



# What's warden wa

It is one of the great privileges of the presidency of Oklahoma Baptist University to shake the hand of each graduate during our spring and winter Commencement exercises. I am able publicly to congratulate these new alumni on completing a major accomplishment. The relationship with OBU does not end with graduation, however.



President Brister at 2007 Spring Commencement.

We want our alumni to maintain close ties to their alma mater. There are many ways they can do that. Participation in on-campus and off-campus OBU events, making financial gifts to the University, and encouraging prospective students to consider studying on Bison Hill are some of the traditional ways alumni remain tied to the University. As you will see in this issue, OBU is encouraging our alumni and friends also to be part of the Bison Network, helping our students learn more about potential careers while they are completing their degrees. The Bison Network seeks to build on relationships within the OBU family.

The entire OBU family cherishes relationships. We do not take friendships for granted at OBU. In this issue you will read about a professor who is serving soldiers in Iraq, and about five successful alumni who have carved out successful careers because of placing value on personal relationships. These individuals represent an OBU tradition of individual learning within a supportive community. The sense of community extends beyond the college years. Indeed, for many it has provided a network of support which helps young graduates go from Bison Hill knowing that whatever is next, they are not having to make the journey all alone. They are part of a great OBU family.

Und But

Mark Brister OBU President

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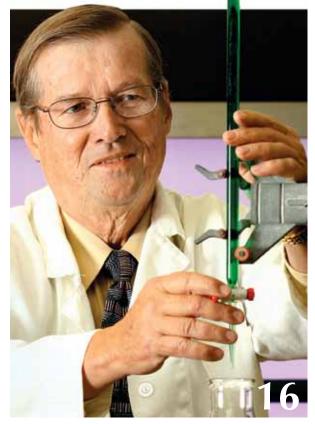
Randy Ridenour is accustomed to building relationships in a nurturing environment. Now, the OBU philosophy professor is trying to build relationships and nurture soldiers in war-torn Baghdad.

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Homecoming will offer a packed schedule in November. Start a college savings account, get \$100.

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Catch up on the life and times of OBU alums from across the years.



OBU has a long-standing reputation as a Christian liberal arts institution. The emphasis on a well-rounded education, stressing critical thinking and clear writing skills, has contributed to consistent national recognition for quality. In a global marketplace where technology is prized, how do OBU graduates measure up? Stephanie Barbour, OBU's career services counselor, sees a perfect fit.

XT7

"When employers are asked which key skills they are looking for in new hires, communication, leadership, teamwork, and problem solving skills are always listed among the top 10," she said. "Technical skills, or knowledge of the discipline, is obviously included in that top-10 list, but is regularly on the bottom half. That being said, it is clear to see that an OBU liberal arts education produces graduates well-equipped in these sought-after skills."

On these pages are comments from members of OBU's Class of 2007, regarding what is next in their lives and how they feel as they move from Bison Hill.

#### MAY 2007 NURSING GRADUATE



Registered Nurse, Intensive Care Unit Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital Santa Barbara, Calif.

"I believe I have achieved an education that was beyond anything

BEKA

I could have expected. Yes, I have spent many late nights studying until I was blue in the face. Yes, I dreaded rolling out of bed at 0445 on Thursday mornings to attend clinicals. Yes, I got sick and tired of doing endless paperwork and care plans. However, I would not trade any of those late nights and early mornings for anything. It was in those most challenging times that I grew and I learned the most not only about how to care for patients in the most competent

way possible, but I also learned a lot about myself.

"OBU has taught me to think critically by looking at and contemplating the questions of 'what?', 'so what?', and 'now what?'

Beka, a second generation Bison, learned about her job through family networking connections. She would like to see OBU offer more job fair options involving businesses, schools and hospitals outside Oklahoma.

#### A Sampling of Employers of OBU Graduates

Classes of 2003-2007

#### "Access to job opportunities all over the world is now at our fingertips."

hen Matt Burton took his diploma from OBU President Mark Brister at Spring Commencement May 19, he knew what was going to happen next - and that knowledge extended beyond being sure he didn't stumble while descending from the Potter Auditorium stage.

Burton, who earned an accounting degree, already had a job lined up as a staff accountant in the corporate offices of Chick-fil-A. Thanks to a successful internship after his junior year, he had earned a job offer from the corporation committed to saving cows.

Like many OBU graduates, Burton had his future plans in place at graduation. While graduate school is the next step for many students, the majority go directly into career fields. The University's career planning office is trying to increase the percentage of graduating students who can graduate with the next step already lined up.

It isn't that there is a lack of opportunities for learning about jobs. Communication advances have accelerated the process of finding and exploring employment options. But knowing what to expect is a crucial step, according to Stephanie Barbour, '93, OBU's career services counselor.

"Access to job opportunities all over the world is now at our fingertips," said Barbour. "One of the keys to landing a great job is networking. The university classroom provides an excellent base upon which to build, but sometimes the deciding factor is being exposed to what happens in the "real world."

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Among her objectives for expanding OBU's career planning services, Barbour has joined forces with the University's alumni office to launch the Bison Network. The cooperative effort focuses on information rather than internships.

"Today's working world is more complex than ever," said Barbour. "The college graduate is faced with an array of possibilities in which to pursue a career. While an endless amount of possibilities seems like a great problem to have, it can be overwhelming to a recent graduate or an alum looking to switch careers. The purpose of the Bison Network is to give students and alums the chance to view their chosen career field 'up close and personal."

"This is a joint venture to provide our students and alumni with educational and networking opportunities in the workplace," said Lori Hagans, executive director of the OBU Alumni Association. "We're putting a framework in place where alumni, parents and employers can volunteer their expertise and offer assistance to current students without having to commit a large portion of time or having to create an internship slot within their business."

Barbour and Hagans see the Bison Network as a flexible tool, where students can interact with network volunteers through a variety of communication channels, including email, phone calls or by mail.

Bison Network assistance can come through many channels, as well. Volunteers can register online at www.okbu.edu/bisonnetwork, and help through career exploration, interviewing advice, job searching, portfolio advice, organization tours, or other avenues.

"Electronic communication is a prime avenue for job searching and networking growth," said Barbour.

"Obviously, our present students are very internet savvy and prefer to use that medium in many areas of their lives," she said. "Because of this, they expect to have instant, easy access to needed information. Many career services programs across the country are offering a majority of their services online, yet making sure a 'real person' is accessible for those students who prefer face-to-face contact. Our office is moving in that direction. Over the next year, we will be expanding our online services."

For Burton, the chance to help account for all of those chicken filets and pickles is an exciting opportunity.

"I anticipate really enjoying this job," he said. "OBU, I feel, has prepared me greatly in teaching me excellent accounting knowledge. The business school also does a great job preparing students for presentations and how to write and act professionally.

"Teachers are always willing to help students outside of class as well as build personal relationships with the students," he added.

Through the Bison Network, Barbour and Hagans hope that opportunity to build relationships and help outside the classroom will extend to alumni and friends who can help OBU students cross the bridge from the campus to their careers. •

#### MAY 2007 JOURNALISM GRADUATE



**amy** Adams

Copy Editor/Page Designer The Villages Daily Sun The Villages, Fla.

"I am very excited to put the skills I have learned during my four years into use at my new position. My OBU professors have prepared me for life after OBU so well that I am not nervous at all. I am confident that this transition will be a smooth experience.

"The Bison [student newspaper] prepared me for things that I will have to deal with out in the real world. It also gave me a chance to step up to the plate when needed and prove ... that I can do anything if I just get in there and do it."

Amy posted her resume on journalismjobs.com, which led to interviews with the newspaper's managing editor. She wants OBU's career services office to make sure students understand they need to actively search for jobs, even if "the one job you don't apply for ends up finding you instead."

#### MAY 2007 ACCOUNTING AND FINANCE GRADUATE



Accountant Smith, Carney & Co. Oklahoma City, Okla.

"OBU professors helped me to understand the importance of picking a right career path. They are really

BRENNING

knowledgeable in their fields of practice. I learned the importance of teamwork, development of expertise, continuing education and reaching out to the community.

"I was fortunate to have had a basketball scholarship to attend OBU. I didn't expect a lot of involvement from my professors outside of the classroom, so I was glad to see my professors attending my basketball games, spending extra time outside of the classroom to explain difficult topics, or just taking time to get to know the students to give valuable advice. OBU is not just a school; it is a community."

Lena came to OBU from Ukraine. She learned about her new job from other OBU students familiar with the accounting firm. She plans to take the CPA test soon. She would like to see OBU offer more on-campus job fairs and counseling regarding graduate programs.

#### MAY 2007 LEISURE SERVICES MANAGEMENT: SPORTS MINISTRY GRADUATE



Sports Minister Council Road Baptist Church Bethany, Okla.

"OBU did a great job in giving me a well-rounded education. In my area of concentration I was able to do an array of things to prepare me for sports ministry. I was able to go to the Bahamas on a sports mission trip, I was the intramural assistant, I worked at the Final Four, and I led recreation at camps all over the country.

"I have learned so much and made friendships that will impact my life forever. I really believe if students give their best in every area while at OBU, they will grow spiritually and intellectually." Chris became a candidate for his job through relationships he had with members of the church's staff. His credentials were boosted, he said, by his father's reputation in ministry. Michael Fetters is pastor of Church of the Journey in Oklahoma City.

#### MAY 2007 BIOLOGY GRADUATE





Medical Student Oklahoma State University Center for Health Sciences Tulsa, Okla.

"I am thrilled to get to learn more about the intricacies of the human body, as well as having the opportunity to interact with patients. I am excited for medicine to become an avenue of ministry in my life.

"The experience of OBU for me has expanded beyond the classroom. The summer following my sophomore year, I was allowed the opportunity to follow doctors in Calcutta, India. My eyes were opened and at times overwhelmed by the vastness of need, and I was keenly aware of the responsibility we have as humans to our fellow brothers and sisters.

"While I've been challenged and grown by the academic setting OBU has to offer, perhaps even more growth has come from the multitude of experiences that have served to supplement academic material."

