

AHS “A” Association, 2018

Moser Retirement Address/Devotion

By Gerald E. Cumby

Abilene High School Athlete, 1957-1959

What a delight to be standing in these distinguished and respected grounds for great men and women of Texas Sports. It is called a “Hall of Fame.” Hall of Fame it is; for to be honored in this place one must be a hero...a person who has dedicated their lives to entertaining the masses by their blood, sweat, and tears in order to accomplish extraordinary feats. Whether it is and was through football, basketball, track, baseball, golf, etc., these great heroes of Texas went the extra mile in living their lives giving 100% of themselves to be the best. I feel honored to be able to speak to you...you were the ones that were blessed by these great sports heroes. I was blessed because I knew a wonderful man and coach like Chuck Moser.

I want to especially thank Gerald Galbraith and Andy Springer for making sure this event happened. We loved the honor bestowed upon Chuck Moser; but this would not have happened if it were not for Coach Moser’s students of Athletic Stewardship. Stewardship is defined as “the responsible overseeing and protection of something considered worth caring for and preserving.” Gerald Galbraith and Andy Springer was involved in making sure that the efforts of Chuck Moser at Abilene High School, as well as the community in which he lived, were not overlooked. Gerald and Andy promoted this and has been instrumental in assuring the preservation of the good name of Chuck Moser and his efforts as a coach, teacher, family man, and good Samaritan as he walked on planet earth.

All of you have shown your stewardship and love of Chuck Moser by giving of your time and money to make this dedication happen. Thank you for all who worked on this effort. Would all those who spent time putting this honorable dedication together please stand?

I know most of you know that I never played football for Chuck Moser. However, I am very much appreciative of what Chuck Moser stood for and how he was truly an “Athletic Director” when he wasn’t given the title... who made a difference for everyone dedicated in their respective sports at Abilene High School. To be an “Eagle” was and is an honor. Chuck Moser helped me “behind the scenes” where very few knew he was involved.

Today is a hallowed and special day for me; not because it is Sunday...but because 63 years ago today my father was killed in a bridge construction accident (April 22, 1955). I was 13 and my two younger siblings were 9 and 5 respectively. Every year, my brothers, sister and I called our mother to let her know we were thinking of her. It was a long time ago...but it is imbedded in my mind as if was yesterday.

Let me tell you a story that very few people know. I played basketball and ran track (pole vaulted) in high school. My first two years at Abilene High School, I played on the basketball team (A team and started until Glenn Gregory finished football). I loved basketball, averaged about 4-6 points a game as a sophomore and warmed the bench mainly at the start of my junior year. I was mediocre at best as a high school basketball player. However, I was blessed to go to Region and tied for 2nd in my junior year as a pole vaulter.

At the end of my junior year, I was called into the office of Coach Nat Gleaton and Coach Bob Groseclose. They sat me down and stated that I did not have the ability to play basketball and then immediately go into a required strict and dedicated drive to be a pole vaulter at Abilene High School. They felt my only chance for a scholarship was to dedicate myself to full time work on being the pole vaulter that they really thought I could be. Averaging 4-6 points on the basketball court was not going to get me a scholarship and they knew my mother did not have the means to send me to college. "Your destination is Vietnam if you don't get a scholarship, Gerald." That got my attention. I was irate about this. I wanted to play basketball, too. Now, I realize that this demotion and decision was officially approved by Chuck Moser, who had his hand in every sport. He was the one that would take the heat if my family complained about telling a young man he was not good enough to participate in two sports and be a winner in both.

As you know my story, they were right. I did not even want to look at the basketball court in my senior year. I was embarrassed and angry. As the track season began, I knew why they did it. I knew why they wanted me to dedicate myself fulltime and then some to pole vaulting. Thank God, I had coaches that stood up to the plate and told it like it was. I received that scholarship that I know could not have been available if were not some grave and brave decisions by a team of coaches at Abilene High School. Thank you, Wally Bullington, Coach Brinson...and the other great coaches who have gone on to glory ahead of us all.

I am going to tell you a truth...we are getting old!

I don't like it...but I am dealing with it. I used to be asked by my wife to open the bottles of ketchup and pickles because my grip could open anything. Now, she hands them to me; I try to open...and I hand them back to her and say, "Something is wrong with this bottle, it won't open." She takes it and makes one twist and it is opened. What has happened to me? Don't laugh...you know exactly what I mean. This is embarrassing.

I love the way old people think. The best example I saw was sent to me by one of my "old friends."

The title was "Why Old People Make Good Decisions."

It shows an old man on a bicycle with plastic bags of groceries hanging on the handle bars. He is riding the bicycle but with a very uneasy way of pumping the pedals, humped over and pumping with all the strength he can muster.

He makes this statement: "I went to the store on my bicycle to get some groceries. While I was there, I bought me a bottle of Jack Daniels. When I got outside, I thought to myself. If I place my Jack Daniels in this plastic bag with the rest of the groceries and head home, I might fall off my bike and break my bottle of Jack Daniels. I thought to myself, "Why don't I just drink the bottle of Jack Daniels before I leave and I won't have to worry about breaking my bottle of Jack Daniels. It turns out I made the right decision. I fell 7 times on my way home from the grocery store. Good decision!"

