

LIFE CARE

# LEADER

*2019 Edition*



'Round and  
'Round They Go

Emmett and Barbara Young

A Life Devoted to Love

Margaret Radford

Changing Colors

Mark Lakin



## CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

In her book "The Right Words at the Right Time," actress and author Marlo Thomas invited 100 remarkable people to share the moment in their life when words meant all the difference.

One of them was Scott Hamilton, figure skater and Olympic gold medalist, who now lives in Franklin, Tennessee.

In Thomas' book, he shared his story:

*I remember a time early in my career when I was in need of financial support to be able to continue skating. A family I had met graciously offered to sponsor my training, asking for nothing in return. Frank McLoraine was an amazing man. When I was competing at the Midwestern Sectional Championships in Chicago, I stayed at his house, and I was a bundle of nerves.*

*He sat me down and said very simply, "Skate the ice." Those three words have stuck with me for many years, and I have applied them to many different situations. What he was telling me was to take what is given to you. Always*



*do the best you can with what you have. I took those words to heart.*

*I was the only skater at the time executing a difficult triple lutz in the compulsory short program, a risky move because there are mandatory deductions for mistakes. With Mr. McLoraine's words ringing in my ears, I nailed the jump and thought to myself, "OK, this works. I was prepared. I had done my homework, and it was either going to be great or not so great. I had done everything I could so I just had to let it happen. I had to 'skate the ice.'"*

For us in Life Care, are there lessons to be gained from Hamilton's experiences? Without a doubt!

While we are not preparing to seek a gold medal in the Olympics – as grand as that is on the world stage – we are called to something much more important: contributing to the well-being and enrichment of the lives of the men and women who come to us, desperate to be helped.

It isn't executing a triple lutz, but *our work is difficult*, with the judges (surveyors) ready to make their deductions for our mistakes or shortcomings.

Our charge? Serve with love. Take what is given you. Do your best. Be prepared. Do everything you can to be ready. Then, let it happen. *Skate the ice. Serve with love!*

Let those words stick with you. 🙏

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

FORREST L. PRESTON  
Chairman



LIFE CARE  
**LEADER**  2019 Edition

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Living Life with No Regrets  
**John O'Donnal**..... 2  
The Lane House (IN)



Soaring Close to Heaven  
**Margaret Miller**..... 6  
Life Care Center of Coeur d'Alene (ID)



Honor Through Perseverance  
**Donald Dombrow**..... 10  
Life Care Center of Crossville (TN)



A Life Devoted to Love  
**Margaret Radford**..... 14  
Life Care Center of Hixson (TN)



'Round and 'Round They Go  
**Emmett and Barbara Young**..... 18  
Life Care Center of Evergreen (CO)



Changing Colors  
**Mark Lakin**..... 22  
Life Care Center of Osawatomie (KS)



A Life to Be Proud Of  
**Anna D'Intino**..... 26  
Life Care Center of Estero (FL)



Unwavering  
**Samuel "Rix" Warren**..... 30  
Life Care Center of Westminster (CO)



Service Before Self  
**Mary Catalano**..... 36  
Life Care Center of Hickory Woods (TN)  
**Short-term patient**



# Living Life with NO REGRETS

By Piper Evans

• JOHN O'DONNAL •

“Son, you got a panty on your head.” This is the famous line from the 1987 movie “Raising Arizona” that John O’Donnal said to actor Nicholas Cage. The classic film represents O’Donnal’s biggest moment in the spotlight, but he has lived his entire life full of fun and adventure, with no regrets.

## The Early Years

O’Donnal was born in Garcia, Mexico. His family moved to Arizona when he was just 8 months old. The family lived on a beautiful 20-acre ranch between two rivers in Prescott, Arizona. O’Donnal lived in a full house with six brothers and six sisters. Living on the ranch, they fished, hunted and did just about anything outdoors. O’Donnal was in the eighth grade when he had to leave school to go to work for his family. He worked on machinery and loved working with graders. In his spare time, he rode bulls and was a champion bull rider when he was 15.

## Love at First Sight

In late December 1981, a young Hoosier named Cheryl took a trip to Arizona to visit her mother and stepfather for Christmas. Her mother asked her if she wanted to go to

the dance hall where she met her husband, and Cheryl agreed to go.

“Those were my wilder days,” Cheryl joked.

While they were there, Cheryl was listening to a band perform when a cowboy walked up to her. He asked her to dance, and she immediately said yes.

“This handsome guy and I danced all night and just talked the whole time,” reminisced Cheryl.

“I asked her for a date the next day,” laughed O’Donnal.

The couple dated throughout Cheryl’s visit. They went on dates, called each other multiple times, and their feelings grew stronger. Knowing he could not live without her, O’Donnal asked Cheryl to marry him.

“I said, ‘Well, alright then,’” Cheryl laughed. “I knew John was different, and I wanted to take a chance with him. I knew it was the right move to make.”

“It was love at first sight,” said O’Donnal.

The couple married a few months later, on April 29, 1982.

## Their Adventures Begin

O’Donnal and his wife never stopped going on adventures.

They did everything together from elk hunting to fishing and hiking. One memory they both recall is the time they were hunting and wild pigs attacked O’Donnal. They were mean and approaching fast. O’Donnal told Cheryl to get the gun ready; he shot one of the pigs before they could kill Cheryl or himself. The other pigs fled up the hill, and the couple was safe.

“We never went back to the canyon again,” laughed O’Donnal.

Not only did the dynamic couple explore the Southwest, they traveled all over the United States.

One of O’Donnal’s favorite moments was during a trip to Hawaii. He threw his name into a drawing to travel on an aircraft carrier to visit historical ships around the islands. His name was drawn, and O’Donnal boarded the USS Coral Sea aircraft carrier and enjoyed the tour of a lifetime.

“Ships are a lot bigger in person,” said O’Donnal. “I felt like a peanut looking up at them.”

## Lights! Camera! Action!

O’Donnal began his acting career in a comedy dinner show called The Mavericks. They traveled to various hotels,

*"I didn't need a microphone to shout," said O'Donnal.*

restaurants and clubs and performed Comedy Westerns, with choreographed "shootouts" about 20 times a week. They called themselves "The Shoot-Out Group." During his time with the group, he also played several small roles in films, but the best was yet to come.

O'Donnal didn't know it at the time, but someone in the crowd was watching him who would help jumpstart his acting career. The female talent agent had seen O'Donnal perform but didn't know his name, so she called the Shoot-Out Group and asked for his contact information. She called O'Donnal and asked him to try out for a part in a movie she was casting.

"She thought I was bigger," chuckled O'Donnal. "She said I was 100 pounds light and one foot too short."

Even though O'Donnal was smaller than the talent agent had pictured, she gave him the opportunity to audition. As they arrived at the airport, he met

directors Joel and Ethan Coen – the soon-to-be-award-winning Coen Brothers. The Coens knew that O'Donnal had previously told the talent agent that he was the mascot for the Arizona Outlaws football team and had a strong voice.

"I didn't need a microphone to shout," said O'Donnal.

The Coen Brothers asked O'Donnal to scream for them. He let out a yell in the middle of the airport for the audition. Amazed, the Coen Brothers clapped for O'Donnal, and he landed the part as Hayseed in the Pickup in "Raising Arizona."

"Raising Arizona" is a comedy film about a couple who cannot have children, and they decide to help themselves to one of another family's quintuplets. When they do, their lives become more complicated than they expected. Nicholas Cage as H.I. McDunnough, an ex-convict, and Holly Hunter as Edwina McDunnough, a former police officer, star as the couple. In one scene of the movie, H.I. swipes

diapers for his stolen son. As he runs from police, he is wearing pantyhose over his head in an attempt to hide his identity. During his getaway, H.I. runs in front of a pickup truck driven by Hayseed (O'Donnal), who screams and stops at H.I.'s command.



“Son, you got a panty on your head,” pointed out Hayseed.

“Nicholas once talked about the film on a talk show, and he said it was all he could do to keep a straight face after I said that line,” said O’Donnal. “He said he would never forget me and the way I delivered that line. He is a really great guy to work with.”

O’Donnal continued his acting career after the film. He was in “Bill and Ted’s Excellent Adventure” and met Keanu Reeves. O’Donnal and Cheryl both acted in “Renegade.”

“I was a bar fly in that movie, and John was a rich Texan,” laughed Cheryl. “I got to meet and get to know Terence Hill.”

O’Donnal and Cheryl said the best part of being in a feature film is going to the premieres. They both agree that seeing yourself on the big screen is fantastic. They met a lot of celebrities and took pictures with many of them. O’Donnal said that acting is easy; you just do what you are told.

### **The Adventure Continues**

O’Donnal and Cheryl continued to live in the Southwest, where they raised their children. Traveling was their favorite hobby. They traveled all over the western



United States and have been to Disneyland three times, seen beautiful ranches and enjoyed having fun together.

Eventually, the couple retired and decided to move to Indiana. Cheryl had been away from her family for almost 30 years, living in Arizona, so O’Donnal arranged to move back to Indiana for Cheryl.

### **Today**

O’Donnal and Cheryl reside in The Lane House in Crawfordsville, Indiana, where they are happy to be together. O’Donnal enjoys being outdoors, and Cheryl enjoys writing stories. Both of them appreciate where they are and like to tell stories about their adventures to their new friends.

Marriage is important to O’Donnal and Cheryl. Both of them have been through divorces, which taught them the value of finding each other. The couple believes it is important to listen

to and learn about each other. Sometimes, you will fight, they say, but always apologize.

O’Donnal and Cheryl have learned to accept each other as they are, and they are still madly in love because of it.

“We’ve been good to each other and

supported each other,” said O’Donnal.

O’Donnal and Cheryl have shared a life full of adventure. They agree that it is important to find someone to have fun with, like they did. O’Donnal said their bucket list has been met, and they have made amazing memories that will last forever. Having fun was and still is a staple in their relationship.

