FEATURES

36 J.C. Penney Statue
The J. C. Penney statue has arrived in Kemmerer, Wyoming! Find out more about the upcoming ceremony in August.

42 I remember when...
Hear from ten of our JCPenney alumni and the memories they have while they were on the job.

50 JCPenney Archives
Read the story about how the JCPenney Archives were created thanks to the work of Gordon Lindsey and Virginia Mowry.

IN THIS ISSUE

6 Membership
12 Profiles
34 Penney Memories
63 Foundation
67 Donors
68 In Memoriam

52 Deep South
56 Indiana
57 Mile High Denver/Rocky Mountain
58 North Central
60 Southern California
61 Southwest

FROM THE COVER: Photo by John Fowler on Unsplash
As time nears for the completion of my tenure as your President, I want to reflect on the past five years. From a personal standpoint, it has been my honor and privilege to serve you in this capacity. I have made many new friends and renewed several previous relationships.

Many changes have taken place over this time, especially within the last couple of years – in the company we all loved and served, as well as in our country, and even the world. Not all change has been what we would have wanted, nor in many instances, anticipated.

We held the 2013 National Convention in Washington, D.C., and then the gathering in 2016 in San Antonio, Texas. During the October Annual Meeting that year, I began my “three-year” term as President (nee Chairman) of this wonderful relationship-built organization.

Being a long-time Board member, I thought I had a fairly decent understanding of what the role entailed. Following in the footsteps of the excellent leadership of Sharon (Leight) Winkle and Warren Richards, not to mention Jim Hailey and Tom Arthur, would indeed prove to be a challenge.

In addition to these leaders, I had the benefit of exceptionally strong partners on the National Board and in the Regional Meeting Groups (RMGs), previously known as Local Meeting Groups (LMGs). I was able to depend on terrific support from: Al Bell, Tom McGurren, Jeannette Siegel, Robin Caldwell, Wynn Watkins, Tom Clarke, Ellen Baker, former Treasurer Bill Burns, current Treasurer Karen Bell, as well as Ron Salzetti and Larry Noble with the H.C.S.C. Foundation.

Pat Carberry was instrumental in taking our Partners magazine to a new level of enjoyment, which was maintained and expanded under the leadership or guidance of Ellen Baker, Susan Dunseth, and Jeannette Siegel. And, I have much appreciated the work Sheila Radabaugh has done for us on our website.

The continued viability of the JCPenney National H.C.S.C. Alumni Club is really up to you, all of you, who must work together to sustain alliances and ongoing activities. Fortunately, I am confident you will have very capable leadership over the next several years via Bill Watson (incoming National President), Bill Kruder (incoming 1st Vice President) and Steve Strom (incoming 2nd Vice President).

My last Annual Meeting to oversee the organization will be in October 2021 and, with the Board’s endorsement, I will remain onboard for a year to assist as needed with the transition.

So, I say THANK YOU to everyone for your participation and wisdom in helping me guide our club. It has been a pleasure to serve with you.

In Partnership,

Phil Esch, President
National H.C.S.C. Alumni Club

This just in! We now have a QR Code that can be used to recruit and sign up new members!
This past year, the JCPenney National H.C.S.C. Alumni Club Board of Directors approved a leadership succession plan. Bill Watson, Bill Kruder and Steve Strom were elected to two-year terms as President, 1st Vice President and 2nd Vice President. As one completes his term of office, the next in line will succeed him. These three officers will officially take over leadership of the organization at the October Annual Meeting.

President Bill Watson
As President, Bill Watson is primarily responsible for membership growth and retention, the club’s financial health, developing the board and hosting board meetings, recognizing the 50-Year Pin and Century Club recipients, working with regional meeting group presidents to host gatherings that all members can attend, communicating with the membership and maintaining a relationship with JCPenney.

Bill spent 37 years at JCPenney working in store and district positions in Raleigh, North Carolina; Anderson, South Carolina; Lynchburg, Virginia; and Colfax, North Carolina. His last 16 years were as the Kinston, North Carolina Store Manager where the store received the Chairman's Award four times.

Bill has been married to Sandy for 51 years. They have two daughters and four grandchildren.

He is also a dedicated volunteer, willing to give back and to serve as needed. He has held numerous volunteer positions for his church, the Lenoir County United Way, the Boys and Girls Club of Lenoir County, Eastern Wayne High School Parent Support Group and the H.C.S.C. Southeastern Regional Meeting Group. He is the incoming president of the Goldsboro Golden Kiwanis. Bill has won the James Cash Penney Award for Community Service several times.

For fun, he and Sandy like to travel and attend East Carolina University football, basketball and baseball games. Bill is also an avid golfer.

1st Vice President Bill Kruder
Bill Kruder will be responsible for organizing the board meetings via Zoom or other formats. His membership responsibilities include working with the President and the 2nd Vice President to grow membership at the local level, ensure that the national database and website are maintained and current, and collaborating with RMGs to host large gatherings for all members. Additionally, he will oversee the production of Partners, helping to set due dates and reviewing content.

In 1973, Bill went to work in Store 1542 Chicago Ford City while still a college student. After completing the management training program, he held several store positions before joining the Chicago District Staff as the Business Planning Manager for Women's Apparel.
In 1994 he was transferred to the Home Office where he held several assignments in the buying area. Bill received numerous awards for his leadership including Catalog Media Manager Award, Brand Team Award, Women's Apparel Buyer of the Year, Company Grand Winner Buyer of the Year, the Chairman's Award and the 100th Anniversary Award. He retired in 2012.

Bill joined the JCPenney Southwest H.C.S.C. Alumni Club in 2012 and currently serves as treasurer.

He and wife Debi are proud of their children Maggie, Carson and Conor. He enjoys skiing, tennis, reading, movies and serving as president of the Maverick Region Porsche Club of America.

2nd Vice President Steve Strom

Steve Strom will work with the President and 1st Vice President to ensure the smooth operation of the organization. Those tasks include working with the secretary to ensure that meeting minutes are accurate, maintaining a relationship with the H.C.S.C. Foundation representatives, reviewing the annual budget prepared by the treasurer, responding to member inquiries and being familiar with the club’s 501(c)7 tax status and ensuring adherence to the requirements.

During his 39-year career, Steve worked in Iowa, Illinois, Kansas and Arkansas. He spent six years on the staff of Chicago District 8310/8311, and 18 years as store manager in Hays, Kansas, and Fort Smith, Arkansas. He won the Chairman's Award in 1994 and 1995.

Steve has been a member of the JCPenney Mile High Denver/Rocky Mountain H.C.S.C. Alumni Club since 2013. He was elected vice president for three years and president for four years. His other contributions include participating on the 2019 National Convention Site Committee, serving on the National Ad Hoc Committee to develop ideas to promote the club’s growth, serving on the 2020 Succession Program Planning Committee and developing and leading the 2021 Membership Drive.

He and Marcia have been married for 45 years and have two sons and three granddaughters.

He is a member of Christ Lutheran Church, Highlands Ranch, Colorado, and has volunteered on five committees. He loves the Colorado outdoors including hiking, skiing and snowshoeing.

Winter Partners due November 1

Send us your stories about your career as well as Mr. Penney stories and other items of interest.

You don't have to wait until November 1 to send your stories. You can email them to 1902partners@gmail.com or mail them to me at 16610 Cleary Circle, Dallas, TX 75248.

Partners is for you and about you. Let us hear from you.

Jeannette Siegel
Please welcome our newest members to the JCPenney National H.C.S.C. Alumni Club. These members joined through June, 2021.

Abod, Michell  
Allen, Brett  
Anderson, Douglas  
Anderson, Jane  
Anderson, Mark S.  
Arbuckle, Chris  
Ault, Damon C.  
Bailey, Gregory  
Beaulieu, Lori  
Beck, Mike  
Bernard, Jeannie  
Bobola, Bonnie L.  
Burnett, Elizabeth  
Czerwinski, Barbara  
Daugherty, Cheryl  
De Roy, Gary  
DeBonis, Ted  
DeMuth, Ann  
DeMuth, Jane  
DeMuth, Jean  
Dulski, Patty  
Ellis Czarnecki, Judith  
Enriquez, Lupe  
Eudaly, Daniel  
Ewing, Cathleen  
Flood, Mark  
Flood, Tracey  
Gable, Brenda  
Gaylor, Robert  
Gelinger, Susan P.  
Gray, Diana  
Guerra, Michael  
Hafenbreidel, David A.  
Hagan, Bobbi  
Hampson, Sherbie  
Hansen, Michelle  
Hansen-Sorahan, Karen  
Hase, Stan  
Houston, George  
Huffstickler, Melvin  
Hunter, Pamela  
Hysquierdo, Yvonne M.  
Jankowski, Margaret  
Johnson, Luther  
Johnson, Sherry  
Jones, Earlie  
Jones, Mary Ann  
Kaeser, Jodi  
Kamra, Kay  
Kuhlke, Sheryl  
Lacsamana, Aurora  
Lagge, Nancy  
Latorre, Rocco  
Lawson, David  
Lies, Dick  
Locklear, Becky S.  
Loesch, Jan  
Logston, Timothy  
Lott, Wilneta L.  
MacAulay, Doug  
Mappes, Henry  
Massey, Carolyn  
Mazzeo-Lawton, Aileen  
McCarthy, Pamela  
McDermott, Cecilia  
McDonald, Sandy  
Meyer, Kenneth  
Miller, Dennis  
Miller, Doyle  
Montgomery, Janie  
Moore, Maureen  
Muller, Trudi  
Muzatko, Laura  
Nelson, Lesa  
Peeples, Carol  
Pendleton, Holly  
Phillips, Arlene  
Priest, Debra  
Prinster, Betsy  
Ratcliff, Tracey  
Redding, Edward  
Rial, Holly  
Richardson, Cindy  
Riddle, Roger  
Rudder, Shirley  
Russell, Helen  
Schneider, Heather  
Scholly-Looney, Elaine  
Sester, Karin  
Shaffer, Lori  
Singleton, Charlotte  
Smith, Gisela Joyce  
Smith, Jeannette  
Sollars, Rebecca Lynn  
Spaulding, Harriett  
Stankos, Kay  
Stephenson, Erik  
Stone, Thomas  
Stuart, George  
Sustek, Karen  
Taylor, Lisa  
Thigpen, Elaine  
Trenhaile, Pam  
Tutty, Debra  
Vorndran, Joyce  
Whitson, Kate  
Wiggers, Edith Grete  
Williams, Philip A.  
Wilson, Robin  
Winter, Keith A.  
Wood, Scott  
Wood, Tim  
Workman, Stephen  
Wrightsil, Jacqueline
National H.C.S.C. Membership Drive

2021 Inaugural H.C.S.C. National Membership Drive Gains Positive Results
By Steve Strom

The results are in and our National HCSC Alumni Club added 65 new members in the months of April and May thanks to the hard work and efforts of our 13 Regional Meeting Groups!

Recognizing that our Alumni Club has been losing members to death and inactivity, a National Membership Drive idea was proposed and approved by the H.C.S.C. Board last December at our Board Meeting. The new program was detailed at the March 2021 Quarterly Board Meeting and announced to our national membership through the Spring Partners Magazine and by each RMG President.

Beginning in April each Regional Meeting Group was asked to focus on recruiting new members to renew our national membership rolls and goals were set for each RMG based on their size compared to the national membership total. RMG recognition incentives were offered based on achieving 50% (bronze medal), 75% (silver medal) and 100% (gold medal) of their RMG goal. Besides earning a medal, a recognition certificate would be awarded to the qualifying RMGs. There is also an individual RMG member recognition for any member who personally secured at least two new members.

With the final results in, the following RMGs distinguished themselves for the two month drive:

**GOLD MEDALS**
- Deep South (Florida) RMG – Karen Witt President
- Ohio RMG – Tim DeMuth President
- Southwest RMG – Jan Hodges President

**SILVER MEDAL**
- Mile High Denver/Rocky Mountain RMG – Royce Bervig President

**BRONZE MEDAL**
- Indiana RMG – Deryl Benz President
- Mason-Dixon RMG – Harry Smart President

Twelve of thirteen RMGs added new members during the drive. The Southwest RMG (our largest) added the most new members with 24 and the Deep South (Florida) RMG had the highest percent over their goal at 167%. Hedy Sawyers and Bill Kruder of the SW RMG were recognized for their individual membership drive efforts as well as Bill Alcorn from the Southeastern RMG. They receive free dues in 2022 and a recognition certificate!

Special thanks to National Membership Director, Tom Clarke, and his IT Expert Son, Ed Clarke, for developing and launching a new online membership application which had an immediate impact on gaining new members and helped for a strong finish to the drive in May.

We are very pleased to announce that 16 new members have been added since the end of the drive on May 31 as we close in on our original goal of 100. Ten are from the SW RMG, 3 from the North Central RMG, 2 from the Deep South (Florida) RMG, and 1 from the Southeastern RMG.

President Phil Esch commented that adding new members will continue to be a National H.C.S.C. priority in 2021 and beyond as we seek to strengthen our group and remain H.C.S.C. STRONG!
Now New Members Can Join Online

You can now refer your JCPenney retiree friends who do not belong to the National H.C.S.C. Alumni Club to our website. Joining is easy, just click on the “JOIN the HCSC” icon and our prospective members will be directed to an easy-to-use membership application.

Member Information Screen Receives New Look

Your member information screen in the Member Database has a new look. Everything is on one page, allowing you to make any needed changes easily.
Members who started their career with JCPenney 50 years ago (1971) are eligible to receive the JCPenney National H.C.S.C. Alumni Club 50-Year Pin. Part-time years are included in this honor. To be eligible to receive the 50-Year Pin, you must be a member in good standing of the JCPenney National H.C.S.C. Alumni Club and of course have not already received your 50-Year Pin.

If you know someone who is eligible for this recognition and they are not on this list, please let us know. Send any inquiries to the National H.C.S.C. Club Secretary at natclubsecretary@gmail.com.

Recipients of the 50-Year Pin for 2021

Alcorn, Bill
Armbruster, Keith
Beavers, Harmon
Beran, Denny
Bogdala, Richard
Bryan, Paul
Chambers, Steve
Cote, Bob
Eissinger, John
Ekey, William
Gagnier, Joe
Green, Jerry
Gronseth, Doris
Hansen, Merle
Hansen-Sorahan, Karen
Hatt, Thiel F.
Henrich, Lynn J.
Houston, George
King, Nick
Kuhlke, Sheryl
Lane, Robert W.
Latorre, Rocco
Littlejohn, William
Lobeck, John P.
Lovy, Mona
Lund, Bob

Meyer, Kenneth
Miller, Carolyn (Cari)
Morris, Carol
Mullen, Keith
O’Neill III, James D.
Parker, Walt
Phillips, Arlene
Ray, Troy F.
Ready, Geraldine
Reese, Bill
Reineke, Robert
Rizzo, Joseph
Romero, Richard
Rudder, Shirley
Russell, Helen
Shaffer, Marion
Stankos, Kay
Stone, Richard
Toney, Timothy
Tuttle, Mike
Vorndran, Joyce
Wiggers, Edith
Williams, Philip A.
Winter, Keith A.
Woodbury, Timothy
Zietlow, Judith A.
Like Our Groups!

By Bill Kruder

So, who is on Social Media? Specifically, Facebook? Well, according to the statistics there are 2.74 BILLION worldwide users, the biggest marketing platform on Earth. The United States— with over 190 MILLION users—is not even the largest country of usage. Okay - right now someone is reading this and saying, “But I don't use it.” Well, that I'm sure is true, but on the other hand, nearly two-thirds of you reading this DO use Facebook.

In addition, 52% of the users are 55 and over - that's right - our age demographic uses it. Matter of fact, Facebook is the second most downloaded app, behind only Tik Tok.

The men reading might be thinking, “My wife does, I don't.” Well, 57% of men use it vs. 43% of women.

Facebook users spend 34 minutes a day on the site. Go ahead, like me, say, “No I don't.”

One more statistic: 1.8 BILLION users use a Facebook Group

So with that, here's what I would like to share with you, the introduction of our new JCPenney National H.C.S.C. Alumni Club Facebook page. First of all, our group is a PRIVATE group; what is shared on there is only seen by our group members. Can anyone join? Pretty much, after you answer three simple questions.

Are we the only JCPenney group? Heck, no! Some of our Regional Meeting Groups (RMGs) have been using this platform for a while now.

Here's a sampling of some groups I found:

- JCPenney PNP (Past and Present) - 2,600 members, 36 new members the week of June 6, 2021, alone.
- JCPenney and Friends
- JCPenney H.C.S.C. Southwest - Recently shared a post for their Rough Rider baseball outing and in 48 hours they had over 90 “likes.” One of the comments from a group it was shared with said, “I didn't even know you all do this stuff.”
- Deep South Local - JCPenney H.C.S.C - Learn about their October get together in Melbourne, Florida.
- Southeastern H.C.S.C. Alumni Club - A fun site for JCPenney memories.
- JCPenney National H.C.S.C. Alumni Club

So, let's step back and ask, “Why are we pushing the use of Facebook?” #1 - it keeps us relevant. #2 - it's a great recruitment tool for our club. And #3 - it's just a fun way to engage with others, to share memories and what you are doing in retirement.

One last stat for you – the number one picture people post the most is FOOD followed by vacation photos.

So, yes, keep the post fun! It's more about that than anything.

