Betty Haley Haven

Newton’s First Law states: “A body continues in a state of rest or uniform motion until acted upon by an external force of sufficient magnitude to disturb this state.” Betty Haven has certainly embraced this law as her life has been that of a body in a continuous state of motion. It began at an early age, when Betty and her family moved frequently around the country with her father, a naval aviator. It was during her travels as a youngster that Betty developed a love for education and people, a passion she continued in higher education.

She completed her undergraduate degree at Duke University, where she was on the first women’s basketball team to play intercollegiate women’s games. Betty taught physical education for a few years before returning to school for her graduate studies. She moved to Bloomington, where she finished her doctoral degree in biomechanics in 1977. Shortly after graduation Betty was appointed as an assistant professor part-time in the Department of Kinesiology. During these first few years she taught several graduate and undergraduate courses, including biomechanics. She also continued her work in the biomechanics laboratory and with the United States Olympic Committee. Her other and most important full-time job was in Columbus, with her young children and family.

By 1987 Betty’s noteworthy administrative and leadership skills were recognized, and she was appointed coordinator of undergraduate studies, in addition to her teaching duties. During her time as coordinator several new programs were added and/or received national certifications, and procedures and policies were modernized and standardized. Other duties included scheduling all undergraduate courses, coordinating staff and classroom space for those classes, coordinating registration and drop/add (for anyone who remembers those days before computer registration), providing leadership in curriculum development in each of the areas, advising all prospective and new students coming into the department, and advising approximately 40 undergraduate exercise science students.

Since her days as a graduate student, Betty has always been at the forefront of using technology to support her research, teaching, service, and administration. Over the years she became the department “go-to person” for both faculty and staff with regard to most things computer related. In addition Betty developed and taught Micro-Computers in Physical Education, a course on computer literacy for undergraduates that has since become a requirement in most of the kinesiology undergraduate major programs. She was also instrumental in the development of the departmental Web page. In 1995 the increased responsibilities for departmental computing support led to a change in administrative positions, and Betty transitioned into a new administrative role as coordinator of computer support and education. At both the school and university level she was increasingly active in planning and implementing technology solutions. Betty was an early adopter and advocate for the IU-developed Oncourse Web-based class management system. She was active in the development of Oncourse and vocal in suggesting additional modules and capabilities within the system.

Although Betty is an excellent administrator, her true gifts are in the classroom where she has helped thousands of students overcome their “math anxiety” and “technophobia” to achieve success in biomechanics and technology courses. She is an outstanding teacher who brought biomechanics to life by using her children as real-life examples in her instruction. One only has to have read her humorous presentation, “A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Classroom . . .” to truly appreciate her giftedness as a teacher. Betty is constantly revising her courses and working on new ways to maximize student learning. Her innovative pedagogy has been recognized by numerous awards and Indiana University teaching grants. She truly cares about her students, and that caring shows in the time and preparation she commits to her teaching and student advising.

Over the last 30 years Betty Haven has been a consistent, positive force and a body always in motion helping the department and students move forward. It is hard to imagine
the Department of Kinesiology without her. The good news is that Betty will continue her constant motion in her retirement years with her R.V., which she will use to visit grandchildren, friends, and colleagues around the country. Safe travels, Betty. We will miss you.

*Donetta Cothran*