

WINTER 2008

# O·B·U

m a g a z i n e

RAW  
CLIMBING.

"Proudly Stand on Bison Hill: The First 100 Years" is the theme for the Oklahoma Baptist University Centennial Celebration which is rapidly approaching. Beginning with the fall semester of 2009, just 20 months from now, the University will launch a series of celebratory events which will continue through December 2010.

Major events to add to your calendar now are Homecoming 2009 (Nov. 13-14), the Centennial kick-off event for alumni and friends; Founders' Day 2010 (Feb. 10), a day-long formal celebration featuring Chapel and community worship; and Homecoming 2010 (Nov. 12-13), which will help conclude the birthday party. Along the way, OBU will offer Centennial concerts, plays, lectures, and community events. Convocations, Commencements, Harvest Festivals, and Hangings of the Green will have Centennial emphases.

The *OBU Magazine* will provide special coverage of the Centennial in future issues, featuring the celebration's activities and providing information about key people and events throughout the University's history.

In 2004, OBU launched a Centennial Book Series which includes two published works: *The Glory Years of Bison Basketball*, a chronology of OBU's 1964-65, 1965-66, and 1966-67 seasons, and *OBU Hoops*, a history of OBU's men's basketball from 1911-2007 and women's basketball from 1977-2007.

Lest you think that the Centennial is only devoted to basketball, four other books are already scheduled for the Centennial Book Series. *Glory Shakes the Ground: Written Prayers of James E. Hurley*, a collection of publicly delivered prayers by the late Dr. Hurley, long-time biology professor, will be released in February. *Bison Bon Appétit*, a cookbook featuring recipes from notable OBU personalities, is scheduled for release in late 2008 or early 2009.


A detailed history of OBU from 1985-2010 will be published as a supplement to *The View from Bison Hill*, a 75-year history published in 1985. Dr. Jerry Faught, OBU church history professor, will write the 25-year history. Another book in the works is a Centennial pictorial history which will provide photographs from all school years, plus current campus photos and many pictures of long-time faculty members. These histories will be released in the fall of 2010.



Among my colleagues when I joined the OBU staff in 1964 were Gregory Pritchard and Don Osborn. Pritchard moved to Wake Forest in 1968 after 16 years on the faculty. He was recognized as one of OBU's great teachers. Osborn, who joined the OBU staff in 1952, was dean of men, dean of students, and vice president for student development and a history teacher. He also served as special assistant to the president for planning and research and then as archivist, retiring in 1998. His formative work in student development was a great contribution to the University.

We lost both of these friends in the last days of 2007. Earlier in the year we lost Coleman Raley and Jo Bond, also long-time OBU faculty members who made major contributions to the University.

As we celebrate OBU's Centennial, we must remember, recognize, and honor the many dedicated teachers and administrators, like these four, who invested many years on Bison Hill and affected the lives of so many students.

  
John Parrish  
OBU Interim President



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**On The Cover:** Shayna Legg, a junior from Prague, and Canaan Crane, assistant professor of psychology, scale the climbing wall in OBU's Recreation and Wellness Center. Dubbed the "RAWC," the massive new center officially opened for business on Nov. 29, 2007. *Read more about the RAWC on page two.*



# O·B·U

Winter 2008

m a g a z i n e

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OBU's spacious new Recreation and Wellness Center opened for business November 29. Students have already grown accustomed to the convenience and the variety of options the center affords, including a very popular 29-foot climbing wall.

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With a strong appreciation for a liberal arts education and a passion for learning and communicating, Dr. Justin Hardin is fulfilling his aspiration to be a university professor. He's being noticed by colleagues, as he received OBU's 2007 Promising Teacher Award.



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Words from an alumnus and former administrator, written three decades ago, ring true today.



# RAWC CLIMBING

Jason  
Gallagher  
didn't  
realize  
how big  
it was.

*Now he's inspired.*

Shayna  
Legg  
didn't  
realize  
how tall  
it was.

*Now she's eager to  
get to the top.*

*Those were the reactions  
of two OBU students to  
the grand opening of the  
Recreation and Wellness  
Center, and the building's 29-  
foot-high climbing wall.*

Matt Kennedy, RAWC program director, and Gina Kraft, assistant professor of kinesiology and leisure studies, ascend OBU's 29-foot climbing wall.

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## **“There is a lot of a ‘wow, this is cool’ response from students.”**

When Gallagher ventured into the center, nicknamed the RAWC, he was amazed by the size of the 59,500-square-foot facility.

“It inspired me to work out and to start running, really for the first time in three years,” said the junior public relations major.

Before going home to Mansfield, Texas, for the Christmas break, Gallagher utilized the center every day since it opened on the afternoon of Nov. 29. He was already looking ahead to 2008.

“I feel pretty excited about going there in J-Term,” he said.

For Legg, the center has already provided a learning experience. By the end of December she had scaled the climbing wall twice – picking up a popular fitness sport she had never tried before.

“The second time was a lot better than the first,” said the Prague junior. “The first time, I climbed two steps from the top and I looked down and freaked out.”

Along with her new-found climbing ability, Legg also has expertise in many of the cardio and strength machines found in the center. She is part of a staff of about 90 students who run the place under the guidance of Amy Lassetter Riggins, '84, director of recreation and wellness. Riggins has heard many reactions similar to Jason and Shayna's in the first month of the center's operation.

“There is a lot of a ‘wow, this is cool’ response from students,” she said. “I see a lot of energy and satisfaction on people's faces – both students and faculty and staff.”

That response fits in well with what Riggins articulates as the mission and focus of the recreation and wellness program.

“We want to encourage wellness behaviors for everyone,” she explained. “It goes beyond the walls of the center into a campus atmosphere of wellness.”

The RAWC is helping to inspire individuals across Bison Hill.

“It makes people aware of how God has designed our bodies to move. As we are more active we are better able to fully serve

Him with more strength and stamina to fully do what God has called us to do,” said Riggins.

“I'm glad the center and program are named ‘recreation and wellness,’” she said. “It really needs to be both aspects.”

She has a three-pronged emphasis for the program: helping individuals increase activity, exercise regularly, and become more aware of their food choices.

Gallagher and his friends already enjoy the activity aspect of the program. He said they come to the RAWC together to work out, versus spending the time playing video games in their dorm rooms or apartments.

There is still the chance to keep up the gaming aspect, however. The center has 57 cardiovascular workout and strength machines, 29 of which include personal televisions.

“We come over at 3:30 and watch Jeopardy while we run,” said Gallagher. “We feel like we are running and learning at the same time.”

The spacious center's towering, climbing wall and adjacent 14-foot-high bouldering area attract a lot of attention from first-time visitors. The facility also contains three basketball/volleyball courts, an aerobics/fitness studio, three racquetball courts, and a 1/10-mile walking/jogging track. In the first month of operation, Riggins has seen some usage trends develop.

“The climbing wall has really been a highlight,” she said. “Surprisingly, the racquetball courts have been booked from 2 p.m. to closing every day. We are encouraging people to make reservations.”

Legg said she enjoys the glassed-in racquetball courts. As a middle distance runner on OBU's powerful track team, she also enjoys the indoor track, especially on wintry days.

She also uses OBU's junior Olympic pool. The indoor pool, which opened in 1982 as part of the Noble Complex, has been added to the RAWC's list of resources, with new locker rooms and an entrance from the east side of the basketball courts. The pool area was refurbished and the filtration system was converted to a salt water process last summer.





Students can choose from 57 cardio and weight stations in the cardio workout area on the north side of the center. A total of 29 machines include personal televisions.

