



**If it has a ball in it,
*He's There!***

Red is his favorite color;

Action, his Modus Operandi,

Spheres and *Circles* dominate his world,

People stimulate his passion,

and *Aging* dictates his adjustments.

For some 32,873 plus days, his life has been guided by these elements,

and his memories of their results remain sharp.

He is Hubbard McDuffie. For the past 20 years, "Hub" and his wife Doris have presided over their Annona acres. For both, the move from Wake Village to Annona was a homecoming, yet Hub and his red Ford pickup have logged more than 200,000 miles traveling Bowie and Red River Counties. "You know why I drive a red pickup?" he asks. "Because I like red, and they're easy to sell. People buy red pickups better." People do buy red pickups—when they are put on the market, but

Hubbard and Doris McDuffy at their home in Annona



the McDuffies retain their treasures. "We are pack rats. I'll agree to that," Doris confesses while Hub nods agreeably. Hub's constantly shining everyday Ford pickup has to move aside when he starts the engine of his red, refurbished and parade-ready '65 Chevrolet truck, a prize winner in Avery and Clarksville parades.

Their agreement comes easily, as Doris and Hub have known each other most of their lives. The Geary Family migrated to Annona after the covered wagons of their ancestors arrived near Clarksville. Doris, an only child, still points to the modest white

frame house in which she was reared. She grew up trying to be both son and daughter to her parents, so she learned early to accept challenges. For instance, on one bird hunting trip with her dad and uncle, the hammer slipped on the 410 she was carrying. "Oh Daddy, do you think I shot Ole Jack [the bird dog]?" she cried. Her uncle quickly answered, "Jack, Hell, you almost killed me." Not to be deterred, Doris, her dad and uncle continued to hunt—deer as well as birds.

In 1937, Hub and his family got off the train at the Annona depot. Since his dad was a Depot Manager for the Texas and Pacific Railroad, the family moved around, but Hub found his moorings in Annona. He was the fourth child in a family of 8 children, five of whom have died from lung cancer. Everyone in the family, but Hub, smoked heavily. Hub, however, had no time for smoking. He was much too active.

As it turned out, Doris lived just down the street from the McDuffie Family, and she had a bicycle. The two of them preferred going home for lunch each day,

so Hub would pump Doris from the school to the house where his family boarded, dismount and surrender the bike to his younger passenger to ride the remainder of the distance. When Doris had finished her lunch, she rode the bike back to Hub's house where he hopped on and pumped the two of them back to school. Hub also buckled skates at the skating rink so he could skate free. At the time skater Doris was 8 years old and he was 17. Hub laughs as he remembers pointing to Doris and declaring to the town's restaurant owner, "You see that little girl there. I'm gonna marry her." Today, some 64 years later, he squirms as he acknowledges, "I was just talkin'. I didn't really mean it." Doris just shakes her head.

Life during those growing up years was hard. Since Hub had a nine year headstart on Doris, their memories differ. He recalls, for example, a few Christmases before the Depression. Christmas 1925: Santa Claus left a little red wagon for this Hawkins, Texas, 5 year old. Hubbard was so proud of the wagon, which he was certain his dad had not seen, he decided to pull it

to the train depot and show him. When Hub tried to pull the wagon over the bank of the railroad, the wagon's wheels got caught in the tracks. He was able to lift the back, but the tongue caught on the railing. The wagon and Hubbard were stuck. Fortunately, his dad spotted the problem from the depot and ran out to rescue both boy and wagon before the oncoming train reached the station.

By 1929, there were no more red wagons, however. The nation was in



McDuffie (front row, 2nd from right) with his teammates at Texas Middle School's Basketball Gym recently.

the grip of depression. Hub recalls many Christmases when there were no gifts, but there was food on the table. With an unemployment rate of 45%, the entire family was grateful Hubbard's dad had a job. Economic stress was easing by the time the McDuffie's arrived in Annona. The high school went to the eleventh grade, with graduating classes of 20 to 25 students. Annona bustled with businesses—grocery and drug stores, meat markets, feed and farm supply stores—even a department store. "It was a busy little place until people got cars and could go to town," Hub acknowledges.

Transportation also encouraged opportunities, like expanded games with the spherical shape which would dominate Hub's life—a basketball. "I played basketball on a little dirt court in Bivins, Texas," he reminisces. "The seventh and eighth grade was the big boys' team, and I had to earn the right to play. I was 12 years old the first time I ever played basketball on a gym floor in Queen City, Texas. You just had to have 5 players for a game; no idea of a position."

Doris smiles knowingly, "If it has a

ball in it, he's there."

