

O·B·U

m a g a z i n e



Blue Eagle —

Higher education plays a vital role in molding an individual. OBU has been a place that upholds Christian ethics and commitment. Please join me in committing to carry that excellence forward – helping to pave the life-paths of future leaders.

– Dr. Burton Patterson, '56
2004 Annual Fund Chairman

What does the Annual Fund accomplish?

Annual Fund contributions help bridge the gap between the total cost of a college education and the amount students pay in tuition. Gifts to the Annual Fund shape the future of OBU by providing funds for

- student scholarships
- new equipment and technology
- instructional enhancements
- library acquisitions

Part of the Annual Fund is the upcoming Phonathon.



Please expect a call from a current OBU student during the weeks of January 5 through February 12.

COVER ART: I recently visited my grandmother, Caroline Oldham Williams, '31. She lives in the Muskogee, Oklahoma, home that her father, Ira Brown Oldham, built in 1903. He served on an early board of OBU and founded the first Baptist hospital originally located in Muskogee. On my visit I saw again a Blue Eagle work that had hung on those old walls for many years. Caroline's brother, Dr. Ira Brown, Jr., befriended Acee Blue Eagle, a Creek/Pawnee Native American. Acee Blue Eagle established the Art Department at Bacone College in Muskogee, Oklahoma, and was its first director. To read more about OBU's connection with Native Americans, please read the articles on pages 4-7. – Zach Kincaid

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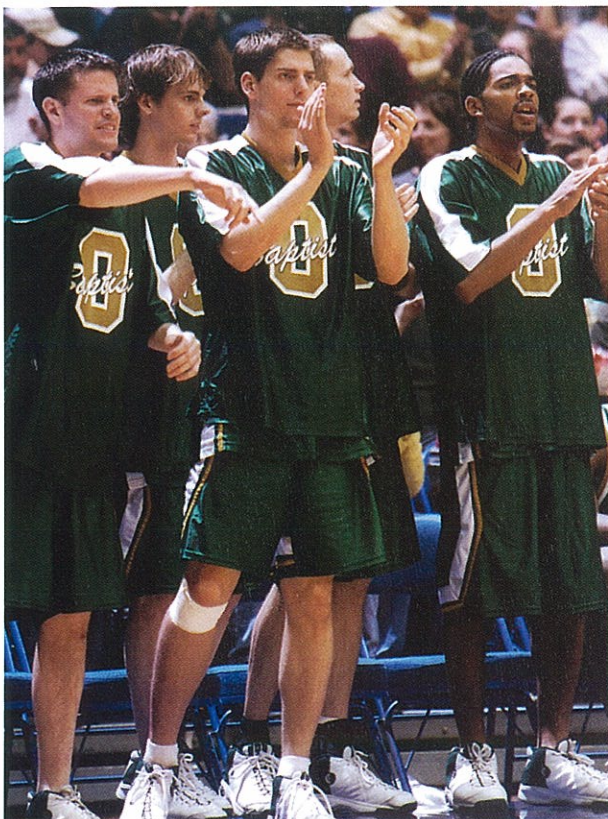
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by John E. Simons

Worship is a hot topic in evangelical circles. Using "worship" as an online keyword search, I found more than 9,370,000 results in .22 seconds. Among the confusion surrounding modern worship, I like Robert Webber's thought, "worship is a verb." In other words, worship is an action word with a subject.



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Examples That Inspire

“Remember that all things are connected. All things have purpose,” reads the Cherokee proverb. “Listen with your heart. Learn from your experiences, and always be open to new ones.” Oklahoma finds its roots here, in the Native American context, and Oklahoma Baptist University finds similar connection. For example, Dr. James Ralph Scales, an OBU graduate of 1939 and the university’s ninth president (1961-65), was Cherokee – his paternal grandmother, a native of Indian Territory. In fact, the first Baptist church in Oklahoma, established in 1832 along the Arkansas River near Muskogee, had among its original seven members, a Creek Indian.



KACIE PRATT



MICHAEL BELL



LYNDSEY MORGAN

Recently, OBU has experienced a flourishing of Native American students through The Gates Millennium Scholars that offers, in part, full scholarships to Native Americans for undergraduate, graduate, and post-graduate work. Currently, several OBU students are Gates Millennium Scholars including Gabriel Bell, Michael Bell, Lyndsey Morgan, Dora Pipkins, and Kacie Pratt. They each share a common story of Native American heritage, and they each understand the example their lives exhibit to that heritage. Here are their stories.

Kacie Pratt is Pawnee and Osage. “In Pawnee it isn’t bad to be Native American,” she says. “I didn’t have much struggle about my identity, but many of my former high school classmates

struggle with the direction they are going. Some of the students I graduated with are already challenged with alcoholism and drug addiction.” Fortunately, Kacie’s story has taken a different direction. For Kacie, that direction pointed toward college, and specifically OBU, where she and her father often came to watch basketball games. “I knew that as a family we could not afford it,” she says. “My father was the pastor at Pawnee Indian Baptist Church for many years, and now serves a small Indian congregation in Hoopa, California.”

Kacie learned about the Gates opportunity through her high school counselor. “I could not have come to OBU otherwise,” she says. Now, she is majoring in Mathematics and plans to move on to graduate school concentrating in Statistics. She isn’t sure whether she’ll pursue a career in government, in a corporation, or in a sports-related field, but she is motivated. “I want to make my family proud; I want to do good,” she says. “Not many people in Pawnee can say they have a master’s degree let alone a college degree.” More than this, Kacie says that OBU has provided an “atmosphere” where she can foster healthy relationships with people and strengthen her Christian faith. Kacie hopes to some day move back to Pawnee. For now, she frequents the area to visit family and participate each July in the Tribe’s exhibition of Native American dancing.

Lyndsey Morgan is Creek, Seminole, Cherokee. Growing up in Ada, she attended the 30-member First Indian Baptist Church in nearby Holdenville. “The label ‘Native American’ is often used as an excuse,” she says. “I want to serve as an example who inspires other Native Americans

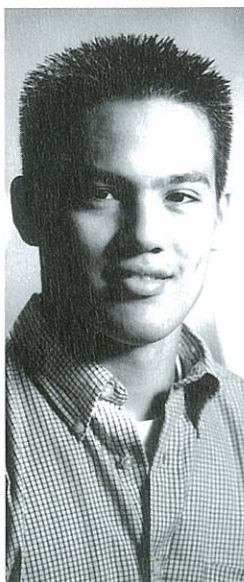
to do anything they want to do.”

Through mission trips to Mexico and Alaska working with children of very poor families, Lyndsey has realized even more the tremendous opportunity given

to her. As a major in Spanish Education, she hopes to move into international business as a translator. “I feel like I am in the right place where I can be most effective,” she says. Lyndsey continues to work in her home church. This semester she is serving as the girl’s youth group leader. “I hope the young people will benefit from my example and the healthy choices I made in high school to put me where I am today,” she says.

Dora Pipkins is Choctaw. She is the first generation to attend college. Through the State Chorus Workshop, she came to OBU as a sophomore and again as a senior in high school. She remembers telling herself, “This is where I’m coming to school. I don’t know how, but this is where.” Growing up in Pocola, she graduated with just 55 other students. This afforded her opportunities to take up leadership positions. As an OBU sophomore, she is an officer in the Bisonettes, the women’s choral group. Although music is an integral part of her life, Dora is concentrating her study around family psychology and hopes to pursue a career as a high school counselor.

Michael and Gabriel Bell are twin brothers and one-fourth Arapaho. They grew up between here and Guam. Their mother, an Oklahoman, and their father, a Guamanian, divorced when they were 12 years old. They spent their high school years in McCloud, where Michael boasts of “beating” his brother in academics and in sports. “We both came to Christian faith as high school freshmen,” Michael says. “By going through the divorce,” Gabe says, “God ministered to us through the Kickapoo Friends Center, a Quaker church near our home. We spent a lot of time there and began helping out in youth camp and traveling with several people from the church.”



GABE BELL



DORA PIPKINS

Gabe and Michael both play guitar, sing, and lead worship. “Our message to young people is not to give up,” Gabe says. “We tell them to continue to better themselves and succeed where their parents may have failed.” Their involvement in church worship has grown and they now lead worship each Sunday. As to career, Michael is thinking about structural engineering; Gabe is considering mathematics. “We are thankful to be minority,” Michael says. “As a result we have a whole different perspective. Things have certainly not been handed to us. We have had to struggle and work hard. Young people should never just give in to what is expected of them; they should always shoot higher.”

“Always remember that a smile is something sacred, to be shared,” continues the Cherokee proverb. “Live each day as it comes.” The exuberance of these students and the goals they pursue are apparent in their countenances. Their academic rigor that has allowed them to thrive in the OBU environment is a testimony to live each day with purpose because it adds to the one that follows. “It doesn’t matter how much you’re rewarded,” reads the Gates website, “if you don’t do anything with it.” OBU actively finds ways like The Gates Millennium Scholars for students to have the opportunities afforded through private education. OBU recently hosted a workshop for students interested in The Gates Millennium Scholars. More than twenty students attended. For more information visit www.okbu.edu/obumagazine.