Christa, who is planning to work in medical missions, said her application process for medical school was "certainly not the most fun thing in the world," but added "it has been a joy to see God's steadfast faithfulness ... and it makes me excited to see what He has in store." She wants OBU to help students "build and foster a spirit of confidence in their ability to succeed." •



# **INVOLUNTARILY REASSIGNED**

Randy Ridenour is the prototypical OBU professor. He values learning and he values relationships.

He is a well-trained, serious academic who is committed to teaching in a community where relationships are prized. When the assistant professor of philosophy isn't teaching a class or meeting with students in his Owens Hall office, he can usually be found visiting with students or faculty colleagues on the lower level of the Geiger Center. His easy-going style suits him well for Bison Hill. It also serves him well in his "other" job, as a U.S. Army Reserve Chaplain.

These days, that "other" role is a full-time gig, and it is in one of the world's hottest places, literally and figuratively. Randy is serving on active duty in Baghdad, Iraq, as a chaplain with the Army's 378th Military Intelligence Battalion. He left Shawnee in April, and after two stops stateside and a stop in Kuwait, he is working in Iraq as part of a year-long deployment.

While he cannot divulge a lot of his daily work, he has managed to post two or three blog entries each week, describing the environment and giving readers a glimpse of the opportunities he has to visit with soldiers and help them through times of loss.

Randy joined the OBU faculty in 2000, the same year he completed a Ph.D. degree from the University of Oklahoma. The Copan, Okla., native was an infantry soldier before completing his college degree. He later served as a chaplain's assistant before being commissioned as a chaplain with the Army Reserve. He served in active duty in 2003 and 2004, stationed at Fort Hood in Texas. His overseas assignment comes with the territory of being a chaplain.

"The Army is very committed to ministry. They recognize there is a serious need. It enables the unit to succeed in ways that it wouldn't otherwise," he explained. "There aren't enough chaplains to go around, so we are 'involuntarily reassigned."

His assignment means providing pastoral care for more than 800 soldiers. While he is stationed at one location, his work involves a lot of travel.

# A view of Baghdad from one of Randy's helicopter trips.

"The battalion is spread out. We take it to them. There is a lot of drive time and helicopter travel."

His year at Fort Hood equipped Randy with a greater understanding of the full circle of military family life. The earlier assignment was as rear detachment chaplain for the 4th Infantry Division, which had roughly 4,000 soldiers deployed from the base in central Texas.

"The average pastor doesn't get that much training in crisis ministry, especially with people you don't know," he said. "I am able to have a year of knowledge of what family members are going through. It helps to know both sides."

But Randy is not relying on his knowledge and ability to succeed.

"I am going knowing God will enable you to do the things which, by any reasonable act of your skills, you can't do," he said before he left the OBU campus.

His experiences in Fort Hood proved to him that God would undergird his work. He delivered eight death notifications to soldiers' families.

"The first one was the easiest," he explained, "because after that I knew what to expect."

His service included leading a dozen funerals and about 25 memorial services. One, in particular, he will never forget. He was to conduct a funeral for a young soldier from Bryan, Texas, who had recently moved to the area before his deployment. Randy was in continual contact with the family between learning of the soldier's death and the funeral service.

"His step-mother was very upset because not only was he dead, but nobody there would know to care," he recalled.

The day of the funeral, as he entered the chapel in Bryan, Randy saw an overflow crowd. In the processional to the cemetery, thousands lined the streets to pay respects to their unknown hero. "We learned that Dollar General and a local radio station had alerted the community to the service. This was the first soldier to die from that area, and the people wanted to show their support."

For Randy, that was one of countless illustrations that "God will fill the hole in the dyke."

These days, while he serves in Iraq, he is counting on colleagues and friends to help fill the hole in his family home in Norman. His wife, Sheri, and their 15-year-old daughter, Rachel, are carrying on in his absence. It is quite unlike his deployment at Fort Hood, when Rachel was in sixth grade.

"When I come back, it'll be right before she turns 16," he said, taking solace in the fact that he will be working "all the time" while stationed in Iraq.

He relies on what he has seen in other military families to make a difference for the women in his home.

"People who have support systems in church make it a lot better than those who do not," he said. "That's a big relief."

While he is a little more than 7,000 miles from campus, Randy continues to teach his students and former students. Caleb McCary, a 2006 OBU graduate who is currently a second lieutenant in the Oklahoma National Guard, is pursuing a chaplaincy career as he studies at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is pointing other potential chaplains to Randy's blog to get insight into the ministry work.

Randy's entries include down-to-earth tales, including a humorous suggestion that stateside churches could boost budget support if they followed the Army's approach in Baghdad chapel services, where ushers carry 9 mm handguns. But he also shares from his experience of praying with soldiers who just lost their platoon sergeant in a roadside bomb attack.

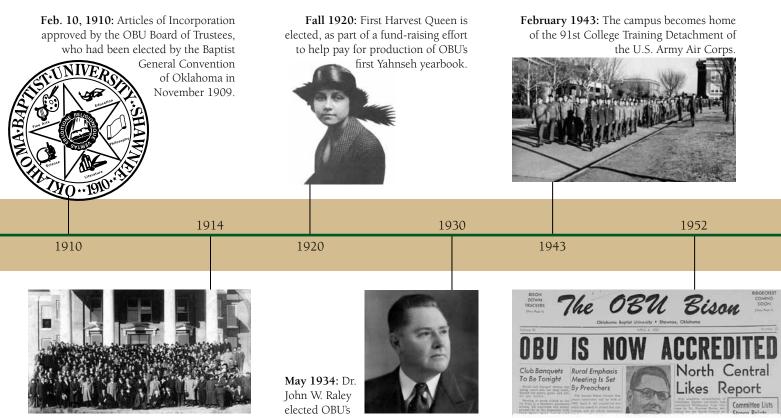
While encouraging his readers to pray for peace, Randy continues to help others learn, while valuing the relationships he is building in the midst of the battle. •

A Century in the Making OKLAHOMA BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

From a halting start in a new state through its emergence as a nationally recognized comprehensive college, OBU has been proudly standing on Bison Hill for more than 97 years. That storied history will be commemorated when the University celebrates its Centennial in 2010.

With the theme "Proudly Stand on Bison Hill: The First 100 Years," the OBU community will mark a century of steadfast achievement with centennial activities kicking off in the fall of 2009 and continuing through the fall of 2010. The University was officially founded February 10, 1910, but alumni, students, faculty, staff, and friends will commemorate the historic milestone before and after a Founders' Day celebration on February 10, 2010.

The Centennial Committee, formed in 2006, is headed by John W. Parrish, OBU executive vice president emeritus, who joined OBU as a faculty member in 1964 and retired as chief financial officer and executive vice president in 2002. Parrish is coordinating the work of a 22-member committee representing faculty, staff, students, trustees, alumni and the local



**November 1914:** The Administration Building, now Shawnee Hall, is completed on the campus.

eighth president, assuming the role during the Great Depression, with the University in financial jeopardy.

**Spring 1952:** OBU is officially accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

community. Sub-committees are working on compiling centennial information, coordinating and scheduling special events, and publicizing and funding the celebration.

Preliminary work by the committee has produced a tentative schedule for the 16-month celebration. Concerts, lectures, theatrical productions and a Homecoming emphasis will point to the Centennial in the fall of 2009. The February 10, 2010, Founders' Day Convocation will signal the official Centennial celebration kickoff. From that point, most campus activities and traditions for the balance of 2010 will include a centennial aspect.

"We have the opportunity to revisit the creation of many of today's campus traditions, and some of those which are no longer continued, but contributed to OBU's history," said Parrish.

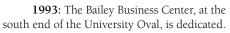
During the 2007-08 academic year, the Centennial Committee plans to announce a working schedule of Centennial events and unveil the Centennial logo. In the meantime, Parrish, assisted by Tom Terry, OBU archivist, has been combing through OBU's historical files to find photographs for a Centennial pictorial history book. The book is one of three significant works being created for the celebration. The second is a history of Bison basketball that Parrish is compiling, beginning with the first teams in 1911 and including the 2009 teams. Dr. Jerry Faught, '83, OBU's Dickinson associate professor of religion, is writing a 25-year history of OBU which will be a companion piece to "The View from Bison Hill," a history of the University written for the 75th anniversary commemoration in 1985.

For more information about the centennial celebration, visit www.okbu.edu/100. •

Raley Chapel opens.

Fall 1961: The landmark John Wesley

**1970:** OBU's core curriculum is restructured to incorporate a Unified Studies approach between academic disciplines.











**March 1966:** The Bison win the NAIA Basketball Championship, OBU's first national sports title.



**1984:** The Vision for Excellence Campaign is launched, which includes construction of W.P. Wood Science Building.



**2007:** OBU is the highest rated Oklahoma college in the *U.S. News & World Report* rankings for the 13th consecutive year.

# Asked and Answered

Do you remember John F. Kennedy's inaugural address?



Don Boucher, '61

Don Boucher certainly does. He claims the challenge to "Ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country" refocused his life.

The 1961 OBU graduate was already doing things for others, working at the YMCA in Springfield, Mass. But he and his wife, Beverly, wanted to do more. They decided to be two of the first volunteers for the Peace Corps.

"That was a life-changing experience," he said. "I knew I didn't want to just teach or coach. I wanted to make a difference."

Born in Ardmore, Don came to OBU in 1957 to play basketball. The Bison made their first appearance in the NAIA Tournament during his freshman year and reached the Sweet 16 when he was a junior.

"We helped set the table for the team that won the national championship," he said, referring to the 1966 OBU squad.

Boucher credits OBU for setting the table in opening his eyes to an expanded worldview. He said his contact with international students at OBU was "very useful" in helping him gain a different perspective.

His sociology professor, Mary Bean Drummond, gave Don a wider viewpoint.

"That class probably had the greatest impact on me than any class I took at OBU," he recalled.

He also credits OBU for enabling him to marry Beverly Wilson. They first met while she was dating his friend, Corky Oglesby. They started dating not long after that. Nearly half a century later, Don and Corky are still friends and Don and Beverly are still together. They recently celebrated their 46th wedding anniversary.

