

There's a story I like to tell at New Student Orientation each fall semester about my grandfather, Rudy. Much of the story is illustrated with the only item I have that belonged to him: a custom-made major league baseball bat.

The story is not so much about baseball; rather, it is about the lessons, wisdom, and priorities that guided my grandfather's life. His influence upon me is profound, and by sharing the lessons from his life that have so guided me, I hope to be able to pass on life wisdom that can resonate with students as they begin the journey of their college years. It always seems more alive, more real, to gain life's insights through the actual experiences of others we have come to trust and in whom we place our confidence.

Somehow life stories, the passing on of memories, and the recounting of life's lessons are important ways of sharing our knowledge, beliefs, faith, and wisdom with others and reflecting upon them for our own growth and insight. Across human history, much of life has been shared in this way, this life story way. In this issue of the *Viewpoint*, we focus upon the power of life stories captured as memoirs.

It's important to note that memoir isn't just a literary genre. It's a form of storytelling that shares significant moments, eras, or events of one person's life with others. It's about legacy as much as it's about history. And even if we aren't all writers, there is something fascinating about reading the stories of others and searching for meaning in their experiences. There is something rich in trying to describe our own experiences in language, in writing. After all, there are things I want my grandchildren to know about life's lessons that will enrich their living. There are also things I want the students I see every day on campus to know. And there are things I want students three generations from now to recall when they think about their faith and this place, PLNU. There is much to hear, much to learn,



Dr. Brower chats with students outside Mieras Hall.

and much to consider as we reflect upon the stories and influences of others all around us.

In furthering this consideration of memoir, February marks the 13th annual Writer's Symposium by the Sea, hosted by Point Loma's Department of Literature, Journalism & Modern Languages. Authors such as Gay Talese, who is featured in this issue, Anchee Min, and Philip Yancey will reveal some of their stories to students, faculty, and community members throughout the symposium. It should prove to be a wonderful time of reflection and sharing. Even if you can't join us, I hope this issue of the *Viewpoint* will help you reflect upon the gift of memoirs and all you have to share with others from your unique experiences and life.

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