

Roy Allen farmed with his family and for himself and for other farm businesses over the years. He is almost 50 years old. But about four years ago he had a heart attack - and went into surgery for that. When he woke up he was blind. It turns out a tumor on his pituitary gland swelled up while he was under the knife - and then collapsed and died on his optic nerves - crushing them. Since then he has been in training with the Institute for the Blind and he continues a very active calendar of activity in which he visits with and contributes to the efforts of his friends throughout the area.

He is a test subject with the institute for a tool that allows him to "see shapes" through a camera feeding visual data to a metal plate on his tongue. He is active in his church choir at Elizabeth Chapel in Chumuckla. He often speaks to church groups about his blessings and of course the challenges of being blind. He is on facebook and welcomes friends to join him there. A computer program called "JAWS" allows him to use the computer without sight. He is even training to use spreadsheets for business use. All this is coming in handy as he begins the management of his new enterprise - Buzzcreek Heritage - a service designed to help people get their parent's and grandparent's stories recorded AT LAST. Just about anyone can record their family stories but it seems almost nobody does. The service gets the process going with some good recording sessions on video.

His memory is an especially superb tool in his arsenal of humor and conversation. It seems he can provide the blood line of just about everyone he meets if he just has a chance to learn who their moma is ... or maybe their moma's moma (or maybe their daddy). He knows almost every road in the county and can tell you where you are driving just by the feel of the road and the vehicle. It is seldom he is off by more than a hundred yards. In the past he has farmed, hunted or fished almost every square mile of the county. It seems he has a built in biological GPS system.

As it turns out, Roy's zest for life also translated to a zest for food. A few months ago he weighed in at an impressive 450 lbs. After a gastric bypass surgical procedure three months ago he has already lost nearly 100 pounds and is on his way to a healthy goal of about 220 pounds. He is an inspiration to everyone. IF he has one challenge - he has several and all of them - he attacks with gusto.