— ZACH KINCAID

“The best and the brightest students shouldn’t be denied access to higher education simply because they can’t afford it,” says Bill Gates, founder of Microsoft. Bill and his wife, Melinda, formed the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in January 2000, a foundation endowed with \$24 billion. The initiative began in 1994 when Bill remembers asking, “Am I going to be a naïve giver, or am I going to make a wholehearted commitment to learn and study about these things?” He and his wife made the intentional decision to try and change the world. More than half of the Foundation’s activity centers on world health issues, particularly AIDS; one-fourth deals with library technology and the Pacific Northwest region where Microsoft is headquartered; another quarter services educational objectives like The Gates Millennium Scholars which currently supports 6,000 Native American, African American, Hispanic American, and Chinese American students.”

(Quotes from Bill Gates appear on the Gates Foundation website.)

Opening Doors

Robert Washington is Native American – Eastern Shawnee. He understands the doors that a good education opens. Among the first in his family to attend college, he changed his course from a state university to Oklahoma Baptist University, a decision he made after meeting the professors on an OBU preview weekend. Graduating in 1978, he worked in the public school system until 1988, when his life took an unexpected turn.

Diagnosed with diabetes and nerve disease, Robert had his left leg amputated in 1988. Not long afterwards, he had his right leg amputated as well. “I had allowed my diabetes to go undiagnosed,” he says with a genuine smile. Robert understands that it is his faith that keeps him running ahead to fulfill his dreams, not his legs. He began to work with the Iowa Tribe in 1989. “Originally, I wanted to work to increase the number of Native Americans going into healthcare careers,” he says. “Perhaps fear of peer group criticism or different expectations make it difficult to communicate educational possibilities, at times, to Native American young people. Excelling in education is often viewed as showing off.”

Through the Iowa Tribe and with a mandate to service all Native American young people, Robert began a scholarship program called Tenskwatawa, which means “he who opens the door.” In Native American history, Tenskwatawa transformed his life to lead many Shawnees and influence his more recognized brother, Tecumseh (see note that follows). “I want to open up the door of opportunity that education provides,” says Robert. He has opened up a door to more than 25 students, a number that expanded from only three when he began. He and his wife whom he met in 1989 when she answered a newspaper ad, work together to write proposals for grant dollars. In 1999, they received a grant to provide scholarships to students heading toward the teaching profession. “After they

graduate, they have to work for one year in a school with significant Indian population,” says Robert, noting several successful OBU students. Robert works with several schools in the area, wherever he can facilitate Native American young people to succeed.

“My faith continues to keep me going,” says Robert. “It gives me purpose. My dream is to see all the Tenskwatawa students graduate and succeed in their



lives and careers.” As to his experience at OBU and why he asks Tenskwatawa candidates to consider OBU, he says, “The professors are not going to let you fail. I doubt I would have graduated without their help and interaction.” OBU actively finds ways like the Tenskwatawa scholarship for students to have the opportunities afforded through private education.

About Tenskwatawa...

In 18th century Shawnee, Tenskwatawa became known as a prophet when he began to preach about a vision he had for Native Americans. As the little known brother of Tecumseh, Tenskwatawa influenced his brother to work toward a Native Confederacy spreading from the Great Lakes to Mexico. They set up Tippecanoe, a Native American town. Its defeat in 1811 by American troops under the direction William Henry Harrison, the governor of Indiana Territory, brought shame to Tenskwatawa. Tecumseh, however, went on to garner respect. Neither proved trustworthy role models, but Tenskwatawa clearly reverted from what some interpret as a “lazy drunkard” to a leader.

“What is a guy supposed to do with a philosophy degree?” asked Native Oklahoman Wes Gan, ’76, when he graduated. He answered the question by spending time in the construction industry before happening upon the world of Native American art. “It was supposed to be two weeks, 18 years ago,” Wes says. “I decided to help produce the printing of Larry Hood’s first painting, ‘Comanche Buffalo Prophet.’ I stayed in the business



received brutal treatment, not uncommon in history, but nonetheless brutal. And this generation still remembers. Some have disfavor. Some trust. Some have forgiven and accept, but some have not.” Because Oklahoma is a relatively young state, Wes recognizes that Native Americans were driven from this land in significant ways just three generations ago.

“Native American art has four options,” he says. “Either the artist will select a scene of war, humor, meditation, or a moment in history, whether a dance scene or the Trail of Tears, for example.”

The roots of the genre are traced to 1926, in Anadarko, Oklahoma, according to literature that Wes has in his gallery. A Mrs. Susie Peters organized an art club for the purpose of helping young talented Kiowa Indians. Not long afterwards, Mrs. Peters sent paintings to the Nichols Taos Fine Art Gallery in Taos, New Mexico. The works promptly sold. In 1928, the work of several artists from the original art club received a sensational review at the first international art exposition in Prague, Czechoslovakia. In 1929, a portfolio was published of their work. The Gilcrease Museum in Tulsa houses the majority of these works.

“Many Native Americans have faith in Christ,” Wes says, “and because their native beliefs run deep, most have a reverence for spiritual things. They have a particular way of thinking about self and earth as the same that points to

Happening Upon The “Comanche Buffalo Prophet”

because I love working with the people and I love the art.”

In his packed-to-the-brim downtown Tulsa showroom that carries the simple title “Native America Art,” Wes highlights at least 20 living artists and eight artists who have passed on. “The basement has many more works that I just don’t have space to show all the time,” he says.

Choctaw Native Americans Jane McCarty Mauldin and her sister, Valjean Hessing, gave Wes an early boost when they put together his first art show showcasing more than 20 artists. He has found similar hospitality throughout the Native American landscape. “I have certainly come to respect their plight,” he says. “As a people, they have

their long-standing acceptance of theism.”

“I would not trade my days at OBU for anything. I thought I knew a lot back then, but I didn’t know much. I don’t know much now. However, I have learned that faith is about not knowing but nonetheless choosing. And I chose Jesus. I wouldn’t say that any of this is ‘glorifying’ God,” Wes says as he surveys the paintings, “but the outgrowth of my enjoyment and impacting the people I meet – both artists and patrons – has made this work rewarding.”

Wes and his wife have three dogs and a home that reflects the brilliance of Native American art throughout its rooms.

Their Calling. Their Work. **THEIR**



IMPACT.

I Was Blind But Now I See

For someone to receive the miracle of sight, one must first understand blindness. Bartimaeus, the roadside beggar, knew it. In his blindness he called out, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" A similar cry came from Saul on the Damascus road when Jesus blinded him for three days. "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asks. When Jesus answers, he simply replies, "Yes, Lord."

Tom Wilks did not want to become a minister. Since his freshman year of high school he had some understanding of God's direction toward ministry, but in a Job-like haste this Louisiana native sailed down the bayou to escape God. "I had this image of a black suit and black car kind of minister," he says. "I didn't want to be that person." After receiving a bachelor's degree in history and speech, he thought politics might be in his future. He successfully managed campaigns for mayors in two Louisiana cities before he decided to attend law school at Louisiana State University. "I was miserable," he says. "I found that God had followed me there. Every time I began reading for class I could not cut loose of the Book of Leviticus. I guess I was called to ministry while reading Leviticus – by reading the laws of God."

From his pastor growing up, Tom learned that ministry involves more than dictating the purposes of God, it's about relationship building. He had less than one semester of law school completed when he entered seminary. In 1971, he graduated with a Master of Theology degree, and for the next six years he worked as a youth minister and a pastor. As a young minister he saw a bright future ahead.

That changed in 1977. A brain tumor robbed him of his sight and threatened to kill him. "I had come to that lazy place of only 'getting by' and not growing," he says. And like Saul, Tom went blind to discover the value of life, the path charted out all along. Despite a midnight conversation with his wife before the surgery where he convinced himself death had called, he unexpectedly survived. "My doctors called it a miracle," he says. Tom Wilks experienced a renewal of life. "Every day has to count," Tom says, "and I continue to pack as much into each day as I can. That's what we are called to do."

In June 1980, Tom came to OBU as university chaplain. In 1984, he became a professor of religious studies and director of in-service guidance. He found his life's work. "OBU is a calling," he explains. While other professors in the Joe L. Ingram School of Christian Service concentrate on biblical languages and other academic preparation for ministry, Tom is infused with preparing students with ministry's practice. "I have the opportunity to focus on the practice of ministry – its 'how to' application. For example, how do we prepare students for conducting baptism? I take them down to the pool and we practice baptizing each other."

Tom serves as an example to students not only through his lengthy tenure at OBU and his pastoral experience, but also through his involvement in the local church and his active schedule of preaching and working with community high school students through various programs. Like Bartimaeus and Saul before him, Tom Wilks continues to live out the exclamation of the man born blind: "I was blind but now I see!"

— ZACH KINCAID



Of Historical Value

Her Oklahoma roots go some 100 years back, just after the landrun. Her grandmother was born in 1890 to a newly

established Edmond farming family. But in 1921, an emphasis on education became evident when “Grandmother Thompson” and her new husband “moved into town” to afford their young boy a good education. “The commitment to education goes at least that far back on my father’s side,” says Sherri Raney, assistant professor of history and political science.

