

'Extraordinary Comebacks' author, alum looks back on college, all things Buckeye



By John A. Sarkett

I HAVE HAD A GREAT, PASSIONATE LOVE FOR OHIO STATE since the day I set foot on campus, as a high school junior on a Saturday tour sponsored by the (long gone) Cleveland Press.

And especially for the College of Agriculture, where the doors were swung wide open for me, a kid from Cleveland, with very modest agricultural credentials (my grandfather had a small farm in Pennsylvania), but lots of enthusiasm.

At my freshman convocation, then-president Novice G. Fawcett quoted Thomas Carlyle, "The goal of a liberal education is self-educating man." Not long after, I met College of Agriculture Dean Roy M. Kottman. Speaking to a group of us, he said never be afraid

to make right-angle turns in life—sometimes it's necessary. I took both admonitions to heart.

And so I added all kinds of off-the-beaten-track classes to my core agriculture regimen, music, literature, etc. Some self-guided. My advisor, Dr. Bobby VanStavern (AnSci), heartily approved (I wasn't sure he would). He was a true scholar and great gentleman and ultimately, friend.

After getting my degrees (BS, MS, 1973) working in agricultural communications, starting in Chicago, via agencies, with major companies like Elanco, Steiger Tractor, Ford, American Bankers Association, etc., we produced the National Agriculture Week TV Special (1982 to 1990). We produced a similar program for the National Association of Realtors during that time as well.

Naysayers provided many reasons these projects couldn't be done. So we steeped ourselves in—what else?—self-education, and did it anyway.

From there, in the 1990s, with a long-held interest in agricultural and financial markets, I developed Option Wizard® software.

And six years ago, I started writing "Extraordinary Comebacks: 201 Inspiring Stories of Courage, Triumph, and Success."

Every step of the way there was a great deal of curiosity, then "self-education" going on, this time about the world of publishing.

Readers of this periodical will be pleased to know the new book includes an Ohio farmer. One of our 201 is Mark D. Cook, a fifth-generation (East Sparta, Ohio) farmer who developed his financial trading expertise to become a leading and widely quoted trader.

Other Ohioans featured include the entire 2002 Buckeye national championship football team, head coach Jim Tressel, author James Thurber, coach Bobby Knight, and track legend Jesse Owens. (I have Archie Griffin, among others, blocked out for volume two.)

Calling to mind Alan Arkin's great and pithy advice to Peter Falk in the original "The In-Laws" (1979), "serpentine, serpentine," the road since my own "Goodbye, Columbus" has indeed been serpentine, yes, boring, never.

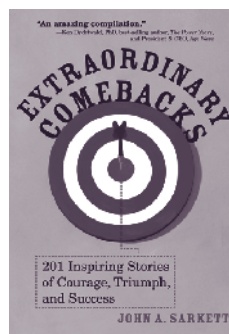
I have visited many college campuses since my time as a student. I have never experienced the excitement, electricity in the air, the spirit of can do, must do, academic and otherwise (yes, some of it comes out of Buckeye football; they make us all proud every year), that I did at Ohio State, and in the College of Agriculture.

I was back a time or two in recent years. The electricity in the air? It's still there, I was happy to confirm. The excitement—still there, too, in the faces of the students who wouldn't want to be anywhere else.

Go Bucks.

John A. Sarkett (BS, MS, College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences, 1973) is author of the new book "Extraordinary Comebacks: 201 Inspiring Stories of Courage, Triumph, and Success." Available at Amazon, Borders, Barnes & Noble, BJ's Wholesale Clubs, and other retail outlets. More information: <http://sarkett.com>.

Share something about yourself with your fellow CFAES alums. Send items to Martha Filipic, filipic.3@cfaes.osu.edu.



TOP 10 "TO DO'S" FOR MAKING A COMEBACK

1. PERSIST. Don't quit. "Never give in, never give in, never, never, never, never—in nothing, great or small, large or petty—never give in except to convictions of honour and good sense." — Sir Winston Churchill

2. MAKE THE EFFORT. Word hard. Great comebackers use all the hours in the day: Paula Deen barbequed all night, Wayne Huizenga collected trash at night, sold new accounts in the day. George Foreman out-trained younger fighters to become champ. You can find your comeback right in the effort you make.

3. UNDERSTAND TRANSIENCE. Don't extrapolate temporary setbacks into permanent defeat. "This, too, shall pass." Lance Armstrong was given a 2 percent chance to survive cancer, he went on to win seven consecutive Tour de Frances. Churchill again: "When you're going through hell, keep going."

