

Reading The Great American Success Story

By Melinda Kaitcer

Entrepreneur Tom Harken has made millions in businesses ranging from selling recreational vehicles to operating a highly successful restaurant chain. But that's not how he made his true mark on his fellow man. Following his passion for promoting patriotism and the entrepreneurial spirit was what earned Harken the 1992 Horatio Alger Award. What followed is a legacy that continues to change lives.

It was winning the coveted 1992 Horatio Alger Award for Distinguished Americans that brought to light the deep, dark secret Tom Harken had carried with him most of his life. As he sat in his conference room across from his two grown sons one day in 1992, Harken clutched his wife's hand. "Miss Melba," as he calls her, had supported him and kept his secret for many years.

During one of the most emotional moments of his life, Harken told his sons Tommy and Mark why he hadn't

been the father he had wanted to be. He had never read them a bedtime story, he hadn't helped with their homework and he had never been a Scout leader. The plain and simple truth was that while his sons were growing up, their father was illiterate.

Though he started and had enormous success in more than a half dozen different businesses, Harken never could have guessed that his major contribution to the world would be totally unrelated to these accomplishments.

From his upbringing, which was steeped in American patriotism, Harken discovered his true passion. He loved telling others about the importance of patriotism and the hard work it takes to achieve the American dream. Harken delivered this message to schools, businesses and service organizations whenever he was asked. As the word spread, so did his bookings.

"One speech always led to several more," he says. And then someone nominated him for the Horatio Alger



Harken has achieved numerous awards and showcases them in a gallery, including his Horatio Alger Award medal (middle).

Award. Still, nobody knew that he didn't learn to read or write until he was 27 years old.

"You have to tell your story," Miss Melba said, when she learned that his nomination had been confirmed. "You have to make the speech of your life."

And so he did. In Washington, D.C., on May 1, 1992, before an audience of more than 4,500 people including the President of the United States and other Alger honorees, Harken told his story.

"He got a standing ovation," Miss Melba says, her eyes still shining with the memory of that moment.

The power of Harken's message quickly reached mainstream America, and he landed on the cover of *Parade* magazine.

"Can you imagine that?" Harken laughs, still amazed over it all.

By following his passion, Harken was able to shed light upon the plight of more than 80 million Americans who are functionally illiterate, just as he had been.

"You can't imagine my surprise when I learned that I wasn't the only adult in America who couldn't read or write," Harken says. "I knew I had to use this opportunity that had been given to me to make a difference."

And now, as Tom Harken shares this remarkable story with \$1,000,000aire Blueprints readers, it is his hope that they, too, will follow their deepest passions. Who knows what a difference any one person's story could make?

Why were you illiterate? How did you grow up without learning to read?

When I was a child, I was very sickly and spent a lot of time in an iron lung. As a result, I missed a lot of school. And when I was there, I just wasn't interested in learning. I couldn't sit still and concentrate. I just thought I was stupid and too much of a dreamer.

Once you were grown, what jobs were you able to get without being able to read or write?

Well, the first thing I did was go into the U.S. Air Force. The recruiters filled out all the forms, so they had no idea. That was right at the end of the Korean Conflict. They gave us all these multiple choice tests, so I thought I had a pretty good chance of beating the odds. But that particular time, I didn't. I ended up with a permanent 1-0, which meant that a person was uneducated and could not be promoted. I was just there. They really didn't know what to do with me, so I was bounced around for about three and a half years. Then they mustered me out early because I was uneducated.

Did you learn any skills in the service that helped you get a job when you got out?

I first sold shoes in the military. All I had to do was measure the customer's foot and collect a deposit of \$3. That was what we made. The company would send the shoes to the customer cash on delivery. Since the customer filled out his or her own order form, I got away with that pretty well.

What else happened in the military that changed your life?

Well, the best thing that happened to me then was meeting Miss Melba. I ended up at Altus Air Force Base. She was working in civil service and going to college as well. I saw her as I was coming in every day, and I would say, "Wow! Who is that? That is the best looking woman around." So our friends conspired to get us together for a date.

Did she know you couldn't read?

No, but she told me many times that she was valedictorian of her high school class. I did not know what that meant, but I knew it was a pretty big deal. So I kept quiet.

"At the time, he would sell himself short because he felt he wasn't very bright. But I noticed how he absorbed all the information around him," Miss Melba says.

