

WALLIPARI

THE Power Couple for 2010 By Heather C. Watson

Arguably the most famous Power Couple in the Bluegrass, these guys aren't romantically linked, nor would they characterize themselves as personal friends. Separated by a three-decade age disparity, their relationship is more that of a seasoned mentor and the brilliant prodigy entrusted to his care.

Still, it's hard to deny that John Wall and John Calipari are a duo that command attention. Like any other high-profile couple, they have captured our collective imagination with their charisma, charm, and talent. Their tremendous acts of charity warm our hearts, and their celebrity friends make us feel cool by association. LeBron James and Barack Obama count themselves among the Power Couple's legions of fans. You know they must be something special.

Calipari's smart, savvy coaching style, when paired with Wall's graceful yet dominant style of play, seems virtually unstoppable. Longtime basketball viewers—even non-Wildcat fans—are amazed by the poetic grace with which Cal and Wall cooperate. At their very best, their collaboration is the kind of seldom-seen magic generated when Huston directed Bogart, or Balanchine taught Baryshnikov. The game of basketball reaches awe-inspiring heights when Wall's effortless shooting highlights Coach Calipari's famous dribble-drive offense. Sportswriters and bloggers spill tons of ink, both physical and virtual, on our favorite couple, hoping to immortalize the magic they've witnessed. "John Wall" is consistently a Twitter trending topic on game day. People love these two.

As their fellow celebrity Power Couples would likely advise Cal and Wall (dare I say it—Wallipari?), that adulation will, at times, turn speculative or even truculent. Not so long ago, our beloved duo was sitting on top of the world, boasting a Number One ranking, a million-dollar charity fundraising event and an even a phone call from the President of the United States. It seemed their names were on everyone's lips. But, as any tabloid can tell you, bliss is boring while drama moves copy. Mere days later, national media sources began to speculate that, just maybe, there was trouble in paradise. Analysts and color commentators took Wall's statements of dissatisfaction with his own play to mean that he was unhappy in his relationship with Cal. And, before you could say Brangelina, our Power Couple seemed doomed. Were they facing a Gyllenspoon-style split or the sullen coexistence of TomKat?, we wondered as our Final Four hopes began to fade just a little.

John Wall's recent highlight reel-worthy performances against Ole Miss and LSU disproved these rumors far better than any celebrity publicist could. Even if this Power Couple hit a rocky patch, as rumored, they've recovered quickly. Wall is exceeding even Calipari's highest expectations. The poetry has returned to the game. And our Power Couple is standing strong. ■



Photos courtesy UK Athletics

The Envelope Please
By Kevin Faris

At some point we as a city and a state are going to have to stop giving awards to our favorite Wildcats. (Ace readers Best of Lex 2009: Coach Cal; Best Twitter; best thing to happen to UK; best Facebook Page; and...best taqueria?)

I'll admit, it won't be easy, especially if they keep doing amazing things. And while the NBA tries to bill itself as the place where "amazing happens," the citizens of the Commonwealth know the truth; the address for amazing is the University of Kentucky. That's why the 2010 Power Couple is John Calipari and John Wall.

Why not? Think of what these two have been able to accomplish in the past few months, and I'm not even talking about the 22-1 record on the basketball court. Calipari was behind the effort that ended with over \$1 million dollars going to Haiti. John Wall

was complimented directly by the President of the United States of America. John Calipari wrote a best selling book. John Wall started a dance craze that has swept the city, the state, the nation, and the world. John Calipari has used his twitter account, and its 1.1 million followers, to promote charities and local business. John Wall has reshaped the idea of the "one and done" mercenary (sorry Bobby Knight) by achieving one of the highest GPAs on the team and embracing the role of a college student-athlete. Calipari and Wall have seen the best and worst of the UK fan base in their short time here, and they both still manage to smile. I might add, that Wall's smile, especially after a highlight dunk or pass, is one of the most enjoyable aspects of this team.

