ARIZONA SOFTBALL HALL OF FAME SPEECH

     My past has caught up with me once again as I am honored to be inducted into the Arizona Softball Hall of Fame on this day, August 10, 2019. Thank you all for coming and it is great to see you all again. I want to talk to you about The Rewards of Life.

   Aging is a natural part of life. At first, we can't wait to get older - start kindergarten, get a driver's license, vote, graduate, off to college, get that first car and job. Growing older creeps up on us slowly so cherish each day - Live each day. Life, on the other end, seems to have passed way too fast!  The older you get — the faster it goes.

    To all of my retired friends from 65 years and up ... we are going through the next phase of our lives. We're at that age where we see wrinkles, gray hair, and extra pounds. We see the cute 25-year-olds and reminisce. But we were also 25, just as they will — one day — be our age. What they bring to the table with their youth and zest, we bring with our wisdom and experience.  In our careers, we have participated in sports, coached or officiated, raised families, run households, paid the bills, dealt with sadness, great joys and accomplishments and everything else life has thrown our way. We are survivors ... we are warriors ... we are women ... like a classic car or a fine wine. Even if our bodies may not be what they once were, they carry our faith, our courage, our love, our strength & our memories. My hope is that we shall all enter this chapter of our lives with humility, grace, and pride over everything we have been through, and we should never feel bad about getting older. It's a privilege that is denied to so many.

    I have had the opportunity to coach and work with high school teenagers for 40 years - a privilege that not too many people have had. This has brought many blessings to my life with many joys and many sorrows when I see these people leave the earth way too soon.  My athletes will remember when we adopted families at Christmas, painted windows, put on softball clinics for the youth in our community, just lots of great memories of the past working together as a team. But my biggest joy is seeing these 18-year-old young ladies mature into outstanding citizens, outstanding women, fantastic parents, and outstanding leaders in our society today. Many of these students have become great friends over the years as we have stayed in touch. Thank you for your many kind words, I love Facebook.

    I have had the privilege of receiving many awards for outstanding achievement in areas that I pursued as a career and on the athletic field and now in my retired life I am enjoying my new found love of golf.  The beauty that surrounds a golf course with God‘s nature is such a blessing that we all should never ignore that just because we miss a shot and hit the ball into the lake.

     My students all know that I have always had, due to my loving parents, a love for dogs, also one of my retired activities. I have always had two dogs in my life by my side. Thanks Mom and Dad for always having a pet around the house while we were growing up. While I have been out on my own, I have saved 12 dogs and each one you lose (just like your friends) can’t be replaced but they let your heart grow bigger and stronger.

     I also have been blessed with the patience of learning and teaching our new technology, computers, phones, and the internet (coachellis.net).  I really enjoy sharing that expertise with many of my friends, my golfing groups, and my church activities in working with the computers and presentations during services.  God is good all the time.

     When my parents were alive, I remember driving over to Chandler from Mesa and showing them how to use their iMac computer — I miss them as they both passed 11 years ago. My parents are looking down and loving this moment.

     So, The Rewards of Life for each of you will grow if you follow your heart, your talent, and continue with whatever abilities God has given to you as you age.  Life isn’t about waiting for the storms to pass; it’s about learning to dance in the rain.

     God has blessed me in so many ways and even though I am only 72 and I know I have (or I think I have), many more years left on this earth to help and share with others ... I just want to SHARE with everyone RIGHT NOW how great it is that our paths have crossed and thank you for being a positive part of my life whether current or a long, long time ago.

    May God bless you and your family and may you continue to PAY IT FORWARD and be a positive influence in this world while God’s eyes look upon you and bless you.  Thanks everyone and I love you all.