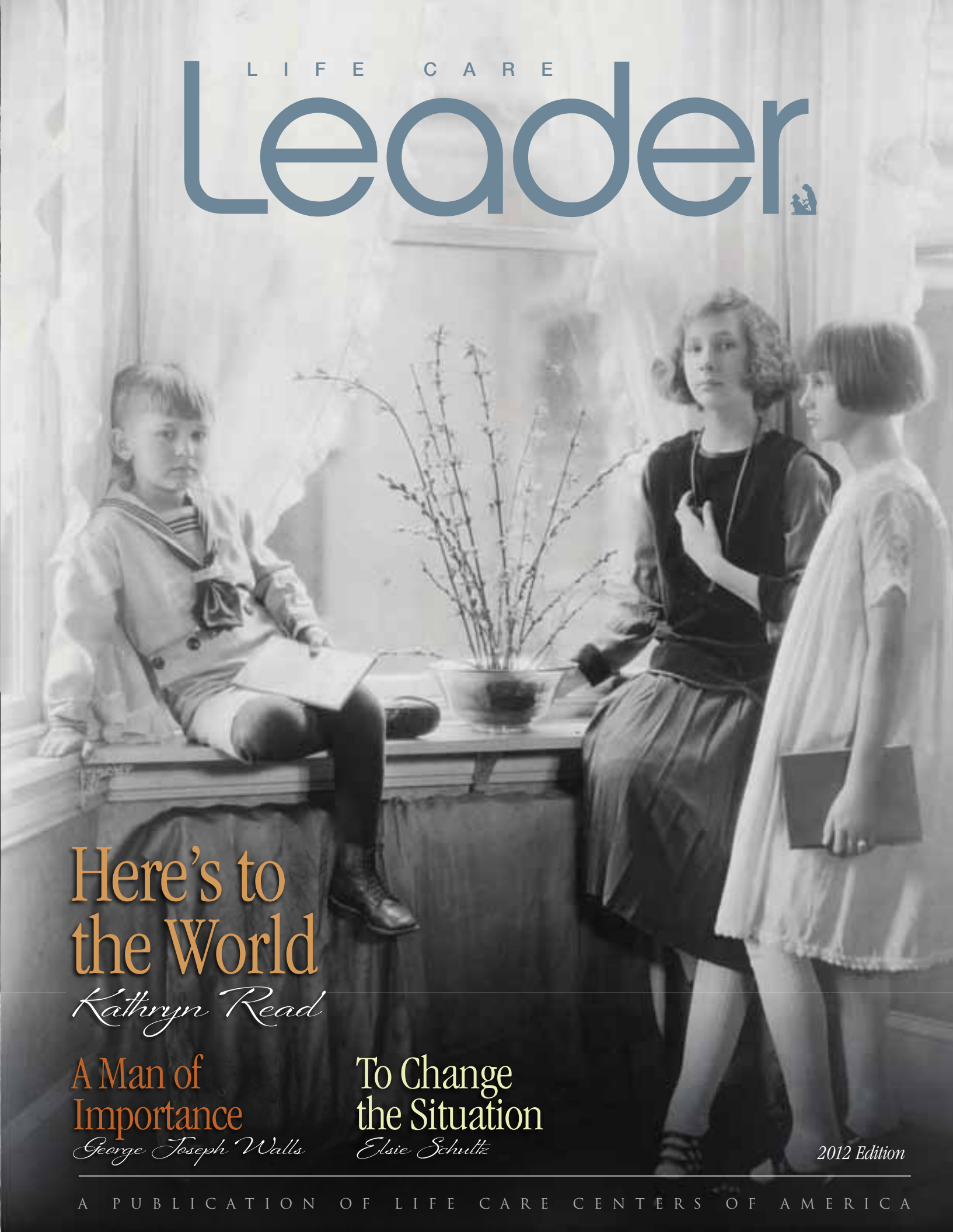




L I F E C A R E
Leader



Here's to
the World
Kathryn Read

A Man of
Importance
George Joseph Walls

To Change
the Situation
Elsie Schultze

2012 Edition

HOW DEBORAH SAVED THE DAY



Before Israel anointed its first king, the nation – around 1100 B.C. – was ruled by a system of judges. In our society today, judges preside over civil matters and rule over criminal cases. But a judge in Israel, while tending to those responsibilities, was also considered a moral and military leader.

The Book of Judges in the Old Testament provides an interesting account of the rise to power of a prophetess by the name of Deborah, who became a judge and is recognized as the greatest leader of her generation. And remember, that was in a male-dominated culture when men did not readily follow women, and few females were allowed to achieve leadership positions.

How did she do it?

John C. Maxwell, nationally recognized expert on leadership, in his book *The*

21 Most Powerful Minutes in a Leader's Day, refers to the biblical account of Deborah and offers the process that a leader must go through. It is bound up in the acronym R-E-S-P-E-C-T:

- **Respect yourself and those with whom you work.** Deborah made Barak the commander of the Israeli army, and she was quick to empower others.
- **Exceed the expectations of others.** Leaders go the extra mile – the *And Then Some* we preach in Life Care – and they take others with them.
- **Stand firm on your convictions.** The Canaanite king who opposed Israel, the Bible says, had 900 iron chariots. But Deborah did not waver in her belief that God would give Israel the victory, which was achieved in a total rout.
- **Possess uncommon security and maturity.** Leaders whom the people respect don't grab all the credit for success themselves. They give as much as they can to the people.

■ **Experience personal success.** A leader cannot help people experience success unless he or she has been successful.

■ **Contribute to the success of others.** When Deborah called her people to battle, she gave them the resources they needed – Barak, the commander, and 10,000 fighting men.

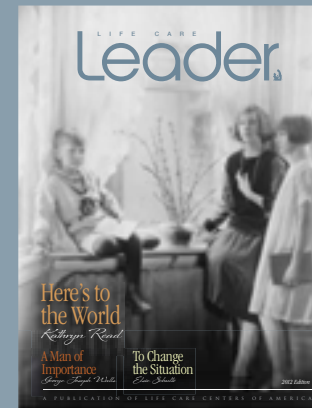
■ **Think ahead of others.** She gave Barak the battle plan, telling him how to attack. She supplied him with troops. She even accompanied him to Mount Tabor, where the battle would be fought. How could the people not respect a leader of such strategy and vision?

Strong leaders know that they must earn respect.

John Maxwell's principles for leadership are sound, and we have seen them at work. We must continue to seek and to develop leaders to ensure success for Life Care.

It's what our residents need and deserve.

FORREST L. PRESTON
Chairman



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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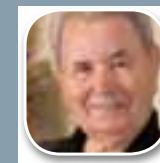
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• KATHRYN READ •

Here's TO THE World

By Deanna Moore

Kathryn Read chuckles. "I have never thought anybody would be that interested in me," she says softly.

Read currently resides in Camellia Gardens of Life Care in Thomasville, Ga. To describe her as humble is an understatement. After living 102 years and helping thousands of people, she hasn't let her outstanding accomplishments go to her head and is still amazed that people are interested in her remarkable story.

Read was born in September 1909 in Philadelphia, Pa. While the city's nickname – the City of Brotherly Love – may not have influenced Read directly in her many self-sacrificing



acts, her life followed a pattern of exemplifying the characteristics of brotherly love to all with whom she came in contact.

Read was the oldest of the three Sonneborn children. She

believes that her parents played a large part in the charity she has shown toward others throughout her life.

"They treated us as a unit," Read says. "They were just as kind and interested in each of us. They gave us a chance to have a full life, all three of us."

Her father was a well-known, successful banker in the Philadelphia area.

"Every week he would bring my mom clean money," Read says. "He didn't like her to have dirty money."

As a young woman, Read traveled with her sister, Doris, who she fondly called Doss, to Atlantic City to visit





Doss' boyfriend, a young hotel owner named Jack Lippencott. While there, Jack and Doss set Read up on a blind date with physician Hilton Read. Hilton was immediately fascinated with the blue-eyed brunette beside him. But, Read was not impressed.

When Hilton asked Read if she would like to come and spend every weekend in Atlantic City, she frankly told him that she might have other things to do. And, she made it known that his mustache and proper dress were not strong selling points in her book.

"He immediately shaved his mustache and started wearing sporty clothes," she laughs. The couple's next date was to see *Gone with the Wind*.

The Reads were married in the winter of 1941. Their passion for service and the love they had for

each other brought them together in an unbreakable union of self-sacrifice throughout their marriage. They gave of their time, energy and resources to help those in need, never asking for anything in return.

The bombing of Pearl Harbor occurred only a short time after their wedding, and the couple felt the world needed their help. Having served in World War I as an artillery officer, Hilton volunteered his services in medicine and teaching during World War II.

"He was a pacifist, but he knew they would need doctors," Read says. "So, he volunteered."

The couple was temporarily transferred to Thomasville, Ga., where Hilton became the chief of medical services at Finney General Hospital. During their time in the city, they made long-lasting friendships which would eventually lead them to relocate once more to Thomasville in their retirement years.

When the war ended, the Reads traveled to Germany and saw firsthand the devastation in the country that was left desolate and despised by so many in the United States. The Reads were shocked by the deplorable working conditions

When the war ended, the Reads traveled to Germany and saw firsthand the devastation in the country that was left desolate and despised by so many in the United States.



The Ventnor Foundation is just one example in a long line of selfless acts that Kathryn Read has performed throughout her life.



to celebrate Read's 90th birthday and then again in 2009 for her 100th birthday. Because of her inability to travel as extensively, the foundation members decided to bring the meetings to Thomasville every other year so Read could participate.

The Ventnor Foundation is just one example in a long line of selfless acts that Kathryn Read has performed throughout her life. Each year on May Day, the Reads would take hundreds of tiny baskets of wildflowers to homes throughout their community and leave them before dawn so no one would know who was responsible for the beautiful gifts. Read also donated her time to read to children at Thomasville's Jerger Elementary School. Adjacent to the school, a group of Read's friends planted a rose garden in her honor, a tribute to her humble spirit and her countless anonymous acts of kindness.

When asked about her secret to such an amazing, long life, Read responds, "Never stop moving." She adds, "Never stop playing tennis."

Tennis is the love of her life, having been a member of the

Germantown Friends School team as a young teen and later, founding the Swarthmore's women's tennis team.

According to friends, Read was struggling with a shoulder injury later in life. She went to see an orthopedic surgeon who prescribed medication and physical therapy. Diligent and disciplined in performing the prescribed exercises, she returned to the doctor after a month or so, and he congratulated her on her recovery. However, he was concerned.

