**Remembering Minor Myers jr.**

**by Ed Rust jr.**

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Ellen, Minor, Jeff, members of the extended family, the Illinois Wesleyan family, and this community.  
  
Minor Myers and Carl Sandburg had some things in common. Among them: the fact they both passed away on a July 22. When Sandburg died, his brother-in-law said: "When God made Carl, he didn’t do anything else that day."  
  
I think the same might be said of Minor.  
  
Minor surely was a full day’s work ... and at the end of the day, the Creator must have been very pleased with himself. He surely broke the mold.  
  
Minor made us all proud to be associated with Illinois Wesleyan. How lucky this institution is that it benefited from ... continues to benefit from ... Minor’s 14 years of leadership. And now he lives on ... through the university ... through its graduates – past ... and future.  
  
But his imprint has also been left on the broader community. Those of you associated with the Pratt Music Foundation ... the Gospel Festival ... the annual minority academic achievement recognition ceremony ... his outreach to local and area schools ... the Chamber of Commerce ... even his interest and research in local history — you all know this very well.  
  
His focus was on IWU, but he also understood well the university’s role ... its obligations and commitments to the community.  
  
There are, of course, a thousand stories to be told, and so many of them involve Minor’s encyclopedic knowledge, his lust for learning, his unquenchable interest in each of us, in new ideas, in new things, in new opportunities.  
  
Several years ago my wife, Sally, and I were having dinner with Minor and Ellen at the President’s house. Minor had showed me his collection of brass musical instruments. And I mentioned to him that it’s possible that he might find some brass instruments at a local business called "Tick’s."  
  
Now for those of you not familiar with Tick’s ... the Morris Tick Company is a local, long-established recycling center. Back when I was young, we’d call it a "junkyard." But it occurred to me that it’s very possible that in some of the better scrap metal that gets hand-sorted at Tick’s, in its collection of brass, there might very well be some brass musical instruments — at least I had seen such over the years.  
  
That matter-of-fact observation prompted one of those "Minor moments" so many of us have experienced, that pose Minor almost always adopted when a fresh idea, a revelation was introduced into his ever-inquisitive mind.  
  
You know that look: His head dipped about six inches. It turned to the side. His glasses were shoved up onto that shock of white hair. His eyes locked on mine as the thought registered like a bolt of lightning.  
  
And then we moved on.  
  
I don’t know whether Minor ever did get around to visiting Tick’s in his never-ending quest to expand his collection. I wouldn’t be surprised if he did. But if you happened to see him there, now you know why the president of Illinois Wesleyan was at the local junkyard.  
  
Minor had an amazing grace. Although his time with us was far too short, he led a full life. And what an example he set in that regard. He looked for the best in each of us. He gave us the best he had ... and it was a lot. More than anything, he challenged us, and inspired us to reach our own potential.  
  
That was his gift to each of us. That clearly was Minor’s gift to Illinois Wesleyan and to this community.  
And it will be an enduring gift ... his lasting legacy.  
  
We’ll miss him a lot, and there is a lot to miss.