Lastly, if any of our Regional Meeting Groups would like to get started with a Facebook group, I would be happy to set one up for you and turn the admin rights over to you.
Facebook Flashbacks

**Facebook Flashbacks**

**Join the Flashback fun!**
Go to the JCPenney National H.C.S.C. Alumni Club group page!

---

**William Kruder is at Texas Billmore**
What were u doing in 1996? I was the Career Sportswear Media Manager (pre internet) responsible for pages in this book; if u can believe it we did $5B in catalog back then . . . we called ourselves the biggest Region in the company 😂 lol

**Steve Strom**
What a year promoted from my first store in Hays, Kansas, to Fort Smith, Arkansas, an A box store as they were known.

**Roger Rhodes**
Store Manager Council Bluffs Iowa

**Tim Logston**
Visual Merchandise Manager Store 1049 Fox Valley, Aurora IL. (Chicago)

**Lesa Lape-Nelson**
ASM in store 1190 Lombard, IL (Chicago) followed by Women's BPM District 8310 Chicago

**Kathy McCausey**
Regional Personnel Administrator Southwest Region, we were located in Buena Park 😊

**Ron Fazio**
Home Office, ran DBS planning, satellite services, network support and execution to the stores. In addition was involved with all company wide special events including H.C.S.C. and stockholders meetings.

---

**Cathy Mills Naftel**
Vice President, Director of internal and external communications. We did DBS to the stores along with all external communications to the market

**Terry Ballard Baker**
Assistant Buyer in Women's National Brands reporting to Sharon English; Howard Hall was our DMM 😊

**Dick Lies**
Northeast Regional office (Hoffman Estates, IL.) as the Regional Personnel Administrator under Chuck Gray

**Ed Redding**
Divisional Merchandise Manager Career Sportswear, private brands including special sizes; Howard Hall was my counterpart for National Brands; Jim Hailey Was our Div 8 president.

**Phyllis Seberger**
Northeast Regional Geographic Merchandiser, Schaumburg IL., reported to Gaylord Rasmussen

**Mary Ann Jones**
Home Office, Marketing and Visual Communications Manager for the Home Division reported to Mr. Hoggatt

**Holly Howard Rial**
Store Merchandise Manager in Olympia Washington

**Daryl Eidler**
Store Manager Store 1948 Schaumburg, IL. (Woodfield Mall), retired January 26, 1996, my 60th birthday. 💙

**Rod Schweitzer**
I had two jobs in 1996 the first was Div 8 BPM in Chicago the second was store manager of store 0153, St Charles, IL

---

Add to Story
Almost half a century has passed since William M. Batten (1909-1999) became a JCPenney retiree, concluding a long and storied tenure as CEO and Chairman of the Board. “Mil,” as he liked to be called, had actively overseen JCPenney for sixteen tumultuous years, with a longevity second only to Earl Corder Sams, Mr. Penney’s immediate successor. Furthermore, outside of Mr. Penney himself, no other CEO before or since had been a JCPenney associate for a longer period of time than Mil Batten. His own Penney career touched six decades, modestly beginning in West Virginia before ending 49-years later in Midtown Manhattan, inside the company headquarters he had largely masterminded.

However, what makes Mil Batten’s impact on JCPenney so remarkable is not his length of time at the top, but what JCPenney ultimately became as a result of his dynamic vision and transformative leadership. Indeed, Albert Hughes, his predecessor and longtime mentor, remarked in 1974 that “Mil Batten is the chief architect and master builder of JCPenney as it is today.” Five decades later, many of Batten’s innovations for JCPenney are still visible across its remaining stores, from point-of-sale cash registers to anchor locations in suburban malls—the latter a shopping trend Batten recognized in the late 1950s, long before it became commonplace across the United States.

Throughout his career with JCPenney, Mil Batten was always anticipating where American retail was heading rather than complacently resting on what had worked well in the past, or even what was currently succeeding in the present. Although Batten had never been a JCPenney store manager, Albert Hughes nominated him as his own CEO successor largely due to an influential memo Batten had crafted in 1957, addressing future directions for JCPenney. In the seven pages of that memo, Batten strongly encouraged J.C. Penney to move away from the cash-only, Main Street model on which the chain had built its success, and follow booming postwar populations into entirely new markets, chiefly in freshly created suburbs or on the outskirts of established urban cities. The “future” JCPenney stores Batten was envisioning would be considerably larger than their Main Street predecessors, and
predominantly operate out of indoor shopping malls versus traditional city centers. These stores would additionally offer ample free parking, enormous sales floors, credit-purchasing, and full lines of hard as well as soft JCPenney merchandise—for a new wave of postwar consumers who were increasingly pursuing wants as opposed to just needs.

In the nearly 120-year history of JCPenney, Mil Batten is regarded as the father of its many full-line stores and shopping mall locations. Yet those stores were merely the surface of Batten's indelible impact on the company, its customers, and its many associates and retirees. His 1957 memo additionally urged J.C. Penney to enter the catalog business, embrace computer technology and data automation, incorporate lucrative financial services like insurance and banking, and launch a chain of discount stores—a full five years before the first Walmart, Kmart, or Target ever existed.

In 1958, when the Board of Directors unanimously approved Mil Batten as the company's fourth CEO, he began pursuing each course of action he had outlined in his memo, as strategic initiatives for a “future” JCPenney. Even the new logo for the company, often referred to as the “funky P,” was an initiative of Batten himself. The stylish, teal and black letter created a unifying symbol as JCPenney moved into the 1960s and beyond, with Penneys subsequently spelled out in the same font across the company’s new full-line stores, automotive centers, private label merchandise, catalogs, and brand new company headquarters. To be sure, Batten had utilized an army of dynamic associates, a team of talented executives like Oakley Evans, Ray Jordan, Cecil Wright, and Don Seibert, and Board members like Albert Hughes and Mr. Penney to assist him throughout the many transformations—but the vision, direction, and responsibility for these new Penney initiatives ultimately came from the CEO himself.

In 1962, Batten additionally gained formal approval from the Board of Directors to acquire General Merchandise Company, a mail-order retail firm out of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The acquisition of this firm and its state-of-the-art distribution center enabled JCPenney to offer its first catalog in 1963, as well as unveil Treasure Island, a two-store discount operation in Wisconsin that came with the deal. However, both the catalog and discount store initiatives were often met with strong internal resistance, on account of their significant up-front costs and perpetual drain on company profits. The JCPenney catalog eventually became a highly successful addition, though it did not show its first profit until 1971, almost a decade after the first catalog was ever printed.

Treasure Island, while beginning the same year as Walmart, Kmart, Woolco, and Target, was essentially an early superstore predecessor to the modern-day Super Target and Walmart Supercenter—unfortunately, Penney's discount operation struggled to generate profits as Batten attempted to expand the new chain and its larger-than-average stores, many of them nearly 200,000 square feet in size. By the end of the 1960s, however, Batten was able to successfully integrate the Thrift Drug chain into JCPenney, as well as open international JCPenney stores in Italy and Mexico, and joint-venture Sarma stores in Belgium. He also opened the first JCPenney locations in Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico. Tragically, Batten's first Alaskan store was completely destroyed by a 1964 earthquake—a few months after his son was working there and exactly one year after it...
opened—but he was able to rebuild a new Penneys store for Anchorage on the exact same site, one of the few downtown locations still in operation today. Additionally, his first Puerto Rico location, at 261,000 square feet, became the largest JCPenney store in the chain at the time of its 1969 opening, eventually expanding to 350,000 square feet to continue its reign as the largest JCPenney store in company history. Beginning in 1964, Mil Batten also became the first executive since Mr. Penney to concurrently hold the offices of both Chairman of the Board as well as CEO. However, he naturally expected to step down from both positions in 1969, when he turned 60 and would reach the mandatory retirement age for JCPenney executives. To Batten's surprise, his predecessor Albert Hughes, along with Mr. Penney, personally requested that he continue his leadership in both positions for five more years, until his 65th birthday in 1974. Batten agreed to the extension, and continued overseeing the various transformations he had set in motion—including phasing out the “funky P” for the iconic Helvetica logo, while searching for his own successor as Chairman and CEO, an honor that eventual went to Don Seibert.

The JCPenney Mil Batten left behind in 1974 was very different from the one he began leading in 1958, much less began working for in 1925. Sales over the time of his leadership had dramatically risen every year of his CEO tenure, from $1.4 billion in 1958 to $6.9 billion at the time of his retirement—an increase of nearly 500% that placed JCPenney second only to Sears, Roebuck among non-grocery retailers. Under Batten's watch, JCPenney stores had likewise become fixtures of American shopping malls, with 351 full-line locations covering 31 million square feet of selling space, and contributing more than $3.5 billion in 1974 revenue. And the JCPenney catalog, a completely new enterprise in 1963 that experienced considerable opposition during its unprofitable years of establishment, was now bringing in $614 million in 1974 sales, with three state-of-the-art distribution centers nationwide as it continued to expand and top $1 billion in sales just three years later.

In addition to increasing sales and profits at JCPenney, Mil Batten concurrently broke down numerous barriers for women and minorities along the way. One of his first moves as CEO was to desegregate JCPenney stores in the South, four years before the Civil Rights Act of 1964 required it, and at a time when making such a move came at great personal and professional risk. Batten additionally brought other equal opportunity initiatives into JCPenney, leading to the first Black and first woman...
store managers in the history of JCPenney. He was additionally responsible for promoting the company’s first Jewish and woman executives, as well as successfully nominating Juanita Kreps and Vernon E. Jordan to the JCPenney Board, the first woman and Black directors in the history of the company. Although Batten did not personally publicize his myriad civil rights activities, he was publicly honored by both the Anti-Defamation League and the National Urban League for his groundbreaking social justice work.

Even as a powerful and highly successful CEO, Mil Batten made a habit of setting aside two days every December to personally visit the offices of every associate at the company’s New York City headquarters. He also had no problem pointing out how just modest his own beginnings with JCPenney had actually been, at store #206 in downtown Parkersburg, West Virginia. Batten was just sixteen when he went to work for JCPenney, and as the lowest associate in the Parkersburg store, was responsible for cleaning the men’s and women’s toilets throughout his workdays. Prior to moving to Parkersburg at the age of nine, Batten had additionally suffered the stigma of being born and raised in the backwoods town of Reedy, a tiny Appalachian community barely above poverty. The one-room school in Reedy was so poor that Batten was ordered to repeat the third grade the moment he enrolled in Parkersburg, a humiliating decision that motivated him to excel as a student and a thinker, and eventually become the Student Body President of Ohio State University and the husband of Kathryn Pherabe Clark, the baby sister of the Buckeye’s star football player.

In the course of Mil Batten’s career, eight universities, including his alma mater Ohio State, awarded him honorary doctorates for his contributions to American business. He remained largely apolitical throughout his life, but personally knew every U. S. President from Eisenhower to Reagan—and two of them, Johnson and Nixon, offered Batten appointments in their administrations, respectfully as Secretary of Commerce and Ambassador to Japan. In 1976, the New York Stock Exchange even asked Batten to come out of retirement and become their CEO, at the age of 67. He would subsequently lead that organization for eight years, rescuing the Exchange from near collapse, incorporating computer technology, increasing trading volumes to exponential highs, and expanding trading opportunities for small and independent brokerage firms. As with his tenure at JCPenney, the Board of Directors at the Exchange likewise requested that Batten delay his retirement there as well, extending his leadership as CEO until 1984, when he was 75 years old.

Over the summer of 1986, as an elderly JCPenney retiree, Mil Batten made several trips back to the company headquarters at 1301 Avenue of the Americas, ostensibly to sit down with corporate historians and talk about his experiences leading and working for JCPenney. In hindsight, he had just a little more than twelve years left to live. However, even at 77, Mil Batten had not gone soft. He was still dynamically thinking about where American retail was headed, lucidly discussing the emerging intersections between information technology and commerce. “You see what’s happened to the catalog business today,” he calmly remarked as his interviewers listened. “And the end is not yet. Catalog shopping in the home—by means of the telephone or even a terminal in a person’s home—will develop and grow. What we will have in the future, I think, is more diversity, more options for people to shop. There will be a diversity of ways to shop—of the linkage between merchandise and the customer.”

Ironically, just a ten minute walk from the JCPenney headquarters and the chair where Mil Batten was seated, a recent Princeton graduate was likewise beginning to envision the very things Batten was talking about in 1986. Jeff Bezos was only twenty-two at the time and still eight years away from launching his own retail business—but when the ideas became clearer, the younger entrepreneur eventually left New York City to create his own company with a most unusual store.

David Delbert Kruger is a lifelong fan of JCPenney! In 2017, David wrote J. C. Penney: The man, the Store, and American Agriculture. David is currently writing a full-length biography of William “Mil” Batten, which he hopes to complete this year and publish in 2022.
JCPenney has been a part of my family's life for 85 years. My father Joe Gill started as a message boy in 1916, without a high school education, and worked his way up to Department Head of Women's Sleepwear and Lingerie. I joined the Company in 1953, and later two of my children worked at JCPenney, the last retiring in 2001. I was fortunate to be able to spend my entire career at JCPenney. Many of my co-workers have become lifelong friends and, thanks to this alumni group, we are able to keep in touch with a much broader group of former associates. I was honored when asked to share some of my JCPenney experience.

I was born in the small town of South Orange, New Jersey, in 1931. My future wife, Barbara, also grew up in South Orange and we attended grammar school, junior high, and high school together. We were close friends from the beginning. In 1949, we started our freshman year at college. Barbara attended the Douglass Women’s College at Rutgers University while I enrolled at the Rutgers College of Agriculture. My hope was to go into farming, but due to an injury many years earlier, riding a tractor and farming would not be a viable career path for me. With farming no longer an option, I transferred from Rutgers to Lehigh University’s College of Business.

While at Lehigh, I was elected president of the Chi Phi fraternity and played varsity lacrosse. I was fortunate to have several job opportunities when I graduated and decided to join JCPenney as a Buyer Trainee. The merchandising role appealed to me along with the performance-based promotion culture of the firm. My father had the great pleasure of working with Mr. Penney and always spoke highly of the man, the Company, and the Golden Rule value system that was the cornerstone of the Company. However, the starting salary was half of what the other companies were offering. The Dean of the business college called me to his office to discuss my future and wanted to know why I wanted to work at JCPenney for such a discounted salary. I told him that I was comfortable betting on myself. I knew that JCPenney would reward performance faster than the other companies and I saw the value in applying the Golden Rule to business. The Dean told me that the JCPenney job had the lowest starting salary of anyone in the class and that he was very disappointed in my choice. After thinking about his comments for a moment, I replied that it wasn't where I started that mattered to me – it’s where I would end up and what I could accomplish along the way. I told the Dean that I was confident in my choice and that when I returned for the reunion in 25 years, he would likely have a different opinion of my choice.

I started work in February of 1953 in the New York Office. Barbara and I wanted to get married and upon discovering that I would not be eligible to take a vacation for a while after my start date, we made the decision to get married in Naples, Florida, the...
weekend before I started work as a Merchandise Trainee.

My first assignment was in the Men's, Women's and Children's Underwear Department training to be a “Penney Buyer.” Penney buyers had the reputation of being extremely knowledgeable and professional and were expected to know everything about their lines of merchandise, down to the smallest detail. I visited factories and worked alongside the garment workers to fully understand each product and process so that JCPenney could offer its customers high quality and great value in our private label merchandise.

The New York Office was a great place to learn the business and meet people. Mr. Penney was coming to the office every day and would have lunch in our cafeteria. He was in his eighties, his eyesight was failing, and he walked with a cane. His doctors did not want him to move about without someone with him. As a result, his secretary would call young trainees, like me, and ask us to go to lunch with Mr. Penney. Mr. Penney felt he did not need anyone, so his secretary would tell him that Bob Gill called and asked if he could have lunch with him. I was fortunate to have had lunch with Mr. Penney several times each month.

I remember those lunches well. Mr. Penney was very humble, but also very confident. He was a small man with a very strong handshake, which he attributed to his time on the farm. He had a pleasant smile and a warm soft voice. He believed in hard work and expected everyone to be motivated to do better. He loved spending time at his farm in Missouri and was extremely proud of his prize cattle. He believed in the Golden Rule and wanted the Company to have a reputation of being fair, honest, and beyond reproach. He loved visiting new store openings where he would cut the ribbon and wait on customers. He would say to me, “Bob, you can tell an outstanding selling associate if you watch him fit and sell a pair of shoes. Every outstanding associate will make the sale.”

As he got older, his travel became limited, and he would only attend major events. He was well liked by the associates, and he loved to engage with them and customers. At times, the crowds would be overwhelming for him, and I acted as his bodyguard while helping him navigate crowds and keeping him steady. Over the years, I had the great fortune to develop a very close relationship with Mr. Penney and was honored to be asked by Mrs. Penney to be a pallbearer at his funeral.

In 1956, I became the buyer of Infant and Girls’ Underwear, Sleepwear, and Hosiery. At the time, the feet of children's sleepers were extremely slippery on wood and linoleum floors. My team and I realized we could deliver a better and safer product, so we designed a pattern of nonskid plastic that was fused to the sole of the sleeper foot. One year after we introduced the product, our market share exceeded 45% and today the non-skid foot is the industry standard. This was also the first assignment that I worked with a new secretary named Mary Anne Eames. During my career, we worked together for
over 25 years up to my retirement when she was my Administrative Assistant.

I was soon spending time every evening folding cotton diapers for our three young children. Disposable diapers were not on the market yet, so everyone with babies was faced with the same tedious task. Working with our two major suppliers, we designed two pre-folded diapers, one of bird’s eye fabric and one of gauze fabric and introduced them to the market. Our pre-folded diapers were an instant hit and became the industry standard for almost a decade.

