

**ROBERT A. MCCABE**

**1914-1995**

**MEMORIAL SERVICE  
FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH  
UNIVERSITY BAY DRIVE  
MADISON, WISCONSIN**

**JUNE 4, 1995**

TRANSCRIBED BY GARY LAIB

POYNETTE, WISCONSIN

REV. MICHAEL SCHULER:

Dear friends, in these early June days, warm breezes, harbingers of summer, remind us that in the presence of death, life and hope spring eternal. We have gathered to speak words of parting and of praise for Robert McCabe, an unrepeatable expression of the human spirit. For over 80 years this intelligent and multifaceted man made the forests and the fields of our brilliant blue-green planet his home. Years spent for the most part in good health, productive activity and faithful friendship. These were also years of devoted service to his family, to the community and to the natural world with which he felt such a deep affinity. This is an hour to remember again the wise and decent soul who has graced our lives, our university and our city. This is an hour to be grateful for one, who, through a long lifetime, sought to increase his own and the world's store of wisdom, and to enlarge all our sympathies. Robert McCabe was a man whose commitment to teaching, scholarship and to the natural heritage of his native state was unquestionable. And so, this is a day to be reminded that when a man of such stature enters our midst, life has given more than death can ever take away. I would like to share with you now these words of Thomas Wolfe (SOME THINGS WILL NEVER CHANGE, *From A Stone, A Leaf, a Door*), words which I think reflect the naturalistic outlook of Robert McCabe.

"Some things will never change.  
Some things will always be the same.  
The voice of forest, water in the night,  
A woman's laughter in the dark,  
The clean hard rattle of raked gravel,

The cricketing stitch of midday in hot meadows,  
The delicate web of childrens' voices in bright air;  
These things will never change.

The glitter of sunlight on roughened water,  
The glory of the stars,  
The innocence of morning,  
And the smell of sea in harbors;  
These things will always be the same.

The feathery blur and budding of young boughs  
And something that comes and goes and never can be captured.  
The thorn of spring,  
The sharp and tongueless cry,  
These things will never change.

The leaf, the blade, the flower,  
The wind that cries and sleeps and wakes again,  
The trees whose stiff arms clash and Tremble in the dark,  
And the dust of lovers long since buried in the earth,  
All things belonging to the earth, will never change.

All things proceeding from the earth  
The seasons, all things that lapse and change  
And come again upon the earth,  
These things come up from the earth that never changes  
And they go back into the earth that lasts forever.

Only the earth endures, but it endures forever.  
The tarantula, the adder and the asp,

older. And thus, today we can look back upon who Bob McCabe was, what he accomplished, with gratitude rather than with pity, and with gladness rather than with despair.

I would like to close these opening remarks with a sonnet by Edna St. Vincent Millary, lines to me at least, evoke Bob's image and his reputation and as an avid outdoorsman.

"Mindful of you  
the sodden earth in spring,  
and all the flowers that in springtime grow.  
And dusty roads and thistles  
and the slow rising of the round moon.  
All throats that sing the summer through,  
and each departed wing,  
all the nests that bared branches show.  
All winds that in any weather blow,  
and all the storms that the four seasons  
bring.

You know more upon exultant feet,  
of paths that only mist and morning knew,  
or watched the wind or listened to the  
beat of a birds wings too high in air to  
view.

You, you were something more than  
strong and sweet, and fair and the long  
year remembers you."

I invite you now to be in an attitude  
of meditation for a moment.

Infinite mystery, source of life and  
of love, the final parting of death brings  
sorrow to our hearts and weariness to our  
spirits, and though it is painful, this grief of  
ours bespeaks the affection and respect  
we felt for Robert McCabe. And whatever  
enterprise and relationships death has  
broken in upon us, we can feel assured

that he who has so recently experienced  
suffering and anxiety has finally gained  
release. Whatever length of time we may  
have known him, we will remain grateful  
for his indomitable personality and for the  
gift of his friendship. A man's voice has  
been stilled and his service ended, but his  
example ever motivates us to creative  
adventure and devoted action. All that  
came from deep within his heart is secure  
in the hearts of his loved ones. Those of  
us gathered here today and uncounted  
others dispersed abroad were challenged  
by him to do their best in both their work  
and their recreation. Truly we who are  
grateful for Bob's living, come together  
with courage and with faith to celebrate  
his distinguished legacy.

\* \* \*

REV. MAX GAEBLER:

"Death this year has taken men  
whose kind we shall not see again.  
Pride, skill and friendliness, warmth and  
delight  
are shining still but shining less and  
clouded with a common sight.  
Time will show them clear again,  
time will give us other men  
with names to write in burning gold  
when they are great and we are old.  
With these your royal hearts, rare,  
memory keep with loving care  
deeds they did and tales they told,  
but living men are hard to bear."

