

PHI BETA MU

TEXAS BANDMASTERS HALL OF FAME

JIMMY NATHAN YANCEY

MARRIOTT RIVER CENTER

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

2:30 p.m.

JULY 24, 2000

AUTOBIOGRAPHY  
JIMMY NATHAN YANCEY

MOTHER:

Linnie Allen, a twin, born August 17, 1907 a few miles south of the community of Old De Roche, Arkansas. She and her twin sister were 12th and 13th of 17 children. Old De Roche community is located approx. 12 miles north of Arkadelphia, Arkansas. Deceased July 3, 1999, age 91.

FATHER:

Charles Watson Yancey, born July 5, 1905 in the community of Lenox, Arkansas. He was 9th of 11 children. The community of Lenox is approx. 18 miles west of Arkadelphia. Deceased March 27, 1995, age 89 years.

SISTERS:

Joan Yancey Lane, born October 17, 1937.  
Bachelor of Elementary Education, University of Arkansas.  
Husband Steve, 1 child Kimberly, 18 months of age when Joan lost her life, age 26.

Wanda Sue Yancey Varady, born January 5, 1942.  
Masters in Social Services & Counseling, University of Arkansas.  
Husband Kenneth, 4 children Cherri, Scott, Steve, Susan.

My parents were from 'hard-scrabble' Arkansas church going farm families who fervently believed a person's word was sacred, all liars were going to hell and a lazy person was among the sorriest creatures on earth.

Dad received an 8th grade education. Mother completed the 11th grade and at age 18 was certified to teach public school in Arkansas.

Dad grew up helping his father, mother, brothers and sisters farm two sections of land homesteaded by grandfather Yancey. This land now lies under the eastern section of DeGray lake. The lake is approx. 9 miles north of Arkadelphia.

Mother grew up in like manner helping her father, mother, brothers and sisters farm land now under the eastern end of DeGray lake.

The only lasting reminders of that time past are vines of antique roses growing at the old Yancey homesite and 'Yancey Creek' which empties into the western end of DeGray lake.

During the early 1920's dad left the farm, became a Singer Sewing Machine salesman, convinced mother to meet him at her sister's in Cairo, Illinois where they were married April 4, 1926.

Except for World War II years dad remained a sewing machine salesman for most of his working life. Mother obtained a cosmetology license but later became a successful real estate broker in Little Rock, Arkansas.

As a salesman dad's philosophy seemed to be the grass was always greener just over the way. Consequently during my growing years we were always moving.

JIMMY NATHAN YANCEY:

Born September 17, 1930, Ft. Smith, Arkansas.  
Between birth and 1st grade lived in Cairo, Illinois, Paducah, Kentucky and Cape Girardeau, Missouri.  
1st grade: Vernon, Texas.  
2nd grade: Abilene, Texas.  
3rd grade to December of 7th grade: Arkadelphia, Arkansas.  
During this time period we moved each summer to another town but returned to Arkadelphia by the time school began.  
Completed 7th grade in Oakland, California.  
8th grade: Texarkana, Texas.  
9th grade: 1st 12 weeks, Arkadelphia, Arkansas.  
Completed 9th grade in Wichita Falls, Texas.  
10th grade: 1st semester Wichita, Falls.  
2nd semester Hope, Arkansas.  
11th grade: Hope, Arkansas.  
12th grade: Russellville, Arkansas. Graduated May, 1948.

Always the 'New Kid' on the block and knowing you were likely to be 'tested' by the neighborhood bully has a way of building character.

Early during my junior year at Henderson State I was walking past the practice rooms when I noticed this attractive young lady who not only was playing piano quite well but also just happened to have an exceptionally good figure. Naturally I went in, introduced myself and diligently pursued her to marriage. Molly Lanette Smith and Jimmy Nathan Yancey married 7:00 p.m., May 28, 1952 in the First Baptist Church, Louann, Arkansas. I think Lanette considers everything from that point forward a roller coaster ride.

August 8, 1952: Bachelor of Music Education, Henderson State Teachers College.

1960: Master of Music Education, North Texas State.

30 hours above Masters including administrative certification all levels and 12 hours toward guidance certification.

MUSIC BACKGROUND: GROWING UP.

