

**Wanderings  
from the  
Woods  
& Water**  
by Jay  
Bicknell  
CorridorHR@gmail.com



## Teal and the Master

Jake, Josh, Brinley and myself made it out for a quick duck hunt the other day. The boys and myself had our shotguns. Brinley brought the fishing pole AKA retriever! We shot a duck that landed about 25 yards out in the water. After 40 casts I finally snagged the duck and reeled it in.

The memories of my old dog teal came flooding back. She was one of the best dogs I ever owned. She would have hit the water wide open and retrieved the duck in seconds. I wrote this column several years ago and ran it several times. In a few days we will be celebrating the Master's birthday and I thought it was fitting to run it again. Merry Christmas and Seek His Presence and not his presents this Christmas!

Teal was a 60 pound black Labrador Retriever. She was a tenacious, hard-charging duck dog. She only had one master and that was me. She taught me more than I ever taught her.

We got Teal when she was 4 months old. Actually, my wife got her as a pet 13 years ago. I saw Teal as an opportunity to get into duck hunting. I watched a few training videos and started getting her ready for the upcoming hunting season. Before I knew it, Teal was my dog 100% and had snubbed my wife. Teal's mission in life was to make me, her master, happy.

I taught her how to be one heck of a duck dog. She did it all, took hand signals, did blind retrieves with ease, and even passed every hunt test she ran in. Teal did everything I asked of her without hesitation.

Teal taught me many things too. We were hunting the river on a 10-degree morning when my brother-in-law shot a duck in the middle of the river. I sent Teal and she went without hesitations into freezing water to chase down a crippled duck and bring it back.

We were hunting a slough covered in Lotus so thick you could barely see the water. I shot a wood duck in the middle of the Lotus jungle. I sent

Teal into this mess after the crippled duck and she went without hesitation. She was out of sight busting through the Lotus for at least 30 minutes. I came to the conclusion the duck was a lost cause. She would not give up. Another 15 minutes passed when she came out of the Lotus, face bleeding and raw, with the duck.

Again, we were hunting Station Camp Creek when a friend of mine shot a duck on the other side of the stream. Teal didn't see the duck fall. But I sent her and again, she went without hesitation. She got to the other side of the stream and I gave a whistle blast, she turned to watch me. I gave the back left hand signal, she did it perfectly. Then I gave another blast, she turned and I gave her a left over signal. She went left and made an awesome blind retrieve.

A year ago last January Teal made her last retrieve for her master. Her body was covered with cancer and started to shut down. We went for one last retrieve. I grabbed a retrieving bumper and tossed it for her. I sent Teal and she went without hesitation even with her hurting body. She brought it back and went to sleep in my arms. If real men don't cry then I am not a real man.

So what did Teal teach me? She taught me when the master asks you to do something, you do it without hesitation. She taught me to trust the master no matter what the circumstance. She taught me when the master asks you, don't give up until it's done. She taught me to listen and look for signals from the master. She taught me that no matter how bad it gets, follow the master's commands. She taught me to only follow one master. And she taught me to LOVE serving the master.

I will tell you straight up, I love Jesus. I feel like the Lord talks to us everyday we just have to listen. I try my best to live for the Master the way Teal taught me. I fall short everyday, but I keep striving. Its funny how the Master talks to us, are you listening?

Until next week get out and enjoy God's creation!



Jake, Brinley, and Josh with a wood duck.

## Long-time Basketball Scoring Leader Started Playing Ball at an Early Age

Estill's long-time basketball all-time scoring leader Delmar McGee was surpassed by current Estill County senior Caleb Click on Friday night, December 15, 2017, during a game between Estill and Owsley County. The game was stopped after Bonny's basket and McGee presented him the game ball.

The previous all-time leading scorer, McGee, with 1,943 career points, was honored during a game between the Estill County Engineers and the Owsley County Owls in 2010. A banner was placed on the wall of Estill's gym.

Many former teammates of McGee during his career, and his many friends, were on hand to honor him.

McGee's record had stood the test of time since he graduated in 1957, holding up to the likes of former Louisville Cardinals standout player Brian Kiser who finished with 1,614 at ECHS and was second in scoring until last year.