"People find the water silkier when they are in the pool," said Riggins. "There is also less of a chemical smell and it is less irritating to the skin and eyes."

The RAWC "has everything," said Legg.

For Riggins and her two full-time colleagues, Kerri Foster, RAWC assistant director, and Matt Kennedy, RAWC program director, the challenge is to make sure individuals get the

most out of their experiences with the facility. That means they put their student staff through a detailed training program, and they are introducing a variety of programs and services.

In addition to offering orientation to the actual equipment and some basic exercise guidelines and tips, RAWC personnel are providing group fitness classes. The classes include indoor cycling, kick-boxing, step aerobics, dynamic stretching, and

## RIBBON CUTTING

Cutting the ribbon to dedicate the RAWC on Nov. 9 were, from left, Randy Smith, OBU senior vice president for business affairs; Ken Fergeson, president of NBC Bank; Donne Pitman, trustee of the H.A. and Mary K. Chapman Charitable Trust; Dr. Mark Brister, former OBU president; James Howell, 2007 chairman of OBU's board of trustees; Larry Johnston, principal with CJC Architects; Wayne Brodt, executive vice president of Wynn Construction; and Dr. Norris Russell, chair of OBU's kinesiology and leisure studies academic division.



circuit training. Riggins said student fitness trainers also will be available to RAWC users starting in February 2008.

"We also will offer fitness assessments and wellness coaching," she said. The added classes and programs will be available for a nominal fee.

Monica Mullins, OBU's assistant dean of students, will be an instructor for one of the indoor cycling classes. She was trained in the course at the Cooper Aerobics Center in Dallas.

"It is the best cardio workout, offering the biggest bang for your buck," she said.

For OBU, the RAWC is offering a significant bang for the buck. The \$10 million facility is the largest capital project in the University's history.

"Students are in awe of the quality of the facility," said Mullins. "We have a great community and this is just going to make it exceptional."

Riggins has high expectations for the big place with the tall wall.

"Our primary goal is to change the campus environment," she said.

After less than two months of operation, it seems the center and the program are helping the OBU community scale new heights. ♦



Ashley Gamble, left, and Keely Tolin enjoy the 1/10-mile track on the RAWC's second level, overlooking the basketball/volleyball courts.

Garrett Sayre, left, and Francis Edwards play racquetball. The glass wall lends to the open feel of the center's first floor. The walking/jogging track is visible at the top of the picture.

**For more information about the RAWC, visit [www.okbu.edu/wellness](http://www.okbu.edu/wellness).**



Significant donors to the RAWC construction who participated in the ribbon cutting on Nov. 9 included, from left, Rev. Raymond and Charlotte McDowell, and Dr. Ed Minars.

## GIFT SUPPORT

**The Recreation and Wellness Center construction was supported by gifts from many OBU alumni and friends. These organizations and individuals provided significant support to name specific areas of the center:**

Cardio Area – H.A. and Mary K. Chapman Trust

The Bison Spirit life-size bronze – Ken Fergeson

RAWC Office – Ken and Jan Rutherford Culver

RAWC Patio – Dr. Joe and Louise Skinner

RAWC Control Desk – Dr. and Mrs. C.W. Brister, in honor of Dr. and Mrs. Mark A. Brister

Assessment Room – Dr. Edward J. Minars, in memory of his late wife, Beverly

Events Room – Dr. Edward J. Minars, in memory of his late wife, Eileen

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# AN ENGAGING ASPIRATION

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He knew he wanted to be a teacher when he was an undergraduate student. At 31, Dr. Justin Hardin is fulfilling his aspirations.

"I knew I wanted to teach in a university context," said the native Texan. "I believe teaching is my calling, and in the liberal arts setting, I love to learn, and I love to communicate."

Hardin, OBU's Rowena Strickland assistant professor of religion, is in his third year on the faculty. He received the 2007 Promising Teacher Award, which included the opportunity to deliver the University's winter Commencement address.

"If our students graduate from OBU without learning how to think critically and creatively, they will certainly be incapable of living a virtuous life in the world," he said to the graduates on Dec. 14. "If this is the case we might as well close the doors. Jesus stated that the greatest commandment is to love the Lord your God with all your hearts, souls, and minds. This is transformative thinking."

Hardin believes he has been enlightened since becoming a member of the OBU faculty. The setting OBU provides has helped him enhance his educational philosophy.

"Where I've grown since I've been here is I've learned to appreciate liberal arts more than I've ever appreciated it," he said. "Last year in my first-year Greek class, half of the students in the class were non-majors. They were taking it simply

because they wanted to. That lets me know liberal arts is working at OBU. Students here are getting it. They understand that this is a life of the mind, and they're being encouraged to take classes outside of their field."

Hardin has put into practice his challenge of engaging a diverse world through academic pursuits. After completing a bachelor's degree from Ouachita Baptist University and a master's degree from Samford University's Beeson Divinity School, he went to the University of Cambridge. He earned two degrees at the internationally renowned English institution.

"It took about six months to get fully acclimated to England," he said. "It was a common language divided by a different culture and a great experience of personal growth. What I appreciated the most at Cambridge was the respect for whatever religious convictions that you have. There was this idea that what you believe is not as important as being able to defend what you believe."

While working on a second master's degree in philosophy, Hardin also played varsity basketball at Cambridge. He earned the prestigious Cambridge Blue, which is awarded to athletes competing in the highest level of university sport.





Hardin recently completed his requirements for a Ph.D. degree in New Testament. His thesis on the Book of Galatians will be included in an international publication next year.

Publishing is a current avenue Hardin is using to engage the world. He has approximately 10 articles in print.

“(Publishing) gives credibility to what we do at OBU,” he said. “Many of these publications are peer-reviewed all over the world. The publishing aspect is what people hear the most, in terms of engaging. You’re not going to public forum debates. You’re building credibility among a watching world. They’re going to quote you and do their own research. From a professor’s mind, this is part of engaging a diverse world.”

During his first two years at OBU, Hardin had a unique living arrangement many professors rarely experience. His wife, Jill, served as resident director of Kerr Dorm.