The surgeon cautioned, "Kathryn, what are you going to do when I tell you one day that you are just not able to play tennis anymore?"

Without batting an eye, Read responded, "I'll find another doctor." She kept her game up until the age of 93.

The late sister of this gentle soul once characterized her as "remarkable," "generous"

and "respected." It is a fitting description of this amazing woman, who, at 102, still has sparkling eyes, a quick wit, a wry smile, a keen memory, a wonderful attitude and a strong will. Her love of life is infectious.

"She has the most wonderful attitude," says family friend Mary Wise, "and that just exudes to everybody else."

Winston Churchill once said, "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give." Kathryn Read's life has been a full one and has embodied the spirit of giving – of herself, her time and her resources.

Throughout their lifelong journey of service, the Reads created a central message to their mission: "Here's to the world – one family be it, and may this family live to see it." 🙏

that German doctors faced, as well as the lack of quality education in the country. They discussed the idea of inviting a few young medical students to area hospitals in the United States for their residency.

"Hilton thought that if the Germans came over and got to

know the Americans and saw what our doctors were doing, and the Americans saw that the Germans were human beings too, then, maybe, as he put it, 'we could wage peace,'" Read says.

In 1951, the couple's idea turned into a lifelong project. The Reads set up the Ventnor Foundation, named after the New Jersey town in which they were living at the time. The goal of the foundation they established was that young German residents would "work in our hospitals as interns, getting the same pay, doing the same work, having the same complaints as other interns. Then, they would return to their homeland, loving us or not loving us, but knowing us in depth."

The Ventnor Foundation brought more than 1,600 residents to the United States from 1951 to 1976. Over time, it extended its reach to medical

residents in Austria, Switzerland, India, South Africa and Japan.

"It was a meeting of the minds in the hope that we could help prevent another war," says Read. She lovingly referred to the residents as "foster children" and stayed in contact with the men and women who were blessed by her dedication to a dream of peace.

Dr. Hilton Read died in 1984, but his wife continues to stay in touch with her "foster children." For many years, she traveled to Europe for annual Ventnor Foundation meetings, celebrating the accomplishments of those who were brought to the U.S. because of the Reads. In 1991, the annual meeting was held in Thomasville for the first time, and during the meeting, a live oak tree, named "Hilton Read's Oak," was planted. The meeting returned to Thomasville in 1999





In the Middle of It All

By Tanya Bumgardner

The '60s were a study in contradiction if there ever was one. The U.S. was at war, both abroad as we fought against the threat of the Cold War and at home as we fought for civil rights on our own soil. Those calling for peace staged protests, and the psychedelic era ushered in a period of drug use not seen before. We grieved a lost president and rebelled against the strict social mores of the '50s.

But in the midst of this time of turmoil was a surprising optimism. We landed on the moon and put a television in nearly every home, opening our eyes to the world. We had flower power and an intense longing for peace. We were in an age of expression, and we found our voice through music. Rock 'n' roll exploded to give us Motown, the British Invasion, surf rock, blues rock, folk and pop. We shaped our

culture through music, and at the same time, music shaped us. In the middle of it all was Bud O'Shea. In 1967, 24-year-old O'Shea's closest connection to the music industry was a 12-string guitar and his band, The Folkswingers. Living in San Francisco, Calif., he supported himself and his new bride, Donna, by working at a tool and die company while she worked as a flight attendant

for American Airlines. But O'Shea always had hopes of entering the recording industry someday. That same year, O'Shea heard of an opening at a local independent record label that represented larger labels. Thanks to a fellow band member and a few other friends, he got a job in promotions. During this time, he worked for Capitol Records with Ken Mansfield, former district promotion manager for Capitol and former U.S. manager for Apple Records, a Beatles-owned label.

"In San Francisco, which was one of our major creative markets, his job called for him to not only be able to sell and promote our product but to understand what was going on on the street... He was in charge of artist relations and promotion and everything that happened in the San Francisco area with the Capitol roster, which was a pretty exciting roster at that time," Mansfield said.

O'Shea suddenly found himself working for a record company that handled many of music's most

popular artists at the time, Linda Ronstadt, The Beach Boys, Glen Campbell, The Steve Miller Band, Pink Floyd and, most notably, The Beatles. One of O'Shea's favorite memories of his time in the music business was when he spent a weekend with George Harrison and Ringo Starr.

Mansfield tells the story in his book *Between Wyomings: My God and an iPod on the Open Road*. He asked O'Shea to look after a couple of Capitol's artists one weekend in 1968. O'Shea respectfully explained he already had plans with his wife. Mansfield urged him to go.

"All right," [O'Shea] said with a certain lack of enthusiasm. "Who are they, and what does it entail?"

"I told him Ringo Starr and George Harrison were checking into one of the grandest hotels on the West Coast, the Hotel Del Monte in Pebble Beach. I informed him they wanted someone to hang with them and show them around. I know he didn't hang up, but the phone seemed to have gone dead for quite a while.

"You've got to be joking," he said in an almost whisper.

O'Shea spent the weekend with the famed artists showing them the sights of Southern California while trying to prevent crazed fans from causing mayhem at the same time. Harrison and Starr wanted to walk the streets, not realizing what a stir they might create at a time when Beatlemania was at its height.

Mansfield continued: "Ringo and George wanted to play golf on one of the most prestigious courses in the world. The fact that George and Ringo weren't golfers was of no matter. It turned out that the back nine holes had to be closed down because of their presence. The whole thing was just bizarre – they were hitting golf balls all over the place. They'd drive from one tee and their balls landed on another fairway. The main thing they were into was commandeering the golf cart – pushing each other out of the way so that they could drive it. Picture this: two Beatles going all over the

place like kids in a bumper car. They were having a ball!"

As the 1970s approached, CBS heard about O'Shea's



Infinity launched artists such as Rupert Holmes, Hot Chocolate and Spyro Gyra.

In 1979, MCA decided to consolidate MCA Records and Infinity, causing O'Shea to eye another exploding industry – home entertainment.

As the '70s ended, the '80s ushered in the age of



reputation as a savvy promotions man and lured him away from Capitol. This time, he had the opportunity to work with another group known for causing hysteria – the Jackson 5.

"When the Jackson 5 was appearing at a local Tower Records store in San Francisco, Bud thought it would be fun for Kevin, our small son, to see them," said Donna. "As the crowd grew and began to pack tighter together as they tried to get into the store, it became so congested that they literally pressed to the point that the plate glass windows shattered and pandemonium ensued."

O'Shea – now a father of two, Kevin and Heather – would only stay with CBS for a few years before he went to work for MCA Records (now Universal Music Group) and started Infinity Records in the late '70s with Ron Alexenburg.

video. Set-top video players, Walk-mans, MTV and HBO brought movies and music to us, allowing us to be entertained in the comfort of our own homes. O'Shea recognized this shift in entertainment and took the position of senior vice president of MCA Discovision, a



company designed to make the MCA movie library available to consumers on laserdisc.

As history would prove, the laserdisc would have a difficult time competing against VHS and would eventually evolve into the current DVD format. O'Shea remained with the home entertainment industry during this time, becoming one of its pioneers, working for the video division of 20th Century Fox and later as president/COO of the U.S. and international divisions of MGM/UA Home Video.

In 1989, he oversaw the release of one of our most beloved films of all-time on VHS and laserdisc in honor of its 50th anniversary – *The Wizard of Oz*. He also led

the release of *Gone With the Wind* and other favorites.

O'Shea continued to be a leader in the home

entertainment industry, later working for companies such as Sony Pictures Entertainment and Metro-media Entertainment

Group Home Video to help facilitate the release of our favorite movies on DVD. In 1992, his accomplishments were recognized when he



received the Ellis Island Medal of Honor.

"The Ellis Island Review Board reviewed his history and selected him based on his contributions as an influential and innovative business leader as well as for his contributions in maintaining our national identity while preserving his Irish heritage," said Donna. "There are 100 people selected for this honor nationwide annually. Bud was more than humbled to be counted that year among such luminaries as Sen. Bob Dole, Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf and the oldest serving senator in the U.S. at the time, Sen. Strom Thurmond."

It is hard to fathom the success O'Shea, now a resident at Life Care Center of North Glendale in Glendale, Ariz., has enjoyed over the years. Few people can say they spent a weekend with The Beatles or

led companies that pioneered the delivery of movies into our homes. But what was the key to his success? His genuine, friendly manner.

"He just had a smile and a way," said Mansfield. "He was very kind, always kind to everybody, always courteous to everybody."



Sometimes when you are working with big stars, you can cop an attitude, but Bud was always there to help and just do his job. He was just special. He was one of those special people. Over the years and different companies, I can't remember how many people have

worked for me or I have worked for, and there are only a few people that stand out over that time."

Much has changed since the '60s, but we now find ourselves at a similar crossroads. Technology allows us to be more connected today than ever, yet we are divided by politics and economic woes. But music and movies still give us an outlet for expression and the opportunity to hold on to our optimism, and it's thanks to pioneers like Bud O'Shea. 🐾



Parachute *Silk* Bride

• MARTHA WAYMIRE •



By Heidi Tompkins



Photo by Chameleon Studio Photography

Twenty-year-old Martha Karl walked down the aisle to meet the dashing young military policeman, her groom, Vernon “Bud” Waymire.

The couple took their vows for the first time that Friday under military orders... then repeated them again on Saturday in a civil ceremony at a Lutheran church in Frankfurt am Main.

Germany, 1948. Two hearts united from two different worlds, joined by love and common values and hopes for the future.

Martha proudly wore a wedding gown she made from Bud’s Army parachute. The

white silk made for war now

gently graced the blonde, blue-eyed lady who was determined to take whatever life threw at her and make the best she could out of it.

Throughout her life, this attitude has helped Martha Waymire, a resident at Life Care Center of Rochester, Ind., get through countless challenges.

These began when Waymire was only a toddler, growing up in Frankfurt. Her parents divorced, and her father remained distant from his children even though he supported them and their mother financially. One of her

three older brothers died of leukemia.

As Hitler rose to power, things began to change in the country, though Waymire was too young to understand what was happening. She noticed shops once owned by Jews boarded up, for example, but she did not know why.

When Waymire was 12, Germany invaded Poland, and the war officially began.

Waymire had just graduated from eighth grade when the government shepherded her into a Hitler Movement Group camp against the wishes of her mother. She was one of 80 German girls in her class being taught lessons in

housekeeping and sewing, as well as Nazi propaganda.

Waymire had a mind of her own, however, and whatever the government or other authorities tried to do, she only went along as far as was necessary to get by.