The Allens were a musical family. They all sang and most played some type of instrument from juice harps to harmonicas, guitars and an old pump organ.

Mother was always singing to me or herself. While in 3rd grade she decided I should learn to play soprano saxophone and enrolled me in the Arkadelphia high school band (age or talent seemingly to be no barrier). The director was a nice old fellow but blind. Yet...somehow he managed to teach very well...every one but me. I learned to play C scale by rote and mother...realizing we were going nowhere fast...ended my 3rd grade band career.

Not one to give up, during 4th grade mother decided I would be a great violin performer, paid \$20.00 for a violin and signed me

up with a sweet lady, Mrs. Dora Harwood. After several weeks Mrs. Harwood (being a compassionate person) informed mother that this just wasn't going to work. I then began piano lessons from another sweet and very...very patient lady, Mrs. Zimmerman, continuing off and on until the 9th grade.

Because of my families rural church background after 4th grade I began attending one to three singing schools each summer. The first were of Sacred Heart type but as time passed moved toward southern gospel. We were taught sightsinging with shape notes, no instruments, used only a pitch pipe and moveable 'do'. As many know these schools would last only two or three weeks at a time. We did learn to sightsing, a fair amount of fundamental theory, conducting and socially had a good time...most schools attended were held in little country churches...there were always more girls than boys...and the woods were never far from the church house.

Early fall of 1947 (my junior year) a friend who was in Hope high school band convinced me to ask the director, Mr. Cannon, if I could join. Mr. Cannon said I could, asked me what instrument, having no idea the first thing coming to my mind was trumpet, he informed me the world was full of bad trumpet players, he had the very instrument I needed and handed me an Eb sousaphone.

Christmas holidays occurred shortly after joining Hope band. My sousaphone storage was flat on the floor. Upon returning from holidays I picked up the instrument and was about to play when I noticed a strong unpleasant odor. I took the instrument outside, took out all slides, filled it with water...and gently floating to the surface was a large decomposing rat. A new method of instrument storage was arranged.

In Russellville Arkansas senior high I continued with band which at that time was a mixture of high school and Arkansas Tech students. We did double duty appearing at most high school and intown college games. Our director (known only as George) was quite elderly and directed us with one hand while holding and playing a silver cornet with the other.

It was my intention to enroll in Arkansas Tech and major in engineering. However...after high school graduation dad closed his sewing machine store...loaded the family in a 1946 Chevrolet and headed south looking for greener pastures.

Passing through Arkadelphia I rebelled...informed dad I was going no farther...had him take me to an aunt's home...got out of the car with my suit case...sent the family on their way and planned to enroll in engineering at end of summer. Two hours later dad had turned around, come back, bought a house, rented a building and put in a sewing machine business.

Because tuition was waved I enrolled in the college band. My sophomore year I changed my major from engineering to music. Things were going well in engineering...I simply enjoyed music more.

FAMILY:

Wife: Lanette.

1951-Bachelor of Music Education, Henderson State Teachers College.

Friend, Wife, Much Loved and Respected Mother, Outstanding Instructor of Piano.

Sons: Michael David.

1980-Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering, Texas Tech University.

1989-J.D., University of Tulsa.

President: Continental Natural Gas, Inc. Tulsa, OK.

Deceased: June 19, 1994, age 37.

Timothy Allen.

1984-Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering, Texas Tech University.

Senior Engineering Adjuster, F.M. Global: Commercial Insurance, Dallas, Texas.

Wife Malia, 3 children Joshua 6, Rachel 4, Caleb 1.

Christopher Andrew.

1986-Bachelor of Science, Stephen F. Austin University.

1990-M.D. University of Texas Health and Medical Center, Houston.

1990 to 1994 Resident: Ob-Gyn, University Hospital, Jackson, Mississippi.

1994-Board Certified Ob-Gyn Physician affiliated with Longview Diagnostic Clinic.

Wife Alisa, 2 children Allison 6, Andrew 3.

Each Yancey son was in the Longview I.S.D. band program from 6th through 12th grade. Every year each participated and was successful in all UIL solo and ensemble contest and all All Region tryouts and each won membership in our Texas All State Bands.

ARMED FORCES SERVICE: 1952-1956 U.S. Air Force.