“My grandmother taught in a one-room school house,” Sherri continues, “and I still remember her willingness to do whatever it takes to educate, the only person I really knew who did not believe any barriers existed for women to succeed.” Viola Thompson died in 1986. A similar story

is rooted in Sherri through her mother, the daughter of sharecroppers. “My mom was determined to get out of the cotton patch,” she says. “My mom had to raise and sell turkeys to make it through college and become an instrumental teacher at Choctaw Elementary School.” Sherri’s mother recently passed away. She had also engrained upon her the importance of learning and value of developing one’s understanding. “When I went to college I thought about going into law or politics,” she says, “but I had this love of learning that made academia more appealing than any of the other paths. It seemed like this might be more important than adding another politician or lawyer to the mix.”

Her chosen field of study, nonetheless, included her interests in law and politics, especially as it relates to Russian history, a love that she traces to a senior project in high school. “I had to write a paper on the Communist manifesto,” she says. “Because of the political tension of the 1970s I was especially intrigued with the question, ‘Who are these people?’” Her dissertation title reflects how her interest grew. It’s titled

“A Worthy Friend of Tomiris: The Life of Princess Catherine Dashkova, 1744-1810.”

Sherri came to OBU in 1994 after teaching at several public institutions. Sherri has found a similar stress on learning that her grandmother and mother instilled upon her because the environment at OBU engages the whole person. “I have felt most free to explore history and look at all the issues and spiritual ramifications,” she says. “I don’t want to return to that presumptuous time when Queen Elizabeth declared that the Spanish Armada was sunk by a Protestant wind. When Christian historians talk in terms of God causing things in history, it discredits their efforts. However, when we can look at people for who they are, for what they believe, and be open about their motivations, that is when we have freedom as historians. We can take faith stories seriously at OBU and that matters.”

— ZACH KINCAID

With An Understanding Ear

and mental health aspects. Two teddy bears stand out, one dressed in scrubs and one in a classic nurse's uniform. They smile down from atop a filing cabinet. A quilt hangs prominently on the wall, as does a painting from Haiti. These little outward touches only scratch the surface in illuminating the down-to-earth, approachable person of Wanda Robinson.

As an assistant professor of nursing with a mental health specialty, Wanda began working for OBU in 1991 and became a full-time faculty member in 1999. "OBU is integral to my upbringing," she says. "I attended here as an undergraduate student after I transferred from a school in California. I also met my husband at OBU."

Although Wanda has a background tied to OBU, she traveled down several paths before her 1991 return to campus. After graduation, she went to work at the Veteran's Administration Hospital in Oklahoma City, which had funded a full scholarship to begin work on a Master's degree. From there, she became the director of nursing at a psychiatric facility. "I began to combine my two passions, counseling and nursing," she says.

Eventually, Wanda started a business to service those with advanced mental health issues, a need she saw during research data collection for her Master's thesis. "I realized that the area of home care was greatly underdeveloped. Nurses simply did not know how to deal with home health patients in need of mental health care. "As a result, during the next five years a colleague and I developed and coordinated a team of 10 advanced practice nurses who provided psychiatric nursing care to mental health patients in their homes."

Since returning to OBU as a professor, Wanda has become a

She has an office lined with books on nursing

university counselor. "I very much enjoy this hands-on opportunity to help students," she says. "It is a primary reason I am so happy at OBU. I love the balance between educating future health professionals and helping those in need of an 'understanding ear.'"

"It is crucial for students to acquire the skills necessary to effectively communicate and collaborate with many different groups of people," Wanda says, "health care involves ministry." To this end, she has taken two groups of students to Haiti, and emphasizes the training of students in the cultural aspects of health care, grieving care, and communication.

Her international flare is evident at home as well, where she and her husband have hosted more than 40 international students at various times. "The students are typically college-age and studying English like our current house guests from Japan and Korea." Either at OBU or at home with her children and international guests, Wanda certainly has focused her life work on nurturing young people, to lend her "understanding ear" and see them grow in their professional and personal lives.

—ASHLEY NELSON



Artistic Passion From The Start

A portrait hangs in Julie Blackstone's office. She calls it "Mentor." It's of her first college art professor, a man named Gene Dougherty, who provided Julie's first "real" artistic training. Sculptures share space with numerous books that line the shelves. Numerous paintings are stacked against the walls.

Her passion for art began early.

Even as a preschooler, people told her that she should pursue art. This did not naturally spread to teaching art, not until much later. "There were those who kept telling me that I should teach art, but I thought that would leave me no chance to do my own work."

However, in college Julie began to mold her "rawness." Having had no "real" training, it provided an eye-opening experience. Over time Julie gravitated to teaching, receiv-

ing some sound advice from family members and professors. After completing an education degree, she taught at several "small and rural" high schools as well as a community college. In the 1980s, Julie began teaching at OBU. For the last seven years, she has served as a full-time instructor of art.

Julie teaches a variety of different subjects at OBU. "I always enjoy being in whatever class I am in at the time," she says. By not focusing on one subject for eight hours every day, Julie says that she avoids "burnout." Color theory, painting, (oil and water color), ceramics, stained glass, and fibers (or weaving) are several class concentrations that fill the week.

Julie says the inspiration for her own art comes from the students. "Life inspires you," says Julie. "Looking at their art, I can begin to see things from their perspective. This leads to new perspectives in my own pieces."

When Julie isn't teaching, she is at home rearing her two children, Rachael, 19; and Evan, 16. Outside of family life, Julie weaves, paints, does pottery, and creates stunning stained-glass art. Some of Julie's pieces are available for sale at Starry Starry Arts, a local specialty shop.

When she isn't working on visual art, Julie can be found hard at work writing novels. Unbeknownst to some, she is currently at work on her 11th novel, which is yet to be titled. Her writing is driven not only by her love of art but also her appreciation of history, especially medieval Europe and Civil War America. Her first five novels had a Civil War setting, but they have yet to be published. "I'm just too chicken to go out there and get my work published," Julie says with a laugh. Her other work she categorizes as mystery or medieval fantasy.

Socrates says that the unexamined life is not worth living. It is a favorite quote of Julie Blackstone, and an intentional activity in her life as teacher, artist, author and mother.

— ANNE BUTLER





People Matter, Not Profit

“Relationships have always been my foundation,” says Professor of Business Robbie Mullins. Growing up in Oklahoma as the daughter of a small town grocery store owner, Robbie experienced firsthand the importance of “people-oriented” business. “The experience of working in a small community prepared me to work in the business world,” she says, “and the impact people had on my life through education drove me to commit my career to preparing business students to focus on people rather than profit.”

Robbie came to OBU in 1990 and now holds the title Peitz Professor of Business. Raised in a Christian home in a “sheltered” small town, she says that going to college proved a “shocking” experience. “I found that people had not grown up with the same advantages, that many had no idea about Christian love,” she says. “I felt a responsibility

to show the difference, to demonstrate that ‘better life’ as a Christian.” This responsibility extends today. “As a teacher,” she says, “I serve as a small piece of the puzzle in a student’s life.”

Her classes make up the marketing-related courses in the business school. “There are many good schools of business around the country,” Robbie says, “but the uniqueness of the OBU program is the time spent between faculty and students. Education is about much more than knowledge. It’s about cultivation. It’s about building strong Christian business leaders.”

As board member of various companies and social conscious groups, Robbie provides a context for marketing to gain footing not in simply projecting the image of an institution but working in tandem with the whole picture of business. Certainly the variables remain important – price, product, promotion, and place – but the “inner-core” as Robbie says, remains relationships.

– ZACH KINCAID

Worship • *A Verb That Needs A Foundation*

*by John E. Simons, Associate Professor of Church Music and
Coordinator, Division of Church Music*

Worship is a hot topic in evangelical circles. Using “worship” as an online keyword search, I found more than 9,370,000 results in .22 seconds. Among the confusion surrounding modern worship, I like Robert Webber’s thought, “worship is a verb.” In other words, worship is an action word with a subject. How can we worship actively with little or no foundation for the subject of worship? The historical context to worship provides a foundation. Therefore, let’s explore how early Christians may have worshipped.

How Did Early Christians Worship?

After the building of the temple of Solomon (about 900 BC), the people gathered to worship God. This “Old” or “First” Testament worship encounter begins our journey.

And all the Levitical singers, Asaph, Heman, and Keduthun, their sons and kinsmen, arrayed in fine linen, with cymbals, harps, and lyres, stood east of the altar with 120 priests who were trumpeters; and it was the duty of the trumpeters and singers to make themselves heard in unison in praise and thanksgiving to the Lord, and when the song was raised, with trumpets and cymbals, and other musical instruments, in praise singing, “For he is good, his steadfast love endures for ever,” the house, the house of the Lord, was filled with a cloud, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord filled the house of God.

(2 Chronicles 5:12-14, NIV)

Often, we think of the spectacle of this event, see the drama, and feel the emotion in the temple as it fills with God’s presence. However, we fail to look at the cause. Was it the quality of the music or Solomon’s oratory that caused the great creator of the universe to fill the temple? Was it the enormous organizational skill it took to coordinate this event the element that moved the Lord? Was it the sheer sized and spectacle of the event that revealed God’s presence? No. It was God’s people joined in one accord to praise Him. Solomon’s immediate response gives insight. He said, “The Lord has said He would dwell in thick darkness, but I have built Thee an exalted house, a place

for Thee to dwell in for ever.” Put in the context of the Risen Savior and a sinful people covered by the blood of Jesus, God promised to dwell with us and our response is to exalt him with our entire being. This concept fueled the early church.