4. CHANGE DIRECTION. Sylvester Stallone was stymied as an actor, so he wrote "Rocky" after seeing the Wepner-Ali fight. Billy Beane was a so-so baseball player, he quit and became a top GM. Quincy Jones was a talented trumpeter, but after a stroke, he had to quit, and then became a legendary music producer.

5. EMPLOY SUPPORT. Stay away from the nay-sayers, even if they're famous or going to be (Martin Scorsese told Billy Crystal he had "no talent"). Pack your corner with friends who won't let you quit. Ali did that: he wanted to quit during his first heavyweight championship, but his manager wouldn't let him.

6. REPEAT. It took Sir Edmund Hillary two attempts to climb Everest, Peary eight times to reach the North Pole, and various authors scores and sometimes hundreds of tries to get their works published. Go again, and again, and ...

7. DREAM BIG. Your effort and ideas are worth many times what you may imagine. Fred Smith wrote a college paper that got a "C," as the story goes, then turned it into \$40 billion FedEx. Dean Karnazes ran a 226 mile ultramarathon and 350 mile run, plus 50 marathons in 50 days (2006). J.K. Rowling wrote her ideas about a fictional boy during a train ride. "Harry Potter" sold 100 million copies, and \$4 billion movie box office, and counting. You can do much more than you imagine. Dream big.

8. STAY HUMBLE. Attitude—is everything. When tennis master Andre Agassi fell from No. 1 to No. 141 (1997), he started over, went back to the minor leagues, upped his training, including weightlifting. It set the stage for greater things than ever before. Attitude—not image—is everything.

9. SELF-PROGRAM. Get a mantra. A psychiatrist-hypnotist provided Rachmaninoff the composer, who had a writing block, with a positive self-talk mantra: "You will begin your concerto. You will work with great facility. The concerto will be excellent." It worked. He wrote his Piano Concerto No. 2.

10. PERSIST. It's not over until you say so. Don't say so.

— John Sarkett

Alum Makes Career of 'Wine and Dine'

By Lynn Krielow Chamberlain

I KNEW WHAT COLD DUCK WAS BY THE TIME I entered college. That pretty much summed up the extent of my wine knowledge. My lifelong dream, passion, mission statement, was to become a veterinarian, specializing in equine reproductive physiology. I always knew that I would be attending Ohio State University.

Shortly after I arrived at college, I met an engineering student who unknowingly changed the direction of my life. The student's father made wine as a hobby, in Cincinnati, from hybrid Cincinnati River basin-grown grapes. I grew up in the shadow of Lake Erie's Snow Belt.

Not knowing a sip about wine, I started enrolling in the wine appreciation classes taught through Ohio State's Continuing Education. By the time I was in my senior undergraduate year I was hooked enough to register for an elective in the College of Agriculture, "Wine in Western Civilization," taught by David Crean, Ph.D. (I believe that was his name). A biologist from South Africa. What an inspiring teacher he was!

What began as an attempt to impress my friend's father with winespeak, ended up careening into a full-blown



interest in wine... ultimately, a career. Wine neatly bundled so many of my interests: nutrition, microbiology, chemistry, storytelling, geology, geography, history, culture, lifestyle, to name a few. I continued my work in wine with an independent study of malolactic fermentation under Dr. Crean during my last quarter. That is precisely where and when I became aware of the then-named College of Agriculture's graduate program in wine-making (Food Processing & Technology) and grapegrowing/vineyard management/viticulture. Most of the graduate research grapes were French-American hybrids, there were a few people experimenting with *Vitis vinifera* cold-climate cultivars, and the omnipresent Concord. The bulk of research effort at that time was on malolactic fermentation in the effort to naturally reduce the perceived, over-the-top high, or unbalanced, acidity, biologically stabilize the wine, and increase complexity.

Even though MLF was not a sexy research subject (to me), I have been thankful for that foundation of understanding the concerns of winemakers and grapegrowers in marginal growing climates. And how glorious to realize that global cool-climate regions are finally being recognized,

in particular over the past 20 years, as the wellspring of honest food-friendly, crisp wines with tame alcohol levels... my preferred wines of choice.

Over the years, my wine journey has taken me to several wine-traditional countries and states; my work, in several aspects of the industry (I get bored fast and love to learn). But my favorite job is that of broadcast wine journalist, with "Wine & Dine Radio," because I am constantly learning from people around the world, on every possible wine and food tangent, and share my conversations with listeners tuning in around the world. I believe that wine is a true universal language that defies borders and cultural barriers. If only we can stave the effects of global warming from eliminating our cool-climate winegrowing resources.

Lynn Krielow Chamberlain, who earned degrees from the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences in 1979 and 1981, hosts "Wine & Dine Radio," heard online at WineFairy.com, iTunes Talk Radio and Live365. She lives in New Bern, North Carolina.

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