So when did she find out?

We were sitting in a restaurant, and she was pushing me a little bit to get married. "Either make a commitment," she said, "or something's got to go." She also liked this captain who was a pretty sharp guy. So I thought, 'Oh, man — What am I going to do here? Then the waitress came to take our order. I told her to get me a hamburger and Miss Melba just looked at me.

"Why do you always order a hamburger?" she asked. "There are other things to eat here. Just read the menu."

And I just looked at her in a fit of



“I believe in going into business, in being independent and in having your own business.”

**Miss Melba with poet, Dr. Maya Angelou (left).
Harken’s RV company set up for business (below).**



anger and blurted it all out. I said, “You don’t want me because I’m not that good. And I’ll tell you something else — I can’t read or write and that is the reason I always order a hamburger!”

Right then, our eyes met and she just grabbed my hand and said, “Honey, I love you and it makes no difference. I’ll teach you.” Now how many sharp-looking lady valedictorians would marry a dip who couldn’t read or write?

How quickly did you learn to read, and how did that help you to advance?

“Helping him learn to read was a gradual process. It was very hard for him, and I didn’t know anything about how to teach it. We did finally get him reading and writing. But at times it got really intense. I just knew when I saw his frustration coming that I should back off a little. Gradually, he learned,” Miss Melba says.

Once we had a family to support, I needed a bigger ticket item than shoes, Harken says. I knew a guy who was selling vacuum cleaners and making pretty good money. So I asked him about it and he said, “We’ll go to the distributor and he’ll give you a job.” In those days, they didn’t always make you fill out applications. Since they didn’t require anything in writing, he hired me.

But a sales job required paperwork. How did you manage that?

I carefully memorized names, dates, addresses and telephone numbers. Then, when I got home real late at night, Miss Melba would fill in all the order blanks for me. After I ate my dinner, she’d say, “Go kiss the kids, and tell them good night.” And she’d always help me do the paperwork starting about 10 or 11 p.m., because I had to show the vacuum cleaners in the early evening. We went on like that for 11 years from the time we married, which was in 1958, until 1969.

“Tom learned to be creative. Sometimes he would hand the contract to the wife to fill out while he kept the husband busy explaining how the vacuum cleaner operated. If he couldn’t do that, we had to piece it together the best we could when he got home. He would usually remember the name, the street number and the street, but he couldn’t always remember it all. Sometimes I

had to get the phone book and figure it out. We just found a way to do what we had to do,” Miss Melba says.

How and when did you start with public speaking?

When I was selling vacuum cleaners, part of the training was to get up and give speeches. I worked for Casey Southern, who was my mentor in Atlas, Oklahoma. When we had our sales meetings every morning, he’d make all of his salesmen get up and tell a story — any kind of story. I am a Vet, and I am proud to be a Vet. So I began to talk about being patriotic, about the importance of raising the flag and about the fact that I am proud to be an American. I guess somebody thought I was half-way good, and I started getting invitations to give these patriotic speeches. It seems like one speech always led to two or three more. In addition to talking about patriotism, I began to talk about entrepreneurship. I believe in

going into business, in being independent and in having your own business.

Meanwhile, you started many businesses. How did that come about?

About every eight to nine years, I would get bored and want to do something different. I guess I was always looking for the next trend. People were beginning to talk about a four-day workweek so they could have more free time. The next thing I knew, I was thinking about those recreational vehicles people drive when they get more spare time. I went to a recreational vehicle trade show in Houston, and they had some pop-up campers there.

I bought seven from a company based out of Ocean, Indiana. By the time I got home to Beaumont, they were sitting on this lot.

I told Miss Melba, "By the way, I am going into the recreational business." I can still see the hole in the ceiling. "You've got to be crazy!" she said at the time. "Did you already write a check?" I said, "No, they did it. I only signed it." Then she said, "We need to stop payment on that or we're going to the poorhouse!"

Did that discourage you or change your thinking?

"No," I told her, "We're going to sell these things." And sure enough, we sold 126 of those recreational vehicles in one year. Within our population area of 120,000 people, I calculated that I sold one for every 1,000 individuals. I got to thinking about that. I realized that if I was to become a distributor for those guys from Ocean, Indiana, I could put them on the map because there were no other dealers in Texas at the time.

pointment with the president of the company. I flew up there and showed him that map, along with the population numbers in that circled area. I also presented my sales figures showing that I had sold one RV for every 1,000 people in my area alone.