“Do it while you’re young,” said Cheryl. “If you want to travel, go and do it while you’re young.”

The O’Donnals have lived an exciting life with no regrets. When asked how they would sum up their life together, they both answered without hesitation, “Blessed.” 🙏







MARGARET MILLER

# Soaring Close to HEAVEN

By Dara Carroll

If you ever think about comparing family trees with Margaret Miller, get comfortable. Remarkably, the 92-year-old can trace her family roots all the way back to the 11th century. The “Domesday Book,” completed in 1086, references Lacock Village, a hamlet named after Miller’s ancestors.

The archaic text details the results of a survey of England and Wales that was ordered by William the Conqueror. As the oldest public record in England, it is an invaluable reference of medieval residence and land ownership – and inclusion in it is a source of great pride.

Today, Lacock is one of the oldest surviving villages in England, and it has become a popular filming location and tourist destination because of its medieval architecture. Although the village’s storied history is closely tied to Miller’s family, she never lived there. She was born in the north London district of Tottenham on Oct 18, 1926.

Miller was the third of her parents’ four children together, including two older brothers

and a younger sister: Michael “Mick,” John and Lynn. Her parents also had children from previous marriages. Her father, Arthur Dennis, was a math professor at London University. Her mother, Minnie, was Arthur’s second wife. His first wife died from Spanish flu during the 1918 influenza pandemic.

Childhood was an idyllic time for Miller and her siblings. They adored the outdoors and spent their time canoeing, playing tennis and hiking about the peaceful English countryside.

You could usually find Miller with her older brothers. She believes her adventures with them made her brave and strong.

On one occasion, she and one of her brothers switched bikes. As they started going downhill and picking up speed, her brother remembered that the brakes on his bike were out. He tried to warn Miller, but it was too late. She crashed hard into a thorny barberry bush.

When Christmas came around each year, Miller fondly remembers strolling along the hedgerows with her family,

collecting holly to decorate their house for the holidays. The warmest months were spent at their summer cottage on Canvey Island, where she learned to sail. Her family was close friends with the Prout Brothers, who built their world-famous Shearwater Catamarans on the island.

Like many Britons, Miller’s idyllic life was shattered when Germany invaded Poland on Sept. 1, 1939. Two days later, England declared war. The year that followed was turbulent, but it would get worse. On Sept. 7, 1940, Germans started bombing London, and for the next eight months, the frightening air raids continued.

“We spent many hours in bomb shelters, where we could hear the sounds of machine guns,” said Miller. “Dad was in the hospital, clearly marked with the Red Cross flag, when enemy planes struck it. They bombed us. It wasn’t a cup of tea. There was a lot of suffering.”

Eager to help the war effort, Miller joined the Royal Air Force Coastal Command when she was only 17 years and 3 months old,

the earliest you could enlist in England. Once again, she was following after her brothers: John was with the RAF in Burma and India, and Mick was in and out of occupied countries, working with the Resistance.

"I wanted to keep my family safe and together," she said.

By the time Miller joined the RAF, she already knew how to fly. She had learned in a de Havilland Tiger Moth in 1943.

The RAF Coastal Command was one of three RAF commands operating during World War II. The Fighter Command focused on the defense of Britain and protection from raids. The Bomber Command attacked the enemy and organized bombing runs to the continent. The Coastal Command was tasked with island and maritime defense: guarding the coast and protecting convoys and Allied shipping from German U-boats and aerial threats.

Fortunately, Miller was never in combat or direct danger from the enemy, but she did have several close calls. During one flight, she discovered soon after takeoff that her plane wasn't airworthy. She had to chart a harrowing flight path back to the base. She survived, but it was a gut-wrenching experience.

"I was one scared Birdie Birdie!" she said.

Miller spent most of her service guiding anti-sub patrols and explaining the rules of

English flying to newly arrived American pilots.

To keep up morale, Miller and her comrades did their best to find ways to relax and socialize. In the late fall of 1944, an American pilot took her on a date to see Glenn Miller and his orchestra. It was one of his last performances. On Dec. 15, the beloved band leader perished when his plane was lost over the English Channel.



When the war was over, Miller married an American serviceman with the 101st Airborne Division of the U.S. Army. They lived in the safe zone in southern England, and Miller stayed on with the RAF's Women's Auxiliary Air Force until 1946.

The couple's son, Greg, was born soon after the couple relocated to the U.S. Every child is a miracle, but Greg's arrival was a special blessing.

Miller had been told by several doctors that she would never be able to have children. However, in 1953, she tagged along with a curious friend to visit a fortune teller. The medium knew things about Miller that no one would have any way of knowing. Before they left, she told Miller that she would have a baby before the end of the year. To Miller's delight, she was right!

When Greg was 3, Miller took him to the U.K., to visit her family. They sailed over on an ocean liner and stayed for 18 months. When it was time to return to California, they had to make the long flight home on a prop plane.

While Miller was living in Ventura County, California, she and her first husband divorced. She later met and married John Miller, an electrical engineer who also farmed avocados and oranges.

The blended family of three loved to travel and spend time outdoors, and they always enjoyed their adventures together. At one point, they lived for a year and half at 9,000 feet above sea level in New Mexico.

"I remember taking the old truck on 100-mile trips about the land, hiking, camping and fishing," said Greg. "Of course, Mom taught me how to fish. Dad had no idea!"

In 1975, John took a job with the Alyeska Pipeline, and the family followed him north. Miller got a job at the



*“The good Lord must have thought I needed someone extra special in my life, and He gave me Mom.”*

Anchorage Chrysler-Dodge Center, where she met Lee Iacocca one day. He was so impressed with her that he offered her a job at the corporate office in Michigan.

Miller was flattered, but she took a job as vice president of United Bank Alaska, instead.

In 1979, Miller and John moved back to California, where they owned an art gallery in Carmel. Their high-end art shows featured iconic artists like Leroy Neiman and Josef Eidenberger.

In Carmel, Miller also grew close to some of her famous neighbors. She and Doris Day enjoyed tea time and walked their dogs together, and Eve Arden’s son Duncan Brooks West often hung out at the Miller house with Greg and their classmate Robert “Bobby” Carradine, son of John Carradine.

After Miller’s husband died in 1991, Greg wanted to move his mom home with him to Alaska. However, they settled on relocating her to Idaho; she’d be closer to her son without having to deal with the harsh Alaskan winters.

No matter where she lived, Miller never lost her passion for

the skies. She piloted her last flight at the age of 75 – flying a de Havilland Beaver Float plane around Coeur d’Alene, Idaho. And for more than 60 years, she has been an active member of the Ninety-Nines: International Organization of Women Pilots. Founded in 1929, the exclusive organization counts Amelia Earhart as a founding member.

Today, Miller lives at Life Care Center of Coeur d’Alene, where she enjoys the daily activities and socializing with other residents. The grandmother of two (Kelly and Ben) is always the first in line at the ice cream parlor and treasures daily visits from her son and grandson.

With a twinkle in her eye, the nonagenarian attributes her longevity to “being feisty and stubborn.” And to her caring heart: “I tried to be compassionate and think for myself,” she said. “I kept the thought of right and wrong always in my mind, and I’ve tried to relay that to my son and now to my grandson.”

Her lessons fell on fertile ears. Greg is compassionate and keenly aware of his mom’s positive influence: “The good Lord must have thought I

needed someone extra special in my life, and He gave me Mom.”

Although she hasn’t traveled to England in many years, Miller’s heritage is never far from her heart. On any given day, you might find her rooting for her favorite English football team or meeting up with other British residents for “Elevenses” – late-morning tea.

Most of all, Miller still enjoys being outdoors, where, not surprisingly, she is always looking up into the sky.

“Once you have tasted flight,” anticipated Leonardo da Vinci, “you will forever walk the earth with your eyes turned skyward, for there you have been, and there you will always long to return.”

Perhaps Miller is simply looking up to enjoy the beauty of nature. But maybe, just maybe, she is remembering how it feels to dart through majestic clouds in her Tiger Moth and soar through the boundless azure atmosphere – the smells, the thrills, the awe. Remembering how it feels – if only for a moment – to soar so close to heaven. 🕊️