World War II changed everything for the world and for Hubbard McDuffie. However, some things stayed the same. He joined the United States Army Air Forces and became a flight engineer with the Fifth Ferrying Group which took over Love Field during the war. The 62nd Ferrying Division picked up B-24 bombers and flew them to Air Corps modification centers. Each squadron on the base had a...basketball team. After the coach of the base team

scouted, he chose the best players on each squadron's team to play on the base team. Hub's 62nd squadron team soundly defeated the elite base team and earned the right to compete in the 5th Army tournament at SMU. Now, Hub's team was composed chiefly of high school graduates, but there was a Fort Hood general who took basketball seriously. "He had all the pro players transferred to his team. We got beat the worst you've ever seen." The defeat did not dampen Hub's enthusiasm for the game, however. "His life's centered around sports, I tell you," Doris observes.

Hub's immediate response, "That's why I'm so healthy." Even today he sports stylish, thick, light brown hair streaked with gray; clear, almost wrinkle-free facial skin, and light blue eyes protected by long lashes. His brisk gait easily carries his 190 lbs. from one project to another.

When Hub returned to Annona, he had seen much of the world. On December 15, 1944, for example, he was on the Phillipine Island of Leyte, "flat on two sides with a mountain in the middle—Americans on one side; Japanese on the other." After fierce land and naval battles from October to December 1944, the Allied forces gained control of the island, thus the Pacific waters. The global world was changing along with his local world. The young squirt he had left in Annona when he joined the Army Air Forces had now become a lovely young woman (just as he knew she would, he claims). Doris and Hub dated about a year under the careful scrutiny of Momma Geary. "We drove into the driveway, and if we didn't come in soon, my mother started flipping the switch."

"Had to get in a little smooching, you know," Hub responds defensively.

When Hub asked Doris to marry him, she walked and walked the streets of Annona before she said "Yes." "Why do you want to marry before you finish your education?" her mother had asked. "I'm afraid Hub will marry someone else while I'm in college," Doris responded. On November 2, 1946, with a note from her mother in hand, Hubbard McDuffie and Doris Geary got the license and were married. She graduated from Annona High School in May of that same year. Hub fully understood he would be responsible for educating his young bride.

"How come you married such a young girl?" folks asked.

"I got home and lots of the girls were picked over. I got me a cheerleader," Hub casts a mischievous glance at his cheerleader.

"Well, your brother Jack kinda' liked me, too."

"She thought everybody liked her."

"I felt lucky to get him," her tone more serious now. "All the others I didn't care for. He always treated me like a lady. The others were rambunctious and drank a lot."

The newly married couple experienced some tough days. Shortly after Doris and Hub married they used money Hub had saved from his Army pay to purchase a 1947 Fleetline Chevrolet for \$1675. "That was some car... with underseat heaters and everything," Doris declares. They were crossing the Oakland Bay Bridge in their new car when a gravel truck crossed in front of them. In addition to losing the car, Doris suffered

facial cuts which required plastic surgery in her eyebrow area. She also endured a fractured skull and had tendons cut in three fingers on her right hand. Her doctors never expected her to be able to use the hand again, but she and Hub proved them wrong. When she returned for her check-up, the doctor took her around to show off her hand to other patients. Hub wore a body cast—a plaster body cast—from March through August of 1948—but he too recovered from his substantial injuries. The experience,



McDuffie with his teammates many years ago.

however, remains indelibly imprinted in their respective memories.

This early lesson also taught them the importance of expecting the unexpected and working together. Hubbard sold military insurance for a while until he landed a job at Red River Army Depot. His airplane mechanics skills from his military years qualified him for the job—supposedly,

although like many jobs he had, his on-the-job training (self-taught) enabled him to advance. With each new responsibility, he watched and learned and led so that he was promoted steadily to supervisory positions and higher grades. After 28 1/2 years, he retired from Red River.

Meantime, Doris decided to pursue her dreams. She wanted to go to school and become a dentist. Twelve years after their marriage, the couple sold their home in Clarksville to raise money for her to

attend school. After graduating from Paris Junior College in premed, Doris completed her degree at North Texas State University then applied to Baylor Dental School. "Once I got started going to school, I discovered I loved it. I didn't want to stop."

Since she had worked as a Girl Friday in a dentist's office, Doris applied for dental school equipped with substantial medical knowledge. Her application was denied because she was a woman who should become a dental hygienist instead of a dentist. Still interested in medicine, she then

submitted an application to Southwestern Medical School but was denied because of her gender and her age. A man would practice medicine longer than a woman, and student slots were scarce.