Sorting through mounds of worship seminar literature, I am stunned by the enormous resources dedicated to help people understand, define, and implement worship services. This summer alone, I was invited to 27 worship seminars. I wonder what would have happened to early church had they been media and seminar driven. We sometimes forget that first- and second-century Christians relied on a relationship with a living God, letters from people they did not know, ancient writings from the Jewish people, and friendships to sustain them and guide their worship. Realistically, the Christian movement should have ended. In a letter from Pliny the Younger to Emperor Trajan (111 AD), Pliny tells the Roman Emperor about Christians as he seeks counsel for handling this problem.

Others named by the informant admitted they were Christians and then denied it; they had been indeed, but had ceased, some more than three years ago, some even longer, and a few as many as 20 years ago. These also all venerated your image and those of the gods and cursed Christ.

But they assured me that the sum of their fault or error was that they usually met before light on an appointed day to utter in turn songs to Christ as to a god, afterward taking an oath – not for the purpose of wickedness, but in fact to abstain from theft, banditry, committing adultery, lying, and withholding a deposit when it was claimed. At the conclusion of this time they separated, reassembling to take food of an ordinary and innocent kind; but they had ceased this after my edict, issued according to your order banning secret societies.

Believing it all the more necessary to get at the truth, I interrogated two maidservants, who they call deaconesses, through torture. I discovered nothing else from this but perverse and immoderate superstition.

Therefore, I broke off the investigation to ask your advice. The matter certainly seemed to me to be worthy of this consultation, especially in view of the numbers of endangered by it. Very many of all ages, all classes, and both sexes have been accused and put in peril. The contagion is found not only in the cities, for the superstition has spread even to the villages and countryside; but it seems possible to stop and redirect it. Certainly, the temples, which had been almost desolate, now begin to be crowded, and the sacred festivals, which were neglected for a long time, have been resumed; sacrificial animals, which hitherto seldom had a buyer, are available everywhere. From this it can easily be surmised that many people might be reformed if given an opportunity to repent.

Small wonder Pliny was confused. The spread of Christianity did not make any sense to this enlightened ruler. As for the early Christians, they dealt with people abandoning their beliefs, torture, ridicule, outlaw status, and competition from the culture. In the midst of this, they gathered, sang songs, committed themselves to a lifestyle which modeled Christ, and tried to follow the laws of the land. In 140 AD, Justin Martyr wrote of the importance of gathering on Sunday, and gave a description of Christian worship. In a paraphrase outline, here is what he described:

- They began with reading the memoirs of the Apostles or the writings of the prophets.
- Then, the president of the assembly spoke to the people.
- Next came an offering of prayers and the presentation of the Lord's Supper elements.
- During prayers and thanksgivings, they expressed their approval and said, "Amen."
- The Lord's Supper was celebrated and elected members left the assembly to take the elements to members who were absent, sick or in prison.
- Finally, they collected goods for the poor, orphans, widows, and those in need.

It is interesting to note the free form of worship filled with scripture readings, testimonies, prayers, and connective acts of offering and the Lord's Supper. I wonder what



would happen to our modern church if we took the time to know where our absent members were each week, and sent Lord's Supper elements to them as an act of connection. I wonder what would happen to our communities if a church collected monies and goods for people in need living next to their church, and distributed it with joy and thanksgiving. I suspect our cities, towns, and villages would be different places.

How did early Christians worship? They had a relationship with a living God, gathered with friends, praised God, read scripture, prayed, told stories of the faith, gave worldly goods for kingdom causes, and celebrated the unity of the Spirit through the Lord's Supper. The gatherings were relationship-driven and worship was not just a part of life, it was life itself. There were no market-driven worship studies, massive worship conferences, or the latest worship "guru" book. Pliny was right. The early church should have been absorbed by the Roman polytheistic culture, and Christian worship lacked the splendor, spectacle, and logic of pagan worship. However, the early church swept through the Roman Empire. They succeeded by God's grace, not human design. Pliny did not understand that the subject of "worship" or the "Christian life" is not a style, form or method. Quite simply, it is a relationship with the living God.

Please visit OBU Magazine online (www.okbu.edu/obumagazine) for two additional resource articles asking the questions: (1) What relationships are built or destroyed in worship? (2) Should worship be relevant to our culture?



Intramural Sports Under The Lights

The sweat-drenched fields provide the stage as the players assume their respective roles. The darkened sky and the few suspended lights set the mood, so the players proceed to put on a show. They enact joy and sorrow, comedy and tragedy, victory and defeat, and they entertain the expectant crowd beneath the evening curtain.

Providing an escape from homework, books, and exams, the excitement of the intramural sports season yet again soothes the appetite for activity, competition, and relief from academic stress. This being OBU's second year with a lighted

intramural field, students can further enjoy the thrill of athletics during this time of day in which they are most awake. "The lights were installed because of the overwhelming participation of OBU students in intramural sports," says Mike Manlapig, assistant director of athletics. The flag football participation actually increased by almost 10 percent this year to 588 students. The 6-on-6 fall soccer season and the spring softball season are also expecting similar increased turnouts. Soccer began its second year as an intramural sport and softball, a staple of the program, began its second year on the OBU campus as a direct result of the improved field.

Flag football, soccer, and softball

join 16 other sports, 10 in the fall and nine in the spring, to produce an intramural setting where 800 OBU students take part.

— BENJAMIN BLACKMON

Seeing And Meeting Needs

Carol Fletcher-Knight wears many hats – mother, grandmother, teacher, insurance adjuster, church worker, student. Oh, yes, and there's also her work with the Ministry Training Institute of OBU, or MTI.

Carol began working with the MTI program in the fall of 2001. She currently directs the program at Bethesda Baptist Church in Edmond, Oklahoma. As a student in the

program, pursuing her second bachelor's degree, while concurrently pursuing her doctorate in adult education, she knows well the value of education.

"I found out about the program while doing research for a friend. He wanted to start school and pursue a degree. That's when I found out about the second bachelor's degree program. It's a best-kept secret, as far as I'm concerned," Carol says. "So I said 'Let me try it!' If all goes well, I will have gotten my second bachelor's degree in three years, part time, taking six hours per semester."

Carol has a bachelor's degree in human environmental science with a major in fashion merchandising. She went straight into her master's degree work and graduated with honors. From there, she began work on her doctorate, and will receive her degree in 2006 "if all goes as planned."

By day, Carol works as a claims adjuster for Farmer's Insurance in Oklahoma City. At her church, she is an adult Sunday School teacher and is the church's finance director. She has two grown children, two stepchildren and four grandchildren. Her late husband, the Reverend Cleophas Knight, was as studious as his wife. "When he died, we began looking through his papers and discovered that he had 150 hours of credit! That's enough for a bachelor's degree," she says.

When Carol began looking at various programs she only considered those with accreditation – programs where a degree could be obtained. "At least it is obvious to me that when people are considering furthering their education that they look for an accredited institution," she says. "You gain respect and recognition if you are going through a rigorous pro-

gram, and you deserve that respect. In accredited programs there are certain standards that you must measure up to, and I think people recognize that. I always tell people that when they are ready, they should focus on a degree. Case in point. The friend I spoke of earlier went to non-accredited institutions for six years. I do not think he wasted his time, but his time could have been better spent in getting a degree. That man is the assistant pastor of our church. He now is pursuing his degree through the MTI program."

"Our biggest feature is that we offer our courses in short blocks of time. The first course is the first seven weeks, and the second course is the second seven weeks. This is beneficial to adult students because it allows them to focus on one course at a time."

Among her duties in her position as director, Carol maps out a study plan for the students. "If the students stay in the program long enough,

they develop goals, and I work with them to attain those goals." Carol also finds ways to meet the needs of the students. "Because of the nature of our adults this session, I conducted a writing lab because some had been out of school for a while. I feel that it is my job to see needs and then to meet those needs." And what hat will Carol put on next? I guess we will have to wait and see after she graduates...again.

— SHARON BOURBEAU

There are currently 240 students enrolled in 29 MTI centers in Oklahoma and across the United States. Twenty-two centers are located throughout Oklahoma, and there are centers in six other states, including Indiana, Kansas, Oregon, Washington, Wisconsin and Montana. In the last 10 years, 41 MTI students have graduated with an associate's degree and 46 students with a bachelor's degree in Christian studies. Through work at MTI centers, diplomas



in Christian studies are also awarded.

MTI centers are set up through local associations of Southern Baptist churches, individual churches or Bible schools. OBU supplies the study guides, textbook selections, approves adjunct professors and maintains student records. Because of OBU's accreditation through the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, all courses taken through MTI may be applied toward an associate's or bachelor's degree from OBU. For further information about the MTI Program, call 405.878.2230.

20th Anniversary M&M Pops Concert

The 20th Anniversary M&M Pops Concert featured the Symphonic Band and the Bison Jazz Orchestra on

October 24. In addition, three former OBU music faculty, Ron Howell, Steven Goforth, and Pancho Romero, returned to campus for the anniversary and to celebrate Jim Brown, who retires this year as Master of Ceremonies.

The M&M Pops Concert concept was inaugurated in 1984 by Ron Howell. The legacy continued this year as a giant bag of the chocolate candies fell into the hands of those who could "name that tune," a segment of every M&M Pops Concert. Every person also received his or her choice of peanut or plain as they entered Potter Auditorium. The show included Broadway tunes, film music, and an occasional "more serious" work. A video retrospect reminded those in attendance about the incredible heritage of OBU Fine Arts.



