

J.C. Eaves Math Endowment Multiplies Opportunities In Kentucky

J.C. Eaves, Jr. spent many hours gazing at the stars with his father.

His father, J.C. Eaves, Sr. was born in Muhlenberg County, Kentucky and received his B.S. and M.A. degrees in mathematics from UK before joining the U.S. Navy during World War II. After the war, he completed his Ph.D. in mathematics at the University of North Carolina, where his son was born. After that, he taught for short periods in the math departments at Alabama and Auburn and then came to UK as the head of the Department of Mathematics and Astronomy in the early 1950's.



J. C. Eaves, Sr., former head of UK Mathematics and Astronomy, and his son, J. C. Eaves, Jr.

Eaves spent much of his youth around the UK campus. He remembers fondly the nights when his father opened the telescope, which was located near Shawneetown, for community viewing. Long lines of people would wait for a quick look at the heavens. Along with his friends in the Lexington Junior Astronomical Society, he was able to audit an astronomy course. Then, after the computer center was established in the basement of McVey Hall in the late 1950's, his father, along with Drs. Tullio Pignani, J.B. Wells, and W.S. Krogdahl, received a NASA contract related to the restricted three body problem. According to Eaves, "Those experiences have me still out in the dark watching the international space station and the shuttle and anything else out there."

The Eaves family summer vacation was usually a trip to an annual math meeting, enabling him to see most of the United States, including sleeping in the car to see the sun come

up at the Grand Canyon, visiting the Arizona meteor crater, and visiting the Mt. Palomar observatory. He recalls getting to know Dr. Sallie Pence and watching with interest slides of her worldly travels, mainly by ship, across the Atlantic. All of that instilled a love of travel in the younger Eaves, which led to twenty years in the Air Force.

In 1963, J.C. Eaves, Sr. and Jr. established the Sallie E. Pence Award in mathematics, an honor that is still being awarded and has helped many on the road to becoming teachers of mathematics.

As a student at UK, Eaves, Jr. has wonderful memories of his educational experience, including football games at Stoll Field and basketball games in Memorial Coliseum.



He marched in President Johnson's inaugural parade in January 1965 as a freshman in the UK ROTC program. He also met his wife, Mary, at UK in the fall of 1968.

As a result of all the experiences he had growing up in Lexington and being involved with UK, Eaves honored his father by establishing a mathematics scholarship in his name. The Eaves feel fortunate to be able to help the scholarship fund grow each year since it was endowed and are extremely happy

that it has helped many Kentucky high school graduates pursue their undergraduate degrees in mathematics.

J. C. Eaves, Jr. was the beneficiary of scholarship assistance as well. He attended UK as an undergraduate student from 1964-1968 and received a B.S. in mathematics. He received an orchestra scholarship (he played string bass) and a USAF ROTC scholarship. With this endowment, Mr. Eaves has found a way to honor his late father and give back to his alma mater.

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