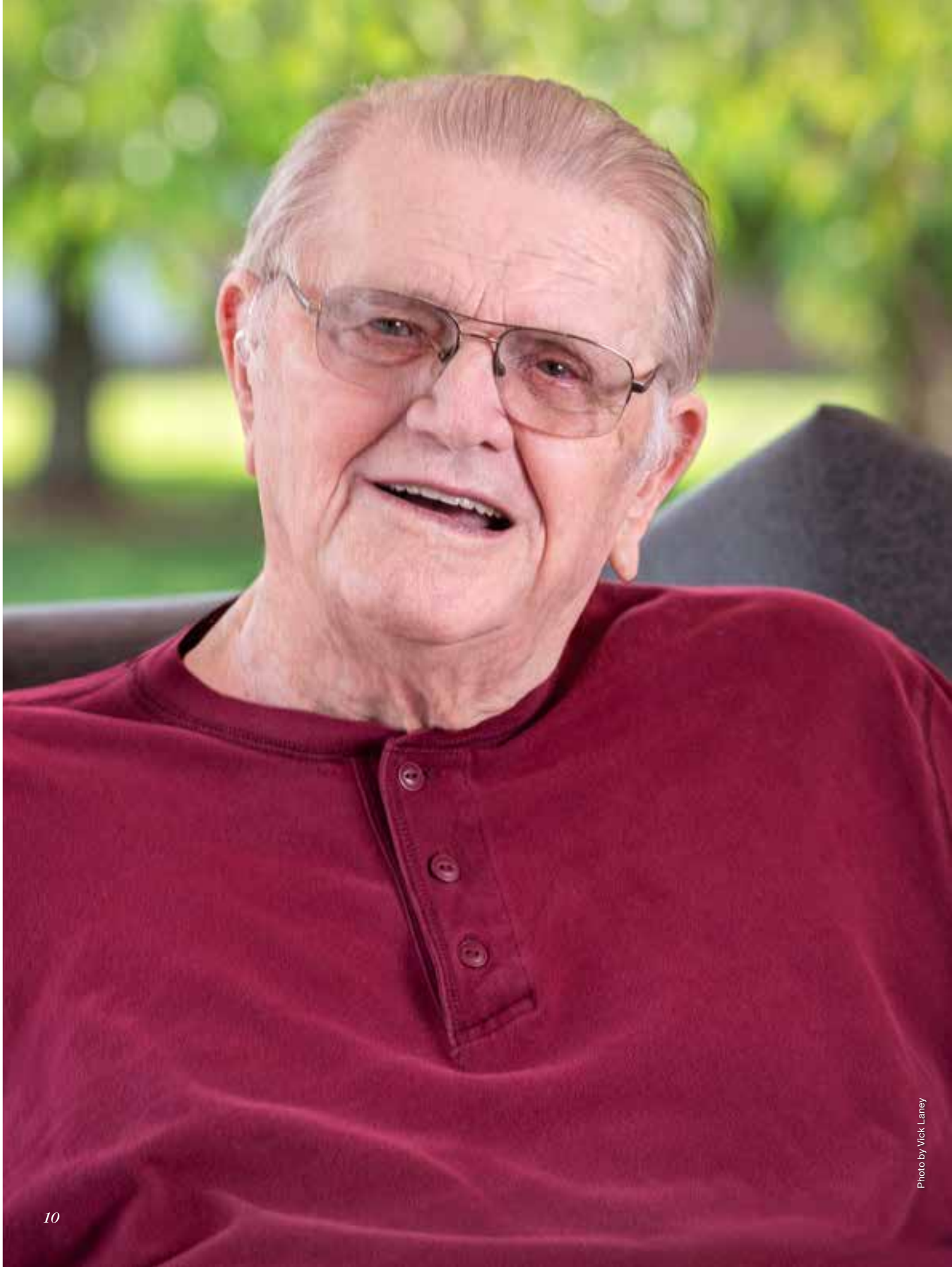


Photo by Vick Laney



# Honor Through *Perseverance*

• DONALD DOMBROW •

*By Jenna Mathis*

Hopelessness spread throughout the world from 1939 to 1945. World War II involved over 30 countries and, according to NationalWW2Museum.org, caused about 15 million battle deaths and 45 million civilian deaths.

The global impact of the war was immense.

“This war is a new kind of war,” said President Franklin D. Roosevelt on Feb. 23, 1942, during one of his Fireside Chats. “It is warfare in terms of every continent, every island, every sea, every air lane in the world.”

Donald Dombrow, a Pennsylvania native, was born in 1925 to August and Edith Dombrow. The two later had a daughter named Lillian. Dombrow and his sister grew up during the Great Depression, but his father made sure that they never went without basic necessities.

Dombrow followed his father’s lead and wanted to provide for his family. His first job was going door-to-door selling fresh produce in his small Pennsylvania town.

Although it was difficult growing up during the worldwide economic recession,

it allowed Dombrow to understand perseverance during harsh times. The perseverance he learned at a young age would benefit him later in his life.

In May 1943, Dombrow graduated from high school carrying a diploma in one hand and a draft letter in the other.

Drafted into the U.S. Army, Dombrow became a typist at Fort Meade, Maryland. Later in 1943, he was sent to the Pacific as part of the 706th Tank Battalion. Dombrow and his fellow servicemen

fought in Guam, Japan and the Philippines.

In early 1945, the Battle of Okinawa began. The U.S. Marine and Army forces fought against the Imperial Japanese Army throughout the Ryukyu Islands.



The 706th Tank Battalion was fighting to liberate Okinawa, Guam and two Philippine islands: Leyte and Luzon. During this battle, Dombrow began to distinguish himself.

Each tank carried five crewmembers, and Dombrow was the youngest in his crew. His duties were to assist the gunner and assist the driver in Company A.

The objective of the tank was for the driver to position the vehicle over injured servicemen, who were then able to climb through the hatch and into the tank, out of enemy fire.

In May 1945, Dombrow's tank commander was wounded. Dombrow and a fellow crewmember carried their commander to a nearby aid station. Dombrow was wounded in his left arm while helping his commander, but that didn't stop him.

"Our tank commander took some shrapnel in the

face," Dombrow described in a 2014 interview for *CrossvilleLifeOnline.com*. "He couldn't see me, so me and my gunner got out and took him back to an aid station. Then we all got hit with shrapnel."

Dombrow was awarded the Purple Heart for the incident. Being awarded this military decoration is a high honor.

*ArmyHistory.org* explains: "First, [the Purple Heart] is the oldest U.S.

military decoration; Gen. George Washington awarded the first purple-colored heart-shaped badges to soldiers who fought in the Continental Army during the American Revolution. ... the Purple Heart is the only decoration awarded without regard to any person's favor or approval; any soldier, sailor, airman or marine who sheds blood in defense of the nation is automatically awarded the Purple Heart."

MEMORIES - 1945 & 1946  
Chocolate Drop Hill Battle in Okinawa

Company B lost 4 tanks in this battle.

Company A Staff Sgt. Charles Lozito was struck in the face by Japanese scrapnel that left him practically blind. He was removed from the tank by Kalman Hassay and Donald Dombrow. They walked him back to the Aid Station (approximately 1 mile) and he was put on a Red Cross Ship. Hassay and Dombrow didn't realize until then that they had also been wounded so they were treated for their wounds and waited for their tank to arrive and pick them up. Strunk and Tutino arrived approximately a half hour later, picked them up and took them back to their company. Strunk was the driver and Tutino was the Radio Operator.



Photo by Vick Laney

In July 1945, the war in the Pacific ended, and 20-year-old Dombrow returned home with \$300 in his pocket after two years in service.

Upon returning home, Dombrow pursued a college education at Robert Morris College in Pittsburgh. He attended the college through the G.I. Bill.

Dombrow worked long, hard hours to pursue his degree in accounting. Although it was stressful at times, Dombrow completed the four-year degree in only three years. After graduating, he partnered with his uncle to start an accounting firm: Palmer and Dombrow. He worked as a bank examiner with that firm for 18 years, and then continued to work as a bank examiner elsewhere for the next 22 years.

Dombrow married his first wife, Marion, in 1948, and they had two daughters, Susan and Rebecca. In 1959, Marion passed away due to

breast cancer when Dombrow was 35 years old.

Although life was despairing for Dombrow during this time of loss, he met his beloved Bert in 1960.

Bert was a 25-year-old Southern belle when she met Dombrow. They married, and in 1961, Donald Dombrow Jr. was born.

Donald Dombrow Jr. served in the military, following in his father's footsteps. However, at 30 years old, he passed away from complications due to a terrible cough. This cough may have been triggered by exposure to Agent Orange while in battle.

Dombrow and his wife have five grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. In 1989, Dombrow retired, and in 1997, he and his wife moved from Pennsylvania to Cumberland County, Tennessee.

In 2014, Dombrow underwent quadruple bypass

surgery, and the next day, he suffered a stroke that paralyzed the right side of his body. Walking became strenuous for the veteran, so he was welcomed to Life Care Center of Crossville, Tennessee, as a resident. Dombrow has been living at the facility for five years.

Dombrow is proof that life is not trouble-free, but through perseverance comes honor. 🇺🇸





Photo by David Smith



# A Life Devoted to Love

By Jake Cash

• MARGARET RADFORD •

*An examination of Margaret “Patsy” Benham Radford’s life reveals one central and powerful calling: to love selflessly and tirelessly.*

*It’s a calling that has informed Radford’s actions her entire life. Throughout the many roles and experiences of her life, Radford has served and cared for others with remarkable passion and excellence.*

Radford was born on Jan. 15, 1932. Her mother and father raised her alongside 10 siblings, one of whom was adopted. The family was poor and lived in a small house, but they were very close and always watched out for each other.

Radford’s father was Bradford Benham Sr., but everyone called him Pooloo. He was a groundskeeper and gardener. Radford’s mother was Flora Ethel Casey Benham, but she was known as MaDear. She was quiet and petite, but also a strict disciplinarian.

“She was soft-spoken, but she didn’t take no junk!” said Radford.

Radford was the fourth oldest of the children. Her older siblings looked after and helped raise her, and she, in turn, did the same for her younger brothers and sisters.

In this way, Radford learned to love, care for and support others at a young age. This skill would translate well to her time in school.

Radford was successful throughout her educational career. In fact, she was so smart that she skipped a grade in junior high school. She was also very athletic and became a basketball star alongside her sister, Agnes Benham. Together, the two were known as the “Dynamic Benham Duo” – a name that still brings a smile to Radford’s face and a look of excitement in her eyes.

Radford recognized the blessings of her academic skill, athletic successes and protective family, so she was sure to help and encourage others who didn’t have the advantages she did. “I always had people watching over me,” Radford said. “When other people didn’t, I stood up for them and made sure they had some things. I also helped people with their lessons in school.”

After graduating as valedictorian of Summer Hills High School in Cartersville, Georgia, Radford earned a scholarship to Paine College in Augusta, Georgia, where she studied to become an English

teacher. She continued to excel academically and athletically, despite the fact that she was a year younger than the other students in her class.

“I think it all caused me to be a smart aleck,” Radford said with a laugh. “But the experience really taught me a lot.”

As Radford continued her academic and athletic careers, she remained a passionate and steady encourager to the people around her.

One summer when Radford was home from college, she met a man named John Lewis Radford, who was a friend of her sister’s fiancé.



“We liked each other from the start,” said Radford. “He was a smart aleck, and he was sort of a bad boy. He liked to do a lot of crazy things.”

