



***“My candle burns at both ends; It will not last the night;
But ah, my foes, and oh, my friends — It gives a lovely light!”***

- Edna St. Vincent Millay

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I want to thank The Academy, Richard Chan and the Reed Memorial Lecture Committee, the Council, Steve Sutton, the Program Committee and David and Jill Palanzo, for the invitation to offer this address. It means a great deal to Judi and me to be back at The Academy, after missing about 14 years. It's great to see old friends, but especially to see new innovations not only in techniques, but in perfusion education. It's extremely rewarding to see The Academy continue to lead the way in perfusion education.

We were reminiscing last evening about my involvement in selecting George Cate for the executive director at the national office for AmSECT, and my hiring of Mark and Beth Richmond for executive directors and national office for The American Board, when I was President of the Board. Both offices have been in operation for 30- plus years. And of course, Judi and I ran The Academy for over 20 years, and convinced David and Jill to follow, and now The Academy is 36 years-old. So I guess, if you have a problem with any national office involved with perfusion, you might give Judi a call, they may not all like me.

There are two previous recounts of Charlie's many accomplishments, especially in perfusion, that were well presented by Aaron Hill and Mark Kurusz, in this forum. They are available for reading on The Academy website. I hope that anyone who cares about perfusion will take the time to read and appreciate Charlie's contributions to perfusion technology.

I doubt that Ms. Millay wrote the poem 'First Fig' about Charles Clay Reed, but I do know that he lived out these last lines of that poem for the benefit of all of us. I had the special honor many years ago to host and moderate the tribute to twelve of the "Pioneers in Perfusion" at a banquet in Savannah, Georgia. I was always the youngest of the old pioneers, and oldest of the second wave of perfusionists, so it fell to me to pick the pioneers and host the tribute. Many participated in the development of the practice of perfusion techniques, in many places around the world, but Charlie commanded the drive for professionalism. In my opinion, Charlie Reed had more to do with the establishment and development of the perfusion profession than anyone. I will try to avoid telling you about his accomplishments today, and will attempt instead to tell you about Charles C. Reed the man, the person, the friend, and the older brother I never had.

“My candle burns at both ends;

Charlie was always a diverse, strong willed, individual. He never did anything in his life without total focus, full effort, and complete commitment. It was no one less than Aristotle who said: ***“We are what we continually do. Therefore excellence is not an act, but a habit.”*** Charlie lived as close to this as anyone I have ever known.



As a child in Arkansas Charlie enjoyed hunting and fishing, and was a gifted musician, but he couldn't read music. He was from a well-educated family, with his father a well-known surgeon in the area. He played football in high school where he met another player George Cate. Many years later when I was in charge of a search committee for a new office and executive director for AmSECT, Charlie referred me to George to interview. Two Arkansas boys and one from Alabama.... What could possibly go wrong?

Charlie didn't particularly care for the confinement and boredom of the formal education system, but his mind was wide open to learning anything and everything he chose. Becoming a Naval Aviator as a young man filled his all of his passions to be free, to control his environment, to be in charge, and to reward his hard work, personal responsibility, commitment, focus and dedication. It defined for him the understanding of the importance of those values, and what real commitment was all about. Furthermore, it implanted within him the fact that anyone could be a success, and accomplish big things, if truly committed to the proper values. So, equally as important, this attribute deeply implanted questions in him, as to why everyone did not understand this simple fact of life and achieve accordingly.

Thus the lifelong conflict between excellence and mediocrity that was the war Charlie fought his entire life, began. I'm fairly fond of telling people that, "*I don't suffer fools lightly*", a position defined by Winston Churchill. But Charlie was a bit more robust in his declaration of the same. But, I too hope that I may die never understanding why so many people live to be satisfied with mediocrity.