In 1962, I was asked to lead a new division bringing Major Appliances, Paint and Hardware, Automotive, Sporting Goods and Furniture to 450 of our largest stores. This was a major expansion for the Company and required some different skill sets in some key areas as the product categories were new to us. We began hiring knowledgeable associates capable of buying and merchandising the new lines, training sales associates, developing fixtures and space allocations for the stores, and seeking high quality manufacturers and suppliers that could produce private label items to our exacting specifications at scale. It was imperative that everyone in the procurement process understood Penney’s view on vendor relations, conflict of interest, quality standards, and vendor entertainment since our policies and procedures were very different from others. Within the first year, we added new partners such as General Electric, Goodyear, Stanley Tool, Toshiba, Kodak, and Thomasville.

With so many new products being added, it was clear that we would need to expand the scope of our Laboratory and Testing Center to ensure our products met our exacting standards. In 1968, we received several complaints about a clock radio that had the potential to catch on fire. I met with Mr. Batten and Mr. Wright and outlined a plan to try and contact all the customers who purchased this radio. The plan called for running a newspaper ad in each market where the radios were sold showing a picture of the radio with the headline “Wanted Dead or Alive”. We issued a full recall for the product (which was a relatively new concept at the time) because it was the right thing to do. The response from our customers was incredibly positive and the recall was widely noticed and applauded. The Company was subsequently asked to participate on a governmental and industry committee to address product safety issues. I was asked to chair the committee and we recommended establishing the “Product Safety Commission” which was established and exists today.

In 1976, I was made a member of the Board of Directors and promoted to Director of Corporate Personnel, reporting to Chairman Don Seibert, replacing Andy Cumming who was retiring. As Director of Corporate Personnel, one of my responsibilities was the profit-sharing compensation program. Mr. Penney always put a very high priority on our associates and wanted them to be very pleased with their benefits. He was proud of the Company’s profit-sharing compensation program and liked the idea of a mandatory retirement age of 60. He wanted to make sure our associates could retire and enjoy their golden years. Our retirement plans were very good, but complex. I thought our associates would welcome a pre-retirement, one-on-one meeting conducted by corporate personnel as well as recently retired associates, to review and thoroughly explain their benefits to them and their spouse. I enjoyed these meetings very much because...
so many associates were surprised at how well the plan performed, and I knew that Mr. Penney would be proud of the way we took care of our people.

Our Company has always had a high standard of ethics going back to Mr. Penney and the Golden Rule. Often, he and I would talk about the role of ethics at our lunches. Our goal was to create our own “Statement of Business Ethics.” In the late 1970s, I formed a management team to study ethics in business. As we did so, more than 2,000 associates provided comments and examples of conflicts of interest and preservation of Company assets which helped shape our statement. Each associate signed the statement indicating their understanding and compliance and that document became part of the associates’ personnel file. Penney’s Statement of Business Ethics has been emulated by many US companies and we were proud to be a leader in something so important to our founder.

In 1982, I was elected Vice Chairman of the Board. In 1985, we held our H.C.S.C. Inaugural Meeting for associates that had attained a profit-sharing position. It was my privilege to host this meeting and present each associate with their H.C.S.C. pin. This meeting was especially important for me and my wife, Barbara, because I was able to give my son, Rick, and daughter, Patti, their pins. This was a unique opportunity since it was the first time a father could welcome his children into the organization. Added to that, 50 years earlier my father received his pin from Mr. Penney.

In 1990, I was elected Chief Operating Officer, the position I held until my retirement in June 1992. In those final years I was involved in selling our bank and commercial insurance companies and developing strategies to exit the Paint and Hardware and Sporting Goods Businesses.

When I retired, we sold our home in Plano and Barbara and I headed to our retirement house on Lake Sunapee in New Hampshire. It was an old house that was going to need a lot of renovations, but I am a do-it-yourselfer and needed a major project to keep me busy. During the summer of 1992, we began what would encompass four years of upgrades on the house and grounds. It became a destination home for our rapidly growing family and friends. We always enjoyed southwest Florida and many of our New Hampshire friends wintered in Naples, which we were very familiar with. We eventually purchased a condominium in Naples overlooking the Gulf of Mexico where we enjoyed spending the winter months.

As we were preparing to return to New Jersey from Naples after our first winter of retirement, Barb noticed a lump on her breast. Within a few weeks, Barbara was diagnosed with cancer of the breast and kidney, beginning what would become a 25-year fight. Our retirement plans changed drastically. I dropped my outside board commitments and devoted myself to our fight for life. We were fortunate to live in an area that had excellent medical care, including cancer treatment, and her physicians did an outstanding job of helping her lead as full a life as possible under the circumstances. We had many great years enjoying New Hampshire where we played golf, went boating with our family, and we were able to take cruises to many of the destinations we had hoped to visit. Barb fought valiantly, but after 25 years she lost her battle, and I lost my lifetime partner whom I had known for 85 years.
I have been very fortunate to have had many lunches with Mr. Penney and learn from him. Likewise, Mil Batten and Cece Wright took interest in me and spent time guiding me. I worked closely with Walt Neppl and Andy Cumming for many years and appreciated their guidance. Some of my best friends were Penney associates; Dave Binzin, Walt Neppl, John Cody, Rod Birkins, Scott Frahlich, Tom Jewell, Bill Johnson, and Don Lauer. They were all my Penney Partners.

And of course, my five children; Rick, Patti, Tom, Bobbi, and Jack. Two chose to follow me at Penney and each had a fine career until changes in their lives required leaving Penney. They all remember the nights and weekend when Dad had to work for Penney. They all appreciated the wonderful life that Penney has provided for our entire family.

As I was writing this, I kept thinking about my answer to the Lehigh Dean when he told me to turn down the job at Penney’s. I believed then, as I do now, that Penney’s would recognize performance and reward associates based on results, not length of service. I believed it then because I saw my father’s success and ability to provide his family with a wonderful life. Penney’s has done the same thing for me.

Say hello to Bob at rgbill31@me.com
I grew up as an only child in Florida, where my parents were in the dry cleaning business. We relocated quite often, which meant learning to adjust to a new environment with new schools and making new friends quickly.

A couple years after graduating high school, I met and later married a career military man stationed in nearby Jacksonville. We started a family that grew to be three sons, Chuck, Ken and Bob. My husband's career meant that he was subject to be transferred every 3-4 years. Upon transfer to Ohio, I went to work at JCPenney Store 1255 in Columbus as a management trainee. I had three promotions, running three different departments before transferring to San Bernardino, California, and a few years later to Austin, Texas.

My career eventually included moves to seven different locations, lots of travel and a growing number of responsibilities. Over my 32 years with JCPenney, however, I never lost sight of the importance of balancing my "Penney Life" with my "Family Life." It was not always easy, but when you have the trust and the support of both, as I did, it works for all involved. My primary assignments included Houston district staff, Southern California regional staff, district staff and then store manager in Northern California, Women's Marketing Programs Manager and Manager of Merchandise Specialists in the New York Corporate Office, and Regional Merchandise Manager in Southern California.

In 1988, Bob Northam, JCPenney Chief Financial Officer, asked if I would be interested in a position as Director of Investor Relations in Dallas, a job he believed was valuable in communicating Penney’s business to its investment community. Bob believed that my merchandise and stores background would provide a unique perspective when it came to explaining what was behind the "numbers." While I did have some reservations, I decided to accept the position, which as it turns out, became a turning point in my career. The position encompassed and provided an even greater understanding and appreciation for the importance of healthy business relationships, both within and outside the Penney Company.

The new position required relocating to the Corporate Office in Dallas, where I was also asked to be on the Building Planning Committee for the new headquarters building in Plano. One of my personally rewarding responsibilities included oversight and collaboration for the creation and development of the Child Care Center.

During my 12 years in Dallas at the Corporate Office, I held positions as Vice President and Director of Investor Relations, Executive Vice President and Director of Merchandise Administration, Senior Executive Vice President and Director of Personnel and Company Communications, and President of Marketing and Company Communications. The last chapter of my 32-year JCPenney career was as President of Company Communications and Corporate Image. I retired on April 1, 2000.
My Corporate Office responsibilities also included positions on the Executive Management Committee. Having reached the executive level, I was in a position to introduce initiatives with the intent of “leveling the playing field” by making diversity and the advancement of women and minorities a priority throughout the Company.

As the first woman to be promoted to many of the positions I held coming up in my career, sitting in meetings as the only woman, the issues women and minorities faced became very obvious. From the very beginning, I was fortunate to have the support, encouragement and mentoring of Chairman W.R. Howell. Programs such as “Spirit of the American Woman,” which was an initiative and marketing collaboration focused on recognizing the contributions of all women—in the Penney Company, Penney shoppers, and women everywhere—who are to be recognized for their worth, not their gender. We kicked it off with JCPenney sponsoring Lyn St. James to drive the “Spirit of the American Woman” race car in the 1992 Indy 500, a male dominated sport. She placed 11th, and won the “Rookie of the Year” award her first year. As hoped, this brought recognition to JCPenney for its effort to prioritize the positive recognition of women and minorities.

The JCPenney Home Office campus also became the home for the annual Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure which created awareness of the importance of detecting, treating and curing breast cancer.

While a JCPenney executive, I was privileged to meet many influential people who believed in my initiatives and offered their support. I was asked to speak about our diversity initiatives and “leveling the playing field” at a variety of organizations around the country, even at the Walmart Headquarters.

Some of my initiatives became policies that removed barriers for women and minorities seeking promotions and brought the Penney Company national recognition, including the Catalyst Award in 1995, which recognizes corporations for their efforts to break the glass ceiling for women. JCPenney also established the Juanita Kreps Award to recognize women who have been outstanding role models. Juanita Kreps, a JCPenney Board Member at the time, was herself “the first woman” in many of her career positions. Juanita became Duke University’s first female vice president, the first female U.S. Secretary of Commerce and the first female director of the New York Stock Exchange.

My support for diversity was not always popular, but I remained an advocate and mentor, having the support and encouragement of other influential women, such as Juanita Kreps, Barbara Jordan, Eunice Shriver Kennedy, Sally Ride, Ann Richards, and others, who were also recognized as role models and recipients of the Juanita Kreps Award.*

While I personally received recognition and awards, including my Dallas Mother of the Year Award, the most rewarding was seeing the beginning of positive change in the Company with regard to women and minorities starting to gain positions at the executive
level during my remaining years with the Company. Throughout my career, I tried to take advantage of the opportunities to learn from my predecessors, my contemporaries, those for whom I was responsible for leading in the Company as well as others with whom I engaged outside the Company. I owe much of my success to their encouragement, mentoring and support. There are far too many to mention individually, but if you read this, you will know who you are, and for that I say “THANK YOU”!

I truly believe my success during my career with JCPenney, regardless of position, is owed in part to advice I received early in my career about “Don't be afraid to get out of your Comfort Zone!!” I tried to live by this mantra and encouraged others to do the same! As a collaboration and extension of my JCPenney career, I also served on several corporate and volunteer boards, which included being the first woman to chair the National Better Business Bureau, the North Texas Commission, the Hugh O'Brian Youth Foundation, and others. I was also active in professional and civic organizations as part of my responsibility as an executive officer in the JCPenney Company.

After my retirement, I slowed down some, but continued serving on the PolyOne Corporation Board of Directors, retiring in 2010 after 16 years in a totally different industry. Chemicals! I have continued some of my volunteer activities as a member of the President's Council at Texas Health Resources-Plano, and the Assistance League of Greater Collin County, which helps clothe elementary school children in
need. I had the pleasure of working with JCPenney staff locally to establish support for an annual school year “In-store Shopping Experience”, providing clothing for up to 1,000 disadvantaged elementary school children. I also organize an auxiliary program that involves “Emily’s Place”, a nonprofit organization that provides support including care, career counseling and job placement for battered women with young children.

On a personal side, along the way, after seven years as a single mother, in 1987 while in the Regional Office in Buena Park, California, I met my now husband Darryl, then the National Sales Manager for an electronics company in Southern California. Considering that, as single parents, we both had children and busy schedules, getting married was in discussion, but went from discussion, to planning, to happening once I learned I was to relocate to the Corporate Office in Dallas. In July 1988, Darryl and I were married in Kauai, Hawaii. We made Plano our new home with my college son Bob, and Darryl’s high school daughter Heather.

We return to Kauai almost every year, having made friends with local residents and tourists like ourselves who return the same time each year as we do. Celebrating our anniversary each year with our children and grandchildren at the Beach House, our favorite restaurant on the island, is a special night for us during the two weeks.

Family has always been important to Darryl and me, so even before retirement, our trips to visit those who didn’t live in the Dallas area, or even Texas, and getting together often with those who do was a priority. For 10 years we were fortunate to gather as many as could possibly make it to an annual get together vacation in Seaside, Florida. Then, into my retirement we decided a lake house two hours away in East Texas was much easier for everyone to just come anytime!

Our retirement continues to create lots of great memories as our kids became parents, and we became grandparents, and now great grandparents. With more time in retirement, Darryl and I enjoy extended travel in Europe, sometimes with friends, sometimes just the two of us. We plan to resume going somewhere once COVID restrictions allow. We have particularly enjoyed and taken several Viking River and Ocean Cruises, including a trip to Cuba in 2018.

In 2019, we decided to share the “Travel Europe Experience” with our then 20-year old granddaughter Abigale and 23-year old grandson Preston by taking them on a 21-Day Land and Ocean Trip, starting in Rome and ending up in Barcelona, experiencing the variety of cultures along the way. It was so rewarding to “see things again, and for the first time through their eyes”!

With seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren (another on the way), and a grandson’s wedding in December, my retirement is filled with lots of love and happy days! We are fortunate in our retirement to have our health, family and friends, and I am truly thankful for my "JC Penney Life". “Life is Good!”
NOTE: Barbara Jordan was the first African American elected to the Texas Senate after Reconstruction and the first Southern African-American woman elected to the United States House of Representatives. She is remembered for her work in civil rights and for her eloquent manner of speech.

Sally Ride was an astronaut, physicist, and the first American woman in space.

Eunice Kennedy Shriver was a philanthropist and founded Special Olympics.

Ann Richards was Governor of Texas.

Say hi to Gale at galeduffbloom@gmail.com!
Jack's story goes back...way back...to 1947!! That's when his father Melvin arrived back in Oklahoma after getting a degree from the University of California at Berkley, courtesy of the U.S. Navy. Married two years earlier to his high school sweetheart Virginia overlooking the Golden Gate Bridge, Melvin joined the JCPenney Company in Enid, Oklahoma, and began a 42-year career. Jack was born three years later in 1950 as the first of four children.

After moves to Shreveport, Louisiana, and Jackson, Mississippi, in 1958 Melvin got the opportunity to manage his first store at Stewart-Lakewood Shopping Center in Atlanta, Georgia, one of the first Penney stores in the market. It didn't take him long to “employ” Jack during the summer months at 10 cents an hour (paid out of his own pocket, of course). Sorting hangars, vacuuming fitting rooms, and marking merchandise didn't seem too exciting until he was able to buy his first bicycle later that summer.

Jack’s “employment” continued each summer through a subsequent move to Virginia Beach, Virginia, in 1964. After a few more summers working in Dad's Norfolk, Virginia, store, his driver’s license allowed him to “get promoted” to the store across town at full minimum wage. First working in the stockroom, he moved on to selling shoes. Fishing the Chesapeake Bay and making the high school wrestling team filled the remaining days until he attended the University of Virginia where he continued his pursuit of wrestling and earned a degree in Business.

Upon graduation in 1972 Jack’s “second career” started in Store 1917 at Military Circle Mall in Norfolk Virginia, at that time one of the largest volume stores in the Region. With Melvin managing a soft line store across town, that made for some interesting
combine advertising meetings and fireside chats. Jack managed various departments while always expecting the inevitable call for male management to report to the Garden Center to unload a truck. “Bags of lime were the worst, especially in a suit and tie,” Jack recalls. Jack’s final year in the market was highlighted by living in a one-bedroom shack on the Chesapeake Bay, and mentoring a new trainee named Kim Pritchett, whom he taught the fine art of assortment planning on weekends. She became his bride in 1980 after he relocated to Richmond, Virginia, Store 778 as Store Operations Manager. Melvin headed to New Bern, North Carolina, to open a new store, and Kim began a new career in insurance.

In 1984 Jack had the opportunity to serve on staff as District OM/PM, District 8219, Richmond, first for Al Daggett and followed by Charlie Haygood. Getting to travel back to the Tidewater, Virginia, area where he spent many years was a treat, and the experience of district work and the interaction it gave him with Region and Home Office staff were invaluable. After an 11-month assignment back in a store as GMM, he was moved to Atlanta District 8217 as the District Personnel Manager in 1989.

Those were interesting years, first with Don Hurst and then Frank Coleman as District Managers, as the Atlanta market was on a total store commission test. Those that have managed a store can understand what that did to salary cost. They finally ended the test in 1991 and suddenly salary cost was not an issue! May of 1993 brought Jack his first Store Manager assignment in Store 1650 Florence, Alabama, working for District Manager Ray Hinkle. A memorable moment was when the ladies of the management team talked the men into presenting a fashion show, dressed as ladies, if the store exceeded the credit application goal. Needless to say, the store set a record that month.
Johnson City, Tennessee, Store 1993 was the next stop in 1995, and an opportunity to enjoy all the beauty of East Tennessee and the mountain hiking it offered. At the time it was in the top five in sales per square foot, which presented many challenges. “I’ll never forget my first day when I toured the store and found the home furnishings stockroom…up in the penthouse next to the air handlers!” In 1996, he was responsible for opening one of the first outside receiving warehouses in the company, serving the Tri Cities area (Johnson City, Kingsport, Bristol). “We quickly found out three stores cannot support such an investment.”

