

PLAIN BROWN RAPPER

News for the Grace and Tandy Brown Family

July, 2011

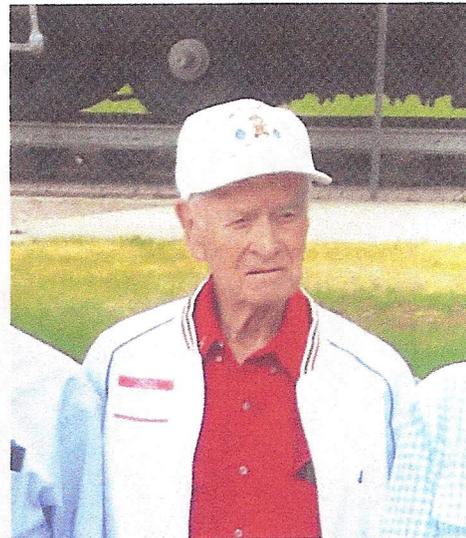
What's that saying? "Leave it to the Marines!" We did just that and Mike organized a great family reunion. It was held June 18th in Holliday Park and was terrific! I'm told the old saying is "Tell it to the Marines" but since he did such a great job, I'll take my quote and use it.

From the oldest, June Brown-Smith and Willis Shriver to the youngest, Jimmy VanAlyne (1 ½) everyone had a good time.

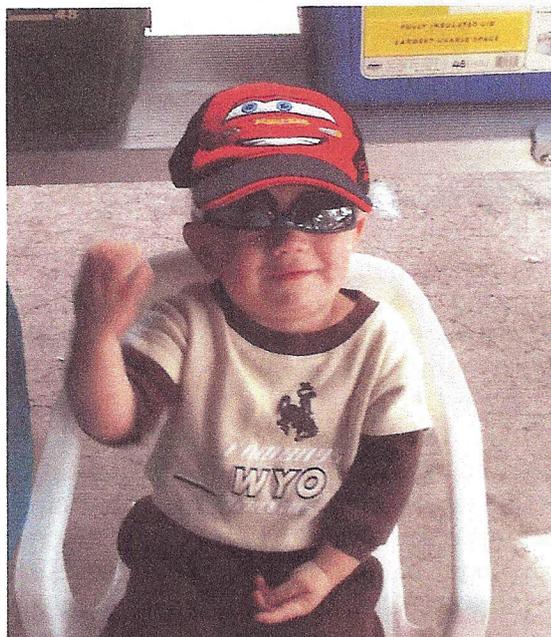


Left is Kirk Smith (June and George Smith) June and Nicki Schumacher (Anna and Norman French).

Below is Willis Shriver (Leah and Willis) Sorry about the sober look on his face, I couldn't find one with a smile. But I assure you he had a very good time!!!!



Below is Jimmy VanAlyne, great grandson of Bob and Dolfe who was the youngest attendee at 1 ½ years old.



Assisting Mike was Pat White who put together all kinds of treasures (all the little boys and girls had bats and balls, frisbees, bubble blowing bottles, pencils with the reunion stamped on them and lots more. She had special items for the brothers and sisters. Coasters with mom and dad's wedding picture, hand crocheted dish clothes and pencils. She was busy for a very long time putting everything together.

Also helping was Sally Viersen (Betty and Charlie Sylvester) who was in charge of the side dishes. The Shriver family and LaVena (Charles's wife) brought deserts! Did you taste that carrot cake? Or Jayne's award winning chocolate chip cookies?