Assigned to the Command Band, Strategic Air Command. Remained at this station entire enlistment. Special Significance: All bandsmen assigned to the Strategic Air command were routed through the Command Band. Continued assignment with the Command Band was held by competitive audition.

RELIGION: Cumberland Presbyterian.

CHURCH CHOIR:

1 year-Choir Director, Luthern Church, Bellevue, Nebraska.

½ year-Choir Director, Presbyterian Church, Big Spring, Texas.

6 years-Choir Director, Winterfield Methodist Church Longview.

2 years-Choir Director, Founders Christian Church, Longview.

11 years-Choir Director, First Cumberland Presbyterian, Longview.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

1952, Spring Semester and Summer: Sparkman, Arkansas.

1953 to Spring 1956: While in the Air Force began band programs at two small schools in southern suburbs of Omaha, Nebraska; also taught private lessons.

2 years-Van, Texas: Assistant Band Director and Choir Director.

1½ years-Hearne Independent Schools.

½ year-Runnels Junior High, Big Spring.

3 years-Gaston Independent Schools.

2 years-Gladewater Independent Schools.

3 years-Industrial Independent Schools.

1 year-Assistant Longview Senior High School Band.

7 years-Foster Junior High, Longview.

8 years-Longview Freshman Band.

2 years-Pine Tree Freshman Band, Longview.

1 year-Longview Senior High School Band.

July, 1987: Began procedure for retirement. Brownsboro I.S.D. desiring to improve a badly deteriorated instrumental music program repeatedly contacted me for help. I did not want to do this...however... at my families urging and Lanette obviously not wanting me around the house cancelled retirement arrangements and accepted (a week at a time).

1987-1990: Brownsboro I.S.D. (see contest record).

May 31, 1990: Retired.

September, 1988-May, 1990 Part-time Instructor, Tyler Junior College.

January, 1991-May, 1997: Part-time Instructor, Henderson I.S.D.

September, 1999-December, 1999: Part-time instructor Henderson I.S.D.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:

Association of Texas Professional Educators.

Texas Music Educators Association.

Texas Bandmasters Association.

Texas Music Adjudicators Association.

Phi Beta Mu.

JUDGING EXPERIENCE:

23 years-UIL and Invitational Solo/Ensemble, All Region Try-outs, Marching, Concert and Sightreading Contests.

8 years-Auditions for final chair positions with All State Bands.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE OTHER THAN JUDGING:

1978-1980 Region Chairman, Region IV, Texas Music Educators Association.

1980-1982 Executive Secretary, UIL Music Region IV.

CONTEST RECORD

	<u>MARCHING</u>	<u>CONCERT</u>	<u>SIGHTREADING</u>	<u>INVITATIONAL</u>
1956-57		2	4	
1957-58		1	4	
1958-59	2	3	4	
1959-60	1	1	2	
1960-61	2	1	1	
1961-62	1	1	2	
1962-63	2	1	1	
1963-64	1	2	4	
1964-65	1	2	2	
1965-66	2	1	1	
1966-67	1	1	2	
1967-68	2	1	1	
1968-69	1			
1969-70	2	2	3	
1970-71	1	1	1	
1971-72	2	1	1	1
1972-73	1	1	1	1
1973-74	1	1	1	1
				Region IV Honor Band-CCC
1974-75	1	1	1	1
				Region IV Honor Band-CCC
1975-76	1	1	1	1
				Region IV Honor Band-CCC
				State Honor Band Finalist-CCC
1976-77	1	1	1	1
1977-78	1	1	1	
1978-79	1	1	1	
1979-80	1	1	1	
1980-81	1	1	1	
1981-82	1	1	1	
1982-83	1	1	1	
1983-84	1	1	1	
1984-85	1	1	1	
1985-86	1	1	1	
1986-87	1	1	1	
1987-88		2	2	
1988-89		1	1	Brownsboro-last UIL rating before 87-88 school year was a IV.
1989-90	1	1	1	Brownsboro-1st Sweepstakes in history of school.

7 times to Invitational Marching Contests.	7 1st Divisions.
30 times to UIL Marching Contests	23 1st Divisions.
33 times to UIL Sightreading Contests	23 1st Divisions.
33 times to UIL Concert Contests	27 1st Divisions.

17 UIL Sweepstakes Awards.

1974, 1975, 1976, Region IV TMEA CCC Honor Band.