Radford’s parents didn’t want her to see John Lewis because he was two years older than her,



Photos used with permission from bonnyoaks.org.



and he had a reputation for being a bit unruly. Radford's sister, however, helped the two continue to meet until they secretly got married in 1948. Her parents were not pleased when they found out.

"They didn't like it," Radford said through a smile. "They didn't like it one bit. He was older than I was, and they were worried about my scholarship."

After she got married, Radford did return to school. Her young family soon grew to include a daughter and son: Faith (1950) and Henry (1952).

Meanwhile, John Lewis had a spiritual awakening. In an unexpected conversion to Christianity that Radford could only describe as divine intervention, he felt called to become a minister. The family moved to Atlanta where he went to seminary at the Morehouse School of Religion.

After John Lewis graduated, he took a job at a church in Chattanooga, Tennessee, so the family moved again. In Chattanooga, Radford found a place where she could live out her mission of love and care in a profoundly meaningful and effective way.

Bonny Oaks was an orphanage, and Radford and her husband both served as house parents there. They were

directly in charge of taking care of the children and raising them. Charles Calloway, who came to Bonny Oaks as a 6-year-old and stayed until he was 18, is a living testament to the impact Radford and her husband had on the children of Bonny Oaks.

"They were the mother and father to me that my own parents weren't," Calloway said. "My life today is because of them, and any success I have is because of them. I only have my wife, children and grandchildren because of the love they taught me. They taught me how to care for someone else."

Calloway has kept in touch with the Radford family over the years and refers to Radford and her husband as his own parents, and their children as his siblings. Like Calloway, many of the people from Bonny Oaks are still an active part of each other's lives.

"I taught them to work hard for the things they wanted," said Radford of the Bonny Oaks Children. "I taught them to go to school and get their education. I wanted to teach them all the right ways to do things. I taught them about being mothers and fathers."

Radford also made use of tough love, as she was a soft-spoken disciplinarian, just like her mother. Faith Edwards,

her biological daughter who also lived at Bonny Oaks, experienced this sort of discipline firsthand.

"She believed in not sparing the rod," Edwards said with a laugh. "If you don't want a whooping you better do what's right."

Radford also fought against racial segregation and inequality at Bonny Oaks. The orphanage was segregated, meaning there was a side for black children to live on and a side for white children. While the kids from each side often socialized and played together, the white side had better amenities, and events at the orphanage were always segregated.

"I treated them all the same way," said Radford. "I loved them all the same way. I taught them to treat everybody right and respectfully."

Radford also worked against inequality through frequent conversations with Malcolm Adamson, the superintendent of the orphanage. Adamson was pro-segregation, so Radford would often go to his office and speak to him about integrating the students. Over the years, Adamson and Radford became good friends, and when Radford was involved, things usually worked out well for all of the children.

Once, when the Bonny Oaks basketball team had an important game coming up, the students watching in the stands were to be segregated. Radford went to Adamson and told him that the team couldn't play in the game unless the stands were integrated. Adamson argued, but when the game rolled around, there was no segregation.

"It became known that there was no segregation at Bonny Oaks if Mrs. Radford had anything to do with it," said Edwards.

Radford also fought for racial equality in schools in Hamilton County, Tennessee. With the support of the Black Ministers' Union, the NAACP and many

worked as a coordinator for a cluster of group homes around Chattanooga called Family and Children Services. These were homes for older children who were usually in some sort of trouble.

"My mother always goes out and searches for the children who are out of control," said Edwards. "The children that nobody else wants. The disadvantaged. She sees that as an opportunity to make their lives better. The children were always the most important thing in her life. Always."


Radford, in addition to being a minister's wife, Sunday school teacher and choir director, went on to be a motivational

Black Women's Chattanooga Chapter. This award is presented to black women who are community leaders and have made accomplishments in a variety of fields including, in Radford's case, community development, religion and social services.

"She would always be taking food and clothes to people," said Edwards. "She would always be helping people with their children or helping them solve their problems. I run into people who will say, 'You don't know what your momma did for me.' There are hundreds of stories like that."

Whether she was helping raise her younger siblings, assisting fellow students with their academics, raising up to 50 children at once at Bonny Oaks, fighting for desegregation, speaking in churches or giving assistance and wisdom to members of her community, Radford was always there for the people around her. Radford spent her life devoted to an extraordinary love for others and a passion for lifting them up to success.

Today, as a resident at Life Care Center of Hixson, Tennessee, Radford remains a strong and kind woman who is known for her sweet smile. She is surrounded by people who love her and are thankful for the love she shared, and continues to share. Her wisdom continues to impact lives, and her devotion to selfless love continues to inspire. 🙏



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*"The children were always the most important thing in her life. Always."*

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people within the school system, Radford often went before Hamilton County's Board of Commissioners to advocate for racial equality and better facilities in schools.

After the legal end of segregation, Radford regularly visited the newly integrated schools to make sure the kids weren't having any trouble. She made it a point to check on black and white children, alike.

"They're my kids," Radford would say with determination. "I am their parent. I'm the only parent that some of them will ever know."

After Bonny Oaks closed and many of the kids were placed in foster homes, Radford

and spiritual speaker. She and her husband would study the Bible together, pray and develop messages for Radford to deliver at various churches and events. Her authority to preach, accompanied by her style of powerful honesty, was highly respected due to the life that she had lived and the reputation she had gained as a devout Christian and as a source of wisdom and advice.

Radford earned numerous awards, such as the Distinguished Citizen of the Year and Outstanding Baptist Minister's Wife awards. She was also named the 1998 Black Pioneer Woman of Excellence by the National Coalition of 100



• EMMETT AND BARBARA YOUNG •

Photo by Mindy Lundy Photography

# ROUND AND ROUND THEY GO

By Leigh Atherton

“We don’t roller skate anymore; we just go ’round and ’round,” Barbara Young shared laughing.

Barbara, along with her husband, Emmett, have called Life Care Center of Evergreen, Colorado, home since 2014. The couple’s room is full of mementoes showcasing memories of their amazing life and talents. One of the first items a visitor will notice is an old pair of roller skates. Those skates are the memento that started it all.

In the 1950s, Emmett and Barbara both worked for the same department store.

“There were three girls that worked upstairs,” shared Emmett. “I always planned ahead at least 10 or 15 minutes for a date. They told Barbara that I was going to call her.”

“He called me up and said, ‘What are you doing?’” continued Barbara. “I said, ‘Oh, I’m ironing.’ He said, ‘I thought



*Emmett was the artist who was known for his cutting-edge hairstyles, including boldly using bright hues of pink, purple and blue hair dye.*

you might like to go roller skating.’ I said, ‘No, I’m ironing,’ and hung up on him.”

Barbara knew Emmett had dated her friends, and she did not want to get involved. His charm, along with the help of her friends, eventually convinced her to go roller skating with him. It was her favorite hobby, and those skates still remind the couple of that romantic night. After skating, Emmett offered

to take her out for dinner or a drink, and she accepted.

“I took her to a cute little place,” shared Emmett. “There was a swimming pool with floating lilies and dim lights. It was a lover’s dream. I took her home, and then never went out with anybody after that. Period.”

Thus, began a life of building businesses, raising children and chasing dreams – always together.

They were married on Dec. 5, 1952,

in Florida, six months after the roller-skating first date. Barbara was from Tampa. Upon graduating from high school, she immediately began working in the advertising department of the department store where they first met.

Emmett, however, was born in Indiana and grew up in West Virginia. He walked three miles to school each day to his one-room schoolhouse, where



he had the same teacher for the eight years he attended school. At 15, he went to work, and by 1943, he was drafted to serve in World War II. After the war, a chance visit to Florida became a permanent move because he loved it so much. This is how he came to work in the same department store as Barbara.

Before moving to Florida, Emmett had researched a few different business ideas.

“I called the man who was the wealthiest man in the state of Ohio. ... I rode a Greyhound to meet him. He asked, ‘Why do you want to see me?’ I said, ‘I’m an old country boy and just got started in life. You’re the wealthiest man in the state of Ohio, and I want you to tell me how you made your money.’”

The businessman spent several days with Emmett, sharing that his secret to making money was running a chain of beauty salons. This inspired Emmett, and he went to beauty school.

In 1952, Emmett opened his first salon: Young’s Hair Fashions.

The newlyweds ran the salon together, eventually opening and running five salons. Emmett was the artist who was known for his cutting-edge hairstyles, including boldly using bright hues of pink, purple and blue hair dye. Barbara ran the business side of things and occasionally modeled her husband’s work.



“I opened my first beauty shop with \$265 worth of equipment,” explained Emmett. “I went on and got into another one and another one. I was just a natural. We were first-class. I dressed in a double-breasted suit that was made in Hong Kong for \$40. I looked the part. I played the part. I started teaching how to live and how to be successful.”

Running salons was so much more than just cutting



Photos by Mindy Lundy Photography

hair for Emmett and Barbara. They learned the value in presenting oneself well and building relationships with their clients. Those relationships are some of Barbara's favorite memories. She fondly recalls how much their clients loved them, often lavishing them with praise, food and goodies.

As their businesses grew, so did their family with son, Barry, being born in 1956, and daughter, Robin, in 1959.

The family traveled every summer from June to September, hiking, canoeing and exploring every single state in the U.S. Another of Barbara's fondest memories of their life is how well-behaved their children were. She felt comfortable taking them where she needed, knowing they would make her and Emmett proud. This good behavior is part of what made their summers so fun as they traveled and explored together.

One of Emmett's proudest memories is moving his mother to Florida to live near

his family. His mom survived cancer twice, and doctors said she would not live on two separate occasions when Emmett was young. In spite of this, she lived to age 82, and Emmett and Barbara were able to buy her a small home to enjoy life in Florida.

Emmett and Barbara's business model and approach to life inspired Robin and Barry, who both became hairdressers as well.