School only lasted so long, though, and in wartime, workers were needed badly. Waymire was shuffled into her first job at age 15, working as a secretary at a radio manufacturer in Frankfurt.

The war dragged on, and the Allied forces began bombing Germany, including Frankfurt. The city was bombed several times, but on March 22, 1944, the worst destruction took place.

Waymire and her family were at a movie in Anspach (a suburb outside the city), when the movie suddenly stopped and the audience was told to go home. When they got out of the building, they looked to the south, and Frankfurt was burning.

The next morning, Waymire returned to find what used to be her house. She was left with nothing but the clothes on her back and some items she had moved to her sister-in-law’s house in Anspach. It was a dark day for Frankfurt – 1,000 citizens lost their lives, and the old portion of the city was destroyed beyond repair.

For aid, Waymire and her mother received the bare necessities – one pair of shoes, one sweater and one dress. Rations were minimal.

“It was a lot rougher on the German citizens than I think a lot of people realized,” shared Waymire’s son Kurt.

Waymire still had her job, but not for long. The bombing of the city continued, and the factory was hit during one of the bomb runs. Waymire barely escaped before the building collapsed, holding tightly to the coat of a man who sped to the exit.

The war was not through taking from Waymire’s family, however – her two brothers died on the front, one in Belgium and the other in France.

She was one of 80 German girls in her class being taught lessons in housekeeping and sewing, as well as Nazi propaganda.

When the fighting ended, Waymire and her mother slowly tried to pick up the pieces of their lives, and Waymire went to work as a waitress in a commissary for American soldiers.

“It was a basement kind of thing, and they had windows on the side, and all the girls, when they walked in, [the soldiers] could see them,” Kurt said. This was how his parents met, a story he has heard a few times.

“Dad noticed she had the nicest legs,” he said.

The attraction was mutual, and the couple courted for two years. At first, Waymire’s mother was

wary of the arrangement, wanting to protect her daughter from the unknown intentions of a foreign soldier, but once she got to know the honorable young American, she felt more at ease.

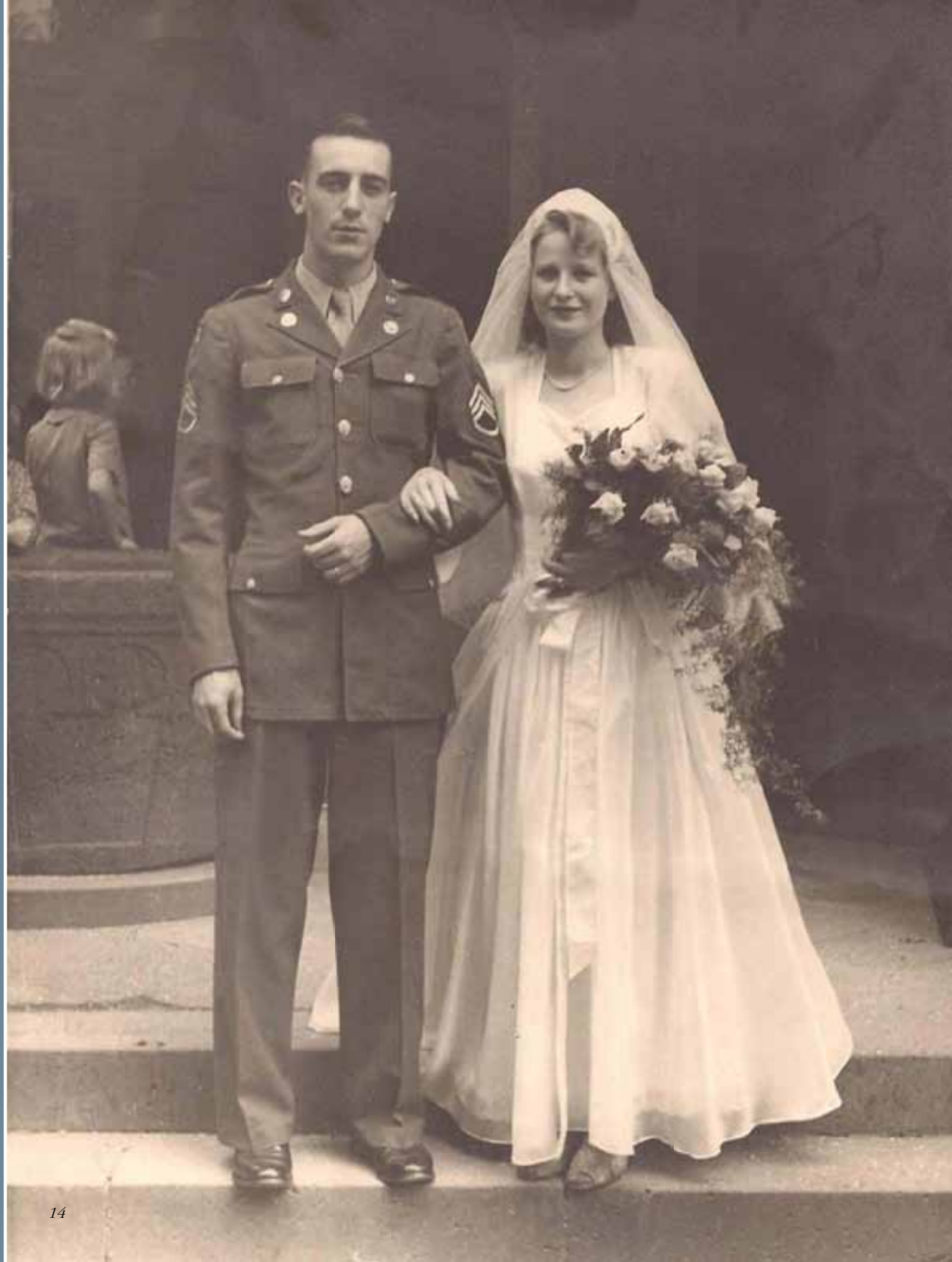
Sometimes, on a date, Waymire and Bud would go dancing. They were quite the sight – Bud’s Army dog, who followed him everywhere, would go out on the dance floor with them!

Bud wooed Waymire with kindness and even bought her a pair of brown suede shoes and a watch in Switzerland. His letters to his mother and sisters in Indiana glowed with love for his newfound lady, and his family sent a blouse and skirt for Waymire as well. Bud took pictures of her in the new outfit and sent them home so his family could see.

The Waymire family’s generosity had only begun to show. When Bud announced the couple’s engagement, his family sent materials for the wedding along with their best wishes, and when Waymire left her home country less than a month after the wedding, they welcomed her to her new home in the United States with open arms.

Waymire quickly took care of a little bit of business – retrieving Bud’s class ring from his ex-girlfriend. She showed up at the young woman’s house one day, introduced herself as Mrs. Waymire, and told her she wanted her husband’s class ring back. It is one of the family’s favorite stories.

Waymire had learned English before coming to the United States, so that eased the difficult



transition. She missed her mother, but she fully embraced her new life.

As soon as Waymire could apply for U.S. citizenship, she did.

In the home, Waymire spoke English only, and she only kept a few German traditions, like cooking sauerbraten and cabbage. Her passion for embracing her new country was something she would not only carry herself but would share with others.

“She was instrumental in helping a lot of Mexican immigrants get their citizenship because she knew how important it was and what it took to get it done,” Kurt shared.

Determination factored greatly into how Waymire has faced challenges as the years have gone by. For example, she lost the fingers on her left hand in a push-press accident while working in a factory, but even then, Kurt said, “It never slowed her down. If she ever felt sorry for herself, I never saw it.”

Loss found Waymire again when her eldest son, Michael, was killed in Vietnam. Since then, her third son of four (Max) and her husband have both passed away of Parkinson’s disease.

Waymire’s children, including the youngest son, Kerry, have looked up to their mother’s strength in handling life and have found it helpful in

facing their own troubles, such as when Kurt also lost a son.

“My mother is very strong-willed, and she showed me that each day is a gift and not to worry about what happened yesterday because you can’t do anything about it,” Kurt said. “She is the one who’s helped me through a lot of different situations.”

Sometimes people are dealt less-than-ideal situations. What they do with the lives they are given defines who they are – people of courage, people of resourcefulness. Martha Waymire has proven to be nothing less than this – a woman who could take a wartime parachute and turn it into a beautiful wedding dress. 🇺🇸



• JAMES H. STEELE •

The Father of Veterinary Public Health

By Dara Carroll

Today's average American lifespan is about 78 years. Amazingly, that's more than 28 years longer than the average life expectancy in 1900. What's even more amazing is that a lot of the credit for our improved health can be attributed to veterinarians. During the 20th century, veterinarians played a major role in organizing the public

health structure of America, and leading the charge was Dr. James H. Steele. A veterinarian who went on to complete a master's degree in public health at Harvard University, Steele has devoted his life to the discovery and control of zoonotic diseases and to the promotion of one health – the idea that human health is directly related to animal

health and that both affect our economic well-being. Steele's original interest was preserving the environment. The Chicago native entered Michigan State University in 1937 to study forestry, but soon set his sights on becoming a doctor of veterinary medicine. In addition to helping him choose a career path, Steele's

time at MSU gave him a sharper focus for his interest in the environment.

"The whole philosophy of Michigan State University was community service," said Steele. "Being a veterinarian, I thought the control of animal diseases would contribute to the development of public health and also the environment. And, that became my goal: eliminating animal diseases that threatened public health and keeping the community free [from disease] so it could profit accordingly. And out of that, we developed the formula good public health + good animal health = good economic health. And, that has been my goal most of my professional career."

On June 14, 1941, Steele graduated from MSU and married his girlfriend from Chicago, Aina Oberg. The couple relocated to Boston, where Steele had received a scholarship for the Masters in Public Health program at Harvard University. Carrying countless plans and hopes for the future with his young bride, Steele started graduate classes in September. Before the year was out, Aina was diagnosed with tuberculosis, and the U.S. was at war.

While Aina recovered in a sanitarium, Steele was commissioned into the U.S. Public Health Service and served in the Caribbean, South Atlantic Command.

The couple had three sons between 1944 and 1952, but Aina's health was never fully restored.

She eventually succumbed to tuberculosis in March 1969.

Despite the hardship and heartbreak of Aina's health problems, Steele was determined

remembers meeting with "tough-looking" Joseph Mountain at the end of the war. The high-ranking public health official threw down a challenge: "He looked me over



to pursue his passion for public health. Veterinarians played a key role for the military during World War II, helping with everything from epidemiology and food safety to overall community health. But many wondered what veterinarians could offer the Public Health Service once the war was over.

