



*“Opportunity is  
all around us and the  
American Dream is  
still very much alive.”*

## Harry S. Patten

*Founder, Chairman and CEO  
National Land Partners, LLC and  
Inland Management*

When Harry Patten was born in 1936 in North Conway, New Hampshire, his father was 58 years old. “My father,” says Harry, “was born in 1881, and his father—my grandfather—was a veteran of the Civil War. My father’s family went back many generations in New England, but my mother’s family were immigrants from Nova Scotia. She was one of eight children, and the only one in her family who went to school beyond high school. She trained to be a public health nurse, and was very proud of her accomplishment. Everyone in those days valued education, but few had the opportunity to obtain it. Her father was a janitor in the local school and never even had a driver’s license, so I don’t know how they found the money for my mother’s schooling.”

Harry’s father, on the other hand, did not attend school beyond the eighth grade. He worked as a salesman of tailor-made suits from the Arthur B. Nash Company. “My dad worked seven days a week,” says Harry. “He sold suits to the banker, the

undertaker, the minister, and the occasional farmer who would buy a suit every 20 years. He knew everyone for miles around. He was a determined man who paid his bills on time and saved what money he could. He believed in love, responsibility, vision, goal setting, and dreams. Arthur B. Nash taught him the Golden Rule of treating others the way you want to be treated. It became my father’s motto in life and he passed it on to me.”

When Harry was five, his father fell from a ladder and broke his back. He was out of work for three years, and the family had a difficult time surviving financially. Harry recalls one Christmas during those challenging years when he received what he thought were new toy trucks. A day or two later he realized they were his old trucks, but they had been lovingly repainted to look new. “In those days if there was no money, you couldn’t just make a purchase on a credit card,” says Harry. “We had no safety net. My father had no unemployment benefits, no Social Security, and

no health insurance. My mother had to stay home to take care of him, and I am not sure how they succeeded in keeping food on the table."

But Harry enjoyed his small New Hampshire town, where the first ski lift in the United States was built. He had lots of friends and enjoyed the security that comes from living in an insulated community. "We were busy with work and school during the week," he says, "but Sunday was a day when we came together. We had church, then Sunday school, and then enjoyed a big family dinner. It was very nice."

When he was seven, Harry's father bought 12 chickens and set his son up in business. Harry's job was to sell the chickens' eggs. He enjoyed the one-dollar-a-week income he earned from this enterprise, until his father informed him he owed him for the start-up costs of the chickens and feed. "This was my first lesson in making money and

paying back a loan," he says. "I was lucky to have a father who taught me to work hard for what I wanted."

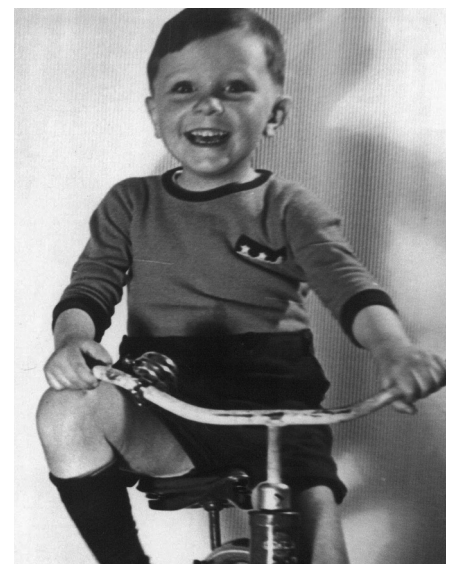
Other childhood jobs included shoveling snow and coal and mowing lawns. He also worked as a bellhop, farm hand, and sold magazines and name plates door-to-door. With his earnings, he bought the extra things most boys wanted at the time, such as