For the moment, Doris compromised. She earned her teacher certification from North Texas State University and returned to teach science

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at Annona High School. As the newcomer, she was assigned seven class preparations + physical education classes + basketball coaching (helped by Hub, the team won district) + Senior Class sponsor. When she went home crying, Hub asked, "What else would you like to do?"

"Well, I think I'd like to try pharmacy school," Doris sputtered. By now, Hubbard had become, by his own admission, "a

women's libber because of her."

Doris immediately resigned her teaching position and applied to the University of Texas Pharmacy School. Before she was accepted, she had to retake bacteriology and make a B. No problem. She graduated in 1967 and practiced pharmacy at Otto and Simmons Drug Stores and Wadley Hospital until her retirement in 2000. Doris knew she had succeeded when one

day an older male customer came to refill his prescription. "Are you sure you can do this?" he doubted. As he watched her move about the pharmacy, he supplied directions, "He gets my medicine out of that bottle," the customer pointed to the top shelf. Before leaving, however, he complained of an uncomfortable skin problem on his neck. Doris responded by reaching for some medicine which she showed him how to apply. The medicine solved his problem, and from that time forward he became one of her supporters, "This little lady knows what she's doing," he explained to customers during his visits.

Meanwhile, Hub's sphere changed sizes—from basketballs to hardballs. He played for the Talco Oilers, a Humble Oil and Refining Team and could have played pro ball for the Washington Senators (now Minnesota Twins). He chose instead to play—catcher—in Texarkana's Bear Park (also known as Burnett Field and Lee Park) for \$7.50 per game and \$5 car expenses. He played three games a week and went to an amateur tournament twice. "I played for anyone with \$5. We needed the money." His acknowledgement remains sobering but triggers the memory of the Texarkana Bears who played in the Big State League. Players were migratory. For example, Hub remembers Pete Runnels who played shortstop for the Texarkana Bears, second base for the Boston Red Sox, and shared a batting title with Ted Williams. Had the timing been right, Hubbard McDuffie could have earned his college diploma by taking advantage of full scholarships in baseball at ETSU, but other matters demanded his attention

Money was also a motivator for Hub to earn his referee's certification in the SBOA, the Southwest Basketball Officials

Association. For 15 years (1949-1964) he refereed basketball games for girls and boys—even had his own circuit which included Mt. Vernon, Mt. Pleasant, Daingerfield, Hooks, Annona, Avery, and Bogota. Hub worked at Red River during the daytime. After work he rushed home, changed into the referee's uniform still hanging in his closet and headed to the game. Pushing the speed limit a bit, he could get to his farthest point—Daingerfield—exactly 10 minutes before the 7 p.m. game start.

Doris and Hub have embraced life and juggled many activities during their lifetimes. For Doris that has meant tending her beloved flowers whose care her 81 years require she minimizes now (and Hub refuses to do flowers). He does, however, plant a productive garden each year and has cultivated tomato plants even taller than his 6 foot frame. He might even be caught sitting by his pond and feeding his catfish. By now it's no secret that Hubbard and Doris McDuffie are an exceptional couple. Their home is filled with soft colors, and rays of sunshine streak through large windows. A striking, hand-crafted, wrap-around ash mantel compliments ash cabinets and dining furniture and generates a beautiful, comfortable living space. No doubt about it. There are no strangers—visitors are encouraged to come to the back door—only new acquaintances in the McDuffie home.

Both Hubbard and Doris are passionate about people Doris regularly assists aspiring pharmacists with advice and applications. Hubbard watches for people potential wherever he may be. He has attended graduations, as promised, of waitpersons he has encouraged to attend college. He can even be distracted from his customary beef enchilada smothered with onions, chili and cheese sauce to give directions to younger listeners like Kenny Backus of Clarksville. "If you want to know what the Depression was really like, look at Henry Fonda in THE GRAPES OF WRATH movie."

Employees and applicants at Red River Credit Union know him well. He has been on their board for 32 years and has served off and on for 12 years, as both Chairman of the Board and member. The credit union has grown from its original 9 members and \$45 in deposits to assets over \$525 million and more than 60,000 members Hubbard McDuffie has been involved in much of that growth. Both customers and personnel continue to benefit from his encouragement and leadership.

Hub is a man of action, especially where people are concerned. He has assumed the responsibility of assisting widows attempting to negotiate survivor paper trails. He even gets appointed to jobs requiring lots of physical energy, like caring for the historic

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Garland Cemetery outside Annona. The earliest date in the cemetery is 1874, and a historical marker tells its story. Hubbard was actually recruited to serve as the cemetery's caretaker. He accepted then got himself appointed Chief Executive Officer (that eliminates a decision committee). Next, he got a fence erected to keep out 4 wheel visitors and persuaded Jerry Calloway, a neighboring landowner, to donate land for expanding the cemetery. Now, Hub has had a burial chapel constructed. He also has managed to become the chief lawn mower and picker-upper.

