

Comments at Bill Becker's Lunch  
Tuesday, January 5, 2010  
Mike Salemi

It is a pleasure to offer some remarks on the occasion of Bill's retirement and the first thing I would like to say is that I have always liked Sue....

Not many of you may know this but I got my start in Economic Education as Bill's Assistant Director of the Center for Economic Education at the University of Minnesota. Good things happened. Bill Walstad and I shared an office and have been working together ever since.

When I first bumped into Bill Becker at the Friends of Economic Education reception on Sunday evening, I was feeling a bit nostalgic and, I admit it, thankful for the start in economic education that he had provided me.

So, I went up to Bill and said: "Wow, Bill, it's been a long time since you gave me a start as your Assistant Center Director and look at all the good things that have resulted."

Without pausing to reflect, even for a second, Bill said: "That was Darryl Lewis. I would never have chosen you for that job."

All of you who are now shaking your heads acknowledge by your gestures that you recognize a classic Beckerism when you hear one. All I can say is that I would like to credit Bill's comment more to his brutal (and unfiltered) devotion to honesty and less to his ability to judge horse flesh.

Thanks.