During the family's summer adventures, the Youngs discovered Grand Lake, Colorado, and it quickly became the favorite place they ever visited. They loved it so much that they purchased an old cabin there with a tree fallen across the roof. Remodeling this cabin became the couple's newest hobby and pride and joy.

Emmett and Barbara retired to their cabin and filled it to the brim with treasures they had collected or made. They are both known for their handiwork. Emmett builds miniature models of places

they have visited, and Barbara shares crafts with family, friends and associates at Life Care Center of Evergreen.

Their cabin is still enjoyed by their family – and even neighbors, who have been known to bring visitors over to see all the items that have been collected over the years.

"Right now, it's the most beautiful thing you have ever seen," said Emmett.

Even though their cabin is full of conversation pieces, Emmett said Barbara is still his favorite conversation piece. It's that playful love that has permeated 66 years of marriage. Barbara still reminds Emmett that he owes her \$3 for their marriage license, but she's also quick to share the secret to their success: "Keep your mouth shut and just let whatever is said come in one ear and go out the other ear. You say things, and you regret it. He's such a sweet man; it isn't worth it."

"Barbara is the best thing that ever happened to me," added Emmett.

These days, Barbara still wears her trademark overalls every day. Emmett loves sharing a laugh and story with visitors. They both enjoy observing the Colorado wildlife and landscape they fell in love with so many years ago.

"I've had the best life of anybody I've ever met," shared Emmett. "Everything nice happens to me." 🐾



Photos by Mindy Lundy Photography

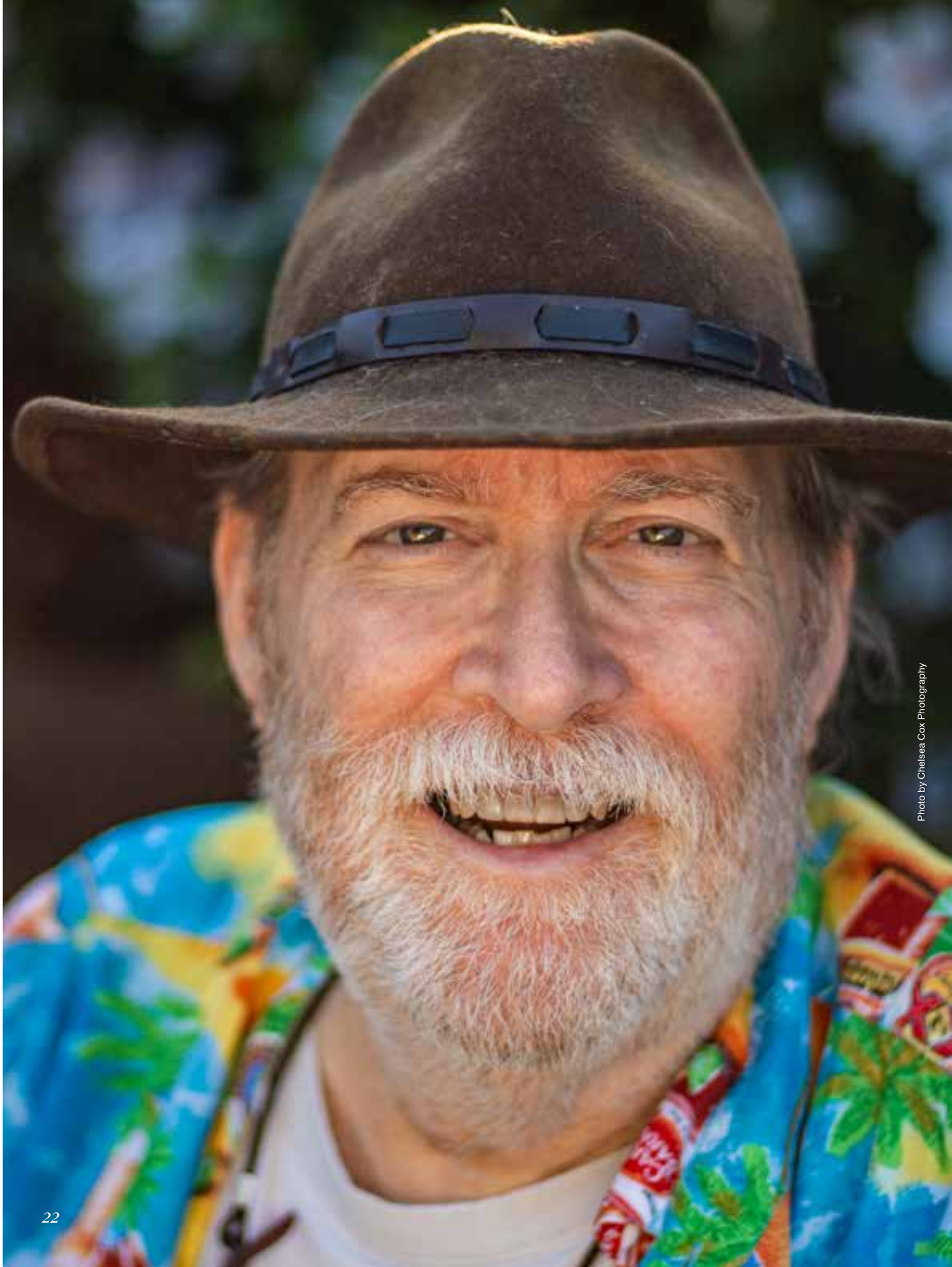


Photo by Chelsea Cox Photography



# Changing Colors

By Ryan Faricelli

MARK LAKIN

“I drew on the wall,” said Mark Lakin, remembering how his parents reacted to his discovery of art as a child. He immediately faced his first experience in adapting his art to a different medium. “They said, ‘Let’s get him some paper and see what he can do.’”

Lakin was born on Jan. 1, 1953. He was the oldest of three children. Their father was a lieutenant colonel in the United States Air Force, and their mother was a housewife, excellent at planning and hosting great parties for her husband and his fellow officers. Unfortunately, their father was also a strict disciplinarian who never liked that Lakin grew up to be a successful and prominent artist instead of becoming a military officer.

“If you had to describe him as a glass is half full or a glass is half empty kind of guy,” said Lakin, “he wouldn’t like the glass the water was in. When he retired,

he tried to be a realtor, but that didn’t work out so well. I told him he had to be nice to people.”

The lack of support didn’t stop Lakin, who spent much of his youth in Pasadena, California, as a cartoonist. By the time his family moved to Sierra Vista, Arizona, he started high school and was drawing caricatures of other students that were featured in the yearbook.

Lakin attempted to go to college but struggled with the process. He had been a member of the ROTC, but lost interest and quit – a decision that caused his father to stop giving him money for college. Not long after, Lakin’s disagreements with the head of the art department resulted in him being thrown out of school. Unsure of what to do next, a friend suggested he consider learning airbrushing.

“I thought the airbrush was an actual brush that shot air out the brush itself,” Lakin remembered with a laugh. “I had no idea there

was a device. So, I started learning how to paint T-shirts. From T-shirts, you go into custom car painting.”

Lakin began working at several custom car shows, and the first major car he painted was a van featuring a brand-new movie everyone was talking about.

“When Star Wars came out in 1977, I covered a van with scenes from it,” recalled Lakin fondly. “Guys would say, ‘Oh, you did the Star Wars van?’ Then people wanted me to start doing their life stories on their vans.”

His reputation grew, and soon Lakin was well known on the car show circuit throughout the Southwest, from California to Arizona and Nevada.

“They used to call me The Magician,” said Lakin. “I could see a painting done before it was done. I would see how the whole process would be created before I created it. So, when I went and

started painting, it would just happen. I did all the vans, cars and trucks. I did planes. I did a motorhome for a guy in Germany.

"I even did a custom design for a race boat. The first time it was out, it went airborne and then straight down. I think my artwork is still on the bottom of Phoenix Lake."

In the 1980s, Lakin had an art agent friend who connected him with a side gig doing artwork for textbooks.

"I began illustrating for McGraw-Hill Education," Lakin said. "I illustrated books for kindergarten through 12th grade. I was their space artist."

In 1991, an automobile covered in Lakin's artwork was featured on the cover of Truckin' Magazine. It was a crowning achievement that was immediately followed by tragedy.

Lakin became terribly sick. His kidneys stopped working, and after being subjected to countless tests with no answers, he moved to Kansas to find a doctor who would finally determine his diagnosis.

"I got deathly ill," explained Lakin. "I got a virus around my heart called pericarditis. I've never felt pain like that."

Lakin's doctors told him he might not live through the night and performed a surgery that would save his life. He spent months on antibiotics and learned that it was no longer safe for him to breathe the fumes from the paint used to customize automobiles.

After fully recovering in 1995, Lakin had to teach himself to paint in a different medium, and he had to learn to paint on canvas and walls instead of cars.

"I started painting with acrylic, doing regular paintings," Lakin explained. "I was told Topeka loves landscapes, but that didn't really work too well. Even with acrylics, I still used an airbrush. No matter what I painted, I always did some part of it with an airbrush."

Lakin finally got his career back on track but was about to face another health challenge. In 1998, after completing a 20-foot mural at the house of the doctor who had saved his life, he noticed he was having trouble with his right eye. A week later, he was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis.

"In 2000, I fully lost my right eye from MS," said Lakin. "I've been painting and drawing with one eye ever since. They said I couldn't do that, but if someone says I can't do something, I'll figure out a way to do it. It didn't matter how sick I was, I would still try to paint."

Lakin didn't just try, however. He excelled.

The Kansas International Museum commissioned Lakin to do work for their "Czars: 400 Years of Imperial Grandeur" exhibit in Topeka in 2003. The exhibit was part of a unique cultural exchange partnership between Kansas and the Russian government. The partnership was orchestrated by the director of the Topeka

Convention and Visitors Bureau, Betty Simecka, and Kansas Governor Joan Finney. More than 150,000 visitors experienced the exhibit.

"We constructed St. Basil's Cathedral for the opening party," Lakin said. "I airbrushed everything and made that place look like it did in Russia, but on cardboard. They would make these three-dimensional things and would ask me to paint them.