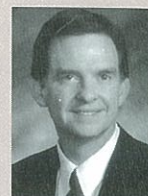
L-R: Steve Goforth, Jim Brown, Jim Hansford, Ron Howell, Pancho Romero at the 20th Anniversary M&M Pops Concert.

Spring 2004 Chapel Highlights

FEBRUARY

- 4 Charlie Hall, Worship Leader and author of the recent CD *On the Road to Beautiful*

- 11 Founders' Day with President Mark Brister



- 18 Fred Luter, Pastor of Franklin Avenue Baptist Church in New Orleans, Louisiana



MARCH

- 3 Wade Burleson, Pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Enid, Oklahoma



- 10 Dave Edwards, Speaker and author of *One Step Closer, Holy and Acceptable*



- 31 Jennifer Rothschild, Conference Speaker and author of *Lessons I Learned in the Dark*



APRIL

- 7 Holy Week featuring music from the Warren M. Angell College of Fine Arts

- 9 Dale Griffin, Campus Minister



Chapel Services are at 10am in Potter Auditorium, Raley Chapel. Guests Welcome.



Lost in Paradise

Unified Studies. Those of us familiar with Oklahoma Baptist University and the purpose behind its liberal arts approach know the term well. OBU is renowned for its focus on a holistic education. Obviously, an extremely important part of this education is literature. Throughout Unified Studies, and most notably in the notorious Western Civilization classes, students read many classic works. These works are studied because of their timeless quality and their ability to teach the reader something significant about life. Perhaps you have read these books before; if so, possibly a revisit is in order. If you have never read them, do not put it off any longer. You will be glad that you took the time to both enjoy them and learn from them.

To begin your reading, *OBU Magazine* suggests the epic poem, *Paradise Lost*, by John Milton. He was a prolific author of his time.

He was loyal to his native country of England, and he was very involved in politics. Milton began by writing poetry, but shifted to writing pamphlets and other essays for propaganda during the English Civil War. He voiced opinions on free speech, divorce, discipline, truth, the separation of church and state, and the preservation of a republic, as well as various other controversial and timely topics. Eventually, Milton was reduced to almost total blindness, and at that point in his life, he decided to turn back to prose and poetry and again focus on religious issues in his writing.

Inspired by the creation story, *Paradise Lost* is based on the account of humanity's fall described in the Book of Genesis. However, Milton expands the story to include great detail. The effect is spectacular and places the reader in a position to fully empathize with the creation and fall of man as directly experienced by Adam and Eve. The story explores the entirety of history from the Son's generation, through the war in Heaven, the fall of the rebel angels, the creation and humanity's fall, and even ends with a glimpse into the future when Satan will finally be defeated and Christ's Kingdom will be established. Milton carefully depicts the fallen angels as they lick their wounds after their grievous defeat, and he details the plotting of Satan against man and God's new creation of the world. Satan sets off to make the long journey to earth. Eventually, Satan and his offspring, Sin and Death, gain entrance to the Garden of Eden and bring about the fall of human kind.

The overall intention of the poem

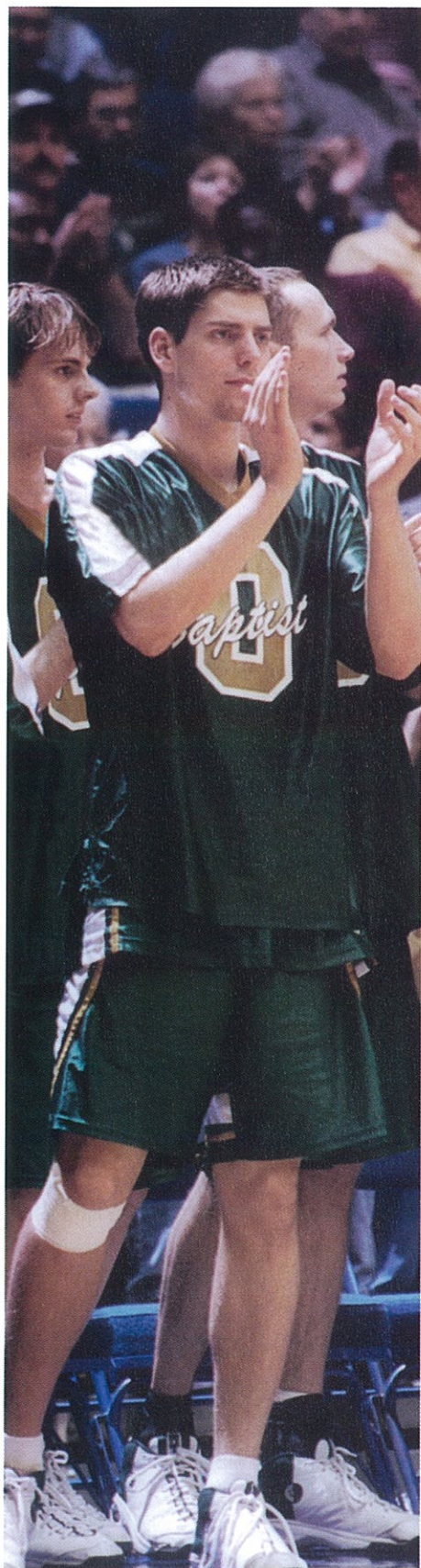
is to cause the reader to contemplate and experience the creation and the fall of man as he never has before or would have otherwise. He writes in the opening of the poem that his whole purpose is to "justify the ways of God to men" (1.26). He expertly sheds light on a story that is so commonly heard that it is typically glossed over. Where this is the case, the full and complete meaning of the story is beyond the grasp of the reader; Milton's desire is to bring the story into our full understanding.

Glenn Sanders, a seasoned veteran of OBU's Unified Studies program, has been opening students' eyes to the significance of *Paradise Lost* for years. Glenn highlights the poem because of the clarity of Milton's example of how believers come to grips with the issues of sin and death. He emphasizes the impact it can have on general readers, but particularly the OBU students. "It breaks the account of the creation and the fall wide open," Glenn says. "Often, students are left with new ideas and ways of thinking about the traditional story, and experience crucial aspects of their spiritual life in a whole new dimension."

Although the reading can be somewhat difficult at certain points, the opening argument or summary that begins each book helps the reader along. There is little reason to retreat from this work. It is a challenging read, but it is also a very worthwhile read as it teaches the story of humanity's early, fateful days.

—ASHLEY NELSON

ROLE PLAYER: THE LEADERSHIP OF JUSTIN ROYE



Role player. That's how the *OBU Basketball Media Guide* describes senior Justin Roye. He played in half of OBU games last season, and in those 18 games, he averaged less than five minutes of playing time. But any OBU basketball fan who saw any of those 79 minutes last season realized that Justin packed the minutes with intensity and purpose. He took 23 shots in 79 minutes and made most of them.

But it won't be the minutes played that his teammates and classmates will remember about Justin Roye.

Last spring, he felt a leadership void in his life and a call to fill it. At first, he thought of traditional ministry opportunities, but he didn't sense that was the direction God has intended at the time. He checked into the Student Government Association, and after discussing it with campus leaders, he threw his hat into the ring and ran for president.

"I felt like there was something I needed to be doing that I wasn't doing," Justin says. "There was a burden (in my heart). I looked into running for president and everything clicked."

With slogans such as "Vote for Justin, He's holding my kitten hostage," his stabs at humor won the favor of many OBU students.

"My personality style is very humor-based," Justin says. "The guys on the team will tell you that even in the most serious times I may crack a joke, but that doesn't change the fact about how dedicated I am to them. Mostly I just did it to catch attention. People are more apt to remember something that makes them laugh."

As president, Justin presides over meetings with his cabinet, and meets

with the Student Development Committee, Judicial Subcommittee and Student Life Council, among others. He is scheduled to speak at the December graduation.

"Basically, I'm around to hear people's ideas and try to help implement them," Justin says. But his sense of duty drives him beyond court time and politics. He appreciates the OBU atmosphere and seeks to take full advantage of it for the betterment of others. It's an appreciation he gained from starting elsewhere.

"I changed schools many times before coming to OBU," he says. "I was an engineering major first for selfish reasons...it paid well. That was my motivation. I had a life-check my sophomore year of college and I really felt I was living more for myself than for what the Lord wanted me to do."

He left the University of Oklahoma as a walk-on basketball player, and after a short stay at several other schools, he determined his path.

"There's a very strong possibility that I will go to seminary after I graduate, but right now I just don't know," he says. But Justin is sure he made the right step in coming to OBU.

"I felt the Lord's calling on my life to serve him and chose to come here to develop the qualities needed to live a good example out in the real world," Justin says. "At OU I walked on the basketball team. Looking back it was a bittersweet time. I decided I didn't want to keep going through that and that's when I transferred to Tulsa. After a while, I started getting a little basketball sick again. I talked to Coach Tolin in the summer and came and tried out for the JV team. (Then-JV coach) Quinn Wooldridge said he thought I ought to be on the varsity. I

get to be around the guys every day and I'm the team chaplain and I get to interact with them on more than a basketball level which is a lot more important to me now than it would have been straight out of high school."