In 2009, Tristan Cacklin moved ahead of Kiser with 1,768 points but could not overtake McGee's 52-year-old record.

A conversation with McGee in 2010 revealed three loves in his life -- that of basketball, his wife of 52 years, Katherine, and their family, and his God whom he has served as a pastor for about 42 years.

The McGees have three sons, Randy, Tim and Rodney, and four grandchildren. They also had a stillborn son, Bradley Scott.

He is currently the pastor of Greenbriar Baptist Church in Estill County, but has served churches in Richmond and in Ohio as well as others.

McGee attended Trapp Elementary School for a couple of years and may have developed a love for basketball then.

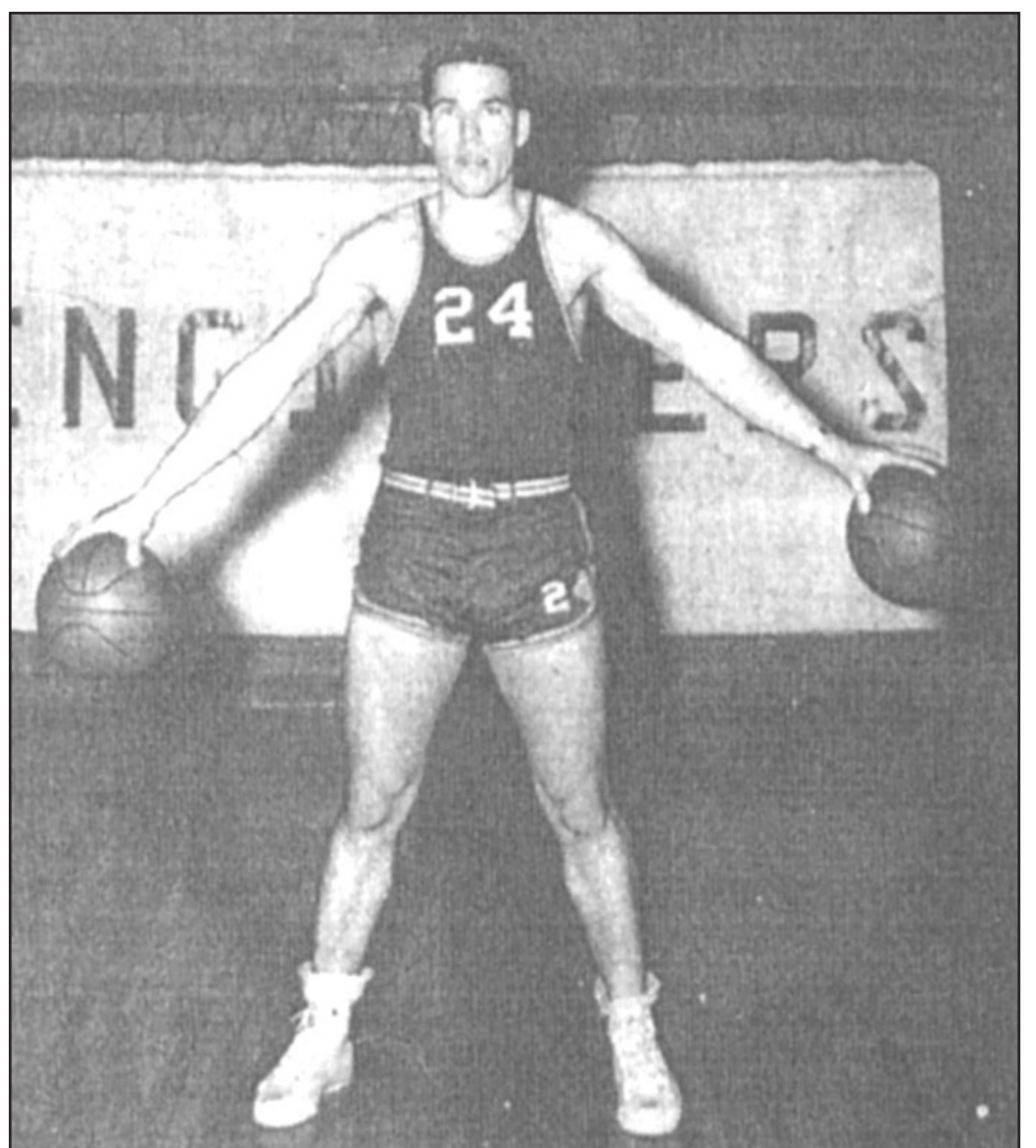
He grew up playing with a wagon wheel for a rim and a rag ball for a basketball.

