

TRIBUTE



Columbus Academy faculty member, coach, alumnus and parent **Mark Barren '78** passed away on June 9 just two days after suffering a heart attack and collapsing while running near his home in Worthington. He never regained consciousness while in the Intensive Care Unit at Riverside Methodist Hospital. He was 51.

"Mark's death is an especially difficult blow to our school community because of the way he affected students here and the extensive connections of the Barren family," said Headmaster **John Mackenzie.**

Following teaching and coaching stints at The Hun School in Princeton, N.J., and Notre Dame Cathedral Latin School in Cleveland, Mark returned to his alma mater in 1993 as mathematics teacher and boys athletic director, and he was an assistant football coach when the Vikings won the 2003 Division V state championship. He had been the varsity head football coach since 2006. This past spring, he helped to start the boys lacrosse program at Academy by coaching the Middle School squad to the state championship.

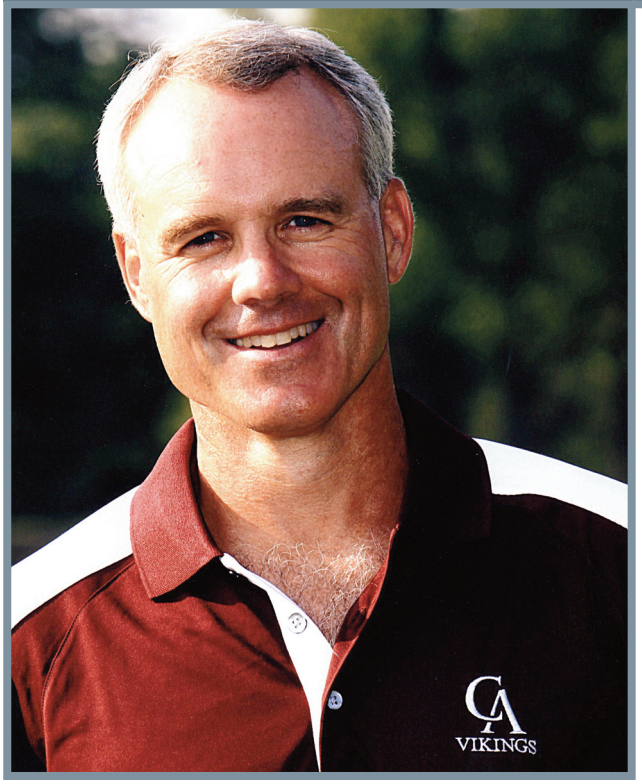
Mark met his wife **Jennifer** (**Bulford**) when both were younger teachers at Academy. She currently teaches in the Lower School, and all three of their sons attend CA: **Jamie** recently completed seventh grade, **David** fourth and **Andrew** first. Mark's father, the late **Dan Barren**, was an Academy math teacher and head football coach from 1977 until 1984, and his impact on the boys in his charge was a powerful one. In addition to Mark '78, Dan had two other sons graduate from CA: **John '82** and **Brian '85**.

Mark was a three-sport standout at Columbus Academy and went on to earn a bachelor's degree in economics and education from Wittenberg University and a master's in sports administration from The Ohio State University, where he was a graduate assistant for the Buckeyes' football team under Coach Earle Bruce.

Contributions to the Mark Barren Memorial Fund for the continuing education of his three sons can be dropped off at any Huntington National Bank branch in the Columbus area or mailed to: Huntington National Bank, Attention Tellers, 800 High Street, Worthington, OH 43085. Checks should be made payable to "The Mark Barren Memorial Fund."

To see the coverage by 10TV on the student-led vigil held in Mark's honor, go to http://tiny.cc/BarrenVigil.

What follows is a small sampling of memories and comments generated by Mark's passing.



"Columbus Academy will lose so, so much with the loss of Mark Barren. Undeniably, we lose a fine teacher and a fine coach who filled major roles in the school in quality ways. But, very notably, we lose a person who was not afraid to look kids in the eye and ask them to stand for something, mostly for the best of themselves." ~ Headmaster **John Mackenzie**

"It is truly an honor to share in the celebration of the extraordinary life of my friend Mark Barren. Having worked with high school coaches for the last 36 years, the great ones are obvious. The great ones like Mark approach the job as a calling. Every day he taught the lessons of life." ~ former Ohio State football coach **Jim Tressel** (for entire letter, go to http://tiny.cc/TresselLetter)