When he got here, he made friends quickly. "I made a lot of connections in business and ministry schools," he says. "My brother, Brandon, was big in theatre here so a lot of people knew me before I got here. I was fortunate enough to make a lot of connections with a lot of different people."

He wants to make sure the athletes, some of whom tend not to mix with the rest of the student population, take advantage of the opportunity to know and appreciate the talents of their classmates and vice versa.

"Our guys are kind of secluded," Justin says. "We eat lunch together; we room together. We practice together. We have a lot of classes together. We need to let people see that we are not just a bunch of scary athletes. We have a lot of good people on our teams. There are some that are here just because of an athletic scholarship rather than just the desire to be at OBU. I enjoy meeting and working with people from other lifestyles and talents. I try to attend their stuff and appreciate what they do." He wants his teammates to do the same – and not just for the social aspect of it.

"A lot of times they don't have any choice but to do things that are on campus. It gives them a chance to see a different side of life," he says. "Some of our guys have never been in an environment with so many Christians in it. After a while they start to soften up and come to me and say 'there are some things I want to ask you about' or 'there are some things that are different and I want to know why.'"

That may be the whole reason God brought them here. I think that's great."

While Justin leads by example, sometimes he's more intentional.

"Road trips are special opportunities sometimes," he says. "Sometimes on the bus they'll come sit by me or I'll wander in and sit next to one of them. One guy last spring came and asked me about some things that he needed to talk about. That's what I'm here for. Two years ago I had a guy that really started getting serious and started asking questions about why were we like we are, because it was different than what he grew up in and he started asking some heavy, serious questions."

A fifth-year senior, Justin knows his impact has a time limit. He uses the opportunities as a student leader the same as he does in basketball.

"My favorite verse is Colossians 3:23, 'Whatever you do, do with all your heart unto the Lord,'" he notes. "If there's a ball on the floor you're going to have to get out of the way or take it from me. That's the style I love playing. I try to bring as much of that honest sincerity to the cabinet and student government as I can."

And there is no time for political games either. "I'm not as big into politics as a president might be," he says. "I want to make everybody's job a little easier. In basketball if someone is having a hard time I try to do or say something that will get them going again. With the cabinet I try to do the same thing. I try to make sure they are doing OK. If I can make their lives a little bit easier and maybe take some of the burden off of them; if I can relieve some of the stress from them then they can do a better job with their group. I try to have a positive attitude and be contagious."

Justin finds it easier to do so in an

atmosphere that fosters growth in all aspects of life.

"Practices at OU were such that you were going to get torn down and you would build yourself back up stronger and better," Justin says. "For some people that works. But for me, I left OU thinking I never wanted to touch a basketball again. Coach Tolin always seems to find a positive outlook on things. He may yell at us when we need yelling at, but he never took it to excesses. He's always had an atmosphere where I can thrive. If I make a good hustle play, he tells me I did a good job and that sparks me to do it again."

Once Justin Royce was in a major where he could be wealthy and on a basketball team that had the national sports spotlight. He's discovered that happiness comes from somewhere else.

"I've talked to Coach Tolin about my goals being more than just basketball," Royce said. "I'm going to fill whatever role he has for me, but I want to leave the guys better than when they came here. They'll have more than just a championship and an education when they leave, and Coach Tolin is 100 percent supportive of that."

"Sometimes when I see OU on TV and in the Final Four championship a couple years ago, a part of me wants to be there," he admits. "But if I was there, I wouldn't be in the place spiritually that I am now. I wouldn't trade an NAIA school with the environment I have for an NCAA school and the environment I did have and I've told Coach Tolin that. I continue to let Coach Tolin know how much I appreciate what he does and how he lets me be who I am. It's not a struggle to live as an athlete and a Christian at the same time."

– RAY FINK

Ken Fergeson

Ken Fergeson is full of surprises, and, those who know him would agree, he kind of likes it that way.

In some ways, Ken strikes you as the last pure country banker. That's not literally true, of course, but he embodies so much of the independent, free-spirited entrepreneurial banker – that he almost seems out of another era.

Born and raised on a sharecropper's farm in the small north Texas town of Crowell, Ken remembers his stepfather's words that "idle hands are the devil's workshop." The farm was owned by a banker – a rather tight character, as Ken recalls. Negotiations over the repair of the door of a tornado cellar, for example, took nearly a week. Finally, Ken says, the banker agreed that if the planks and labor were supplied, he would provide the tin to cover the door. This, plus personal knowledge of the physical labor involved in farming, convinced Ken that he'd rather be a banker than a farmer.

He met his wife, Mary Ann, just before they entered high school, where they represented 15 percent of their graduating class. Dates often involved driving 30 miles to see a movie. They were married as sophomores in college. After almost 15 years of banking experience, Ken moved to Altus in 1985, when he bought National Bank of Commerce. The town of about 20,000 is situated

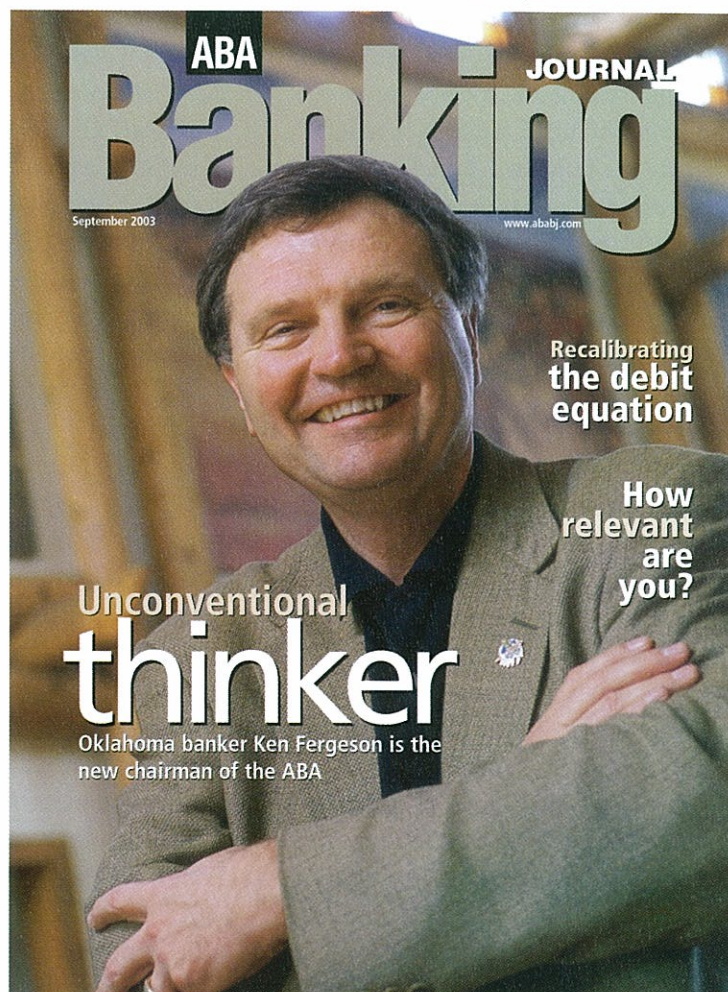
in the far southwestern part of Oklahoma.

Ken doesn't necessarily think that being a big fish in a small pond is that important, just that it's easier to have an impact in a small pond, and a lot more fun. To put this in perspective, we're talking about a man who says "volunteering is my hobby," a man who spends three or four nights a week serving on foundations and community boards and who conducts a lot of his bank's business by phone from the road. Civic involvement is part and parcel with bank leadership, but Ken takes it to a new level. Up until fairly recently he was serving on 30 charitable and development boards. Ken currently serves on the OBU Board of Trustees and chairs the Board's university advancement committee.

"I see OBU as

a great alternative," Ken says. "When we came with our daughter the admissions team was very responsive. That is something unique about a small private school like OBU. They are able to invest personal time." His neighbor introduced Ken to the mission of OBU in the early 1990s. Their experience, coupled with their youth pastor's enthusiasm at the family's local church for the opportunities and Christian emphasis at OBU, led Ken to invest time, energy, and dollars to support the shaping of students who will make a positive difference in the world.

Ken understands the need for training young people to pursue their life's passion as a ministry. When the Fergeson's daughter, Casey, was young, she told her parents she



wanted to be a missionary. Her father's response was interesting. "I kept saying, 'if you want to be a missionary, you need to come work for the bank, because it's the greatest place to be a missionary.'" Ken was quite serious. He often refers to his chosen profession as the "ministry of banking." "As an industry, banks help people plan for their children's education, buy their first home, plan for retirement or expand a business. If those outcomes aren't a ministry, I don't know what is. We help people, and we get to enjoy their success vicariously."

"I told my children when they were young that they need a set of ethics and principles *before* they get into a tricky situation. It's the same in business. An officer needs to know what he'll say when someone suggests capitalizing expenses. A teller needs to know what to do ahead of time when somebody forgets to pick up their change. I really have a deep down belief that if people talk out in the open and freely about morals and ethics, then they will think about them when issues come up."

Ken embodies the spirit of the American West – he enjoys the space and freedom of wide-open country. He loves his part of the world, and is a walking encyclopedia of the region. He and his wife own land in their hometown, near Altus. Perhaps they will settle down there some time in the future. But not yet. Ken has lots of ideas in his head waiting their turn to come out.