It will not last the night;

Charlie was at minimum an eclectic person, he:

- was a Naval Aviator, [Which was a tremendous source of pride for him, and one can only imagine how landing a 1950s, first-generation jet airplane on a rolling deck of an aircraft carrier, in the dead of night, in a rain storm could indeed sharply focus the mind.],

- was an avid reader, [Reading as many as twelve books a week placed him in the category of avid reader with most of the more successful people of our time. I enjoy reading a lot, but I've never read that much. I was never able to discuss anything I had read with him that he had not previously read. Charlie would secrete himself in his library surrounded by these huge movable shelves of books and movies, thousands and thousands of them. I used to carry large boxes of books home with me that he was throwing away, but never had a chance of catching up, even as fast as I read. Reading is knowledge.],
- was an accomplished perfusion researcher and writer, [Everyone is at least familiar with the three perfusion text he coauthored, but perhaps not the nearly one hundred published articles and various position papers encouraging development of the perfusion profession. His input at every education meeting in which I witnessed his participation was valuable for the audience as well as the author. He was the driving force to publish any and all discussion of every paper presented before The Academy, which have become one of the most valuable resources available to perfusionists.],
- could be outrageous, [I first met Charlie when he was president-elect of AmSECT. He, Diane Clark, and several others from the Southwest Region came to our Southeast Region Meeting in Savannah. That was when he asked me to run for treasurer of AmSECT. We were at Pirates Cove on the wharf. His group was at one table and several groups were at other tables. Charlie ordered a 25 pound whole lobster for dinner! This Alabama country boy had never seen anything like it. That thing must have been 40 years old, and they had to have cooked it in a number two washtub. They put it on a huge silver platter and paraded it all over the restaurant. Surely it took everyone at that table to eat it.],
- valued thoughtfulness, [When Charlie retired, with the help of Sue Reaves and a hospital administrator at Baptist Medical Center in Little Rock that had been a resident at my hospital in Birmingham, I managed to buy the first Travenol modular pump that Charlie used there. I shipped it to my house, encased it in Plexiglas, added a Travenol oxygenator mast that I had, and made the greatest rural mailbox in the history of Arkansas. When I got to Pickles Gap with it, there was no way Charlie would use it as a mailbox. It sat on the porch where he could see it, as much as possible. Charlie had a special custom for a porch in rural settings, declaring that every man must have one. I really think he appreciated that more than some of his incredible collections. He once told me it

was the best gift he had ever received, and this is a special source of pride for me.],

- was a poet, [with eight volumes of poetry published under the pseudonym of Charlie Straight Arrow. If you haven't read them, it's your loss. Many of his verses provide insight to a father with misgivings in his family life, a man traveling through the minefield of life's relationships, as well as many valuable nuggets of what cultivates a real leader.],
- was charming, [My wife, Judi, once asked me why I could not be as charming as Charlie and treat women the way he did? I told her, the answer is pretty simple. I can't afford five wives.],
- was an ardent hunter of ducks and geese, [He, Victor Irving, and Arthur Keats never missed a year of duck hunting before his ruptured aneurysm.],
- was a zealous collector, [He had world class valuable collections of orchids, Russian hand-painted boxes, handmade baskets from around the world, art from around the world, scrimshaw carvings in expensive ivory, a gun collection to die for, objects from the French Revolution including a shrunken head we found at the flea market in Paris, and mounted on his walls were all of the ducks and geese that use the flyway through Arkansas every year. One time while Charlie was in the hospital we came into the driveway at the house, and his wife, Linda, was having a yard sale. There, spread out on plywood over saw horses, were some of the most valuable handmade baskets from around the world, some costing as much as \$20,000. They had little post-it signs on them with between \$5 and \$10 as a sale price, depending on how colorful they were. I still wake up at night thinking of how those little old ladies in Toad Suck, and Pickles Gap, Arkansas, to this day must use those baskets for picking blackberries and blueberries. How glad I was that Charlie never knew about it.],
- was an accurate visionary, [He saw the future of a perfusion profession while still a "pump tech", even while most others saw themselves as workers in an operating room. He was especially adroit in realizing that some of the biggest opponents of professional perfusionists would be fellow perfusionists who felt they had more control as OR workers, or perhaps were just afraid to make waves.],
- loved to laugh, [One spring Saturday he and I were sitting on the dock at his stocked farm pond, fishing. It was really more like catching than fishing, because if the bite slowed, Charlie would turn on the

