



OREGON LAWYER

A Distinctly Oregonian Life



Dave Frohnmayer
Returns to Oregon Law

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Report from Haiti

Greg Bell Lives His Message

Navigating the Navajo Legal System

Walking the Talk

Greg Bell '90, author of 'Water The Bamboo,' lives his message

The first time you speak to Greg Bell, you know he is doing exactly what he was meant to do. Even answering interview questions, the Oregon Law graduate is inspirational.

Bell is a motivational speaker and consultant, as well as author of *Water The Bamboo: Unleashing the Potential of Teams and Individuals* and founder of The Bamboo Center for Leadership. The Water the Bamboo concept of success is brilliant in its simplicity: individuals need vision, faith, patience, persistence, and focus to achieve their goals. The philosophy derives its name from the giant timber bamboo that can grow as much as 90 feet in 60 days. Before this rapid spurt, however, bamboo farmers will tend a single seed for at least three years before they see any signs of growth.

"The reality is not overnight success," Bell says of the way successful individuals are often portrayed in the media. "Behind the veil, the successful are really putting in the hard work... it takes 10,000 hours of practice just to be good, more to be great."

Bell elaborates on this point with the story of Los Angeles Lakers star Kobe Bryant, who, after winning last year's NBA Championship, called former basketball great Hakeem Olajuwon to ask for help sharpening his low-post play.

"Now that's working hard," Bell says. "I have a chapter in my book called 'Deliberate Practice' and that's what Kobe Bryant was doing."

Bell's path to success has been deeply rooted in his own teachings. He began his academic career at the University of Oregon in 1981 and played all four years for the Ducks basketball team before earning his degree in political science. During his basketball career, Bell was twice named the team's most inspirational player and garnered the team's top scholar-athlete honor. He stayed at the UO to



earn his J.D. and went on to work for the Bonneville Power Administration in Portland doing contract negotiation work. After climbing the corporate ladder, though, Bell realized there was something missing.

"I was sitting at a big negotiation table with millions of dollars on the line and I just wasn't feeling it — it wasn't moving me. I was at the top of the corporate ladder, but I was on the wrong wall."

Bell left his lucrative career and called former UO basketball coach Jim Haney.

"I said, 'I'm going to work for you,'" Bell recalls. "Jim said, 'Great. What do you want to do?' So I said, 'I don't know. Let me call you back in 30 days.'"

That was the birth of *Coaches vs. Cancer*, a nationwide collaboration between the American Cancer Society and the National Association of Basketball coaches. It was built on the concept championed by former University of Missouri men's basketball head coach Norm Stewart, a cancer survivor.

"I had no personal connection to cancer," Bell notes. "But this had the meaning I was searching for."

Bell says although he wasn't practicing law at the time, his law degree was extremely useful when it came to forming partnerships and relationships critical to launching the program.

"A lot of what I learned in law school was put into use during the formation of *Coaches vs. Cancer*."

After four years with *Coaches vs. Cancer*, Bell opened his own law firm, but quickly noticed that he needed to help his clients in way that he couldn't practicing traditional law.

"During that time I noticed that I was playing more of a counselor role. People were coming to me on their last legs. Relationships had been broken and seeking help from a lawyer was their last resort. I decided I wanted to get to these people *before* relationships were severed."

Bell embarked on his career as a motivational speaker and

began the writing process for *Water the Bamboo*, a seven-year endeavor that required at least one major rewrite. This was Bell's own bamboo. He is a living testament to the success one can achieve through patience and hard work — the merits of which he espouses daily. His leadership center is now in its 10th year and his client list boasts such names as Nike, adidas, Allstate, AAA, University of Oregon Athletics, University of California, and Gonzaga University.

Water the Bamboo has been out for little more than a year now and Bell says it's rewarding to see people interpreting and applying his message in so many ways.

"That's the purpose. Everyone waters their bamboo, whatever that may be."

Bell's message received a big boost in the press last year when UO head football coach Chip Kelly began applying *Water the Bamboo's* principles to his team.

