

Wisdom from the Babe

The Rev. Robert (Bob) Richards, known as the Pole Vaulting Parson for his athletic accomplishments, is the only two-time Olympic gold medal winner in the pole vault (1952 and 1956), and he won the bronze medal in 1948. He was the first athlete to appear on the front of the Wheaties cereal boxes in 1958.

In his book, *Heart of a Champion*, he wrote about a conversation with George Zaharias, husband of the great golfer Babe Didrikson Zaharias (who also won two gold medals in track and field at the 1932 Olympics). Zaharias was a professional wrestler and sports promoter.

Babe was dying of cancer, and Zaharias stood by her bedside, crying like a baby.

She said, “Now, honey, don’t take on so. While I’ve been in the hospital, I have learned one thing. A moment of happiness is a lifetime, and I have had a lot of happiness. I have a lot of it.”

Richards said, “That’s courage, to stress the quality of life rather than just the quantity, to meet life’s greatest tragedy with a smile. That’s what makes courage.”

As associates in Life Care, Century Park and Life Care at Home, we see those individuals who have lived long, and often, fruitful lives pass on. But we also encounter – personally and professionally – young or middle-aged people who are cut down by death early in their years. As we reflect on the value of their contributions while here, we can see the true impact they have made on those within their circle of family, friends and acquaintances.

And as we engage in caregiving, we can be assured that the imprint of our efforts on those we serve brings a quality to our existence that is pure and genuine.

– Beecher Hunter