automatic feeder and it would look like a grunion run for about ten minutes. He asked me if I knew what a tontine was. I retorted that I may just be an old army grunt, not a *great Naval Aviator*, but yes I knew. He said, "Okay, we are going to make a tontine now between us." Cautiously inquisitive I said, "Okay." He said that if I died first he would drink a fifth of Jack Daniels in my name (since I seemed unable to drink it all before that time), and if he went first I would do the same with a fifth of scotch. I told him in no uncertain terms that I was calling bulls**t on this one. I told him, he was just making sure I would keep him alive no matter what, because he knew how much I hated that damned scotch. That deep slow belly laugh of his could have been heard in Conway. As it turned out I took the scotch to his funeral and had all attendees help me finish that bottle of scotch. I expect repercussions from it.]

- understood people, [It's interesting how we all think we can do this, and mostly we miss, and misunderstand. Back when Charlie called to ask me to be on the American Board of Cardiovascular Perfusion, I told him I was not an educator, or researcher, but my niche was clinical perfusion and I knew very little about testing. In his way, he slowly responded saying he'd worked with me as treasurer and member of the executive committee of AmSECT, but wanted to ask only one question of me. The question was: Did I know the difference between right and wrong, and did I have the character to do what was right? Charlie knew people.]
- was a true thinker, [He was always a few steps ahead of everyone, especially adversaries, because he could reason, that great ability that separates us from other higher developed animal species. So, when Charlie called in August of 1979 and said, "It's time we started that organization (the one without politics, that is truly dedicated to perfusion education, and nothing else) we all have talked about for years.", and there was no discussion, except to develop a name, The American Academy of Cardiovascular Perfusion. Had I been the thinker I needed to be, I would have gotten off the phone before he said, "I think our first meeting should be in January, during the Society for Thoracic Surgery meeting." I knew what this commitment, this mission, meant for me. But I agreed, and was all in for five months of unbelievable effort, excitement, and satisfaction. All together I was responsible for five Academy meetings over the years, and loved every bit of all the effort],
- never had projects, he had missions, [There was never a "plan B". Charlie, almost single-handedly, managed to separate the "pump tech" members of

AmSECT from the “dialysis tech” members. Back then AmSECT was an organization for both together. Charlie set out to develop a profession for “pump techs”, then to establish them as a sustainable profession to be proud of. This was the principle mission of his life.],

- was a belated father, [His son, Charles, never knew him growing up, but they had made contact and were developing, I think, a good relationship. Judi and I visited Charlie and Linda at least once a month after his retirement. Judi became good friends with Linda and enjoyed helping with the animals on the farm. When Charlie ruptured his aorta, we were there every other weekend, unless there was a problem, which was often. Many Friday afternoons I would be in Bristol, Tennessee about 5:00 pm EST, and Linda would call and say Charlie had a problem. I would call Judi, in Birmingham, and she would fly to Nashville where I’d pick her up at 6:30 pm CST, and we would drive to Baptist Medical Center in Little Rock, several times in driving rain storms all the way. In the hospital, Charlie once told me that if he had been a better father, his son would be doing all the driving to see him instead of me. I told him that if he had been a better father, I’d let Charles do all that driving.]
- loved to travel, [He had about five trunks that he would “nest” inside each other like those kid’s plastic eggs at Easter. This way he could ship one trunk to where he was going and then have five to ship home all of the stuff he bought on his trip. And could he ever buy stuff on his travels. I think the only place he wanted to see that he had never visited was Jackson Hole, Wyoming. I had talked so much about this “God’s gift to America”, he really wanted to go there. So much so, that we made up a mid-year meeting for Active members of The Academy one August, in Jackson Hole. We even made up a program to send out in case people needed to write off the expenses of the trip. As fate would have it, Charlie came down with a deep vein thrombosis in his vascular reconstructed leg just before the “planned meeting” and could not fly. We missed him for about 30 seconds, rented two custom vans and had a great weekend seeing The Teton Mountains, Yellowstone, the Fire Hole Basin, and Jackson Hole. We’d have to try again for that trip.],
- supported perfusion development around the world, [He had done cases in China when their medical care was “third world.” He traveled anywhere and everywhere as often as possible to advise or assist anyone. He also had an annual trip to the Amazon to collect orchids. On his last trip, just a couple months