**“WHEN I’M WITH  
MY ART, I’M SO MENTALLY  
FOCUSED ON THE  
PROJECT AT HAND...  
I BECOME THE  
AIRBRUSH.”**

I also did a giant 8-foot egg with St. Basil’s Cathedral on it.”

The large egg was inspired by the tradition of Fabergé eggs, two of which were being displayed as part of the exhibit. Lakin painted the cathedral on the egg, surrounding it with sunflowers and a yellow brick road to illustrate the connection between Russia and Kansas.

“My biggest challenge is staying healthy,” Lakin told a local newspaper at the time.

“But, when I’m with my art, I’m so mentally focused on the project at hand that I am the egg – I become the egg; I become the airbrush.”

While creating the piece for the museum, Lakin was approached by members of the Russian government to do a painting on canvas of one of the famous Fabergé eggs from the Romanov family. They offered him a generous commission to do the painting.

“There’s only one painting in my life I regret that I did,”

Lakin said about the commission. “That painting, I spent a

hundred hours on it. They brought me a photo, and I said, ‘no problem.’ Boy, that was a mistake. When I was hired by the Russians, it was the communist government that hired me. When it was done, it was a different group of Russians in charge.”

The new group had no intention of paying Lakin for the painting, so he kept it.

That painting is still on display today in Lakin’s room at Life Care Center of Osawatomie, Kansas, where he continues to pursue his artistic endeavors while battling MS.

“I’m having to figure out how to accept my frailties,” Lakin concluded. “So, I’ve learned how to paint on the computer using Photoshop. Now I don’t even have to mix any paints! I just point at the block of color, and it just instantaneously happens. No cleaning airbrushes; no cleaning jars. It’s great. The hardest thing is just holding the painting pen because my hands are messed up. But I keep moving forward. I adapt well to adapting.” 🐼





Photo by David Michael Photography

# A LIFE TO BE PROUD OF

ANNA D'INTINO

By Kailey Holbrook

Anna D'Intino has lived a life full of adventure, travel and adversity. She was born on Jan. 10, 1923, in Genoa, Italy, to Pietro and Fiorentina, and is one of 11 siblings. One of her favorite memories from her childhood is holiday meals with her family. She also played basketball and soccer growing up and enjoyed sewing.

Only eight years before her birth, Italy officially entered World War I as part of the Allied Forces. A year after her birth, fascist leader Benito Mussolini came into power as the country's dictator. In other words, D'Intino was born into a very chaotic time in European history.

D'Intino grew up in the city of Genoa, where she would meet her future husband, Mario. Mario's family had a fishing business, and they were always able to

find food and work. When Italy became dangerous at the height of World War II, D'Intino made the decision to move in with her in-laws for safety. D'Intino's older sister taught her to sew, so she worked as a seamstress – a common trade for Italian women at the time.

## WORLD WAR II

Since Genoa was a port city, it became a very important spot of German occupation during the second World War. D'Intino recalls that the Germans were very tough on the Italians.

"We ran when we heard the metal of their boots on the pavement," she says.

During the German occupation of Genoa, D'Intino went through many trials as a result of the Allied Forces' invasion. She had several

close calls with danger. After Mussolini's declaration of war on France and Britain, Italy became the target of more than 50 bombings by British forces. The British had decided to target Italy because of its industrial workers. They wanted to damage morale and believed that Italy would easily fall.

D'Intino recalls a specific time when a friend's dog, who had excellent hearing, heard the

*D'Intino's older sister taught her to sew, so she worked as a seamstress – a common trade for Italian women at the time.*



*She recalls standing in line for food from the Allied Forces, all while the impending threat of bomb sirens loomed.*



British bombers 20 minutes before the sirens went off. The dog alerted her and her friend, Nina, saving their lives. She also recalls the birth of her first daughter as a close call with danger. After the birth of Maria Rosa, bomb sirens went off near the hospital she was in. Her husband came, and the family was able to safely evacuate. The hospital was burned to the ground.

In 1945, the Americans showed up in the city. D'Intino says they were disorganized and served black bread (made from unbleached flour.) D'Intino was particularly brave during this time. She knew she had to provide food and nourishment, not only for herself, but for her family.

She recalls standing in line for food from the Allied Forces, all while the impending threat of bomb sirens loomed. She was a young mother and wife, hoping for a better life for herself and her young daughter.

#### **LEAVING ITALY**

D'Intino applied for a visa to come to the United States in 1948, but there was a long waiting period. Because of this, she and her family decided to immigrate to Buenos Aires, Argentina, instead, where they remained safe until 1959. From there, they finally traveled to the United States.

D'Intino and her husband went on to have four more children – Ann, Gilda, Monica and Mario. The family joined millions of other families who

relocated to America after the war. Their ultimate goal was to move to Sea Isle City, New Jersey, where Mario's brothers owned a fishing business. They finally settled in New Jersey in 1959, where D'Intino's fourth daughter and her son were born.

The family enjoyed their new home in New Jersey. D'Intino wore many different hats as a mother, wife and seamstress. She worked for a factory, making hats for the military and sports teams. She went on to work for a local school as a seamstress – this is the job she would eventually retire from. D'Intino's love of sewing went further than just a job. She gave back to her community by knitting 1,000 shawls for cancer patients at local hospitals in Sea Isle City.



Photo by David Michael Photography



*D’Intino’s story is one of courage and perseverance. She is a woman who never gave up on trying to make the best life possible for herself and her family.*

### **TODAY**

Today, D’Intino resides at Life Care Center of Estero, Florida, where she frequently gets visits from her daughters Ann and Gilda and son-in-law Drew. At the age of 96, she attributes her longevity to some life-saving surgeries she’s had and says she enjoys meals with her family. Her hobbies include knitting and crocheting.

Associates at the facility say that D’Intino’s story is remarkable.

“She was able to come out of a time of war with a heart much purer and selfless than the ones who caused her life so many unpredictable threats,” says one associate.

D’Intino’s story is one of courage and perseverance. She is a woman who never gave up on trying to make the best life possible for herself and her family. Through the adversity of World War II, D’Intino and her family were able to accomplish many things.

And that is a life to be proud of. 🙌



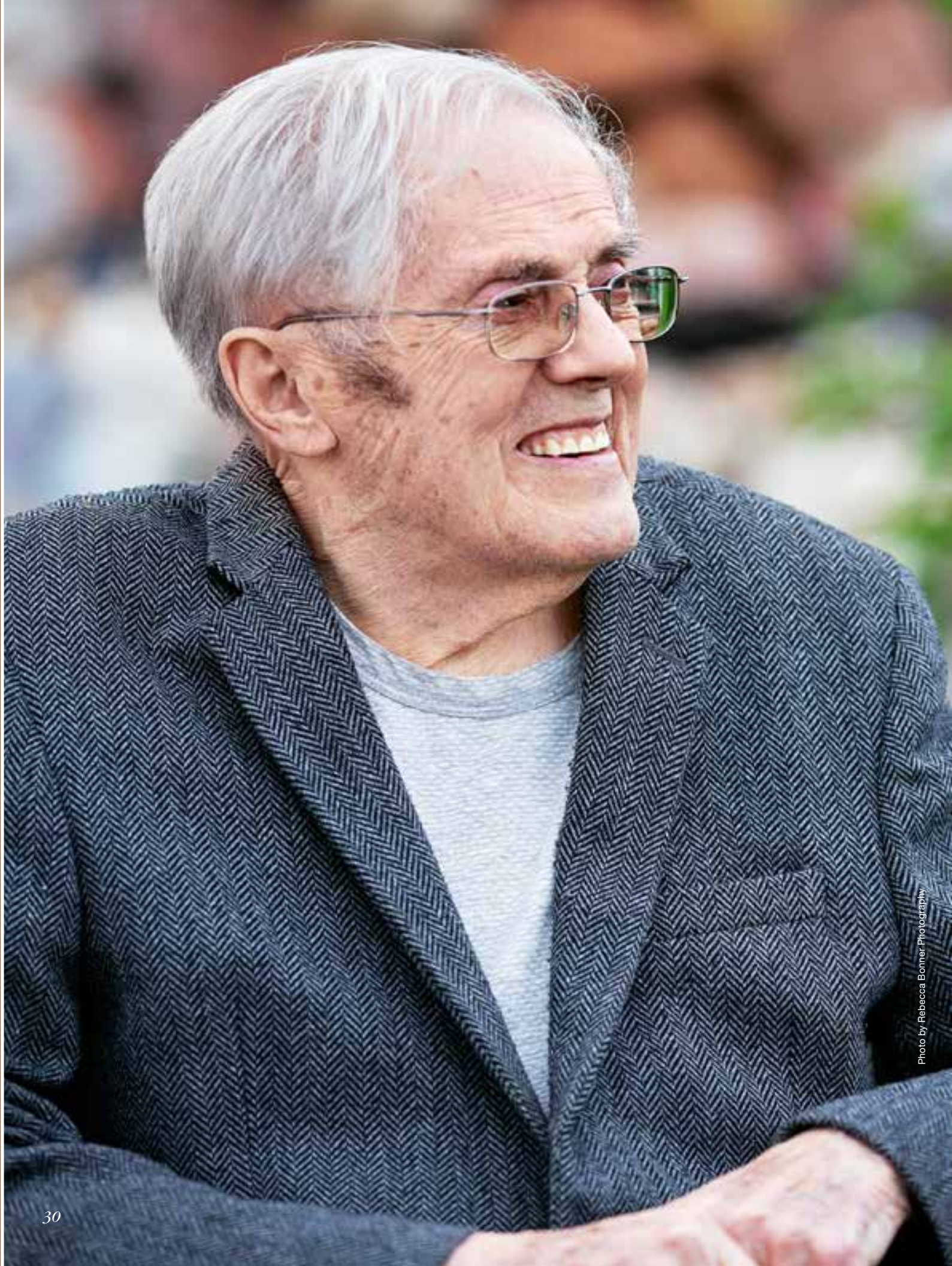


Photo by Rebecca Bonner Photography



# UNWAVERING

• SAMUEL "RIX" WARREN •

*By Bri Bentley*

Winston Churchill said, "There is only one duty, only one safe course, and that is to try to be right and not to fear to do or say what you believe to be right."

