an *Eye*

Photo by David Smith

By Hannah Buckingham



It takes a special gift to be a teacher. Strength, patience and creativity are all traits that must coincide in order to drive a student to learn. Some people are born with the innate ability to not only teach, but to inspire. For Ann Coakley, inspiring her students to be excellent came as naturally as her finesse with a lacrosse stick.

Born in Norwood, Massachusetts, in 1926, Coakley knew she wanted to be a teacher by the time she was in seventh grade. She was the fourth of five children, and with three older brothers, she learned to play everything from football to tennis. Coakley thrived on the energy and excitement athletics brought to her life.

After graduating high school, Coakley continued her education at Boston University's Sargent College, well-known and highly regarded for its programs in health and physical education.

Apart from recreational activities such as croquet and tennis, women's athletics only gradually began to be recognized at the collegiate level. News coverage of female sporting events was sparse in the 1940s and '50s, and few women seriously pursued careers in athletics.

The barriers facing female athletes didn't faze Coakley, and she continued to steadily pursue her love of competitive sports. During her studies at Sargent College, she played four sports: field hockey, softball, tennis and, her personal favorite, lacrosse.



Known as "the fastest sport on two feet," lacrosse at that time was played with minimal rules and no protective equipment.

Coakley had never been exposed to lacrosse prior to college, but loved the freedom and fast pace of the game. Her natural athletic

ability and incredible work ethic helped to rapidly develop her into a skilled player.

Intercollegiate lacrosse teams didn't exist in the 1940s, but Coakley found other ways to play the sport. She joined the Boston Women's Lacrosse Association and played in several national tournaments as a member of both the first and second Boston squads.

"I just fell in love with the game," Coakley said in an interview with the *Boston Globe* in 2002. "I loved our game because it was just wide open. It was a real team effort, with excellent shooting – not just blasting the ball at the goal, but excellent placement."

Coakley became known for her position as an attack wing. Wings arguably cover the most distance on the field and play a supportive role, feeding the ball to the offensive players, but also hustling across the field to help on defense. Coakley's talent with a lacrosse stick remains legendary; her many honors include

being inducted into the Boston University Athletics Hall of Fame in 1984 and the National Lacrosse Hall of Fame in 2000.

Upon receiving her degree in education from Sargent College, Coakley, 25 at the time, took her first teaching job at Pembroke



College, a coordinate women's college for Brown University, with an annual salary of \$2,000.

In 1951, she was named to the United States lacrosse touring team. This would include a 10-week tour of Great Britain and Ireland. Coakley's desire to

The journey to England aboard the Queen Mary proved to be a tough one. Most of Coakley's teammates were seasick on the 4-and-a-half day trip across the Atlantic. The boat rocked and reeled so much that simple tasks like eating off a plate or walking

return there often throughout her career as an athlete and coach.

Though Coakley's accomplishments in lacrosse were already impressive, she had barely scratched the surface of what she would contribute to the game and female athletes everywhere.



travel spurred her to go, no matter the cost.

Coakley came from a family of modest means. With her meager teaching salary, Coakley had little money to spare. In order to afford her passage overseas, with her parents' support, she sold her family's silver tea set.

"You had to provide your own uniform, transportation, everything," said Coakley in her 2002 interview. "That was a good lesson for me. And I never suffered for it."

down a hallway proved to be nearly impossible.

"We weren't allowed on deck," Coakley said in her 2002 interview. "You could get washed overboard. When the ship landed in Southampton [England], about eight people were taken to the hospital with broken bones."

Throughout Great Britain and Ireland, Coakley and her teammates played national teams and regional squads. England still holds a special place in Coakley's heart, as she would

After her first stint teaching, Coakley chose to earn her master's degree from the University of North Carolina. Upon receiving her master's, Coakley accepted a position at Cornell University, where she taught for a brief period of time. Despite being far away from home, Coakley kept in close contact with her family.

"She has always been very concerned for her family members, even when she wasn't able to be around them all



the time,” said John Coakley, her nephew. “Family means a tremendous amount to Ann.”

In 1959, Coakley made what she describes as the best decision in her life. She accepted a position in the Wellness Department at Bridgewater State College in Bridgewater, Massachusetts.

Though small in stature, Coakley never had difficulty keeping up with her students during her physical education classes.

“When she was teaching physical education at BSC, the boys thought they could beat this little girl in tennis or badminton, but she’d beat them all,” chuckled John. “They thought they’d take care of her, but no way. She’s always been very talented.”

Coakley wasn’t satisfied with simply teaching physical education classes. In 1960, she began a women’s lacrosse program at the college. Over the course of the next 18 years, Coakley worked tirelessly to help organize tournaments and ensure that her players had the opportunity to travel and compete, just as she had during her own college years.

In 1978, Coakley organized the New England Colleges Lacrosse Championships, which were held

in Bridgewater. She also served as the President of the Boston Women’s Lacrosse Association for a period of time and was active on numerous other United States Women’s Lacrosse Association committees.



During her time at BSC, Coakley was named coach and manager for the U.S. touring team. This honor provided her another opportunity to travel to Great Britain and Ireland for a 10-week tour.