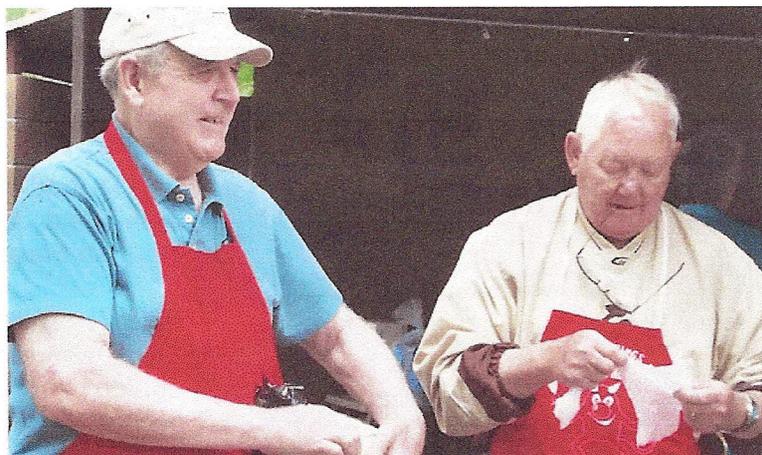
Mikes daughters, Amy and Jenny and Sarah Matthews (Dick and Marty Brown) brought baked beans – really yummy! Jan VanAlyne brought a cole slaw and there was a delicious potato

salad! I apologize for not knowing who to credit. Nicki and Gordy Schumacher (Anna and Norman French) brought some "Chorizo" (Basque sausages) from Winnimucca, Nevada. Nancy brought fresh fruit and on and on. The tables were loaded to the top with fun food items.

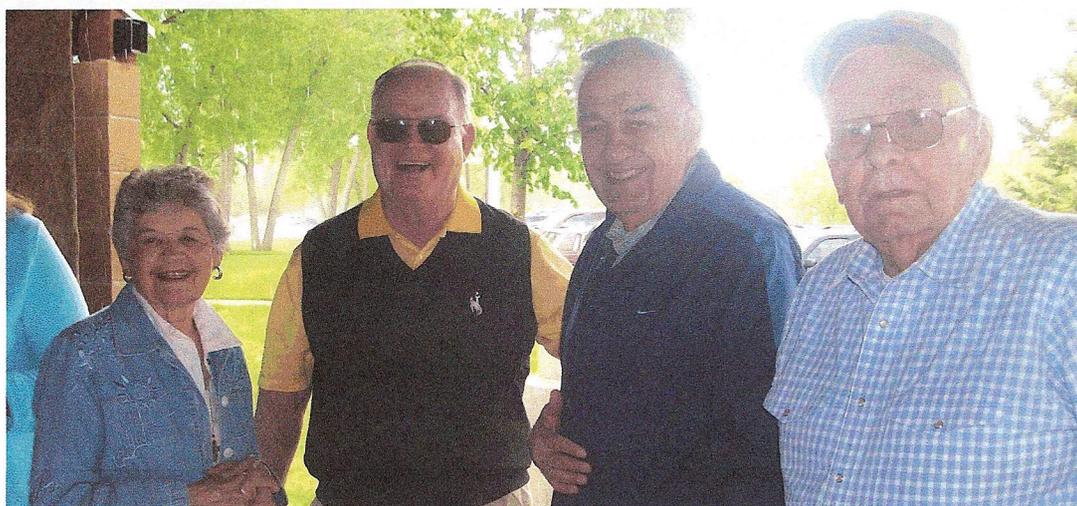
Ben Viersen and Mike's grandson Destin took over the cooking so Mike could socialize.



Destin, who actually was there to cook!



Mike and Bob VanAlyne
These two dressed like cooks, but I think they came to play!



A longtime family friend joined us for the day. L to r: Theona Pappas, Dick, Andy Pappas and Bob Treadway. Andy was as much a part of our family growing up as any one. Nice to see him and his wife. Andy (plus about 6 other young men) loved mother's Sunday dinners. Fried chicken, mashed potatoes and gravy, biscuits and etc. Then, homemade pie!!!!

Family came from far away. The furthest was Mike's grandson Michael all the way from Alaska. Bob and Kim Beardslee from Peyton, Colorado (near Colorado Springs). Dick's daughters Katy and granddaughter Gretchen from Steamboat Springs, Becky from Aspen and Sarah from Laramie. June's family down from Casper; Kerry, Kirk and wife Terry and daughter Mary. Ron Brown came with Charles and LaVena from Colorado Springs and Natalie and Mark from Ft Collins. All of Willis and Leah's daughters were there (and working hard) and many of their family members. It was so good to see Sally, she lives here in town but we don't see her very often. Our grandson Rob with his wife, Laura and sons, Bobby and Jimmy came up from Longmont. I know I've missed many of you, but it was so good to have all of you there and contributing to a great event. THANKS!!!!