"We have had many adventures together," Don said. "In the last 46 years, we saw some amazing things, and we did all of them as a couple."

The first couple to volunteer for the Peace Corps, the Bouchers had some unique adventures while working with the international service program in South America.

"In 1969, I had been Peace Corps country director in Honduras for about a year when Salvador Allende was elected president of Chile," he said. "Since I had served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Chile during the early '60s, I was extremely concerned how Chile would be affected by the first freely elected Marxist Socialist president in South America."

Not long after the election, Boucher was asked to go to Chile to direct the Peace Corps operation. Even though he was excited about the opportunity, he had heard Allende planned to terminate the Peace Corps program.

"It soon became evident that Allende's strategy was not to ask the Peace Corps to leave, but to let volunteers serve out their two-year stints and close by attrition," Boucher said.

Allende's plan gave Boucher a big enough window to make a major impact. He formed friendships with members of the nation's Olympic Committee, and those relationships enabled the Peace Corps to bring basketball and swimming coaches to Chile.

"Within a short period of time, Peace Corps recruiters were able to find a basketball coach from the University of Delaware who not only met our criteria, but also was willing to enter training immediately," he said. "He was a high-caliber basketball coach, and also had a facility for learning a new language. On his first day in Chile, he was able to hold a press conference in Spanish, and subsequently appeared in newspapers daily. He was well received and quite popular. Even to this day, I'm often referred to as the one who brought Dan Peterson to Chile."

Boucher's reputation as a diplomat and negotiator continued through the years. During the 1976 Olympics, he served as coach and administrator for Saudi Arabia's basketball team.

Boucher's international vision led to other positions. He was executive vice president of World University in Puerto Rico, involved in all aspects of planning, teaching and supervision.

He assisted Mexico's medical services, working areas of public policy and development. He helped establish working relationships between hospitals, working to improve services and allowing complex medical cases to be referred to Texas hospitals.

Boucher completed a master's degree from Springfield College, and earned a doctorate from Texas Tech University.

He worked as an ombudsman for Texas Tech and also has directed international services at Texas A&M University.

He served at Texas Tech during a time when special interests groups developed on campus. Helping administrators recognize the groups' concerns, he aided in developing programs encouraging students to be involved in campus activities. That, in turn, aided student retention.

At Texas A&M, he helped students gain an international perspective, sending groups to Europe to learn different economic systems.

Today he is recruiting nurses from other countries to help address America's nursing shortage. He plans to one day write a book about his experiences.

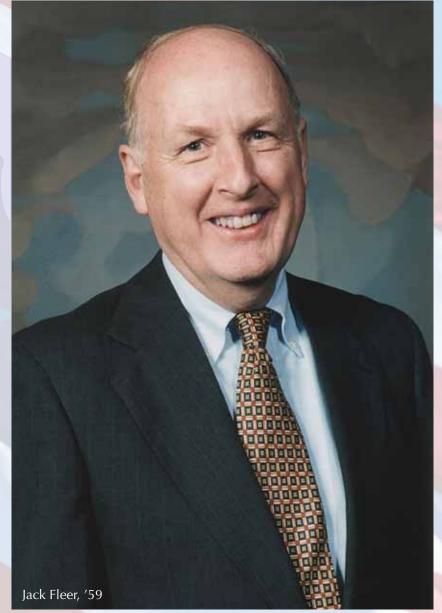
"If nothing else, I hope people can understand that they can get along with anybody if they will just look differently at the simple things in other cultures," he said. "If you experience another culture, be sensitive to the little things."

From promoting peace on a global scale to helping meet present healthcare issues, he has made a difference as he keeps responding to a straight-forward question he heard in January 1961.

# Navigating A Noble Pursuit

Mention politics to some people, and they become uncomfortable.

For Jack Fleer, it is the starting point for a conversation about high ideals.



"Politicians try to resolve conflicts and reconcile differences with the intention of trying to live with others," he explained. "To me, politics is noble."

That understanding helped launch Dr. Fleer on his own noble quest as a political science professor. Reared in the St. Louis suburb of Washington, Mo., he was the first in his family to attend college. Despite many options in his home state, he "wanted to see the world." So he opted for Shawnee, Okla.

"A friend of mine recommended OBU to me," he said. "I know it doesn't seem like that far to go, but considering how limited travel was in the 1950s, I thought I was really broadening my horizons by leaving Missouri."

Fleer was fascinated with the hospitality and the friendliness the OBU community offered.

"People were generous, inviting me to their homes to visit their families on the weekends," he said. "I also enjoyed singing, and there were times, when I would visit churches, they would ask me to sing solos on Sundays."

Focusing on his main passion of "experiencing the world," he recalls two historic events which increased his domestic and international interests.

In September 1957, a television was wheeled into Dr. Gregory Pritchard's philosophy class. Young Jack was amazed with the revelations of early technology, as he and his fellow classmates watched a major chapter in America's civil rights history unfold at Little Rock's Central High School.

"This was a big event, watching the National Guard that President Eisenhower sent at that school. It was a major domestic crisis," Fleer said. "After we watched it, Dr. Pritchard had us discuss it."

Later that year, the Soviet Union's Sputnik made it to outer space. Fleer sat with others in the student center and watched reports of the unmanned spacecraft's orbit.

"Fear was generating with the Cold War between the U.S. and Russia," he said. "This was an impacting event for me and opened my eyes to international affairs.

"For me, there was an innocence living in the 1950s," Fleer said. "Even at OBU, life seemed to be carefree. But these events – in Little Rock and with Sputnik – helped me become aware of things happening in the world. College can be a period of awakening. I really appreciate Greg Pritchard allowing us to have discussions in his class because it was instrumental in increasing my passion for working in government."

After graduating from OBU in 1959, Fleer earned his master's degree in public administration at Florida State University. He completed his Ph.D. degree in political science at the University of North Carolina.

While in Chapel Hill, he volunteered to be a big brother mentor. His mentee, Martha, was a graduate student at UNC. He quickly used his political skill to show her they should consider a lifetime relationship. Not long after the mentorship developed, Jack and Martha decided to get married.

Jack served in various positions while finishing his doctorate. He was a research assistant for UNC's Institute for Research in Social Science and Institute of Government. He also was a parttime instructor in the political science department. Fleer began his tenure at Wake Forest University in 1964 as assistant professor. In 1969, he became chairman of the university's department of politics and was an active faculty member until 1997. He currently is professor emeritus, working on research and offering political commentary.

Fleer was reacquainted with two of his OBU mentors at the North Carolina university. Pritchard, his philosophy professor, came to Wake five years after Fleer joined the faculty. For many years, their offices were just down the hall from each other.

Fleer also provided a recommendation for Dr. James Ralph Scales when the former OBU president and 1939 OBU graduate was considered for the Wake Forest presidency. Scales had a storied tenure as president of Wake Forest from 1967 to 1983.

When it became public knowledge that Scales was being considered for Wake's presidency, a local newspaper interviewed Fleer because of his OBU connection. The paper's reporter asked Fleer what Wake Forest and OBU have in common.

"I said other than having a Baptist heritage, they both were located off I-40," he recalled.

Fleer was thrilled to have Scales lead Wake Forest, as Scales had encouraged him to pursue graduate school and a position in public administration or federal government.

When Scales retired, he invited Fleer into his office. Scales had kept some papers Fleer wrote as a student at OBU, and he wanted Fleer to have them.

Fleer's role at Wake has allowed him to speak at hundreds of engagements. He also was instrumental in organizing the university's hosting of a debate between George H.W. Bush and Michael Dukakis during the 1988 presidential election.

In the days leading up to the debate, Fleer was a "principle talking head" on C-SPAN's call-in show, American Politics.

While actively following American politics, Fleer also is involved in volunteer organizations. He works with Meals on Wheels, helps teach children with literacy problems, and teaches English as a second language.

Fleer also has seen the world, traveling to more than 15 countries. As he continues to help resolve conflicts and reconcile differences, Fleer demonstrates that noble efforts can truly be pursued and achieved in the political realm. •

#### "I thought I had died and gone to heaven!"

That is what Peach Barker recalls about OBU. While the quote is an admissions director's dream, it reveals more about her than it does about OBU. Peach is a particularly positive person.

Born in Trenton, Mo., Pearl Marie Lewis picked up the nickname "Peach" in her youth. A child she baby-sat was unable to pronounce "Pearl," but found "Peach" easy to say.

Peach describes her time in Shawnee as heavenly, but the schedule she and her husband, Ercil, kept during the late 1940s does not sound divine.

"We were very, very busy," she said with a pleasant laugh.

They moved to OBU after Peach completed an associate's degree at Southwest Baptist College.

Ercil was a pastor of a little church, and both were school teachers. Peach took classes at OBU in the evening, but Ercil's daily ritual was quite rigid.

"We taught at a small country school. I taught the first- through fourth-grade students, and Ercil taught fifth through eighth grade," she said. "We would start school every morning at 7:20. He would give his students their assignments, leave at 8:30 to be at OBU by 9, and he would be back to teach before recess was over."

The Barkers lived in a small apartment on Bell Street. Ercil was finishing his pastoral ministry degree, and she was a science major, planning to be a nurse.

"Those were happy days. We were surrounded by many great friends. That's why it was so wonderful," she said.

After Ercil graduated from OBU in 1949, they moved to Louisville, where he studied at Southern Seminary. For four years, he was an assistant pastor at a church in Louisville, and Peach taught a women's Sunday School class.

Having children was on their minds during their Louisville years. Early on they were not successful in child bearing, so they decided to adopt two children. Betsy was born in 1953, followed by Marcile in 1954. Peach gave birth to their youngest child, Joel, in 1956.

The family moved to Iowa in the early 1950s. Ercil and Peach planted a few churches in Des Moines. Peach focused on women's ministry work. In the '60s, the Barkers moved to California, working with churches as the Golden State's growth boom continued. Peach soon decided to progress further academically and pursue a career in counseling.