These lines of poet John Holt bring  
to mind Bob McCabe's own response to  
the death of his mentor Aldo Leopold  
back in April of 1948. He writes that he  
tried eagerly, but in the end

unsuccessfully, to persuade Leopold's son Starker to return to Madison to assume his father's role. When that attempt failed, Bob records, "Nothing transpired for a month or more. Then one day Joe Hickey and I were called into the Dean's office and told the College of Agriculture was going to go with you two." "For the next 30 years," Bob continues, "we provided departmental leadership and attempted to maintain the bonds which make the educational experience in Aldo Leopold's department, something special." How well Bob succeeded over those years I'll leave to others who will be sharing their own recollections and reflections with us just a little later in this service, but I begin by recalling Bob's long service as successor to and interpreter of Aldo Leopold, because for many of us it is through him and in his work that the legacy of Aldo Leopold has come alive.

Bob was a man of striking contrasts, all of which combined somehow in a consistent whole. He was a man of great discipline and focus, but still knew how to have a good time. A man of intense and serious purposefulness who was also gifted with a sense of humor. He was an exacting scientist, he found tremendous esthetic satisfaction in the object of his study. Like his mentor Aldo Leopold, he was profoundly devoted to the moral as well as the practical claims of maintaining ecological balance and his favorite pastime was hunting. Let me sketch a few details.

Bob grew up in what he described as a lower middle-class neighborhood on

Milwaukee's south side. "The Depression of the early 1930's curtailed my enrollment in college for lack of funds," he explains, "thus, I was several years older than most member of my class at Carroll College." Marie adds that his parents had not gone beyond the 8th grade in school, and it was a 10th grade biology teacher who stimulated Bob's interest in learning and started him on his determined quest for education. He got a summer job as a lifeguard in 1934 and used his earnings to start college. Then a football scholarship to cover tuition, \$50 per semester in those days, got him into Carroll College, and with savings from his summer job, a dishwashing job to help with room and board, and an occasional \$10 or so from his younger brother, who was a beginning fireman, he managed to get through. An assistantship with a biology professor there at Carroll College while still an undergraduate not only helped financially but got him headed for graduate school in Madison. It was at Carroll we should note, that he met Marie Stanfield and they were married in 1941. Two years after Bob graduated from Carroll and began his graduate work here with Aldo Leopold.

I recall this early history to point up what a determined, purposeful and persistent young man Bob was. Those qualities remained his throughout his life, occasionally I suspect a bit hard on his children and yet remembered by them with general appreciation and affection.

Bob, single-minded as he could on occasion be, was also a man of many interests and many talents. Many of you, I'm sure, remember that remarkable

exhibit on the Bird in Natural History featured at the Elvejeum Museum of Art some 13 years ago this past winter, an exhibit that Bob and then director of the museum, Catherine Meade, organized. More recently, in a paper delivered before the Madison Literary Club just last year, Bob enlarged on his own esthetics view.

"The rapport the viewer has," he wrote, "with any work of graphic art, we depend on personal experience with the various aspects of subject, action, mood or temporal affinities of the scene depicted or even a personal association unrelated to the art itself. Thus a painting of a galloping horse could be enjoyed by a farmer, a jockey, a cowboy, another artist, or a veterinarian, but the source and the level, that is the depth, of emotional involvement could be drastically different in each case and for very different reasons."

Now that paper, I would add, comprises an impressive scholarly review of the history of wildlife art. In an earlier paper to that same audience, Bob referred to his own experience as one of the judges chosen, some year's back, to select the picture to be used on that years federal duck stamp. "The selection," he noted, "was to include recognized experts in the fields of ornithology, wildfowling and wildlife art. I don't know which of these I was to represent, but hoped it was for the art critique aspect which has long been a hobby of mine."

Well, there is much, very, very much more that wants saying at a time such as this, and I'm confident that much of it will be said by those who are about to

share some of their thinking with us. I began with a poem and I'm going to chose this brief tribute with another reading which comes from Lucien Price's little book *A Litany for All Souls*.

"What else are we, we the living, but the spring sowing of those myriad mortals whose autumn harvest time was death. From them we had our bodies, we are heir to their passions and desires. From them spring many of our deepest thoughts and highest aspirations. They have bequeathed to us their sacred flame and we shall do the same for others. The force which animates this continuing immortality of all souls is love, for it is because they loved us and we them that they live on in us. And this is true, not alone of persons, but also of people of centuries, of epochs, they are reincarnated in us, and men of genius who have left their souls on earth are only this universal process raised in excelsis."

Well, it was Lucien Price who spoke of those twin immensities of the human heart, love and memory. Surely it is our love and our memory in which Bob McCabe remains, and will always remain, as a living presence.

\* \* \*

LLOYD KEITH:

Bob McCabe was my friend, and he was my mentor. When I say he was my mentor, that is probably a great understatement. He brought me here as an undergraduate student from the Province of Alberta, Canada; he supervised my Ph.D. studies; he obtained

the post-doctorate money that supported me for the years following my degree; he created the position in his department that I occupied for 35 years. The family has asked me to review Bob's professional contributions. I feel very privileged to be able to do so. I have made some notes here-there is much to be said about Bob McCabe, and I simply don't want to forget.