*Harry Patten, age one.*



*Harry at age three.*



*Harry, age four.*

## Harry S. Patten



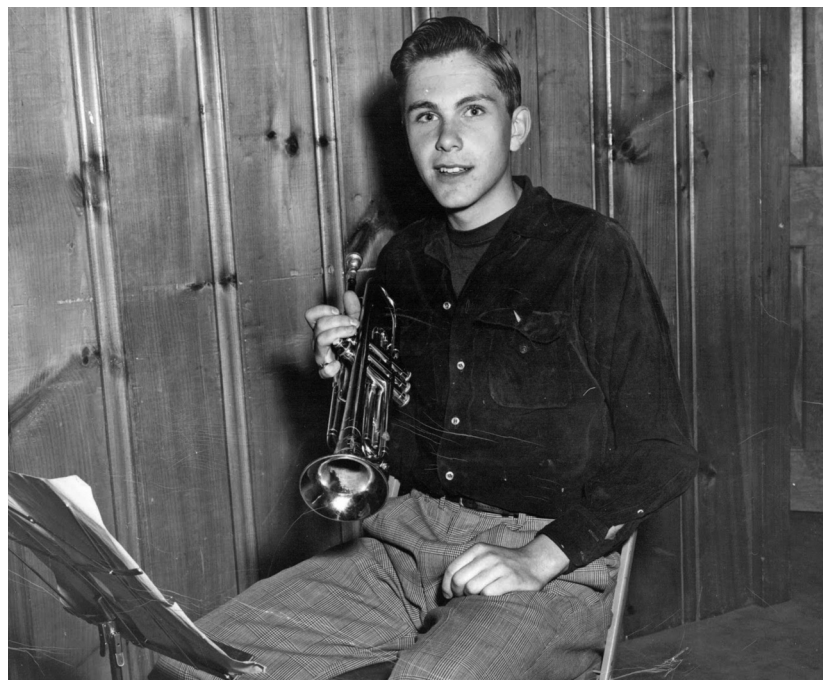
*Harry with his grandmother, Jenny Le Shane.*



*Harry Patten, age 11.*

baseball equipment, a bicycle, and skis. He remembers, “Whenever I would tell my father I wanted something, he would always ask me, ‘Well how are you going to pay for it?’ It was a good lesson for me and I learned how to pay my own way at an early age. My father never gave me cash, but he gave me treasure in values.”

Harry liked school. He was his class valedictorian and enjoyed several sports, including skiing and hockey. He was awarded a full scholarship to the University of New Hampshire, where he majored in psychology. “College was mandatory,” he says. “My dad wanted me to have an education and there was no discussion about it.”



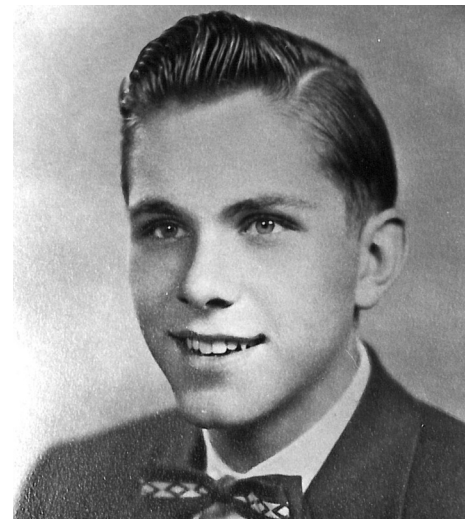
*Harry enjoyed playing the trumpet when he was 16.*

At the age of 20, Harry married and soon had a child on the way. To support his young family, he sold Kirby vacuum cleaners door-to-door while he continued his studies. He did 30 in-home demonstrations of his product before he finally made his first sale, but it was a pivotal moment for him. He learned that if he didn't accept failure, he would eventually succeed. He was a vacuum cleaner salesman throughout college, and he stayed with Kirby as a distributor for several years after he left school.

