About 2½ weeks ago, a former student of mine at Tay School, asked me to write to you. I am sorry for not doing this sooner because I promised him I would write right away.

As Athletic Director, Algebra Teacher, Study Hall teacher I had various opportunities to observe both why would I remember? Because he was a unique child and a challenge to a young teacher. At age 17, just out of college, Bart was a challenge to me in Algebra. I had a certain procedure that I wanted my students to follow when solving equations and problems. But he didn’t follow these procedures. He would write down the equation and the answer. He couldn’t understand why he shouldn’t do this — in my estimation — and I thought he was cheating. I had difficulty figuring him out — as I knew he wasn’t cheating as I told only 29 people in class. I didn’t realize that someone could have a “ment” that would “tick” so fast. I was angry to me and a challenge. Bart could do the work in his head — as he proved to me when I challenged him. This made him “different” from other students and a challenge.

There was another thing that impressed me — Bart as I observed him, outside as well as inside the classroom — he was quiet. I never caught doing something wrong. He never tried to talk his way out of it. He accepted the punishment even at times when he was accused for something he didn’t do.

Even to this day this guy amazes me — after the years I’ve told many of my friends about my experiences with Bart. How this boy to me was “different” — he was intelligent, very trustworthy, and straightforward. I have seen this boy take beatings and never break down because he knew he was right and wouldn’t give his accuser the satisfaction of breaking him down.

Bart to me was a special person and challenge and that is why I am writing to you — because he asked me...