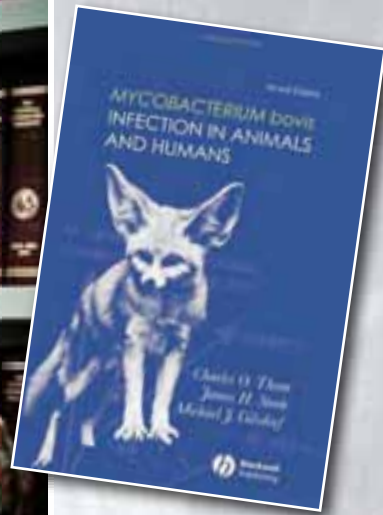
Domineering himself at 6 feet 4 inches, Steele clearly



and said, 'Steele? What are you veterinarians gonna do for public health now that the war is over?' And, that became my marching orders, to see what we could do."

It didn't take Steele long to prove there was plenty veterinarians could do.

When the Communicable Disease Center (now the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) was established in 1946, Steele was asked to be a part. He founded the veterinary division and introduced the principles of veterinary public health to the world. The division, which investigated the transmission of animal diseases to humans – zoonoses – was the



“GIVE PEOPLE A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT, AND THEY’RE GOING TO WORK HARD AND DO BETTER. AND, THAT HAS BEEN MY GOAL: IMPROVING THE ENVIRONMENT FOR MAN AND ANIMALS SO THEY’LL HAVE FREEDOM FROM DISEASE SO THEY CAN WORK AND REPRODUCE AND HAVE SUCCESSFUL LIVES. THAT GIVES ME GREAT PLEASURE.”

first of its kind and became the model for future international health agencies like the World Health Organization and the Pan American Health Organization.

“I am one of the few survivors of January 1946, when the CDC came into being,” said Steele. “When I was there, the [CDC] had a budget of \$5 million a year. Now, it’s \$5 billion, and something like 15,000 employees nationwide, as well as worldwide.”

Steele’s early years at the CDC were focused on rabies control.

“At the end of the war, we were probably having the biggest epidemic of rabies ever recorded,” he explained. “The reason for that is thousands of people were moving around the nation, and thousands of pets were abandoned.”

Steele and his team began studying rabies and vaccine duration. After five years of testing, they knew they had a safe vaccine. They also developed a plan of action: conduct a rabies

awareness campaign, pick up stray dogs and vaccinate them. The successful intervention stopped the outbreak and became a model of rabies control that is still internationally followed.

“Today, we as veterinarians can all proudly say we did our bit in eliminating rabies in dogs and cats,” said Steele.

After the rabies breakthrough, Steele was more passionate than ever about his belief in one health. Eager to continue veterinary efforts to improve public health, Steele focused his efforts on other zoonotic diseases, like bovine tuberculosis, brucellosis in cattle and avian influenza. In fact, he contracted the deadly flu himself.

“In 1959, I came down with something I thought was malaria,” said Steele, “but it turned out I became the first victim of avian influenza, the grandfather of all avian influenza viruses, H7N7.”

Although it took Steele two years to fully recover from his

bout with the flu, it was the only thing he ever caught, despite being exposed to so many diseases.

In 1950, Steele’s advances in veterinary public health were rewarded when he became the U.S.’s first Chief Veterinary Officer and an advisor to the Surgeon General. In 1968, he became the Assistant Surgeon General. After retiring from the position in 1972, he was hired as a professor of environmental health at the University of Texas School of Public Health in Houston. In 1983, he retired again, moving into the role of professor emeritus.

In the last 30 years, Steele has continued his work with the school and also served as a consultant with WHO, PAHO, the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations and several other national and international bodies.

Widely regarded as the “father of veterinary public health,” Steele has also had a major

impact on veterinary and public health education. In addition to his time on the faculty at UT, he has given countless lectures around the world, served on panel discussions and published several books and scholarly articles on zoonoses and public health. One of his most highly regarded works is the *CRC Handbook Series in Zoonoses*, an eight-book set he edited that is regarded as the best early reference source in the field.

Steele’s influence in the field of veterinary public health has been recognized with countless awards. Additionally, several international awards, lecture series and institutional chairs have been renamed in his honor. His 70-plus years of groundbreaking research and work will be felt for generations and are chronicled in a 2009 biography written by one of his protégés: *One Man, One Medicine, One Health: The James H. Steele Story*.

The extent of Steele’s impact on public health and world economy is difficult to measure. But, if you ask him to reflect and summarize his life’s work, his answer is simple. “I am quite satisfied,” he said. “There are now thousands of people who have followed the kind of career that I laid out for veterinarians in public health and who follow the formula of good public health plus good animal health provides for good economic health.”

Steele explains the concept: “In the United States, we’ve eliminated many environmental health problems of animal origin.

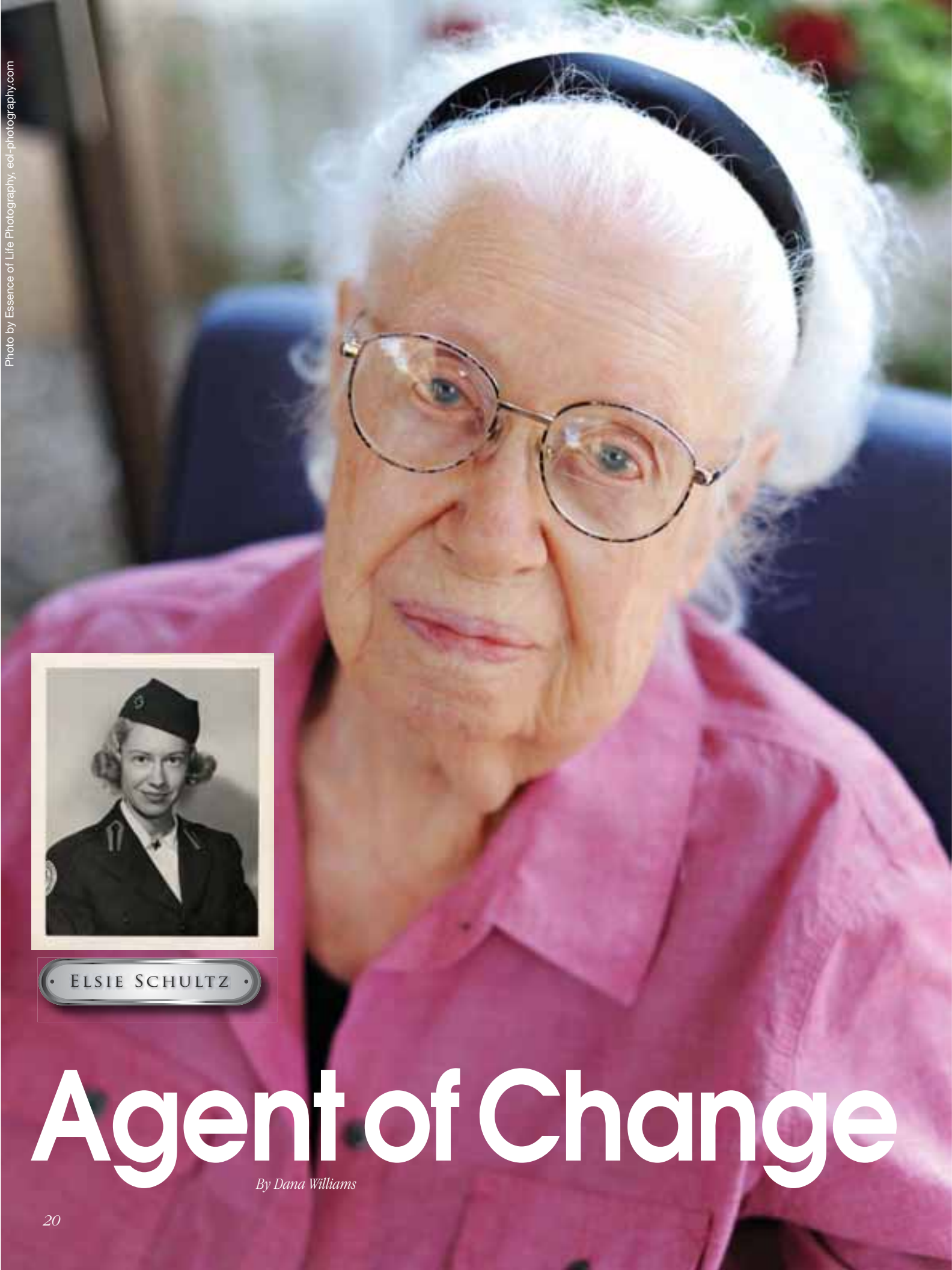
“All of these different problems – as they’re solved, we’re solving some of their most economic challenges,” continued Steele. “Give people a healthy environment, and they’re going to work hard and do better. And, that has been my goal: improving the environment for man and

animals so they’ll have freedom from disease so they can work and reproduce and have successful lives. That gives me great pleasure.”

Today, Steele is a resident at The Vosswood Nursing Center in Houston, Texas. He continues to receive updates from the CDC and other organizations on the state of public health and maintains an office at UT. Although he is still sought after as a consultant, his focus these days is family, including four grandchildren and visits with his wife of more than 40 years, Brigitte. He is also eagerly looking ahead to his 100th birthday next April.

“It’s great to be a public health worker,” said Steele with a glint in his eye, “because you live longer than anybody else!”

Thanks to the work of Dr. Steele, we’re all enjoying a better quality of life – and living a little longer. 🐾



• ELSIE SCHULTZ •

Agent of Change

By Dana Williams

Elsie Mae Schultz, a farm girl from Indiana, grew up on corn, wheat and soy beans – produce that would carry her 11-member family through the Great Depression. Her Quaker upbringing provided a firm foundation on which she built a life centered on service to others.

Schultz never lacked in ambition. Aspiring to follow in the footsteps of her role model who was a successful lady in the social service work industry, she received grants and scholarships to Ohio State University and earned a Bachelor of Science in social administration in 1942. Then she earned her master's degree from Smith's College of Social Work.

After school, Schultz entered the American Red Cross Special Unit and was stationed in Charleston, S.C., from 1942 – 1946. Her military-equivalent rank was Red Cross Supervisor in military hospitals. Much later in life, in 1994, she became a charter member of the Women in Military Service Memorial. A plaque acknowledging her service captures one of her most memorable service-time experiences in her own words: "During my assignment at Stark General Hospital in Charleston, I had the opportunity to take Helen Keller on a visit through the hospital as she spent time with patients who had eye injuries. Her very presence gave these patients encouragement and hope."

Today, those four years still represent some of the most impactful experiences of her life.

"If you want to ask me what was the most important aspect of my social work career, it would be four years of service



with the American Red Cross during World War II... I still feel tears when I think about a youngster who was 18 years old facing a combat situation."