She completed her bachelor's degree in the California State University system, then earned a master's degree from Azusa Pacific University. Her caring demeanor attracted clients as she worked with marriage, family and child counseling.

Her own style of caring competence was demonstrated in her work with a nine-year-old boy who was having a difficult childhood. His parents tried other counselors, but Peach was able to make a breakthrough with the boy in a unique setting.

"Most of the time we would play checkers," she said. "One day, he got in a position where he wasn't able to make a move "Those were happy days. We were surrounded by many great friends. That's why it was so wonderful."

on the board, and he started crying. It was the first time he cried in front of me. I asked him, 'Is this important to you?' He responded, 'It's very important.'"

Peach found out the boy was intimidated by how intelligent his parents were, especially since his dad was an engineer. He didn't think he measured up in their minds, but said he would rather be "bad than stupid."

The relationship she developed with the boy made a difference. The boy's behavior improved, and he realized he was able to excel.

"He eventually was the county chess champion," she said proudly. "One day he came to visit me when he got older and said to me, 'Peach, I want you to know I realize I don't have to excel in everything. I know I will be OK."

For nine years, Peach served as a licensed counselor on the church staff at Evangelical Free Church in Walnut Creek, Calif. Five of those years she served as director of counseling services.

Just like her busy days living in Shawnee, Peach was active in many things. In the late '60s, she was a member of a church mission group and noticed she had a knack for organizing trips overseas.

"Between 1969 and 1996, I organized 60 tours to 63 countries with the total enrollment of more than 2,200 travelers," she said. "Our slogan was 'Christian Group Travel at its Best."

In 1995, Peach was invited to be a part of the teaching staff of Western Europe's Baptist Missionary and Church Leaders week in Interlaken, Switzerland.

"We had 16 countries represented in the classes," she said. "It was a challenge because of the different languages, but it was so rewarding to see the students interact and help each other understand and learn."

Today, Peach still lives in Walnut Creek. At 81, she is still active in women's Bible studies.

Whether teaching in a small country church or traveling the world, sharing her life with people is what she enjoys most. Those relationships have helped Peach maintain a heavenly outlook.

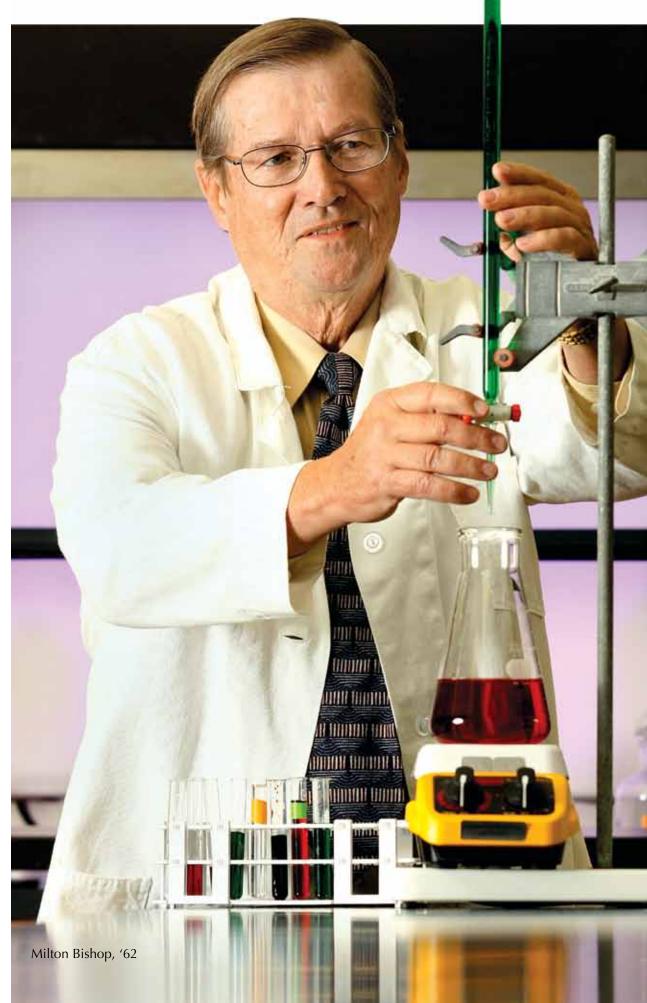
AMANDA PHIFE

Peach Barker, ex '49

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His career allowed him to research natural resources.

Milton Bishop developed a prominent reputation in the field of chemical engineering, but his success did not lure him far from the area where he grew up.



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# A Values-Based Formula

"I was not the typical student," said Bishop, who was born in Drumright, but lived the majority of his childhood in Shawnee. "I lived off campus and didn't take part in the regular campus life."

His mentor, Jerome Zickrick, ran OBU's public relations office. He invited the teenaged Bishop to go with him on recruiting and promotional trips.

"Most of the trips involved Bison Glee Club performances," Bishop said. "When I turned 16, he even allowed me to drive on some of the trips."

OBU had a lot of influence on Bishop's early years. He remembers staying at the OBU cabin at Falls Creek and living close to University Baptist Church, where he attended. He grew up within walking distance to the campus.

Bishop also had a few meetings with OBU President John Wesley Raley during his youth. He recalls spending time with Dr. Raley at Shawnee Lake.

"I admired how Dr. Raley handled pressure," he said. "He told me to take a problem 'a little at a time.' I knew what he meant because, as a teenager, I mowed large yards. I always had to mow the yard in segments and not try to mow it all at once. That was a valuable lesson that he taught me, and I never forgot it."

The decision was a simple one when it was time for Bishop to choose a college. However, his original plans didn't include staying at OBU.

"I intended to go to OBU for two years and get my general studies done, and then transfer," he said.

However, a fellow student made the young physics major change his mind. Before he could complete his core courses, Milton met Sandra Shields, a secondary education major. By the time they graduated in 1962, Milton and Sandra were not only married, but also raising their daughter, Kathy.

The pressures of family life made their latter years at OBU very busy. While taking classes, Milton worked full time on the nightshift with a local electric company.

Stories of struggling to stay awake in class are plenteous. One of his favorites involved a friend named Sam, a co-worker who also took a chemistry class taught by one of Bishop's favorite teachers, Dr. William Neptune. "Dr. Neptune was at the board with his back to the class writing a formula," Bishop said. "He apparently knew Sam and I were working nights and trying to stay awake in class because as he was writing the formula on the board, he yelled 'Sam! Wake up! This is important!' but kept on writing."

After graduation, Bishop worked for Dowell Laboratory as regional chemical technology manager. For two years, the family lived in Tulsa.

Around the time their son, Kelly, was born, the Bishops moved to Oklahoma City, where Milton was instrumental in starting a research lab. He also began a lab in Midland, Texas.

"I enjoyed my work," he said of his time at Dowell, which became Schlumberger. "There were some lean years, but there were also fun times."

After establishing roots in Oklahoma City, Bishop was offered a position at the company's headquarters in Houston. He said it was a difficult decision, but he turned down the offer and opted to retire after 29 years.

"My family was happy where we were living, and Sandra was teaching school in Edmond," he said. "I enjoyed my work, but I knew my family was happy."

In 1992, he got a call from the University of Oklahoma. The university was starting a petroleum engineering program and asked Bishop for help. He obliged.

He worked on various projects with graduate students. He also helped OU receive a \$17 million grant from the Gas Research Institute. At the time, it was the largest grant OU had ever received.

In his 12 years as a senior research associate, Bishop helped the engineering program move from holding classes in an airport hanger to a state-of-the-art academic center on the Norman campus.

"I know I am very blessed," he said. "I really enjoyed my work, both with Dowell and Schlumberger, as well as working at OU. There never was a day that I dreaded going to work."

Even though he enjoyed all his years of research in the field of chemical engineering, his value of family and home also is a component of his measured success. •



# Following His Heart

"I didn't have a choice on where I was going to college," said Dr. Robert Gregg, a 1971 Oklahoma Baptist University graduate.

OBU was in his blood, as both his grandparents and parents studied on Bison Hill. Not only did they attend, but they were key contributors to early operations on the campus.

His grandfather, George S. Baxter, served as the University's physician for 32 years, from 1923-55. The Baxter Hall wing of OBU's Agee Residence Center was named in his honor.

Robert's mother, Doris Baxter Gregg, was Harvest Queen. She graduated in 1935 and taught music at OBU during World War II.

Robert's father, Adrian Gregg, graduated in 1936. He taught mathematics courses during World War II, when OBU needed instructors. Belmont University Symphony Orchestra was founded in 1984 with the arrival of its current director, Dr. Robert Gregg.



"Eventually I realized that OBU had the strongest music program in the state, and I knew this was what I needed to pursue."

"I didn't intend to go anywhere else," Robert said. "OBU was a great experience in my life."

He started as a chemistry major, and he participated in music programs as extracurricular activities. He found he could not escape the pull on his heart.

"Music was always an interest of mine, even at an early age," he said. "I never thought I did things very well, but I figured that I was supposed to major in chemistry. However, my heart was really into music, so I eventually changed my major."

Gregg said he remembered how the OBU faculty did not pressure him into studying music, but respectfully and compassionately supported him in making his own decisions.

"They told me, 'do what you want to do.' They didn't make me do anything I did not want to do, and I appreciate how they handled it. Early on, I did struggle with what I wanted to study. Eventually I realized that OBU had the strongest music program in the state, and I knew this was what I needed to pursue," he said.

Gregg plunged fully into music. He traveled with the Tuneclippers, going to southeast Asia, Indonesia and Hawaii. He also went on a USO Tour in Europe.

The international experiences led to some interesting moments. In the spring of 1970, the Tuneclippers toured Italy. Trying to catch a train, they got to the station late. As they were hauling equipment on the train, it started to leave.

"It was like one of those scenes in the movies, where you see somebody throwing luggage on a moving train and running to catch it," Gregg said. "But not all of us made it. There were nine of us who had to spend the night at the train station.

"We had to cancel our show in Rome that night, but it turned out OK. They invited the troops to come to a later show on our tour," he said. His involvement in church music turned out OK for Robert, too. He met his wife, Sharon, while both were members of the college choir Jim Woodward led at the First Baptist Church of Shawnee.

