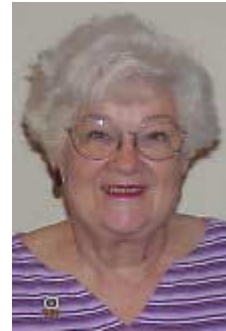


Freda Fife

Interview by Sherry Kennedy

I truly enjoyed interviewing Freda as she is one of the original members of our chapter and has always held a special place in our group. People often ask how our chapter has done so well for so many years and I think it is because of people like Freda who built a good foundation for us all. Freda is one of the only people that you will see that always has a smile on her face and after interviewing her, I can see why. She has a wonderful outlook on life, has a great family, and two successful businesses, which she has worked very hard at making them what they are today.



Where are you from?

I was born in Central Illinois and have four brothers and two sisters. I am almost the youngest and was raised on a farm.

Please, tell me a little about your family.

I have been married to my husband, Dee for 49 years. We have two sons, Dale and Russell. We also have four grandchildren and one great grandson who was just born in February of this year.

What are some of your greatest accomplishments?

My greatest accomplishment is starting Fife Refrigeration and Fort Walton Restaurant Equipment from the ground up in 1975 and making it what it is today, a successful business.

What are some highlights of your life?

I have had some of the best moments spending time with my brothers, sisters and their families. We get together with them every three years and have a reunion. The immediate family of my brothers and sisters get together every year.

What are your hobbies or things you enjoy doing while you're not working?

I enjoy entertaining at my home and cooking. My husband has taken an interest in cooking too and has been learning new recipes from the food network.

Tell me about the positions that you held before becoming the co-owner of Ft Walton Beach Restaurant Equipment and Fife Refrigeration? Tell me about your current position.

After high school, I started working with an insurance agency and then eventually moved into a new job of being a long distance telephone operator. Shortly after we got married, Dee started working at Vitro, and that is when we moved to Fort Walton Beach. Dee took one look at the surroundings (which was a small beach town in 1959) and said, "What have I gotten you into?"

Currently, I am the Secretary and Treasurer for both Fife Refrigeration and Fort Walton Restaurant Equipment and work in the daily operations of the business Monday through Saturday.

When did you join ABWA? Who introduced you to it?

I joined ABWA over 24 years ago (in September) and was one of the original members of the chapter, along with Jeanne Rief. Our chapter was only 5-6 women in the group and we met at the Marina Bay Motel in Fort Walton Beach. I was the Vice President one year after starting the chapter.

How has ABWA affected your life?

One of the reasons I joined ABWA was that I felt like it filled a void in my life, having some lady friends and associates outside of my businesses to talk with. It's important to me to have a life outside of work. It has made me feel more complete and I like the consistency of our meetings being the first Tuesday of every month and my husband always knows where I am.

Are you a member of any other business clubs or groups?

I am a member of Fort Walton Beach Chamber of Commerce and the local Republican Women's Club. I enjoy hearing the candidates discuss their views on various topics.

What would you consider as your greatest challenge?

My greatest challenge is running both of businesses and keeping all of my customers happy.

What drives, inspires, and motivates you?

What drives me is all of my customers and knowing that people depend on me. I don't want to disappoint them.

Finish this statement: "Each week I look forward to..."

My day off on Sunday. I usually do laundry, chores, and relax.

Likes: I like having friends...I feel that we can never have too many friends. I like people who do what they say they are going to do.

Who would you consider as your role model?

My role model is my mother.

Best Asset: My best asset is friendliness and openness with people.

Favorite Color: Purple

What is the phrase or saying that you live by day to day?

"Take one day at a time because you never know what the next day will bring."

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