

1-1-2010

Sportswriting legend Bisher retires

Furman University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarexchange.furman.edu/furman-magazine>

Recommended Citation

University, Furman (2010) "Sportswriting legend Bisher retires," *Furman Magazine*: Vol. 52 : Iss. 4 , Article 28.
Available at: <https://scholarexchange.furman.edu/furman-magazine/vol52/iss4/28>

This Article is made available online by Journals, part of the Furman University Scholar Exchange (FUSE). It has been accepted for inclusion in Furman Magazine by an authorized FUSE administrator. For terms of use, please refer to the [FUSE Institutional Repository Guidelines](#). For more information, please contact scholarexchange@furman.edu.

Megan Theiling Draper is director of development for the College of Pharmacy at the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston. She is co-owner with her husband, Trevor, of TMD Architects, a firm that was featured in the fall 2009 *Charleston Home & Design* magazine.

Paul Foster of Simpsonville, S.C., a representative with Northwestern Mutual Finance Network, was invited to attend the 2009 Northwestern Mutual Forum, held in November in Scottsdale, Ariz. The invitation was in recognition of his outstanding performance.

Elizabeth Coker Hamlett has become university collections manager at Furman. She has worked for a number of museums and historic groups in South Carolina and most recently worked for Informal Learning Experiences, a museum consulting firm in Washington, D.C.

MARRIAGES: Robin Hinson and Michael Kanady, June 27. Robin, a reporter for WOLO-TV in Columbia, S.C., was nominated for a 2009 Emmy for her coverage of a fatal plane crash that injured two celebrity musicians. Michael is a sales representative with Colonial Life Insurance.

Dulaney Wible and Benjamin Farkas, October 17. They live in Cockeysville, Md.

BIRTHS: Will and Jessica Sumner Barrett, a daughter, Kara Leanne, August 12, Johnson City, Tenn.

William and **Bonnie Warman Byrnes**, a son, Kieran Philip, February 10, 2009, Richmond, Va.

Brent and Kelly Benning '01 Huckaby, a son, Judah Pace, April 24. Brent is director of worship and arts at Hope Church in Dallas, Ga. Kelly recently joined a grant-writing consulting firm, where

she works to secure federal, state and foundation funding for community health centers and other clients.

Josh and Natalie **Patterson**, a son, Cooper Wright, September 8. Josh is an assistant principal at Boiling Springs Intermediate School. They live in Duncan, S.C.

Doug and Jody James '03 Webb, a son, Charles Douglas, February 25, 2009. Doug recently accepted the staff attorney position with the Greenville County School District.

SPORTSWRITING LEGEND BISHER RETIRES

With the retirement of James Furman Bisher, the world of journalism lost one of its all-time greats.

A veteran of more than 70 years in the newspaper business, Bisher spent the last 59 years of his career as sports editor and columnist at *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* — until October 11, 2009, when, just a few weeks before his 92nd birthday, he published his final column.

The North Carolina native covered it all, from the Olympics to the Masters, from the World Series to the Kentucky Derby, Super Bowl and Final Four. He wrote for national magazines and authored books with and about such legendary figures as Henry Aaron, Arnold Palmer and others. His distinctive flair and insightful style earned him a legion of faithful readers and a host of awards.

His work was included in the "Best Sports Stories of the Year" anthology 23 times. He received the Georgia Associated Press Sports Writing Award 18 times, was named the state's Sportswriter of the Year 19 times, and won the Professional Golfers' Association's Lifetime Achievement in Journalism Award. He is a member of the National Sportscaster and Sportswriters Hall of Fame, the International Golf Writers Hall of Fame, the Georgia Sports Hall of Fame and the North Carolina Sports Hall of Fame.

As Vince Moore wrote in the Fall 1995 *Furman Magazine*, Bisher is "one of America's best sportswriters and one of Atlanta's best-known citizens."

Bisher is also a member of Furman's Class of 1938 — even though he actually earned his degree from the University of North Carolina. He had intended to finish his college career at Furman, but he was thrown a curve at the start of his junior year.

Bisher told Moore he thought he was set at Furman — he had a scholarship and was planning to be manager of the football team and sports editor of *The Hornet*, the student newspaper. But just two weeks into the term, he learned that Furman would not be offering any journalism classes that year, and journalism was his primary interest. After talking to his father, he decided to transfer to North Carolina.

Still, he said, "I made a lot of good friends when I was in Greenville, and they are friends I have stayed in touch with over the years."

His loyalty to Furman was evident when he established the J. Furman Bisher Academic/Athletic Scholarship, which is awarded to four top scholar/athletes each year. The university, in turn, honored him in 1978 with the Distinguished Alumni Award and in 1999 with an honorary Doctor of Letters degree.

Commenting on Bisher's retirement, Furman president David Shi joked that the sportswriter "is so distinguished that many people assume that Furman was named for him rather than the other way around." More seriously, Shi said that Bisher "effectively uses his agile words about athletics and athletes to help readers reflect on much larger issues . . . Over many years,



Furman Bisher has prompted countless readers to stop and reflect about sports but also about life — and what really matters."

For those who'd like to sample Bisher's talents, a good place to start is *Furman Bisher: Face to Face*, a 2005 collection of some of his best interviews (Muhammad Ali, Ted Turner, John Wooden and others). Or visit <http://furmanbisher.wordpress.com>.