

## Legacy of the Big Blue Farm

Remarks by Ray R. Maddox, PharmD, FASHP

Paul F. Parker Award

December 9, 2008

### **Introduction**

Over the next several minutes I want you to focus your thoughts on the meaning of the word “legacy” and what this term conveys specifically to you. I will come back to it at the end of my remarks.

It is a privilege, honor and humbling experience to be named among those who have received this award. I want to thank the selection committee for having included me among those who have been given this special recognition made in honor of a special man, Paul F. Parker.

Since the award’s inauguration in 1990, there have been 17 recipients including Parker. Those that followed him are all products of an internationally renowned farm system: Charles Walton, Tom Foster, Joel Covinsky, Curt Johnson, Bob Talbert, Bruce McWhinney, Jim Cloyd, Don Letendre, Ann Amerson, Steve Schondelmeyer, Joe Dipiro,

Bob Rapp, Bob Blouin, Cindy Raehl, Doug Miller, George Francisco, and Kim Brouwer. All have made outstanding contributions to our profession over the past 20+ years clinically, academically, and in research. Five of these individuals helped to shape my career and invested a part of their professional life in me. I wish to thank them publicly today: Paul Parker, a mentor and friend; Bob Rapp, my major professor; Tom Foster, Curt Johnson and Ann Amerson, all teachers and caring colleagues.

In preparation for my remarks today I have reviewed those made by previous recipients of the Parker Award. There is much wisdom in these comments; I encourage you to read them if you have not done so. Many have spoken extensively of the role of Paul Parker's mentorship in their lives, especially those who are former residents. Others who worked with him on the Big Blue Farm spoke of his vision, patience, forbearance and passion. I want to share some comments regarding leadership that my Kentucky experience has helped me to appreciate in my career.

### **My Kentucky Experience**

I graduated from the University of Kentucky's combined PharmD-Residency Program in 1977. Actually I am privileged to have graduated from *TWO* ASHP-designated residency programs of excellence: Kentucky recognized in 2007 and the Medical University of South Carolina, so recognized just this past Saturday evening for the year 2008. You might think that I must be a slow learner because I needed two

residencies to “get it” – those of you who know me, recognize the truth: I am a slow learner.

I had planned to attend medical school after completing my BSP Pharm at the University of Georgia. I was accepted late in the year to the Medical University of South Carolina Medical School; however, somehow the acceptance letter got lost in the mail and did not follow me to Charleston where I was beginning the pharmacy residency in late June of 1972. Having started the residency, I felt it not proper to withdraw and enroll in medical school.

The MUSC residency focused on hospital/institutional pharmacy practice (the old *hospital pharmacy residency*). Yet it helped me define and conceptualize a career deeply rooted in the clinical concepts of patient care but one remaining in pharmacy – not medicine. I knew that I wasn't ready for such a practice, in spite of having finished the MUSC residency and I knew that I needed a PharmD. My MUSC preceptors advised me to stay in Charleston or go to another 2-year PharmD college rather than attend the Kentucky program where I would be required to complete the combined PharmD-residency. It was suggested that Kentucky ought to give me “credit” for my MUSC residency so that I did not have to stay there for 3 years. Well, we all know the answer to that one – there was and is no program equivalent to Kentucky's. So, no credit was likely or forthcoming. I chose to apply only to Kentucky in spite of this additional time commitment.

My Kentucky years were a unique life experience; I know that this is true for those of you who are or were residents as well as those of you who are faculty and staff. This life journey began with the interview. I don't remember many of the details, except that it was cold and there was snow on the ground. Given that I had come from the South, that truly was a unique experience. Additionally, this was the first time I had ever flown on an airplane. Believe it or not, I did not know how to buckle the seat belt and flew all the way from Savannah to Atlanta to Lexington without buckling up.

I do remember my interview with Paul Parker. Sam Shelton (R-15) was on an administrative rotation with Parker and was my resident host – he took me around for all of my appointments. While walking down the administrative hall to Parker's office he warned me that this interview would be different. At that time in my life I really did not know who Parker was. He asked my reason for wanting to come to Kentucky. That was an easy question: I wanted to learn to be a clinical pharmacist – he did not seem to be impressed with my answer.