before his aneurysm ruptured, he put off elective surgery for a trip to London. Mark Kurusz, Charlie and I went to the Third European Congress on Perfusion to show The Academy support for their efforts. After the meeting Charlie and I took a train to Edinburgh to start about four days of traveling through Scotland by car. We stayed at Bed & Breakfast establishments at farms, small villages, and castles, as we toured the highlands and coast at our leisure. It was a trip I wouldn’t trade for anything and a great opportunity to share much more time with Charlie as a person.]

But ah, my foes,

Any one of the above attributes could make an average man pleased with their life’s accomplishments. But none of these are what made Charlie different, and a special person. Charlie was special because he feared no one when he knew he was right, and he was a leader. His leadership style was individual.

After Jim Dearing left the ABCP, Charlie called and said you are now the vice president of the ABCP. That was it, from knowing nothing to vice president in less than two years. But Charlie understood people, could evaluate character and knew what commitment was all about. I asked Diane Clark later, why me? She quickly said, because you are the only one who can win an argument with Charlie. There was enlightened truth in that answer, because Charlie and I did argue intensely at times, until truth and reason prevailed. Those who say he was obstinate and unyielding, are those that were unable to argue the whole truth and all the logic necessary. Or perhaps they were just wrong. Charlie required the whole truth.

Charlie was never one for traveling down the middle of the road. In fact, where we come from, in the Southeast, the only things you will find in the middle of the road are yellow lines and dead opossums. For all you metro folks, a possum is a flat animal with poor eyesight that lives on the side of our roads and travels at night.

For me, probably the most insightful demonstration of his leadership was after he had left, and I was president of the ABCP. The American Association of Thoracic Surgery and Society for Thoracic Surgeons Executive Councils invited (as in ordered) me to an exceptional joint meeting to explain why they should not abolish the ABCP and assume control of perfusion education. This was over the 1981 deadline requiring the completion of an approved education course in order to take the ABCP certification examinations. Charlie and I talked two or three times a week for almost 20 years. After this notice, I kept asking him, “What do I say? How do I change their minds, especially given their starting point? How on earth do I handle this?” This was the culmination of what many had worked for years to accomplish, and Charlie’s personal mission for life. Surely he could give me *some*

advice. In the most amazing demonstration of leadership I have ever seen, he told me nothing. All he would say is, "You'll think of the right things to say at the right time." Thanks a lot, Charlie.

It all worked out in your favor, with the invaluable help of a great friend and surgeon from Gordo, Alabama, Dr. Gerald Rainer. Without his support and intervention before, during and after that that weekend you very well may be "pump techs" today under the control of nurses in the OR. It was Dr. Rainer's mediation, and Charlie's understanding of commitment, character and leadership, that accomplished that last big hurdle for professional recognition of perfusion. That's two Alabama and one Arkansas boys solving an issue. If you are interested, I'll tell you the whole story at another time. I remain amazed to this day, how even members of the ABCP never really understood what occurred and why, but the end result seemed sufficient information for most everyone, and the perfusion profession was underway. Most perfusionists and surgeons never even knew about these events, and maybe that's a good thing.

and oh, my friends —

Lead, Follow or Get the Hell Out of the Way

Charlie had this little saying framed and hung in his office. I don't know who said it first, maybe it was Moses. I had a wooden plaque with it on my desk. Everyone would get a chuckle out of it, but that was about the end of the consideration of the message. The message is an important one that is overlooked by most. We have a lot of people in this country today asking, where are our leaders? Why doesn't someone lead us out of this mess our country is in? The reason, I believe is we don't want real leadership.