1976: TMEA State CCC Honor Band Finals (5th in State).

In All Region/All State Band auditions and UIL Solo/Ensemble contests throughout teaching career the percentage of student success has been consistly high.

#### TEACHING PHILOSOPHY:

A contest system cannot be justified educationally as an end unto itself. It must be used as a motivational vehicle to excellence. During and after each contest period students must be led to understand the same ingredients required for excellence in music performance and competition are necessary for excellence in any endeavor.

It is our firm belief music is vital to enrichment of the human spirit. Those who claim the day of miracles is over have obviously not examined one of God's greatest gifts to humanity... Music. Also, as with all of God's gifts, those who participate in music receive extra benefits. I consider among those extra benefits exposure to the virtues of hard work, persistence, responsibility, self-discipline and all worthy goals and responsibilities require self-sacrifice.

PERSONAL STATEMENT

Never in my wildest imagination have I ever entertained the thought I would be where I am standing Honored by this great fraternity, Phi Beta Mu. Here at the end of my career I am humbled, feeling unworthy, but at the same time tremendously appreciative and pleased.

I came out of Arkansas during a time when public school and college bands were not strong extremely ill prepared to teach young men and women instrumental music...the worst thing about this was...I didn't know it.

My first few days on station with the Strategic Air Command Band were a huge traumatic shock. I immediately discovered how little I knew about music and teaching. In that band there were men who had studied at Michigan, Illinois, Nebraska, Iowa, Eastman...fine musicians, great players...and there I was. From this point on I owe so much to so many fine teachers and directors who let me learn from them directly and from them through their students...This is a debt I can never repay.

If there is a beginning it would have to be Captain Bennie Maniscalco who summoned me and another bandsman (we were both tuba holders...not players) before him informing us competitive auditions would be held the winner to stay the loser traveling to Korea. I stayed, he traveled...and from that time forward I began to be a tuba player as opposed to tuba holder.

During my enlistment a first cousin, Charles Sheets, was making a name for himself in East Texas at Timpson and Levertts Chapel. Charles had always been the big brother I never had. He said to me "Jimmy, when you are discharged go to East Texas, snow any superintendent you can to hire you, walk into Tatum Music Company, convince Alto Tatum you want to learn to be a band director, when he tells you something, keep your mouth shut and do it". I took that advice...the best I ever had. Frequently as he finished his day about 9:00 p.m. Mr. Tatum would drop by my home. Because of getting the kids to bed he would have us go outside, sit on the curb and we would talk band until 2 or 3 in the morning. He was always direct, honest and correct.

One time when at Gladewater I had the band on the practice field...Mr. Tatum got out of his car...slowly walked across the field with that walk of his...eased up beside me with this question..."Yancey...what in the hell are you doing to those trombones?" Mr. Tatum will always be my Master Teacher.

After the Air Force for 12 years every position I took, almost everything I did was to learn. And then in 1968 we came to Longview not especially for the job...but to stay...no matter what...and give my family stability. Neal Grant was about to begin his 2nd year in Longview. By the end of his 1st year membership in the total band program had doubled, the high school band had excelled in everything it did and that growth and performance excellence was even more pronounced his 2nd year.

For me as a teacher and director, in Longview it all began to come together. I call those years with Foster Jr. High and the Longview freshman "The Glory Years". It was a tremendous feeling of accomplishment to lead young men and women to a level of pride and skill in marching, all region, solo and ensemble, concert and sightreading that was as good or better than many high schools. This was especially so with the Freshman Band. But folks...when you are preparing students to send to someone as demanding of excellence and as 'picky' as my good friend Pete Kunkel ...you want to send the best. I watched Pete take those young people to such heights...performances that made the hair on the back of your neck bristle and chills run down your spine...and as I watched and listened there was such a great pride...and still is...to be have been a part of it all.

Last but far, far from least I owe so much to my wife, Lanette. Wives and husbands of band directors know. We as a group are so focused. An example...the last year at Foster I was heavy into rehearsal when the phone rang. I usually ignored the phone during rehearsal but this time it rang...and rang...and kept ringing. Finally in exasperation I answered. Here is this frantic voice..."Jimmy, one of the kitchen appliances is on fire"...My response..."Don't you know I'm in rehearsal...call the fire department...Bye!" You have to really love someone who reacted as I did and still live with them.