In 1997, Jack got the opportunity to manage Store 1320 in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, reporting to district manager Terry Nave. It was a unique store since it resides in the middle of the mall with four mall entrances. “Christmas was like watching a herd of buffalo stampeding through the store” Jack feels blessed to have followed great managers who built solid teams and he also had the support of his district managers. As well as the district managers mentioned, Jack worked with Clayton Kilgore, Buzz Corrington, Frank Ott, Bob Ricketts, Carla Finney and Paul Kuzdas.

Jack retired in April 2010 from that store, which was fortuitous timing since he was able to spend some quality time with his parents Mel and Virginia in New Bern, North Carolina, in their last few years. Fortunate to be within a few hour’s drive to his three siblings and Kim’s family, Jack and Kim have enjoyed numerous family outings hiking, camping, or boating. Recent adventures have been entertaining Kim’s 18-month old grandnephew, and with a new born grandniece’s arrival, they are looking forward to refining their “grand parenting” skills.

Retirement years have been good, with both he and Kim getting to play more golf and travel to some beautiful scenic areas (until the pandemic hit, of course). Favorites were Alaska, Oregon, and a New England cruise, with plenty of new trips in the planning. Of course, attending the SE Region H.C.S.C. gatherings is always on the calendar. Lately Kim has found a new way to apply her creativity through artistic painting. Jack has become more active in their church, assuming the leadership of the Local Missions Team which oversees financial support and encourages volunteer participation in their partner missions. Both he and Kim serve as Deacons and have been long term volunteers at the local food pantry.

Reach Jack at jjohndrow@roadrunner.com!
I grew up in Wheeling, West Virginia, and went to Central Catholic High School and then graduated from the University of Notre Dame in 1973 majoring in Marketing which certainly helped me during my 38-year career at JCPenney.

I started working for JCPenney as a Merchandise Management Trainee in Store 5 at Regency Square Mall, Jacksonville, Florida. I was fortunate to have Ben Blackwood as my store manager and Tom Hutchens as the assistant store manager to help mentor me in starting my retail career. In addition, JCPenney was known to have the best management trainee program in the retail industry for building a strong foundation in the principles of merchandising, marketing and customer service.

In the late 1970s JCPenney started a program of recruiting store merchandisers to become buyers in the New York Office. My wonderful Store 5 experience prepared me to follow my heart and in 1979 I was accepted into this program. I began my assistant buyer position as a merchandiser in Window Coverings for Catalog, which was the largest volume area for the Home Division. This experience was followed by a Catalog position in Junior Sportswear and then, a retail assistant buyer position in Women’s Blouses which was a huge volume area as well. A most memorable part of being an assistant buyer in Subdivision 282 was being closely involved in the ground breaking Halston III program in 1983. This venture made the Halston label accessible for everyday women and JCPenney was its exclusive home. Working directly with Halston himself and his unique personality in his palatial showroom in New York was certainly a big step for a guy from a pretty simple background!

In 1984 I was promoted to my first buying position which was for Junior Sportswear in our Los Angeles Buying Office. At the time, Los Angeles was known as THE major market for junior sportswear with many of...
the key suppliers and junior brands originating from LA. It was a wonderful experience working with the regional office staff in Buena Park and the district managers throughout Region 5, as we built many successful programs that also became important in other regions of the country. One highly successful program was our novelty fleece program which won the Company’s Item of the Month in November 1985 as we sold over $15 million in the 4th quarter. Amazingly, our best seller was a $26 embroidered sweatshirt that was very unique since the average price of fleece sweatshirts was under $12. Per a Los Angeles Times article from November 12, 1985, as Princess Di and Charles were touring the Springfield, Virginia JCPenney store during our “Best of Britain” promotion, “What really fascinated the royal eye, Penney officials said, were some $12-$26 pastel sweatshirts featuring assorted novelty characters.” Always knew Princess Di had great taste! In 1986, with thanks to our buying team, our suppliers and most importantly JCPenney stores, districts and regional support, I was selected as the “Buyer of the Year” for the Company. It is an honor that I will always cherish.

In 1990, I was promoted to Senior Buyer of Men’s Dress Shirts in our Dallas Home Office. This was another wonderful opportunity as JCPenney was always known as a very strong retailer of this category and fashion was beginning to become more important to the mix. My experience in LA with its fashionable retail environment really helped our team to strengthen our dress shirt business by significantly adding fashion to the assortment. In addition, we developed the Stafford Executive higher quality line of dress shirts that was also very successful. Many thanks again to Tom Hutchens, Director of Merchandise for the Company, and Ray Pierce, President of the Men’s Division, for their support in building this business.

In 1992, I was promoted to Divisional Merchandise Manager of Junior Sportswear, followed in 1995 by Divisional Merchandise Manager for Private Brand Merchandising in Product Development.

In 1998, I was appointed Divisional Merchandise Manager of Bedding and Bath which perennially produced a great balance of basics and fashion that positioned JCPenney as a leading retailer within the industry. Our JCPenney towel was the #1 towel in the industry and we were dominant in sheets, towels, bed pillows and decorative bedding. Our Private Brand merchandise was the best value in the industry with great quality, in addition to brands such as Chris Madden and Cindy Crawford that added additional style and customer recognition. In 2006, we reached $1 Billion in sales in Retail Bedding and Bath in addition to over $1 Billion in our Catalog business! We were fortunate to have many experienced and strong buyers and mentors to help build such a successful business including Charlie Chinni, President of the Home Division, who provided great direction in merchandising and marketing throughout the division.
I must admit that following my heart and focusing my retail career on the buying side of the business was the right one for me, but the stores, districts, regions, merchants and suppliers were incredible partners throughout my career. Strong teamwork built successful results. One of our best programs was our “Winning Together” program in support of the Company’s initiative that year. The Bed and Bath recognition program during this time was built around the passion, energy and determination that the sport of hockey delivers. Hockey is a sport that I love, so individual “Winning Together” hockey pucks were awarded for outstanding performance and effort each month. A “Winning Together” hockey stick was awarded each month to the best performing Merchandise Action Team (MAT) team. And a Stanley Cup was awarded with each individual’s name engraved on the Cup for the year’s best performing MAT team. After all, retail is supposed to be fun!

Always planning to retire at 60, I did so on December 31, 2011. Retirement has been incredibly wonderful and, like many others, travel has been a significant part of our leisure time. My wife Tona, who I met at JCPenney, and I both love to travel. Our favorite place to visit is Italy, of course, with my Italian descent. The scenery, food, wines, history and people are so amazing throughout the country. Whether it’s the beautiful Northern Lake region, Tuscany, Amalfi, Puglia, Sicily or others, Italy is a very special place for us. Our other favorites include New Zealand, Scotland, Switzerland, Canada and the beaches of Mexico.

Like many others, we have had some very unique and incredible experiences during our travels. Most memorable, by far, was renewing our wedding vows on our 25th anniversary on the beautiful Amalfi coast surrounded by the Mediterranean Sea and spectacular cliffs in the small quaint town of Praiano.

Other unique adventures would include:
- A 4-hour dog sled ride through the beautiful Canadian Rockies. I was driving the sled of eight Huskies in very cold weather while my lovely wife, Tona, was comfortably sitting in the sled with many warm blankets keeping her warm and toasty. It truly was amazing sledding through a Winter Wonderland. One of our favorite things that we’ve ever done.
- Ringing in the New Year in 2013 by actually snowshoeing to a real igloo on the grounds of the spectacular Fairmont Hotel in Lake Louise and toasting our party of 12 all inside the spacious igloo at midnight!
- Visiting the filming locations of the Lord of the Rings movie in New Zealand including spending time in one of the Hobbit houses in Hobbit Town!
- Attending the powerful and breathtaking Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo performance at the stunning Edinburgh Castle in Scotland! This is a must see unique and memorable annual celebration of military tattoos performed by international military bands with musicians and artistic performance teams from around the world during Edinburgh’s summer festival in August.

Another very surprising, but wonderful experience, was touring through the country of Poland (yes Poland!) with a long-time close friend of ours, Angela, who retired to her home city of Warsaw. Angela and her family were Polish royalty and very knowledgeable about the history and landscape of their beloved country. The hardships during the
Profile

Steve and Tona in New Zealand

Snowshoeing in Lake Louise, Canada

Tona and Steve at a Dallas Stars hockey game

Hobbit Town in New Zealand

Tona and Steve in Scotland
Second World War were devastating to their basic existence and all was lost. However, the pride and resiliency of the determined Polish people enabled them to completely restore the beauty of their country that exists today. We were blessed to have such a wonderful and knowledgeable guide share with us her love of the Poland of today.

We visited one of the most fascinating places in the world, the huge Wieliczka Cathedral built underground in the salt mines near the beautiful city of Krakow. Not only has it been a working mine for centuries, but the miners have created awesome chambers, chapels, and halls within the mine filled with art literally carved with salt! While Poland may not be on the top of many people's list, it is a very unique and educational experience, especially with its history, but also offers spectacular mountain resort towns on the border with Slovakia and beautiful seaside resorts on the Baltic Sea. You would be pleasantly surprised.

We also travel extensively throughout the United States enjoying the beauty of our own country with special interest in the wine areas of Napa Valley in California and Willamette Valley in Oregon, the Rocky Mountains in Colorado and various national parks.

We spend a great deal of time with our two grandsons Caleb and Reid, ages 4 and 8, who live nearby and are always up for a fun time and new adventures. There is nothing better than being a grandparent. We have two daughters, Christen who lives in Dallas and Stephanie who lives in Southern California.

In addition, I am very active and spend a great deal of time volunteering at our church and in directing monthly outreach programs for our service to the community in helping those in need. Golfing is also a fun and frustrating part of my weekly activities. And yes, we are crazy dog people, with a love for Chocolate Labrador Retrievers, who in turn show their love and loyalty every day.

I do participate in many of the H.C.S.C. activities that are planned in the Dallas area. Having started my career in Jacksonville, I have attended the H.C.S.C. Southeastern Regional Meeting Group trips in the past few years sharing fun times with people who I started with nearly 50 years ago in Store 5 and many others in the region. I would also like to sincerely thank the many store, district and regional managers from all five regions and the Home Office that I had the pleasure of working with for many years in providing merchandise from my many different buying and merchandising positions. Your support was incredible!

My career at JCPenney provided me the opportunity to do something that I loved to do for 38 years. The people, whether in stores, districts, regions or the Home Office made the Company a very special and unique place to work and to share great times. We have all built many long-lasting relationships with people we worked with and have been blessed with this opportunity.

Say hi to Steve at stevejebbia@gmail.com!
Mr. Penney’s comments as told by our alumni...

**Terry Prindiville**
Southwest RMG

While working in the downtown San Francisco store, Mr. Penney visited us on a busy Saturday. He just came into the store on his own. I was the assistant manager at the time and the store manager was not in at the time. The downtown store was six floors plus the basement. We were the largest store in the Company at the time. Before coming to the main floor, I called the store manager and told him about Mr. Penney’s arrival. Mr. Penney visited each floor and talked to our customers. If they were not carrying a Penney bag, he approached the customer and asked if he could help. Finally, Store Manager Wayne Reinhold arrived and told Mr. Penney he was working the night shift. Mr. Penney was a great example for the whole team. We all got to meet him and appreciated his example. This happened in the 1960s.

**Jerry Gusewelle**
Southeast and Southwest RMGs

My grandfather Vern Robert Gusewelle worked in Hamilton, Missouri, for Mr. Penney. He and my grandmother stayed with him while Grandfather worked at the store. Later on when Grandfather came to Little Rock to run the downtown JCPenney store, Mr. Penney stayed with my grandfather. They got along well.

On a side note, my father was in New York and had to go get Mr. Penney. He introduced himself and was called out by Mr. Penney because he failed to mention that his father was Vern Gusewelle. He said, “Don’t you remember when I stayed in your house when you were a boy?” He really liked Grandfather.
Don Jordan
North Central RMG

I began my 42-year career with JCPenney in October of 1950 in Jefferson, Iowa. Our store manager got a call one day in 1952 stating that Mr. J. C. Penney was to deliver the major address at the National Dairy Congress Convention at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa. The call was an invitation to the management people in the surrounding area stores to join him for dinner before his speech. So, about 30 of us met him in an adjoining private room for the meal accompanied by a little business pep talk. Imagine how thrilling it was for a 20-year old to be in the presence of this world-renowned retailing giant. We also got to hear him deliver his speech in the main convention center.

Fast forward to 1970 and my first national convention as manager of our Rushville, Illinois, store. It was held at “The Greenbrier” in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia. Much to our surprise, my wife and I were getting on an elevator and the only two occupants were Mr. Penney and his health assistant. During that second meeting with him, we chatted about our first meeting. His memory still sharp at 94, Mr. Penney assured me that he remembered that first occasion, oh so many years prior. Keep in mind that this was just a few months before his death in February of 1971. These are fond memories of my career with JCPenney and my 89 years on this earth.

William Wright and Bob Milleville
Indiana RMG

The Indiana Regional Meeting Group recently honored William Wright, Jr., and Robert (Bob) Milleville for attaining Century Club status with the H.C.S.C. Club. William and Bob shared their stories about meeting Mr. Penney during their careers.

William Wright, Jr., recalls that while working in Indianapolis in early ‘60s as a Shoe Department Head, he was asked to attend a meeting in New York City to talk about improving shoe business for the Company. Two other Shoe Department heads were also asked to attend. When the meeting started, Mr. Penney came in and introduced himself to all. He had coffee with them and chatted for a while then left. He was very cordial and personable with all.

Robert (Bob) Milleville worked in Dubuque, Iowa, for Store Manager Herman Lott. Mr. Penney came to visit the store for nearly a week during the ‘60s. Mr. Lott was good friends with Mr. Penney. The store was moving to a new location during the same week. On grand opening day, Mr. Penney spent all day greeting guests, customers and signing autographs. About mid-afternoon Bob asked him if he would like to have a chair. He looked at Bob and said, “Maybe in about 10 years, but not now.”

Bob also recalls touring the store when Mr. Penney saw a large two-wheeler standing in the corner of the stockroom. He asked if anyone used it and Bob explained no one could handle it because of the size. Mr. Penney said he could use it to move his large flower pots at home. The tour went on as normal and nothing else was said. About a week after the tour, Bob wrapped up the two-wheeler and sent it to Mr. Penney.
A lot has happened with the relocation of Mr. Penney’s statue since our March issue of Partners.

**STATUE RELOCATION**
The City of Kemmerer polled its citizens asking for their input about the location of the statue. It was decided that the statue will be placed at the lower part of the triangle of land that runs in front of the Mother Store. The statue will be clearly visible as one enters the city from the main road into town. A bronze plaque recognizing donors will be created. In addition, directional and information signs will be developed pointing out the store and the J.C. Penney Homestead and Museum.

The statue will be dedicated on Saturday, August 28, 2021. The celebration will be part of a new annual festival called the J.C. Penney Golden Rule Days in Kemmerer. Steve Strom, 2nd Vice President for the club, has been working with Brian Muir, Kemmerer City Administrator. Using the skills he developed as Special Events Manager for the Chicago market, Steve is helping Brian with public relations and planning and managing the dedication event. Kudos to Steve for his support. We will have a report on the dedication in the winter issue of Partners!

**FUNDRAISING**
The JCPenny National H.C.S.C. Alumni Club is proud to announce that $7,002 has been raised thanks to the generosity of members, active associates and even customers! Altogether, including local donations from Kemmerer businesses and residents, over $14,500 of the $15,000 goal has been raised. Any funds raised over the goal amount will be used for ongoing maintenance of the statue.

The donations often included charming notes in which members wrote why they were contributing. Excerpts from those notes are included in this issue of Partners. One of the cleverest donations was from W.R. and Judy Howell…their contribution was for $1902.

The Board of the JCPenny National H.C.S.C. Alumni Club and the City of Kemmerer are grateful to and thank all the club members, associates and friends of the Company who donated to the campaign.
STATUE RELOCATION DONORS

The JCPenney National H.C.S.C. Alumni Club
Robert Adams
Kathryn Atkins
Daphne Avila
Deryl Benz
Mary Alice Box
Jane Rogers Brown
Gwen Brucker
Robin and John Caldwell
Ann Mellon Campbell
Pat Carberry
Steve and Patrice Cason
Kathi Child
Don and Barbara Christensen
Thomas Clarke
Pat Conley
Amanda Cranfill
Stuart Dunkel
Phil and Bunny Esch
Carol Farquhar
Joanne Feite
Jana Fettig
Margaret Filingeri
Edward Foster
Linda Franco
Rod Franz
Karen Ehni Gatreaux
Ida Gephart
Diana Gray
John Gresham
Thomas Griffo
Joel Hennessee
Lynn Henrich
Bruce Hill
W. R. and Judy Howell
Tom Jewell
Mary Kemp
Jim and Gay Ann Kiser
Al Ladwig
Gordon and Ginny Lindsey
Richard Marricle
Woody McPike
Betty Boyd Meis
Harold Monroe
Jim and Pat Oesterreicher
Richard and Betty Peyer
Debra Piorkowski
Terry and Kay Prindiville
Nancy Reichs
Eugene Renner
Hank Rusman
David M. Schultz
Jim Schwaninger
Jen Serra
Jeannette Siegel
Harry Smart
Marilyn and Russ Willour
Sharon Winkle
“My husband, John, and I are JCPenney retirees, both serving the Company for 33+ years each, most recently at the former Home Office in Plano, TX. We were sad to learn of the Company leaving its Home Office and that Mr. Penney’s statue was leaving Plano. However, we can think of no finer place for it to permanently reside than Kemmerer, WY.”