Bob began at the University as an Arboretum Biologist in 1943, and he held that position for two years. Then in 1945 he began as an Instructor in the then Department of Wildlife Management. After 11 years he was a Full Professor, but only four years after he started he became Chairman of the Department, and he held that position for 27 years. Now 27 years must be one of the longest, if not the longest, tenures as a chairman on the University of Wisconsin campus. There are many things I could say about Bob as a chairman, but the bottom line for the staff during his tenure was that he was extremely adept at running interference for us, that we considered as coming from the upper echelon of administrators, and we had on average about one staff meeting a year, and the rest was taken care of by Bob McCabe.

Well, the research topics of Bob's 140 or more publications, including a couple of books, reflect a really unusual breadth of interest and knowledge. It included the sorts of things you'd expect on animal ecology and taxonomy, behavior and field techniques and conservation and so on. It also included aspects of plant ecology and art, philosophy and anthropology. It goes on, the man was extremely interested in a

great number of aspects of his surroundings. Bob was on the, what is fashionably called, the cutting edge of research in two respects. He was just proud of these aspects of his research prowess: he was the first to have the idea, and the first really to test the idea that one could use electrophoresis as a taxonomic tool to determine the relationships of different species of birds; and that eventually led of course to the use of RNA and DNA in the same context. It was a major advance in traditional taxonomy. Bob was also one of the first individuals to use radio isotopes in a field setting, that is, on free-ranging mammals and birds. The upshot of that was that we came away with a much better grasp of how to estimate abundance and distribution of mammals and birds in the wild, and also their productivity.

During the 36 year period from 1948 until 1984, Bob supervised, he supported, nurtured 49 graduate students. Thirteen of these were Ph.D.'s, and another interesting aspect of his philosophy was that he never accepted a single co-authorship on anything that his graduate students produced as a graduate thesis. His basic idea here was that the student should receive full credit for the research, for the general quality of the thesis and the subsequent publication, because he wanted to maximize the opportunities for these individuals as post-graduates and as wildlife biologists, as professors, and so on. It was a very generous move on his part.

There was a strong international component to Bob McCabe's research: he

worked extensively in Canada, in Ireland. He worked in Alberta, in Manitoba, in Newfoundland. He worked also in East Africa. From a personal point of view, I have many memories of being in the field with Bob, both in Canada and overseas. Some indication of the quality of training Bob gave us is in the fact that of the 13 Ph.D.'s, 10 subsequently became full professors or deans, and the other three became higher echelon administrators in government.

Bob's role as a public servant is certainly unsurpassed. The perspective here is that what Bob had was certainly one of utilizing his knowledge in a highly public service sort of way and I'm just going to quote for you, cite for you, some of the positions he held which reflect this commitment to public service. He was, for example, or served, as President of the Wildlife Society, he served as President of the Wisconsin Society of Ornithology, he served as President of the Wisconsin Academy of Science, Arts and Letters, he served as Secretary of the Wisconsin Exposition Board, as Secretary of the Wisconsin Resources Development Advisory Board, he was Chairman of the National Academy of Sciences Vertebrate Pest Committee, he was also Chairman at times of the Wisconsin DNR Research Advisory Committee, he was Advisor to the Irish Department of Public Works-National Parks Branch, and he was also an Advisor to the Ethiopian Department of Wildlife Management.

I have been given 5 minutes to cover some of the aspects of Bob McCabe's history.

I would like to conclude in a way with some of the honors, or list of the honors, Bob received as a result of his educational contributions and public service. He was a Fulbright Professor of Ecology at the University of Dublin from 1969-1970. In 1988 he received a doctorate from the National University of Ireland. In 1969 he received an honorary doctorate from his alma mater, Carroll College. In 1982 he was given the Wisconsin Award, which is the major premium award of the Wisconsin Chapter of the Wildlife Society. And in 1988 he received the award I'm sure pleased him most of all, it was the Aldo Leopold medal. This is a medal given by the Wildlife Society and I'd like to just read a short excerpt from the context of the dedication at the time that Bob received this medal. It goes as follows, "The Aldo Leopold Award is presented for distinguished service for wildlife conservation and is the highest honor bestowed by the Wildlife Society." It is the ultimate recognition of a wildlife professional, and Bob McCabe is indeed that.

And I'd like to close just again by repeating that Bob McCabe was my friend and indeed he was a marvelous mentor and I will miss him very, very much.

Thank you.