Coakley’s impressive career in sports didn’t go without notice. Inducted into the U.S. Lacrosse Eastern New England Chapter, Bridgewater State College, Boston University, New Agenda,

Northeast and the National Lacrosse hall of fames, her legacy lives on.

In the midst of her many accomplishments, Coakley remained humble and approachable. Her easy-going demeanor allowed Coakley to

provide a teaching style that harvested her students’ best qualities. Wherever she taught, Coakley’s inquisitive nature drove her to pursue new content areas. Whether it was health and wellness or philosophy, her ability to seek out new information and apply it to her students helped Coakley keep learning exciting for whomever she taught.

Longtime friend and colleague Mary Lou Thornburg fondly remembers Coakley’s gift to teach and inspire.

“My memories of Ann include the patience she demonstrated when introducing her students to an activity, especially lacrosse, which she loved,” Thornburg said. “She loved helping her students learn new things and stimulated their curiosity, which helped them to enjoy what they were learning.”

“Ann’s incredible patience and attentiveness made her a great teacher,” said John. “I think there’s a big difference between a teacher and a coach. Ann was a true teacher. A coach gives



training and helps a person nurture their own talents, but teaching is wider and deeper than that. Ann gave her students something they could carry through life. She's an inspiration to others, without trying to be."

Coakley has never allowed herself to stop learning. She's read books on subjects from philosophy to the science of sports.

"Ann has always been incredibly open. She understands the phrase, 'Once a teacher, always a student,'" John said. "She is a humble and deeply spiritual person. She's sensitive to sports. She sees the science of sports, the art of sports and the spirituality of sports. It's always been more than competition for Ann."

Even upon retirement and experiencing a double knee replacement, Coakley

refused to slow down. She tutored individuals within the Bridgewater community who needed help with English language development. She also remained active in her local church, St. Thomas Aquinas Parish.

"She sees the science of sports, the art of sports and the spirituality of sports. It's always been more than competition for Ann."

Coakley currently resides at Life Care Center of West Bridgewater, Massachusetts, where she is cherished by those who come in contact with her.

"Ann serves as sort of a greeter for all who enter the facility," said John. "She is always

making people laugh and handles all of life's changes with grace and class."

Coakley's advocacy for the diversification of women's athletics changed the landscape of competition for the women who followed her. Growing up in an era that stifled a woman's desire to play sports never stopped her from doing what she loved.

When asked what her greatest accomplishment is, Coakley replied, "Bringing the presentation of women into sports."

Coakley's high school senior yearbook photo is accompanied by a quote she chose, which reads, "In the twinkling of an eye." From a young age, she understood that time passes in the blink of an eye and the future is never certain. Perhaps that's why she's lived such a fulfilling life. 🍷

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Leland Melvin of Lynchburg, Virginia, had a dream to play in the National Football League. After graduating from high school, he went on to the University of Richmond on a football scholarship. He played wide receiver from 1982-85.

In 1986, Melvin was drafted into the NFL by the Detroit Lions, but during training camp, he pulled his hamstring and was released from the team. The following year, the Dallas Cowboys invited him to their training camp. Again, he severely injured his hamstring, and his career in football came to an abrupt end.

That didn't bother Melvin. While training with the Cowboys, he'd been working toward a degree in materials science and engineering from the University of Virginia. With the time to explore his passion for science, Melvin earned a graduate degree and went to work for NASA.

An unfortunate accident during his spacewalk training landed him in surgery with damage to his ears. His next dream of becoming an astronaut seemed over in much the same way his NFL career ended. Yet, Melvin continued to work for NASA. His career



with that organization spanned 24 years.

Ultimately, he was given the medical clearance to resume flight training. It paid off. His first mission on the space shuttle Atlantis took place in 2008. His second, and final space flight, was the following year. Melvin was named the NASA associate administrator for education in October 2010. Two dreams for Melvin: one wasn't possible, but another, grander, was achieved. He was an overcomer.

In the early morning hours of Jan. 2 of this year, Cathy Lowe, a receptionist at the three-story building on Life Care's Corporate Plaza in Cleveland, Tennessee, received a call that every parent fears. Her beautiful, 30-year-old daughter, Meghan Snyder, was struck and severely injured by

a train at a railroad crossing in McDonald, Tennessee. By the time Cathy got to the hospital, her daughter was dead.

In addition to a grief-stricken mother, the accident victim left behind two sons, Tanner, age 6, and Austin, 5.

But in spite of the sorrow and the pain that – even now – won't go away, Cathy is an overcomer. She has taken custody of her two grandchildren and, with some struggles financially, has managed to purchase another home for more room to raise them. To their delight, it also has a swimming pool in the backyard, and Cathy has them taking swimming lessons.

The boys talk openly about memories of their mother, and Cathy finds ways to help them celebrate her life.

What about you? Maybe you are an overcomer; most of us are. Or maybe you are struggling to be. It will require faith, hope and determination. But it can be done.

Leland Melvin and Cathy Lowe have proven it. 🙏


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