She is my best friend, patiently understanding (most of the time), loving wife, loved and respected by her children, a super piano instructor... and she still has an exceptionally good figure. Except for the loss of our oldest son and we feel his presence every day...especially today... our life has been...and is...a great ride.

Sisters and Brothers of Phi Beta Mu...again thank you. You have Honored me far, far more than I deserve.



1973 Foster Jr. High Band

Boyle  
PHOTOGRAPHY



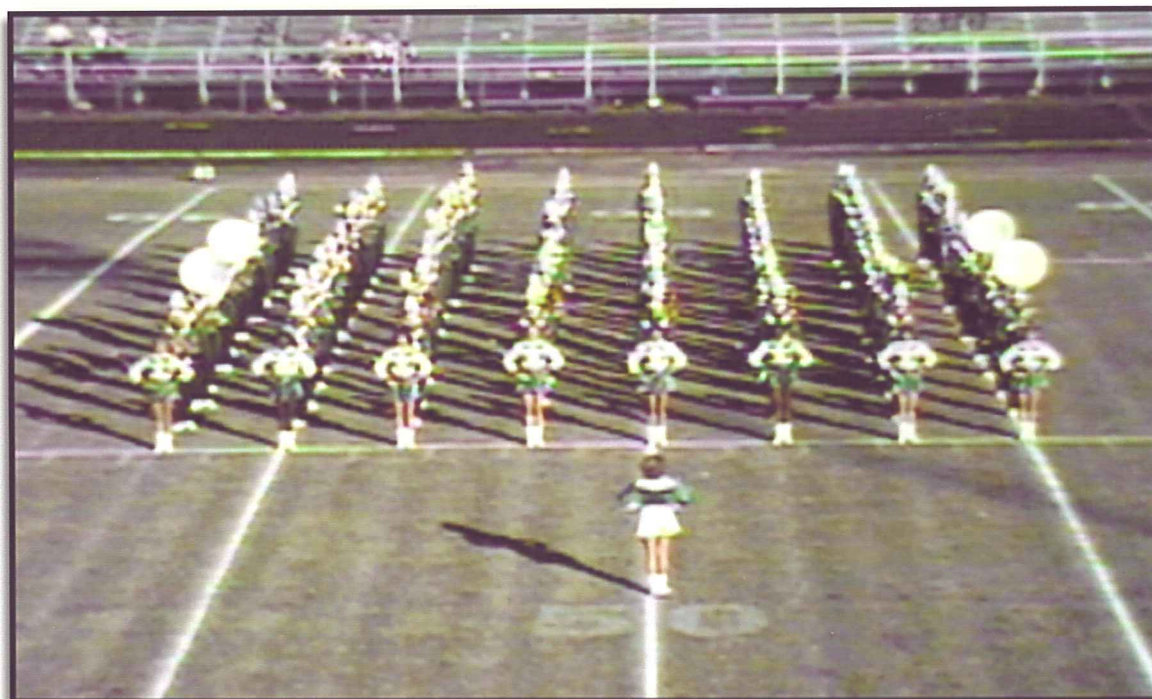


— Longview Freshman H.S. Band —  
11/4/76





— Longview Freshman H.S. Band —  
11/4/81

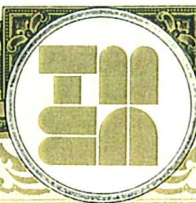




My Final UIL Marching Contest: 1998 Brownsboro High School Band, Mesquite, TX



1990 Brownsboro Varsity Band



# *Texas Music Educators Association*

*Honor Band Finalist*

◇ FOSTER JR HIGH ◇

Class CCC

Year 1975-76

JIM YANCEY

Director

TMEA commends the group for excellence in musical performance

*Brian J. Dean*  
Vice-President/State Division Chairman

*July 27 1975*  
Date

# Longview Public Schools

Longview, Texas

## Certificate of Merit

*to*  
*Jim Gancey*

This certificate is awarded to you in appreciation of the fine service rendered through the years to the youth of your community. This tribute is extended as a great honor for the influence and effort which you have exerted in the cause of public education. The appreciation and indebtedness of the Board of Education and the Community are herein gratefully acknowledged.

