



Mary R. Durham

*Second Counselor in the
Primary General Presidency*

While balancing the demands of home life, Church callings, career, and other responsibilities throughout her married life, Mary Richards Durham has noticed that when she and her husband put the Lord first, everything falls into place. “It’s a sweet thing. If you trust, the Lord blesses you,” she said.

It is a theme she has seen repeated many times. She was called to serve as the ward Young Women president while her husband served in the stake presidency. Later they served together as her husband presided over the Japan Tokyo Mission from 2000 to 2003. Now she will serve as the second counselor in the Primary general presidency as her husband begins his service as an Area Seventy.

“As we are yoked with each other and with the Lord, everything goes easier,” she said.

Mary Lucille Richards was born on March 15, 1954, in Portsmouth, Virginia, to L. Stephen Richards Jr. and Annette Richards. While her father pursued his medical degree, the family moved to Minneapolis, Minnesota, before settling in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Nurtured by the faith and love of her parents and a large extended family, she came to know that the gospel is true. “It was a happy experience to live the gospel. It wasn’t hard. It was fun,” Sister Durham said.

As a young woman, she was impressed with the importance of finding a worthy young man to marry and made it a matter of daily prayer and weekly fasting. After high school she attended Brigham Young University on a dance scholarship and met Mark Durham, who was attending the University of Utah. “I immediately recognized his goodness,” she said.

The couple married in June 1974 in the Salt Lake Temple. They have seven children.

Sister Durham has served as a stake Relief Society president, counselor in a ward Relief Society presidency, Gospel Doctrine instructor, ward Young Women president, and, most recently, as a member of the Primary general board. ■



Stephen W. Owen

Young Men General President

When Stephen W. Owen was 14 years old, his neighbor hired him to cut the grass in his spacious yard and weed his garden every week. “It took me three days to mow that lawn,” said a smiling Brother Owen, who was sustained on April 4, 2015, as the Young Men general president.

When young Stephen finally finished, his wise employer asked him to join him for a walk through the garden in order to point out a weed or two that had been overlooked.

“He told me that I needed to pull every weed,” he said. “That was my first job and it helped me understand what it meant to be duty-bound.”

Brother Owen would learn lessons that year that went far beyond lawn and garden care. For one, he discovered that satisfaction is found in doing hard things the right way. He also learned the value of mentors.

The neighbor expected only the best from Stephen. “It was like he was saying to me, ‘I know who you can become, and I want to help you.’”

Every young man in the Church, he added, needs such mentors to help him become the best priesthood holder he can be. “I have a lot of empathy for the youth,” he said. “I love them and I know this is a critical time that will set the pattern for the rest of their lives.”

Brother Owen served in the Texas San Antonio Mission and later served as Scoutmaster, ward Young Men president, bishop, high counselor, and stake president.

The Holladay, Utah, native also presided over the California Arcadia Mission from 2005 to 2008, where he served with his wife, Jane Stringham Owen. They were married on December 28, 1979, in the Provo Utah Temple. They have five children.

He was born on March 22, 1958, in Salt Lake City, Utah, to Gordon and Carolyn Owen. He graduated from the University of Utah with a finance degree and is the president of Great Harvest Bread Company in Provo, Utah. ■