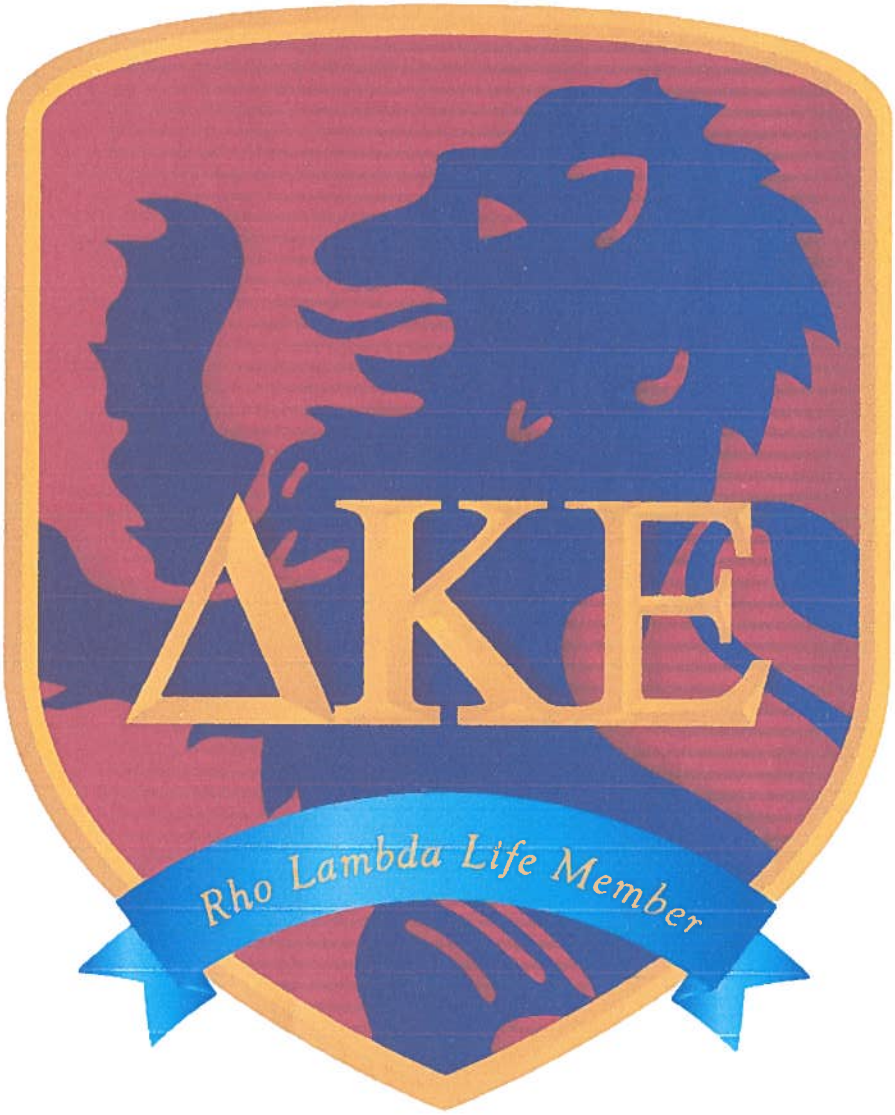

ΔΚΕ
Rho Lambda Life Member

The objects of Delta Kappa Epsilon are the cultivation of general literature and social culture, the advancement and encouragement of intellectual excellence, the promotion of honorable friendship and useful citizenship, the development of a spirit of tolerance and respect for the views of others, the maintenance of gentlemanly dignity, self-respect, and morality in all circumstances, and the union of stout hearts and kindred interests to secure to merit its due reward.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF RHO LAMBDA
OF
DELTA KAPPA EPSILON
by
George Otey (PΛ '73)

"We'll Sing to Phi and Rho Lambda
And Dear Old Delta Kappa Epsilon"