While away on a business trip, Bell watched Oregon's win over Oregon State in the Civil War match-up that sealed the Ducks' trip to the Rose Bowl. After returning home the following day, Bell noticed several emails from clients linking to video clips featuring player interviews and Coach Kelly's post-game press conference. During the interviews, Coach Kelly and players talked about what they learned from *Water the Bamboo*.

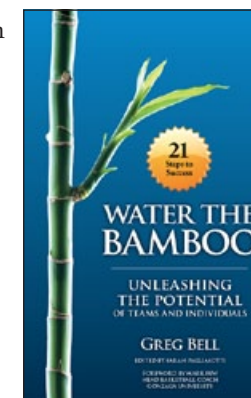
"It was great," Bell, who did not know Kelly personally, recalls. "I couldn't believe they were talking about my book."

Bell was referred to as the football team's "secret weapon" and the players donned "Water the Bamboo" bracelets. He spoke to the team during one of their final practices prior to the Rose Bowl.

"Speaking to the team was mind-blowing," Bell says. "I have so much love and respect for Coach Kelly. He's such an upbeat and positive person."

After years of watering, Bell is now beginning to see the signs of growth. His ultimate goal, he says, is to die a peaceful death, knowing that he helped people and made a difference. Of course, having a good time along the way is imperative.

"It's never about the bamboo — it's about making the watering, the effort, fun."



Bell was twice named the Duck basketball team's most inspirational player and garnered the team's top scholar-athlete honor.

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LAW SCHOOL HAPPENINGS (continued from p.15)

On October 11, 2010, at 12:30 p.m., the **Environmental and Natural Resources Law Program** sponsors "ENR Pizza Monday," in which all law students are welcome to stop by the Bowerman Center to meet with faculty and staff and to learn more about the ENR Program.

On October 12, 2010, at 3:30 p.m. in Room 175 of the Knight Law Center, author and historian Thaddeus Russell will deliver a talk titled, "A Renegade History of the United States." Part of the **Wayne Morse Center** Public Affairs Speaker Series.

On October 14-16, 2010, Oregon Law will host the 4th Annual ADR Works in Progress Conference. If you would like to attend the Conference, please visit the 2010 WIP Online Conference Registration Form. For information on the ADR Works in Progress conference, please visit <http://www.adr.uoregon.edu/2010WIPconference/>.

On October 16, 2010, at 3:00 p.m. in the Knight Law Center, Morse Distinguished Speaker Dr. James E. Hansen will deliver a lecture titled, "Global Time Bomb: How to Avert Disaster." Sponsored by the **Wayne Morse Center** and the Environmental and Natural Resources Program.

On October 20, 2010, at 1:00 p.m. in the Lewis Lounge, journalist and historian Rick Perlstein will speak at the Politics and Policy Colloquium.

On October 20, 2010, at 3:30 p.m. in the Knight Law Center, historian and journalist Rick Perlstein will deliver a public address titled, "The Tea Parties Today." Part of the **Wayne Morse Center's** Public Affairs Speaker Series.

Professor Nancy Shurtz will speak on the topic of "Learning Sustainability in the Classroom and Beyond" on October 20, 2010, at 5:00 p.m. at the Many Nations Longhouse on the University of Oregon campus. The talk is part of "Local Approaches to Global Problems: Solutions for Sustainable Communities: A Series of Fireside Conversations 2010-2011," co-sponsored by the **Appropriate Dispute Resolution Center**, the Environmental Studies Program, the **Environmental and Natural Resources Law Program**, the **Green Business Initiative**, and the Sustainable Cities Initiative.

On November 5, 2010, at 5:30 p.m. in the EMU Ballroom on the campus of the University of Oregon, the John E. Jaqua Distinguished Alumnus Award Dinner will take place. The Jaqua Distinguished Alumnus Award is presented by the **Law School Alumni Association** ("LSAA") and is given to individuals who exemplify the highest quality and ethical standards of the school. The award recognizes personal and professional achievements and loyalty to Oregon Law. The LSAA named the Distinguished Alumnus Award after its first recipient, the late John E. Jaqua, in 2007. Nominations are solicited by the LSAA and a committee of Oregon Law alumni selects the annual recipient. For more information visit www.uoregonlaw.com

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