During her time with the Red Cross and while in San Francisco waiting to be transferred to a



different duty station, Shultz and a friend visited Top of the Mark, a local restaurant, to have a drink. This is how she retells the evening she met her husband.

"There wasn't any space except for at a table that had two sailors seated. So we asked the two sailors if they would mind if two Red Cross girls sat with them. They said, 'Whoopee!' That's how I met Bert Schultz. And the interesting part of that story is that the sailors didn't have any money. They were looking for somebody that could pay for their drink... And we paid for more than their drink."

Schultz and Bert were married for 40 years until he passed away. According to Schultz, the secret to a long, happy marriage is found in a bit of advice her mother always shared, "Life is like a bank account; you need to put more in than you take out."

Once they married, Schultz and Bert moved to Pueblo, Colo., where she took her social work

career in a different direction with the Pueblo County Welfare Department. Schultz lightheartedly explains that her first duty was answering the telephones. She then became a child welfare consultant because she had a degree from a prestigious school. She remembers, “When any place

Schultz went even further. She headed a special committee that applied for a grant from the National Institute of Mental Health. Because of receiving that grant, program improvements included hiring a trained director for the county court probation department; providing special attention to the placement of minority children

“Every boy had a different story, and it didn’t make any difference if it was lack of home care or school difficulties. They all had a resistance to supervision that you had to break down until they saw supervision as a different aspect of their lives instead of fighting it,” said Schultz. “It was really a simple task. Although we had trained psychologists and social



in the social work field pulled up that degree, you could have a job.”

In 1948, Schultz took some time to be at home and give birth to her first child. Two more quickly came in 1949 and 1950. Once the youngest was ready to go to preschool, Schultz went back to work. She went to Parkview Hospital, then St. Mary Corwin Hospital, establishing discharge processes to provide smoother transitions and continuity of care for patients.

During this time, Schultz was also asked to take on the task of launching a new program, the Pueblo Youth Center. With the assistance of other town leaders, she was successful in turning what had been an old work farm in the past into this community service.

in foster homes; establishing the family service unit in the welfare department; and opening a group foster home for the older adolescent boys.

“I received great satisfaction watching the successful outcomes of this program,” said Schultz.

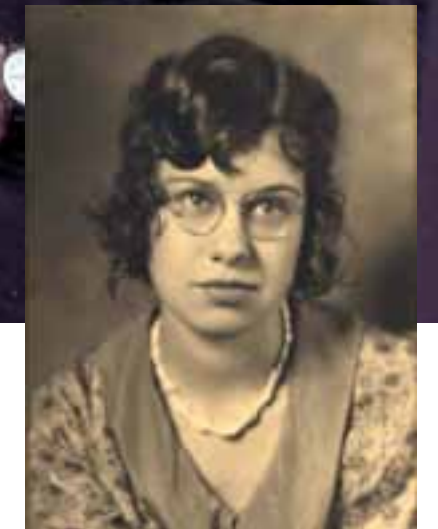
In 1960, the state of Colorado licensed the Pueblo Youth Center to care for a maximum of 25 children ages 9 – 16. The program provided foster care programs for older children. At that time, Pueblo and Boulder Counties were the only two counties in Colorado providing this care. Schultz’s role as one of the first board members gave her the opportunity to play an active part in essential tasks like furnishing the boys’ rooms and overseeing the quality of food served.

workers, the most important aspect of care was the personal relationship they had with the parental group at the ranch.

Schultz continued, “[They needed] someone who understood what life was like for them [and who was] trying to help them change. [I wanted them] not to expect everything to happen but [to understand] that they themselves had some control over their lives.”

Pueblo Youth Center, now called El Pueblo, an Adolescent Treatment Community, has served more than 4,000 youth since its beginning in 1960. In 1977, at age 65, Shultz retired from Pueblo Youth Center but continued in her life’s work as a contracted social worker for Child Welfare Adoption Services to review adoption applications.

“I was at the grocery store standing in line, and a little girl came up to me and said, ‘Mrs. Schultz, I know who you are.’ And I said, ‘How do you know that? I don’t know you.’ And she said, ‘Yes, you do; you found me my momma and daddy.’”



Approving families for adoption was a great responsibility. Schultz describes what she looked for in finding a child the right applicants.

“I looked for a family – I’d have an interview with a husband and a wife, and if they already had children, include those children in the interview,” explained Schultz. “[We talked] about what they thought about being displaced, so to speak, as a family unit. We sought recommendations from people in the community. [I looked for] good interaction between all the people in the family unit and what they were willing to contribute.”

One rewarding experience that stands out among Schultz’s career

years took place while she was running errands in town one day.

“I was at the grocery store standing in line, and a little girl came up to me and said, ‘Mrs. Schultz, I know who you are.’ And I said, ‘How do you know that? I don’t know you.’ And she said, ‘Yes, you do; you found me my momma and daddy.’ That was the most pleasure I think I’ve ever had in all the time I’ve spent working in a welfare area.”

Schultz retired for the second time in 1984 at age 72. During retirement, she opened a ceramics studio 25 miles west of Pueblo in Beulah, Colo., and took up water-based oil painting. Now, she enjoys abstract watercolor painting.

At age 99, Schultz lives at Life Care Center of Pueblo, Colo.,

and her ability to recount details with humor and passion makes listening to her stories not only interesting but inspiring. Schultz says the most important advice is, “Never go to bed angry.” And her secret to living a long life is to take good care of your teeth. She still has all of her own.

The thread of continuity throughout her life is the desire she has always had for making a real difference in people’s lives. As she puts it, her motivation in life was always, “Change. It was always to change the situation.”



• GEORGE JOSEPH WALLS •

A man of Importance

By Jared Powers

Photo by Vick Laney

An unassuming man, with a connection and story for everyone who walks through his door, sits in a wheelchair. His white turtleneck matches the color of his hair. The television is on, playing a forgotten program. Hands clasped nervously in his lap, he is unsure of where to begin. After a few quiet minutes, he decides.

George Joseph Walls of Coal Hill, Tenn., was born Sept. 5, 1929, to Clifton and Maud Walls. The third of 12 children, Walls' father provided for his family through a variety of careers, including being a Baptist minister, blacksmith, coal miner, farmer and school bus driver. Walls' mother was a housewife and later worked as a cook at an elementary school.

Walls began work at age 14 as a delivery boy and laborer on the Manhattan Project at the Y-12 National Security Complex in Oak Ridge, Tenn. The plant was operational in 1943 and began work separating uranium for the atomic bomb Little Boy, which was dropped on Hiroshima, Japan, on Aug. 6, 1945.

At the age of 16, near the end of World War II, Walls forged enlistment papers, joined the U.S. Army Air Forces and started airplane mechanic school. After a call from his father, he was sent back home, but not before he was decorated as a World War II veteran.

In 1949, Walls enlisted in the Merchant Marines, hauling cargo and ore across the Great Lakes. Then, in January 1951, he was drafted into the Army and trained by the "Dixie" Division, the 31st Infantry. He was then transferred to the 8th Cavalry Regiment and served in Korea for seven months before being honorably discharged in January 1953.

"A while back, I looked up some of the guys I served with in the war," Walls trails off and stares into the distance. Tears begin to fall, and he

is silent. After a few minutes and a regained composure, Walls shares, "I'm sorry I got emotional about my military stuff. I don't usually do that unless we are talking about the guys. I fought quite a few battles in Korea."

Walls is silent again. Memories kept locked away are dangerously close to bursting forth into the open. His eyes gaze into the distance as he recovers, and he changes topics.

After his discharge, Walls moved back home to Tennessee. While working for a life insurance company, he frequented the local Citizens First Bank and caught sight of a bookkeeper named Mary Jo Brasel. Walls was smitten.

After one date with Mary Jo, Walls knew she was the one. Soon after their courtship began, Walls took Mary Jo to the local theatre and, sitting in his car, he proposed. They were married on Dec. 5, 1954.

Shortly after getting married, Walls bought an Esso station in Wartburg, Tenn. He and his bride moved around for a few years, living in Danville, Ky., and Muncie, Ind., but their home state kept calling. In 1960, Walls built a house on Mary Jo's parents' land, where they started their family. The couple went on to have four children: Joni, Robert, Wayne and George Jr.

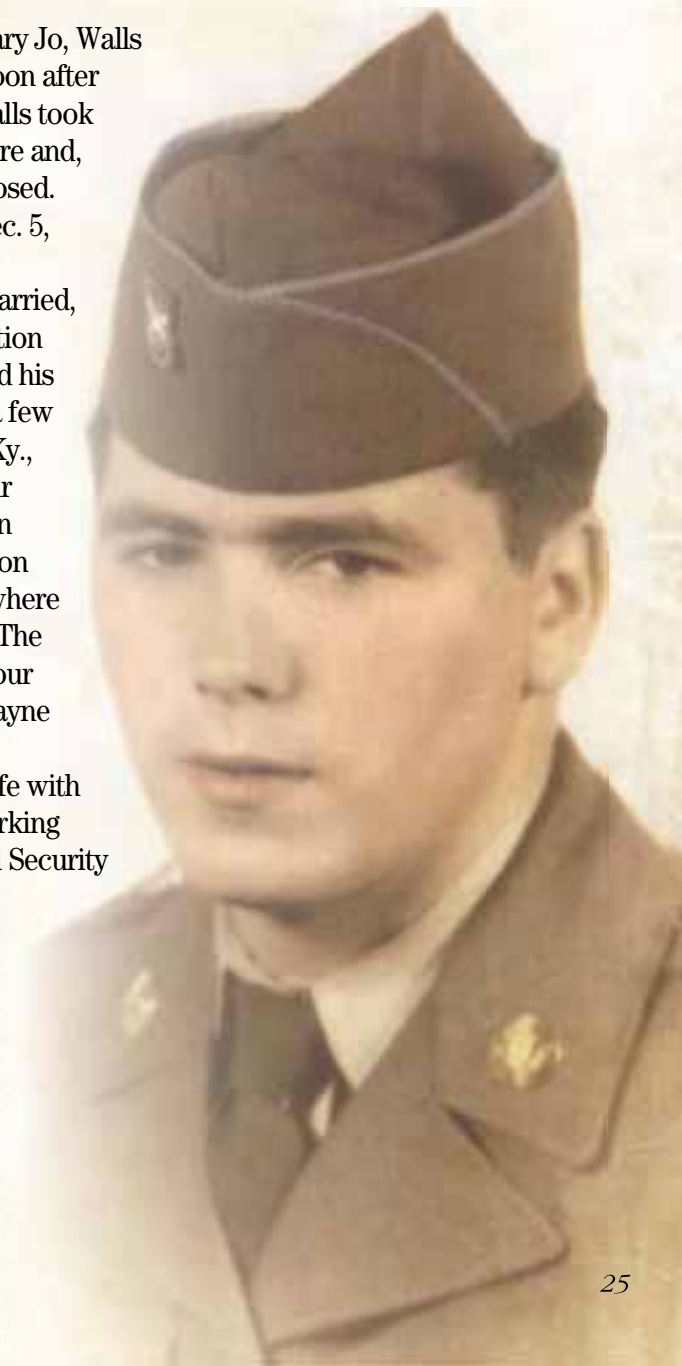
Settling into married life with children, Walls began working again at the Y-12 National Security Complex, this time as a machinist. Y-12 was known for its precision machining, producing the "moon boxes" for NASA to bring lunar surface samples to Earth.