After graduating from OBU, Gregg attended North Texas State University and received his master's and Ph.D. degrees in music education. He remained at NTSU for seven years, serving as assistant conductor and assistant dean of music.

In 1984, Gregg received a call from Belmont University in Nashville, Tenn. He was asked to start an orchestra program at the Baptist university, working from meager beginnings.

"I started with four violinists and one bass player," he said. "Three of the four violinists were basically 'fiddle players' and didn't know how to read music."

In the early years, Gregg had professional musicians help fill the orchestra. Twenty-three years later, he has built an 85-piece orchestra which is featured annually on the PBS broadcast of "Christmas at Belmont."

While he remains an active faculty member at Belmont, serving as professor, orchestra director and graduate studies director, he maintains a busy off-campus schedule. He has been a guest conductor for the National Symphony, and he also is a judge with Heritage Music Festivals, judging bands and orchestras across the country.

Sharon, who graduated from OBU in 1968, is director of admissions for Belmont's College of Visual and Performing Arts. Robert and Sharon have twin sons, Christopher and Michael.

Michael recently was named associate pastor at Northside Baptist Church in Atlanta, Ga. Christopher lives in Nashville and is a member of a Christian swing band, "Denver and the Mile High Orchestra."

History shows Gregg made the right decision in choosing music over chemistry. But his story shows there was chemistry in how he found success in music. •



#### OBU is Global Leader in IMB Missions Personnel

Growing up in Granite, Oklahoma, David Steverson's view of the world extended to the Wichita Mountains and the surrounding plains in the small southwest Oklahoma community. Today, his view of the world is somewhat wider.

Steverson is chief financial officer for the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, overseeing money matters for the agency's 5,184 missionaries and the board's varied programs.

Steverson's path from small-town Okie to CFO for a global enterprise included a bachelor's degree from OBU. His journey into international missions is not a rare one for OBU alumni. A recently released report from the IMB shows that the University has more alumni currently serving as IMB missionaries than any other college in the world.

"What that says is that OBU is doing more than one thing right," said Steverson from his home in Richmond, Va. "You don't have this kind of statistic unless you are doing a lot of things right."

OBU has 242 alums currently under appointment by Southern Baptists' international mission-sending agency.

"This report is a strong affirmation of the fact that OBU is a great training ground for those committing their lives to missions service," said OBU

President Mark Brister. "We are very grateful for a reputation of preparing students for missions careers. This news undergirds two key parts of our mission statement, which stress engaging a diverse world and living worthy of the calling of God in Jesus Christ."

Dale Griffin, OBU's campus minister, said the statistics support a missions preparation tradition for the University, and reflect the University's ties to the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma.

"We have a long history of raising up young men and women for missions through the International Mission Board," said Griffin. "I think that is directly connected to our relationship with Falls Creek and Oklahoma Baptists."

The influence of Falls Creek, a massive summer camp program operated by Oklahoma Baptists near Davis, Okla., may have a spillover influence at other Oklahoma colleges and universities. The IMB report showed alumni from 21 other colleges in the state are currently serving as missionaries. Those include 117 from the University of Oklahoma's Norman campus and 88 from Oklahoma State University's Stillwater campus. The fourth-highest in-state total was 18 alumni from the University of Central Oklahoma.

Griffin said OBU's Willis Center for Global Outreach, which opened in the spring of 2005, should help the University maintain its leadership role in missions preparation. The center coordinated eight global mission trips for OBU students in the first half of 2007.

"Our Global Outreach Center gives us a great vehicle to strengthen our missions experiences for students and also expand that influence for the future," said Griffin.

Steverson has maintained close ties to OBU since his graduation. He said the alumni going into missions careers are from a wide range of academic areas.

"It's not just the religion department," said Steverson, who completed a bachelor of business administration degree in accounting in 1983.

"OBU offers a balance. I had great professors in business, yet at the same time everybody got a good liberal arts education that gave you an expanded worldview. Added to that, we had required Bible courses. Those grounded me in how I wanted to use my skills."



OBU students gain experience in global missions each year.

Steverson and his wife, Judy, served as Southern Baptist missionaries to Thailand from 1986-92, before he became the IMB's associate vice president for finance. He was promoted to vice president for finance in 2001.

When he joined the board's sixmember senior administrative team, Steverson became the third OBU alum on the leadership group, joining Dr. Don Kammerdiener and Dr. Avery Willis. Kammerdiener, executive vice president and a 1958 OBU graduate, retired in 2001. Willis, senior vice president for overseas operations and a 1956 OBU graduate, retired in 2004.

Three other universities currently have more than 200 alumni serving as IMB missionaries. They are Baylor University and Ouachita Baptist University, each with 233 alumni; and Hardin-Simmons University, with 210. •

#### Bison Claim OBU's Second 2007 NAIA Title In May

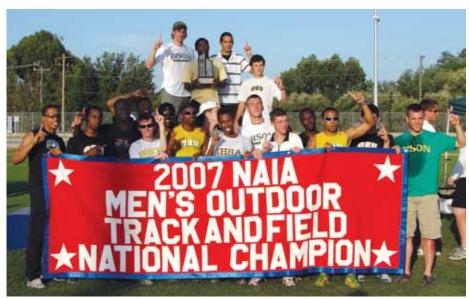
Long one of the NAIA's premiere men's track teams, OBU won its first NAIA Outdoor Track and Field National Championships since 1990 in late May.

The OBU women finished third among 61 teams to score points at the meet with 55 points – 18 behind national champion Azusa Pacific.

The Bison finished with 77 points, 19 ahead of runner-up Dickinson State.

The win was a hard one to come by, as OBU did not have its own track for the 2006-07 year due to construction.

"We really felt like back in September this would be worth it," said OBU Coach Ford Mastin, who was named 2007 NAIA Men's Coach of the Year. "All those trips to Tecumseh and running on the soccer field was worth



The Bison brought home OBU's second banner of 2007.

it. I'm just proud that our guys didn't give up."

OBU scored 16 points in the men's 400 hurdles where Ross Harlan took the national title in 50.99 seconds.

Michael Rodgers, who won the 100 meters, finished second in the 200 meters in 20.95, one one-hundredth of a second behind Tyrell Cuffy of King College. Rodgers finished as Co-Outstanding Performer of the meet.

OBU won the 4x100 relay in 40.32 seconds using Baskin, B.J. Bashorun, Dominique Matthews and Rodgers.

"Michael Rodgers just had a great meet," Mastin said.

OBU's women finished the meet with a national title in the 4x400 relay as Amanda Mayfield, Optimum Baker, Kyli Bean and Sherene Pinnock captured the championship with a 3:39.96.

Amanda Mayfield won the 800 meters in 2:09.44, while Kyli Bean was third at 2:11.11, giving the Lady Bison 16 points in the event. In addition to five event championships, OBU had 19 different athletes claim 32 All-America awards by finishing in the top six in their events. •

#### OBU Fifth in NAIA Directors' Cup

OBU's athletic program finished fifth in the 2006-07 U.S. Sports Academy Directors' Cup standings for the NAIA, giving the University back-to-back topfive finishes in the annual ranking of overall athletic programs.

OBU finished as the top school from the Sooner Athletic Conference and NAIA Region VI with 639 points, capturing two national championships along the way. OBU received 100 points each for its men's outdoor track and field and the women's indoor track and field teams.

OBU also received 90 points for the men's indoor track and field, 85 for women's outdoor track and field, 80 for men's cross country, 57 for women's cross country, 53 points for men's basketball, 25 for men's tennis, 25 points for women's basketball, 19.5 for women's golf, and 5 for men's golf.



"Actually, I was a bit surprised, though thrilled that we finished as high as we did this year," said Dr. Norris Russell, OBU director of athletics. "We had an exceptional year in men's and women's track and field, and finished strong in the men's and women's basketball and cross country. While we didn't score in a couple of sports that we normally do, the men's tennis team made up the difference with a national tournament appearance. Again, though, it is a tremendous tribute to some top NAIA coaches and athletes. We all take pride in having one of the top athletics programs in the nation."

OBU was 17th at the end of the fall season and moved up to eighth after a successful winter season (basketball and indoor track) and moved past Mid-America Nazarene, Simon Fraser and Cumberlands with a strong spring performance.

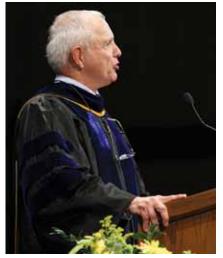
The Bison finished second in the SAC Cup standings, which doesn't figure indoor track into the formula because there is not a true SAC championship season in that sport.

With indoor track included in the national standings, OBU was easily the best athletic program in the SAC. Oklahoma City finished 12th in the national standings with 557 points, followed by Southern Nazarene in 23rd at 459.5, No. 29 Oklahoma Christian at 441, No. 37 Wayland Baptist at 375.5, No. 72 St. Gregory's at 216.75, No. 85 Lubbock Christian at 191.5, No. 129 Northwestern Oklahoma State at 105 and No. 130 John Brown at 104.

Houston Baptist was the top non-SAC Region VI member. In their final year before going to NCAA Division I, the Huskies were the No. 51 program in the NAIA. •

#### Grads Challenged To Build Communities

Challenged to commit themselves to "building communities," 258 graduates received degrees during OBU's spring Commencement May 19.



Hagan urged graduates to remain connected.

Dr. Bill Hagen, OBU professor of English, delivered the Commencement address before an overflow audience of more than 1,800 in OBU's Raley Chapel. The longtime educator urged the graduates to be engaged in their communities.

"If we live only to succeed, only to fulfill ourselves, only consume, we don't really live. We can walk around plugged into our iPods or sit in front of screens in a kind of electronic cocoon, but it's not a cocoon that leads to any metamorphosis or emergence for us," said Hagen.

Citing the tendency to live to achieve a project and achieve a grade, Hagen encouraged the students to realize there was not a final point of completion.

