



Gary E. West - *Business, Industry and Professions*

in 1937, graduated from Triadelphia High School in 1954 and received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business in 1958 from West Liberty State College.

He married Phyllis J. (Flip) Krider in 1959. Gary & Flip have two Children, Kimberly, Lori and four grandchildren who live in Atlanta, GA. Gary has two brothers, Jim and Jack and a sister, Patti.

During High School and College, part-time jobs at Twelve St. Garage and Goodyear Tire & Rubber helped to pay the college expenses. After college graduation, he worked for 13 years for the Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company at various positions in Wheeling, Pennsylvania, New York, and Connecticut. In 1970, Valley Welding Supply co., a small one location Industrial Gas Company was purchased with Personal Pension Funds and with funds from two partners. With the experience gained working for a large corporation (Goodyear), good Banks and great Accountants, Valley acquired many locations in WV, Ohio and Pennsylvania and in 1997, 27 years later and \$85 million in sales, Valley went public with capital value of \$56 million. From 1997 to 2007, many additional acquisitions were made until the locations had grown to 84 locations in 16 States with over 800 employees and sales of \$220 million. In February of 2007, Valley was sold to a private equity firm for \$316 million. Many local stock holders and employees were justly rewarded by the sale and more importantly, all employees retained their local positions and additional personnel have been added to the local corporate office staff.

During the 37 years (1970-2007), Gary was active in United Way, Rotary, Upper Ohio Valley Construction Employer's Council and Board member of local businesses. West continues to be involved in local business and institutions. He is president of West Rentals, Inc (the developer of Oglebay Meadows), Real Equip-Lease, and owner of Stratford Springs Steak and Seafood, a local restaurant. In addition, West owns a real estate company (GEW Real Estate) in Naples, Florida.

In the 37 years working at Valley, West has been honored many time by his peers and the business community. He is a member of Who's Who in WV., was inducted into the West Liberty State College Hall of Fame in 1993, WV Wholesale Distribution Entrepreneur of the year in 1995 and was inducted into the WV Business Hall of Fame in 2006. Many institutions and churches in the Ohio Valley are recipients of the Philanthropy practiced by the West Family.

Gary's favorite quotations is:

"Surround yourself with good loyal people who are smarter than you and you can not help being successful!"