Justin and their young sons, Ethan and Drew, were the only

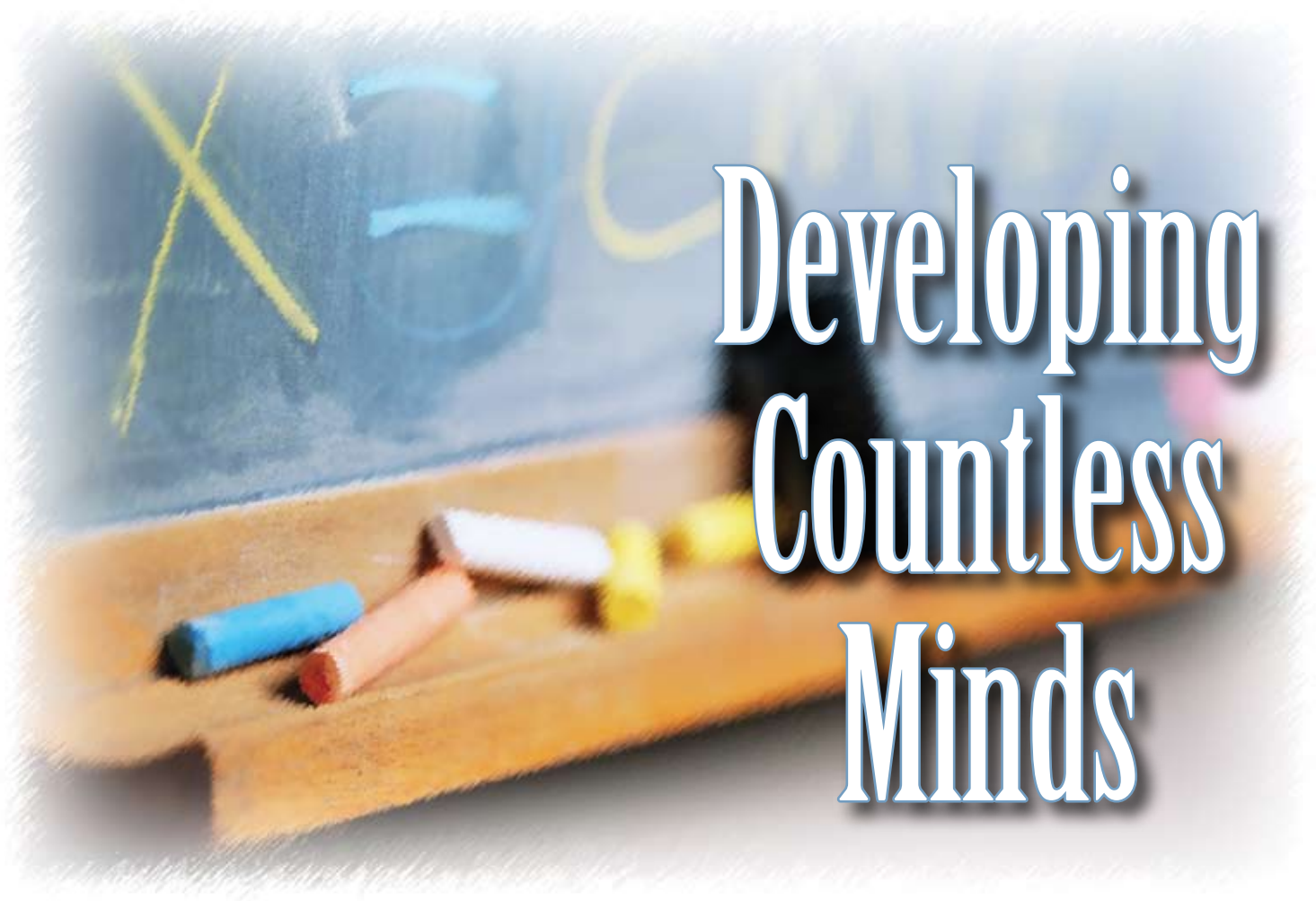
male residents of the dorm for two years. He believes living in the dorm and having a campus life connection helped him gain a better understanding of his students.

“I believe teaching is  
my calling, and in the  
liberal arts setting.  
I love to learn, and  
I love to communicate.”

“I was able to see how area affects the faculty and students. I am able to interact better than I would have normally,” Hardin said. “I know the resident directors well, and I know Bobby Canty (OBU dean of students) and Monica Mullins (OBU assistant dean of students) well, just by virtue of my wife working with them. It’s been an advantage for me in the classroom because I knew what students were experiencing on campus.”

With his passion to connect with the academic world, as well as effectively challenge today’s OBU students, Hardin is demonstrating why he is worthy to be one of the youngest recipients of OBU’s Promising Teacher Award.

At the close of his commencement address he challenged the graduates to be “agents of transformation.” He is seeking to answer that challenge in his own life. ♦



# Developing Countless Minds

To more than 23,000 students at the University of Memphis, Dr. Ralph Faudree is known as Provost. To mathematicians worldwide, Faudree is a leading scholar in graph theory. Through the years, his work has influenced countless inquisitive minds. To Faudree, the development of each one is rewarding.

Born in Southeast Oklahoma, Faudree attended elementary school and high school in Atoka, where his life revolved around school, athletics and church. He enjoyed school and worked hard as a student. His passion was athletics, and he participated competitively in football, basketball, baseball and track. He also was an active participant in the youth program at the First Baptist Church of Atoka, which claims to be the oldest Baptist church in continuous service in Oklahoma.

At OBU, Faudree studied mathematics and physics, earning a bachelor's degree in 1961. He spent many hours in classes in Thurmond Hall. He recalls the careful instruction of many faculty, including his mentor, OBU mathematics professor

Eugene Lucas, along with physics professor Beryl Clotfelter and chemistry professor William Neptune.

"I received excellent instruction, professional advising and, probably even more importantly, caring and individual attention from all of my professors in that unit," he said. "I entered the program scared to death and left feeling that I could be successful."

While at OBU, he met his future wife, Pat Newson. Pat, a 1962 graduate, taught English in high school and university classes before working in advertising and public relations. The Faudrees have been married for 45 years, and have two daughters, Paja and Jill.

During his OBU years, Faudree also maintained his interest in sports. "I fondly remember playing doubles in tennis with my roommate, Bruce Naylor, and two of my favorite professors, Eugene Lucas and Gregory Pritchard," Faudree said. "I never could understand how Professor Pritchard could play tennis



"I received excellent instruction, professional advising and, probably even more importantly, caring and individual attention from all of my professors in that unit."

with a pipe in his mouth, but he did. It was great fun and very much an honor to play tennis with these professors."

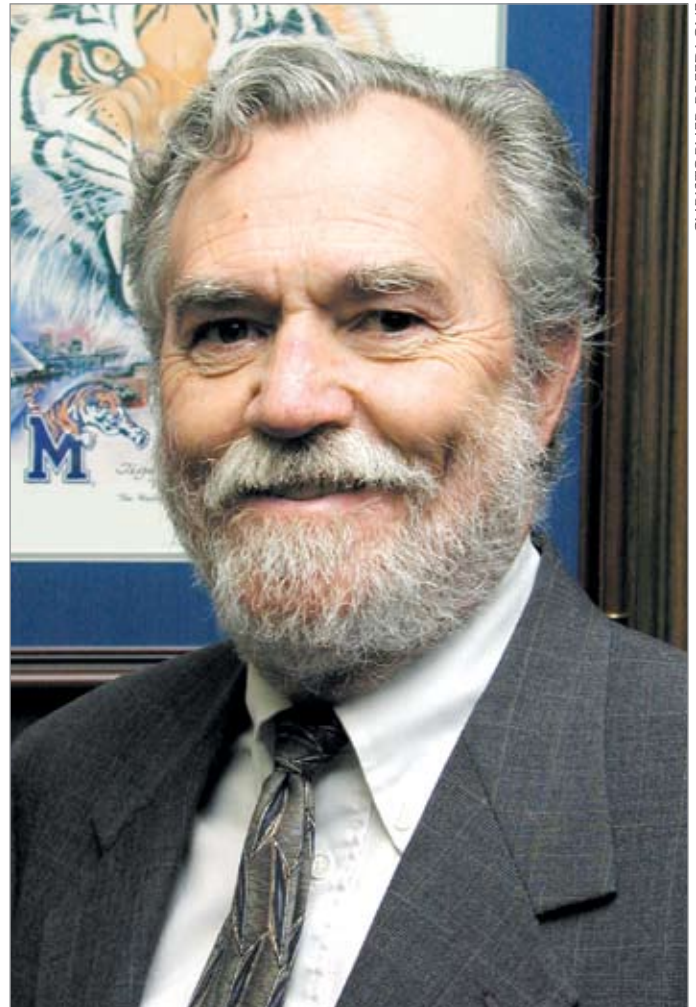
Faudree followed his studies on Bison Hill with a master's and Ph.D. degrees in mathematics from Purdue University in 1963 and 1964, respectively. He was an instructor at the University of California at Berkeley, and then an assistant professor at the University of Illinois before becoming an associate professor at what was then called Memphis State University in 1971.