"As individuals, you studied hard, completed papers and projects ... and were given grades," he said. "But those of us who taught you have to hope we prepared you for exactly the opposite kind of experience. Let's face it, in many cases your jobs, your work with others will not be tied up neatly and given a grade. In life, the things that count never really conclude; they change as they continue.

"Hopefully, we learn that best satisfactions come as the result of working with others we like rather than winning or being recognized for personal achievement," he said. "Individuals need community. Facebook is nice, but face-to-face is better."

He contrasted generational concerns from the 1950s to concerns of today, noting his colleagues feared becoming "organization men" and "conformists," as compared to society's current trend toward individuality.

"We can become so focused on individualism and the idea of freedom that we refuse to be tied down to any community," said Hagen.

He cited a recent paper he completed, comparing Homer's writings with the Psalms. Focusing on the Odyssey and Psalm 23, he said he found a link in hospitality, as both writings stressed "the joy of being together."

"The Lord is a model of hosting," said Hagen. "Notice the emphasis on community in the Bible."

He focused on the account of Pentecost recorded in the second chapter of the Book of Acts, as Jesus' disciples communicated with people who spoke other languages, "reversing the outcome of the Tower of Babel story."

"You, too, Class of 2007, are of many disciplines, headed in many different directions," he said. "We expect you to excel in your disciplines, in your individual lives, just as the disciples excelled in the different languages they spoke on that glorious day. But notice that they weren't celebrating themselves. They were connecting to people, forming a community based on one message."

During the graduation program, OBU President Mark Brister presented the university's top three annual awards.

Dr. John McWilliams, assistant professor of natural sciences, received OBU's Distinguished Teaching Award, presented in recognition of "classroom excellence." McWilliams joined the OBU faculty in 2000. He completed his bachelor's, master's and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Arkansas.

Dr. Justin Hardin, Strickland assistant professor of religion, received OBU's Promising Teacher Award, presented to a faculty member who has taught at the University for less than five years and "shows great promise as a teacher." Hardin joined the OBU faculty in 2005. He earned a bachelor's degree from Ouachita Baptist University, a master's degree from Beeson Divinity School, and master of philosophy and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Cambridge.

Robert Cash, director of OBU's physical plant, received the University's Meritorious Service Award. Cash joined the OBU staff in 1990. He served in a variety of roles with the physical plant before being named director in 2005.

Two retiring faculty members, Dr. Doug Watson and Dr. Ron Duncan, were honored during the service. Watson, professor of English, joined the faculty in 1980. Duncan, professor of anthropology, joined the faculty in 1990. •

#### Riggins To Direct New Recreation/Wellness Center

With the opening of the new recreation/wellness center just months away, Amy Lassetter Riggins, '84, is working to have the center's programs ready for student use.



Part of the *Brer Rabbit Tales* cast included (clockwise from top left) Thomas Mosely III as Brer Fox, Rebecca Barksdale as Brer Terrapin, Justin Metcalfe as Brer Bear and Megan Winters as Brer Rabbit.

Riggins was hired this summer as director of the recreation/wellness center. She was a member of the OBU faculty in the 1980s and also coached

volleyball and softball at the University. She moved to OBU from the University of Central Oklahoma, where she was an instructor. She previously spent six



RIGGINS

years as fitness education program coordinator at Lane Community College in Eugene, Ore., where she coordinated the daily operation of the Fitness Education Center, a facility with an annual membership of 2,500.

Riggins majored in health, physical education and recreation at OBU. In 1986, she earned a master's degree in the same field from the University of Oklahoma. •

#### *Brer Rabbit Tales* Amused Young Theatre Audiences

Mischievous pranks from famous folktale characters came to life in the OBU Theatre for Young Audiences production of *Brer Rabbit Tales* during the spring semester. The annual Theatre for Young Audiences production was presented to nearly 3,000 elementary school children in the greater Shawnee area. Each of the four main character parts was shared by two OBU students to accommodate a frequent performance schedule.

The tradition of staging a theatrical event for young audiences will continue next spring with a production of Charles Way's *Sleeping Beauty* opening in February 2008. For information about the complete 2007-08 OBU Theatre schedule, visit www. okbu.edu/theatre. •

## HOMECOMING

**ALUMNI NEWS** 



For more Homecoming information, visit www.okbu.edu/alumni or call 405.878.2706.

## HIGHLIGHTS

#### The Class of 1957: 50 Years Later

Members of the Class of 1957 will celebrate their Golden Anniversary Reunion on Friday, November 9. The class celebration includes a morning reception and an 11 a.m. luncheon which will feature memories and reflections by class members. This class graduated when Oklahoma was celebrating its 50th anniversary of statehood. Now, the Class of '57 will gather just days before Statehood Day. Whenever these alums get together, it seems like it is a statewide celebration.

Reunion luncheons and fellowships also will be celebrated for the Fifty-Year Club and the Classes of 1962, 1967, 1972, 1977, 1982, 1987, 1992, 1997, and 2002.

#### Celebrating a Century of Angell and 70 Years of the BGC

Two OBU musical institutions will be celebrated during Homecoming. One created the other, but both names are still thriving on Bison Hill.

Dr. Warren Angell, longtime dean of the College of Fine Arts and founder of both the Bison Glee Club and The Bisonette Glee Club, would have turned 100 on May 11, 2007. Dean Angell passed away in May 2006, but alumni and friends will commemorate his 100th birthday during his centennial year. Homecoming will offer a time to reunite for a celebration of Angell memories and music. Included in the festivities will be a 100th birthday party, complete with birthday cake, during Friday's late-night Alumni Ice Cream Fellowship.

In 1938, Dean Angell founded the Bison Glee Club. From that small start, the group grew to gain national recognition. The BGC turns 70 in 2008, and we are going to celebrate early with a 70th

Continued on Page 26

# **ALUMNI NEWS**

# Schedul All times are subject to change.

Thursday, November 8

#### 6:30 p.m.

National Board of Development Banquet Geiger Center, Upper Level

#### Friday, November 9

#### 7:15 a.m.

National Board of Development Meeting *Geiger Center, Upper Level* 

#### 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Homecoming Registration Geiger Center, Upper Level

#### 10 a.m.

50-Year Club Reunion and Anniversary Reunions of Classes of 1932 (75), 1937 (70), 1942 (65), 1947 (60), 1952 (55), and 1957 (50) Geiger Center, Upper Level

#### 11 a.m.

Registration for Golf Tournament Driving range opens | Shawnee Country Club

#### 11 a.m.

50-Year Club Luncheon honoring the Classes of 1932, 1937, 1942, and 1947 Class of 1952 55th Anniversary Reunion Luncheon Class of 1957 Golden Anniversary Reunion Luncheon Geiger Center, Upper Level

#### 11:45 a.m.

National Board of Development Luncheon *Geiger Center, Upper Level* 

#### 12:30 p.m.

Homecoming Golf Tournament Tee-off Shawnee Country Club

#### 1 p.m.

OBU Bench and Bar Association Continuing Education Workshop

#### 2-4 p.m.

#### **REUNION FELLOWSHIPS\*** Seasons Remembered

The Classes of 1962 (45), 1967 (40), 1972 (35) The Classes of 1977 (30), 1982 (25), 1987 (20) The Classes of 1992 (15), 1997 (10), 2002 (5) Locations TBA

\* This time is set aside for informal visiting by reunion classes and other friends. Yearbooks, pictures and other materials will be available.

#### 2-4 p.m.

Library Assistants' Reunion | Library "Bubble"

#### 2:30 p.m.

Wellness Center Dedication Wellness Center

#### 3-5 p.m.

Open House - Wellness Center, Noble Complex, Baseball/Softball Complex, and Track Facilities

#### 5 p.m.

Lady Bison Alumni Basketball Game Noble Complex

#### 6-8 p.m.

Harvest Dinner Recognition of 2007 Harvest Court GOLD Alum of the Year Presentation Induction of Athletic Hall of Fame Members Presentation of Alumni Achievement Awards Geiger Center, Upper Level

#### 8:15 p.m.

*Godspell*, OBU Theatre Production Shawnee Hall, Craig-Dorland Theatre

#### 8:30 p.m.

Harvest Festival Raley Chapel, Potter Auditorium

#### 9:15 p.m.

Reception Honoring Harvest Court Raley Chapel, Helen Thames Raley Parlor

#### 10 p.m.

**ALUMNI REUNION RECEPTION** All alumni invited. Honoring the 50-Year Club and the reunioning Classes of 1957, 1962, 1967, 1972, 1977, 1982, 1987, 1992, 1997 and 2002; and Dean Angell's 100th Birthday Celebration Geiger Center, Upper Level

Live at the Black Box Sarkeys Telecommunication Center

#### 10:30 p.m.

Phi Mu Alpha Reunion Raley Chapel, Faculty Student Lounge

#### 10:30 p.m.

Homecoming Bonfire sponsored by the Social Club Council Lawn between Jent and Sarkeys

#### Saturday, November 10

#### 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Homecoming Registration Geiger Center, Upper Level

#### 8 a.m.

Omicron Delta Kappa Reunion Benedict Street Marketplace, 613 N. Pottenger

#### 8:30 a.m.

Alumni Association Board of Directors Breakfast Geiger Center, Upper Level

Student Nurses Association Reunion Thurmond Hall 126

#### 9 a m

MK Cousins Reunion Montgomery Hall, Global Outreach Center

Mortar Board Reunion Montgomery Hall, Room 204

University Chorale Reunion Raley Chapel, Room 203

# HOMECOMING

#### 10 a.m.

Cheerleaders Reunion | Noble Complex 10-11 a.m.

