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Acknowledgments

Roger Ramseyer is a bright, thoughtful, and insightful educator. He is an outstanding individual.

I have known Roger for over 40 years. In 1979, when he came to Holmes County as the high school principal, I was working as a school superintendent, and we became great friends. His ability to achieve great results and yet seemingly balance his life was a model for me.

Roger and I continued to be close associates and he became superintendent

of Green Local Schools. Later, when I became the executive director of the Buckeye Association of Ohio School Administrators, we continued to work together at the College of Wooster, where he is still serving as a professor in the Department of Education.

He is an extremely capable man of high integrity. His management and leadership skills are exemplary. You will indeed enjoy his book *Life Is Good, Most of the Time*. It is just as good as his first book, *The ABCs of Living Happy*.

Roger Ramseyer receives my highest regards as an educator and as an individual.

Richard Maxwell

*Executive Director of the Buckeye Association
of School Administrators of Ohio*

CHAPTER 1

Learning the Ropes

I have been waiting a long time to put these ideas and memories down on paper.

Having been born on a farm, I was expected to be a farmer by my dad, and that was not a bad expectation. Many farmers have a wonderful life. They do not punch a time clock or work a 40-hour week. As a matter of fact, they usually work 70 hours a week, and the day oftentimes begins between 4:30 A.M. and 5:00 A.M., especially if they have animals



to tend to. However, they are their own boss and determine their own fate. I know many bright, hard-working, successful farmers, and I respect what they do for our country.

During my high school days, I was fortunate to have some athletic skill, and I wanted to play sports. However, my dad expected me to be home after school, and working on the farm. I asked my coach to “Please talk with my dad,” and ask him to permit me to play basketball. At first Dad told the coach “No,” as he thought sports were a waste of time, and anyway, he needed me at home to help with the farm work. This was not an unexpected answer from a Mennonite farmer, as he was brought up that way by his father. All members of the family were expected to contribute to the household. This was in the early 50s and all Mennonite farm boys were expected to “work.”

However, my coach did not give up, and he went back to see my dad two more times. He explained to Dad that he thought I had some good basketball ability, and I could help his team win. Finally Dad agreed that I could play basketball,

with the understanding that my work would be waiting for me in the barn when I came home — usually about 6:30 P.M. Also, it was understood that I would not eat until all my work was completed first. I usually did not get in from the barn until 8:30 or 9 P.M. Mom always had a great meal waiting for me, and as soon as I came in, it was on the table. My mom was super! She really took care of her kids.

I worked very diligently at my basketball and by my sophomore year, I was a varsity starter on the team. Since I was 6'4" and could shoot and rebound the ball, I had success. Dad and Mom came to all of our games and they became super supporters. Mom, especially, encouraged me to “be the best you can be...work hard at the game and be a winner.”

One day in P.E. class, Coach had all of us doing track and field events. He showed me how to throw the shot put, and I picked up on that skill quickly. Within a few days, I was throwing the shot farther than anyone else in the school, and I really hadn't had any real coaching yet. My basketball

coach told the track coach about me, and of course he wanted me to come out for track. I knew there was “no way,” as my dad had made it *very* clear that I was only going to play basketball.

Again, Coach made a trip to the farm and spoke to Dad about me coming out for the track team. Now, Dad was *really* not happy about this visit. Was I ever going to be home after school and working on the farm? Well, Mom intervened and in some way convinced Dad to allow me to go out for track. However, my barn work was always waiting for me at 6:30 P.M.

My high school days were terrific, and I really enjoyed every day. I was elected class President (all four years) and track and basketball were coming along very well. Oh, by the way, the baseball coach found out I could pitch and you guessed it—I played baseball also.

By my senior year I owned the basketball scoring record in my high school (it still stands today, 50 years later). I was selected to the All Star Team and was able to set the record in our county in the shot put.