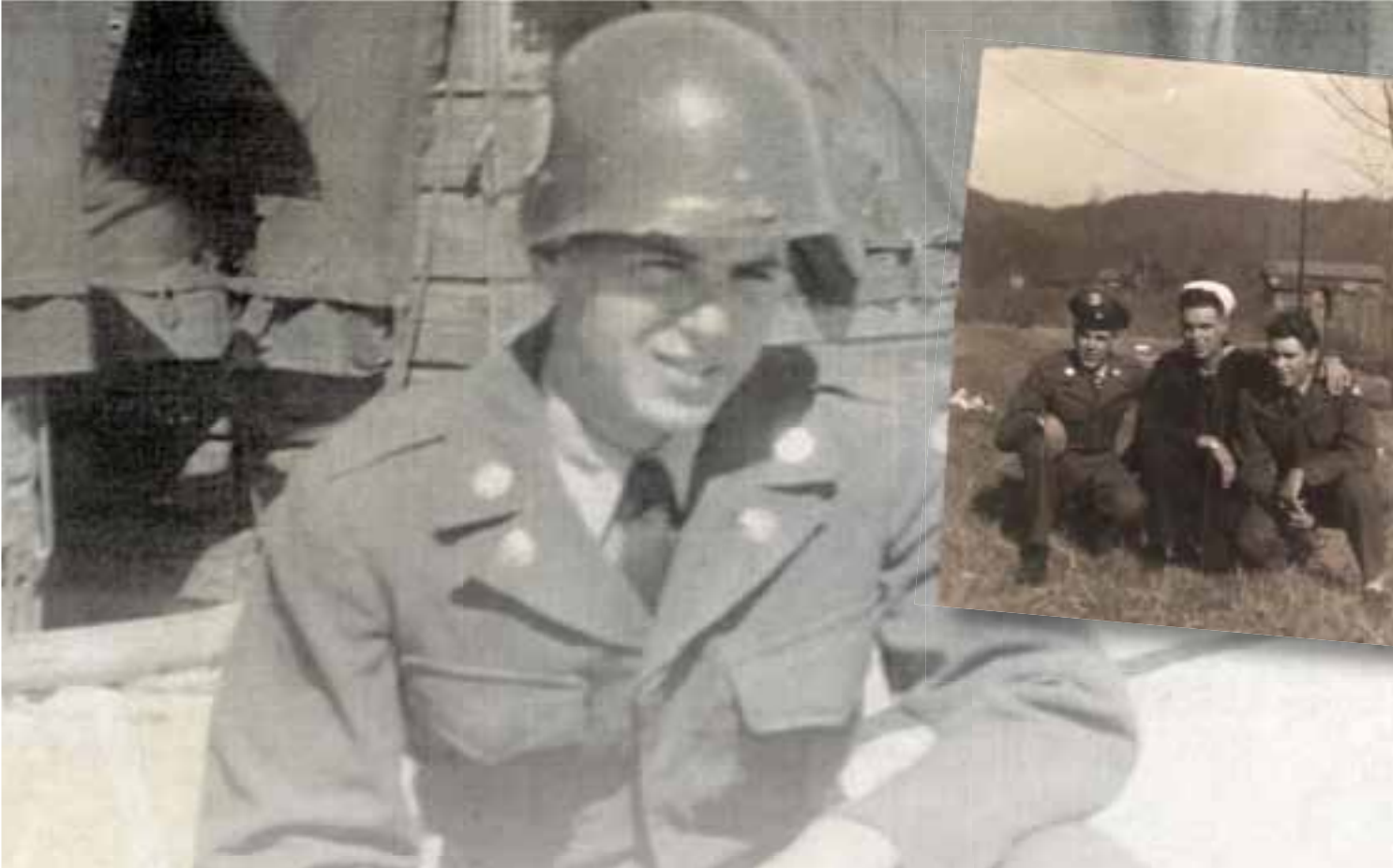
Shortly after moving back to Wartburg, Walls began supporting

the local Democratic Party. He served as campaign manager for various gubernatorial and senatorial candidates, including former Tennessee governors Frank Clement, Ray Blanton and Phil Bredesen. He also served as the Democratic Chairman for Morgan County for many years and supported the party with generous donations.

After working at Y-12 for 10 years, Walls started teaching vocation at Harriman High School, mostly shop class.

While he taught, Walls decided to further his own education. He started attending the University of





Tennessee and took three to six credits per semester, working toward a degree in industrial education.

Never without a side project, Walls purchased The Bell Bottom in 1969, a local drive-in restaurant. He ran the business with the help of his teenage children.

"It was fun working there when we were younger," said Walls' daughter, Joni Lovegrove. "But as we got older, it became more of a chore."

The Bell Bottom was sold a few years later to allow Walls to accept an appointment in the Department of Environment and Conservation as Assistant Commissioner of Conservation, where he supervised all state and regional park managers.

As with most political appointments, this position was only short-term. In 1975, Walls started working for the Federal Railroad Administration as a hazardous waste inspector and investigator. When there was an accident at a railroad crossing or a train derailment, Walls would be called to investigate.

*"You are only here once –
live while you can.
You don't know what
is going to happen around
the corner."*

Every two months, Walls traveled around Tennessee, to Rogersville, Johnson City and Chattanooga, and checked the safety of the stations and railcars at those locations. He also inspected the railroad through Nashville and worked there for a few weeks at a time.

In 1990, after a battle with cancer, Mary Jo passed away. With the love of his life gone, Walls shifted his full focus to the community he cherished.

"Dad did date after mom passed, and he always had a lot of friends," said Lovegrove. "But he never did remarry. They truly were soul mates.

When she was sick, he always made sure someone was around to be with her if he couldn't be there himself."

Shortly after the passing of his wife, Walls' nephew was diagnosed with cancer. He was touched by the care his nephew received at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital and decided he would begin fundraising for the organization.

An avid equestrian and horse breeder, Walls put his passion to work for the hospital. Starting in 1992, he hosted a show or trail ride every year to raise money for St. Jude. His running total is nearly \$200,000 raised.

Even though Walls retired from the railroad in 1996, he was not finished working. He served as public relations representative at Regions Bank in Wartburg and then as bailiff at the Roane County courthouse.

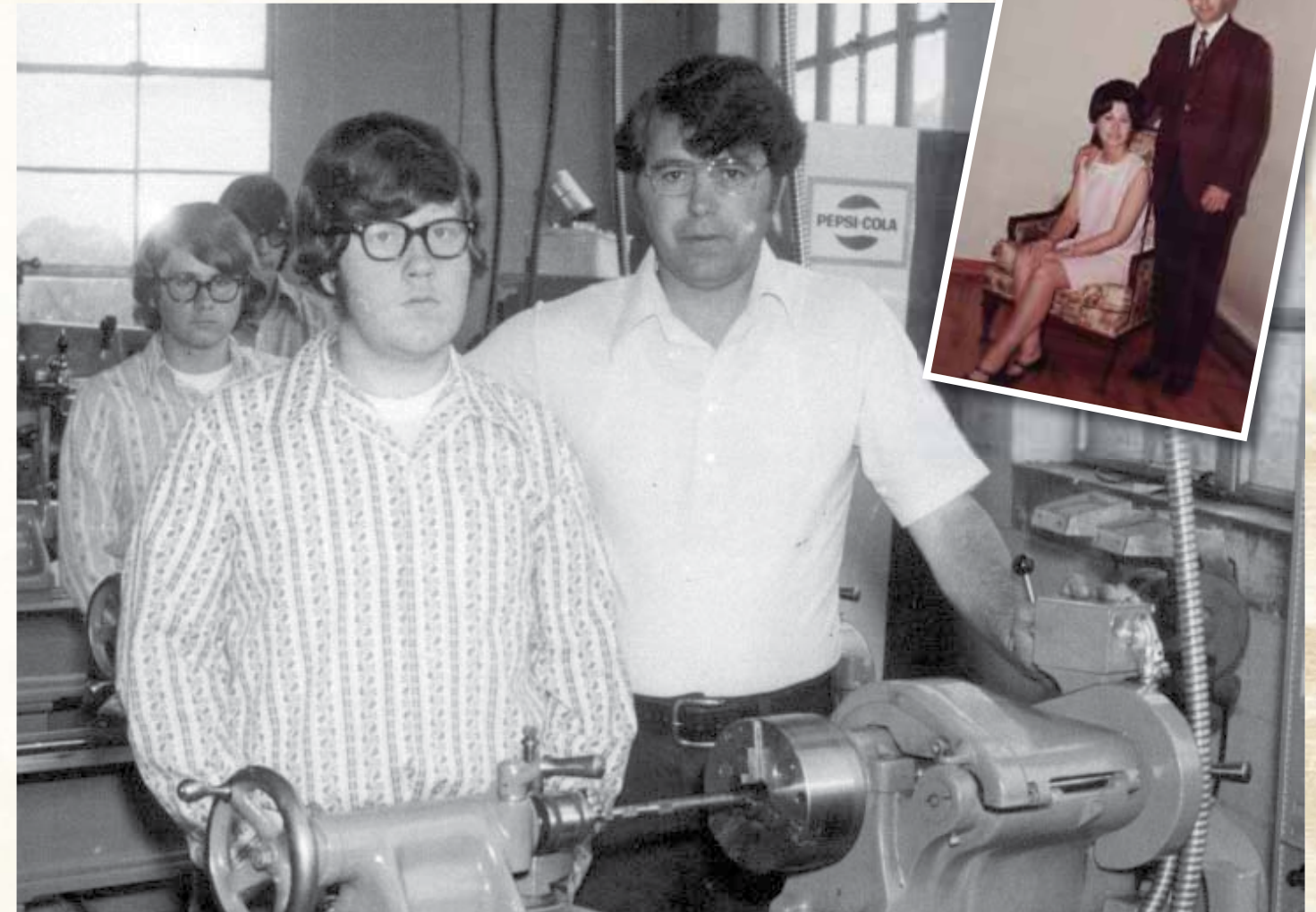
Throughout his life, Walls served in various roles as an active member of his community. He was on the board for Plateau Electric Cooperative and Plateau Utility. He was the youngest

appointed Worshipful Master of the Emerald Masonic Lodge in Wartburg, a Shriner and a Boy Scout leader. He also helped organize the local chapter of the United States Junior Chamber, or Jaycees.

laughed Lovegrove. "He really takes his responsibilities to heart."