In 1976, Faudree became professor of mathematics at the university. During his tenure, he has served as chair of the department of mathematical sciences, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and interim president. He has received numerous awards related to his administration and research.

In 2001, the Tennessee Board of Regents named Faudree the university's provost. He serves as the chief academic officer, implementing academic policies and overseeing the university's teaching, research and service missions. Faudree relishes the opportunity to see each student and faculty member develop.

"Independent of the positions I've held – professor, chair, dean, interim president and provost – the most rewarding experience at a university has been being involved in the incredible development of a student over a period of four or five years," Faudree said. "To see a young person mature, gain expertise and assume responsibility is a high that is difficult to match. As a provost, I've had the opportunity to see the same kind of development in staff, faculty and administrators."

As an academician, Faudree specializes in graphical Ramsey theory and Hamiltonian theory of graphs. He has published



CHRISTOPHER BREEDLOVE

Dr. Ralph Faudree, '61

more than 150 mathematical papers on graph theories with great thinkers such as Paul Erdős, a world-renowned Hungarian mathematician who also was Faudree's personal friend. Since Erdős's death, Faudree has continued the work they began together.

Faudree's work on graph theory has taken him around the world as a visiting professor or researcher in Hungary, Scotland, The Netherlands, France and Singapore. Through the years, he and his wife "entertained and hosted in our house – as described by my daughters – a large number of strange mathematical guests from all over the world," he said.

Today his daughters follow in his footsteps of molding young minds. Dr. Paja Faudree is a faculty member in the anthropology department at Brown University. Dr. Jill Faudree is a faculty member in the mathematics department at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks.

Faudree, himself, continues working both in university administration and among mathematical scholars. If you're counting, there are still many minds to develop. ♦

# Back to BASICS

Candy Ross had a neat job with a wonderful boss; she traveled internationally, and she made a lot of money. But after 21 years in corporate business, all that changed. She longed to get back to the basics of life: freedom from the job, time for family and a focus on health.

Friends at church founded a company to distribute natural, non-toxic nutritional supplements in both the United States and international markets. The products are based on a relatively new science called glycobiology – described by some as a new frontier in medicine.

Meanwhile, Candy and her husband, Greg, were fighting fatigue. Living about 30 minutes outside Dallas, both traveled to work each day in the city and took their daughters to school downtown. They began taking the supplements, and felt a positive change in their energy levels. It also changed their work goals.

“God just really changed my heart,” said the former Candy Shirley, who graduated from OBU in 1971. She had invested in being a corporate professional, earning a bachelor’s degree in business administration, then completing an M.B.A. degree at the University of Texas at Arlington three years later. “I didn’t want to do corporate work anymore – I just wanted to tell people about (this new technology).”

Candy feels like God provided a path to fulfill her desire: her boss needed to downsize a position and planned to lay off one of her coworkers with one year of severance pay. Candy asked the boss to give her the layoff and severance instead. The timing worked well for her. A few years later, the entire staff was laid off due to a downsizing.

Greg also became frustrated and chose to quit his job with a major bank, and the couple launched into network marketing of the young company called Mannatech. They knew their goal – financial freedom in a business that benefited others – but they also knew it wasn’t without risk.

“You have to be willing to take a chance,” Candy said. “People thought we were crazy, going to do something we didn’t even know how to do.”

Today, Candy and Greg have achieved the high rank of “Gold Presidential,” with about 80,000 people in their organization in the United States, Australia, the United Kingdom, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Germany, New Zealand and Canada. Their income from their days in corporate America has doubled. Plus, she added, it’s fun. But best of all, they feel like they’re making a difference in people’s lives.

“This has been the most rewarding thing we have done,” Candy said. “In this line of business, people’s lives are changed, people’s health is given back, and you can’t put a price tag or value on that.”

Candy says she and others in her organization have had people contact them to literally say, “You have changed my life.” She has a joy of working with a large number of Christian believers. And from an eternal perspective, Candy has seen people come to faith in Jesus Christ through events sponsored by the company’s founders, Sam and Linda Caster.

Candy also has participated in non-profit organizations related to her company such as MannaRelief Ministries’ “Adopt an Orphanage” program, which supplies nutritional enhancements to children around the world. She also has sponsored chronically ill children who benefit from the glyconutrients.

“We won’t ever retire from doing this because we love doing this,” Candy says. “People need to know they have choices. People need hope.”

“The Bible says we have to have a vision, for without a vision the people perish. We have a vision of making the world a better place.”

Candy is looking to make the world a better place closer to home, too. Her two daughters, Angela and Erin, both are engaged to be married in 2008. Candy wants the business she has built to pave the way for freedom in their own young families – the freedom to stick with the invaluable basics. ♦

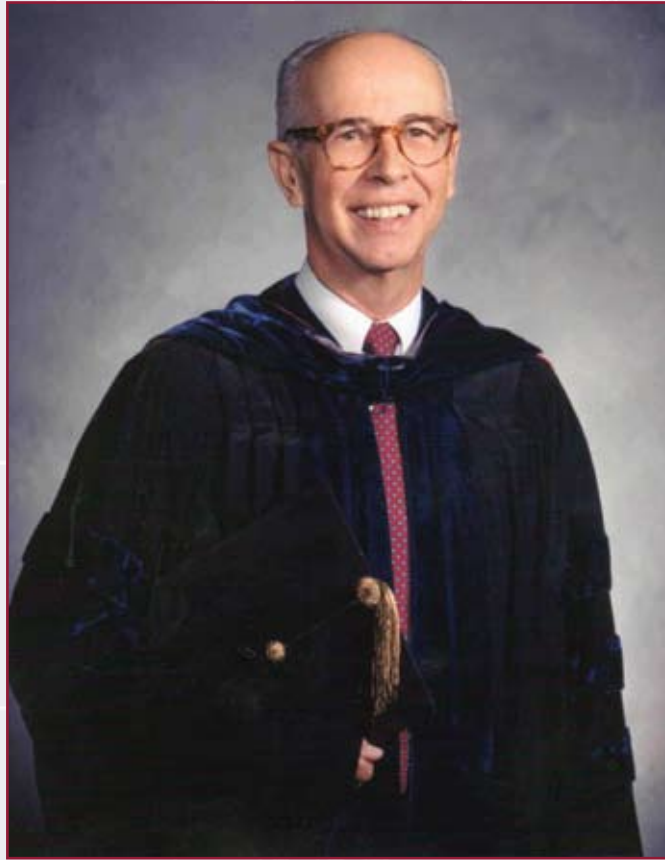
**Candy Ross, '71, and her husband, Greg, flanked by their daughters, Erin, left, and Angela**





# *A Storied* **JOURNEY** *of LEADERSHIP*

"We traveled from Cuba to Miami by plane, took a train from Miami to New York City and a bus all the way from New York City to Shawnee."



Dr. Jorge Padron, '52

**T**raveling to Bison Hill is not too difficult. Today, most OBU students spend less than a day getting to Shawnee from their hometowns.

In 1948, Jorge Padron's journey from Cuba to OBU took much longer than a day.

"My parents accompanied me on the trip from Havana to Shawnee," he said. "We traveled from Cuba to Miami by plane, took a train from Miami to New York City and a bus all the way from New York City to Shawnee."

Padron graduated second highest in his high school class. His teachers strongly encouraged him to attend college in America.

He was offered a scholarship to OBU, and that began a lengthy journey that led him to invest a career at one institution while also touching lives around the world.

When he finally arrived at OBU, Padron was one of only two students not from the United States.

"I became something of an attraction," he said. "The campus community wanted to know about Cuba, about my life in Cuba and about me. I was enthusiastic about conversation and happy to make new acquaintances."

