

Mike Killpack

I've been married to Linda for 57 years. I have two children, Kip and Heidi, who are my greatest accomplishments. Kip has two master's degrees, and Heidi has two bachelor's degrees and a master's degree. Both are very successful in their occupations.

I also have four granddaughters who are the center of my life. My 3 oldest grandchildren are now in college and the youngest is finishing up high school. I'm so proud of everything they have accomplished already in life. All four of them are gorgeous, still not sure how that happened.

Education--2 years at Snow College and 2 years at Utah State University.

Work History:

I was with the LA Parks and Rec Department at Granada Hills park for one year. One day, I came home, and Linda informed me that she and Kip were going back to Utah. She told me that if I wanted to go, I should get in the car. When we got back to Utah, I got lucky and secured a job with Salt Lake County Parks and Rec at the Central City Community Center in downtown Salt Lake City. It was the early '70s, and the Black Power Movement was just starting. The experience at the Center helped shape me into the person I am today. Being one of the only white guys there taught me how to get along with others.

Next stop was the Kearns Rec Center, out on the west side of the Salt Lake Valley. It was the best job ever. All I did for 15 years was play with the kids. I guarantee that I could beat most people playing table tennis, pool, and shooting and playing hoops. While I was at Kearns Rec, I organized a big basketball program and was asked if I could do it county-wide. I said, "Give me the job." I became the Youth Sports Coordinator and moved to the main Rec Office for the next 12 years. I combined all the smaller basketball programs into one large 17,000-player program. All while I was working for the county, I was volunteering with the Amateur Athletic Union, traveling around the country working at their national championships.

Two weeks before the end of 1995, I got an offer I couldn't refuse. They paid off my last 3 years so I could retire with 30 years. Linda said she wasn't leaving; she had a good teaching job, and the kids lived close.

There was no way I could pass up this opportunity. So, the first week of '96, I was on a plane to Florida, and my office was located at the Disney World Resort.

For the next 12 years, I had the best job you could have. We hosted 46 basketball championships, plus a track meet, gymnastics meet, martial arts event, and one of the biggest volleyball tournaments. All events were held at Disney's Wide World of Sports; it is an awesome venue. P.S. I had a silver pass that allowed me to get 3 people into any of the 4 theme parks every day.

I left Disney in 2007 and came back to Utah, working as an AAU Regional Rep. I started the Big Mountain Jam and the Rocky Mountain Showcase basketball tournaments. Both tournaments today have 400-plus teams. This means I have had a full-time job for 58 years.

Life Experiences:

People who know me know I'm all about my life experiences. Here are a few:

- Attended 4 NBA All-Star Games
- Attended 3 Super Bowls
- Attended 12 men's and women's NCAA basketball Final Fours
- Traveled to Panama, 5 times to Mexico, 2 times to Canada, and traveled to 49 of the 50 states
- Hunted Russian boar on a 40-mile fenced reserve
- Flew down to the Keys in a King Air to fish twice
- Had the privilege of shaking hands with 3 Presidents: both Bushes and Ford
- Followed Tiger Woods around one of the Disney courses
- Walked the West Grand Canyon Skywalk
- Saw the Acapulco cliff divers
- Saw my first and last bullfight (it was brutal!)
- Toured the pump room at the Bellagio and got to pick the music
- Ate frog legs and raw oysters
- Went to the Kentucky Derby on a VIP pass (Mint juleps are nasty!)
- Traveled to Afghanistan and experienced things very few people have (this is by far my favorite life experience)

I don't know why and I'm not bitching but this old Emery Co boy has had a charmed life.