"I hope Mark's family finds comfort in the certainty that he loved what he was doing and that many young people – no doubt now spread far and wide – with lasting memories of their time on 'his team' are pulling for them." ~ **Bob Bradway '81**

"The thing I remember most about my favorite teacher Mr. Barren is the picture of his three sons on his desk. He would subtly look at them every day and smile. You could really tell how much he loved them and how we was so committed to them." ~ **India Sherman '14**

TO MARK BARREN '78

"I have called Mark 'Coach' rather than 'Mark' for a long time. Teacher, friend, mentor, father, son, brother… good at so many things, and missed at them all." ~ science teacher **Dr. Shaun Heale**

"I didn't play football and I never had him as a teacher, yet I felt his warmth, kindness and genuine character in so many facets of my life." ~ **Gebby Keny '10**

"Mark always wanted to know the kids better and wanted to understand them from the perspectives of others. He wanted to find different ways to motivate them or know about their relationships or study habits, etc. – anything so that Mark could be the best teacher, coach and mentor he could be to them." ~ language arts teacher **Amy Seymore**

"Coach B, thanks for always believing in me. You taught me so much, all of which I hold dear to my heart. If they made more men like you, this world would be a much better place." ~ **Chris Crockett '08**

"Mark was an amazing part of the admissions team. The best part was that Mark was always pushing CA's entire program. He sold kids on our academic, service and arts programs as well as the fact that CA wanted 'good' kids. We will miss him terribly." ~ admissions director **John Wuorinen '80**

"As a volunteer at middle school track practices, Mr. Barren helped me pace for the mile when I was in eighth grade. In the last race of that year, I finally ran my goal of 4:50… winning and pacing my race perfectly for the first time in my life. It was all thanks to him, and the interest and excitement he showed in my results made me feel proud and accomplished." ~ **Jake Tuckerman '14**

"Coach Barren, you were always so supportive of my D-1 field hockey aspirations. You will be forever missed." ~ **Christina Williams '99**

"Coach, because of you, I know the value of hard work and passion. You were the best coach, but an even better friend. You live on through us, your kids." ~ **Jordan Hoffman '11**

"October 3, 1982 – the NFL was on strike and to replace Sunday pro football, CBS came to Springfield, Ohio, to broadcast the Wittenberg-Baldwin Wallace game. John Madden was the commentator for CBS and he kept making references to the "big bad Barren brothers" who were starting in the defensive backfield for Wittenberg. Mark and his brother John '82 made Dan and Katherine very proud parents once again that day!" ~ history teacher **John Exline '64**

"Mr. Barren's class is the only math class I have ever found success in, and I will never forget how proud he was of me. I had always thought of him as one of my larger role models in the school, but this proved to me he was like a father figure for me when I was in school. He was an amazing man, and I will never forget him." ~ **Mallory Grayson '12**

"Mark was a rare teacher and beloved member of the Class of 1978. May Mark's name remain a blessing to all of us who knew and loved him." ~ **Artie Isaac '78** (for more, go to http://tiny.cc/BarrenEulogy)

"Coach B, from the minute I met you, I knew that you were an honorable, courageous and wonderful man. You weren't just a coach or a teacher, but a friend." ~ **Joey Vara '11**

"When I think of Mark, I think of how much he loved his family, but I also think about how much he loved the Academy family and teaching. His persistence and will gave students strength and an example to follow, and showed them much about the power of tenacity and determination." ~ service department chair and Latin teacher **Christy Bening**

"Without my asking him to, Mr. Barren came up with a method to help me in math that has benefitted my overall academic career tremendously, and he wasn't once concerned with making sure I or anyone else gave him credit. He knew that being a wonderful person was its own reward." ~ **Sam Korda '09**

"If I could grow up to be half as nice, caring, loving, intelligent, strong, inspirational, etc., as Coach Barren was, I would be beyond proud of who I had grown to become. Coach Barren will always be a part of me and in my heart." ~ **Turner Montgomery '14**

"Coach, I had never gotten A's on a test before your class. When you said, 'Nobody's bad at math,' it really gave me hope and that's all it took. I can never thank you enough for this." ~ **Aziza Corbett '13**

"Yes he was my head football coach and yes he inspired me athletically and mentally in many ways, but overall Coach B was a great life-coach and person. I can only hope that I can go on to inspire people the way Coach Barren did for me." ~ **Jeremy Lipp '08**

"Coach was a great man, and he will forever remain a part of my life and play the role of my mentor and provide me with a path to follow." ~ **Josh Hill '11**