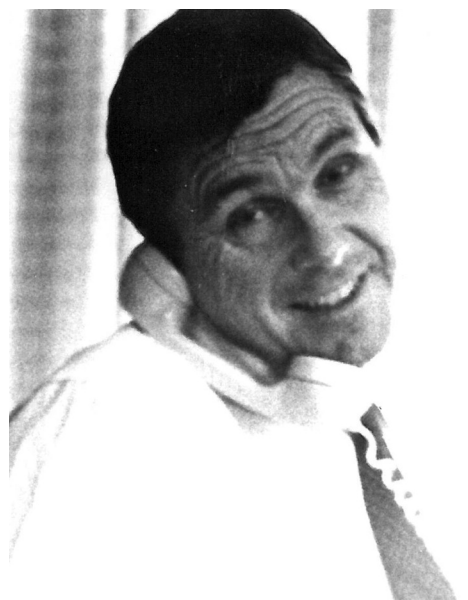
He bought a small farm and supplemented his income by boarding and trading horses and selling turkeys. Thereafter he found a chance to pursue an opportunity to sell recreational real estate and moved his family to Virginia for a job with American Central Company, developers of rural lakefront property. Within a year, he and his family relocated to Massachusetts, where Harry managed the company's Northeast division.

By 1964, Harry had saved \$15,000, and he decided it was time to go into business for himself. He formed American Land and Development with a partner, Tony Cerosimo. The company grew rapidly, and Tony became a lifelong friend and mentor. In 1985, his company, which had become Patten Corporation, went public. Eighteen months later, the company was listed on the New York Stock Exchange—where it still exists today under the name Bluegreen Corporation (BGN).

In 1995, Mr. Patten sold his company stock, but soon thereafter launched several new, private-property family ventures, including National Land Partners, LLC; National Timber Partners LLC; and Inland Management. Over his career, Harry Patten has become the leading buyer and seller of rural and recreational land, as well as timberland in America; and today's family company, which includes his son and two grandsons, has become one of the largest owners of land in the country.



*Harry Patten, age 22.*



*Harry Patten in 1975.*

## Harry S. Patten



*Harry Patten has become the leading buyer and seller of rural and recreational land and timberland in America.*



*Harry and Rita Patten.*

Through the Patten Environmental Trust, thousands of acres of land in New England have been preserved and protected. “It’s important to do that,” he says. “We have saved some very special sites that have unique vistas and historic significance.”

Harry Patten has become an American success story—a person who through his own wits and determination built a strong, viable business. But his success could have been predicted long before it became a reality. As a boy, he was keenly interested in successful people. He read many of the Horatio Alger rags to riches stories and he noticed the main characters had one thing in common—a strong work ethic. Later, as a businessman, he wanted to know why some of his employees were successful and some were not. He conducted

hundreds of interviews with successful people from all walks of life. By the end of that process, he had the makings of a book. With the help of his daughter, Andrea, he produced *What Kids Need to Succeed*. The book outlines four key elements needed to reach the pinnacle of success: a refusal to fail, hard work, strong discipline, and giving back to society. “This is what excites me about becoming a member of the Horatio Alger Association,” he says. “It is a group that not only recognizes achievement, but also gives back by helping young people who have faced great challenges. I am looking forward to being a part of that. I want the Scholars to know that the American Dream is alive and well. There isn’t a day that goes by that I don’t talk about the boundless opportunities available in this great nation of ours.”

## Harry Patten's Activities and Honors

The Patten Family Foundation's (PFF) philanthropic interests center primarily in the areas of health, education, and financial literacy. A particular passion has been supporting Junior Achievement (JA) to educate children about the free enterprise system. The PFF has generously funded the naming of Finance Park at the JA World Huizenga Center. Junior Achievement of South Florida educates more than 45,000 students per year through its programs, which are mandated by the Broward County School Board.

Mr. Patten has also given significantly to educational institutions and has been a long-term supporter of Massachusetts General Hospital, where he recently was selected to serve on the President's Council and remains actively involved as the hospital expands its facilities and conducts significant medical research.



*The Harry Patten family at a Junior Achievement ribbon cutting ceremony. On Mr. Patten's right is H. Wayne Huizenga, a Horatio Alger Member since 1992.*