It's no surprise that these wise words were spoken by the childhood role model of Samuel "Rix" Warren, whose life exemplifies what it means to put Churchill's words into action.

"Dad lives by example of what his beliefs are," said his oldest daughter, Jane Warren. "His actions have always spoken louder than his words. His life is all about the Lord."



Warren grew up in Punchbowl, Australia – a small suburb of Sydney – with his father, Samuel Warren I, and his mother, Millicent Warren. He was the oldest child of five, with siblings Peter, Brian, Maureen and John.

Warren's father was a noble man who served Christ and loved people. He was a businessman and actually served as the mayor of Canterbury, Australia, a neighboring town to Punchbowl, for a time.

"There's even a little park and a street named after him," said Warren.

"Since Dad's name was Samuel, too, everyone just called him 'Rix,'" said Jane. "It was short for his middle name, Richard."

Warren has many fond memories of his time growing up with his family. He especially loves looking back on times when he played sports with his siblings.

"Growing up, we played football out in the

paddock," said Warren. "A very sports-minded family we were."

In 1943, Warren joined the Royal Australian Air Force to train to fight in World War II. Although the war ended before he ever saw combat, he did have a scary experience during his training.

"We found out that the aircraft we were in had some problems," said Warren. "We called the Air Force, and they said for us to go to Melbourne to land on the longest runway. So that's what we did. [As we tried to land,] our landing gear didn't work, and we went over the longest runway, crossed some train tracks and stopped. About five seconds after we stopped on the other side of the tracks, the train that traveled between Melbourne and Geelong drove past us. It had almost hit us. That was quite an exciting experience."





But something else exciting happened during Warren's time in the Air Force as well.

"That was when I met my wife," said Warren. "She and I were on the same mission. We had opportunities where she would sing a lot as a part of our mission. We also went to the same theological college. I fell in love with her because of her voice. She had a very beautiful voice."

After their service in the Air Force, Warren and his

soon-to-be wife, Irma Faulkner, attended Moore Theological College in preparation for a life of ministry.

"He went to Bible school to become a pastor and heard someone speak about missions," said Warren's youngest daughter, Ann Ramirez. "He decided to go to Tanganyika in southeast Africa – which today is Malawi and Tanzania. When he met Mum, she also had a heart for missions and wanted to go to

India. She had just returned from the Northern Territory as a nurse missionary."

The two were married on Oct. 10, 1953.

"That's when the Mission Society said there was a need for someone to go to Groote Eylandt in the Gulf of Carpentaria, and that's where they went for five years," said Ramirez.

In those days, Groote Eylandt, the largest Australian island in the Gulf of Carpentaria, was considered a "missionary island." The Warrens felt very passionate about going there to spread the gospel and help meet the practical, everyday needs of the Aborigines. Irma helped provide medical care, while Warren ran a local store where they sold basic necessities.

"It was called a 'mission,' but it was like a reservation for Aborigines," said Ramirez. "Other people weren't allowed to live there unless they were given permission by the elders.





One day, Dad intervened in a family dispute, and the husband came after Dad and threw spears at him, trying to kill him.”

“I was pretty young in those days,” said Warren. “So, I moved my head to one side and the spear missed me and went into the side of the store.”

While they were there, the Warrens gave birth to their firstborn son, Peter.

“I remember when I made a little carrier to go on the front of my bicycle, and we tied him in,” reminisced Warren. “Then off we would go around the mission station to see how far we could go. It was quite fun!”

After their time in Groote Eylandt, the Warrens moved back to the mainland of Australia, where Warren pastored in Sydney for the next five years. It was during this time that the Warrens had their first daughter, Jane.

Soon, Warren felt the call to do ministry overseas again. He was inspired by a story he read

about missionaries in Patagonia, Argentina. He and his wife applied to become missionaries to South America, and they moved to Paraguay, where they had their second daughter, Ann.

Next, the family moved to Buenos Aires, Argentina, where Warren pastored a church. Although there were times before when Warren had depended on the hand of the Lord to keep him and his family safe, it was in Argentina that he experienced a trial that grew his faith in the Lord even more.

“My dad’s always had the strength and character to handle any situation,” said Jane. “There was a strike in Argentina that kept Dad from receiving his pay from Australia. For two weeks, we ran on no money, but everything was taken care of. Our school was 30 minutes from home, and Dad drove us there for two weeks in his truck on an empty tank of gas. Dad never said anything to anybody. He just told us, ‘The Lord will provide.’ People would just



show up on our doorstep and say, 'The Lord told us to bring this extra casserole over.' At one point, we even found chickpeas inside beanbags from my physical education class and cooked them for dinner one night. It was actually kind of a miracle."

It's just one example of Warren's steadfast faith and character. Jane also remembers other times when her father exemplified humility and compassion.

"When I was 15, I had my first boyfriend, who was three years older than me," said Jane. "Mum and Dad wanted to meet him before we could go out, so they invited him over for dinner. When Dad opened the door and saw Mark and his motorcycle with two helmets in his hand, he told him, 'You're not taking my daughter anywhere,' and slammed the door in his face. I ran upstairs



crying, and Mum took Dad back in the bedroom to talk to him. Unbeknownst to me, Dad left to find Mark and apologized to him in front of all his friends and invited him back for dinner. He even gave Mark the keys to his own car to take me to the movies. That takes a lot of humility and character."

Jane also described how her parents always worked together as a unit.

"Growing up, we never saw them fight. It always appeared as if they were a unit and everything went along. Dad had rules, and he was consistent. If we wanted to do something that bent his rules, he would say, 'I'll pray about that,' and give us an answer the next day. We didn't know it, but he would say that because he would go and talk to Mum and come to a mutual agreement. He always considered his wife in everything he did."

She also fondly remembers their loving and self-sacrificing dynamic as a couple.

"The bathroom was Dad's chore," Jane said. "He would clean the floors in the kitchen, unstack the dishwasher and do the vacuuming. He felt that Mum shouldn't have to do that anymore because it was too much physical work for her. Mum wasn't frail, but he just decided to do those





chores. He even brought her breakfast in bed almost every day. Sometimes Mum would say to me, ‘I wish I could sleep in sometimes,’ and I would say, ‘Come on, Mum! There are so many women out there that would die to have a husband who brought them breakfast in bed every morning!’”

“My parents always sacrificed for us,” said Ramirez. “God has always provided, and He has just been so faithful to my parents.”

In 1978, the Warrens became involved with Youth With A Mission because of their son Peter’s involvement with the organization. They served as parental figures and mentors to the young adults involved in the ministry who had never had strong parental guidance in their lives. Peter, who also has a heart for missions, now lives out his father’s legacy through his role as YWAM facilitator for the Western U.S. and Canada.

“He’s now my dad’s boss,” laughed Jane.

Ramirez also served with her parents in YWAM.

“My mum, dad and sister Ann were on board the Anastasis, which is a mercy ship that goes around with doctors and nurses and gives free services to help the poor with medical treatment,” said Jane.

Warren also worked closely with the South American Mission Society – which was a part of the Church of England, as well as Teen Challenge.

In 1990, the Warrens came to live in the United States, in Denver. But over time, Warren decided that he wasn’t through with his mission to Argentina, so he went back to South America.

Warren still lives out his beliefs. One of the things he has become most passionate about is the reconciliation and healing of the world.

“The healing of the world has been a mission for my father in his later years,” Jane said. “To bring forgiveness for the sins of the forefathers for what we’ve done to each other inhumanely. We all play a part in healing the world.”

Today, Warren resides at Life Care Center of Westminster, Colorado, where he is frequently visited by his three children, three grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. He continues to share the love of Christ with the staff and fellow residents with more than just his words, with his actions.

“When Mr. Warren got here, he told me that he just wanted to keep doing God’s mission and keep spreading His word; that was all that he wanted to do with his life,” said Bethany Speer, activities director assistant. “He still does that!”

“Dad practices what he preaches,” said Jane. “He has lived a life faithful to God, and he’s unwavering.” 🙏



Photo by Vicki Laney



# SERVICE

## Before Self

MARY CATALANO

Short-term patient

By Bri Bentley

**I**t was nighttime in the jungle of Guyana, with a darkness as thick as its muggy heat. The rescue crew of five U.S. Air Force medics bravely trudged through the wild vegetation without a second thought of the danger lurking in its shadows. The only thoughts on Mary Catalano's mind were about her mission.

"Locate the civilians," she thought. "Rescue the civilians."

Catalano knew this was not an average mission. She had flown all over the world before, rescuing people from floods, earthquakes, fires and war zones. Maybe it was the fact that the crew had hardly any information about where they were going and why, but there was an air about this mission that sent a chill up her spine.

As the crew raced against the clock, they decided to split

up to cover more ground in search of the wounded civilians.

She walked through the jungle alone in the dark. Suddenly, she felt a tug at the pocket of her flight suit.

"Who are you?" she asked, startled. "Are you alright?"

"He ... help us," a voice whispered in terror. "Help us! They want to kill us."

"Who are you?" she asked again, this time with an urgency in her voice.

"I'm a reporter," the voice stated. "We're part of the news team that came here to protect Congressman [Leo] Ryan."

"Where is Congressman Ryan?" she breathed.

The voice replied, softer this time, "He's dead."

"Tough mission," Catalano said, as she described her experience in Guyana after the Jonestown Massacre, one of her most memorable assignments in service to the U.S. Air Force as an aeromedical evacuation medic. "We were the first plane in and brought out the only survivors – there were 19 total. I'm proud that I was asked to take that mission. I'm glad that I took it. I hope that I never have another one like it."