His questions focused on leadership: what had I done in this regard in my family, school, work, previous residency, organizations, and outside activities that put me into leadership roles. Was I comfortable in these roles – if indeed I had been in such positions? All the time I was thinking, “Gee whiz – why are you asking me this? I just want to be a clinical pharmacist!”

I believe the essence of Paul Parker's horticultural genius was not found in his famed rose garden but it was in his commitment to the cultivation of leadership in young pharmacists. Parker's focus for the residency program was on: 1) finding potential leaders; 2) planting them in the fertile soil of the Big Blue Farm; 3) cultivating them for a REQUIRED minimum of 3 years (or longer for some of the former residents who are still there); 4) pruning and primping them for the annual flower show (i.e., the job market); 5) releasing them to the world to implement changes in the profession; and, 6) then watching them in his quiet way go and do good things (with the occasional phone call telling you that you should have done it a different way).

### **What I Learned About Leadership at Kentucky**

At Kentucky I definitely learned how to be a clinical pharmacist which was my primary motivation for going there in the first place. But I learned so much more about *LEADERSHIP*. And, I learned it from *TRUE LEADERS* – not just Paul Parker but also my other preceptors and fellow residents.

The foundation of my understanding of leadership was created at Kentucky. To use farming as an analogy:

- a. My ground was cleared of trees and their stumps - i.e., many of my misconceptions about leadership were removed.

- b. My soil was plowed and made more fertile by the application of nutrients – i.e., leadership was modeled by not only Paul Parker but the other farmers (preceptors/mentors) at the Big Blue Farm.
- c. I was given the opportunity to help plant seedlings and nurture their growth – i.e., senior residents were influential mentors and role models for junior residents in the program.
- d. I learned that you can indeed tell the tree by the fruit that it produces – i.e., there are unique attributes that are common among those of us who were produced on the Big Blue Farm.
- e. And, I learned that genetic engineering and cross pollination is important to the sustenance of the species – i.e., marvelous new interventions in patient care, theories of practice, models of care delivery, and academic and organizational leaders have emerged from the fertile fields of the Big Blue Farm. These new life forms were created in part by the mixing of gene pools from all over the world.

Building upon the insights from my Kentucky experience and living for a lot of years motivates me to make some suggestions particularly to the young folks in the audience today:

- a. *Don't take yourself too seriously.* You will soon be graduated (or may have recently graduated) from one of the most prestigious training programs for clinical pharmacy practitioners in the world. You will often know much more about important patient care issues than those with whom you practice. What you

know is important. But it's not so much what you know that counts, but how you use it, how you express yourself, and the way that you apply what you know to help others. Be humble in using what you know.

- b. ***Stand for Truth and Rightfulness regardless of the difficulty and consequences of doing so.*** Know who you are. Know your convictions and core beliefs. When the need arises, be comfortable in saying that a clinical decision, academic direction, professional action, or an innuendo is wrong – personally, professionally or morally. Be a person of integrity.
- c. ***Practice collaboration in all that you do.*** The health care team is made up of many parts. Much like the analogy of the body given in the Bible (1 Cor 12:12-26), the team is dysfunctional when its parts are not working together or when one part is missing. You can not achieve greatness without reliance upon others; failing to acknowledge their contribution is destructive of self and others. I would especially encourage you to think about and include when appropriate the contribution of nurses to your successes.
- d. ***Invest in others and invest in things outside of who you are professionally.*** In part this means becoming a mentor. But it goes beyond mentorship because sometimes small investments of our time or resources can change another's life forever. Twelve years ago I answered a "call" to become a medical missionary to Guatemala through an organization named Faith in Practice – an ecumenical Christian medical mission group. This mission work has become a major part of my life through which many people – physicians, nurses, pharmacists, dentists, administrators, lay people – as well as indigent Guatemalans have been touched.

I've been with many groups of "healers" to Guatemala who have become the "healed" through their work in this poor, third-world country. I challenge you to become a missionary and give of yourself freely.