So, what's left to accomplish? A lot. But the reason we keep giving awards to Coach Cal and to Wall, before they either win anything as members of the UK team, is a reason that would fly in the face of what the rest of the world thinks about UK fans. In the

wake of Tubby and Billy G., how many times were we all labeled as fans who expect national titles every year, entitled jerks who did not appreciate what we had? Too often we were painted with a broad brush, and while those fans do exist, most of us just wanted fun, excitement, and yes, wins. And as a Power Couple, that is what Calipari and Wall have brought us. Not to diminish the off or on court accomplishments of previous coaches and players, but Calipari has embraced the celebrity aspect of being one of the highest profile college coaches, and Wall has delicately handled being the most celebrated draft prospect since LeBron while being a team player and leader.

The only question that remains is how many more awards will we give this Power Couple? I think I speak for all UK fans when I say we all hope many, many more. ■

Power Hosts Steve Kay & Rona Roberts

By Becca Self

It may be hard to imagine, but Lexington hasn't always been blessed with the presence of Steve Kay and Rona Roberts. In fact, Rona originally hails from the rural lands of Wayne County, while Steve grew up in the blustery Northeast. But without question, we're better off by their decision to stay. Indeed, not only have Steve and Rona been woven into the fabric of our city, they've even become some of the most critical weavers. Together they run Roberts and Kay, Inc., a consulting firm that was instrumental in developing the city's Destination 2040 plan. Steve has developed a spotless reputation as a facilitator, helping to bring about action from discussion with groups in local and state government, public schools, and private organizations. He hopes to use these skills to serve all of Lexington's residents by running for an at-large seat on Urban County Council in 2010. Rona is a brilliant writer, having been a regular columnist in the Nougat Reader and now on her engaging blog, Savoring Kentucky. For many, though, the fondest associations have come over food. Her appreciation for food runs the gamut from production to marketing to consumption. She's a staple at the Lexington Farmer's Market. Meanwhile, Steve is an avid gardener and has made a veggie paradise out of their small backyard in the heart of the Martin Luther King neighborhood. There, they have resided for decades, and both have been integral in the neighborhood association to build a strong community in a genuinely diverse area. Most recently, Rona and Steve have brought their passions for food and community together at a weekly offering of Cornbread Suppers. Held every Monday evening in their home, they throw open their doors to anyone and everyone, welcoming folks to come with food or not, to enjoy crunchy, steamy homemade cornbread, accompanied with a side of stimulating conversation. For it is here, in the warmth of their home and hospitality that you'll discover their true gifts - the blessing of friendship. Generous to their core, the majority of Lexingtonians can likely count them as personal friends. Indeed, Lexington can proudly claim them as our own now, and be grateful that they chose our fair city to take root! (You can join the Cornbread Suppers group on Facebook for regular menu updates.) ■