Founding

In the Spring of 1951 a group of men living in Whitehead Hall won both the University Sing and Sooner Scandals. From that experience they realized they possessed deeper bonds out of which grew enthusiasm to affiliate themselves with a different fraternity than those already at OU. They created their own local fraternity for the purpose of petitioning Delta Kappa Epsilon to become a chapter. Initially calling themselves the Charter Club they quickly adopted Rho Lambda as their Greek name. The *1953 OU Sooner Yearbook* shows the membership of Rho Lambda as Howard W. Byars, Morris L. Dunlap, Riley G. Goldsmith, Roger A. Hansen, Jerry L. Johnston, Howard L. McMillan, Mike Sandlin, George L. Scott, J. F. Van Ryder, and Jerry Wood. The officers were: Howard Byars, President; Howard McMillan, Vice President; Roger Hansen, Secretary; Morris Dunlap, Treasurer; and George Scott, Social Chairman. Understanding housing as a primary component to solidify their existence, they wasted little time in locating an adequate facility to accommodate the fraternity prior to chartering. After obtaining a house at 701 DeBarr Ave. they employed the services of Mrs. Isla "Mom" Harris as Housemother.

The first Deke House at 701 DeBarr Ave.

Chartering

By 1953 Rho Lambda believed it was fully prepared to take its place on the chapter roll of Delta Kappa Epsilon. To that end Morris Dunlap, Riley Goldsmith, Howard McMillan, and Mike Sandlin travelled to Deke's 109th convention being held December 28-30, 1953 at the Royal York Hotel in Toronto, Canada. There the Rho Lambda delegation presented its formal petition bearing a dedication to Dan C. Kenan (ΓΦ, '15), a local sportscaster and Mayor of Okmulgee,

Oklahoma, with support from Howard Taber (Φ '49), a Yale Deke alum living in Oklahoma City, and Oppie Watson (ΩX '28), known as Mr. Deke of the Southwest. The faculty sponsor for the group was OU history professor Donnell M. Owings, (ΨΦ '34).

Rho Lambda received approval of its application to become the 63rd Chapter of Delta Kappa Epsilon at the convention which had just installed the Honorable George A. Drew (AΦ '17) as the fraternity's 28th Honorary President. Following acceptance Rho Lambda was officially chartered on February 21, 1954 with the 16 Petitioners being: George Dooley, Morris Dunlap, Riley Goldsmith, Roger Hansen, Ronald Holcomb, Cleo Maddox, Howard McMillan, Byron Parker, Charles Sanders, Malcolm Sandlin, Bob Scott, George Scott, Brady Stewart, O. A. Thomas, Preston Trimble, and John Woody. The Chapter's first pledge following acceptance was James Howard.

700 Elm St.

700 Elm

Seizing the opportunity to move to a more suitable location, in the fall of 1956 Rho Lambda purchased the former Tri-Delt house 700 Elm at the corner of Brooks and Elm immediately across from the West side of the OU Campus. The house was a three-story red brick Dutch Colonial Revival style with a full basement. Built on an east/west line it faced Elm Street. The west half of the front façade was covered with English ivy which kept its green year round. On entering the house, to the right was the dining room with hard wood floors and chandeliers was a partial set of the striking panoramic wallpaper called "Views of North America."

"Views of North America" as seen on the walls of the Diplomatic Room at the White House became famous in 1961 when Jacqueline Kennedy had it installed in the White House. While 700 Elm did not have the complete set of 32 scenes, the walls were decorated with panels showing West Point and Boston Harbor. Attempting to safeguard the paper someone covered it with a clear lacquer, which unfortunately had the reverse affect, leaving it permanently discolored.

The Placid '50s and '60s

As the 25th fraternity at OU, Deke was one of the youngest fraternities at OU, the Chapter wasted little time living up to Founder Jacobs' characterization of a Deke being a "gentleman, scholar, and jolly good-fellow." By 1958 the house had grown to 55 members and pledges. Dekes' campus leaders included: Sherrill Whitten, OΔK; Jerry Duncan, TBΠ Honorary Engineering Society; Derrill Whitten, OΔK, TBΠ and selected BMOC; Rick Kingelin, OU varsity baseball; Bill Whitaker, OU Rifle Team; Randy Robbins, OU varsity tennis team; Walter Milligan, Convair Air Cadet Award; and Tim Miller, a Westminster fellowship recipient. During this period Max Weitzenhoffer and Larry Wade joined Deke. Max eventually represented Rho Lambda on the Deke Council before Deke changed its structure. Both Max and Larry became members of the OU Board of Regents with each serving in the capacity of chairman. Founder Preston Trimble was elected as District Attorney for Cleveland County and later District Court Judge in the 1980s.