Walls enjoys being able to use his friends and family to enrich the lives of the other residents in the facility. His daughter tells old stories of the

golden eagle sits perched on a square wooden base. The plaque reads, "2010 Floyd E. Freytag Award for Lifetime



The house Walls built in 1960 served as his home until 2007, when he suffered a debilitating stroke and moved into Life Care Center of Morgan County in Wartburg.

His commitment to the community is still alive and well.

Serving as Resident Council president, Walls helps to relate ideas, questions or concerns of other residents to the members of the council and the leadership of the facility.

"He likes to joke and tell people that he is president of Life Care,"

area, a friend from The Cumberland Trail sings and picks his banjo, and his brother offers haircuts to men who aren't comfortable going to the beauty salon.

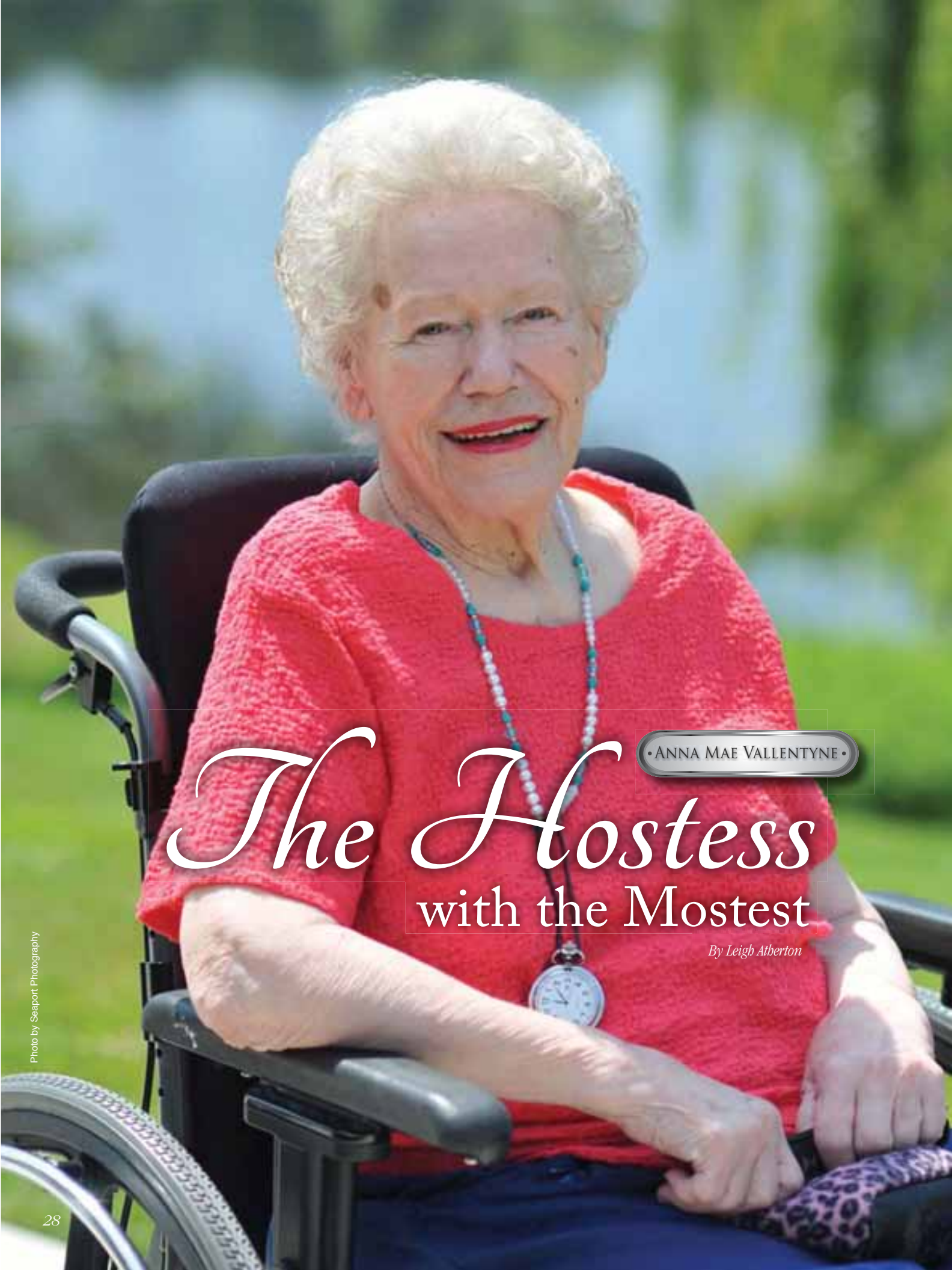
"You are only here once – live while you can," Walls shares. "You don't know what is going to happen around the corner."

As the wisdom of his words hangs in the air, Walls falls silent – wearied from memories of a full life passing through his lips. His eyes brighten with a remembered treasure. He points beside the television, still playing its forgotten program. A

Achievement." A senate proclamation hangs framed on the wall, stating to all the importance of this man.

"It was really nice to get that," Walls comments. "I really appreciated that."

Clasped in Walls' lap are his hands, not out of anxiety, but, in a quiet contentment. With a reflecting gaze he adds: "I've not had a dull life." 🐦



• ANNA MAE VALLENTYNE •

The Hostess with the Mostest

By Leigh Atherton

Photo by Seaport Photography

It was Christmas time; every decoration was in place. Life was as it should be. People were laughing, eating and enjoying all that Anna Mae Vallentyne and her family had worked so hard on. Her daughter was smiling and serving plates of their famous prime rib. Her sons were cooking in the kitchen. Her husband was behind the bar, talking to the locals and making new friends.

The Hadlock House was small – but it was the place to be. The little restaurant offered a bit of flair to the small town of Hadlock, Wash., with its banquet hall, dining room, good food and family operations.

Taking it all in, Vallentyne stood in the back of the room, surveying the business that she poured her heart and soul into. The locals were gathered in small groups at different tables. Meanwhile, a wedding reception was in full swing upstairs. The bride and groom had beamed when she showed them the specially decorated room. Not a detail was missed.

Evenings like this were normal – just the way she liked them.

Vallentyne had always dreamed of running a restaurant. Hostessing and making people feel welcome came naturally to her. When asked why she selected The Hadlock House to make her dream come true, Vallentyne explained: “It was the only restaurant in Hadlock, and it was the only one for sale. That’s why we bought it.”

In addition to the prime rib, The Hadlock House was also known for baked potatoes that held a quarter pound of butter, jumbo hamburgers and coffee for 25 cents a cup. Everything was homemade by Vallentyne or one of her valued employees.

“Every day was like a party,” explained Vallentyne. “It was a lot of hard work but such a pleasure to see how happy our friends were when they came to the restaurant...I didn’t consider them ‘customers’ but true friends.”

Life before The Hadlock House was quite different for Vallentyne. As one of six siblings, her childhood was spent in North Dakota. Born in 1923, her days consisted of basketball, baseball and hopscotch. “We just did outdoor things because that’s all we had,” said Vallentyne.

Vallentyne was close to her siblings, especially older sister Margie, who was more like a second mother. Her father, Herman, worked for the railroad and was transferred to Washington when Vallentyne was in grade school.

Soon after graduation from West Seattle High School, Vallentyne met and married Cleve Orth. They had four children together: Mike, Mary Ann, Tom and



Terri. Throughout the 1940s and ’50s, Vallentyne was a homemaker. She calls her four children the greatest accomplishments of her life.

When asked what lessons she tried to instill in them, she simply said, “Be kind to each other and other people, and always be honest.”

However, the dream of running a restaurant was always there. It became a reality in 1967.

“We were needing something to do,” said Vallentyne. “My husband and I had the money, so we bought The Hadlock House.”

Focus on the restaurant became a priority. As the business grew, the realization of just how much work was involved in running your own business set in.

“I waited tables and cleaned tables until 1 or 2 o’clock in the morning,” explained Vallentyne. “You didn’t just hire a janitor or someone to do the dishes. You got in and did it yourself.”



“ *Vallentyne loved greeting guests and seating them at her best tables, making each one feel like the most important customer.* ”

hours together and were married in 1973.

Since the restaurant was closed on Mondays, the couple enjoyed sneaking away to

Reno on Sunday nights.

When the time came for a change, John and Vallentyne sold The Hadlock House so they could enjoy more time with each other.

However, after all those years of such hard work, slowing down was a bit of a challenge. They found new ways to keep busy, including yard work for friends, growing and selling Christmas trees and traveling to arts and

crafts fairs to sell Vallentyne's one-of-a-kind creations.

They traveled to arts and crafts fairs all over the Washington area. Vallentyne remembered how small the fairs were compared to the arts and crafts fairs of today. They had fun selling her wares and enjoyed the camaraderie among vendors.

Vallentyne made sweatshirts, cloths for washing dishes, baby blankets and many other items. All of her baby blankets were hand tied.

After 30 years of marriage, John died in 2002. Vallentyne moved to Port Townsend, Wash., and is now a resident of Life Care Center of Port Townsend. Visitors often recognize Vallentyne from



The Hadlock House was unique because it offered the upstairs banquet room for large parties which, at the time, was not available anywhere else in the area. Local businesses kept Vallentyne busy, as she focused on making each party unique, from decorations to the menu.

Vallentyne loved greeting guests and seating them at her best tables, making each one feel like the most important customer. On Friday and Saturday nights, she brought in live entertainment for diners to enjoy.

In the early years of owning the restaurant, Vallentyne and Cleve grew apart and eventually divorced.

Vallentyne kept running the restaurant with the help of her children and a few loyal employees. One of those employees was the bartender, John Vallentyne. The two of them fell in love working long



The Hadlock House. Others say they bought a Christmas tree from her and John. Some mention that she made a favorite sweatshirt they purchased at a craft fair. Vallentyne certainly made a name for herself in the community.

