

GARY VAN WINKLE

Gary Van Winkle's Dream Achieved: Gary Van Winkle Works on this Task along with Many Others

Graduate: Class of 1975 Occupation: Engineering/Land Surveying
By Carmen VanWinkle, Spring, 2009

Raising a family and working at the same time is not as easy as it looks, but for Gary he found it fun and enjoyed it. Gary Van Winkle, my father, graduated in 1975. He has lived in Bretzville, Indiana, for the past 21 years.

Gary had some successful times in high school along with many unexpected failures. He had to go through getting cut from the high school basketball team. He says "I had to watch them even though I thought I was better... I never gave up on anything, if I can do it, anyone can." He was happy to be 85th out of 125 students in his class rank (says with a laugh!).

College was a hectic time. He attended several colleges. Attending Vincennes University for architecture, he didn't enjoy drafting. He soon moved on to Indiana State to study business and construction management and technology.

Getting a job early in life makes sense; one can benefit from knowing what a career feels like and how real life works. Gary worked at Best Chairs during his college days, and he somewhat enjoyed his work there. Concrete delivery trucks fascinated him, but he knew that wasn't what he planned to do the rest of his life.

Becoming a successful business man was a huge part of growing up and starting a lifelong career. After working hard and gaining money, Gary found the woman of his dreams. The greatest day of his life, he says was when he married his wife Rhonda (Haas) also a Forest Park graduate, class of 1980. A huge part of his life was when all of his children were born: Stephanie, Reece, Casey, and Carmen. "We are a fun, loving, hardworking, and sports-minded family," he said.

Gary co-owns his business-Benchmark Services, Inc. an engineering/land surveying company. Located in Huntingburg, Indiana, where he has enjoyed working since 1982, the company has challenged him to do his best.

Responsibilities are a huge part of having a job. Gary takes it seriously when certain tasks need to get done, while still having fun. Involved in cellular telephone companies, he prepares lease descriptions and sites plans. Providing FAA reports is not an easy job, but he does the job well. Also, he works for Hoosier Energy. The

most important part is doing surveys and computer work with stable drawings. Gary works in a partnership with Ralph Wallem. Their main mission every day is to of course make money to work as hard as they can every minute to get the people's work complete so that they can move on.

In the past, a hobby of his was playing golf with buddies five times a week. He now enjoys his children's sporting events almost every other night. As Gary stated, "Nothing pleases me more than seeing my kids work hard for something and then being rewarded for it. Maybe that sounds boring to some, but that's just me." He also stated, "If you have a dream go for it. Don't be afraid to take risks, especially when you are young. Just go for it."