### Red, White and Blue

Mary Catalano is a patriot of patriots. “If you look up ‘patriot’ in the dictionary, her face would be right there beside it,” said Debbie Guy, activity director at Life Care Center of Hickory Woods in Antioch, Tennessee. Guy has known Catalano for about seven years, since her first stay at the facility. In February 2019, Catalano returned to Hickory Woods for rehabilitation after another fall; she was discharged in June.

“I was born on Veterans Day,” Catalano said proudly as she pointed to the patriotic display of flowers and flags in her room. “My father told me all those parades and flags were because it was my birthday. I think I was about 7 before I realized it was about something a little bigger than me. I’ve been pretty red, white and blue all my life. Service before self,” she smiled, with profound conviction in her voice.

You would think that it was destined for Catalano to become the faithful veteran that she is today. Although her medical service to the Air Force is a huge part of her legacy, it’s only the tip of the iceberg.

### Open Doors

Born and raised in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, Catalano grew up with a big family. Her father, Joseph Nenno, worked for Tennessee Valley Authority, while her mother, Mabel Genevieve Lefeber, was the “CEO” of the family.

One of Catalano’s favorite things to do with her family was to sing. She began hearing about music scholarships that could help students pay for college.

Coming from a large family in the midst of wartime, she knew that if there was a chance for her to become the first person in her family to go to college, this was it.

“I taught myself to play ‘Moonlight Sonata,’ ‘Claire de Lune’ and memorized ‘Maria’ from ‘Madame Butterfly’ – I thought it was beautiful.”

Catalano made an appointment with the director of music at

Austin Peay State University in Clarksville, Tennessee. The instructors were impressed and awarded her a music scholarship to begin studies as a music major that fall.

It was as if door after door continued to open for her as she attended school. Being the spirited woman she is, Catalano continued to walk through each one of them. While she was there, she also received an opportunity to sing with Jimmy Dorsey, one of the most famous jazz artists of the early ‘60s.

“It was like going into a room full of doors,” she said. “You say, ‘Oh wow!’ and you open that door. Then you see another door, and you open that one. My whole life has been that way.”



Photo by Vick Laney



## **A Change in Course**

During Catalano's senior year, life began to take a different direction. Catalano transferred to Vanderbilt University to continue her studies and took a job working in the library. Every day for lunch, she and her co-workers would eat their lunch together in the school's carrels. One day, as she walked in, she saw a lady in a beautiful blue suit who radiated confidence. Catalano couldn't help but approach her to find out where she had gotten her high-class attire.

The lady's answer surprised Catalano. "It's my uniform," she said. "I'm in the Air Force." This intrigued Catalano, so she set up a meeting with the lady to find out more.

After finding out more about opportunities the Air Force offered, especially new ones they were beginning to offer to women, Catalano became convinced that this might be her new path in life. When her father was diagnosed with terminal cancer during her final quarter of college, Catalano had to leave school to help him through his illness. Because of this turn of events, she decided to change direction and pursue a career in the Air Force.

## **Fly High, Miss Mary!**

Six months after Catalano submitted her application, she was accepted into the Air Force. She was sworn in at the federal building in downtown Nashville.

"The oath I took – the one everyone takes – is exactly the

same one the president takes," Catalano explained. "The oath had no expiration date then, and it doesn't now."

The doors continued to open for Catalano. After she completed training as a medic, she decided to pursue medical training as a physician's assistant. She was then selected to attend Duke University and graduated in the first class of the new physician's assistant program.



From there, Catalano served in several places. Eventually, she transferred to Georgia. It was there that she met her husband, Dominic Catalano.

"I got married in 1972," she said. "We had no money. We had a cathedral wedding, and the hospital staff did our wedding. I had six bridesmaids, and Dominic picked out my wedding dress. It was a beautiful wedding."

It wasn't long before the door opened for Catalano's next big adventure.

"When I was stationed in Georgia, I would sneak off to the ladies' room and tip the blinds down so that I could see the planes taking off,"

Catalano said. "They would come and go in twos. Oh, I just thought that was too much! One day, somebody out of the unit came up to me and asked, 'How would you like to fly? We have medical deployments and planes that turn into hospitals. You could go to flight school and medical flight school.' I said, 'Send me; I want to go.'"

Catalano transferred to Charleston, South Carolina, for the next 12 years. She attended flight school and became an instructor and examiner. She was eventually qualified in four different aircraft for aeromedical evacuation.

## **Jonestown**

In the fall of 1978, Catalano embarked on one of the most memorable and haunting missions of her career.

"It's a story worth hearing," Catalano said. "The commander picked five of us to go, and all we knew was that we could not tell our families where we were going, because first of all, we didn't know."

Catalano's team boarded the aircraft and found three men in uniform already onboard, sitting near the doors.

"When we were getting ready to land, we still didn't know who they were," she said. "As the three men went to the back and pulled the tarps off the cargo, we saw that it wasn't our normal medical supplies underneath; it was machine guns. We were surprised and told them that they were not

allowed to carry weapons on our military aircraft. The leader replied, 'We have full permission to take them. You're the reason we're here.' Now, that got my attention."

When they landed, the team looked out the windows of the plane and were alarmed by what they saw.

"There was a huge, human circle of Guyanese civilians surrounding our plane," she said. "At the time, we didn't know if they were friends or foes."



As soon as their wheels touched down in Guyana, the doors flew open, and the three men jumped out of the plane, guns in hand. Not knowing what they were looking for or what they would find, the team scoured the jungle until they found the injured civilians. Much to their surprise, the civilians turned out to be a part of a news team from America that had accompanied Congressman Ryan, U.S. Representative from California, as he investigated Jim Jones and The People's Temple compound in Jonestown, Guyana.

"We finally found them in that jungle with shirts and

dresses stuck to their wounds," Catalano remembered.

It wasn't until she arrived home that Catalano and her team were debriefed with the rest of the story: On Nov. 18, 1978, more than 900 people died at Jones' command in one of the worst mass killings in American history.

"It was horrific," said Catalano.

### A New Adventure

After years of exciting missions, Catalano was faced with a new challenge. She was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 1990, right before operation Desert Storm.

"When MS came along, it made me very angry and gave me a very ugly attitude," Catalano said. "I thought to myself, 'I studied all this and learned all this for this? I'm no good for anything!' I now know better. It took me several months to get squared away, but I found out there were other things I could do. So, everything I learned, I taught others coming up."

Catalano helped develop many training programs for the Air Force, one of which is still used today. The Non-Commissioned Officers Leadership Development Program is a week-long course to teach and reinforce leadership and management practices in future Air Force leaders.

A few years later, Catalano and her husband moved back to Tennessee, where they

took over management for an assisted living facility in Dickson. Dominic, who had gone to school to become a hospital administrator, managed the facility while Catalano trained the skilled nursing staff. When it came to caring for others, Catalano and her husband were an unstoppable team.

When Dominic was diagnosed with cancer in 2009, they decided to sell the facility.

"When we found out that Dominic was sick, we wanted our friends to have the assisted living facility," Catalano said. "So, we met with the banker. We decided to foreclose on the facility and auction it to Robert and Monica for one dollar. They were so happy!"

Although Dominic passed away in 2010 from his battle with cancer, Catalano says that his memory is still alive with her.

"I can feel his presence with me every day," she said. "His memory is always with me."

Today, Catalano still puts serving others before herself. During her recent rehab stay at Life Care Center of Hickory Woods, she started each day by greeting everyone and making sure they felt as special as she considers them all to be.

"I like to say good morning to everybody," Catalano smiled. "Optimism is a conscious choice, you know? When I get to say good morning to everyone, it makes a better day for me. I've got to have people. People are the important thing in my life and always have been." 🐾

## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Two men who brought joy and laughter to thousands within the Life Care family have left us, but their words and their music will reverberate in the depth of our souls for all eternity.

We refer to Jimmy Rhodes, 83, Life Care's longtime director of music services, who died on Feb. 5, 2019, and Claude Ogle Sr., 104, Mr. Life Care 2015, whose songs and wit captivated his audiences. He passed away on Feb. 24, 2019.

For 50 years, Rhodes acknowledged that God had given him the gift of music with a variety of instruments, and he was determined to share it. His appearances drew crowds wherever he went. With Life Care, his mission was to visit each of our centers, provide concerts for our customers and develop music therapy materials to assist activities directors.

Rhodes performed at the grand opening of the first facility in 1970 – what was to become Life Care Center of Cleveland, Tennessee. From that time on, he had a connection with the company.

Ogle, too, was a singer and musician, particularly with the piano and guitar. Years ago, he was given the lyrics of a song by a friend and asked to write the music for it, which he did, but before he could perform it, his friend passed away and never heard it. The friend had



entitled the song "Christmas Long Ago," and Ogle changed it to "Jesus' Birthday." The song had about five verses, and Ogle said he sang it every day since composing the music.

Ogle vaulted to fame in 2015 at 100 years of age when he was chosen as Mr. Life Care in the annual competition held at Life Care Center of Cleveland. The videos of his stories and jokes have become classics that will remain treasures in Life Care's history.

Ogle's health began to decline in the fall of 2018, but he seemed determined to reach his 104th birthday, which was Feb. 22. Rev. Edwin Lipsey, lead pastor of Ogle's home church, came up with a plan.

At one minute past midnight on Feb. 22, 2019, family members and friends gathered in Ogle's room at the nursing facility with balloons and a cake, and we sang "Happy Birthday" to him. We believe he knew what was happening. He passed away two days later.

Both Jimmy Rhodes and Claude Ogle honored their Lord by using their God-given talents to bless others. They left happy tracks on our hearts. 🎵

*Beecher Hunter*  
BEECHER HUNTER  
President



Jimmy Rhodes



Claude Ogle



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