

‘Looking for a Hot-Dog Stand’

It happened back in 1983. Only eight minutes and 34 seconds remained in a football game between the University of Nevada-Reno Wolf Pack and the Fresno State Bulldogs.

Suddenly, Wolf Pack running back Otto Kelly broke loose on an 89-yard scamper and a touchdown, giving his team a 22-21 lead. During Kelly’s run, his coach, Chris Ault of the Wolf Pack, got so caught up in the excitement that he began racing down the sideline alongside Kelly.

When Ault reached the Fresno State 20-yard line, he realized he had gone beyond the marked-off area in which coaches are allowed to roam. He risked having his team penalized 15 yards, so he just kept right on running. He dashed through the end zone, up a ramp and out of the stadium.

He was found hiding behind a truck. A fan asked, “Say, aren’t you the coach for Reno?” Without a moment’s hesitation, Ault replied, “I’m just looking for a hot-dog stand.”

When the chagrined coach made it back to the bench, he learned that in spite of his attempt to elude the referees, his team had been penalized 15 yards on the subsequent kickoff because he had run afoul of the rules. This gave good field position to Fresno State, which went on to kick a last-second field goal for a 24-22 victory.

Getting carried away cost this football coach a win. Still, we love his enthusiasm. Have you ever gotten that excited about something? If you are a sports fan, you have. It’s exhilarating, isn’t it?

Merriam-Webster dictionary defines excitement as “something that stirs up feelings of great enthusiasm and interest.”

So, beyond sports, what else do we get excited about? Courtship? Birth of a child or grandchild? A wedding anniversary? A civic club award? A musical performance?

The question also becomes ... what about work? Do we get excited about the mission we are called to do in Life Care and Century Park? Does it show in our relationship with residents, families and our co-workers?

A word closely related to excitement is passion, which *Merriam-Webster* says is “a strong liking or desire for or devotion to some activity, object or concept.”

Excitement about a job and the passion that is brought to it are qualities that always stand out. And they help define true leadership.

The Apostle Paul described how we should approach our calling: *Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men* (Colossians 3:23 ESV).

– Beecher Hunter