Chapel and Alumni Annual Meeting Raley Chapel, Potter Auditorium

10:30 a.m.-2 p.m. Children's Festival | TBA

10:30 a.m. Legends Basketball Game for Alumni Men Noble Complex

#### 11 a.m.

Reception for Alumni Profile in Excellence Award Recipients

Raley Chapel, Helen Thames Raley Parlor

Bison Glee Club Reunion Ford Music Hall. Third Floor

**Bisonette Reunion** 

Phi Omega Sigma Reunion President's Home

Theta Sigma Chi Reunion WMU Memorial Parlor

11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Future Bison Campus Tour and Luncheon for 7th-12th grade students | TBA

#### **REUNION LUNCHEONS**

11:45 a.m. Clasess of 1962, 1967, 1972

Noon

Classes of 1977, 1982, 1987

12:15 p.m. Classes of 1992, 1997, 2002

#### 1:30-5:30 p.m.

Homecoming Basketball Doubleheader Lady Bison vs. New Mexico Highlands Univ. Bison vs. Union University | Noble Complex

2:00 p.m. Beta Chi Gamma Reunion

Raley Chapel, Helen Thames Raley Parlor

#### 2-4 p.m.

Open House - Wellness Center, Noble Complex, Baseball/Softball Complex, and Track Facilities

2:30 p.m.

*Godspell*, OBU Theatre Production Shawnee Hall, Craig-Dorland Theatre

#### 5:30 p.m.

Angell/Bison Glee Club Tributes Banquet "Ten and Seven Decades" Geiger Center, Upper Level

#### 7:30 p.m.

A Grand Gathering of Glorious Song Raley Chapel, Potter Auditorium

Alpha Gamma Tau Reception | Art Building

Raley Chapel, Room 142

College Players Shawnee Hall, Craig-Dorland Theatre

## HOMECOMING



anniversary recognition during Homecoming 2007. The festivities will include an anniversary banquet on Saturday evening, as well as a special role in the Angell Tribute concert in Raley Chapel Saturday evening.

We're combining these two celebrations as we seek to allow alumni to focus on one major event to recognize Dean Angell's 100th birthday. Make plans now to be a part of this musical celebration. Enjoy the fellowship and then be part of a Saturday evening concert featuring alumni from the Bison Glee Club and Little Sisters, the Bisonette Glee Club, the Tuneclippers, and the Fallen Angells. This one will be talked about for years to come. You don't want to miss it.

#### **Festival Moves To Friday**

Crowning of the Harvest Queen is an annual Homecoming highlight and this year the tradition will come a little earlier in the weekend's schedule. The Harvest Festival will begin at 8:30 p.m. Friday in Raley Chapel's Potter Auditorium.



The program includes a multi-media presentation of each Harvest Court candidate, as well as announcement of the 2007 Harvest Court. Senior candidates are voted on by the OBU student body for the honors of most servant-like, best all-around, and the Harvest King and Harvest Queen. Relive your days on campus and find out what today's students are up to at this free event.

#### **OBU Theatre Presents** Godspell

Alumni will have three opportunities to see OBU Theater's production of *Godspell* during Homecoming. Written by John-Michael Tebelak, with music and new lyrics by Stephen Schwartz, *Godspell* has rocked audiences since 1971. Rich in color, sound, and movement, a cast portrays Jesus and his closest followers giving joy and hope in this uplifting celebration of life. Performances will be at 8 p.m. Friday and 2:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday in Shawnee Hall's Craig-Dorland Theatre.

#### Harvest Dinner

Celebrate the presentation of our Alumni Achievement Awards,



Graduate Of the Last Decade Award, and induction of new members into OBU's Athletic Hall of Fame during the Friday evening Harvest Dinner. Two distinguished alumni, retired U.S. Congressman Joel Hefley, '57, and retired oil businessman Lawrence Harris, '41, will receive the Alumni Achievement Award, the OBU Alumni Association's highest honor, during the program. [Our GOLD Award recipient and Athletic Hall of Fame inductees will be announced in late August.] Join your classmates and attend this annual celebration. It starts at 6 p.m. in the Geiger Center banquet rooms.

#### Friday's Late-Night Ice Cream Fellowship

Join alumni and friends for an informal fellowship, including a birthday cake recognizing the 100th anniversary of Dean Warren Angell's birth. Stop by for food and fellowship and rekindle memories of your student days. The OBU Bookstore also will be open during the fellowship in the lower level of the Geiger Center. The fellowship is scheduled for 10-11:30 p.m. Come and visit. •

## HOMECOMING

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ State\_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

#### LODGING OPTIONS

(Area Code 405)

#### SHAWNEE

American Inn 273.2000 | 5501 N. Harrison America's Best Value Inn 275.4404 | 4900 N. Harrison at I-40 Colonial Inn 878.0120 | 4800 N. Harrison Days Inn 275.6720 | 5107 N. Harrison at I-40 Hampton Inn 275.1540 | 4851 N. Kickapoo at I-40 Holiday Inn Express 275.8880 | 4909 N. Union LaQuinta Inn 275.7930 | North Harrison at I-40 Motel 6 275.5310 | 4981 N. Harrison at I-40 Super 8 Motel 275.0089 | 4900 N. Harrison at I-40

#### MIDWEST CITY

Comfort Inn & Suites East 733.1339 | 5653 Tinker Diagonal Hampton Inn (800.HAMPTON) 732.5500 | 1833 Center Dr. Hawthorn Suites 737.7777 | 5701 Tinker Diagonal Holiday Inn Express 736.1000 | 1700 S. Sooner Rd. LaQuinta Inn (800.531.5900) 672.0067 | 5501 Tinker Diagonal Motel 6 737.8637 | 6166 Tinker Diagonal Sheraton Hotel at Reed Center 455.1800 | 5750 Will Rogers Road Studio 6 737.8851 | 5801 Tinker Diagonal Super 8 737.8880 | 6821 SE 29th St., OKC

#### **RV** Parks

The Heart of Oklahoma Expo Center RV Park near the OBU campus is available for those who wish to bring their motor homes or trailers.

For information, call the Expo Center Office at 275.7020 or 800.762.7695.

## **RESERVATION FORM**

#### Name

Daytime Phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City

Email Address\_\_\_\_\_

Others for whom I am purchasing tickets \_\_\_\_\_

#### **PLEASE RETURN TO:**

Jent Alumni Center, OBU Box 61275, 500 West University, Shawnee, OK 74804 or fax ticket information to 405.878.2710. For more information, call 405.878.2706.

	ADULT	OTHER	TOTAL
FRIDAY			
LUNCHEONS – \$12 each			
50-Year Club Luncheon (honoring Classes of '32, '37, '42, '47)			
Class of '52 55th Anniversary Reunion Luncheon			
Class of '57 Golden Anniversary Luncheon			
Golf Tournament/Lunch – \$55 each			
Harvest Dinner – \$13.50 each			
SATURDAY			
Future Bison Tour/Lunch – \$3.50 each			
Children's Festival/Child Care – \$5 per child			
Child's name Age			
Child's name Age			
CLASS LUNCHEONS – \$12 each			
Class of Luncheon (indicate class year ending with 2 or 7)			
Dean Angell's 100th Birthday Celebration and Bison Glee Club 70th Anniversary Dinner – \$15 each			
Basketball Doubleheader – \$6 adult   \$4 Student			
OBU Theatre Production: Godspell			
\$8 Adult   \$6 Student   \$5 Children under 12 ■ Friday Evening ■ Saturday Matinee ■ Sunday Matinee			
	1	TOTAL	

Please make checks payable to Oklahoma Baptist University.

**Deadline for tickets ordered by mail is Friday, Nov. 2.** Tickets cannot be held without payment. Please purchase tickets in advance! Very few tickets for luncheons and dinners will be available during Homecoming weekend. We regret that refunds and/or exchanges cannot be made after Thursday, Nov. 8.

#### FOR CREDIT CARD CHARGE:

Card No	_ Exp. Date	MasterCard
Name on card		Visa
Signature		Discover

# Alums Eligible For \$100 Matching Contribution To 529 Plan

Planning for your child's college expenses can seem like a foreboding task. For the past four years, OBU has sought to help alumni jump-start the savings process with an innovative program that rewards alumni who open college savings accounts for their young children.

OBU offers a \$100 matching incentive contribution for alumni who open an account through the Oklahoma College Savings Plan and invest at least \$100 in the account. The program, initially designed in 2003 for children up to a year old, is now available for children six or younger.

"Our graduates continue to value the strong liberal arts education they received on Bison Hill," said OBU President Mark Brister. "Through our OCSP matching contribution, we want to encourage them to invest in their children's ability to experience the same kind of personalized education."

"The program is designed to help alumni follow through with plans for their child's college education. We want them to be actively planning for college even before their child starts first grade," said Randy Smith, senior vice president for business affairs. "An OCSP account can offer significant benefits for the parents and the child."

The OCSP is a "529" college savings plan. The 529 plan – named for the part of the Internal Revenue Code which allows such savings programs – offers a variety of benefits, including



unique tax advantages for families planning for college expenses.

According to the College Board's website, "529 plans have become one of the more popular options for families saving for a child's college education, and for good reason. Though the plans differ from state to state, they are

all exempt from federal income tax, and that can give a real bottom-line boost to your college fund." OBU officials believe the OBU-OCSP partnership provides alumni with a convenient, respected savings program

"We want them to be actively planning for college even before their child starts first grade." and an incentive to save. Smith said OBU investigated several programs before selecting the OCSP structure.

OBU promotes the savings plan by providing a \$100 matching incentive

for the first \$100 investment by an OBU alumnus or alumna in an account opened with OCSP where the account has an eligible dependent child of the alum as the beneficiary. The University provides the incentive directly to the account created with the OCSP.

Funding for the incentive program has been developed through budgeted funds and gifts to OBU.

After receiving documentation that the account has been opened by an eligible alum to benefit an eligible child, and that the initial \$100 contribution has been made to the account, OBU will make a one-time matching investment for each eligible child of an alum.

While the program is designed for OBU alumni with young children, the funds in the savings account do not have to be invested at OBU.

"We want our 'legacy students' to study at their parents' alma mater, but more importantly, we want our alums to be prepared for their children's college expenses and this plan helps them move along with that process," said Lori Hagans, executive director of the OBU Alumni Association.

The current-dollars contribution has replaced OBU's \$100 Future Bison Scholarship for legacy students attending the University. The Future Bison Scholarship will be phased out for legacy students born on or after Jan. 1, 2003.