Not many folks can brag that they have named their own town. Hubbard McDuffie can, and Doris helped him. Since their 30 1/2 acres are situated halfway between Annona and Boxelder, Hub decided they lived in Boxona. He petitioned the County Commissioner's Court to recognize his town's name, and they did. Doris headed the Boxona Garden Club, the mandatory organization which welcomed folks to Boxona and is responsible for maintaining its boundaries. Although the Welcome sign has disappeared now, the green Boxona sign occupies its appropriate space on the roadside.

Undoubtedly, the favorite people project of Hubbard is the Texarkana Basketball Association which played its first game more than 20 years ago in the gym of the Beverly Park Boys' Club (a place to burn up or freeze), then moved to the Pine Street Middle School Gym. No space has been as accommodating as the Texas Middle School Gym where the group currently plays. Team members



are charged a fee which underwrites a \$1500 annual scholarship for a Texas High School student. Teams are loosely organized on the spot into the Shirts and the Skins, i.e. some wear shirts, others do not. Winners must score 15 points then win by 2, 17-15. Fouls are called by the players who make them or by the team member fouled. The players who cover the occupational spectrum range from experienced to less experienced, well-conditioned to a bit pot-bellyish. A game covers a full court, usually. To facilitate keeping track of the score, regulation 3 point shots are worth 2 points in the pickup game while regulation 2 point shots count as 1.

Stan Brummel and Hubbard McDuffie are the only remaining members of the founding group. Over the years, Hub has served the group as Treasurer, i.e. he *will* get your money, while Stan has served as point man, organizer, historian, idea man—basketball man of many hats. On November 8, 2010, Hub's 32,873 days were translated into 90 years of age; on Wednesday, November 10, Hub played in what

he has described as his last pickup game. He had prepared for the game for weeks with walking and workouts, and he succeeded in playing on both Sunday, November 7 and Wednesday, November 10. Now age has forced him to adjust to a spectator's role. "I wanted to play when I was 90 years and 2 days old," Hub noted. He did.

Conversation may be almost as important to these meetings as basketball. Hub can remember as though it had just happened when the Giants and Cleveland played in Texarkana's Bear Park. "There was an overflow crowd. Whitey Lockman, a Left Fielder for the Giants had to back up into the crowd to catch the ball. He got so

mad because any ball caught in a crowd was not an out.!" He can even remember paying 13¢ a gallon for gas.

With affection and admiration, Stan Brummel notes, "I don't know of anyone who enjoys playing basketball any more than Hubbard. He's been playing with us for 27 years. When he first started he was 63 years old, and his goal was to play until he was 65. He's now 90.

"He rarely missed a day except for his credit union meetings. He loved playing so much he drove 120 miles round trip twice a week for about the last 20 years. He is truly an amazing and skilled player, even a better person and friend."

Another player of some 20 years, Frank Poff echoes Brummel's admiration for Hub's character as well as his basketball prowess. "He is always a gentleman, always a pleasure. He has much of which to be proud. Every time he sank a 3 on me, he had to stand and wait for me to shoot a 3. His glee could barely be hidden. I always passed to him because I knew he could sink the ball. On a basketball court, a pass to Hubbard was never wasted. He could outshoot guys one-third his age. He had his shot over in the corner."

Hubbard also likes to shoot from the boundary of the free throw circle. "That way," he explains, "you can hit the board or the edge of the circular basket or the basket. You have lots more

chances for the ball to go in." Always enthusiastic.

As Hub walked toward the gym door for the last time as a player, Stan Brummel accompanied him. He opened the door, and the two stood—just briefly—before their extended hands met in a heartwarming 27 year handshake. "You come on back whenever you want to, Hubbard."

"I'm gonna take my shoes out of my truck so I won't be tempted," Hubbard comments as he walks toward his waiting red pickup spinning his basketball in his hands.

With 90 years of living and learning for Hubbard and 81 for Doris and heading toward their 65th year of marriage, these two have enjoyed the good times and weathered the harder ones. They have constructed their own relationship and lived its changes as the years passed while, at the same time, succeeding in their own worlds. It's to be expected that Hubbard offers some advice about growing older:

1. Do not smoke.
2. Exercise
3. "You want to get old? I can tell you how in two words, 'Don't die.'"

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Hubbard and Doris McDuffie.*

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