I said, "Look, if you'll give me 10 to 15 percent of every RV I sell, I'll put you on the map in Texas."

I thought I could close the deal right then, but I didn't. So I flew back to Beaumont. Then, sometime in the next few days, the telephone rang and the president of the company said, "Tom, we like your deal. We think it's pretty good, and we're going to go along with you as long as you buy 1,000 trailers right now."

So what did you do?

Well, they had backed me in a corner and I said to myself, "Whoa, I am in trouble!" I didn't have that kind of money — I'd never even heard of that kind of money. So I got me a partner and I gave him 49 percent, and I took 51 percent. He and I made our deal that afternoon and we flew back up there to make the deal with the company. Before long, I had five states and was selling hundreds and hundreds of recreational vehicles. I had six retail lots on top of that and about 60 or 75 dealers throughout the five states. I eventually bought that partner out.

Harken's restaurant, Casa Olé, shown here. Guests were always eager to dine and would often wait in lines (below).

Harken honors an employee with a party and retirement check (bottom-right).



How did you act on this idea?

I drew a circle on a Texas map and then made an ap-



What is the Horatio Alger Award?

Each year, the association bestows the Horatio Alger Award on truly outstanding Americans. Association members are dedicated community leaders who demonstrate individual initiative and a commitment to excellence — as exemplified by remarkable achievements accomplished through honesty, hard work, self-reliance and perseverance. All members have a strong commitment to assisting those less fortunate than themselves, as well as a loyalty and devotion to American ideals and the American free enterprise system. Each recipient becomes a lifetime member of the association. Inquiries regarding the nomination process or requests for official nomination packets should be submitted to the Horatio Alger Nominations Chairman at the association's headquarters.

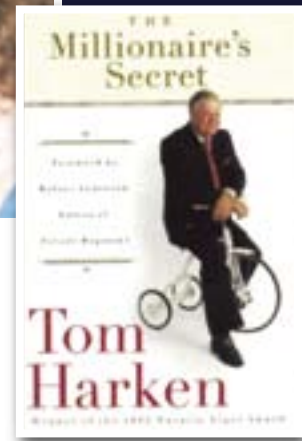
Other distinguished honorees include:

- **Buzz Aldrin - 2005**
Astronaut
- **Wayne Gretzky - 2003**
NHL's "greatest player of all time"
- **George Foreman - 1984**
Twice-World Boxing Champion
- **Colin Powell - 1991**
65th U.S. Secretary of State
- **Rev. Billy Graham - 1965**
Protestant Christian Evangelist
- **Doris K. Christopher - 2006**
Founder/CEO of The Pampered Chef
- **James Bainbridge Lee Jr. - 2004**
Vice Chairman of JP Morgan Chase
- **Mary Kay Ash - 1978**
Founder of Mary Kay Cosmetics, Inc.

Please visit www.horatioalger.com for more information.



Harken at book signing for *The Millionaire's Secret*.



Tell me how you got into the trucking business?

I sold RVs for nine years. During that time, there weren't enough trucks to fill my orders, so I bought trucks. That put me in the trucking business. Miss Melba didn't care much for that idea either, and interstate commerce was another headache and a half. Every five minutes, they would stop and check us. I didn't care much about all that. I just went and made deals.

And what about the car dealership?

It was the same as selling RVs. We decided to put these brand new cars on one of our vacant lots. It was a new thing called a rotary engine, and the company was called Mazda. Well, we bought a few dozen to start. We started selling them off that lot, and then we built a new building. Then I started looking at the motorcycle industry. I said, "You know, that looks like a lot of fun." So we turned around and got into the motorcycle business. We sold the motorcycles with the trailers, and boy, we were ready to make some money. We did the financing, too, so we were in the banking business, the motorcycle business, the car business and we were still selling recreational vehicles.

What caught your attention next?

There was a thing called a van conversion, which still targeted those people with the four-day workweek. We started selling those like crazy. Then Ford Motor Co. went on strike. The next thing I knew, I was selling Dodge van conversions to Ford and Chevrolet dealers. I could barely keep up. Everybody was still thinking about a four-day workweek, and all that rec-

reational stuff was selling like popcorn. I hit it right on the money.