Sincerely, Robin Caldwell

“As a long-time JCPenney Associate and for 25 years a member of the retirees’ HCSC Club, I am glad to have the opportunity to make a contribution to the City of Kemmerer to help support the move of Mr. Penney’s statue back to “where it all began”. I have always been proud to have been associated with JCPenney and to have had the good fortune to meet Mr. Penney early in my career there. And a number of years back my wife and I were thrilled to visit Kemmerer and the “Mother Store”---a trip of a lifetime. Also, I am happy to have had a small connection to the making of the sculpture itself, introducing New York sculptor Greg Wyatt to our senior management in Plano, TX. He had previously designed and cast our miniature JCPenney Golden Rule Award sculptures presented to many hundreds of community volunteers across our nation. I’m glad to see Mr. Penney going home.”

Sincerely, Hank Rusman

“JCPenney associate---now 90 years old---35 years with JCPenney. My father 38 years. My brother 14 years. Dad and I both knew Mr. Penney. Wonderful his statue is now in Kemmerer.”

Tom Jewell

“My wife and I are happy to contribute to the fund covering the cost of transferring the J.C. Penney statue from Plano to Kemmerer. As a retiree of JCPenney, I am happy to see the statue will find a new home in the town where the whole JCPenney story got started.”

Sincerely, Gordon Lindsey

“Dear Kemmerer Citizens: Thank you for welcoming Mr. Penney “back home”! Judy and I will always admire and respect Mr. Penney for his enormous and unselfish leadership not only at JCPenney but throughout our country. Stay safe and enjoy each and every day.”

Warmest regards, W.R. Howell
“I had a 35-year career with JCPenney and am a member of H.C.S.C. I have visited Kemmerer three times.”

Richard Peyer

“Hi there! I started with JCPenney Store 1477 Little Rock, Arkansas, on 8/2/1965. My starting salary was $425 per month---Gives me great pleasure to donate it to the Statue Relocation fund---least I can do. Have not been to Kemmerer since the early 1970s---seeing the Mother Store and home was a great experience.”

Best personal regards, Stuart Dunkel


Gene Renner

“Retired manager from JCPenney in Fredericksburg, VA.”

Harry Smart

“Great to hear that you are saving the statue of Mr. Penney. I worked in JCPenney’s Construction Services Division for 41 years---including on the building of the Plano office. Glad to be able to help in some small part.”

Lynn Henrich

“My husband worked for JCPenney for 38 years. I am happy to contribute to the statue fund.”

Carol Farquhar

“My husband, Don, began working at JCPenney in 1960 in Manhattan and retired in December 1998 in Plano, TX. Don and I are members of HCSC and are pleased that other members are also donating to this project. Don had several meetings in Mr. Penney’s New York Office and I also had the privilege of meeting him! He was a fine Christian gentleman. We and our children were able to see Mr. Penney’s statue in the new Plano office building.”

Sincerely, Barbara Christensen
In the September 17, 1970 issue of The New York Times, the Nobel laureate economist Milton Friedman published an essay that has had huge consequences for American business. He argued that a corporation had no social responsibilities apart from one: “…to use its resources and engage in activities designed to increase its profits so long as it stays within the rules of the game, which is to say, engages in open and free competition without deception fraud.”

The essay took the business world by storm. It was the foundational document for the mindset that corporations had one and only one duty: to enhance the return on investment for its owners/shareholders. Many corporations were to make that not only their implicit, but also explicit goal.

How do you increase the shareholder’s return? Corporations adopted a number of tactics. One way to increase sales and lower expenses seemed to be mergers and acquisitions (often exercised as hostile takeovers). Another was to redirect retained earnings not into new research or capital investment, but to buy back shares (thus increasing the value of the remaining shares). A third way (and often the most used) was to reduce expenses so that those that remained directly contributed to sales and profits. This was the rationale for a range of expense reductions from force reductions (through layoffs and early retirements), efforts to roll back unions, elimination of charitable contributions to communities, and abolition of pension plans.

We are now beginning to see that the Friedman doctrine had a number of significant consequences. Many businesses certainly made their operations more efficient. Many mergers created stronger businesses than the merged companies could have been as independents. And a lot of shareholders as well as business executives became richer people.

But the Friedman doctrine has also led to growing income disparity between business executives and lower-level working people where income growth has been anemic. Layoffs and abolition of pension plans, as well as cutbacks in benefits, have embittered many working families. This in turn has fueled widespread public distrust of big business and disdain for elites. We see the fruit of this in the immense polarization of American society today.

I often wonder how James Cash Penney and Earl Sams might have responded when Milton Friedman published his views. I think I have a good idea. They expressed their viewpoint quite clearly in 1913 when the Penney Company published its philosophy of business. We call it The Penney Idea.

The Penney Idea came to birth at a critical transition point for the Company. The Company had been founded upon the principle of partnership. But the rapid growth of the Company meant that the Company needed access to more capital. The investment world did not fully understand the unusual partnership principle that Mr. Penney had used to grow his Company. The Company needed to adopt the more conventional structure of a corporation.
But Penney and Sams were deeply concerned that incorporation might deaden the growth momentum of the Company, which was grounded in the partnership principle. So they created the HCSC Partnership structure. They also adopted a statement of the Company’s seven operating principles, which the Company came to call The Penney Idea.

A concern with profit was certainly one of the seven principles. It was stated in principle number two: To expect for the service we render a fair remuneration and not all the profit the traffic will bear. Mr. Penney regarded profit as an important measuring rod. It told managers how well a store or the Company was fulfilling its purpose.

But profit-making was not the Company’s purpose. Its purpose was stated in principle number one that stood at the top of the list. That was: To serve the public, as nearly as we can, to its complete satisfaction. Notice the choice of words: To serve the public.... Ultimately the Company was a service industry, serving primarily the public, not its owners.

Also significant was principle number seven, which as last in the list, gave it the position of greatest rhetorical emphasis. It was: To test our every policy, method, and act in this wise: “Does it square with what is right and just?” In Penney’s and Sams’ viewpoint, the Company would be a fundamentally ethical corporation. That stance then placed a qualification on the pursuit of profit. It would not be all the profit the traffic will bear. The pursuit of profit would need to be one that is right and just.

In effect, The Penney Idea extends its partnership principle to its whole way of conducting business. The Company would conduct itself not just as a partnership among its profit-sharing managers, but as a partnership in its dealings with customers, associates, suppliers, and the communities it served. The well-being of all would be a part of the Company’s decision making.

This viewpoint is a direct challenge to the mindset of Milton Friedman. It sees business serving not just its owners/shareholders only. It sees business serving a whole community, a community that certainly includes investors, but also customers, employees, suppliers, and the geographical community in which the business operates. Partners have rights and privileges, but also obligations to one another.

For Penney and Sams these principles were not sentimental, rhetorical words. They were meant to govern decision making. The clearest example of this comes from 1923. In that year store manager Al Hughes in Eureka, Kansas, achieved a remarkable profit for his store. He expected high praise from the New York Office. Instead he received a letter from Sams taking him to task because his store had been “too profitable.” There is a certain service we owe to our community, wrote Sams, and it is one of the most fundamental services that we want to give, which is merchandise at a fair profit. It is a totally unexpected response from a Company president, but it reflects that mindset of Penney and Sams as they envisioned the business. There is no stronger reinforcement for principles than when people practice what they preach.

This philosophy of business worked exceptionally well for the Penney Company. The years of Penney’s and Sams’ leadership saw astounding growth for the Company. The Penney name became one of the most trusted names in American retailing. It ended up producing an extraordinary return to the Company’s owners, its partners and shareholders.

In later years, long after Penney’s and Sams’ passing, some Penney associates may have questioned whether The Penney Idea was still a valid guide for business in a vastly changed retail climate from Penney’s and Sams’ Mil Batten believed it still was. Batten certainly believed in change. He led many in the Company. But in an oral history interview in 1986, Batten reflected at length on the Penney Company that he had led so well as the Company’s fourth Chairman. One of the great strengths of the Company, he said, was its distinctive corporate culture, unique in corporate America. It was a culture grounded in those principles that are expressed in The Penney Idea. That vision of retailing was the Penney heritage.
I remember when...

The Hat Story
from Bob Gill

I had been working in the New York Office for a few months when Mr. Fox, the head of our department, asked me to go to lunch. We took the elevator and when we reached the lobby, we stopped and waited. As associates got off the elevator, they would kindly greet Mr. Fox. After a while, we walked across the street to the New Yorker for lunch.

During lunch, Mr. Fox asked me, “Bob, did you notice anything special about the people getting off the elevator?” I thought about it and responded that they were all very friendly and polite.

Mr. Fox replied, “That’s true, but did you notice anything else?”

When I did not reply, Mr. Fox said, “Every man who got off that elevator who had a job you would want was wearing a hat. When we are finished with lunch, we are going to the store to buy you a hat.”

After a while, Mr. Fox said, “Bob, there’s something else. You have a crewcut. That is fine for the football field, but not for the business world. You will be meeting with older men. They are not comfortable with crewcuts. You need to let your hair grow.”

Well, I knew my hair. I had cowlicks and my hair would not look good grown out. After thinking about it, I told Mr. Fox, “I understand about the hat, but about the hair, I am not going to grow my hair. If that means I need to leave the Penney Company, I am prepared to do it today.”

Mr. Fox paused and said, “Well, I feel stronger about the hat than about the hair.”

I wore my crewcut my entire career.

The “Devil”
from Jack Johndrow

My dad Melvin Johndrow was a career JCPenney manager. Along the way, he developed a nickname of “The Devil!” It’s true that he had a mischievous smile, but that was not how he got the nickname. He would call to speak to his store manager and office friends. When he called to speak to his store manager friends, the receptionist would always ask who was calling. Since that was a formality he never employed in his store, he would answer “The Devil.” The name stuck!

Melvin Johndrow in 1960 (aka, The Devil)
244 or Regional Manager
from Debbie Piorkowski

My name is Debra Piorkowski, a.k.a., Debbie P. My role was a pilot test position---a District Trainer in District 8112, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. I was conducting a meeting one day for 244 Merchandising Assistants, reviewing RMM4 reports, discussing Million Dollar Jewelry prospecting plans, and finding solutions to 244 managing issues. A tall gentleman came in late, took a seat in the back of the room and just observed, taking notes for several hours. I thought, to myself, wow, he couldn't even arrive on time for his own 244 meeting.

My team of District 8112 244s were very vocal. So, during a break, I spoke to the young man and asked him what he thought about the meeting. He said it was eye opening. Now mind you my 244s worked for store managers who were mavericks, like Walt Dishman, Eric Logsden, Fred Zumpano, Ed Michaels, Bill Fitzgerald, Chuck Glorioso, to name a few. I asked him his name and what store he was from. He said my name is Tom Ashmore and I am the new Region 1 President. (SAY WHAT???)

On my break, I flew into my District Manager’s office, Arlene Phillips, and told her about my guest. She said, “No, he is arriving next week in time for operational reviews. A Regional President doesn’t do an unannounced visit!”

I needed to take responsibility, so at the end of the meeting I met Mr. Ashmore outside and said, “Sir I take full responsibility for this meeting.” He looked me in the eyes and said, “So if I am going to fire anyone, it would be you?”

“Yyyeeesss, Sir.” That night I updated my resume.

In a few years, Mrs. Phillips was promoted and my new District Manager was Jerry Remaley. Then it happened, I was promoted to Region 1 Trainer. A few years later Region 1 closed and the Ten Market was formed.

Our Ten Market team members---Robyn Faith, Sam Pulgini, Jim Skopkowski, Ralph Parkman, Denny Adelman, Lydia Thompson, Barry Stewart, Mike Boyleson and I---were moving to Dallas. We moved into the Park Central office building and The Ten Market was established and lasted until 2000.

I was then promoted to Women’s Division training manager, reporting to Nick King; then Operations Furniture Training Manager, reporting to Roger Wolfe; followed by Fine Jewelry Training Coordinator, reporting to Henry Juvers; and, finally promoted to Custom Decorating Corporate Training Manager reporting to Ron Brown.

In my 38 years with JCPenney. I loved working for this great company. I established a lot of relationships, that turned into long time friendships. The Pittsburgh family still meets every year for the holidays.

The Ten Market stands out in my mind. I felt it was the best time in my career. And Mr. Ashmore, I would work for him anytime---great leader, intimidating, but I learned a lot from him.

WOW!! What a ride!
I remember when...

Kemmerer
from Richard Peyer

These photos are from our third visit to Kemmerer, Wyoming, and each one was an emotional trip back in time to the beginnings of our founder. Even in today’s tough days for our Company, I am still proud to have spent 35 years with the Company I worked hard for and that treated me great.

The first picture was taken in the summer of 2017. Standing with me inside the Mother Store is the store supervisor, Penny. She was very proud to have that name working for Penney’s.

The Mother Store is on the corner of the town square, actually more of a triangle. I understand that Mr. Penney’s statue will be located on the triangle.

The third picture hangs in the current store and is of the first store when it originally was open for business with Mr. Penney. If you stand on the front porch of his home you have about a 50-yard walk straight ahead to Store 1.

Going to Kemmerer is worth the effort. You learn about the earliest history of the Company and Mr. Penney’s life from knowledgeable docents who staff the Homestead and Museum. The citizens of Kemmerer are proud to call it the home of the Penney Company.

Halston
from Steve Jebbia

The main thing that I remember was how palatial and over-the-top Halston’s showroom was. It was on a very high floor on one of New York’s huge skyscrapers with a spectacular view of the city, which I’m sure many other high-end designers had similar views. I clearly remember his desk being sooooooo long and very beautiful. While we talked business, he would sit right in the center of this desk with a couple of his guys flanked right beside him on both sides. It was impressive!
The Two Best Things

from John Caldwell

The two best things happened to me at JCPenney!

First, Robin Morrison! Robin Morrison and I met in the JCPenney Banking Department at 1301 Avenue of the Americas in New York. She was Assistant Manager of Banking and I was Cash Manager. In 1987, we went on the JCPenney sponsored tours of Dallas, looked at 30 houses and bought our first home in Plano, Texas. It was an awakening after living in Manhattan apartments for many years. The first month in Texas, our Home Depot spending almost equaled our mortgage! We were married in 1988 and have one son, Robert. He went to JCPenney Home Office daycare. It was like the dry cleaners, you drop him off in the morning and pick him up in the afternoon. Robert went to Plano schools and then graduated in 2016 from the University of Texas in Austin, where he still is! Thank goodness for Facetime!

Second, in the 1980s, JCPenney carried major appliances and electronics. Although they added to our sales, they subtracted from our profit. Both the margins and turnover were low. So, we had a lot of money tied up in unproductive assets. I prepared an online worksheet/program for each individual full line store. I believe there were about 450. Each store had their sales and profit history by business entity (dresses, jewelry, suits, major appliances, etc.). We asked them to plan their sales by entity for the next three years to maximize their profit. 90% of the stores eliminated major appliances and electronics. We had senior management do the same thing looking at JCPenney by entity. They also chose to eliminate major appliances and electronics. Bottom up actually agreed with top down! It was amazing! We then dropped major appliances and electronics. Everyone understood and agreed!

Coffee shops in our full line stores

from Ray Hiza

If you worked in the store, you could not sit down and have your coffee without ordering a piece of our famous Homemade Cheesecake.

Back in the ‘70s I was working in Customer Food Facilities in the New York Office as the Department Operations Manager. One day Ed Jones, a Company attorney, appeared in my office with a situation he needed help on. “Ray, a customer in California is suing JCP because we claim our cheesecake is homemade on the menu. How can I respond to her to make this go away?”

I looked at him and said, “Ed, we have a bigger problem.”

“What’s that, Ray?”

“There’s ... No Cheese ... in our cheesecake. It’s a dry mix that comes out of a box from General Mills. We fold in whip topping back in the kitchen before serving.”

As his face turned white, he left my office stating, “What would Mr. Penney think ... I’ll take care of it.” On the next menu printing, we took off the Homemade.
My JCPenney Story

from Edith Wiggers

I came to America from war-torn Germany in 1950. As a young child at the age of nine, I learned the new language by osmosis. There was no special help for me at school in the little town we had moved to—Catskill, New York. After two years, we moved to the Bronx in New York City.

I graduated from William Howard Taft High School in 1960 in the Bronx. There were 4000 students. I had taken secretarial training and business courses and got special awards at graduation, with 1000 students graduating. Those awards probably helped me get my first job with JCPenney in Manhattan, then located on 34th Street where they had all the corporate office staff in a 17-story building, including Mr. James Cash Penney.

I was hired to work in the Education and Communications Division with Dr. Newel Comish as our boss. Here training films were produced for all the stores. My boss, Kitty Breen, would call me into her office and say, “Edith, take this down.” And I did, with the Pitman shorthand I had learned in high school. I would then type this up and it would be turned into scripts for the training films shown in all the JCPenney stores.

To work in the corporate office, we were required to read Mr. Penney’s life story—with his beginnings in Kemmerer, Wyoming. What a life he lived. I remember reading that he had gone bankrupt three times before he became successful.

When Mr. Penney had his 90th birthday, we had a big celebration at an event center. Every employee in the corporate office building was invited to come and join him for this occasion. The birthday cake was wonderful, and hearing him speak was a delight for all of us. I always remember that he made a big point of sharing this thought: “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”

In the evenings, I was going to college. After a year of working for JCPenney, I wanted more education. I was accepted at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, in the spring of 1961. That fall I headed west to get more education in business and secretarial studies.