Jorge received his bachelor's degree in chemistry in 1952, and immediately began graduate study at the University of

CUBA



Oklahoma. Within two years, he completed his master's degree in microbiology and biochemistry.

While working on his doctorate at OU, he taught mathematics and science courses at OBU. In 1954, he met Dorothy Busha, an OBU student who was working in President Raley's office.

That year, Jorge was asked to speak and show slides of Cuba to a church group in Ada. He invited Dorothy to go with him.

His presentation went longer than expected, especially because of questions at the end. Soon it became clear to the dating couple they did not have time to make it back before the 10 p.m. curfew, and Dorothy was going to be in trouble.

They arrived on campus at 10:15 p.m. Ann Marshall, OBU's dean of women, met Dorothy in Kerr Dorm that night.

"She scolded Dorothy," Jorge said. "She said she could not believe a reliable young woman would break a curfew. But after the scolding, she softened her voice and asked Dorothy what she really wanted to know. 'Did you have a good time? What did Jorge talk about?' she asked her."

In the fall of 1957, Jorge accepted a teaching position at Drury College in Springfield, Mo. He enjoyed the role, but missed Dorothy for a few months. In November that year, they were married.

Five decades later, Springfield is still the Padróns' hometown. They raised three children – Anne, Charles and Phillip, while Jorge built a career in his adopted country.

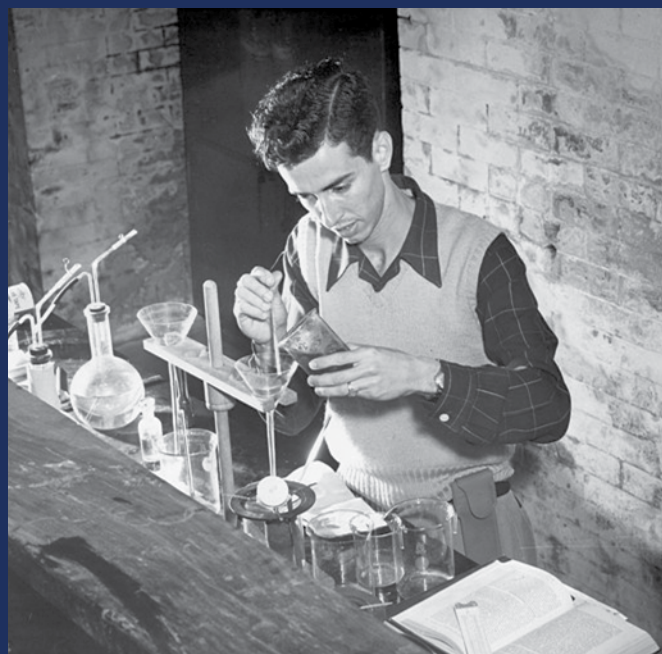
Meanwhile, his homeland was in crisis. Fidel Castro became Cuba's leader in 1959. Castro had Jorge's father, who had been a Cuban army officer, placed under house arrest for nearly a month.

"At first opportunity, my father gathered the family and got everyone out of Cuba," Jorge said. "My parents were in their late fifties at this time, and the move basically meant that they would be starting their lives over again."

To this day, Jorge has not returned to Cuba and said he will not visit his childhood country until "Castro is no longer in power and Cuba is free."

Jorge also had a great teaching opportunity early in his young career. In 1963, he received a Fulbright Lectureship at the University of Seville in Spain. It was the first of several such honors.

In 1966, Jorge and the family spent a year at Central University in Quito, Ecuador. He returned to Ecuador in 1968, teaching at Guayaquil University. He taught again at Central University in 1984.



**Microbiologist turned biochemist, Padrón's life's work began to take shape in the laboratory at Oklahoma Baptist University.**

The Fulbright honors were indicators of Jorge's reputation in the scientific community. As a professor of microbiology, he not only invested in the lives of students, but also focused his own research on combating diabetes.

He has been honored multiple times by science foundations and organizations. He received numerous grants to aid his research in the fight against diabetes.

The combination of academic success and institutional commitment was recognized repeatedly at Drury.

In 1973, he was appointed vice president for academic affairs at the university.

In 1976, Jorge was diagnosed with arterial heart disease. The disease required four angioplasty procedures and two bypass surgeries between 1976 and 1990.

His heart condition did not slow him down, however. On two occasions, he served as Drury's acting president. In 1976, Jorge was asked to fill the leadership role in a difficult time for the university, after the current president was killed in a car crash. He was acting president again in 1980.

Jorge retired in 1996, after investing nearly four decades at Drury. He continues to remain active, and also is aware of his heart history. Along with daily exercise, he volunteers at a heart rehabilitation center in Springfield.

What started as a circuitous journey to Shawnee has resulted in a life invested in family, education and research. For Jorge, his family, his students and his colleagues, it has been well worth that long bus ride from New York City. ♦

# Transitions & Traditions

His frequent visits to Shawnee made it a foregone conclusion that he would spend his college years on Bison Hill.

Rusty Kennedy claims his life is in transition. Yet he continues to be doing the same thing – caring for people.

For nearly two decades, Rusty served on the staff at Northside Baptist Church in Indianapolis, Ind. As the church's youth minister, he introduced scores of high school students to his alma mater.

Rusty, '86, and his wife, the former Michelle Wilson, '87, brought van-loads of students to tour the campus for several years. There were many 12- to 13-hour treks with high school juniors and seniors who were willing to learn more about OBU.

"We would make a trip around Homecoming," Rusty said. "It was a nice arrangement because the kids would have a chance to reconnect with the OBU students who came from our church. They would stay in the dorm rooms with them and also experience OBU for themselves. It was also a great time for Michelle and me as we got to see our friends from college."

The annual pilgrimage resulted in a large number of Northside students attending OBU, for several years in the 1990s, there were more than 10 students from the church enrolled at the university.

Introducing others to the campus followed the path of Rusty's own experience.

Reared in Tulsa, Rusty said his sister Heidi, a 1984 OBU graduate, paved the way for him to come to OBU. His frequent visits to Shawnee made it a foregone conclusion that he would spend his college years on Bison Hill.

"I loved every minute of my college experience," he said. "I developed friendships with a great group of guys. We started OBU the same time, and lived on Storer Hall in Brotherhood Dorm, overlooking the track. I'm still in contact with those guys today."

"I was involved with everything on campus," he said. "I had good relationships with the faculty and staff. Dr. Bob Evans had a huge impact on me. I appreciated his humble, gentle spirit. Dr. Mack Roark is another one. I still have notes from his class."

Rusty and Michelle started dating in high school, but it took Rusty an extra year to convince Michelle to come to OBU.

"She started attending Tulsa University," he said. "That first year I was spending every weekend in Tulsa. Thankfully, she transferred to OBU in her sophomore year, and that made things a lot easier."

Marriage soon followed for Rusty and Michelle, and Rusty attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, where he earned his master's degree in religious education.

In February 1989, the Kennedys began their ministry to students at Northside. They added to their family when son Cory was born in 1994, and daughter Chloe was born in 1999.

After 15 years at Northside, Rusty's title changed to associate pastor, and his ministry continued to prosper. In February 2007, while celebrating 18 years at the church, Rusty decided it was time to leave.

"It was at that point that I shared with the church that God was moving us on from Northside," he said. "It is like turning 18 and time to move out of the house to start your own life."

Rusty knew God called him to begin a new ministry, but he wasn't sure exactly what the ministry was supposed to be. He said he met regularly with his friend Keith Tyner at a local bakery. Through these meetings, Rusty began to see how God was directing him in developing the ministry. The name of the ministry he selected depicts the development.