\* \* \*

HENRY LARDY:

"Would you like to go up to the duck shack tomorrow night?" Those words of Bob McCabe sent shivers through the veins of many of his duck

hunting friends. Reaching the Lake Corning retreat was as difficult as any military boat camp obstacle course. You had to wear hip boots, you walked a mile through the bog, and if you were very lucky, you did not sink in over your boots and draw water into your boots. However, no one ever turned down such an invitation. It was and still is a great duck hunting site, but more important to the guest was an opportunity to share a day with a friend who could be described as a quintessential sportsman. I know that we enjoyed the ride home whether we had success or not. Now it may have been very enjoyable for him to hunt with friends, but no joy could have surpassed that which he experiences hunting with his 3 splendid sons, Dick, Tom and Kevin. I don't know that they inherited this ability to hunt effectively with the genes of their father or whether it was the environment, but they are all expert sportsmen. Colleen, I don't know if he ever enticed you to walk the marsh into Lake Corning, but I know he did appreciate your coming to the house on Lake Puckaway and he knew that you appreciated the marvelous things that are still in that house.

Bob's advice on game management was sought by many people who could afford to make wildlife the main crop on their land, but although he gave freely of that advice, he was very selective in choosing the time he would visit their estates. He would attempt to coordinate it with certain phenomena such as sharptail grouse season in September, Dakota pheasants and grouse in October, Louisiana woodcock in December, and Texas quail in January. He was a good shot and never provided an alibi for a

miss. He was not a trophy hunter, nor was he concerned about the number of birds that he would bring home for the table. However, friends of the McCabe family were very much concerned once they had enjoyed what Marie could do to those birds. I don't know if Bob's expertise in wildlife art grew out of his profession, but he acquired an outstanding collection of original paintings, of sculpture and carvings. I know that he played a very important role in designing the biggest bronze sculpture that is in the McCabe home. He was called on to assemble and judge exhibits including the national duck stamp competition, as has already been mentioned, and the outstanding exhibits at the Lee Yawkey Woodson Museum in Wausau.

Bob was a gifted writer. His essays in the *Wisconsin Academy Review* deal with a wide variety of subjects, most of them peripheral to his academic profession, but there were rich references to classic sources. In a reminiscence about playing marbles on Milwaukee's Southside when he was a child, he enriched the text with some interesting facts about pre-Christian Egypt. In a lecture on the ecological impact of the Duck Stamp, he could quote Plato to prove that Socrates had been a hunter. His writing was effective, was succinct and colorful. When he presented the official portrait of Aldo Leopold to the University he said, "With the stubby fingers of words, I would like to add a few brush strokes to help the features of this portrait convey the man."

Read his poems and his essays



about the land he bought in Ireland and you would wish you were Irish.

\* \* \*

NINA LEOPOLD BRADLEY:

It means a great deal to me to have a chance to say a few words today about a man who has been a very special part of my life. All the way through graduate school and beyond, Bob's family and mine have enjoyed many experiences together. Not insignificant is the fact that Bob's birthday and my father's birthday and my husband Charlie's is January 11th! Certainly a good omen.

In graduate school with Aldo Leopold as major professor, Bob's family and mine had many summers at the Delta Waterfowl Research Station. We passed apples together at my father's seminars on the Madison campus. We were all involved in research on the Arboretum in Madison and in the evening, dinners at the Van Hise house.

Blending all these activities was a warm bonding between Bob McCabe and my father. The warmth and mutual respect of these two men for each other was deep and always apparent. As a young and fiesty Irishman, Bob was much less fiesty in Aldo Leopold's office or in his presence! His personality simmered down to warmth, caring, understanding, eager to please. These two men consistently brought out the best in one another. It was deeply meaningful and always apparent.

I'm sure that many of you know that while the Leopold essays were being composed, later to be published in *A Sand County Almanac*, Bob ransacked the office wastebaskets every evening. The handwritten originals of my father's essays were collected, saved and cared for by this fiesty young Irishman! What a collection!

Bob especially liked the essay "Draba". Oxford University Press wanted to exclude "Draba" from the publication, but my brother Luna, who was editing the book, insisted that it be included, so I would like to read it to you this afternoon.

"Draba"

"Within a few weeks now Draba, the smallest flower that blows, will sprinkle every sandy place with small blooms.

He who hopes for spring with unturned eye never sees so small a thing as Draba. He who despairs of spring with downcast eye steps on it, unknowing. He who searches for spring with his knees in the mud finds it, in abundance.

Draba asks, and gets, but scant allowance of warmth and comfort; it subsists on the leavings of unwanted time and space. Botany books give it two or three lines, but never a plate or portrait. Sand too poor and sun too weak for bigger, better blooms are good enough for Draba. After all it is no spring flower, but only a postscript to a hope.

Draba plucks no heartstrings. Its perfume, if there is any, is lost in the gusty winds. Its color is plain white. Its leaves wear a sensible woolly coat. Nothing eats it; it is too small. No poets sing of it. Some botanist once gave it a Latin name,

and then forgot it. Altogether it is of no importance-just a small creature that does a small job quickly and well."

\* \* \*

REV. MAX GAEBLER:

For all that has been said here this afternoon there still is very, very much that remains unspoken.

We would like to invite any of you who have a specific memory or anecdote or impression or sentiment about Robert McCabe to come forward to share it.