Jane Gilmour, the manager of the JCPenney Corporate Personnel Department, kept in touch with me. She said she would have a great position available for me if I chose to return to New York City. I did return after a year since I had a sweetheart in New York City and I wanted to give that relationship a chance.

When I returned, at the age of 21, I was offered the position of executive secretary to the executive in charge of Store Organization, Manpower Planning and Salary Cost Control for the Company and its 2200 stores. My boss was Basil Cooney. By then there were stores in Puerto Rico, Hawaii and Alaska.
Mr. Cooney did a lot of traveling to determine the cost of living where a new store would be built—the cost of homes, food prices, and the size of store the community could support—ranging from AAA to J stores. His trips would determine salaries, size of stores and needed positions.

While working for Basil Cooney, a skyscraper was built—45 floors—all of it housing the corporate offices of the JCPenney Company. There was NO store in Manhattan. This building was on Avenue of the Americas and 51st Street. Here were the executives, the buyers, the Accounting Department, the Personnel Department and all other needed departments.

I remember at the time there were Zone Managers for the five zones of the country. We were always communicating with them by phone, by letters, and they'd make many trips to New York City for meetings. Munn Wood, Verne Edwards and Hugh Compton are three of the names I remember.

My office was on the 41st floor. I took the high-speed elevator with the first stop being the 35th floor. An elevator man, in uniform, was in charge of getting us to our desired floor. I would see Mr. Penney on the elevator and got to know him from our pleasant elevator chats. His office was on the 45th floor. One day his secretary offered to show me his office. Very evident on his desk was his Bible. Mr. Penney was a very religious man.

I will never forget something I learned about Mr. Penney while working at the corporate office. Executives wanted to hire a particular individual who came highly recommended. They suggested Mr. Penney take him out to dinner—which he did. Food was ordered and good conversation took place. The food arrived. The job applicant took the salt and pepper shakers and generously seasoned his meal before ever tasting the food. The next day the executives who were anxious to hear Mr. Penney’s opinion heard Mr. Penney say, “Anyone who takes action before understanding a situation is not someone I want to have working for this company.”

Many of the executives lived in suburbs of New York City—out on Long Island, in Westchester and others. They would take trains to work and it would take 1 ½ hours to get to work and the same amount of time to return home. The executives working with my boss would tell me that their children were asleep when the left for work and when they returned home—they’d only see their children on weekends.

I worked at the corporate office until January 1966. By then I had married (June 27, 1964) and we were expecting our first child in April 1966. I wanted to be a full-time mother. I had many learning experiences from my years at JCPenney which helped me in many ways in my life as I raised our five daughters.
I remember when...

Halston
from Karen Lindaman

In 1978 I was lucky enough to be transferred from our JCPenney store in Westland, Michigan, to what was then called the New York Office (NOT “Home Office”), probably because at the time JCPenney had several buying offices. Being able to participate in developing some of the Halston III merchandise is a fun memory to have from my 10 years in the New York Office. It almost beats out my being able to meet Cary Grant while being an assistant buyer in Cosmetics, but that is another story! In 1982, I was in my third assistant/associate buyer position in Women’s Accessories which included belts, scarves, wraps, cosmetics cases, sunglasses, and other odds and ends! Joann Massimino was our buyer then.

The Halston III line debuted in JCPenney stores in 1983. But, of course, we were working on it long before that. Our buying team worked on Halston III belts and scarves and this was a BIG deal for sure. As an assistant buyer, I did not work directly with Halston, only our buyers did that! But, boy, did we grill Joann whenever she came back from a meeting with Halston in his glamorous 5th Avenue high rise office! We HAD to hear everything he said and did.

I remember a lot of back and forth with our suppliers, our office and Halston’s office. We had many short deadlines and the Halston III line took priority over everything else for sure. We had our suppliers hopping. I remember it as both an exciting and a stressful time. Our suppliers were pretty stressed out as well, but very responsive, as things were happening FAST!

While we were getting the merchandise ready for the store rollout deadline, we had to provide samples constantly for Halston himself to approve. Also, we had to get the merchandise samples through our own JCPenney Quality Control, get the store and catalog packaging and labeling approved, and more. It was a LOT of balls in the air at one time.

On top of this we were preparing for the runway show of the line and a gala dinner at a very special evening event at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. Everything had to be ready and RIGHT! We “lowly” assistant buyers and others could not attend the dinner and show, but we did get the opportunity to be ushers at this event. As I recall, we were all wearing one of the Halston III red blazers and one of the silk scarves from his line that we developed as well. Our job was to direct guests to the main room for the show and dinner. It was a pretty exciting evening, and I was happy to play a small role in such an event.

Needless to say, when I was watching the new NetFlix series “Halston” and the episodes with Halston’s involvement with JCPenney came on, I saw that merchandise we had worked on and after all these years I got pretty excited. It was a great time for me then and an exciting time for JCPenney for sure. I was happy and grateful to be a small part of it and to have this lovely memory.

klindama@att.net
Penney Proud
from Judy Gabriel

On August 26, 1963 I became a proud JCP Associate, at the Distribution Center in Statesville, North Carolina. While some of my classmates headed off to college, I wanted to work at the JCPenney warehouse. My brother worked there; he started working there when he came home from the war. He would talk about filling orders out of the shipping boxes that were sitting on the dirt floor. Not all the floors had been poured with concrete by opening day. And it was a fact that if you had family working there you had a better chance of getting on. Families would keep you on your toes, or it made them look bad. Ha!

I met my husband of 55 years there and we married in 1965. Archie and I worked at the same place for the rest of our working career. He had 35 years in and I stayed for my 40th year and had the sixth longest time of service.

Our two sons grew up going to JCPenney lake property used for summer picnics and then Christmas parties for associates and families. The lake property was purchased using profits from the snack machines.

One of our friends was a buyer and made contact with someone he dealt with daily in the New York Office. Three couples---all associates---flew up to New York and toured the New York Office. I have pictures we took in Mr. Penney’s office and in the board room. While we were in the board room, we all passed a BIG raise for each of us. What was interesting, in Mr. Penney’s office there was a cast iron bull. The story is that if someone was in his office and they were shooting him a yarn, he turned that bull to where its back end was facing that person.

I am still proud to tell where I spent my working years. Friends we made there are family for a lifetime. Our retiree group is getting smaller, but we still get together at a restaurant three times a year. We have a memorial service each year for all our friends that have passed away during the year and we tell funny things that we remembered about them. It is sad and funny both.

Our distribution Center in Statesville was the only distribution center the company “owned”. All others were rented. I have heard that recently it has been sold, but associates are still work out of that building. It makes my heart hurt to see what is happening to our company, but we still are faithful in buying at Penney’s first.
When I joined JCPenney in 1982, I had only been in place a few months when one day my boss called me into his office. “Gordon,” he said, “I’m going to give you a new management challenge.”

I was still new to the Company. I felt I had enough challenge already trying to learn the Company’s business, its corporate culture, and its standard way of doing things. I did not feel I needed any more challenges.

“And what is that challenge?” I asked him. “I’m going to make you supervisor over Virginia Mowry,” he responded.

Who was Virginia Mowry? I thought. I knew her as this older woman who had reputedly been Mr. Penney’s secretary. She frequently wandered in our halls. Why should she be such a management challenge? I was soon to learn.

E. Virginia Mowry had indeed been the last secretary and administrative assistant to James Cash Penney in the years preceding his death in 1971. To say she was devoted to the man is an understatement. In the 11 years since his death, she had made it her job to take care of any of his lingering business and to do what she could to preserve his memory and burnish his reputation. She maintained his office on the 45th floor of the New York headquarters, just as it had been when he died.

She knew everyone of importance in the Company as well as among retirees. She circulated through the JCPenney headquarters as she pleased. She also set her own hours. She would not only be working in the building during normal business hours, but also often into the depths of the night. A security guard once found her fast asleep on the sofa in Mr. Penney’s office at 6:00 a.m. in the morning. When that was brought to my attention, I admonished her to keep to normal business hours. She ignored me.

She was deeply upset with the Company’s decision to move its headquarters to Dallas. Because of her age (she was in her 80s), we knew she would not make the move. But the Company allowed her to keep an office in its new New York location at 1633 Broadway. For a couple of months before the final move, I kept warning her to get her office ready to move. She needed to be packing up her things for the movers.

It came the day of the move itself. A couple of moving men came to my office and said that Miss Mowry was refusing to move. She said she could not do so until she had sorted through her files, which she was doing paper by paper. I walked to her office and found her as the moving guys had said. I told her in no uncertain terms that she was moving today, with no exceptions. I was so furious that I was like a walking volcano. She had been ignoring everything I had been saying for two months.

I told the moving guys they were to proceed with loading up her office on their cart. If need be, they were even to lift up her desk chair onto their cart with Virginia sitting in it. I don't know if she ever forgave me, but we finally did get her moved by the end of the day.

Despite her resistance to any management, she did know the Company’s history intimately. If you wanted to
know some fact about the Company’s earlier years, you went to Virginia Mowry. She would know. But there was one hitch. She would give you the answer you sought, but along with it a 20-minute discourse about all the related facts and context behind that fact that you did not want to know. She was once so upset about a wrong historical fact that Don Seibert was using in a speech that she chased him all around the country by phone to ensure the fact got corrected.

This exasperated everyone. Virginia was passed from director to director, from manager to manager, to supervise until she landed in my lap. I had no one under me I could pass her onto. I was stuck.

Given this situation, I would take time now and then when I had a free moment to sit and listen to Virginia talk, and talk on and on, as was her habit. Then is when I made an astonishing discovery. Virginia was a walking encyclopedia of the Company’s history. She knew not only the important developments in that history, but she had a deep knowledge of its people through the decades. Sometimes we would look at a photograph from the 1920s. Virginia could identify every person in the photo by name, and even tell you something about their careers in the Company. I began to worry what a loss it would be if she were to die and carry all that knowledge into her grave.

I also made another discovery. She had been storing many of Mr. Penney’s papers as well as other Company historical documents for years in a large closet on the 42nd floor of the 1301 building in New York. As I explored that closet with her, I realized we had the seedbed of a wonderful corporate archives. We needed to do something to ensure its preservation.

I suggested that we hire a professional archivist to work alongside Virginia to create a truly professional archives. I got permission to do so, and ultimately we hired Joan Gosnell, a newly graduated professional in archival science, in 1984. Together over the next five years the two of them organized the archives, which was well underway by the time the Company moved to Dallas. Under Joan’s continuing leadership the archives became an exemplary one in corporate America. Its resources were the key to the historical museum that opened in the new headquarters building at Legacy Drive.

Through Virginia I came myself to have a strong knowledge of the Company’s history. I could nowhere match hers, but at least I could speak somewhat knowledgeably. However, I found Virginia also brought to me another gift that I had never anticipated.

Virginia served as social secretary to Mr. Penney’s widow, Caroline Penney. She kept Mrs. Penney’s social calendar. When she died in 1989, Virginia was reclining on her sofa in her apartment addressing envelopes for Mrs. Penney’s Christmas cards.

As I worked with her, Virginia began to tell me about the Penney family, and then she introduced me to Mr. Penney’s two daughters. After Virginia died, I came by default to occupy her role as a kind of day-by-day go-between between the Company staff and the family.

Coming to manage Virginia had certainly brought me some wonderful personal rewards. But most important, I believe, is what she did for the Company. The Company came to possess a professional archives documenting the major developments of its history, its executives, its stores, its marketing initiatives, and the work of individual managers and associates at all levels. It includes hundreds of photos of the Company’s stores.

Today this archives is still preserved under the aegis of the Southern Methodist University in Dallas. The complete archives was transferred there in 2004, where it is now accessible to scholars and students of American business and retailing. By a totally unplanned serendipity, SMU also hired Joan Gosnell on its special collections library staff. As part of her duties, she was to manage the JCPenney archives. This ensured her knowledge and professionalism would continue to serve the collection, as she does to this day.

The resources of the archives continue to feed discussion of the Penney Company and its history. One notable product, for example, is David Kruger’s 2017 biography of Mr. Penney that received a rave review in The Wall Street Journal. It is for this reason that I have long felt that the archives should be renamed the E. Virginia Mowry Memorial JCPenney Archives. For without the work of this dedicated woman, exasperating to manage as she often was, the Penney Company would not have this enduring testimony to its leadership in the world of American retailing.
The JCPenney Deep South H.C.S.C. Alumni Club will hold its annual meeting October 17 – 19 at the Crown Plaza Oceanfront Melbourne. The registration form is included in this issue of Partners.

Our Meet and Greet Reception will be held in the Oceanfront Pavilion on the beach at the Crown Plaza. It is a marvelous venue looking out over the Atlantic Ocean. Dress cool and casual for this event. We will have a cash bar and hors d’oeuvres including a Mediterranean display to include tabouli, hummus, olives and feta cheese served with pita bread, a cheese and cracker display and a vegetable crudité.

For dinner you are welcome to eat on the credenza overlooking the ocean at the Crown Plaza Restaurant or select one of the many restaurants in the area.

The biggest event on the roster is the Kennedy Space Center. If you have not been to KSC in the last 10 to 15 years, it has changed! Rockets are lifting off at the Cape almost every week. The new Visitor Complex is packed full of history and opportunity to see the space shuttle Atlantis, travel to the Red Planet and maybe see a rocket launch, plus much more. The center tour is self-guided, so you can take as much time at any exhibit as you want. Scooters and wheelchairs are available to rent. We plan to offer a bus tour if the Covid-19 restrictions are lifted by October.

The Camp Holly Airboat ride is a blast! I always enjoy seeing all the wildlife and natural native landscape. There is always an alligator or two to see during the ride. Earmuffs are provided. Ladies, I suggest you bring a scarf to secure your hair. The airboat itself is fun to ride! The ride lasts 35 to 40 minutes on the
St. Johns River. The Camp is located at 6901, US 192, Melbourne, Florida, 32904, 15 miles west of the Crown Plaza. The phone number is 321-723-2179. You can plan to go on the ride Monday or Tuesday, depending on what other events you plan to do.

Our banquet will be held Monday at the Crown Plaza St. Lucia room. All dinners include a tossed garden salad, chef’s choice of starch and vegetables, rolls and butter, coffee and iced tea, and Key lime pie for dessert. The three main course selections cost $45.00, including tax. They are chicken marsala, grilled grouper with fruit salsa, and grilled ribeye steak with caramelized onions. We may have two 50-year pins to hand out at the banquet if the recipients can come to our event.

We have a new attending member, Patti Coggins, heading up our golf event this year and she has done a fantastic job of getting us a beautiful course to play at a fantastic price, $39.00 + tax! The format is Two-person Best Ball with Handicap. You can still play in foursomes. Awards will be given for the longest drive, lowest team net score, and closest to the pin. Lunch will be available at the club after play with a short award ceremony. Mulligans will be sold for $10.00 at registration when you check in on Sunday night.

Bowling seems to be a given for our alumni meetings. This year we will be bowling on Tuesday, October 10, at the Bowlero in Melbourne. We have the lanes starting at 11:00 a.m. for 1.5 hours of bowling. Shoe rental is included along with unlimited soft drinks and pizza while we bowl.

The National Navy SEAL Museum is home to one of the most unusual collections of artifacts and exhibits of any museum. As the only museum dedicated to
the elite warriors on the Navy SEAL Teams and their predecessors, the collection is a window into the secret world of Naval Special Warfare. One of the interesting exhibits is the lifeboat Captain Philips was held captive in for five days before being rescued by the SEALS. The museum is located one hour from the Crown Plaza at 3300 SR A1A, Hutchinson Island, Fort Pierce. Unfortunately, it is closed on Mondays, but open Sunday 12:00–4:00 pm. and Tuesday thru Saturday from 10:00 am–4:00 pm. Seniors, veterans, and first responders are charged $12.00 admission. For more information go to navysealmuseum.com.

Crown Plaza Oceanfront is a beautiful facility sitting on the Atlantic Ocean Beach. You have access to the ocean and the beautiful pool and restaurant on the property. You may want to enjoy the beach!! We will have a Hospitality Room for after hour get-togethers and meetings. We have negotiated a nightly rate of $129.00 for a standard room. Balcony rooms are $139.00 a night. The booking link below will take you to the reservation page. Enter our dates "Oct 17 – Oct 19" and hit search. A page with our group rates will come up. Select the room you want, and it will take you to the Deep South JCP site. You can book the room online or call 877-666-3243 to make reservations.

For those of us staying Tuesday, October 19, we plan to eat at one of the restaurants in the area. We can make our selection when the time gets here.

Please send in your registration form no later than September 10 so final arrangements can be made. Please make checks payable to the Deep South HCSC Club.

Mail checks to:
Karen Witt
420 Bridgetown Court,
Satellite Beach, Fl. 32937

Look forward to seeing everyone in October!
2021 Deep South RMG Annual Meeting Activity Sign Up Sheet

Crown Plaza Oceanfront Melbourne
Sunday, October 17 – Tuesday October 19, 2021

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2021

Registration $20.00 X ______     Total ______
Reception, Meet & Greet $25.00 X ______     Total ______
Cash bar and Hors D’oeuvres at the Oceanfront Pavilion.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2021

Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex $62.00 X ______     Total ______
Plans are to get a guided bus tour, but CDC has not permitted KSC to run bus tours at this time. Hopefully by October buses will be running. It will be an additional charge for the bus tour. I will keep you informed. Reservations held for 10/18/21.