The majority of the contents above are adapted from an article in the September edition of the *ABA Banking Journal* and used by permission. To read "Unconventional Thinker" by Bill Streeter, editor-in-chief at *ABA Banking Journal*, go to www.ababj.com.

The \$25,000 Challenge

As OBU begins preparations for the nationwide 2004 Annual Fund Campaign, an anonymous foundation has renewed its \$25,000 challenge match which creates the potential of gifts made by alumni and friends during the annual fund phonathon to go twice as far. The phonathon is scheduled January 5 through February 12.

The foundation, which consistently supports OBU, has committed to match phonathon pledges and gifts from all new donors, as well as pledges and gifts from donors who did not contribute to OBU during 2003. In addition, the foundation will match the increased amount of any phonathon gift from a current OBU donor. The result: anyone who made a contribution to OBU in 2003 and makes a larger gift in 2004, will have an amount equal to the increase matched by the foundation. The challenge grant will match gifts or increases up to a maximum total of \$25,000.

The phonathon is conducted in three phases: (1) calls to non-alumni friends of OBU by current students; (2) calls to alumni by faculty, staff, alumni and students; (3) calls specific to the support of athletics through the Bison Athletic Association.

Gifts That Endure

The phonathon is part of the *Gifts That Endure: 2004 Annual Fund Campaign*, which is being chaired by Dr. Burton Patterson, '56. Patterson is serving as the overall chairman for the 2004 Annual Fund effort. In addition to Burton, others are serving as leaders for the alumni, parents and friends divisions.

"This is a great incentive for the university's supporters" Burton says. "Through this challenge, alumni and friends can make a greater financial impact on the life of OBU. The university continues to be grateful for the continued support of so many alumni and friends and anticipates even more will participate in the 2004 Annual Fund Campaign. Having a high percentage of alumni who support the school is a direct reflection of the health of the institution and is something particularly noticed by external groups, including those who rate the overall quality of universities nationwide. OBU's alumni and friends have recognized and appreciated how the university's reputation has increased over the past decade or so, as it consistently has ranked as one of 'America's Best Colleges' by *U.S. News and World Report*."

Management Excellence

OBU recently received recognition from the Tulsa-based Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation with a *Certificate for Programming and Management Excellence*. The annual award publicly recognizes local, foundation-supported organizations with the same commitment to excellence exhibited by Charles Schusterman. OBU will receive an unrestricted grant of \$1,800. In a letter detailing the award, the foundation writes, "The unusual amount of the award reflects our desire to wish your organization good luck in the future. According to Jewish tradition, the Hebrew word for "life" ("*chai*") has a numerical value of 18 and a monetary gift of that amount is intended to bring success."

Each year, the OBU Alumni Association honors 12 former students with Profile in Excellence awards, in recognition of their service and leadership. A listing of all award recipients is online at www.okbu.edu/alumni.

Corrinne Cullen Stewart '52

Although nearing 74 years of age, Corrinne Cullen Stewart, '52, continues to teach language arts and works four evenings a week at a local technical college teaching remedial reading. A public school teacher for 52 years, Corrinne began her love of teaching as a young person in church by teaching kindergarten Sunday School. "My mom told me and my sister to 'pay back' what the church had given us," she says.

Corrinne taught first grade in Lawton, Oklahoma, when she graduated from OBU. She married Jimmy whom she met at OBU. Jimmy was transferred to the Armored School at Fort Knox, Kentucky. That was March, 1953. She began to teach first grade at White Mill Schoolhouse, located on a red clay hill, as one of two teachers with a four-year degree. Corrinne found her "niche" teaching sixth-grade students when she and Jimmy moved to Hendersonville, North Carolina.

In 1957, James R. Stewart Jr. was born. By January 1958, she returned to the classroom. When the family moved to Greenville, South Carolina, Corrinne took the sixth-grade classroom, Room 104. She has taught at Northwood Middle School for more than 30 years.

In the fall of 1991, Corrinne was diagnosed with breast cancer. "That was a big blow," she says. "My surgeon



kept telling me, 'God has a reason and you have to work with him on this. You need to have faith.' I guess what I learned was that I was valued. Our school principal at the time said to me, 'I know you have chemotherapy on Fridays and Mondays, but you can come and be here the rest of the week with us.' If people had not believed in me, I couldn't have done it. And the children are healing – they are life," she says.

"I so value the training I received at OBU," she says. "I began to feel the concept of true teaching. It has stayed with me for 50 years. The same ideas they're coming up with now, I learned at OBU 50 years ago. I still see myself in Lena Smock's office, hearing her say, 'You have a profound responsibility with young children. It is right next to godliness.' That made us feel important to hear that. Dr. Smock was head of the education department back then. She helped to mold the image in my mind of what I wanted to do."

In her 52 years of teaching, Corrinne has impacted the lives of more than 8,000 boys and girls from Oklahoma to Kentucky to the Carolinas. "I often ask myself 'Do I really reflect on the lives of children?' It is not uncommon to meet children I've taught and even their children. Mary is a good example of that. Mary was a child I thought would never learn to read and write. Now I see her and she is working at a hospital checking in patients. That showed me that every child *can* learn something. Not all of them will become profound English students, but every child can learn."

— SHARON BOURBEAU

Kenda Fawcett Jezek '67

Kenda Fawcett Jezek, '67, knew what she wanted to do at a young age. My mother said I always wanted to be a nurse. In high school I enjoyed and excelled in the sciences," she says. "I also did career testing that showed I had an aptitude for sciences and interpersonal skills. These confirmed that nursing was a good career path for me." The premature death of her father also influenced Kenda. "My father died when I was 2 years of age," she says. "My mother spoke of the nurses who cared for him. I remembered those stories, and they made an impact. I certainly knew by the time I came to OBU that

I wanted to be a nurse.”

Kenda has been active in nursing for 37 years. She currently serves as dean of the School of Nursing at Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Her nursing career began with clinical practice at Shawnee Medical Center Hospital following graduation. For five years, Kenda worked at the hospital and “felt fulfilled.” One day, she received a call from the chair of nursing at Seminole Junior College in Seminole, Oklahoma. She asked Kenda to help start the nursing program at the college. “I began thinking at that time that maybe I could do more for nursing this way,” Kenda says. She taught every course in the curriculum for three years.

Kenda began her master’s degree in the early 1970s. She worked full time, went to school part time and cared for her two young children. Three years later, Kenda became the chair of the nursing division at Seminole Junior College. “It was not something that I eagerly embraced,” she says, “but I knew it was what I needed to do.” She served in that capacity for three years before she



and her family moved to Tulsa. She began work as a nurse therapist at a psychiatric facility, before returning to education in the fall of 1985 when she began teaching psychiatric nursing at ORU.

Now, as a nursing dean, Kenda says, “I want to create a healing environment – to build bridges from the School of Nursing to the community. What God has done since then is to bring a team together who is

committed to nursing. God continues to open doors. We have begun a partnership with the Northeast Area Health Education Center, an organization putting health-care providers into the Tulsa community, and we are also working in Roca Blanco, Mexico, and in Accra, Ghana.”

“OBU was just a quintessential, rewarding experience,” Kenda remembers. “Academically, it was rigorous, but at the same time, it was nurturing. The faculty poured themselves into us as students. I remember Jaunita Proctor and Mary White Johnson as fabulous role models. And Juanita Millsap is the most excellent nursing faculty member ever. She was so knowledgeable and down-to-earth. Our professors taught us the importance of taking care of the whole person, and while those concepts are done today, we were doing them back in the ’60s. I am blessed to have had wonderful mentors in my life. God put me in places that I’ve been able to grow and develop, and as a dean, I can now give those things back.”

– SHARON BOURBEAU

Hart Morris 69

Hart Morris, ’69, may be a percussionist at heart, but he is making his mark as a composer and minister of music.

Hart has served as the minister of music at Asbury United Methodist Church in Tulsa, Oklahoma, since 1992. During his tenure at Asbury, the church has gone from three to

five services – all of them different. Hart is responsible for each. And the church continues to grow.

“I still am a percussionist at heart. I almost chose to play the French horn in the sixth grade, but I chose the drums instead. My mother asked me why I couldn’t have chosen something ‘normal’ to play. She changed her mind when I got a job! I later planned to become a symphony percussionist, but I learned that I had decided the right thing for the wrong reasons. I began to feel that the only way I could be a useful servant of God was to be in the full-time music

ministry.”

When Hart was in high school, he studied with the principal percussionist for the Oklahoma City Symphony (now Philharmonic). “I played as an extra in the symphony, and actually made money doing what I enjoyed. I was offered a full scholarship to Oklahoma City University in percussion. At that time, that was my world. The plans were for me were to study at OCU for a year or two and then go back East to study somewhere,” he says.

But God had other plans, and Hart

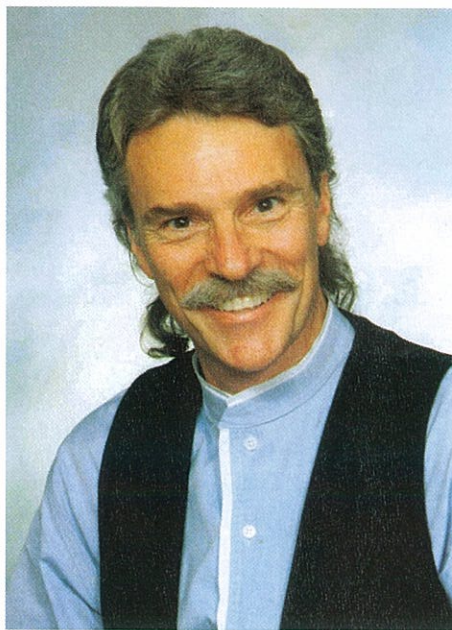
Continued on page 26

transferred to OBU as a sophomore.