Going back to it roots of participating in campus talent shows Dekes developed an award winning comedy act called "The Undertakers" that became sought after at campus wide shows especially Sooner Scandals. The cast of five dressed in black suits, white shirts, thin black ties, and black derbies preformed a series of dead-pan silent skits lasting approximately two to three minutes. Never smiling, the Undertakers went about their macabre business of finding a person (usually their victim) in need of mortuary services.

The Chapter continued to round itself with a variety of social events including the annual Founder's Day banquet, spring and fall formals (which eventually merged into the annual Deke Diamond Formal), the traditional Prohibition party (later called the St. Valentine's Day Massacre Party), Western Days BBQ, the Morbid Meal and the Reincarnation Ball (eventually evolving into the annual Graveyard Party).

The Tumultuous '70s

The college scene at OU remained sedate and seemingly unchanged from the 1950s and well into the 1960s. But by the fall of 1969 the changes occurring on college campuses around the nation finally caught up to OU. The Greek system, long recognized as a bastion of traditional college life, found itself a not so subtle target of those demanding social change and seeking to uproot "the Establishment." Fraternities found themselves caught in the middle of this culture war. Rho Lambda was no different.

The years 1966-70 saw major changes for Rho Lambda. In 1966 Mom Harris retired and was replaced by Mrs. Oujiwa "Mom" Moran, Brother Dave Johnson was the Distinguished Air Force Cadet and BMOC, and Dr. Owings retired with Professor Charles C. Suggs (a Yale Sigma Chi) replacing him as the Chapter's faculty advisor, a position he maintained until the Chapter's demise. Professor Suggs became more integrally linked to Rho Lambda when his son Charles Suggs, II and later his nephew Tom Norman joined. In a gesture of support, Dr. Suggs spent hours hand crafting a Deke and a Rho Lambda crest both of which were works of art.

Until 1968 Rho Lambda pledge classes hovered around ten. Recruitment focused on rush week participants and semester rush, leaning heavily on out-of-state recruitment and relying on Deke's

eastern and international prominence as a draw. However, in 1968 Rho Lambda's numbers grew when over 20 pledged the house, many from Oklahoma. In the spring of 1969, the symbolism of initiating 15 new brothers during the 15th anniversary of Rho Lambda's founding was not lost on the brotherhood and encouraged them that growth of the Chapter was eminent. With the new initiates scheduled to move into 700 Elm, over the summer of 1969 alums had the entire backyard paved to accommodate parking for the burgeoning house of 40 inhabitants. The 1968 success was amplified when the 1969-70 pledge classes grew to nearly 40 men, mostly from Oklahoma.

Deke's were strongly individualistic, not fitting into the "cookie-cutter" mold of other fraternities on campus. This characteristic of leadership was exemplified by Rob Stites, OΔK and recognized as a BMOC, and Hank Helton, a campus police officer, who held the presidency of the Ruf-Neks, a pep organization nationally symbolized by the Sooner Schooner. Additionally, Deke was diversified for its day, being the only fraternity open to Jews, except the Jewish fraternities on campus. At that point all rooms in the house were filled with 40 members and the Chapter had 30-man pledge class. The new parking lot was nearly filled to capacity.

But Deke was about to get caught in the culture war of the 1960-70s centered on the anti-war movement, demands for social and political changes, and the overall anti-Greek feeling on campus. Even though other fraternities were going through the same pangs, Deke's youthfulness as a fraternity proved a hindrance.

Dissention over social and political issues lead many brothers to move out of the house during at the end of 1969 semester. Continued declining pledge numbers made it impossible to keep the doors open. Mom Moran retired in the spring of 1972 and was replace briefly by Mrs. Margaret "Mom" Lester. At the beginning of the spring semester 1973 Mom Lester resigned, with only 6 brothers continuing to live in a house that could accommodate over 40. Later that semester alumni informed the remaining brothers the house had been sold and the premises would be vacated at the end of the school year. In an ironic twist Deke's overall academic rating that year was No. 1 on campus upsetting the long-held monopoly of Beta Theta Pi.

The 1973-74 school year marked the demise of Rho Lambda. Not wanting to disband and hoping for some revival, four remaining brothers rented a house on the corner of Flood Ave and Lindsey Street. There were about 15 "active" members on the rolls. Although five blocks from campus the location held no attraction for potential pledges. The Chapter continued at that location until a fire over Christmas-break destroyed the structure. The members then moved into separate apartments. The fraternity ceased to exist and its memorabilia was ultimately sent to Deke Headquarters.