Camp Holly Airboat Ride. 32.50. Pay at Camp Holly. campholly.net.
Open Monday & Tuesday 8 am to 5 pm.
*Day preferred ___________    # of people ______

Banquet at Crown Plaza 6:00 pm
Menu Selection: $45.00 each
Chicken Marsala. X ______     Total ______
Grilled Grouper w Fruit Salsa. X ______     Total ______
Grilled Ribeye Steak w/caramelized Onions X ______     Total ______

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2021

Baytree National Golf Club $41.73 w tax X ____   Total ______
Mulligans $10 sold at registration.
Name _______________ Handicap ______
Name _______________ Handicap ______

Bowlero / Bowling $28.50 X ____   Total ______
Bowling includes unlimited soft drinks & cheese pizza while we bowl. Shoe rental is included.

National Navy Seal Museum. (navysealmuseum.org.) Pay at Museum.
Seniors, Veterans & First Responders. $12.00. X ______
The National Navy Seal Museum is open Sunday 12:00–4:00 pm & Tuesday 10:00 AM–4:00 pm. Museum is closed on Monday. The location is in Fort Pierce on A1A a little over a scenic hour drive down the coast from the Crown Plaza.

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~
Total Cost ________
Check #    ________
The Indiana RMG luncheon meeting was held at Le Peep on Thursday, April 29. Members and guests gathered for sharing of family and friend’s news with a little of business info as well. We had numerous door prizes and gift bags for the ladies. A sharing of “GOOD” and/or “BAD” working experiences while working at JCPenney was certainly a hit with the crowd. It was suggested by Lyle Backes that we ask each retired associate to bring their own “best” story to our next meeting to compete for an “unlimited” valued door prize!

Awards presented included Century Club certificates to Bill Wright and Bob Milleville. Pat Conley received his 50-year pin.

Gabby Tamler, treasurer, gave us the current financial report with 2020 dues received from the JCPenney National H.C.S.C Alumni Club.

Special topics were discussed such as the contest for membership, the importance of the H.C.S.C. Foundation and pension notices (posted online at www.jcpalumniclub.org).

Special thanks to Bill Wright for communication, Gabby Tamler for the door prizes/gifts & Pat Conley for developing information on membership drive and participating in the National “ZOOM” conference call.


NOTE: Our next meeting/lunch is being planned for Thursday, October 28, 2021 at:

Le Peep 8
487 Union Chapel Rd
Indianapolis, Indiana

All members/guests are invited to enjoy lunch and conversation with all!
The Mile High Denver/Rocky Mountain RMG had their first post-COVID in-person gathering on Saturday, June 18. This gathering was hosted by Dave and Ginny Simpson at their beautiful home and backyard in southwest Denver. The Simpsons provided the main course of pulled pork BBQ sandwiches, others brought side dishes and dessert to complete the meal. Attendees enjoyed some long overdue personal conversation and fellowship.

This first post-COVID gathering was special in that all were able to catch up on life events in person for the first time since the Christmas Luncheon back in December 2019. Attendees were also able to participate in two important award presentations:

- First, RMG President Royce Bervig awarded and presented Dave Simpson his 50-Year Service Pin.
- Second, RMG Member Engagement Director Steve Strom awarded and presented the Silver Medal and Certificate to President Royce Bervig and Vice President Don Sheely for achieving 75% of its goal in the New Membership Drive. Three new members were enrolled.

There was some discussion on future in-person gatherings and events for the balance of 2021. Upcoming are the Summer and Fall events, the Golf and Lunch Outing on August 11, the Summer Picnic on August 21, and the Food Bank Drive on October 16.

Attendees: Bob Anderson, Royce and Shawn Bervig, Andy Martinez, Don Sheely, Dave and Ginny Simpson, Steve and Marcia Strom
The JCPenney North Central H. C. S. C. Alumni Club says “the more the merrier” and invites all members to its gathering from September 12-14, 2021. We will convene at the St. James Hotel in the historic Mississippi river town of Red Wing, Minnesota, for three days of camaraderie and fine food. The registration form and the itinerary are available on the national website at www.jcpalumniclub.org.

The St. James Hotel, located on Highway 61 – the Great River Road – is about one hour southeast from the Minneapolis metro area easily accessible by car from the airport. For adventurous souls, you might choose to arrive in Red Wing via Amtrak’s Empire Builder route between Chicago to Seattle. Make your hotel reservation by the hotel at 651-388-2846 and ask for the H.C.S.C. Alumni Club Rate of $129.00 per night. Please register by August 1, 2021, to get the group rate.

On Sunday, after 3:00 pm, stop by the courtyard to receive your registration packet filled with all the reservation and event information. At 5:00 pm, we will begin the social hour with cash bar followed by a casual buffet dinner.

Monday’s activities will start with a leisurely breakfast from 7:00–9:00 am. Those golfing will leave for the course in Miesville. The golf fee is $60.00 per person and includes lunch. Others will have the opportunity to enjoy walking (or driving) tours of the historic architecture in the downtown business district, a guided tour of the Pottery Museum of Red Wing, and a visit to the Red Wing Shoe Museum and store. Cost to tour the Pottery Museum, Sheldon Theater and lunch at the Pie Plate Cafe is $30.00. Monday evening’s activities will include the annual banquet, awarding prizes, club business and entertainment.

Our event concludes on Tuesday morning with breakfast and a short business meeting.

North Central members: you should have received your invitation. If not, email Jean Lewis at jeanielewis3@gmail.com.

And, remember, all H.C.S.C. members are invited to join us!
JCP North Central HCSC “Gathering”  
September 12-14, 2021  
St. James Hotel, Red Wing, Minnesota  

REGISTRATION FORM  

Name:  

Name Spouse/guest:  

First time to attend:  (Yes or No) Self _________ Spouse/Guest _________  

Annual Dues: You should have received your HCSC statement from the National HCSC Club and processed your payment of $35.00 accordingly. If not, please remit along with your registration fee, $10.00 for local dues.  

Registration Cost  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Select Entrée</th>
<th>Partner</th>
<th>Spouse/Guest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total cost for four meals at the St. James Hotel</td>
<td>Pork Loin</td>
<td>$_______</td>
<td>$_______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*All taxes, tips, and service charges are included</td>
<td>Salmon</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vegetables en croute</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday Banquet and Entertainment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday Plated Breakfast</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday Activities (select one):</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Golf and Lunch at Gopher Hills Golf Course</td>
<td>$60/person</td>
<td>$_______</td>
<td>$_______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guided Tour of Sheldon Theater</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Tourist Day in Historic Red Wing</td>
<td>$30/person</td>
<td>$_______</td>
<td>$_______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Wing Pottery Museum Tour</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch at Pie Plate Café &amp; General Store</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking Tour of Historic Red Wing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Wing Shoe Store and Museum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guided Tour of Sheldon Theater</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*If you have not paid National Dues add $10.00 for Local North Central dues £$_______

Registration and Activities Sub Totals $_______ $_______

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED $_______

Note: Please make checks payable to North Central HCSC Club.
Return this registration form and payment by August 1 to: 
North Central HCSC “Alumni” Club  
c/o Jean Lewis  
1051 Hawthorne Ridge  
Macomb, IL 61455
Southern California

S
do-Cal is glad to announce our Spring 2022 Annual Meeting. Members of all RMG Clubs are invited. Once again, we will be in Palm Springs. The dates are set for Wednesday, February 23 through Friday, February 25, 2022. The Hilton Hotel downtown will be the home hotel. Wednesday evening will be our welcoming cocktail/dinner gathering. Thursday is golf and, for those who are not golfers, there will be a special tour and light lunch. That evening's dinner is on your own. There will be entertainment at the McCullum Theater. Friday is our going away brunch. Please visit our website www.hcsc-socal.com for more information!

This past June 23rd, we had Lunch on the Lake at the Hacienda Restaurant Lakeside at Mission Viejo Lake.

A highlight of the luncheon was being able to recognize Dick Scoville with a photo of him holding his Century Club Certificate.

Another highlight was being able to have a photo of Ron Hudnall with the letter he received in November of 1963, when he returned from serving in the Army in Panama Canal Zone. The letter indicated he would be assigned to Granada Hills JCPenney store.

Attendees Include: Ron Hudnall, Betty Bidwell, Ron and Janice Rhoads, Dick Scoville and Rochelle Egan, Larry and Cheryl Noble, Jack and Helene Siebert, Jeff and Jennifer Page, Ron Salzetti and Donna Dotson, Stan and Cheryl Newton, Tony and Veta Zarifis.
The Southwest RMG under the leadership of Jan Hodges has been busy with a variety of gatherings including monthly lunches at Corner Bakery, a visit to the Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Garden, a Zoom class on how to build a charcuterie board, breakfast to gladly celebrate getting Covid-19 vaccinations, an evening at the Frisco RoughRiders baseball game and a day trip to Choctaw Casino. More fun activities are planned for the rest of the year.

Hedy Sawyer took over as administrator for the Southwest RMG Facebook page. She has been posting photos of the activities and excerpts of the Spring Partners magazine. The response to her work has been enthusiastic and we had a double-digit increase in new members as a result. Thanks to her work, the Southwest RMG received a gold medal in the National Membership Campaign. Thank you, Hedy!

On a beautiful sunny day in March, Southwest RMG members made a trip to the Dallas Arboretum and the tulips were in full bloom! After a morning of touring the grounds, participants had a fun lunch on the patio with a view of the beautiful grounds!

Margaret Filingeri organized the annual “evening at the ballpark” on Thursday, June 10th at the Dr Pepper Ballpark in Frisco, Texas. The Frisco RoughRiders defeated the Northwest Arkansas Naturals 10-3. Two of the Rough Rider players each hit a couple of home runs! It was a great evening with food, friends and fun.

Attendees Include: Phil and Bunny Esch, Paul and Joan Winge, Doug Boyle, John Caldwell, Margaret Filingeri, Bill and Debi Kruder, Ron and Diane Fazio, Mike and Flo Ray, Pat Carberry, Susan Dunseth, Ron Winkler, Jim Hailey and Bill Burns.

Charcuterie Board
Mother's Day Lunch. TOP: Phil Esch, Kathleen Langley, Pam Hunter and Stan Hase
MIDDLE: Gerry Flewharty, Carol Glasscock, Elaine Scholtz, Marianne Gonzales, Margaret Filingeri and Hedy Sawyer
BOTTOM: Bunny Esch, Laura Williams, Jan Hodges, Suzanne McGrath, Connie Delgado and Peggy Creel

At the Ballpark. TOP: Susan Dunseth, Pat Carberry, guest, Ron Winkler  THIRD ROW: Paul and Jblank, Flo and Mike Ray
SECOND ROW: Ron and Diane Fazio, Debi Kruder  BOTTOM: Bill Kruder, Terry Gonzales and Margaret Filingeri
Dear H.C.S.C. Partners,

As you know, we normally use this page to talk about the history of the Foundation and how it was started in 1959 at a Convention in Denver, Colorado. At that time it was brought to Mr. Penney's attention that some retired managers were having financial difficulties.

Now, some 62 years later, the Foundation is stronger than ever and serving over 80 recipients. Last year we distributed over $520,000 to help support our Partners that were in financial need. Since inception, we have given over $7 million in assistance for needy associates. I think if Mr. Penney were alive today, he would be pleased with progress that has been achieved.

When the Foundation was first started only store managers were eligible for assistance. Now, any associate that is at least 60 years of age and has 20 years of service is eligible for assistance if they have a financial need.

Your Foundation board members volunteer their time to make sure we continue to assist as many Partners as possible. The board meets four times a year to review current recipients' situations and go over any new applications. We call each recipient at least four or five times a year and on their birthday.

The main purpose of this page is to have each of you consider making a donation to the Foundation. We need your help to keep the Foundation healthy, and that requires your donations. Last year we received over $100,000 in donations. We are very grateful to all those that contributed. We did receive one donation of $33,000 from the estate of one of our partners.

We have provided, in this issue of Partners magazine, several recipient letters of appreciation and how the Foundation has changed their lives. I encourage everyone to take the time to read each letter.

To make it easy for everyone to donate, we have set up a Foundation website and GoFundMe page. Go to HCSCfoundation.com. This will take you to the GoFundMe page where you can donate. Of course, we still accept checks. Make your check out to H.C.S.C. Foundation and mail it to:

H.C.S.C. Foundation, Larry Noble, 15220 Green Valley Drive Chino Hills, California 91709

I want to thank you in advance for your generosity that will insure we achieve our goal.

Ron Salzetti
Chairman, H.C.S.C. Foundation
Receiving thank you notes from the people we help is one of the most gratifying aspects of serving on the H.C.S.C. Foundation board. While respecting the privacy of the recipients, we thought that you would appreciate learning how their contributions have helped.

Ron Salzetti, Chairman

"When I joined the Penney Company years ago, the Foundation had only been in existence for a few years. Fast forward many years – and the Foundation has provided assistance to me at a time that no matter what I’ve done to stay afloat financially, life has gotten in the way – and I have even more respect for Mr. Penney and what he did to ensure JCP retirees would be assisted in their times of need. I do know that when my time comes, my estate planning ensures that at least some of what the Foundation has been given to me will be replaced."

"The Funding from the HCSC Foundation made an enormous difference in the last few years in my mother’s life. After my father’s death, she had a very small income to live on and not much in the way of savings. While still living independently, the monthly amount from HCSC increased the support to allow her to live in an assisted living facility that provided excellent care. Most of all, the support during the last few years of her life allowed her to live with less anxiety and worry over running out of money. That made a huge difference in her life. She also greatly enjoyed and appreciated the emotional support from conversations with the officers of HCSC. This is truly a wonderful organization that is well run and very caring."

"My wife and I are humbled and appreciative of all you’ve done on our behalf. After retiring from JCP, I had a heart attack and a triple bypass operation. My heart doctor advised me to go on social security disability and not work. My wife was diagnosed with lupus rheumatoid arthritis, aortic regurgitation and spondylosis of the back. Without the financial support and emotional support of the HCSC Foundation the past seven years, I don’t know what we would have done. My wife does not have health insurance and we wouldn’t be able to afford the monthly prescriptions and pay medical bills. You may never realize how helpful the HCSC Foundation has been when my wife and I needed emotional and financial support. HCSC Foundation was there at exactly the right time, in the right way."
“I’m writing to let you know how much I appreciate what the Foundation has done for me. I worked for JCPenney for 38 years and had no idea this program existed. The entire process to get enrolled was so simple, I’m forever grateful for all you have done. I want to personally thank the donors that have contributed to the fund that have made this possible. Being on fixed income, this has been a tremendous help to me. Thank you from the bottom of my heart. I will remember you in my prayers.”

“Thank you!! Two words we do not use enough. It is with deep sense of gratitude that I write to thank you, Jeff and Larry and the entire HCSC board for your financial support for my family. I’m honored to be part of such a fine group of people like you. It makes me feel lucky for selecting a company like JCPenney to spend my career (during the good times and the bad).”

“I retired in 2012 and money kept getting tighter and tighter. Then HCSC Foundation sent me an email in 2017. They helped me so much. Since then money has been very stable and running smooth. Also, all of the people in the foundation are very nice people you can talk to and be part of. I am so thankful for all of them.”

“I just want to let you know how very much I appreciate the money that I get monthly from HCSC. It has allowed me to be able to live here at Presbyterian Village North in a wonderful apartment in the Independent Living section. I would not have been able to move here without that monthly income. Before I moved here 1 year ago that money was so helpful in meeting the regular expenses of owning my own home. The reason I moved into a Retirement Community was because my house was old and had too many things happening to it that needed expensive repairs. And I felt it was time at my age (89) to not live so totally alone. Here I have my own apartment but there are people within a quick call (or press of a button) if I need them. And there are many activities that I am enjoying. Thank you so much for your financial help that is enabling me to live here.”

“We know that we have already expressed gratitude to you in the past, we would like to again thank you for your help. The ways you have helped us and continue to help us mean more than just our ability to pay all of our bills, but also gives us peace of mind and a sense of security. Your mission is an act of kindness that has been a Godsend. Our wish for the foundation is for continued success in what you do. Our wish for all the members, is for continued success in your individual lives as a reward for who you are.”
Below is a list of the Foundation representatives assigned to each Regional Meeting Group. If you believe someone you know may need assistance, please contact Larry Noble or the Foundation Representative in your local area so we can determine what the Foundation can do to help. All referrals will be held in the strictest confidence and will not be discussed with anyone outside of the board. All applications require disclosure of financial information to determine eligibility.

**H.C.S.C. Foundation Representatives**

**Deep South/Florida**  
Karen Witt  
(904) 571-6557  
klwitt100@msn.com

**Southeastern**  
Ed Savold  
(479) 434-5723  
kingofstkball@aol.com

**Heart of America**  
Harry Rediger  
(573) 334-0200  
harryrediger0@gmail.com

**Indiana**  
William Wright Jr.  
(317) 891-6449  
annbillright@gmail.com

**Mason-Dixon**  
Harry Smart  
(540) 786-6170  
hbs31@comcast.net

**Ohio**  
Ben Preston  
(614) 939-1957  
bfprest@aol.com

**Mile High Denver/Rocky Mountain**  
Ed Trujillo  
(303) 805-0396  
edkeystone@hotmail.com

**Northwest**  
Phil Shama  
(360) 424-9581  
pshama3355@aol.com

**North Central**  
Tom Clarke  
(469) 353-8633  
tjclarke1@aol.com

**NoCal/Nevada**  
Hal Monroe  
(209) 952-2104  
hmonroe@sonic.net

**Southwest**  
Al Bell  
(972) 347-2354  
al.bell@sbcglobal.net

**Valley of the Sun**  
John Henderson  
(480) 595-9616  
jghskibum@aol.com

**SoCal/Foundation**  
Ron Salzetti  
(760) 431-5371  
rsalzetti@gmail.com

**H.C.S.C. Foundation**  
Larry Noble  
(909) 597-4678  
hcscfoundation@gmail.com

Thank you for taking the time to consider how you can help, either by referring someone who needs financial assistance or by making a donation to help us continue to help those in need. You can donate at our website, [www.hcscfoundation.com](http://www.hcscfoundation.com) by clicking on the Donate button.