Rusty Kennedy, '86, and his wife, Michelle, with their children Cory and Chloe.

"I chose the name 'Leavener,'" he said. "Leavener is not a word found in a dictionary but is definitely used by bakeries. A leavener is the change agent found in a dough product that causes it to rise or transform while it is in a state of rest."

Rusty believed the Holy Spirit was causing a change in him. "There is no doubt that I have been transformed," he said. "I am holy because God has granted me faith. Just as leavener is the change agent that causes dough to be transformed while it is in state of rest, the Holy Spirit has transformed my life while I have done absolutely nothing."

After the name came the purpose of the ministry. "Leavener is a group of people who desire to help other people through life," Rusty wrote on the ministry's website.

He explained his newly formed group has three ministry aspects – crisis intervention, disaster relief and community of believers.

In crisis intervention, Rusty said they will help individuals, couples, families and churches who need love, support and help during times of crisis.

Already, Leavener has sent a disaster relief team to Ocean Springs, Miss. They are planning a mission trip to Costa Rica in the summer of 2008.

"Our hope is that we can include churches and corporations to assist with these needs. We will provide opportunities for groups of people to help rebuild a family's home and support them through the disaster process," Rusty said.

Leavener also has developed opportunities of fellowship. In October, the ministry group began meeting weekly at a home for worship, Bible study and to connect with each other.

Rusty pointed out that Leavener is in its early stages. Many things could occur while going through the molding process, and he anticipates that many lives will be impacted in different ways.

Like in his own life, there is no telling what could happen when the transition is complete. ♦

## Board Elects Seven-Member Presidential Search Committee

Seven OBU trustees were elected to serve on the University's presidential search committee during the board's fall meeting on the campus Nov. 30.

The board approved by acclamation the search committee candidates submitted by a special nominating committee formed Oct. 12, following the announced retirement of former OBU President Mark Brister.

The presidential search committee includes Stephen Allen, an attorney from Tulsa; Dr. Alton Fannin, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Ardmore; Lisa Fillmore, a pharmacist from Ada; Rev. Nick Garland, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Broken Arrow; Rev. Griff Henderson, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Newalla; Rev. Bruce Sanders, pastor of North Fork

Baptist Church in Eufaula; and Richard Streeter, a financial planner from Claremore.

In addition to the seven trustees, the search committee will include four ex-officio members. Those are Dr. Bill Hagen, chairman of OBU's Faculty Council and professor of English; Abigail Jeffers, president of OBU's Student Government Association and a senior international relations major from Tulsa; Ray Griffin, president of the OBU Alumni Association and minister of education at Quail Springs Baptist Church in Oklahoma City; and Dr. Anthony Jordan, executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma.

Of the seven elected committee members, three are OBU graduates.

Henderson and Sanders both graduated in 1984, while Allen completed a bachelor's degree from OBU in 1995.

The committee will be charged with identifying a candidate to serve as OBU's 15th president. The full board will be responsible for election of the new president.

"We at the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma are extremely proud of Oklahoma Baptist University," said Dr. Jordan, who has served as chief executive for the state convention since 1997. "We continue to be committed to seeing OBU move forward in the days ahead. We are excited about the processes that will go forward. I want to reaffirm our commitment to this University and to all the staff and faculty here."

## Winter Graduates Urged To Be "Agents Of Transformation"

Challenged to be part of a legacy of "agents of transformation," 35 OBU students graduated Friday, Dec. 14, during the University's winter Commencement.



Dr. Justin Hardin, OBU's Strickland assistant professor of religion and the 2007 Promising Teacher Award recipient, delivered the Commencement address to the audience of approximately 350 in Raley Chapel's Potter Auditorium.

Hardin, a New Testament scholar, referenced instances of "transformative thinking" from the life of the Apostle Paul. He urged the graduates to follow the apostle's example in their own lives.

"As a graduate, we've called you, encouraged you, yeah, even charged you with living a transformed life, not just here but beyond the buildings of Bison Hill.

"Come up here," he said. "Walk across this stage. Join the long and unbroken

tradition at OBU of graduates who are agents of transformation in the world."

John W. Parrish, OBU's interim president, echoed Hardin's challenge in his charge to the graduates.

"We have sought to impart to you the heart to care and the spirit to try to do something to make your world a better place in which to live," said Parrish. "Determine to serve your fellow man with an informed caring. Dare to walk in faith believing that God will use you to make a difference in the world."

Dr. Bill Green, associate executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma, brought greetings to the graduates from the convention.

"There are 1,750 Baptist churches in Oklahoma who support this university," said Green. "We believe in OBU and we believe in you."



## London Program Bolstered By Dowdy Scholarship

OBU's London Studies Program has become a campus tradition. This year, a new element is being added to the tradition with the activation of the Thomas Dowdy Memorial Scholarship.

A class of 15 students will spend Jan. 8-23 in England, gaining academic credit as they study aspects of life in Great Britain. Dr. David Byland, OBU

associate professor of communication arts, has coordinated the annual program for the past 15 years.

Byland and his wife, Laura, OBU assistant professor of theater, lead the annual overseas adventures. They started making the trip in 1993. Two years later, Dr. Thomas Dowdy, OBU professor of sociology, joined in the effort.

Dowdy, who taught at OBU for 19 years, died in 2006. This year, two students will participate in the London

Studies Program as recipients of the Dowdy Scholarship. Christi Mitchell, a junior from Blair, Okla., and Kate Rutledge, a junior from Carrollton, Texas, are the first beneficiaries of the scholarship.

"Tom and I were very close friends who shared many travel experiences, taught together often and enjoyed time together outside of OBU," said David. "This scholarship is a fitting tribute to his love of travel and love of students. Tom was known to take money out

*Continued on next page*

## Board Approves Names For Athletic Facilities; Grants Emeriti Titles

Along with creating a presidential search committee, OBU trustees ratified names for two new campus facilities, honored retired faculty and staff, and approved continuing contracts for four faculty members during their fall meeting Nov. 30.

The board approved the naming of OBU's newly constructed baseball facility as "Bison Field at Ford Park." The naming was recommended by the board's university advancement committee in light of the financial support of the Ford family of Shawnee and Shawnee Milling Company. The family-owned company, led by former OBU trustee William L. Ford, has been a longtime supporter of the University. Shawnee Milling Co. has provided significant support for the new baseball complex on the north side of the OBU campus.

The board also approved naming of OBU's new baseball and softball building as the "Harry E. Coates

Sr. Baseball-Softball Building." The building name was approved by the board in 2002 for a new facility constructed on University Street near Airport Road. However, construction



**With its bricked dugouts and tree-lined outfield fence, Bison Field at Ford Park offers a picturesque setting for OBU baseball.**

of the new baseball field included construction of the new building to accommodate baseball and softball offices, locker rooms, and an expanded indoor practice facility. The naming process was designed to honor the financial support of Coates Roofing of Seminole, which assisted with funding construction of the initial facility.

Trustees also granted emeriti status to four former members of OBU's faculty and staff. Johnny Cullison, assistant vice president for business affairs/physical plant,

who retired from OBU in 2003, was given the title of "administrator emeritus" by the board. Dr. Don Clark, professor of voice, who retired in 2002; Dr. Ron Lewis, professor of music, who retired in 2006; and Jack Pearson, associate professor of music, who retired in 2005, were each granted the title of "professor emeritus."

Four faculty members were approved for senior faculty status, allowing continuous contracts for

those faculty. Those approved were Dr. Brian Camp, associate professor of sociology; Dr. Karen Longest, assistant professor of psychology; Dr. John Powell, associate professor of history; and Dr. John Farris, associate professor of education and chair of the teacher education division.

of his own pocket while in London to help students with meals, bus fares, etc. This scholarship means that students who desire to go and who deserve to go on the trip now have the opportunity to apply for funds that may make the difference between going and not going."