He eventually moved to Estill County and attended West Irvine School where his teams played outside with a steel rim and no net.

The West Irvine School eventually burned down and students were sent to other schools in the county. McGee said he lay in his house with a broken leg and watched his school burn from a window.

He began playing for the high school team in the 5th grade and continued to play for the Engineers until his graduation. Coach Winfred Potts gave him the opportunity to play at the high school. Critty Stewart also helped with the basketball team.

Believed to be the



Former all-time leading scorer for Estill County Delmar McGee shows how to hold two basketballs at the same time.

youngest player ever in an ECHS uniform, McGee was the 6th man on the varsity as an 8th grader and started throughout his high school career. (McGee's points scored while in elementary were not counted against his 1,943 total.

"We worked hard as a team," says McGee. After practices and games, he had to walk nearly 7 miles home to the head of White Oak.

He says he always tried to get his rest so he would be ready in time for the game.

McGee scored 28 points as a freshman which led Estill in a district championship win over Madison Central.

He later set nearly ever scoring record for Estill. The old game record was 36 points, but McGee put in 54 one night and said he could have scored more but wanted to make sure his teammates got shots as well.

One of his most memorable individual moments was when he outjumped 6'9" Ned Jennings of Nicholas County five time in one game.

He was named Honorable Mention All-State as a junior and made 1st Team All State as a senior and played in the East-West All-Star Game at Memorial Coliseum.

He received basketball scholarship offers from several colleges and went on to Eastern to play. He also received a couple of foot-

ball scholarship offers even though he had never played a game. If he had played even one game, Kentucky would have gave him a scholarship, simply because of his athletic ability.

He was already playing on the freshman team at Eastern when they told him he was not eligible because he had gotten married to his wife, Katherine Brinegar, so McGee dropped out of school. Later that year they changed the rule, but he had already started working and did not return.

He was also a good baseball player on several teams, but records were not kept.

McGee remembers playing in the Bluegrass League where a team from Estill County that was known as the Kentucky Bluegrass that finished up #2 in the state to a West Liberty team that was led by Steve Hamilton who went on to play for the Milwaukee Braves.

McGee, himself a fine baseball player, tried out for the Pittsburg Pirates but heard nothing. He also was asked to try out for the Cincinnati Reds but did not go.

Despite all his achievements, McGee gives all the credit to his teammates, guys like Don Williams, Rondell VanCleve and Red Roberts. He also attributes his success to his coaches, like Potts and Stewart and Coach Rodney Brewer who coached one of the winningest coaches in Estill County history before

moving to a job in Lexington.

Many feel the Engineers of 1954-55 where the best team to ever play for Estill. There season record was 29-8 and had the longest winning streak in the history of the school, 21 games.

The won the old Pioneer Conference Championship with 8 wins and no loss, and their most memorable win was a 54-53 win over Henry Clay High School, the number 1 team in the state.

Brewer called his team, "the most explosive team I have ever seen in high school basketball."

"There were many fine players on the 1955 team," Delmar noted. "And each one of them understood the team concept."

"It took the whole team to get us there," says McGee. "They made me the player I was."

"I had so many thrills as a member of the Engineers," McGee once noted, "It is difficult to name just one thrill as the most outstanding."

Former Estill principal Blain Click was instrumental in honoring McGee in 2010. Click and others went to great lengths to find missing records for points McGee scored for Estill while still a grade schooler; however, nothing has turned up. Click is still interested in finding any of these old records that may add to McGee's official point total or other records that are missing.

### MONDAY



DECEMBER 25

© 2015 by King Features Syndicate, Inc.  
World rights reserved.