OBU alumni can apply for an OCSP account online, download enrollment materials to be completed and mailed, or request that program information be mailed to their homes. To find materials online, go to www.ok4saving. org. To request materials by mail, call 1-877-OK 4 SAVING (877-654-7284) 7 a.m.-7 p.m., Monday through Friday.

To qualify for the incentive matching investment, OBU must receive confirmation of an OCSP account activation. More details about the OBU program are available at www.okbu. edu/savings. •



### **Recognize the Excellence of an OBU Alum**

This fall, OBU will recognize outstanding alumni with four distinct honors. You can have a voice in the awards recognition program by nominating an outstanding alum for an OBU honor. Nomination forms, and a very helpful listing of previous award recipients, are available at www.okbu.edu/alumni/ awards.html.

#### Here are the four awards and nomination deadlines:

#### Alumni Achievement Award

The highest honor bestowed by the OBU Alumni Association, it is given in recognition of outstanding life service which has brought honor to the individual's alma mater. Alumni Achievement Awards are presented each November at the Harvest Dinner during OBU's Homecoming. Nominations are due April 15.

#### Profile In Excellence Award

This honor 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. Each year, 12 Profile In Excellence recipients are selected and each is featured in an article in *OBU Magazine* and recognized during OBU's Homecoming Chapel service. Nominations are due August 1.

#### Graduate Of the Last Decade Award

The GOLD Award is presented annually during Harvest Dinner at Homecoming to a young alum (not necessarily a graduate) of OBU who, in his or her life and career, has demonstrated outstanding achievement and brought pride and honor to the University. Nominations are due July 1.

#### OBU Athletic Hall of Fame

Since its founding in 1969, 95 individuals have been inducted into the Oklahoma Baptist University Athletic Hall of Fame. The Hall was formed to pay tribute to men and women who have helped bring honor and recognition to OBU through their achievements on the playing fields, or to those persons who by their deeds have made outstanding contributions to the overall athletic program. Honorees are inducted during the annual Homecoming Harvest Dinner, and each is recognized with a plaque in the Hall of Fame, located on the upper level, northeast side of OBU's Noble Complex. Nominations are due August 1.

# William Tanner, OBU's 11th President, Dies At 77

Dr. William G. Tanner, president of OBU from 1971-76, died June 10, 2007. He was 77.

"OBU has lost a dear friend in Bill Tanner. He was the consummate Baptist statesman who never shied away from God's call on his life," said OBU President Mark Brister. "As a pastor, an educator, an administrator and denominational leader, Bill consistently led by example. His love for people, his humor, his wit and his example will be long remembered."

Elected OBU's 11th president in June 1971, Tanner's tenure on Bison Hill was marked by record student enrollment and construction of the University's main library, the Mabee Learning Center. He resigned in September 1976 to become president of the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention (now the North American Mission Board). He returned to Oklahoma in 1986 as executive director-treasurer of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma. He retired from that post in 1995.

Tanner moved to OBU from Mary Hardin-Baylor College, where he served as president from 1968-71. He previously was a pastor at Baptist churches in Mississippi and Texas.

Born March 10, 1930, in Tulsa, Okla., he graduated from high school in Bryan, Texas. He completed a bachelor's degree in English and religion from Baylor University in 1951. He earned a master's degree in administration from the University of Houston in 1953, and a doctorate in administration and guidance from the University of Houston in 1956. He then earned two degrees from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, completing the bachelor of divinity degree in 1958, and the doctor of theology degree in 1967.

A vocal advocate for Baptist higher education, Tanner served two years as chairman of the Southern Baptist Education Commission while OBU president.

"When you're talking about Christian Education, you're talking about a philosophy and attitude that permeates all disciplines," he said during a press conference following his election as OBU president: "It's something more that is caught rather than just taught. It's something that's experienced rather than learned. I see Christian Education as a way of life."

Tanner's arrival at OBU was heralded by Dr. Herschel H. Hobbs, longtime pastor of the First Baptist Church of Oklahoma City, who was chairman of the University's board of trustees in 1971.

"By nature, training and experience, he will lead OBU to new heights of service for the Lord," said Hobbs.

Under Tanner's leadership, OBU's enrollment grew from less than 1,600 to a record of 1,818 in 1975. The University's budget grew from \$3.6 million to \$5.2 million. The Mabee

Learning Center capital project garnered \$1.8 million in gifts and contributions.

In the Fall 1976 issue of OBU's quarterly alumni magazine, *The OBU Anvil*, John W. Parrish, then the University's public relations director, reflected on Tanner's tenure.



"Bill Tanner accomplished

many things during his five years at OBU. But Bill Tanner probably will be remembered on Bison Hill, in Shawnee, and in Oklahoma for his personal public relations. He is a very warm, friendly man who builds and enjoys friendships with diverse people, and it would be impossible to estimate the number of people who call him friend.

"He knew hundreds of students by name. He kidded them, and they kidded him. Even the drudgery of faculty meetings was relieved somewhat by his sense of humor. The Baptists of Oklahoma knew him as an excellent preacher with an unending repertoire of jokes."

Parrish, who retired as OBU's executive vice president in 2002, recalled Tanner's influence at the University.

"He was a friend to all of us who worked at OBU, and we greatly enjoyed watching his family grow up on Bison Hill.

"I was privileged to continue my friendship with the Tanners through the years and am saddened that we have lost this good man and outstanding Baptist leader," said Parrish.

Tanner's affiliation with OBU was renewed when he returned to Oklahoma as head of the state's Baptist convention in the mid-1980's. OBU presented Tanner an honorary doctor of divinity degree in February 1988, in recognition of his contributions to the denomination.

Tanner is survived by his wife, Ellen Tanner, 3115 River Place Drive, Belton, TX 76513; two sons and daughtersin-law, William Jr. and Paula Tanner of Belton, Texas, and Keith and Ginger Tanner of Frisco, Texas; a daughter and son-in-law, Kimberly and Mike Salter of Jackson, Miss.; and 10 grandchildren. He was preceded in death by a son, Mark.

#### TAKING of C recr wel has recc and bus the pro

Construction of OBU's new recreation/ wellness center has overlapped record snowfall and droughtbusting rains, but the \$10 million project is still

slated for completion in the fall of 2007, and the center's visual impact on the campus is becoming more apparent each day.

"The most exciting aspect has been to see the dream of a great facility take shape in front of your eyes, and to picture the activities that will take place there for decades to come," said Randy Smith, OBU senior vice president for business affairs, in late July.

The center's curved entry, encased in two stories of glass, became clearly visible over the summer. At the southwest corner of the facility, the entry faces University Street. The structure interlocks with OBU's Noble Complex for Athletics, though the two buildings will not have connecting entry points.

The \$10 million center is the largest of several construction projects nearing completion on the campus. In addition to the recreation/wellness center construction, OBU is completing elements of the \$4.78 million Winning Spirit Campaign, which is funding a new baseball/softball complex, a track facility, and renovation and expansion of the Noble Complex for Athletics.

With the new center fully enclosed, workers are completing interior elements of the construction. Work on the various projects has been hampered by an unusually wet Oklahoma spring and summer.

"The critical areas affected have been the completion of the geothermal wellfield that will serve the wellness center's heating and air conditioning system and the installation of

#### The signature entrance to the recreation/ wellness center faces University Street.

utilities such as water, natural gas, electric and sanitary sewers at several of the projects," said Smith.

OBU officials are working on dedication events for the new baseball/softball and track facilities in the fall, and plan to dedicate the recreation/wellness center during Homecoming in early November.

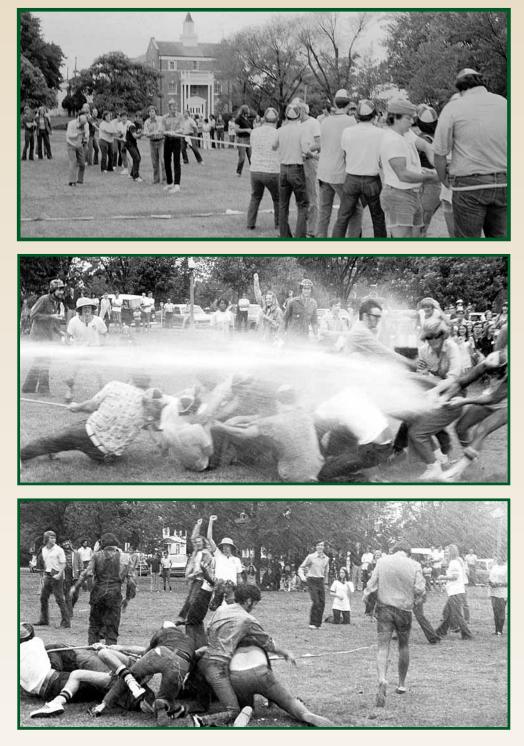
"The wet ground made it extremely difficult to complete trenching and installation. OBU contractors have worked hard to offset these delays and the final effect on construction completion remains to be seen," said Smith.

He anticipates that the final products will be worth any extra wait. "The wellness center is shaping up to be a shining star on the OBU campus in terms of facilities," said Smith. "Wynn Construction is truly working hard to present OBU with a quality facility and OBU personnel are hard at work preparing programs that will take full advantage of a superstar facility."

# Updated photos of the construction progress are available at www.okbu.edu.



Workers assemble lockers in the basketball/volleyball court area of the new recreation/wellness center.





500 W. University Shawnee, OK 74804

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

n old OBU student orientation tradition, the tug-of-war between the freshman and sophomore classes, was a demonstration in the craftiness of veteran students. Most years, after the freshmen put up a valiant effort, the sophomores would be aided by blasts from a hydrant hose. As if that was not adequate to ensure victory, the elder students were rumored to have tied their end of the rope to the back of a fire truck.

Today's Welcome Week activities are somewhat more welcoming to new students. While freshmen still wear beanies, they are warmly greeted and oriented by upperclassmen who willingly cut short their summer breaks to greet incoming Bison.

OBU's Centennial celebration, Proudly Stand on Bison Hill: The First 100 Years, will include production of a new book of photographs from the University's first century.

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