Rejuvenation and Creation of DKERLLA

A short- lived three-year rebirth occurred from 1990 to 1993. A group of men, disenchanted with efforts to recolonize as the Acacia fraternity, turned to Deke in the fall of 1989. Under the administration of Deke's Executive Director David Easlick (O '69), Rho Lambda was rechartered in the spring of 1990. The brothers took up residence at 704 West Lindsey St., located at corner of West Lindsey St. and Chautauqua Ave., and decorated the house with composites and crests returned from Deke Headquarters. In addition, the Delta Kappa Epsilon Rho Lambda Literary Association, Inc. was created as an alumni association to support the

effort. However, at that time DKERLLA went unfunded with no organizational structure to provide guidance to itself or the undergraduates.

704 W. Lindsey

Although located on the fringes of Greek housing the Chapter asserted its presence by volunteering to assist with the Special Olympics' regional competition held at Norman High. The brothers hosted monthly parties from September through April, opening the festivities to the campus while complying with the IFC policy against uninvited guests. These events projected Rho Lambda's commitment to promote a diversified membership as opposed to the traditional OU fraternity experience. Although one of the smallest houses on campus, Dekes prided themselves on their diversity which included men from Malaysia, Canada, Nigeria, Germany, France, and Taiwan as well as having Latino, Cherokee, Cheyenne-Arapaho, Shawnee, and native-Alaskan backgrounds. Deke welcomed Christians, Jews, Atheists, and Taoists seeing the open exchange of ideas and cultures as nothing more than a real-life application of the fraternity's fundamentals expressed in the Objects.

Still isolated by geography from other Deke chapters, the brothers made unsuccessful attempts to connect with Dekes at Kappa Delta at Louisiana Tech and Omega Chi at Texas. Yet one of the most satisfying events occurred in September 1991 when a group of Sigma Alpha Dekes traveled from Blacksburg, Virgina to Norman to see Virginia Tech take on the Sooners at Owen Field (OU winning 27-17). For the visiting brothers Rho Lambda rolled out the red carpet (quickly placing a plastic covering to shielding it from spillage when it became obvious fraternal bonds were turning the weekend into a long revelry, the stories of which for most participants have mercifully perished with the fog of memory.

The restart lost momentum when a regrettable hazing charge led to suspension by the University. The accusation carried state-wide with coverage from *The Daily Oklahoman.* The University's investigation fully exonerated Deke by the beginning of summer but the Chapter could not recover the damage done by the headlines and Rho Lambda again faded from campus.

Reunion and Roundups

In the summer of 1987, after 13 years off campus, a small weekend reunion of Brothers occurred at Arrowhead State Park. Amid the festivities, discussions were held in hopes of more regular reunions and an alumni association that could be the basis of reestablishing the Chapter. Yet, enthusiasm waned even after the recolonization efforts of the early 1990s.

However, the 2012 addition to Deke's Chapter roll of Omega Mu at Oklahoma State University

rekindled a spark of enthusiasm nearly 40 years after Rho Lambda first closed its doors. In the spring of 2013 upon learning of Omega Mu's chartering, Brother Bob Pickup contacted Brothers Fred Streb, Richard Burns, and Dennis Clowers to spearhead a call across the nation for the first annual Rho Lambda Roundup. Held in conjunction with the 2013 homecoming football game, Founders and Brothers from as far away as Alaska attended. The alums met Friday night before the game at the Interurban Restaurant. Among the short talks and presentations Brother Dennis Clowers received the Rho Lambda Goal Post Award. A relic of the 1956 OU-Texas game, a segment of the goal post bearing the score "0-Texas—Oklahoma-45", had hung in Ron Sorter's room at 700 Elm. When he left for Vietnam, the "Goal Post" was prominently displayed on a basement wall. When news of the impending sale of the house began circulating in 1973, it mysteriously disappeared, only to resurfaced at the 2013 Rho Lambda Roundup

As alums gathered, old friendships were revived and new ones made, especially when the young Dekes from recently installed OSU chapter traveled from Stillwater to Norman for introductions. As a result of the successful 2013 gathering the Brothers continued to schedule a Roundup centered on the first home game following the Texas game, featuring a dinner the Friday evening before the game and a tailgate prior to the game.