In addition to his degree in church music, Hart met his wife, Marty, at OBU. "We met in the Tuneclippers. She sang and I played the drums. Marty serves as coordinator of worship and music associate at the church. They have two children, Bradley and Joy, and four grandchildren.

"Jim Woodward was a remarkable man. I was at OBU during his first year as dean of the College of Fine Arts. The things I got from him, I have never again encountered. Woodward, for me, was OBU. He taught us excellence and he conveyed that. He also taught us to be eclectic – to do everything. He definitely cast a long shadow."

When Hart isn't leading music, he spends his time writing music. He has received awards from the American



Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers in 1999, 2001, 2002, and 2003. "I never planned to be a writer. Someone gave us some bells and it happened from there. I needed a

Christmas piece for my kids, so I wrote one. Someone heard it, asked where I had gotten it and I told them that I wrote it."

In the fall of 1994, Hart and a friend began publishing pieces through their company, Red River Music. "When you're new, you just can't risk anyone's reputation, so we started this company. People knew my friend as a writer, and me as a clinician. I am now published by 19 different companies, and we have 28 writers in our catalog. I really enjoy the creative process. I enjoy writing now as much as anything."

As for retirement plans, Hart says "At some point I will want to change gears. You know, raise some horses and potatoes, but I will continue to write."

– SHARON BOURBEAU

Billingsley Elected Association President

Jerry Billingsley, '72, was elected president of the OBU Alumni Association at the association board of directors meeting Nov. 8, during Homecoming 2003. He will succeed Ronda Shelton Mikles, '75, who concludes her one-year term as president on Dec. 31, 2003.

The board of directors also elected Jeremie Kubicek, '93, as vice president, and Julie Hook Largent, '95, as secretary.

Billingsley is associate pastor for music and senior adult minister at Bethel Baptist Church in Norman. He and his wife, Barbara, reside in Norman. They have two children, Thomas, and Aubrey, a 2002 OBU graduate.

Kubicek is co-founder of Giant Partners, a business consulting firm

in Oklahoma City. He and his wife, Kelly, ex '93, reside in Edmond. They have two children, Addison and Will. Jeremie succeeds David Smith, '73, as board vice president.

Largent is a homemaker. She and her husband, Gibson, a 2000 OBU graduate, reside in Oklahoma City. They have two daughters, Kennedy and Ellie. Julie succeeds Sue Lackey Smith, '44, as secretary.

The OBU Alumni Association board of directors includes 24 members, all of whom reside in Oklahoma. In addition, the immediate past president serves on the board. The association also has nine regional representatives who work with the University's alumni office to support alumni programs and activities.

HOMECOMING 2003

VIEW IT ONLINE

Hundreds of alumni returned to Bison Hill for Homecoming Nov. 7-8. You can view a recap of the celebration online at www.okbu.edu/alumni. Information on award recipients, class reunion photos, and other items are available through the University's website.

Alumni who attended Homecoming 2003 reunion events for classes ending in 3 and 8 received biographical data and class rosters with current addresses and telephone numbers of class members. If you were unable to attend your reunion and wish to receive this information, you can request the information by calling 405.878.2706.

A Valentine's Day Pizza Party

One of the best rivalries in the NAIA will be showcased during OBU's annual Pizza Night at the Basketball Games, slated for Saturday, Feb. 14, 2004.

The event will start at 4:30 p.m. in Clark Craig Fieldhouse, as alumni and friends gather for an all-you-care-to-eat pizza buffet.

The fellowship meal will be followed by a basketball double-header in the Noble Complex, as OBU hosts the Oklahoma City University Stars. The women's game will begin at 6 p.m., with the men's contest tipping off at 8 p.m.

"Our Pizza Night gives alums in the area, as well as those who live a few hours away, the chance to come to campus for a special time of fellowship," said Marty O'Gwynn, hon. '58, executive director of the OBU Alumni Association. "This season, participants

will be treated to great basketball competition, too. The OBU-OCU rivalry has produced some very memorable games through the years."

The event includes pizza, salad and cookies, along with soft drinks. In addition, Pizza Night will include the annual OBU sports quiz, with prizes awarded to those with the highest scores on the quiz.

Churches and other organizations are encouraged to bring groups to the pizza and basketball event. Campus tours can be arranged for interested parties.

Cost for the evening, including the meal and basketball action, is \$5 for adults and \$2.50 for children. To order tickets, call the OBU Alumni Office at 405.878.2706. Reservation deadline is Wednesday, Feb. 11. More information is available at www.okbu.edu/alumni.

Recognizing OBU Greatness

OBU alumni who recall the positive impact of an OBU faculty or staff member can help recognize that person's influence through the university's annual faculty and staff awards program.

OBU's top annual honors for employees will be presented to three members of the faculty and staff during spring Commencement May 22. The selection process for those awards will begin soon, and alumni and members of the OBU campus community are encouraged to submit nominations for the awards. The honors are funded annually through the OBU Alumni Association by two graduates.

The Distinguished Teaching Award, for classroom excellence, includes a

cash award of \$1,500 and an engraved silver tray. The Meritorious Service Award, for faithful service to OBU in faculty, administrative, or support staff positions, includes a \$1,000 cash award and a plaque; and the Promising Teacher Award includes a \$500 cash award and a plaque.

A complete list of previous award recipients is available online at www.okbu.edu/alumni.

The annual cash awards are made possible by 1970 OBU graduates John and Janet Marshall Hudson of Edmond.

Please send nomination letters to the Office of the President, OBU Box 61241, 500 W. University, Shawnee, Oklahoma 74804.

Profile In Excellence Honorees Selected

Twelve OBU alumni have been selected to receive 2004 Profile In Excellence Awards. The alums are featured in OBU publications, and will be recognized during the 2004 Homecoming Chapel on Nov. 13.

The award is given to a former student, not necessarily a graduate, who has "demonstrated recognizable accomplishment in his or her profession, business, avocation, or life service in such a way as to bring pride and honor to the University."

Recipients for 2004 include: Earl Bengs, '56, Singapore; Ralph A. Crawford, '54, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Bill Donovan, '55, and his wife, Peggy Galloway Donovan, '53, Shawnee, Oklahoma; Deborah Gardner, '73, Falls Church, Virginia; John Holcomb, '88, Tulsa, Oklahoma; Kenda Fawcett Jezek, '67, Tulsa, Oklahoma; Hart Morris, '69, Tulsa, Oklahoma; Michael Pierce, '73, Athens, Georgia; John Provine, '69, Pond Creek, Oklahoma; Harold Souther, '41, Port Charlotte, Florida; Corrine Cullen Stewart, '52, Greenville, South Carolina

The 2004 honorees were selected by the OBU Alumni Association board of directors in August 2003. Since the Profile In Excellence Award program began in 1982, 276 OBU alumni have received the honor from the OBU Alumni Association. A complete list of past award recipients is available online at www.okbu.edu/alumni.

According to English tradition, the earliest accounts of hanging the green are associated with the Roman festival of Saturn. The druids of old would carry branches of evergreen into their houses in winter, hoping that the spirits of the woods and streams would take refuge there from the winter storms and be ready to bring forth new life in spring. With Christianity, the lasting greenery of the holly, ivy and mistletoe have come to symbolize the gift of everlasting life.

The tradition of Hanging of the Green at OBU, begun in 1937 by president and first lady, Dr. John and Helen Raley, stemmed from the Raleys' interest in English traditions. Desiring a tradition for OBU, they planned OBU's first Hanging of the Green to reflect the ancient English tradition of the lighting of the Yule log to symbolize the spirit of Christmas – hospitality, warmth, friendship, joy, and love.

The first OBU ceremony was held in WMU Memorial Hall. Representatives from all the dormitories lit candles of good will from the candle there and carried the light to their own dormitories. In 1946, the ceremony moved to the newly completed Brittain Hall. It moved again in 1957 to the University Auditorium, and in 1961 to the John Wesley Raley Chapel. In a 1979 interview with *The OBU Bison*, describing the first Hanging of the Green at OBU, Mrs. Raley



≈ 1956 Hanging of the Green

relates "The beautiful girls were stationed down the stairway. There were no escorts at this time. The tops of greenery were hung over the rails and filled the foyer. Then the president of the men's dormitory took a candle. The symbolism was to light the Yule log in their dormitory."

Rhetta Hudson, chair of the 2003 Hanging of the Green committee, says that it was such a highlight of the OBU social season that Potter Audito-

rium in Raley Chapel was actually built with the Hanging of the Green in mind. Rhetta, associate professor of music at OBU, came to the university in 1972 and has worked with the honorees since the 1980s.

One thing has changed through the years, and that is the number of honorees and how they are chosen. Today, 10 men and 10 women are selected on the basis of worthiness of recognition.

– SHARON BOURBEAU



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