\* \* \*

RICHARD MCCABE:

I am Dick McCabe, Bob and Marie's oldest son. You'll have to bear with me. I will try to get through this. My father would undoubtedly have given 4:1 odds against it.

On behalf of Mom and the rest of the McCabe clan, I thank you very much for being here. Your presence and expressions of condolence are very much appreciated.

This memorial involves two, at least two, improbabilities. First, despite the fact that no evidence to the contrary throughout the history of mankind, the prospect of my father's passing seemed impossible. At least until last year, Dad's vitality precluded the notion of death whatsoever. I guess it would have registered as too inconvenient. Second,

the chance otherwise of my speaking to any group from this particular vantage in the front of a church was, at best, remote. The latter of these two improbabilities would have amused my father greatly.

In any case, our family is grateful for your words and sentiments expressed today and in the past few days. I frankly don't possess now the emotional objectivity and perhaps never will have the eloquence to reciprocate a declaration of what my father meant to our family. Other than to say that he, along with Mom, was our center ...the most and best of all of us...I won't try. And I won't prolong my own anxiety up here. But at risk of fragile comportment or of speaking too long and saying too little, I would like to tell you of one experience with Dad.

Just a few weeks ago in April, I traveled from my home in the East to hunt wild turkey with Dad on Rusty Rock Farm. Dad had a gobble permit, I didn't. But that only one of us would carry a gun was not an excuse to forego the sharing of time and adventure together; it never had been. At the time, Dad was enduring the second series of chemotherapy treatments and was quite beaten up physically by the chemistry and cancer as well. He was greatly weakened and a mere shadow of his former robust, energetic self. He then had no appetite to speak of, no endurance and was constantly tired. Yet he wanted to hunt. When I arrived here in Madison, and despite having been with him only a month before, I was distressed at Dad's deteriorating condition, and figured there was no possibility whatsoever that we could go afield. And that was okay. At

least that was okay with me. But it was not with Dad. I suggested that we hold off for several days until brother Kevin and my son Mike would join us, by which time Dad might feel a little stronger or simply think better of trying to hunt at all. He would have none of it.

My father and I had a close relationship, marked by silly bantering and an unwavering affection. He very much liked putting on his stern face with me--that infamous serial curmudgeon look of persona that intimidated students for 45 years--and trading jibes with a son who knew him for the cupcake he was. But no amount of bantering, cajoling or reasoning could distract Dad from a desire to hunt that opening morning.

We spent the night before at the farm. Dad advised me that he wanted to hunt from his traditional blind, so that afternoon I had climbed the hill behind the house to brush out the area and carry up most of Dad's equipment. Those climbs convinced me that the morrow's hunt, especially at his preferred site, was stupid if not impossible. But Dad persisted. That is what he wanted to do. We turned in early that evening so as to be up at 4:00 A.M.. That would allow us to be underway at 4:30 and presumably ensconced in the blind by 5:30. From farmhouse to blind the distance was no more than 500 yards, but the distance is entirely uphill. Dad figured about an hour's hike, and that's what it took. I walked behind Dad toting the balance of his gear and two flashlights. We attacked the hill in the dark and only a few steps at a time, and when we paused Dad propped his skinny self against my side

until he gathered strength and enthusiasm for the next brief pull. Repeatedly I asked and maybe pleaded to abandon the trek for clearly it was extraordinarily taxing to him. Furthermore, the wind was gusting and the temperature below freezing. I was ignored. And even though we weren't moving fast or often enough to generate any body heat, we climbed on a few yards or less at a time.

As time passed ever closer to the opening hour, Dad pressed harder, trying to take more steps between halts, but that only prolonged the stops for him to recover. Increasingly concerned, I took to badgering him to slow down for my sake and for other preposterous reasons. He continued to ignore the protests, even chuckling once or twice at their absurdity. He merely countered by urging me on and reminding me at various intervals that I was a miserable twall and nincompoop for holding up progress.

I would like to point out that if you never laughed with my father you never really knew him. And if he ever called you a miserable twall or a nincompoop, you were a special friend. If he called you both, you were family.

Essentially, our journey up Rusty Rock Hill that morning was even more belabored than this telling of it. But when in fact, we reached the blind about 5:30, Dad was even too exhausted to seat himself, so I helped him into his camouflaged beach chair and wrapped him up in a quilt that weighed nearly as much as he did and smelled like the 1940's. I propped up his gun where he

could reach it, adjusted some wind-shielding netting, set out a Rube Goldberg contraption of a decoy, returned to the blind and took a seat beside Dad.