I recently read a brief summary by James Bronner<sup>1</sup> of 7 qualities of a good leader that are common in outstanding leaders. I want to share those with you.

1. A good head to be able to evaluate the quality of ideas and suggestions presented to him or her.
2. A good heart to be able to be compassionate and fair with people.
3. A good spirit to be able to hear the voice of God. Some paths God will lead you down don't make head and heart sense at the time. Purpose and direction must be discerned by your spirit.
4. A good eye to be able to see things other people cannot.
5. A good tongue to be able to communicate the vision to people and motivate them to follow.
6. A good hand to be able to do the things that need to be done for knowing the right way is not the same as doing it.
7. Lastly, a good foot to set an example for people. A minor flaw can outshine a major mission in the eyes of small minds.

### **Comments from Paul Parker's Memorial Service**

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<sup>1</sup> Bronner J. 7 Qualities of a good leader. A Mountain Wings Original, 2008.

As you know, Paul Parker passed away in the spring of 1998. I was asked to participate with several other people in a memorial service given for him in Baltimore at that summer's ASHP meeting. I want to share those brief comments<sup>2</sup> with you as I reach the close of my remarks today.

*Please listen as I read from the Old Testament.*

*“Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on His law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers”. (Psalms 1:1-3)*

*“The teaching of the wise is a fountain of life. He who walks with the wise grows wise”. (Proverbs 13:14, 20)*

*“As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another”. (Proverbs 27:17)*

*These verses describe a godly man of integrity who is a mentor, investing himself in others.*

*Stephen Covey in his book First Things First<sup>3</sup> writes:*

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<sup>2</sup> Maddox RR. Comments from Ray R. Maddox, Paul Parker Memorial Service. Baltimore, June 2, 1998.

<sup>3</sup> Covey SR, Merrill AR, Merrill RR. First Things First. Simon & Schuster, New York, NY, 1994.

*“Only as we focus more on contributing than consuming can we create the context that makes peace in all aspects of life possible. It’s in leaving a legacy that we find meaning in living, loving, and learning”.*

*“When people have a real sense of legacy, a sense of mattering, a sense of contribution, it seems to tap into the deepest part of their heart and soul. It brings out the best and subordinates the rest”.*

*These words describe legacy.*

*Paul Parker left his legacy partly in the people that he touched. Something in the order of 150 men and women completed residency or similar training at the University of Kentucky Medical Center during Paul’s leadership of that program. These folks now practice pharmacy literally all over the world. Many are leaders in the profession and in their communities. Paul’s influence in pharmacy lives on – not only in what he did but also in the people that he molded. He cultivated us. He nurtured us. He pruned us. Then he pushed us out of the nest with the instruction to “Go . . . and Fly High”.*

*And as if that was not enough, then he and Addie Catherine adopted us as their children. They kept up with us. They knew our children by name. They wrote to us*

*at least once every year, sometimes more often. And the letters, although they were written to all of us, it seemed as if they were written especially for me.*

**AND WE LOVE THEM BOTH.**

I spoke with Addie Catherine last night. Mother sends her regards and wishes you well. She especially hopes that you and your family have a joyous, Christ-filled Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Now - back to the term “legacy”. Look around. Do you see it? You are the legacy. We all owe great thanks to the many dedicated Kentuckians who continue to cultivate the soil, prune and primp the seedlings and young sprouts, and then take them faithfully to market every year. On behalf of the profession, thank you so much for your diligence – the Faithful Farmers of the Big Blue Farm.

To my family, I want to say “Thank You”. To my dad who passed away awhile back, he was the greatest man I have ever known. To my mom, who has always been the backbone of our family. To my wife Kay, who actually got her Kentucky degree – the PHT (**P**ushing **H**ubby **T**hrough) before I graduated. And, to my two sons Cory and Chad, who is here today. I love all of you.

And, oh by the way, Kay and I are the proud grandparents of Olivia Nicole Maddox, the most beautiful granddaughter in the world who was born last month. And, yes, I fully intend to spoil her.

Thank you so much for sharing this wonderful and memorable time with me today. May God bless you.