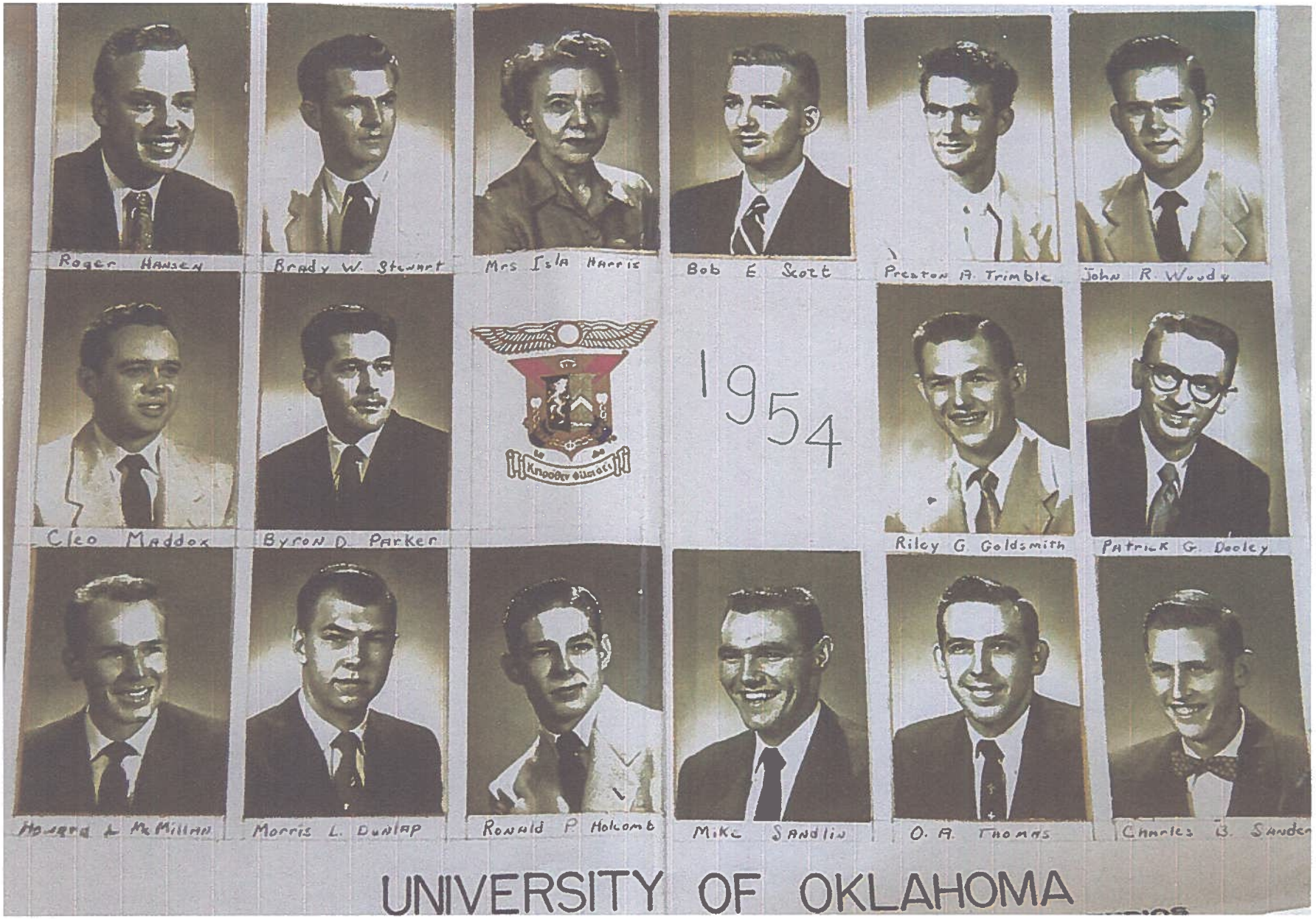
The 2014 Roundup marked the 60th anniversary of the founding of Rho Lambda. The Friday night before the homecoming game nearly 30 alums, many with their spouses, met along with Deke's Executive Director Doug Lanpher (Γ '76), Deke alumni from other chapters and representatives of Omega Mu. Founder Howard McMillan attended and received a standing ovation. Brother McMillan and Executive Director Lanpher both made remarks.