Already, he was fast asleep, and that was just as well for the wind had picked up even more and Rusty Rock Farm was sprayed with brief, horizontal showers of snow. Dad slept on and off for several hours, well into daylight, awakened occasionally by some apnrotic snoring thing for which he was well and widely known. Every time he stirred, I asked if he wanted to head back to the farmhouse and warmth. He responded each time by hunkering deeper into the quilt and dozing off. So there we sat for four hours. During that span a hen turkey visited the decoy, an antlerless deer minced by and two fox squirrels caroused in the leaves nearby. By 9:30 I had sat longer and quieter than I had at any other one time in my life, and I had to move or freeze. So I woke Dad and told him I would be back as soon as I had a discernible body temperature, and I sneaked off into the woods. Not 10 minutes and a few hundred yards later, I was astounded by the boom of Dad's gun, and I raced back. Approaching the blind cautiously I saw the shotgun where I had placed it originally. Easing into the blind I inquired of the excitement. Softly and matter-of-factly, Dad related simply that a big gobbler came by, he shot and missed. And I knew without further elaboration that things were wrong... Any bird close enough to warrant my father's shot would have been missed only because Dad couldn't hold the gun steady. Surely, I said, it was time to go in. Without a word, Dad tightened his cocoon quilt and closed his eyes to sleep again. So I retook my

position beside him and waited for another unlikely turkey or outright hypothermia.

There were then about two hours left before the noon close of our hunting day and, if anything, the snow flurries became more intense and frequent. At least twice in the next hour Dad stirred awake and I asked each time if we shouldn't head down. I was certain that the rigors and conditions of the morning would finally allow reason to kick in. But at each suggestion, Dad shrugged and napped. Shortly after 11:00, Dad sat up slowly, then settled back. Quickly, almost desperately, I implored to quit, for I couldn't imagine that he could endure further the chill and confinement. We had been there six hours, and there probably wasn't a gobbler left in the driftless area after his errant shot. Dad turned to me after a few seconds and fixing me with a serious look-- the type that always preceded something imminently sage-- and he said, "Why don't you try to be a little bit quieter, you nincompoop?"

That essentially was the experience that I wanted to share with you. In some respects, Dad's will and tenacity on our last hunt was an evocative metaphor, at least to me, for how he accomplished and succeeded at so many things.

And now it's time for me "to be a little quieter." But let me conclude by noting that throughout his struggle with cancer, Dad was alert, intelligent, quick-witted and mostly optimistic.

Our family has had a year to find a

rhythm to sadness, to deal through the continuum of anger, frustration, hope, despair and consummate grief with the terrifying prospect of the first improbability. We coped then and do so now by closeness, humor and an ambivalent sense of relief of Dad's suffering. We know, too, that Dad received superb attention and care from his doctors and the U.W. Hospital staff. And as throughout most of his life, he was supported and nurtured and sustained continually, most and best by his bride. He had, as well, the devotion and love of the rest of his family and the very best wishes of his many friends.

Again, on behalf of Mom, daughter Colleen, sons Tom and Kevin, granddaughter Michelle, grandsons Mike, Jason and Darren, greatgrandchildren Joshua and Matthew, other daughters Nicki, Mug and Laurie, I thank you for being here.

\* \* \*

KEVIN MCCABE:

I'm the youngest son Kevin. If my older brother can take the risk I guess I can too.

I don't know why, but 2 stories keep running across my mind and they both are hunting stories, which shouldn't be much surprise, but neither one has to do with hunting.

The first one was one day as we were hunting out at Rusty Rock Farm in the later fall. We were walking along and we stopped for a moment and my father

reached down and broke off a twig of a plant and handed it to me and said, "Kevin, what's this plant?" and I replied, "Dad, it's dead." He says, "I know it's dead, what is it?" So I promptly stared at it and said, "You tell me." And he did. That just illustrates how he learned ecology that way. It wasn't just the living plants in the whole that you could tell him, it was the individual plants that he looked at.

And the other story was just a bit of humor that I can't resist telling. We were driving up to the duck shack and it was late and we were cruising along at 55, at the speed limit of those days. Dad didn't like to go too fast. All of a sudden we were in the right lane and a car went zipping by in the left lane. He just glanced at it and without looking at me or doing anything else, he reached over and tapped his hand on the parking brake. I looked at the car, I looked at him, I looked back at the car and just burst out laughing because he was just checking to make sure the parking brake wasn't on.

And as Dick said, if you had a chance to laugh with my father, you really knew him.

Thank you.

\* \* \*

SCOTT CRAVEN:

My name is Scott Craven. I was a close friend of Bob's and I've been called a miserable twall on numerous occasions.

I think the thing that Kevin was

alluding to showed up in our Wildlife Techniques exam in 1973 when I was in that class with Bob. Generally speaking they were all dead twigs that he expected us to identify.

What I prefer, in my own case, to focus primarily on are the memories that Bob leaves on me. I'd like to share a few of those with you now. These were forged over nearly 24 years of knowing Bob, primarily at the farm, Rusty Rock in Iowa County, and also in the Department of Wildlife Ecology.

First and foremost I remember some of Bob's advice. Shortly after arriving in Madison as a graduate student I recall questioning whether there was any future in our field. Bob's simple comment, "There's always room for a good man." There was no sexism intended, that's simply the way it was stated. That's advice I still use with some of my own undergraduate advisees when they're worried about their future.