Now all this amazing success was coming from someone who was illiterate until he was 27 years old. How in the world did you know enough to perform at that level in that many different businesses?

I was smart enough to surround myself with really good people, and I always made sure that we did everything right. I found brilliant lawyers, bankers, CPAs and actuaries.

What an amazing pace that must have been. How did you keep up?

I got a little tired out. I retired for about a week and a half. But then I got into the restaurant business!

Why the restaurant business?

Miss Melba asked me the same thing. I said, "Well, honey, think about this for a minute. During all my travels, I've seen that the restaurant business is booming. Every lot is filled up at 5:30 in the afternoon. And every time I go into a restaurant to eat, whether I am in Oklahoma, New Mexico or Louisiana, they don't know how to take care of people. They are just selling food and telling the customer thank you and goodbye. If they had a little more polish and a little more get up and go about them, they could retain those customers."



Harken with fellow Horatio Alger Award recipient, Colin Powell.



Harken and former First Lady, Barbara Bush.

“When you have a lot of integrity in the way you do business, customers can feel it.”

What did Miss Melba say to that line of reasoning?

She said, “You don’t know anything about Mexican food!” And I said, “Well, I know how to eat it!” So I signed off on this deal and paid \$5,000 for a store and gave Casa Ole Franchising, Inc., in Houston, Texas, three percent of the gross sales on the first store and two percent on gross sales after that. I built one store in 1979 and paid for it in one year. It was such an unbelievable success. Eventually, I even formed my own restaurant concept called Crazy Jose’s Patio and Café and went into competition with myself in order to keep the national chains out. All told, I owned 13 restaurants prior to selling them a couple of years ago.

What do you think was the reason for this huge success?

It has always been my belief that you have to give great service and surround yourself with fantastic people. When you have integrity in how you do business, customers can feel it. We ran our business with enthusiasm, positive attitude and plenty of pizzazz. We treated our workers like partners and our customers like family. Pretty simple, but it worked.

What did you do exactly in the restaurant to carry out your service vision?

Our managers had two inspections

a day. We’d line up our employees at 10:45 a.m. each day, just like in the military. We would inspect their attire and attitudes and the manager would tell them, “This is what’s on sale, this is how we’re going to sell it and this is how we’re going to upgrade it with a dessert or whatever.” Then I’d say, “Whoever sells the most gets free movie tickets.” And then we’d line them up again at 4:45 p.m. for the evening shift and do the same thing — over and over again. We kept our standards high and this gave the staff pride in their accomplishments.

What did you teach them about customer service?

I told them that everybody was everybody’s customer — and that meant that if they ran a little bit late in waiting on their customer, then another employee should pitch in and help. If we had 18 to 20 people on the floor, the customers should know almost every employee on a first name basis. The manager would be at the front door from 11 a.m. until 3 p.m. to greet everyone who came in. They began to know the customers’ names, where they lived, their kids’ names and their grandkids’ names — and they knew what the regulars wanted to order even before they sat down. That is what people like — that personal touch.



Harken and Henry Kissinger.



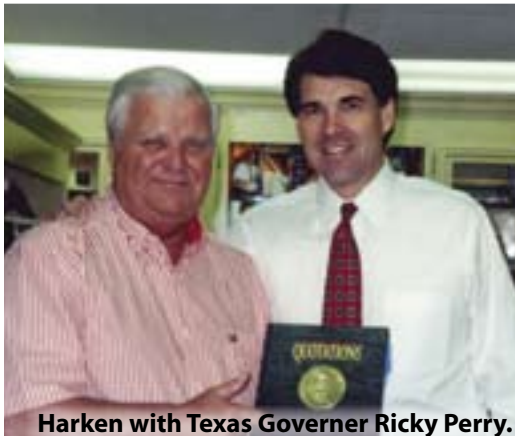
Harken with James Earl Jones and Ted Turner.



