



Tom Newton

PARTNER

This story begins when I married Sally Kaufmann in 1973. We moved to West Chester, PA and she interviewed for a teaching job which required that she coach gymnastics. Although she had never done or coached gymnastics, she accepted the job. She learned a lot that year and the next 10 years she continued to coach. It became the basis for a future decision that resulted in Tumblebee's.

In 1986, we had since moved to Greensboro and Sally hadn't worked for about 5 years. There was some uncertainty with my job at that time. I remember the night we sat on the couch in our family room (like it was yesterday) and discussed how to move forward. We were looking at the classifieds in the Greensboro News & Record and there was a post looking for someone to purchase a franchise for Tumblebee's Gymnastics. It was a franchise out of FL and Sally immediately said, "that's what we are going to do". Her decision was based on the fact that there were no developmental programs for children in Greensboro. To make a very long story short, the franchisor helped us get the business up and running. Soon after that, the franchisor went out of business and we continued on our own to build something that far exceeded our expectations.

We were hoping to get 200 students to come to the original facility on Battleground Ave. Almost immediately, we had well over 200 and continued until we outgrew that location. We took the major step of buying land and building the facility at 6904 Downwind Road. The rest is history and we now have a team gym next door.

None of this would have been possible without the wonderful employees that carried out Sally's dream and lived the culture that we still have today. My goal as an owner is to never lose the culture that Sally built. Sally connected with everyone: employees, customers, young and old. Her energy was infectious. She was mentor to everyone and, in the opinion of many, she made all of us better people.

As for me, I worked 35 years for Penske Truck Leasing in national account sales. I recently retired and stay busy as an owner of Ultimate Kids and running the Sally Newton Memorial Foundation. Sally and I had two boys, Mike and Matt. They live in Raleigh and I now have a granddaughter and grandson that are the joy of my life. Interestingly, my 7-year-old granddaughter is passionate about gymnastics in honor of Nana.

