

"Parting Shot" is a monthly opinion column written on a rotating basis by guest authors. The opinions expressed are not necessarily those of FE&S.

# A Life Well Lived



By Scott Reitano, LEED GA  
Principal  
Foodservice Solution Group  
scott@fssolution.com  
Indianapolis

**W**hile still working as a manufacturers' rep in 2000, I attended the annual conference hosted by the Manufacturers' Agents Association for the Foodservice Industry, where I heard foodservice design consultant Jim Webb deliver a keynote address titled "Integrity 2000." Jim espoused that our industry should step back from a direction of providing foodservice equipment and services based solely on the lowest cost. He spoke about the importance of providing value for our products and service offerings. He even laid out a program for various industry players to sign a pledge and use the *Integrity 2000* symbol in their marketing campaigns. I believe it takes courage to step out in front of your industry and make a bold statement about its direction and to care enough to put your personal reputation on the line to try to challenge that trajectory.

Without a doubt, the foodservice industry will remember Jim for all he has accomplished in his professional career. However, if that is where Jim Webb's impact ends, we will have missed out on his true legacy.

From that day forward, I made a point of keeping track of Jim and his firm, Tustin, Calif.-based Webb Foodservice Design. I rooted for their corporate success and looked for opportunities to interact with Jim. Through his creative vision and the hard work of his outstanding organization, Webb Foodservice Design has done great work and has received well-deserved accolades.

Unfortunately, this past October Jim lost his battle with cancer. Without a doubt, the foodservice industry will remember Jim for all he has accomplished in his professional career. However, if that is where Jim Webb's impact ends, we will have missed out on his true legacy.

Over the last year of Jim's life, I was fortunate enough to spend a significant amount of time with him. I observed a man who lived out the value of the integrity he spoke about in 2000 in all aspects of his life. He loved his family and cared deeply about his co-workers and his friends. He possessed a gentle, giving spirit and willingly shared his gifts with others. While Jim was certainly passionate about his work, he exhibited a much greater passion for impacting lives. Even as he came to the realization that his valiant battle with cancer was coming to an end, Jim never lost hope and he never stopped reaching out to others with love.

In our conversations and through our correspondence, Jim and I often spoke about "walking through this season of life together." It has been a wonderful journey and a blessing that I will cherish the rest of my life. I pray that his legacy will extend well beyond his professional accomplishments and reach into each of our hearts.

What a better industry we will have, and what a greater impact we will have on this world, if we strive to live our lives with the integrity and passion that Jim lived his. Rest in peace Jim Webb.