The London Studies Program includes a communications studies course. The students will be involved in walking tours, theatre performances, discussion periods, museum visits, guest lectures and media site visits.

## Business Students Fare Well In National Simulation Project

OBU business students recently placed among the nation's best in Capstone Simulation, an online business simulation project.

The simulation involved an array of aspects of running a company. Students worked together to make decisions about their company, primarily from a financial perspective.

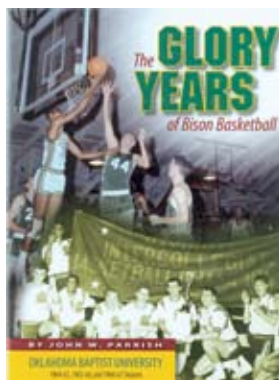
OBU's team ranked 67th out of 1,300 business school undergrad teams. The teams included students from nationally recognized business schools at institutions including the University of Pennsylvania, Baylor University, Penn State University and Florida State University.

OBU's team consisted of senior business majors Taylor Prince, Erin Zahrt, Emily Reiser, Julie Jantz, Jamie Wright, and Michelle Prenzlow.

"During the simulation our team had to draw upon knowledge we have gained thus far in our business classes," said Reiser, a finance major from Pryor, Okla. "It helped us understand the value of teamwork."

## Celebrate OBU With The Centennial Book Series

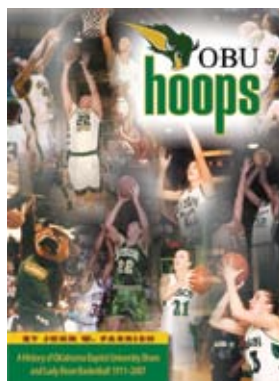
You can own the first three books in OBU's Centennial Book Series. These works include two books about OBU's storied basketball history, and a unique collection of written prayers by the late Dr. James E. Hurley.



***The Glory Years of Bison Basketball: Oklahoma Baptist University 1964-65, 1965-66, and 1966-67 Basketball Seasons*** chronicles one of the greatest runs in NAIA history. Coach Bob Bass and standout Al Tucker led the Bison to three consecutive national championship games. They brought home the 1966 championship banner, marking the pinnacle of Bison basketball success. Relive those memorable years through this hardback book by John W. Parrish.

**Oklahoma residents:** \$25.00 plus \$2.13 tax plus \$3.00 shipping/handling = \$30.13

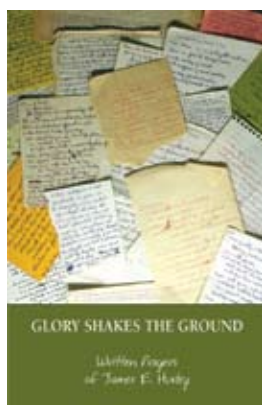
**Out-of-state residents:** \$25.00 plus \$3.00 shipping/handling = \$28.00



***OBU Hoops: A History of Oklahoma Baptist University Bison and Lady Bison Basketball 1911-2007*** recaps the entire history of the University's basketball programs. With season-by-season summaries, team rosters, game scores, and a bevy of statistics, this work is a hardback "coffee table" edition which can serve as a ready resource, providing answers to trivia questions, as well as a glimpse at the legacy of OBU basketball which has carried the teams to continued national prominence.

**Oklahoma residents:** \$24.95 plus \$2.12 tax plus \$3.00 shipping/handling = \$30.07

**Out-of-state residents:** \$24.95 plus \$3.00 shipping/handling = \$27.95



***Glory Shakes the Ground: Written Prayers of James E. Hurley*** is a paperback work which takes the reader into the heart and mind of one of OBU's most revered faculty members. The late biology professor wrote many prayers, several of which have been compiled into this book. In easy-to-use paperback, the book is both a devotional guide and a study in one man's personal communication with God.

**Oklahoma residents:** \$12.95 plus \$1.10 tax plus \$2.00 shipping/handling = \$16.05

**Out-of-state residents:** \$12.95 plus \$2.00 shipping/handling = \$14.95

To order any of the Centennial Series books, call 405.878.2706 or visit [www.okbu.edu/100/books.html](http://www.okbu.edu/100/books.html)



## OBU ATHLETICS UPDATE

### Basketball Teams Undefeated At Break

For the second time in three seasons, OBU basketball completed undefeated pre-Christmas schedules for both the Bison and Lady Bison.

A combined 21-0 (Bison 10-0, Lady Bison 11-0), OBU may be more impressive than the 2005-06 squads that were 22-0 (both 11-0) before the holiday break. The ranking would indicate that as being the case. The 2005-06 men were eighth at the break and the Lady Bison were sixth. This season, the defense-oriented Bison are ranked fourth and the women are ranked fifth nationally.



Point guard Brent Jones has been a major contributor in his first year as a Bison, helping OBU to a #4 ranking.

The women have defeated three ranked teams and NCAA Division I newcomer Houston Baptist. They have carved out a 3-0 record in the Sooner Athletic Conference, including an impressive 74-64 overtime win against then-10<sup>th</sup> ranked Lubbock Christian.

Four Lady Bison are averaging in double figures scoring, led by the post tandem of Betsy Simmons and Heather Graham at 13.2 points each. Guards Jennifer Jupin (12.2) and Ashley Gamble (10.5) also have double-digit scoring averages.

The Bison also have a 3-0 conference mark, including stern tests from Wayland Baptist, Lubbock Christian and St. Gregory's.

Guard Brent Jones leads the Bison in scoring at 16.5 points per game, followed by guard Brian Hill at 13. Guard Evan Grace, who tied a school record with nine three-pointers in a game this season, averages 12.9 points and forward Al Moore is averaging 10.3.

### Track Has 14 Headed To Two National Meets

OBU got off to a fast start, qualifying nine athletes for the indoor national track and field meet with seven other provisional qualifiers at the Kansas State University All-Comers Meet in early December.

The nine automatic qualifiers were Marissa Moseley in the 200 meters, Optimum Baker, Megan Henley, T.J. Lightsey and A.J. Carter in the 600 meters, Nicole Cummins in the triple jump, Lamar Baskin in the 60-meter hurdles, Seth Brown in the pole vault and the women's 4x400 relay team.

Six athletes competed in the Half Marathon hosted by Southwestern College (Kan.) Dec. 7 to qualify for the marathon at the 2008 outdoor championships. Five met the automatic qualifying standard: Lance Goodwin, Dustin O'Day, Becca Murdoch, Jessica Herbert and Meredith Gardner.

### Be Part Of The eHerd

You can get email updates on all of the latest OBU athletics news by signing up for the *eHerd Newsletter* on the OBU website or by contacting Ray Fink, OBU sports information director, at ray.fink@okbu.edu.



Point guard Ashley Gamble averaged nearly six assists per game as the Lady Bison climbed to #5 in the nation.

## European Studies Program

An OBU tradition from the 1970s is returning in the summer of 2008, as the University offers students an opportunity to study abroad in Europe.

Through the European Studies Program, OBU will provide students exposure to European culture, arts and history. Program participants also will have the chance to gain a better understanding of the art of western civilization, and of the Reformation and modern church history, according to Gene King, associate professor of business, who has worked with Dr. Kaylene Barbe, director of study abroad programs, to create the program.

"Students will discover how Europeans see the world, some of the challenges Europe is facing and how Europe impacts our lives in the United States and those in other parts of the world," said King.