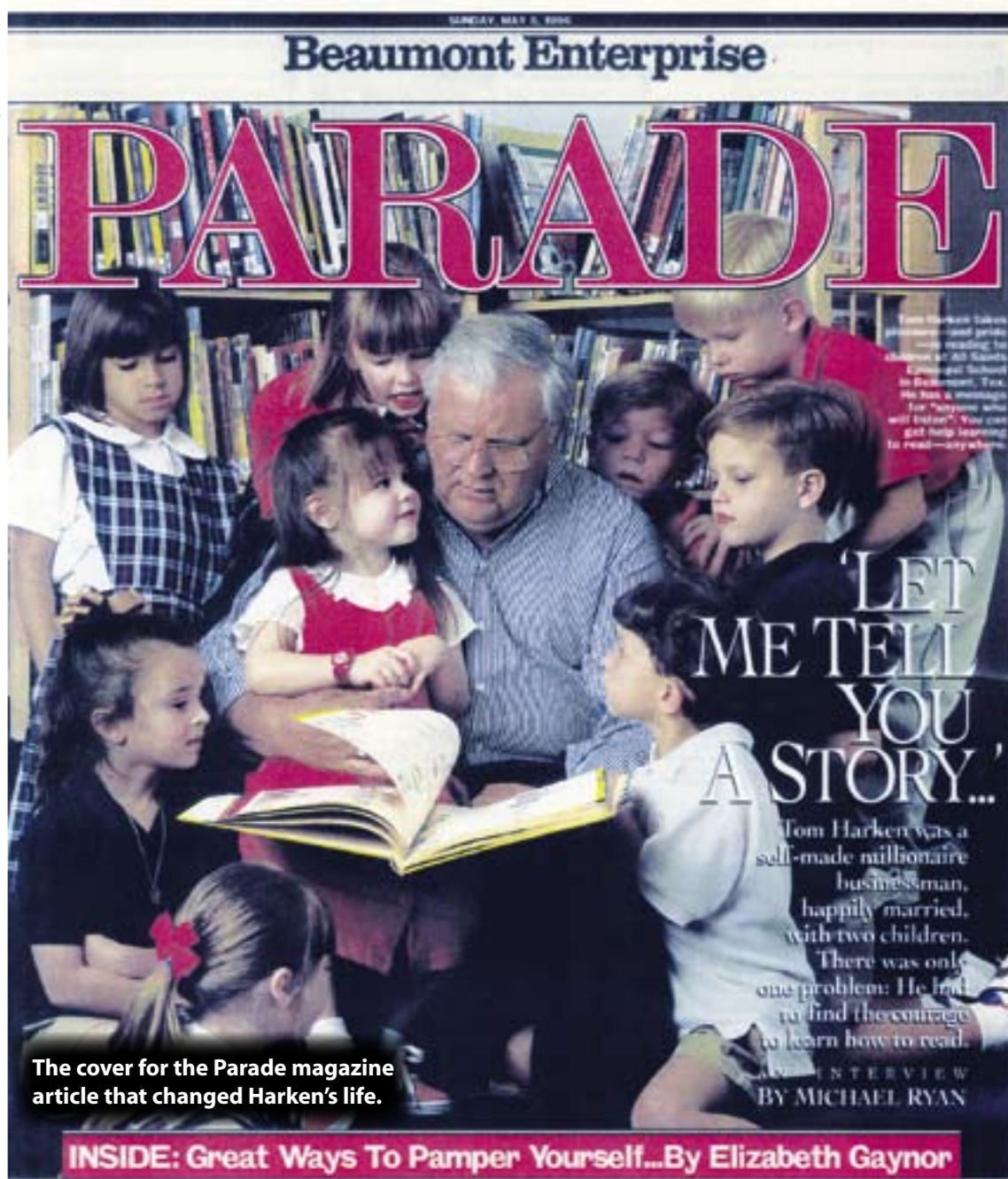
Harken with President George W. Bush.



Harken and the Dalai Lama.



Harken with Texas Governor Ricky Perry.



The cover for the Parade magazine article that changed Harken's life.

INSIDE: Great Ways To Pamper Yourself...By Elizabeth Gaynor

So let's fast forward to the day you received the Alger award letter. Did you have any idea what the award really meant?

The first thing I did was check out Norman Vincent Peale's signature. I wet my lips and my finger, and I smudged the heck out of his signature because I thought it was a dummy deal. Then I thought maybe they had the wrong Tom Harken. There is a senator out there with the same name — I wondered if that letter was meant for him.

I loved Dr. Peale, but I really and truly never knew what the Horatio Alger Award was. I didn't know how to pronounce it, let alone what it was! I called Miss Melba up and asked if she knew

anything about this. Sure enough, she had been working behind the scenes to help them do this — revealing achievements we had made in the past, mostly in working for charitable organizations and as part of the community.

