



**Tributes: Ruebel, Woody, Brummond, Appledorn,  
and Arshinkoff**

*Ted Mallo*

Capping nearly twenty-eight years as the “designated hitter” in The University of Akron leadership roles, including a short stint as interim president following the departure of President Muse, Rube came out of retirement in 1996 to serve for three years as the fourteenth president. He achieved renewed regional institutional accreditation; and, with trustee support, he helped forge one of the first goals for his successor: implementing a new campus master plan. Rube was a former football coach whose competitive and team spirit made him the right person at the right time to be both the University’s

“head coach” and “head cheerleader.” There have been few University of Akron leaders whom I respected more than Rube.

Having served the University in an administrative role for over forty-five years, I know the value of having a strong and competent administrative assistant. For my first twenty-five years as an administrator, Mrs. Belinda Woody was the person who made both me and the office run—that is she knew what needed to be done, when it needed to be done, who needed to do it, and just about everything else about office operations. Then, she would make sure that everything fell into place. If an early morning or late night was needed to complete a project on time, it was simply done. She was a professional—excellent clerical and office skills, typing, shorthand, filing, etc. were a given. Frankly, at times, it was like she could read my mind and hand me what I wanted before I asked for it! Time sensitive documents that needed my attention magically appeared on my desk. Then, she took early retirement. I asked Kristin Brummond, who had worked with Belinda for many years, to succeed Belinda as my assistant. It was a seamless transition. For the next twenty years Kristin was my “boss.” Like Belinda, she had an unbelievable memory, strong work ethic, and excellent skills. She too could read my mind even before I thought to ask her for something. Kristin left our office to become the secretary for the president in 2014. Alisa Appledorn became my third assistant in forty-five years just prior to my retirement. I wish I would have had another twenty

or twenty-five years to work with her, as with Belinda and Kristin. Even though I only had a short time to work with Alisa, she is, like Belinda and Kristin, one of a kind.

Some of my memories of Mr. Arshinkoff, “The Chairman,” are likely quite different than most. As general counsel and board secretary, I can attest to his “all business” approach in carrying out his trustee role.

However, while his tenure as a member, and his four years as the “in-charge” chairman of The University of Akron’s Board of Trustees are well documented, he was simply “Alex” outside the board room.

I don’t recall if Alex and Karen ever missed a University football game at the Rubber Bowl while he served on the board. Attending any game at the Rubber Bowl was not complete for Alex without a stop afterward at Strickland’s or the Waterloo, and it was always his treat for all board members, administrators and spouses who could join him. The deep-dish apple pie at the Waterloo was an Alex favorite.

The University of Akron basketball games had their own after-game social event, usually at the Tangier or Diamond Grill with the same Alex “treat” for those who could join.

In similar fashion, the annual university board meeting at the Wayne Campus in Orville would not be complete without joining Alex for fried chicken at the Smithville Inn.

Most of all, I always looked forward to the opportunity to join Alex for a game of poker. The evening would include non-stop stories and history lessons and political antidotes by

Alex, which never seemed to interfere with his playing and mastery of the game. Admittedly, most of us payed more attention to Alex's storytelling than the game.