A group picture. Back row, l to r: Mike, Dick, Lavena, Charles, Willis, Bob Treadway, and Bob VanAlyne. Front row, l to r: Nanette, Pat, June, Nancy and Dolfe. The train engine in the background makes this all the better. Our family was rooted in Union Pacific Railroad. Dad was a conductor for 43 years.



Left is Mike's granddaughter, Heather. She was the photographer. Thanks Heather for your help!!!!



June and Pat in a little conversation.

THE GENERAL CONSENSUS WAS – “LETS DO THIS AGAIN!!!!” – SURE HOPE SO.

Our brother Charles is to be honored on August 18th as the El Paso County Transportation Department names their new building the "Charles C. 'Chuck' Brown" Transportation Building. My preference would have been to rename "Pikes Peak" and make it "Brown's Peak" but I suppose then you have to get congress involved and you know how futile that would be.

Naming a building after someone is no small matter and you need to know a little of the background tied to our brother Charles that started in the early 1950's.

Charles graduated from Colorado A&M University (now known as Colorado State University) in the early 50's with a degree in engineering. After serving in the Marines, he used his GI Bill and supplemented it by skinning logs and working construction jobs. After graduation, he packed up his young wife Barbara and little son Kenny and went to Colorado Springs where he would work for Barbara's father, Kenneth Brookhart.

Charles worked very hard and helped to take the Brookhart Lumber Company to the huge Brookhart Building Center it became. He also had issues with the way Colorado Springs was growing so he ran for City Council and won.

Colorado Springs in the 50's was a lot like Cheyenne, a small town with a military base. But unlike Cheyenne, and with Charles' vision of growth, Colorado Springs became a growing city with an Air Force Academy, NORAD, Fort Carson, Peterson Air Force Base and numerous businesses. The city was well on its way to become well respected and growing rapidly. The airport was just a few wooden buildings and it became a large very modern facility built away from the city so it could grow. Charles was on the board for many years.

This is not just my opinion of our brother Charles, while Bob was stationed at Fort Carson, we were included in several events where we met many of the leaders of Colorado Springs. It was interesting because when they found out I was his sister, all of them, without exception, said to me that Colorado Springs was what it is today because of Charles and his vision for the positive growth of the city.

After his time on the city council he ran for County Commissioner and served there until he was term limited. During this time two events stand out for me to be somewhat comical. The Federal Government ruled that you had to have a certain kind of building and etc to be the jail. This was tough time financially for El Paso County and so in order to stay compliant with the law and make the building financially feasible it was built downtown, close to the County offices. There was a lady across the street who wanted to have him impeached because it was going to block her view of Pike's Peak. The other one was a zoning change which would stop the people putting up junky trailers and etc in the county and building their outdoor latrines over the creek. This led to a lot of "stuff." Bomb threats, Nazi flags and shouting at the meetings. There was a particular female reporter for the Gazette who wanted to show Charles in a negative light so she wrote that he was one of the "good old boys" and "opened doors for women" and "took off his hat indoors" and "said yes maam and no maam" and for the life of me I never understood how she thought that would work negatively and I wondered what happened to some poor guy who tried to open a door for her. Do you suppose he is still with us?

Charles participated in the annual Range Ride for many years. He always rode "Marilyn" the mule and enjoyed this part of his life. There is a statue in downtown Colorado Springs depicting the Range Ride and the rider on the mule is Charles. Great statue, be sure to go see it.

I'm sure there are many other accomplishments while he was a leader in the community, but this is just a thumbnail sketch. The point is, the Transportation Department appreciated all his efforts to get the building and are thanking him in this way. Congratulations to our brother Charles and just know how proud we are of you. – hmmm "Brown's Peak" hmmm