*May 10, 1979*

Date of Award

*Clarence W. Bowley*  
President of Board

*Bill K. Ford*  
Superintendent

*Brownsboro*  
*Independent School District*

P. O. BOX 465  
BROWNSBORO, TEXAS 75756

MEMO TO: Jim Yancey

FROM: Elton Caldwell *E.C.*  
Superintendent of School

SUBJECT: Sweepstakes Band Designation

Mr. Yancey, you and your band organization are to be commended for the outstanding year you enjoyed. Winning the first ever sweepstakes designation for Brownsboro I.S.D. is a memorable happening.

I appreciate the quality of your teaching, the discipline exemplified by your students and the dedication to excellence apparent in all areas of our band program.

EC:eg

# TEXAS APPRAISAL COMPANY

*Real Estate Appraisers & Consultants*

P. O. Box 804

Brownsboro, Texas 75756

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May 25, 1990



Mr. Jim Yancey, Director  
Brownsboro HS Varsity Band  
Brownsboro High School  
Brownsboro, Texas 75756

Dear Mr. Yancey:

My wife, Charla, and I applaud your organization's musical excellence. Your presentation was outstanding!

Never have I seen a high school band with such composure and disciplined demeanor. And your music, it was terrific: very fine balance, intonation, and interpretation!

Although we enjoyed the program, Mr. Yancey, the highlight of the evening for us was your comments about your wife. We hope you have been able to teach your students the priority that your words of appreciation and love expressed.

Good luck to you, sir, and to your senior members; we are looking forward to seeing and hearing the rest of the band next year. Please tell Ray (he's an old classmate of mine) that he's got a long row to hoe.

Yours very truly,

TEXAS APPRAISAL COMPANY

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'E. Dee Hendrix', followed by a long horizontal line.

E. Dee Hendrix

cc: Mr. Elton Caldwell, Superintendent  
Mr. Bobby Teague, Principal

May 29, 1990

Mr. Yancey,

I don't know where to start. It is hard to find words for someone that has changed your life the way you have changed mine. Not only did you build a superior mansion from splinters of an organization, but you touched me as an individual in ways I will never forget. At the end of my freshmen year, you honored me with the title of "head majorette". Little did I know, this would enable me to learn more about life from you in the next two years than I had ever learned before. You have always told me that I handle things in an adult-like manner. Well, I have a reason to. You also said I was an extension of you, so I only found it fitting that I handle my problems as you would - in a dignified and common sense manner. I learned not to let a "spoiled brat" attitude, mine or anyone else's, degrade me to act in anything less than an honorable manner. Sometimes it means walking away, swallowing your pride, and holding your head

high, but at least when you walk away your self-respect is intact. Maybe one of the most important lessons I have learned is how not to act as a member of a group. Now when I am a member of an organization and the leader says something I support them even if I don't agree 100% because I know how hard it is to make decisions and lead a group. One year later, you named me "drum major." I approached this with absolute fear. It turned out to be the best thing I have ever done. There were very few problems associated with this, and there is nothing in this world that feels as good to me as leading the band on Friday nights. When my children ask me about my band days, I will tell them that I was there when the band program turned completely around, I was there when we made a "IV" and I was there for the first "I's". I made history when we went "Sweepstakes". But above all of this, I will tell them that I wasn't only taught by one

of the finest band directors  
anywhere, but I was privileged  
enough to be associated with  
one of the greatest humans I  
have ever met. Mr. Yancy -  
thanks for spending these  
past three years with us.  
Not only did you instill within  
us musical appreciation and  
knowledge, but you gave me  
first division memories and  
leadership qualities that will  
last a lifetime.

Love,  
Julie

Presented To

*Jimmy N. Yancey*

IN APPRECIATION OF

35 YEARS OF

DEDICATED SERVICE

TO THE INSTRUCTION

OF YOUNG PEOPLE.

THANK YOU FOR

THE 3 YEARS SPENT WITH

BROWNSBORO I.S.D.



PRESENTED TO

JIMMY YANCEY



WITH GRATITUDE AND APPRECIATION  
FOR DEDICATED SERVICE  
TO THE

HENDERSON BAND PROGRAM

AS OUTSTANDING TEACHER,  
MENTOR, AND FRIEND



MAY 22, 1997