"The local businessmen in town came to me and said they wanted to nominate him. They asked if I would help them with his background. So, yes, I knew about it, but we were not allowed to tell him," Miss Melba says.

So you never even suspected this nomination was in the works?

Looking back now, I did have a few suspicions. At the time we had two brokers — Dave Thomas and Tommy

Polk — and they are the ones that got the ball rolling. Dave's stepfather, W.W. "Foots" Clements, who was chairman of the board of Dr Pepper, also was chairman of the Horatio Alger Association. Dave invited his parents to Beaumont and we all went out to dinner. I'm thinking to myself, 'Whoa, is this a big deal or what?'

So after you were notified that you had indeed been selected, what did you do?

That was when Miss Melba said, "You are going to have to give an acceptance speech, and there will be several hundred or several thousand people there."

And who the heck is Horatio Alger, anyway?

We hear it over and over again. People say, "It's a true rags-to-riches Horatio Alger story. It could only happen in America." According to the American Dreams Web site (www.usdreams.com), Alger was "The 19th century preacher on the gospel of success." As one of America's best-selling authors of that time, Alger is considered by many to be the greatest salesman of the American dream who has ever lived.

Born in 1832, Horatio Alger Jr., grew up in a Calvinist home with a strong focus on education and religion. He graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Harvard Divinity School in 1852, where he also studied under renowned writer Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, with the intention of one day becoming a poet. In his 20s, he was rejected by the Union Army because of his asthma. Thus, he became a newspaper correspondent for The Boston Transcript and The New York Sun newspapers. His religious training was then tested and expanded when he became a Unitarian minister and later a social service worker in New York ghettos. His firsthand witness of the plight of the poor and homeless there became the impetus for his 134 enormously successful rags-to-riches-themed dime novels targeted primarily toward the readership of young boys.

Capturing the essence and spirit of an emerging America, Alger's books were first published in 1867 — and they all carried the same message. It didn't matter if a person was poor, orphaned or powerless. Through honesty, hard work and strong determination, the American dream was available to anyone willing to make the journey.

Sound familiar? Although the playing field has drastically changed since Alger's day, the principles and messages he carried to an emerging generation of Americans seeking a new way to do business and achieve a better life are as true today as they were back then. As we are all poised together on the threshold of a new generation of entrepreneurial rags-to-riches success stories, Alger's themes still ring true.

"Gee whiz," I said, "What am I going to do?" She replied, "You get out the tape recorder, and tell your story about your problem with reading."

What was your response to this idea?

I said, "Well, that is crazy. I am not going to tell anybody that! Nobody knows. Our own kids don't even know it. Why in the world would I want to do that?" She replied, "Because you can help a lot of people if you tell them your story."

So you recorded it?

I sat on the steps and started going over my past. I thought about my illness and how I couldn't go to school, which caused me to miss out on learning the traditional way. Then I put it all on the recorder and gave it to Don Jacobs, my liaison.

What was Don's reaction?

He called Miss Melba up for a meeting and said, "Melba, I just got the speech that Tom wants to give at the Horatio Alger Awards, and I just can't believe it!" She asked if I had talked to him about illiteracy. He decided then that she really wasn't kidding.

How did you feel about telling your story at that point?

I was really emotional because I finally let it out. I had let somebody else know besides Miss Melba. One thing led to another. Before I knew it, she told our two sons to come out and have a talk. I said, "What do you want to talk to them about?" She said, "You're going to tell

them your story about your problem with reading and why you weren't able to do what other dads did when they were young because you couldn't read. I said, "I am not going to do that — absolutely not going to do that."

You obviously decided to tell them. How did they react?

I was telling our own two kids, who were grown men by then, that their dad couldn't read or write. That's a tough, tough deal. They came to the boardroom and they sat across from us. I looked at them, and it just started rolling out.

"I haven't been the best dad in the world," I said, "but I know what part of the problem was."

And then I told them. At that time, we had already been in lots of businesses. We had partnerships in car agencies, motorcycle shops, recreational vehicles and banking — you name it.

I just said, "When you were young, I couldn't read." And we all became so emotional. First, it was really quiet, and then we all started crying. One of the boys got up and came over to me. He hugged me, and he said it made no difference to him.

Tell us what happened after you got the award and the Parade magazine coverage.

