

Fred J. Lekson

Business



Fred graduated from Collinwood High School in 1948. While at CHS, Fred lettered in basketball and football and made the Cleveland All Senate football team at fullback. In addition to sports, Fred served as president of the Student Council in his senior year. He also performed in school plays, represented CHS in city-wide vocal contests, and he was active in choral singing groups. He started a barber shop quartet that performed at school functions. He was elected to a term as president of the Cleveland city-wide Hi-Y and was awarded the "Students Good Citizens" trophy. CHS appointed him as a delegate to the American Legion Boys State in Columbus, OH representing the school. He and a fellow classmate met with Cleveland Indians owner, Bill Veeck, who autographed six baseballs that were auctioned off to

raise funds for their Hi-Y club.

Upon graduation, he was offered a grant by Western Reserve University to play football. He played halfback for two years until his college experience was interrupted by serving in the U.S. Army during the Korean Conflict. Following discharge from the military, he returned to WRU but due to an injury he did not play on the football team. He joined the university's chorus and joined a national fraternity, Phi Gamma Delta, serving as president of the chapter in his senior year. He joined a barber shop quartet and sang on a Cleveland radio program. He graduated in 1954 from WRU with a BBA degree.

After working one year at Union Carbide Corporation, he was invited to join the staff of Phi Gamma Delta as National Field Secretary, located in Washington, D.C. He was responsible for visiting and evaluating 82 chapters at colleges and universities in the US and Canada. Fred was instrumental in starting three new chapters. The travel served him well as it put him in contact with industry and political leaders.

In 1957, he joined Preformed Line Products Company, a manufacturer of electric and telephone utility pole line hardware. The company was located in Cleveland, OH. He attained the position of Eastern Division Sales Manager before he left the firm in 1967.

In 1967, Fred decided to move to Charlotte, NC to go into business with a manufacturers' representative agency, Engineer Sales Company. His responsibility was to call on/sell to electric utilities, telephone companies, and other firms. His territory was North and South Carolina. After nine years, he decided to go into business for himself.

In 1977, Fred founded Fred Lekson Associates, Inc. as owner and president. His company represented Preformed's telephone product line as well as other manufacturers' products. After running this company for 19 years, he sold it to one of his employees.

In 1996, following retirement he and his wife, Ann, joined The Friendship Force International organization, headquartered in Atlanta, GA. This organization, founded by former President Jimmy Carter and his wife, has a stated purpose of bringing peace and understanding in the world through visitations in homes of citizens in foreign countries. They in turn, visit club members in their homes, which results in the intended cultural exchange. Fred and his wife served as officers of the club, with Fred serving as president. They served on the board of directors and on committees and at various times participated as “ambassadors” on foreign exchanges and as ‘hosts” for domestic exchanges. With this club and independently he and his wife visited all the global continents (except Antarctica).

In 2014, Fred is retired and is living in Charlotte, NC. His wife passed away in 2007 after nearly 50 years of marriage. Fred has three adult children and five grandchildren.