

Dismantling the house that Pat built

Develop and Demonstrate Loyalty.

Loyalty is not unilateral. You have to give it to receive it.

The family business model is a successful one because it fosters loyalty and trust.

Surround yourself with people who are better than you are. Seek out quality people, acknowledge their talents and let them do their jobs. You win with people.

(Number 3 of Pat Summitt's "Definite Dozen" rules to live by)

By Betty Bean

Gen. Robert R. Neyland required his teams to study his Seven Maxims and apply them to the game of football. Pat Summitt required her teams to study her Definite Dozen and apply them to their lives. Unlike the General's rules, the Definite Dozen were not sport-specific. They were Summitt's tested and true keys to success, and she practiced what she preached.

She acted on this principle while celebrating Tennessee's eighth national championship in 2008 by naming Jenny Moshak the season MVP.

Moshak was the team's athletic trainer whose non-stop rehab wizardry kept Candace Parker on the floor, and Tennessee in the tournament, despite Parker having seriously injured her shoulder during the regional finals.

Longtime fans remembered a similar miracle she performed 11 years earlier when she helped point guard Kellie Jolly come back from an ACL tear to lead a 10-loss Tennessee team to an improbable championship in 1997. Actually, Moshak did it many times, and was considered an integral member of Summitt's stellar staff.

And that April night in 2008, Summitt gave her a Mercedes-Benz.

Moshak, who has been busy this summer promoting her book, "Ice 'N' Go," has been widely acclaimed as the best in the business.

And now she's gone, having tendered her resignation two weeks ago, 11 months after filing a discrimination suit against UT. Through her attorney, she issued the following statement:

"Due to the overall atmosphere since I raised issues of equality at the University of Tennessee and given the university's unwillingness to address the issues of discrimination and retaliation, I cannot continue my association with the university's athletic department."

Brick by brick

Last fall, Sports Illustrated writer Kelli Anderson, clearly disturbed by events in what she called the "once progressive" world of women's athletics at the University of Tennessee, tried to make sense of what was happening. Like many national sports commentators who admired the program Pat Summitt built, Anderson was concerned about changes she was seeing in the wake of the consolidation of the men's and women's athletic departments and Summitt's retirement.

Paying particular attention to a discrimination lawsuit filed by Moshak, strength and conditioning coach Heather Mason, assistant S&R coach Collin Schlosser and another filed by former Associate Athletic Director for Media Relations Debby Jennings, Anderson recounted something Jennings told her in 2008 when asked to explain why Summitt's staff was so loyal:

"It's hard to leave a place where the salaries are fantastic, you're working with the best people, you have the best facility, you have the best and brightest athletes, and you have an athletic department that's in total support of every one of your efforts."

Back in 2000, Tennessee was one of two D-1 universities in the country to have a separate women's athletics department (the other was Texas). Boosters on the men's side urged consolidating the two departments in the name of cutting fat and "cleaning things up." Boosters on the women's side pointed out that Joan Cronan's operation was leaner, more successful, in better academic standing and generally just smarter than the men's, and was untouched by scandal (this point was reinforced by an impolitic T-shirt: "Tennessee - where men are men and women are champions.").

The signing of the graduation pole became a happy exit ritual in the women's basketball locker



Jenny Moshak and Hank Peck in Moshak's 2008 Mercedes File photo by Betty Bean

room, a tangible symbol that the winningest coach in the game took as much pride in her 100 percent graduation rate as in her eight national championships. Ditto for the academic banquet when Cronan would ask all the athletes who'd made the honor roll to stand. The basketball team took pride in having the highest composite GPA in the women's department, and nobody wanted to be left sitting. Kerry Howland, the women's director of academics, played a key role in that success.

But in 2002, after the national scandal that blew up over allegations of cheating and grade-fixing in the men's academic tutoring program, tutoring services for all athletes were combined at the Thornton Athletic Center, and Howland began to be marginalized. She retired in 2011.

Hart takes down Jennings

Cronan's retirement plans were already in place before Summitt's very public health issues emerged. She was still around, but had no decision-making power by the time her successor, Athletic Director Dave Hart, started clashing with Debby Jennings, the most visible member of the house that Pat built.

On May 15, 2012, he called Jennings to his office, accused her of insubordination and gave her a couple of hours to resign or be fired. Evidence suggests that Jennings' major offense was her relentless effort to protect Pat Summitt as she struggled with early-onset Alzheimer's Disease. Other transgressions included complaints that employees on the

women's side were not receiving equal treatment. Jennings, recipient of too many awards to list, who served as Summitt's voice for more than 35 years and her Doberman toward the end, was forced out.

In April of this year, Heather Mason, who had been steadily promoted and praised during the first nine of her 10 years at UT, was terminated at the recommendation of Summitt's successor, Holly Warlick, and first-year soccer coach Brian Pensky, who said she had not performed her job to their satisfaction. They both said they wanted training specific to their sport, and Mason was replaced by a younger man with a relatively short resumé.

Something else will be different when the Tennessee women take to the court named for Pat Summitt in the coming season.

Superfans Raubyn and Donna Braunton have declined to renew their season tickets. The loud and proud sisters from Morristown have been profiled by ESPN and are likely to show up for games in anything from orange prison jumpsuits to referees' uniforms.

Last season, they debuted a different costume - a T-shirt emblazoned with Dave Hart's name under a big red slash and another that says, "I miss Debby Jennings." Raubyn, who also created an online petition protesting Hart's actions, says she and Donna have been treated differently since they stepped out of line, and although they'll continue to support the team, they'll buy their tickets from scalpers from here on out.