I did 127 speeches that next year. I have done an average of 100 a year since 1992. Right after that award and the Parade story, it just took off like crazy. And then I became affili-



ated with the Literacy Volunteers of America (www.proliteracy.org). That is when all these literacy organizations throughout the United States asked me to talk — at their conventions, meetings, fundraisers and graduations all over the country. I even spoke at prisons.

When Parade came out, we found that they were teaching classes based on that article. They told us it was great for the students who were struggling. They would point to the article and say, “Look what this guy did!”

How did your friends and family react to this sudden fame — and to the big secret nobody knew?

“Sometimes we ran into people we had known all our lives, and they’d sort of see us differently for a while because they were a little intimidated. I think the thing about Tom is that he has never changed from the time he had nothing to the present day. He does it by giving God all the credit. Tom has a lot of energy, a lot of drive and he inspires people. They can’t help but like him,” says Miss Melba.

Why is illiteracy such a silent problem? How can it still happen today?

If you see someone who has cancer or AIDS or anything like that and they’re going through treatments, you can tell — and often you can see — their pain. But you don’t see any physical signs in the people who can’t read. Their hearts are broken as well. What we have to do is to mend them. How we do that is to take one person at a time and teach them how to read. There are still college-age kids who cannot even read at a fifth grade level. And seven out of 10 prisoners in the United States can’t read.

What is the most significant progress you see in addressing this problem?

Many colleges are now opening up offices to teach people to learn to read, and the only thing on the door is a sign that says, “Welcome. Come in.” Chapman University in Garden Grove, California, (www.chapman.edu) has a wonderful program. Call and talk to Bobbie, and tell her that you want to learn about literacy. They are doing the same thing at other colleges like Baylor University in Waco, Texas, (www.baylor.edu).

How can a person get involved in helping with this cause?

Go to your local literacy volunteers and consult your local libraries and organizations for literacy. Do your homework. If you contact these people and express a desire to help, they will put you to work.

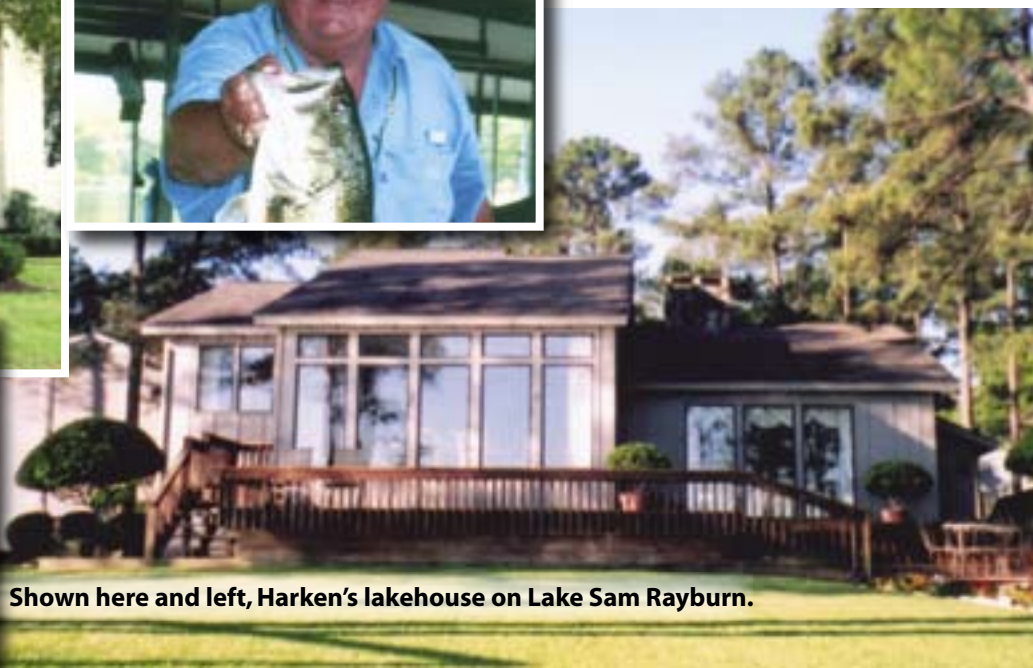
Like Horatio Alger, Harken says he believes that the American dream is attainable for anyone who wants to work toward that goal. Harken brings his own special addition to Alger’s teachings by helping others find the footing that will put them on a level playing field and make it possible for them to pursue “The Great American Success Story.”