I also remember the infamous full-page photograph of Bob in his nightshirt published in the Wildlife Society Bulletin on the occasion of him stepping down as President of the Wildlife Society. That kind of thing probably wouldn't be done anymore, but it was enjoyed by many people at the time.

I remember how much my children Meredith and Jeff enjoyed having Bob miraculously extract a quarter from their ear every time he saw them.

I remember many times quietly sitting on my deer stand at Rusty Rock

only to have the quiet periodically shattered by Bob and his battery powered bullhorn as he communicated with, in his words, any interloper. It always made for great stories at the poker table that night and Bob did truly enjoy those poker games.

I remember particularly well being invited into the family hunting group and many subsequent adventures at Rusty Rock Farm-my first buck, my first gobbler turkey, son Jeff's first buck, son Jeff's first gobbler turkey.

I remember the motto Bob wanted me to engrave with our goose-band making machine for his office door. It's still good advice and I try and follow it. It simply was, "LEAD, FOLLOW, OR GET THE HELL OUT OF THE WAY!" That was something Bob always lived by and for the most part he was a leader.

I remember many examples of Bob's frugal nature, primarily because it reminds me of my own frugal nature, but in particular I remember his affinity for varieties of beer which sold in the neighborhood of \$5.00 for an entire case. His system of frugality certainly worked for him. From his beginnings in South Milwaukee he parlayed that frugal nature into an impressive legacy of art, property and a variety of other things.

I remember him smearing Limburger cheese on some of the spruce trees outside of the gate at the farm because he was concerned about causing some discomfort for miserable twalls who stole them to use as Christmas trees during the Holiday Season.

We shared many interests personally and professionally and I feel I owe Bob my start as a wildlife ecologist. But rather than go on, I'll close with one more snippet of his advice. On the occasion of my prelim exams he told me simply, "If you don't know the answer, say so, say you don't know and move on."

I really don't know what else to say in this case, except that I'll miss Bob greatly and I have one final message for him. "I don't know who you'll be hunting with in the future, Bob, but I hope the grouse are up and the ducks are flying."

\* \* \*

BOB BLOHM:

My name is Bob Blohm and I think I am the last PhD student Bob McCabe had. I don't know if that meant that after his experience with me, that he had had enough and couldn't go on or didn't want to do it any more, but, whatever the case, I think I have that honor.

On the plane this morning I wondered what I would say if I had the opportunity to say a few words here and I remembered or recalled, the conversation I had during the week as I relayed the news that Bob had passed, and in all those conversations the common thread was maybe a little moment of silence or a laugh as we recalled the good memories, the instances, the occurrences that we all shared and enjoyed throughout the years in our tenure at U.W..

Kevin, I might add that that same

dead twig I saw in 1968 in the same techniques class, and as I look around the room I'm sure that twig has been around a long, long time.

I started in 1968 on campus as a graduate student in rather tumultuous times as many of you know, the Vietnam War, the draft, the protesting. A lot of us graduate students were called to take physical examinations, fight with their own draft boards and other things. Some of us had to go away for a couple years and I will never forget Bob's simple words to me when I left, "Take care of yourself, there'll be a place for you when you get back. Let's just simply pick up where we left off."

When I did return I enjoyed a very, very firm relationship with R. A.. I've been called names that have been referred to a number of times and consider it an honor. He was a very kind and gentle man; at first he appeared very stern, very grumpy at times, very stubborn, but it didn't take long to look through the man to find the warmth, the kindness and gentle heart that existed there.

Someone alluded that his approach to guiding graduate students was unique. He gave us a lot of free rein to pursue our questions, our alternatives. He never let us go entirely. When we got off the beaten path he brought us in, he got us back where we should have been. He expected a lot, demanded a lot and we tried to give him as much as we could. There was a lot of humor in the man and we tried to make him laugh. At times in graduate school we were successful.

I recall some of the instances of the

famous freezer cleanouts which occurred every spring and fall. This was a time-honored tradition that took place and of course the intent was to get all the non-research, the non-biological, the non-work related items out of the freezer, and having done that particular task a time or two, it was a great delight at the very end to find some of R. A.'s hidden contraband he had forgotten about, the frozen jams, the frozen fruits and raspberries. He would mumble and grumble down the hall as he took them out of the freezer and took them home. My predecessors brought to mind recently his Wildlife Techniques Class, the kangaroo foot that showed up prior to one of his sessions and made some tracks to where he was going to take the class out that afternoon. And of course that was the only time the master animal tracker was stumped. He didn't admit it for a couple years, I understand, but at any rate he was a wonderful man and I am just thankful that I was able to take part in his life and to gain something from my experiences with him.

Thank you.