One of the highlights of the 2014 Roundup came the next day when 30 Omega Mu brothers travelled from Stillwater to Norman and hosted a tailgate at 700 Elm. Although the Deke house had been razed to make way for OU's Zarrow School of Social Work (an irony not lost on many), the University graciously allowed the reunion on its grounds.

Omega Mu actives with Rho Lambda alumni at the October 2014 Roundup at 700 Elm

Expansion Effort

Encouraged by the Roundup participation since 2013, Deke Headquarters began exploring ways to revitalize Rho Lambda. Integral to the process was developing an organization structure for DKERLLA. Created in 1990 as a perpetual not-for-profit corporation, the organization lay dormant. Upon learning of its legal existence, Brothers Bob Tierno and Bill Nation determined the time had come to put "meat on the bone" and more fully organize the Association. In conjunction with creating bylaws and establishing the Board of Directors, Ron Sorter took editorship of oudekes.org. After functioning for ten years the Board and Deke HQ began serious discussions on developing and implementing a process to establish Rho Lambda as an Associate Chapter. Beginning with Greek Day 2025 and participating in formal rush that year, Deke has attracted a group of quality young men dedicated to each other and to the task of creating a Rho Lambda that will stand to test of time.


Roger Hansen
Brady W. Stewart
Mrs Isla Harris
Bob E Scott
Preston A. Trimble
John R. Woody
Cleo Maddox
Byron D. Parker
1954
Riley G. Goldsmith
Patrick G. Dooley
Howard L. McMillan
Morris L. Dunlap
Ronald P. Holcomb
Mike Sandlin
O. A. Thomas
Charles B. Sander
UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

Brother of the Month – BYRON D. "BUD" PARKER

As I typed Bud's name just now, I wondered how many times I've written it. As pledges, we all had to memorize the Founders' names and woe betide any neophyte who forgot one, right? Bud and I laughed about it when I spoke to him last week, and I kept thinking, "After all these years, here I am, talking to Byron D. Parker. He's a terrific guy, and we're fraternity brothers."

For all of us, fraternity life changed us. Bud put it with perfect understatement, "For me, it was quite an experience."

I'm betting everyone who's experienced the OU Deke brotherhood has a similar story. Thanks to Bud and the other founders, when we walked out of the Deke house, we were ready. We turned onto life's highway and accelerated, eager to encounter that next part of us, thumb out, waiting. This newsletter is me, on behalf of all of us, thanking Bud for his role in that.

Bud's route to OU is top-notch. It starts with him as a little tyke in Claremore, Oklahoma. That's him (left) in 1931 at the San Antonio Zoo with his dad Charlie and his brother Bob. Bud's in the middle. When I first saw this photo, I thought maybe the colorizer had made a mistake. With no hesitation, Bud laughed and told me,

"My mother wanted a girl. Sometimes she dressed me in pink." I remembered his Golden Gloves, smiled, and admired his candor.

In 1890, the Oklahoma Territorial Legislature declared pugilism "a crime against the public peace," but most people ignored that. Bud attended Oklahoma Military Academy, "The West Point of the Southwest," for two years of high school and two of junior college.

Bud said, "OMA, in Claremore, was a cavalry-centered school, complete with sabers and horses. Graduates could enter the Army's Officer Candidate School after graduating from junior college. In 1947, I won my Golden Gloves there in high school." By that time, OMA had a boxing reputation, with a trophy-winning team.

"When I graduated from OMA in '51, I enlisted in the Air Force since I wanted to fly. The Korean War was over in '53, so I took my 30 hours of airtime to OU, became a junior-year freshman, and joined the boxing team. I got my private flying license later. Our boxing team took the train to Houston, LSU, Ft. Sill; we fought all over."

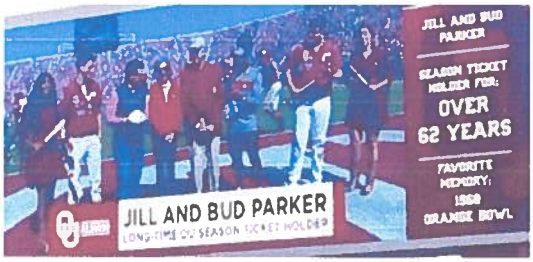
Somewhere along the way, Bud met some jolly good fellows, like Mike Sandlin, Morris Dunlap, and others.