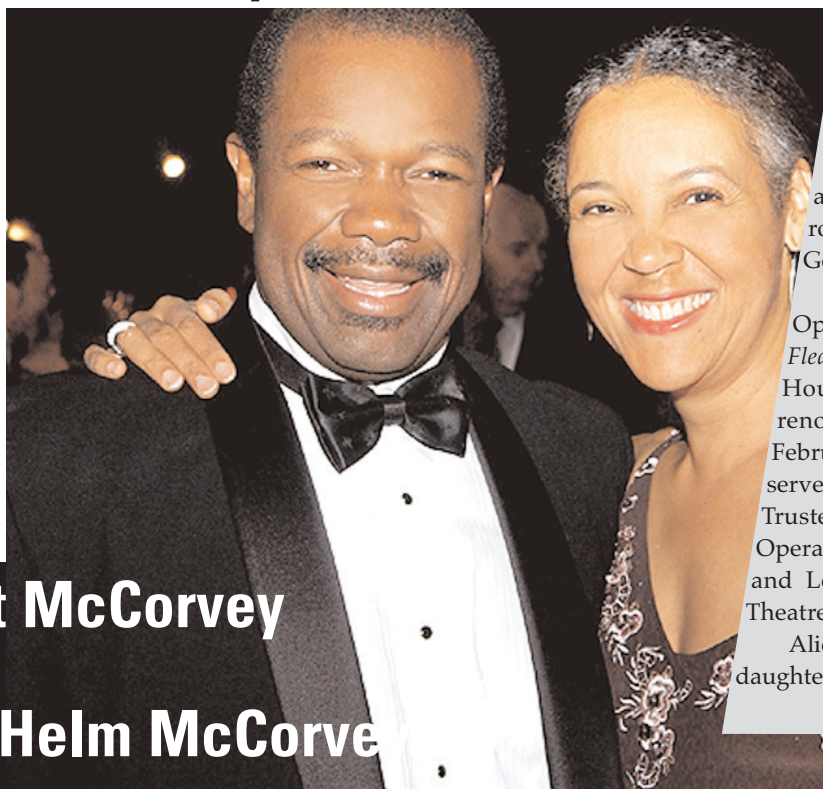


Lexington native and MIT grad Becca Self was already included as a "This Year's Model" in *Ace's* 2009 year-end edition. Rona Roberts wrote in that issue, "She's a 30-year-old brilliant scientist. She's a native Lexingtonian who says she never considered NOT settling in Lexington as an adult. She's just finishing her first year as Seedleaf's first education director, which means she invents fascinating and delightful ways to explain photosynthesis to preschoolers and thinks it is great fun to demonstrate safe tomato canning to their elders. After MIT, Becca began teaching science, first at the high school level, then at the Montessori Middle School of Kentucky. Engaging middle schoolers in real work on real land brought so much natural success that Becca became convinced her life work includes opening similar landbased learning opportunities to children and adults in the larger community. Now Becca teaches and inspires a multi-generational community of people all around the city in neighborhoods and schools where Seedleaf supports productive gardens and orchards. Becca Self is showing all of us in Lexington how to become healthier and more able to produce, cook, and preserve our own food."

Anyone interested in politics knows Becca's husband—fellow Lexington native and fellow MIT grad—Ben Self, a co-founder of Blue State Digital, the company instrumental in transforming the digital landscape of the last presidential election, and now busy creating online communities all over the world. ■



Photo by Keegan Frank from Front Porch Friday/Deb's Social Stimulus Gathering in the Distillery District, February 5



Everett McCorvey
&
Alicia Helm McCorvey

From the stage of the Metropolitan Opera where they met performing in *Porgy and Bess* to their annual showstopping duets at UK Opera Theatre's *It's A Grand Night for Singing!* Each June, Everett McCorvey and Alicia Helm McCorvey have been making beautiful music together for over 20 years.

In the past year, Alicia has added musical theatre to her extensive operatic resume with the title role in Paragon Theatre's *Hello, Dolly!* and as a Goddess in KCTC SummerFest's *Once On This Island*.

In addition to being Executive Producer of UK Opera Theatre's upcoming production of *Die Fledermaus* (March 11, 12, & 13, at the Lexington Opera House), Everett is touring the country with his renowned American Spiritual Ensemble (with a February 13, performance in Lexington.) Everett also serves on several boards including the UK Board of Trustees, the Kentucky Arts Council, the Lexington Opera Society, the Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games, and LexArts, and will be instrumental in the Lyric Theatre revitalization efforts.

Alicia and Everett's three most joyous productions: daughters Elizabeth and Julia, and son David. ■

John Morgan

John and Linda are a couple whose love for Lexington extends deep. Their love for Lexington is rooted in historic houses and preserving the fabric of historic downtown. They were introduced to each other while John was filthy gutting and renovating their 1797 house on North Limestone and the madness has continued with the renovation of their sixth and largest renovation project on East Third Street. Linda Carroll attended Saint Peter School and has been involved with that community ever since, sending her two sons there, serving on numerous boards, most recently the Buildings and Grounds Committee in charge of the new school addition. When her sons attended Lexington Catholic High School, Linda also began to serve that community, she now serves on the Board of Trustees. (They are spearheading the annual Mardi Gras fundraiser for the school this weekend.) As a couple they are involved with preserving the arts in Lexington from supporting



Linda Carroll

their two sons, Patrick and Simon, in pursuing theater and music in their college careers to Linda campaigning for Saints Peter and Paul to become the new arts school and serving on the board of Summerfest. John serves on the Actors' Guild of Lexington Board. John is the President and Linda is the Vice-president of Morgan Worldwide Consultants, Inc. a small engineering company serving the minerals industry worldwide. Linda worked for years with the Council of State Governments and has been involved with politics ever since. John moved to the US from England about 25 years ago, and Linda is on the executive committee for the Bluegrass Trust for Historic Preservation. ■

—By Patrick Morgan
(unbiased son)