Since the 1990s we prefer to listen to and be led by those that fabricate the truth, complimenting them on their skills of fabrication. Many surveys today report that we do not think lying and cheating is a bad thing. What difference does it make, anyway? The significance of this is, that we think it's cute and laudable to get away with something, and the bigger the event, the more respect our media has for the expressed lack of character. We had rather tear down genuine leadership. We as a people had rather idolize the Kardashians while demonizing Sarah Palin, a person of character. We worship sports thugs, gangster rappers, and dishonest politicians, as we work to destroy the character of good men like Judge Clarence Thomas. And so many other examples that I don't need to point them out. You can identify them yourselves. We are told not to judge someone from their character, when that is *exactly what we should do*.

The reason we don't have leaders today is because we don't have enough discerning followers with character. Followers that know right from wrong for themselves, and have the character to stand by right. The kind of followers necessary to *recognize* a person with the

character, passion, self-discipline, positive attitude, courage and the true servanthood that characterizes a real leader. I have always said it's not the deceitful politicians who are the problem. What else should you expect from a bunch of failed lawyers? The problems we face today are because of the people who listen to and believe the deceivers. We have good leaders, people of character; it's just that the majority today are not worthy followers. They prefer to follow known, proven, repeat corrupt people with false promises, than to be personally responsible for the honest judgment necessary to follow a virtuous leader.

Not everyone can be a good leader, but everyone can make an honest informed judgment and put in the effort to be a respectable follower. That includes the courage to defend what you know is right. For those that will not make the effort, or perhaps just don't have the cognitive ability to make suitable decisions, please get the hell out of the way. And don't ever vote.

It gives a lovely light!"

I, and in a way Charlie, would like to leave you with this final thought to hopefully benefit you in your journey through life and the stretch of your life that is the perfusion profession. As you get older you will see that it becomes more difficult to separate who you are from what you do, but what it is, is your life's journey.

I don't know much. I'm just a simple country boy from Alabama. I never have professed to know much. But there is one thing that I do know, and can guarantee you it is an indisputable fact..... You are going to die. I am going to die. We all are going to die..... Therefore, the only thing that matters in life's journey is what we do between right now and when we die.

I am, and have throughout my life, been thoroughly convinced that there are only three valid questions in this life. These three questions are asked by everyone we ever meet or work with or have any relationship with. These three questions are never asked out loud, and the answers are never given in direct verbal response. But, they are always asked and always answered. We also ask these three questions of everyone we meet, including spouses, supervisors, managers, coworkers, politicians, ministers, and everyone we meet. Go for a job interview, and there may be many verbal questions, but these questions are the most important, and you will never hear them asked. The answers to these questions are never given verbally as well, but are all answered nonetheless.

The first question is: Can I trust you? The second is: Are you committed to excellence? The third is: How will you treat me? As I said, they are not asked out loud, but you ask them of everyone you meet, even me right now, and I'm asking them of you. The answers to these questions are answered by our actions, by the way we live.

Can I trust you? The answer is simple, and there is only one answer. *Always be honest.* No matter the circumstance always be honest. Even if it costs you in the short run, always be honest. If we are not always honest, we have still answered the question. We still have given an answer; it's just a negative one. So, we will answer this question, either positively or negatively, as we live our lives.

Are you committed to excellence? The answer is: *Always do the very best you can.* It doesn't mean to always be right, or not make mistakes. This means that you must be aware that excellence is a habit, not an act. Not everyone has the same talents, as we've said, but everyone can remain excellent in everything they do. Everyone can have pride in their life. PRIDE is an acronym for, Personal Responsibility In Daily Excellence. It takes awareness and effort. If you are late for meetings you will answer this question, and the answer is negative. And, please remember this – people of excellence don't

want to hang around people who are not. People who are ordinary seek out people like them. So, to be a good follower, you must have the courage to acknowledge when you see a real leader.

How will you treat me? This answer came from your parents, and will see you through this life. *Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.* This must become reality for you. This must be forever, not just now, not just on the job, but this should be your life.

You can now see that we ask these three questions of everyone we contact in this life, and they ask them of us. You will never be able to answer them verbally, but only with actions, and more important, these questions will always be answered, one way or the other, by everyone.

I leave you to contemplate the life journey of Charles C. Reed, his accomplishments for you, what he was like as a man and leader, and add just these thoughts: The meaning of life is, that life has meaning, and today is the first day of the rest of your life. Make it meaningful.