**The Board of Directors of the H.C.S.C. Foundation Inc.**

Chairman — Ron Salzetti  
Vice Chairman — Jeff Paige  
Secretary/Treasurer — Larry Noble  
Emeritus Director — Stan Newton

Roger Hanson  
Wayne Harmon  
Jim McKeown  
Ron Rhoads  
Lucy Rau

Alan Rogers  
Mark Schultz  
Ross Willour  
Steve Workman  
Tony Zarifis

**Honor, Confidence, Service, Cooperation**

A Nonprofit Foundation Dedicated to Assist Retired JCPenney Associates and/or Spouses in Need of Financial Assistance
Thank you for remembering these partners and for your support of those in need!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HONOREE</th>
<th>DONOR</th>
<th>HONOREE</th>
<th>DONOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bill Alcorn</td>
<td>Phyllis London</td>
<td>Loye London</td>
<td>Phyllis London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. E. Beaty</td>
<td>Richard Marricle</td>
<td>Dave Lower</td>
<td>Ken Ellingboe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denny Beran</td>
<td>Richard London</td>
<td>Jim Magnussen</td>
<td>Jim Crain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ray Botsford</td>
<td>Phyllis London</td>
<td>Jim Magnussen</td>
<td>M Dean Bjornsen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carol Booth</td>
<td>Linda Butler</td>
<td>Jim Magnussen</td>
<td>Ron Salzetti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Clarke</td>
<td>Ron Shipley</td>
<td>Jim Magnussen</td>
<td>Larry Noble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John N Crumley</td>
<td>Deryl Benz</td>
<td>Jim Magnussen</td>
<td>Terry Prindiville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles R Dauchy</td>
<td>Robert McIlvain</td>
<td>Jim Magnussen</td>
<td>Bruce Hill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lillian Galvin</td>
<td>Larry Noble</td>
<td>Jim Magnussen</td>
<td>Jeff Paige</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gary Grose</td>
<td>Heart Of America RMG</td>
<td>Jim Magnussen</td>
<td>Sandy Lynn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bob Hankins</td>
<td>Bill Doss</td>
<td>Edna McKeown</td>
<td>Ron Salzetti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill Hovey</td>
<td>Terry Prindiville</td>
<td>Robert Ormdt</td>
<td>Heart Of America RMG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larry Kelly</td>
<td>Ken Ellingboe</td>
<td>Bud Schuler</td>
<td>John Kish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Keogh</td>
<td>Donald Rudd</td>
<td>Bill Shaver</td>
<td>Stephen Hawley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art Kochis</td>
<td>Jeanne Sftar</td>
<td>C R R Smith</td>
<td>Donald Rudd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Virginia Stoops</td>
<td>Sunny Wandro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chuck Vogel</td>
<td>Suzanne Huton</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Donnie Akers  
William Alcorn  
Stewart Anderson  
Anonymus  
Bobby Beard  
Marshall Beere  
Stephen Beideck  
Dennis Beran  
Rodney Birkins  
Geneva Boggs  
Larry Braby  
Dorothy Bremer  
Peter Brock  
Gerald Carney  
Stephen Carter  
John Carusi  
John Chapman  
Mervin Cihlar  
Richard T Clark  
Thomas Clarke  
Bobby Cartwright  
Richard Daniels  
Patricia Dazet  
Lawrence Dowler  
Nancy Downs  
J David English  
Phil Esch  
John Fesperman  
Margaret Filingeri  
Edward Foster  
Gordon Freund  
Don Gergovich  
John Gresham  
Richard Gwynn  
James Hailey  
Patricia Haines  
Carolyn Head  
Lynn Henrich  
Ray Hiza  
Jan Hodges  
Ron Hudnall  
Jane Hunt  
Thomas Jewell  
Vincent Keefauver  
David King  
David Kluer  
William Kruder  
James Lacy  
Donald Lauer  
Ronald Leitschu  
David Lenz  
Sandy Lynn  
Laraine Macfee  
James Maginness  
Thomas March  
Randal Matlock  
Richard McLaughlin  
David Millard  
Veronica Mitchell  
Gerald Montgomery  
Raymond Moore  
Bruce Motsinger  
Donald Mueller  
Larry Noble  
William Orr  
Bryan Paulson  
Leon Pearce  
Keith Perkins  
William Pfeifer  
W D Poston  
Charles Powers  
Sheila Radabaugh  
Dennis Radabaugh  
Jim Reese  
Indiana RMG  
Paul Rooney  
Rudy Rosman  
Theodore Schmidt, Jr.  
Richard Shankle  
Jack Siebert  
Alan Siebold  
Jeannette Siegel  
Marty Smith  
Sandra Sponable  
Joseph Statler  
Mary Tacher  
Virginia Taylor  
Mike Tuttle  
Donald Waltman  
Norman Weslow  
Alma Wheat  
Deane Williams  
Robert Wilson  
William Wilson  
Darlene Wilson  
James Winger  
Sharon Winkle  
Meridel Wooley  
Phil Young
Bidwell, John Vern (October 19, 2020)
John was from Tucson, Arizona, and passed away at the age of 82. He is survived by his loving wife Terrie, three children and numerous grandchildren and extended family.

Bischoff-Clemente, Arlene Frances (May 12, 2021)
Arlene started working for JCPenney in New York at the age of 18 and moved to Plano, Texas, when the Company relocated there. During the 39 years of her career, she traveled the world and made many lifelong friends. After she retired, she volunteered extensively with St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church in Plano. She was 66 when she passed and is survived by her son, Nicholas Clemente.

Caugh, Lawrence F. “Larry” (August 9, 2020)
Larry went to work for JCPenney in management, and opened stores from the East Coast to the West. He retired from the company in Tucson, Arizona, in 2005. Larry’s greatest joy in life besides his family was helping people and riding the range on his beloved horse Smokey. He belonged to Search and Rescue in Yuma and Tucson, Arizona, where he was awarded many commendations for rescuing and saving lives across Arizona in his 25 years of service. He leaves behind his wife Donna, three children, and two grandsons. He was 79.

Crumley, John Norman (May 5, 2021)
John was from Carmel, Indiana. After teaching high school math and coaching sports, he began his JCPenney career by selling shoes and retired as a district manager in Carmel. He had many interests and volunteered with the Methodist church, taught elementary school chess, recorded books for special needs children, received a police commendation for stopping an assault and served on the board of the Indianapolis 500 Festival. In retirement, he enjoyed fishing, working on the family farm, horseback riding, spending time with grandchildren and reading... he read 200 books in 2020! John is survived by his wife Polly, three children, two grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. He was 90.

Dougherty, Richard “Dick” (June 4, 2021)
Dick worked for JCPenney for over 30 years. He and his wife Lorraine moved frequently with his assignments in Illinois, Minnesota, New York and Michigan before retiring to Sun City West, Arizona, in 1995. Dick was dedicated father, husband, a die-hard Chicago White Sox fan, bowler, and golfer. Dick is survived by his four sons, ten grandchildren and seventeen great-grandchildren. He was 86.

Ferrone, Patricia “Pat” (February 16, 2021)
Pat passed peacefully at the age of 82. Her late husband of 60 years was Andrew. She is survived by her three children and four grandchildren. Pat and Andrew lived and raised their children in New Jersey where she worked for the Lipton Tea Company. Pat enjoyed spending time with family, watching the Yankees and the Giants, playing bridge or mah-jongg. Pat was proud of being from The Bronx and of her Irish Heritage and always was working on the family tree tracing the genealogy back to the 1400s.

Fields, David W. (January 1, 2021)
Dave was born in Kansas City, Kansas, married Carol in 1976 and immediately following his graduation...
from the University of Kansas, he joined JCPenney. His career with JCPenney's included positions at the store level as well as on the district and regional staffs in Topeka, Kansas; Kansas City, Missouri; Indianapolis, Indiana; Chicago, Illinois; Somerset, Kentucky; Leominster, Massachusetts and Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Dave retired eight years ago after serving almost 38 years with the Company. Dave enjoyed traveling, hunting, fishing and gardening but by far he got the most joy in life spending time with his much-loved children and grandchildren. He is survived by his wife Carol, one son and one daughter and four grandchildren. Dave was 66 and passed away of COVID-19.

Freeman, Jr., Omar Dillard (June 27, 2021) 
Omar passed away in Conway, Arkansas, at the age of 82. Retired Store Manager Ralph Griggs wrote, “What I know from personal knowledge is that Omar and I were fellow students at the University of Arkansas back in 1958. We both finished and went to work for JCPenney in 1960. He started as a management trainee in the downtown North Little Rock store and later joined the Air Force to avoid being drafted into the Army. He served JCPenney from 1960 until retirement at 60 in about 1998. Omar was manager of the store at Carthage, Missouri, and then Siloam Springs, Arkansas, for the last 20 plus years of his career. He was well liked and highly respected by his fellow store managers. He is survived by his loving wife of 61 years, Elizabeth, and two sons and four grandchildren.”

Funk, Margaret (Maggie) Prater (March 11, 2021) 
Maggie was 68 when she passed away in Pilot Point, Texas. On November 19, 2004, Maggie married Rowland Funk who worked for JCPenney. She made her home in a house built by her great-great-grandfather and served on a committee seeking to attain “Main Street” designation for Pilot Point. She supported numerous nonprofit organizations, enjoyed fundraising activities, dancing, horseback riding, dinners with friends, and travel, especially to Hawaii. Maggie is survived by her husband Rowland, four children, and five grandchildren.

Gentry, Earlene Sue Custer (April 26, 2020) 
Earlene’s father, Earl Custer, was the manager of the JCPenney store in Holdenville, Oklahoma, and she would often help her father in the store. After her first husband was killed in the line of duty in Korea, Earlene completed her degree in music education at the University of Oklahoma. She caught the “fashion bug” and in 1953 moved to Dallas to start her career in fashion merchandising. She gave the first of many fashion shows in 1954 at the Adolphus Hotel in Downtown Dallas. Later that year, she joined JCPenney to become a millinery women’s hat buyer and eventually transitioned into women’s sportswear. That is where Earlene met Ira “Neal” Gentry and they were married 1958. She left JCPenney after their marriage and began her career as “Mom”. Neal’s career took them to three states and she became a real estate agent and sold homes for 20 years. She is survived by three children and seven grandchildren. She was 90 years old when she passed away.

Gretsch, Roy Edward (January 3, 2021) 
Roy, born on May 3, 1941, passed away on January 3, 2021. No further details were available.

Hovey, William “Bill” Rogers (May 7, 2021) 
Bill was 87 when he passed away and is survived by his wife Carolyn, three children and three granddaughters. Bill began his 42-year career at JCPenney in Ukiah, California, starting in the stockroom. During his career, he was the head of marketing and developed the JCPenney Home stores. His career took him from Ukiah to New York, Los Angeles and a few other stops along the way. He retired at the young age of 60 and enjoyed playing golf most days.
Kight, Jr. Ray Emerson (March 5, 2021)
Ray was 88 and from Boone, North Carolina. After serving in the United States Army, he began his career with JCPenney and retired as manager of the Hanes Mall store. He was a faithful member of Ardmore Baptist Church. Ray is survived by his son, five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Lusk, Jr. Donald “Don” A. (February 21, 2021)
Don was from Newark, Ohio, and was 79 years old. He retired after 35 years with JCPenney where during his tenure, Don and his family moved seven times, all within the state of Ohio. Don loved being outside in nature whether it was fishing, golfing, mowing the grass, or watching a ballgame. He was an avid fan of Newark Catholic High School and a long-standing member of its Athletic Association. Don is survived by his wife of 57 years, Fran, one daughter and four grandchildren.

Nelson, Marjorie Allen (January 17, 2021)
Age 88, Marjorie passed away in Orem, Utah. Her husband was Joseph Alan Nelson and his career with JCPenney took their family to eight cities including Salt Lake City, Utah; Grand Junction and Colorado Springs, Colorado; Grandview, Missouri; Topeka, Overland Park and Manhattan, Kansas, and finally back to Bountiful, Utah, and Orem where they retired. She used her degree in music and home economics from Brigham Young University to serve her family and community. She was active in the LDS Church as a leader in the Relief Society, as ward and stake organist, as a temple worker and organist in the Mt. Timpanogos temple. She became very active in the community while supporting Joe’s term as mayor of Orem, Utah. She is survived by her five children, 26 grandchildren and 60 great-grandchildren.

Omodt, Robert “Bob” (June 3, 2021)
Bob passed away at the age of 79 after a twenty-year battle with aggressive and metastatic prostate cancer. In 1964, he began as a JCPenney trainee in Mission, Kansas, and went on to stores in Missouri, Kansas, and Colorado, in addition to the Kansas City District Office and the Dallas Regional Office. For sixteen years in Fort Collins, he was a co-leader/leader for the local prostate cancer support group. On a memorable trip he and his wife found a house in Norway where his great-grandmother had lived. Above all, he valued greatly his JCPenney friends, associates, and all his friends, and loved his family dearly. He is survived by Margaret, his wife of 56 years, two sons, three grandchildren.

Pierret, Louise (June 5, 2021)
Louise was 81 and passed away in Yankton, South Dakota. Her husband is Jerome (Jerry) Pierret. She is survived by Jerry, five children, 12 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Louise was a dedicated volunteer with various Catholic Church organizations, the Mrs. Jaycees, and the Women’s Club. She was also employed as a credit manager for Sears-Roebuck, the Yankton Medical Clinic and at Avera Sacred Heart where she was the Golden Care Plus Manager and Credit Manager. Jerry and Louise loved traveling in their RV, visiting family and enjoying the beauty of our country from Florida to Washington.

Platt, Robert “Bob” E. (April 19, 2021)
Bob was born in Lafayette, Indiana, graduated from high school in 1965 and married Jane the same year. Shortly after, he joined JCPenney. His career took them to many new locations, where they met lifelong friends. Bob and Jane finally landed in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, where he lived and worked until his retirement in 2007. He is survived his wife Jane, two daughters, eight grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Taylor, Jerry Edward (March 23, 2021)
Jerry worked for JCPenney from 1966 to 2006 in the Southeast Region, the Atlanta Regional Office and
ended his career as the manager of the Clearwater, Florida, store. He enjoyed golfing and traveling, especially to Italy. He is survived by Peggy, his wife of 40 years, three daughters and seven grandchildren. Jerry was 74 when he passed away in Hattiesburg, Mississippi.

**Varnado Sr., Rynold O’Neal** (February 12, 2021) Rynold, affectionately known as “Ron,” was 74. He married Rosie Marie Woods in 1967, received his Bachelor of Administration degree in 1969 and taught high school and adult education. In 1971 he began working at JCPenney in Atlanta, Georgia. He broke many barriers, as he was the first African American to become the Regional Training Coordinator. He remained in Georgia for 19 years, before moving back to Mississippi in 1992. He continued his career with a promotion to store manager in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, and finally retired on October 22, 2007, in Jackson, Mississippi. Ron loved celebrating holidays and received “Yard of the Year” for numerous years. He is survived by his wife Rosie, three children, five grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

**Vadnais, Richard “Dick” John** (February 16, 2021) Dick was from Chanhassen, Minnesota, and was 78 years old when he died. In 1964 he graduated from Saint Mary’s College in Winona, Minnesota, and served in the United States Army Reserves from 1965–1971. His career with JCPenney lasted for more than 30 years. He loved camping, boating, gardening, and swapping stories over good food and drink. More than anything else, he loved his two daughters and grandchildren and Sandy, his wife of 49 years.

**Waltz, John “Earl”** (January 31, 2020) John served for two years in the U.S. Army before completing his education at Miami University in Ohio. He was employed by the JCPenney Company and worked in several Ohio cities: Hamilton, Elyria, Cleveland, and Cuyahoga Falls. Earl was a volunteer with the Cleveland Orchestra Store at Severance and Blossom, delivered Meals on Wheels for Brecksville, and for several years was a volunteer with a New York City Elderhostel. He was an active member of the Cleveland Hiking club since 1987 and hiked about 5,000 miles. His first major hike was a climb up Mt. Fuji in Japan in 1955. He is survived by his wife of 59 years, Carol Ann Guitrau, five children, and three grandchildren.

**Whittington, Robert Ray “Red”** (April 15, 2021) Robert was from Hammond, Louisiana, and was 86 year-old. After marrying Carol, he took a second job at JCPenney. After receiving a pay raise from JCPenney, Red began working full time. He moved to Dallas, Texas; New York City; Atlanta, Georgia; and Destin, Florida. He retired after 32 years of service. Robert is survived by his wife of 61 years, Carol Ann Guitrau, five children, and three grandchildren.

**Williams, Howard E. “Gene”** (December 16, 2020) Gene was 90 when he passed away in Canton, Georgia. He retired in 1990 from JCPenney as store manager of the Marketplace store in Rochester, New York. He had been employed by the Company for 37 years. He is survived by his wife Thelma of 70 years, five children, nine grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

**Vender, Mr. Richard S.** (March 10, 2021) Richard passed in Santa Fe, New Mexico, at the age of 81. His career with JCPenney was in Information Technology. He is survived by his wife Arlene of Santa Fe, New Mexico.
At Your Fingertips

Get the latest National H.C.S.C. or Regional Meeting Group news, as well as other information online at:

JCPALUMNINCLUB.ORG