The four-week study abroad program allows students the option to earn up

to six hours of academic credit. Two courses will be offered for the summer of 2008. History of Christianity: Reformation and Modern (REL 2543), and Arts and Ideas (FNAR 2163) will be taught during the overseas journey. Independent studies in literature also are available through the program.

The OBU team will depart Oklahoma City May 19 and return on June 12.

The group will be based at the Chateau de Pourtales in Strasbourg, France, for two weeks. Students also will spend three days in both Berlin and Paris. Other cities to be visited include Germany's Wittenberg, Wurzburg, Baden-Baden, Erfurt, and Buchenwald concentration camp, as well as Colmar, France.

Total cost for the 2008 European Studies Program is \$4,950, which includes tuition, airfare, lodging, ground transportation, entry fees and 25 meals. The group is limited to 20 students.

For more information, please contact Barbe at 405.878.2348 or kaylene.barbe@okbu.edu.

## "Transforming Virtues" Coming In April

"Transforming Virtues" will be the focus of OBU's first Faith and Learning Symposium, April 21-25, 2008.

Sponsored by OBU's faith and disciplines committee, the week-long conference will highlight the nature of virtue in general and the virtues necessary for living as educated Christian believers and professionals in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Dr. Glenn Sanders, OBU professor of history and chair of the committee said the symposium will include presentations, lectures and discussions.

Dr. Jay Wood, professor of philosophy at Wheaton College, will be a featured guest speaker. Wood is co-author of the book *Intellectual Virtues: An Essay on Regulative Epistemology*.

"The symposium will provide a chance to think hard about the virtuous life," said Sanders. "The opportunity should allow us all to explore the qualities that can make us better people, better scholars and better believers."



Chateau de Pourtales



Keep up with campus news between issues of  
*OBU Magazine*  
by visiting  
[www.okbu.edu](http://www.okbu.edu)



# Wilks Hands Off The Reins As He Retires After 27 Years

Dr. Tom Wilks uses a “hands on” approach to education. The personable professor has helped prepare hundreds of OBU students for effective youth ministry while serving as Huitt professor of applied ministry and director of in-service guidance.

At the end of the fall semester, Wilks retired from the faculty, after 27 years on Bison Hill. He leaves a legacy of dedication and effectiveness which has defined his OBU career.

Wilks has always concentrated on preparing students for the actual practice of ministry.

“I have the opportunity to apply the ‘how to’ aspects in teaching ministry,” he said in the fall of 2007. “For example, how do we prepare students for conducting baptism? I take them down to the pool and we practice baptizing each other.”

Though retired from the classroom, he will not stop a unique ministry he conducts with his wife, Jackie. They have opened their horse ranch to help children with special needs.

Every Monday during the fall and spring semesters, Harvest Farms, a five-acre ranch northwest of Shawnee, is open to special needs kids who come for horse-riding therapy, food, crafts and a Bible study.

“Working with horses is great for autistic kids because it teaches empathy with the animal, waiting skills since the children have to take turns, and they gain fine and gross motor skills from holding the reins,” said Brooke Howard of Autism Connections, who brings kids to the Wilks’ ranch. “The Bible stories help with listening skills and learning, and it’s a way to spread the Gospel.”

In 2004, Tom and Jackie opened their farm to challenged kids, starting with just two. The children loved it, and word began to spread.

Recently, Harvest Farms received premier certification from the North American Riding for the Handicapped Association. Certification was not easy, as the NARHA required a written presentation and assurances that the farm met extensive safety requirements, including providing helmets and offering handicap parking and wheelchair accessibility.

Tom gives credit to Jackie, who devotes her time and energy to working with the children at Harvest Farms.

“My claim to fame is I’m Jackie’s husband,” he said.

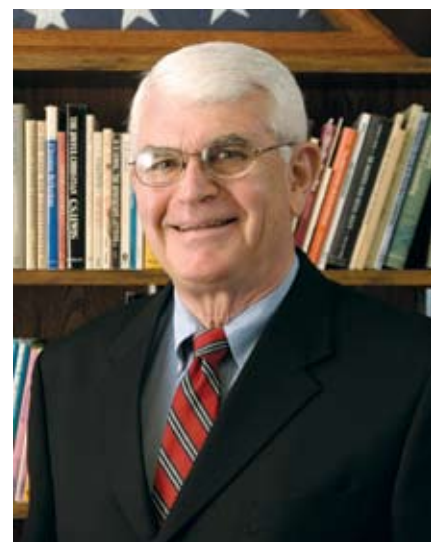
A native of Louisiana, Wilks received a bachelor of arts degree from Louisiana College and a master of theology degree from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He earned his doctorate at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

Wilks encouraged OBU students to volunteer to work at the ranch.

“We couldn’t do this without the help from OBU students,” he said. “This is strictly voluntary. They don’t get credit or payment for their work here.”

This is familiar territory for OBU students who sacrificially travel on Global Outreach trips or spend weekends helping communities recover from storms. Though Wilks doesn’t offer money or a grade, he does offer the same thing he offered in his classes – the chance to do ministry.

Recently, Harvest Farms was featured in the *Daily Oklahoman*. The article



**WILKS**

included comments from those who come to the horse ranch.

“We’ve been doing this since last September, and I’m amazed at how well he’s riding a horse,” said Joel Eichman of his son, Jonathan, who suffers from Asperger’s syndrome.

Pam Woods brings her son Thomas, who suffers from autism, to the ranch.

“When Thomas comes out here and rides, the horses have a very calming effect on him,” she told the newspaper’s writer. “He has trouble communicating, but he opens up after being on a horse. Autistic children have a problem with their sensory system. This allows him to concentrate and focus.”

Whether it was showing OBU students the proper way to baptize or giving them a chance to relate to special needs children, Wilks will be remembered as a “how to” professor. As he teaches others to take the reins of a horse, he has handed off the reins at OBU.

“I love working with our students. I know they will be in good hands in the future,” said Wilks.

## Why OBU?

### The people!

The remarkable faculty, daily demonstrating an interest in students and contributing to institutional integrity.

The enterprising students, unified by a common vision, creating a community in which individuality is respected.

The responsive staff, finding diverse ways to accommodate individual needs as expressions of their commitment to student development.

### The opportunity!

To join a community of believers in an educational experience.

To grow in knowledge and wisdom to dare a demanding world.

To find the righteous path to personal and occupational goals.

The uniqueness of OBU is a quality to be experienced, not defined. It transcends simple academic pursuits, involving the student in the search for the total person in an environment of Christian love, understanding and promise.

**– D.G. Osborn**  
DECEMBER, 1978

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As we reviewed “Dean” Donald Osborn’s biographical files after learning of his death in mid-December, we discovered a copy of this poem, which he penned 29 years ago. The words are timeless. With OBU’s Centennial drawing near, it seems fitting to reflect on and celebrate the words of this alumnus and long-time administrator. It is impossible to adequately measure the influence of those who have given their lives to further OBU’s mission of higher education in a Christ-honoring community.

-Ed.





OBU's Ford Music Hall opened in 1951, honoring the Ford family of Shawnee. Mr. and Mrs. J. Lloyd Ford, long-time OBU benefactors, gave \$50,000 toward the cost of the \$182,000 building. Between 1915 and 1957, Ford served a record 28 years on the OBU board of trustees. The building was updated in 1982 through generous gifts of the Ford family and friends. Originally constructed as a wing of a proposed Fine Arts complex, the building has practice rooms on two floors. Howard Memorial Chapel is located on the first floor. The second floor classroom hosts OBU's Kindermusic program. The Bison Glee Club rehearsal room is on the third floor.



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