Vallentyne's family has grown to include eight grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. Life has slowed down a bit, but Vallentyne still has the simple things she enjoys: spending time outdoors, reminding herself to appreciate each and every moment and catching up with family over coffee. Each time Terri visits, she brings a latte for her mother, and Vallentyne looks forward to those visits.

In the early 1900s, journalist Ambrose Bierce defined hospitality as, "The virtue which induces us to feed and lodge certain persons who are not in need of food and lodging."

Vallentyne clearly lived by that definition. 🇺🇸



PHILIP WELLFORD



A Juggling Act:

When Life Gives You Oranges

By Lindsay Tunnell

Shakespeare penned the beautiful words, “All the world’s a stage, and all the men and women merely players.” A literary metaphor, for Philip Wellford the phrase rings true. Wellford has had the unique perspective of viewing life through the bright lights of the stage.

Born in Memphis, Tenn., in 1954, Wellford and his family soon relocated to sunny Sarasota, Fla. Much of Wellford’s childhood was spent riding bikes around Oyster Bay, camping at Egmont Key and swimming at Siesta Key Beach.

A self-proclaimed instigator, Wellford’s first job was at Mr. Steak, a fast food joint in Sarasota. At the height of Beatlemania, Wellford’s manager was adamant about taming the boys’ newfound shaggy hairstyles with hair-

nets. Wellford, the comic relief among his friends, decided to play a practical joke on his manager, purchasing Beatles wigs for his friends to wear the next day. Though the boys were reprimanded, the gag

marked Wellford’s first true comedy act in a professional setting.

A beach bum, Wellford stuck around the Sunshine State after high school to attend college. Undecided on a major, he pursued a degree from the University of

South Florida in liberal arts – providing flexibility in career options.

During his education at USEF, Wellford became increasingly interested in religion courses and felt a calling to ministry. Obeying the call, Wellford enrolled in the





Masters of Divinity program at the Starr King School for the Ministry in Berkeley, Calif., trading one coastal paradise for another.

While a student in Berkeley, Wellford began taking evening walks to clear his head. He frequented Fisherman's Wharf to watch the jugglers who convened there every night to perform. Wellford, fascinated by their talent, began asking the performers about their trade.

Interested in juggling, Wellford was advised to purchase three oranges and meet the jugglers at the wharf the next night for a lesson. Unable to wait, Wellford immediately purchased the fruit, went home and began teaching himself juggling skills. The next night, the expert jugglers were amazed at Wellford's natural talent.

Soon, Wellford traded fruit for clubs and pins and became a fixture at Fisherman's Wharf. Fans gathered every night to watch his juggling act, effortlessly infused with comedy and a mime routine.

Passionate about both performing and ministering,

Wellford had the unique idea of combining the two. He began incorporating biblical lessons into his act and created a fun and popular version of the story of creation set to juggling. His fans were fascinated, and Wellford determined to pursue his talents further with the obvious next step – joining the circus.

Seminary friends introduced Wellford to the Royal Lichtenstein Quarter-Ring Sidewalk Circus – the full-time ministry of Jesuit priest Nick Weber. Wellford traveled with three other performers, including Weber, performing at churches and universities. The show combined circus performances, animal acts, magic tricks and comedy to illustrate moral lessons.

Following a season with the troupe, and after earning his M.Div. in 1981, Wellford moved to Hawaii, accepting an internship as the chaplain of a mental hospital in Oahu. By night, Wellford continued to hone his comedic and juggling skills.

While performing for a group in Honolulu one evening, he was discovered by a talent agent who recognized his star potential.

The next stop for Wellford was the entertainment capital of the world – Los Angeles. From there, his career skyrocketed.

Wellford began performing notable gigs with stars like Andy Gibb and up-and-coming pop groups, including The Cure, an English rock band, and Wang Chung, a New Wave group. He was also featured on the bill with a variety of comedians including Robin Williams and Jay Leno.

Soon, Wellford was opening for Johnny Mathis and Andy Williams and rubbing elbows in improv class with comedians like Adam Carolla. Wellford even became the Coors Light party spokesperson in 1989 and filmed a nationally aired commercial in this role. Wellford was also a finalist to become McDonalds' mascot, Ronald McDonald, but turned the offer down to pursue other career options.

One of the highlights of Wellford's career happened as the result of a guest spot on "Comedy Tonight" in 1985 with Whoopi Goldberg. Co-starring with Bob Saget and Howie Mandel,



Co-starring with Bob Saget and Howie Mandel, Wellford told the story of creation by juggling fruit, rubber snakes and chickens, all while eating an apple. The fascinating act earned him an individual Emmy Award.



thinking to myself, "That's the kind of man I want to marry someday!"

Wellford told the story of creation by juggling fruit, rubber snakes and chickens, all while eating an apple. The fascinating act earned him an individual Emmy Award.

From that point, Wellford's professional life became an even more complex juggling act. Andy Williams, a dear friend of his, had the idea of opening a theater in Branson, Mo., and wanted Wellford as the opening act. Deciding it would be a great career move, Wellford accepted and began performing a nightly routine at the Moon River Theater.

"I had the pleasure of working with Philip for several years, and when I was on the road, he was really a part of my act,"

Williams recalled. "Everybody loved him."

On May 2, 1992, Philip made his first impression on Susan Wunsch. An associate at a public relations firm in Kansas City, Susan traveled to Branson for work and was thrilled when her boss secured a ticket to "The Andy Williams Show" for her on a night off.

"The first time I saw Philip was during a performance," Susan reminisced. "He was cute, funny and intelligent. I remember

Two years later, Susan moved to Branson to work as a video producer. Wellford had moved on to co-headlining "The VanBurch and Wellford Show" with Kirby VanBurch, an accomplished magician.

Wellford and Susan crossed paths one evening at a nightclub while both were out with friends. Instantly recognizing him as the performer she'd fawned over two years earlier, Susan asked her friends to introduce her to Wellford.

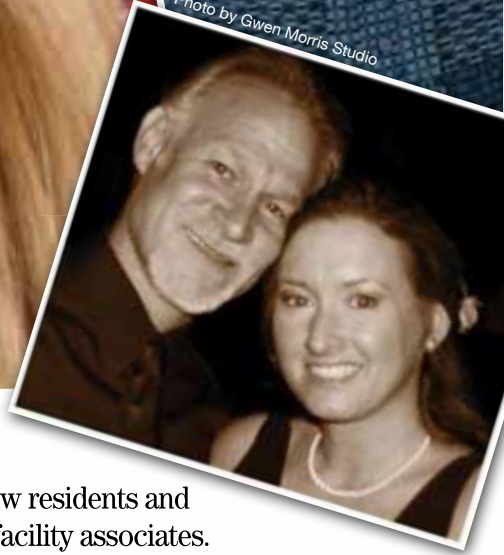
The two hit it off.

Wellford asked Susan to a Glen Campbell show for their first date, and in 1997, the couple married.

With support from his new bride, Wellford embarked on



Photo by Gwen Morris Studio



A BLIND EYE TO THE SKY



another adventure – hosting his very own morning show in Branson. “The Philip Wellford Comedy Show” proved to be an incredible experience for the couple. While Wellford performed stand-up comedy alongside his seamless juggling acts, Susan handled the behind-the-scenes marketing and was a featured vocalist in the show.

During the show’s off seasons, Wellford and Susan would travel with popular cruise lines and perform on the high seas – from Barbados to Rio de Janeiro.

In 2000, Wellford and Susan rejoined Andy Williams for an extensive tour around the U.S. This time, the experience was a family affair. Susan toured as a background singer alongside her husband and friend. For two and a half weeks, the troupe performed in a different city each night.

Wellford and Susan began to miss their freedom and ended “The Philip Wellford Comedy

Show” in 2001. Instead, the duo traveled to different sets to perform. Wellford even embraced his Wild West side, appearing in shows like “Country Tonite” and “Dixie Stampede.”

“By the end of Philip’s career, we had it down to a science,” explained Susan. “He would perform two shows a day, six days a week, and we would go out on the lake when he wasn’t performing.”

Wellford’s career was at its peak, but he knew something wasn’t right.

“Work was becoming more difficult for him,” remembered Susan.

In 2008, at the age of 54, Wellford retired from show business, just one year after being diagnosed with early-onset dementia.

Now a resident at Garden Terrace at Overland Park, Kan., Wellford provides lots of laughs, energy and enthusiasm for his

fellow residents and the facility associates.

Susan explained, “He doesn’t know my name anymore, but he lights up every time he sees me! I love him now more than ever before. He’s given me such a great life; I feel so lucky to have found the love of my life.”

Wellford’s life has been one fueled by passion. His ambition and drive ignited an incredibly successful career that sparked laughter and happiness. But through all the notoriety, Wellford has always focused on what was most important. Whether juggling a few oranges, multiple performances, or a daunting predicament, Wellford has handled the challenges with wit, charisma and a charming smile, keeping every ball in motion. 🙌

Perhaps you were told growing up that you can do anything if you set your mind to it. Do you really believe it?

Kent Cullers, who was born blind in El Reno, Okla., was told that by his parents. And if a child hears the phrase, “You can do anything,” often enough, it sinks in. It bears fruit. It certainly did in Cullers’ case.

As a young boy, he insisted on climbing trees and riding a bicycle. His father arranged a job transfer to California so the boy could attend a regular school, and Cullers became a straight-A student. He graduated as the valedictorian of his high school class and a National Merit Scholar. He went on to earn a Ph.D. in physics from the University of California, Berkeley.

Cullers had a first love, and it was space. It seems fitting, then, that he found himself employed at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. As a researcher, one of his jobs was to design equipment to help scientists search for signs of intelligent communication in outer space, part of NASA’s program called Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence.

How does a blind man see what others cannot? He uses his “mind’s eye.” He also employs other senses, perhaps a little better than most people. Above all, he continues to tell himself what his parents taught him early in life: “You can do anything.”

The apostle Paul would have added a key phrase to that advice: *I can do anything through Christ who gives me strength.* The source of all our ability, energy and creativity is the Lord Himself. It is He who challenges us to go forward and equips us to get the task done.

(2) to get it in gear. In the modern vernacular, “git ‘er done!” He calls us to believe and do.

It’s no secret that Life Care and all other health-care companies have major challenges, including reimbursement, regulation and liability issues. But our focus must be, now and always, on customer service with a passion for being alert to finding ways to do it better. Even though we may receive excellent ratings on customer satisfaction surveys, the quest for improvement should never end.

What do you believe today? What are you doing?

Activate both your believing and doing. You, and Life Care, will be blessed by the results.

Beecher Hunter
BEECHER HUNTER
President