This is supposed to be a devotion. It is Sunday morning and I need to stay on the devotion bit.

To help you remember this devotion, I want you to remember the acronym...MOSER.

M= Mentor: Mentor...Coach Moser was. He helped young men in every sport to accomplish more than they were expected to do.

Manage: He managed his life well; setting the example every young man could see...Chuck Moser was the epidemy of a great father, husband, and friend to his God.

Motivator: He motivated kids, men to achieve the impossible and don't let your team down.

He truly made a difference in the lives of young men throughout our high school days.

O = Opportunity...He made good use of every opportunity to give every young athlete a chance to do his best.

Optimistic: In the sense of never giving up. Until the last punt, the last run, the last pass; always looking for achieving the impossible.

Over Achievers: What I mean...most of us were mediocre at our sport at best. He pulled out of you, just as Coach Groseclose pulled out of me...Go the extra mile, work out until you think you can't pick up one more foot to do the job.

S = Steadfast: Not wanting to be an average coach or the team to be an average team.

He was steadfast in his desire to accomplish the impossible. And, he was successful in making us champions, making us to go the extra mile;

Successful in not letting others down (the teammates, our parents, the fans, the coaches).

E = Effective: He was effective in accomplishing the building of champions (all of you are champions)...not just to get the claps and praises of the people we dealt with while we were in high school and college...but, to remember when we are 75, 76,80 years old of the accomplishments of our group when we were young people. The hard work and drive paid off in every instance.

Encourager: That Coach Moser was. He encouraged us on and off the field to have quality standards and not to embarrass our parents, our teammates, the coaches, and ourselves.

Other words beginning with E that represents Coach Moser and you...enthusiastic, empowered, energized, excellence (spirit of excellence), extraordinary.

And Coach Moser encouraged us to think on eternal things like... "If you don't do your job you might see eternity sooner than you planned."

R = Ready: Ready to win. Ready to accept the consequences of our mistakes...and,

Watch your reputation on and off the field.

Be respectful to others...and you will always "reap what you sow."

So be reliable and he taught us to recognize our weaknesses and to work on them

Moser loved his students and athletes. He wanted to be what the Christians call, a good example, a good mentor...a good person...a good man in general. He loved to see his boys accomplish what they never thought possible. Coach Moser set an example for his players. He was president of the Abilene Kiwanis Club, headed a division of the United Way, was president of the Boy Scout Council and chairman of the board at his church. He taught the seventh grade boys Sunday School class, even when the Eagles played on Sunday.

The Bible is full of sports examples...analogies. The Apostle Paul was best at using sports as a motivating tool to encourage others to be all they could be a follower of Christ.

The word athletics is derived from a Greek word meaning "to contend for a prize."

While Paul was in prison in Caesarea by the sea, he was able to look out the window of his prison to see the games in one of the stadiums just about a football field away. Part of the stadium is still there. The track, the stands, the holding area for the athletes and horses used in some of the events. He saw and heard the cheering of the people for their favorite athletes.

One of the earliest and best known of the old Testament Scriptures is the description of Jacob wrestling with a mysterious messenger from God through the night "until the break of dawn" (Gen. 32:24-26; see Hos 12:3-5).

"Do you not know that in a race all the runners compete, but [only] one receives the prize? So run [your race] that you may lay hold [of the prize] and make it yours". 1 Corinthians 9:24 AMP

"Fighting the good fight" is a quote you may often hear. But you should put it into the context of the Bible verse from which it comes.

1 Timothy 6:11-12

"But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses." (NIV)

1 Corinthians 9:24-27

"Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the

prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training.

They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize." (NIV)

2 Timothy 2:5

"Similarly, if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not receive the victor's crown unless he competes according to the rules." (NIV)

Training to improve your abilities requires perseverance, as you must train to the point of exhaustion in order for your body to build new muscle and improve its energy systems. This can be a challenge for the athlete. You must also drill to become good at specific skills. These verses can inspire you when you are tired or begin to wonder whether all the work will be worthwhile:

Philippians 4:13

"For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength" [\(NLT\)](#)

Philippians 3:12-14

"Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus." (NIV)

Hebrews 12:1

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with [perseverance](#) the race marked out for us." (NIV) **Philippians 2:3**

Today we honor a hero...

But, today, I want to honor you. You are the ones that made Chuck Moser the best high school football coach in the history of Texas. You think so...I think so. Coaches who worked for Chuck Moser believe that. We who were blessed to be coached by the best coaches in all of Texas high school sports believe that. Did you know that over a span from 1954-1961, the Abilene High School Eagles won 3 State Football Championships, 4 State Track Championships, and 2 State Baseball Championship. In 8 years, 9 State Champion teams came out of Abilene High School.

The Word of God is so amazing. It keeps me trying to be the best person I can be. I fail...and God picks me up and try again. He leads me in paths where I dare to tread because I see giants there...and I see a big chance of failure.

But, God says, Joshua 1, "Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey the Word of God; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. ⁸ Keep the Word of God always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in the Word. Then you will be prosperous and successful. ⁹ Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go."

PRAYER:

ENDING STATEMENT: Thank you. May God bless you. God bless the Abilene Eagle legends of yesteryear...God bless Texas and God bless the U.S.A.

Gerald Cumby, AHS proud Eagle