

Daniel Henninger, Deputy Editorial Page Editor of the Wall Street Journal, was the first to publish the first whispers of the lives of the musical family from Boggy Depot Oklahoma known as ‘The Singing Sullivans’. (Wall Street Journal, May 14 2003, “The Sullivans Take Manhattan – and Sing”).

While Mr. Henninger’s article did a marvelous job communicating an overview of the Sullivans and their Mother’s Day **Carnegie Hall** performance in New York, he likely did not have the space to delve into the complex and dynamic lives of the individuals.

The Sullivan story is much more than a musical tale. **It’s an American success story about the history, hardships, failures and triumphs of a family that has overcome a near poverty level upbringing in one of the poorest areas of Oklahoma and produced 8 extremely talented and successful children.** Strangely enough, despite the occasional contentious disagreement, they deeply love, support and defend one another, a testament to their parents who are still happily married after 57 years.

Story Highlights:

Elizabeth and Jim Sullivan were both Oklahoma City High School seniors of 16 when they married. Elizabeth is quick to point out that the first child ‘arrived three years later’.

Elizabeth Sullivan: Enrolled in the University of Oklahoma at the age of 71 after putting her 8 children through high school and college. She is an honor student and is working toward her bachelor’s degree in music & literature and recently received rave reviews from the Wall Street Journal for her Carnegie Hall Debut performance at 73.

Performing with 6 of her children, she has upcoming engagements at Carnegie Hall for Father’s Day, June 20th and **Town Hall** October 19th, 2004.

Co-authored a book of poetry and photographs with daughter Heather and they are collaborating on their second.

Leads the popular annual family Christmas concert (2004 will be the 11th year) at Catlett Hall (University of Oklahoma, standing room only) whose proceeds are donated to the Oklahoma Women’s Shelter.

Jim Sullivan: Enrolled in the University of Oklahoma at the age of 33. Due to the need to support his family he was a part time student for 28 years, finally graduating at the age of 61 with a bachelors degree in business.

Beginning with the birth of his 1st son (Mike) in 1950 to the graduation of his youngest (Shawn) in 1985, Jim worked a potpourri of jobs, occasionally working 3 simultaneously to make ends meet. Over the years Jim ran a paper route with his three oldest sons and worked as a farmer, butcher, little league coach, malt shop clerk, Santa Fe Railroad employee and civil servant employed by the USDA. Jim notes proudly that not one of his children has ever had to punch a clock.

Jim is known by family and friends as a man of strong will and high ethical standards. The depth of his principals in raising his children is understood when one realizes that he was vehemently anti-racial and democratic, maybe even socialistic, in a state during a period of time where whites still sat in the front of the bus and his home town had a sundown law. His children see him as the needle and thread that sew, and keep the family together and strong.

8 Children, listed oldest to youngest.

Mike 54: From a 10 year old running a paper route with his brothers and father, to Owner of one of the largest Mercedes Benz dealerships in the country and winner of many pro-am golf tournaments. Oldest brother Mike ‘can’t carry a tune’ as he often says, but has never missed one of his mother’s and singing sibling’s concerts.

Pat 53: Medical Doctor in one of the poorest counties in the country. He believes that one of the reason’s he became a physician was due to a severe accident as a small child. With parents unable to afford insurance, Pat’s ‘country’ doctor refused to apply stitches and sent him and his grief stricken mother home. To this day, as a self proclaimed country Doctor, Pat has never turned away a single patient for monetary reasons. **He has been known to accept payment in the form of petrified dinosaur teeth, farm vegetables and chickens.** Pat is a ‘proud, amateur’ member of the ‘Singing Sullivans’.

Kathy (K.T.) DOB “not available for comment”: World renowned Cabaret and Broadway star in New York City. Chosen as one of the top 100 Irish Americans by Irish American Magazine in 1999, Kt has headlined at the White House and been described by Stephen Holden of the New York Times as ‘the cabaret equivalent of whipped cream atop a surprisingly nutritious dessert’. Married in a catholic church in New York City in 1999 to Producer Stephen Downey, KT requested her 1000 plus guests to register their gifts with a check to the American AID’s Foundation.

Danny 48: Owner of Oklahoma City Glass, Danny heard the bomb go off from his desk on April 16th, 1995. He and his brother, Shawn, immediately rushed to the site, just 3 blocks away to give their services at the clean up and tear down of the Federal Building. Their picture was displayed in the New York Times. Working for over 2 months, Danny never raised his glass prices, in spite of the prospect of financial gain. Danny and his older brother Pat own and run a 600 acre ranch in Eastern Oklahoma.

Tim 45: Country singer/songwriter who has appeared on stage with country music stars such as Vince Gill, Alan Jackson, is known for his Red Sox Anthem, ‘Cowboy Up’, and one man show ‘Diary of a Songwriter’. New York Backstage Magazine’s John Hoagland describes Tim Sullivan as “one of those titan talents disguised as a good old boy.” In the Oklahoma City ‘Battle of the Bands’ in 1985, Tim’s band won the crown. Second place went to **Garth Brooks.**

Heather 43: Singer/Songwriter in Los Angeles whose songs have been featured on HBO's Sopranos, CBS's That's Life and numerous national commercials. Her songs are well known on daytime television soaps General Hospital, Guiding Light and Passions. Heather is also an accomplished photographer in Los Angeles and New York whose clients have included Dennis Haysbert and Andrea Marcovicci.

Stacy 41: Winner of the 2002 MAC award for female New York Debut from the Manhattan Association of Cabaret. She has performed with Huey Lewis, at the legendary Oak Room in New York. However, Stacy may be even better known as an Actress. From CBS's Christy, to Evening Shade with Burt Reynolds, Oklahoma's Junior Miss graduated Cum Laude with a degree in music from Tulsa University.

Shawn 37: One of the top golfer's on the Nike Golf Tour, Shawn refuses to sing. He prefers to be left alone to practice his golf in peace away from the cacophony of the Sullivan family. Shawn is married to Actress and singer Robin Brooks, whose mother won a Grammy for song of the Year in 1969. They have a 4 year old chess champion, named Montana.