



BY SETH WAUGH

My favorite summer job

CLANCY WAUGH IS OFF TO COLLEGE, BUT NOT BEFORE LETTING HIS OLD MAN SHARE A FEW MORE WEEKS WITH HIM AS HIS CADDIE

I'm on the bag, though the strap is so short I carry it like a briefcase. My son, Clancy, a 6-year-old, is in his first competition, and we are on the first tee staring down an intimidating 140-yard par 5. The other kids have all hit reasonable drives between a quarter and half of the way to the hole. He pulls out his trusty blue U.S. Kids driver and, much to the shock of his competitors and the handful of folks watching, rips one onto the green, about 20 feet above the hole. From there he manages to four-putt for par, but from that one drive, we knew we were in for a special journey. One that we both hope never ends.

Twelve years later by the Roman calendar and 15 minutes on a parent's body clock, I was still on Clancy's bag. This time it was for three of the biggest amateur tournaments of the summer—the Trans-Miss, the Pacific Coast and the Western. And this time, it was about me as much as him.

After too many years of crazy travel, Blackberry thumbs and conference calls interrupting real life, I had run out of time. It was his last year before heading off to Wake Forest. I stepped down from my position at Deutsche Bank at the end of 2012 to actually live with my family. The caddieing was my plan, not his. How many 18-year-olds really want their dad *more* in their lives? But he welcomed me in a truly remarkable way.

I learned to tell the difference between the Fray and Coldplay, Jack Johnson and John Mayer, discovered Mumford & Sons and even learned to appreciate Avicii. But our magical month on the road took it to a whole different level. Every plane ride, rental-car pickup, mediocre hotel room and fast-food meal was not a hassle for me, but rather a cherished moment, a gift from him to me. We sang to the radio, worked out in hotel gyms and, at bedtime, watched SportsCenter, Comedy Central and Shark Week.

Battling side by side inside the ropes was the most fun I have ever had while fully clothed. I wanted to be useful, needed. I was dying for him to seek my advice, yet scared to death for him to ask. We have often kidded about the “we” parents who say “We shot a 68 today.” But when you are on the bag, it is hard not to speak naturally as “we.” The greatest gift he gave me all summer came one night at dinner. I spoke about what “we” did on a certain hole but



quickly corrected it to “he.” Clancy put his hand on my shoulder and said, “Dad, it’s OK to say ‘we.’” Yet again, I was the student, not the teacher.

And then, sadly, it was time to put away my looper's bib and get him ready for college. On an August night, we packed his car until midnight and slept little. For my wife, Sheila, and me, the 12-hour drive from our home in Florida lasted 10 minutes, for him it was two weeks. He is ready. We are not. The irony is that we have all spent years preparing our children for this moment and not one second preparing ourselves.

Now when I'm in a car alone and one of our songs comes on, I tear up, but with a smile. On my desk is a picture of our last round together, me in my bib. Propped up next to it is a note he wrote to me on my birthday, three days before we went to Winston-Salem, N.C. Eventually it will go into my safe, but for now I keep it close. It says many wonderful things and suggests that this last and best year of my life was perhaps the best of his as well. One sentence that I focus on is this: “My going off to school is not even close to the end, but just the beginning of a new chapter of both of our lives. I am just getting started and so are you.”

In the end, he knew exactly what I needed most. **GW**

Seth Waugh, 55, spent more than 12 years as CEO of Deutsche Bank Americas before stepping down in November 2012.