

## How Do You Define a Great Man?

How do you define a great man? Is it someone who is a great orator or someone who has amassed great wealth? Is it someone with immense power, strength or fame? The Moby Thesaurus II by Grady Ward gives the following, among many, as words for a "great man: baron, celebrity, dignitary, luminary, man of note, mogul, superstar ..." I venture to say that we all have our own ideas, but for me, I know how to define a great man because I have seen it lived out by my dad.

My father was not a great orator. In fact, I never heard him give a public speech. Yet, his one-liner words of wisdom carried me through more than a few occasions. On the eve of my first law school exam, I called my dad, exclaiming that, despite my innumerable hours of study, I was going to forget all of the civil procedure on the exam the next morning. My dad simply said, "Well, don't let what you do not know mess up what you do know." That little phrase carried me through that exam, as well as many oral arguments in Courts since.



Lisa Adler

My father did not amass great wealth (in the materialistic sense), and yet he has held the respect of an entire community in his and my mom's furniture design and interior design business for the last 55 years. Even at the age of 83, and despite his failing health, people still wait

in line to have him design and work on their furniture and interiors.

My father never served as the CEO of a huge corporation or held a position of power on a Board of Directors, but he also never missed an event of my sister's or of mine. He helped me with my projects, stood coaching me as I ran a track race or swam a swim meet, taught me how to shoot a rifle and a camera, to mention only a few. More importantly, he taught me how to live life to the fullest; he taught me that strength does not always exhibit itself the way you think, that the race truly is sometimes won by the tortoise, that joy is in the little things, and that there is goodness in every person and in every minute of the day.

My father was an example of true power and leadership from a young age. He served our country in World War II at the age of 18. Although he rarely spoke of his wartime overseas, he did recently answer my questions about the many medals of his I found in my mom's jewelry box. He was ranked as an Expert Rifleman, which was reserved for the top two percent (2%) of the Marksmen in the Army. Out of that 2%, the Army picks its Snipers, and my father belonged to that elite group.

My father has shown his strength by the way he loves. He has been married to my mother for over 62 years, and they still walk hand in hand. I can recall as if it were yesterday, the morning many years ago when a deep snow had fallen at our home in Evansville, and upon my mother awakening, the words I LOVE YOU



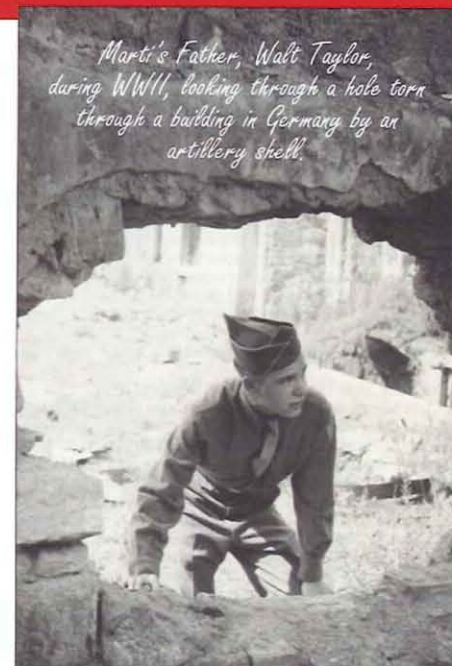
Marti Starkey

were boldly and carefully written in the snow outside her kitchen window. Although you may find this hard to believe, I never heard my father raise his voice at my mother, my sister or me. His true humility and integrity are difficult to capture in the written word.

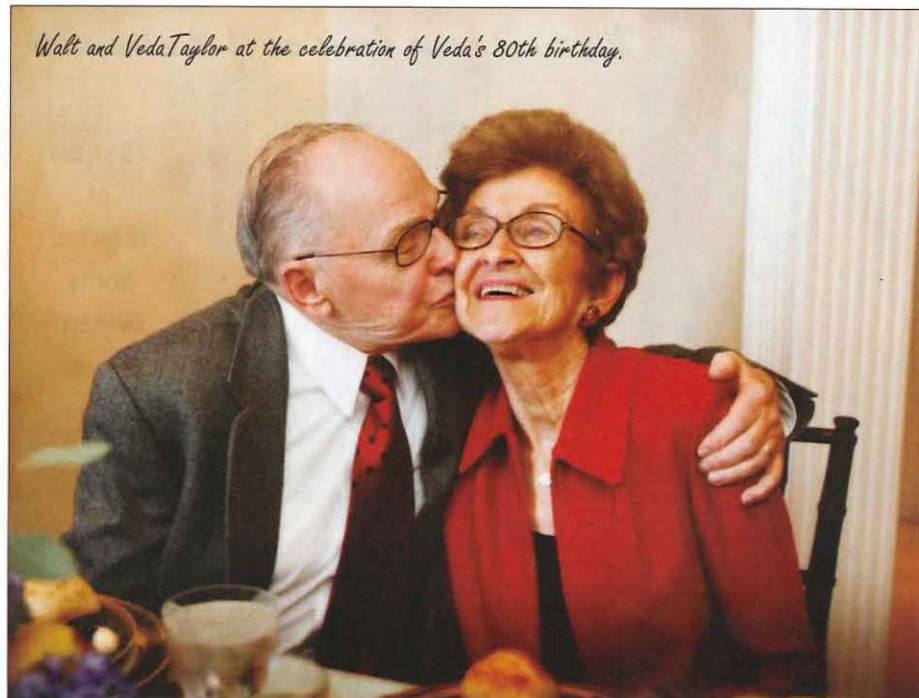
I would not say that my father has had fame in his life either, but I can say that I have loved and respected him every day of my life. I realize that not all daughters can say this and that his fame may be limited to the extent of our tiny family. Anytime I have needed a friend, a hug, an encouraging word or a plan for the next step, my father has been there. He has been my human glimpse of what the love of a Heavenly Father must be. Yes, I would say my father is the living definition of a great man.

By Marti Starkey

**Marti Starkey, Esq. and Lisa Adler, Esq. are members of the Trust and Estate Practice Group of the law firm of Harrison & Moberly, LLP, where Marti serves as Chairperson.**



*Marti's Father, Walt Taylor, during WWII, looking through a hole torn through a building in Germany by an artillery shell.*



*Walt and Veda Taylor at the celebration of Veda's 80th birthday.*

**HARRISON  MOBERLY, LLP**

ATTORNEYS

317.639.4511

[www.harrisonmoberly.com](http://www.harrisonmoberly.com)