\* \* \*

JIM TEER:

My name is Jim Teer. I was one of the 13, as someone said, of his Ph.D. students. I may be the only surviving one, I'm not sure. I started at U.W. in 1955 and Bob was my major advisor and we kept a very close contact over the years as he did with most of his students. That is an enviable thing not shared by some other professors I've had in the past.

What I wanted to say to you was just an incident that occurred in Texas. Bob came to Texas almost every year for the past 20 years to hunt quail. There was a small group of us that camped out on some large ranches in south Texas brush country. They included George Burger, who is here, also one of his students, myself and Ed Kozicky, who was with Winchester for many years, and we always enjoyed the camp, and we always shot a lot of quail, had a lot of fun doing that. One incident I remember particularly that amused all of us was on one occasion we were walking behind the dogs hunting quail, and we were about 20 or 30 feet apart, and over the years Bob lost some of his hearing. I don't know if it's because of the number of times he shot his shotgun or what it was, but he lost a range of hearing. He couldn't hear a quail singing or call, and he couldn't hear some of the lower rhythms of that spectrum. On this one day we were walking along and I heard a rattlesnake, and the snake was very close. I looked over to where Bob was walking and that snake was within 2 feet of him and he didn't hear it. I yelled at him, "Bob, Bob, snake, snake!" He said, "Where are they? Where are they?"

We've had many examples of his hunting prowess and his lifestyle and so on, but one thing that I think is important is that this memorial service is kind of a remembrance or celebration of continuance with his 2 sons who are involved in conservation professionally and the many students that he trained.

(Jim could not continue and stepped down)



\* \* \*

BOB RUFF:

My name is Bob Ruff. I am currently Chair to the Department of Wildlife Ecology. It's extremely difficult to believe that this day is really upon us. Last week I happened to be out backpacking in the remote areas on Kenyonlands National Park, came into town on Wednesday to receive the news and my thoughts were immediately with the family, Marie, Dick, Tom, Kevin, Colleen, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and after a frantic hour or so of trying to make reservations to get back, I thought of the very strong loss this was going to have to the wildlife profession. I thought of the loss to the family and I also thought of the loss to the Department at the University. After all, our Department of Wildlife Ecology was Bob McCabe's department. He made that his home for 55 years and chaired it for 27, as you've already heard, a remarkable accomplishment. In essence, it was his second family, his first family was by blood, second one by the sense of purpose, motivation, whatever you want to call it, maybe a sense of calling that he came to the Department and led it with a sense of passion, fervor, the likes of which I have never seen in another department chair.

Although he might not approve of my choice of words, he literally brooded over many of his students, his staff and faculty and the association of "his Department". He had a fundamental vision for the Department and that was

basically, "stay small and stay good". He abided by that philosophy during his entire tenure. Unquestionably Bob steered the ship well for the Department, sometimes with force, other times with gentle persuasion, and I can see via the smiles on a couple of faculty members that they probably put emphasis on the force, but that is only because he was good at gentle persuasion as well, that the ship was steered by force.

When I became Chairman in 1987, one of my first visits was simply to go to Bob McCabe's office and ask for some of his sage advice. Basically he reiterated the same things that he recounted to me in 1970 when I first came on board, that was, "Stay small and stay good. Pick your courses or your faculty with care, and then do whatever you can to remove obstacles and let them basically run free. With that in mind you will achieve some success." I'd just like to share with you the knowledge that Bob McCabe invariably did what was best for his Department. Again, that served him well over the years.

Tomorrow, for some of us, it will be for the first time of going back to the office without Bob McCabe being there, and it's going to be very difficult. We're going to continue our brown-bag lunches that Bob participated in on a daily basis, literally I guess for over 50 years. We'll exchange barbs, debate issues about whose farm produced the largest and most deer at the McCabes or Ellarsons or wherever. But it won't be the same. Not much will be the same in the Department. Hopefully with the legacy that we've inherited from Bob McCabe, it will be a richer department.

It has often been said that the sum total of life is really the memories. Bob McCabe left us with a fine collection of those. We deeply appreciate the family's willingness to share this really remarkable human being with us.

This be the verse you grave for me:  
*Here he lies where he longed to be;  
 Home is the sailor, home from sea,  
 And the hunter home from the hill.*

Peace be with Bob.

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

REV. MICHAEL SCHULER:

Clearly there are many impressions and anecdotes to be shared. I invite you now to be in an attitude of meditation for a moment more.

Infinite mysteries, source of endless love and life, be with us here as we remember with gratitude the life of Robert McCabe. Help us bear the grief that still oppresses our hearts that we may now turn back toward life and toward those who yearn for and still can receive our affection. May we always recall the best that was in Bob and be ever inspired to pursue our own destinies with the same awareness that was so typical of him. His legacy forever lives in our hearts and in our memories. Rest well in the bosom of eternity. Know the peace he has so rightly earned.

I offer these parting words, a short poem, a "Requiem" by Robert Louis Stevenson:

Under a wide and starry sky  
 Dig the grave and let me lie.  
 Glad did I live and gladly die,  
 And I laid me down with a will.