“We need to help people who need help,” he says, simply. “None of us are so good that we can’t get out there and teach people to lift their heads up and go get the American dream.” He pauses for a moment to reflect on his experiences. “The funny thing is that the more you give to others, the more you get in return. There is no question about that.” MB

Harken’s Beaumont home at Christmas time.



To contact Tom Harken, please e-mail donj37@hotmail.com.



Shown here and left, Harken’s lakehouse on Lake Sam Rayburn.

RESOURCES FOR THE BATTLE AGAINST ILLITERACY



FOUNDATIONS FOR LITERACY

National Institute for Literacy

www.nifl.gov

A federal agency that provides leadership regarding literacy, including the improvement of reading instruction for children, youth and adults. The Institute serves as a national resource on current, comprehensive literacy research, practice and policy.

National Center for Family Literacy

www.familit.org

Services include professional development for those who work in children's education, adult education, English as a Second Language and related literacy fields.

ProLiteracy Worldwide

www.proliteracy.org

ProLiteracy Worldwide is an international nonprofit literacy organization that was formed in 2002. It is now the oldest and largest nongovernmental literacy organization in the world. They pursue a mission of sponsoring educational programs that help adults and their families acquire the literacy practices and skills they need to function more effectively in every day life.

The Literacy Site

www.theliteracysite.com

The Literacy Site was founded to help promote literacy among children from low-income families nationwide. Partnering with First Book, the site makes books available to children around the country, giving many children their very first book. With the generous support of their sponsors, each click provides 1% of a book. Making books a part of a child's life is the best way to encourage the love of reading.

The L.I.F.E Program

www.abcliteracy.org/about_life.php

The first literacy program in the New Jersey prison system to use community

and prisoner volunteers. It has become a model for other literacy programs.

Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy & Learning

www-tcall.tamu.edu

As the Texas state literacy resource center, TCALL's mission has evolved into responding to the needs of those who provide literacy services to Texas' adult literacy and family literacy learners. Their mission is to achieve through a combination of externally-funded projects and internally planned activities.

The Ohio Literacy Resource Center

<http://literacy.kent.edu>

OLRC at Kent State University aims to stimulate joint planning and coordination of literacy services at local, regional and state levels.

Center for Literacy Studies

www.cls.utk.edu

This foundation has a simple mission — to support and advance literacy education across the lifespan and to bring the strengths of multiple disciplines to the issues of literacy.

PUBLIC SPEAKING

Toastmasters

www.toastmaster.org

Your success in business is based on how effective you are. Through participation in the Toastmasters Communication and Leadership program, people from all backgrounds learn to effectively speak, conduct a meeting, manage a department or business, lead, delegate and motivate.

Dale Carnegie

www.dale-carnegie.com

As Dale Carnegie said, "Believe that you will succeed, and you will." The Speakers Bureau link is very useful.

Great Public Speaking Blog

www.greatpublicspeaking.blogspot.com

Great Public Speaking is the blog por-

tion of "Great Speaking" Ezine. Provides insightful advice and tips accompanied with links to articles and Web sites devoted to public speaking.

LITERACY VOLUNTEERS AND PARTNERS

About Rotaract

www.rotary.org/programs/rotaract/participate/prospective_member.html

Rotarian volunteers identify and teach the illiterate people in their communities and workplaces.

LEARNS

www.nwrel.org/learns/resources/start-up/idlocalresources.pdf

Linking education and America Reads through National Service is a good resource for identifying local resources for a literacy program.

Verizon Literacy Campus

www.vluonline.org/index.asp

This Web site was developed and managed by the National Center for Family Literacy and ProLiteracy Worldwide, with generous funding from Verizon Communications. The following categories are available: Free Online Courses, Literacy Challenges Today and Volunteer Now.

ProLiteracy Worldwide

www.proliteracy.org

One can search this Web site for volunteers, help and information by state or within miles of a zip code. ProLiteracy Worldwide is a nonprofit international literacy organization based in Syracuse, NY, that was established as a result of the 2002 merger of Laubach Literacy International and Literacy Volunteers of America, Inc.

United Way

www.unitedway.org

The local United Way agency in your area often has links to local social services agencies that offer adult literacy classes, or at least makes connections between tutors and those who need help.

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