That's him on the left, toasting the DKE charter and rampant lion with Ken Davis and Elbert Lesch. "The big thing I remember was the Omega Chi Texas chapter initiating us in '54. We also won the Scholastic Improvement trophy two years in a row." That's Ken Davis with the cigar, appearing to brush up the award, with Bud in the middle and O.A. Thomas on the left. Bud was also a president of the chapter.

I imagine a housemother was required, so they hired Mrs. Earl Harris in '53. Bud and I agreed she was a ferocious bridge player. "One time, when her attention was elsewhere," he said, "one of the guys stacked the deck and dealt her 13 spades. She had quite a look." I can see her face. Nevertheless, we gave her props for her talent for keeping a lid on the Deke house.

"That's Jill and me in '54, on our first date at the DKE Hayride. She was a Theta from Clovis. I graduated in '55, she in '56, and we married in New Mexico. We've lived in Oklahoma City ever since. I first worked for a brokerage firm, then went into business for myself in '62. Our company's name was 'Parker, Bishop, and Welsh, Inc.' We dealt in securities

scrambler radio in 'Nam was from Oklahoma, too. Any adroit jungle moves he saw got this comment: "Steve Owens would've done it like that." His buddy was a guy from Tennessee, who always laughed and said something unprintable about Owens.



In 2019, OU celebrated Bud and Jill as long-time season ticket holders. The Jumbotron shows Bud's favorite memory was the '68 Orange Bowl, between OU and Tennesee. OU was ahead 26-24, and, with seven seconds to go, Tennessee's kicker missed a field goal.

You can see in the closeup that Jill is having a blast, and Bud's wearing the O Club jacket he earned in boxing. O Club membership is reserved for those who've lettered in an OU sport. In '69, Bud bought his jacket from Steve Owens.

Yesterday, Patty and I talked about these newsletters and how their aspiration is first to help unite the brotherhood and then to help inspire the re-establishment of the Rho Lambda chapter. We both recognized how fitting it is that Bud is assisting, by

and insurance at first, specializing later in insurance. We built the firm until we eventually had 70 people."

Bud's voice softened as he described his family. "Our daughters, Patty and Suzy are both married. Patty's daughter, Katy, is an OU grad and teaches school. Suzy's daughter Lydia attends Purdue, and Sally will attend Drexel this fall." Here, left to right, are Sally, Lydia, Mary Kathryn (Katy), Patty, and Suzy. Jill and Bud are below.

Patty gathered all these photos for me (Thank you!) I connected with her through Dennis Clowers: "An interesting story about how I found out Patty is Bud's daughter. Suzi and I've known her and her husband for a while. There's a group of us, 5 or 6 couples, who generally attend summertime outdoor concerts on Sunday evenings. "I was drinking a strong libation from a metal cup with OU Deke, Rho Lambda on it. Patty saw it and asked if I was a Deke at OU. I said I was; she told me her Dad was, too. I asked his name, and she said, 'Bud Parker.' I said, 'you mean Byron D. Parker?' Truly, a small world."

I agree. For me, there's this: Steve Owens won the Heisman in '69, and a year later, the guy who carried my

talking with me, in helping to resurrect the OU chapter he helped found.

I get a kick out of the connections I encounter each month and the memories they trigger. My life, and I'll bet the reader's, has been immensely improved by the decision of Bud and others to establish a Deke chapter at OU.

Ron Sorter

September 21, 2014

Richard Burns
10138 Julian Way
Westminster, CO 80031

Hi Richard,

Recently you mailed me a couple of letters about a roundup in mid-October. I'm glad to hear that OU Dekes are still active. Is the OU chapter active? If so, when did it re-activate?

I recently retired and have been sorting through old files and miscellaneous junk that should have been discarded decades ago and found the attached "mug shots" of the first Rho Lambda Dekes. I don't know why this was made but I imagine it was for the 1954 OU Yearbook. Please dispose of this however you see fit.

We were the charter members of the OU Deke chapter. As I recall, we were initiated in the spring of 1954. I got married in May of that year and lost contact with most of the brothers.

The OU chapter was the brain child of Howard Byars. He graduated before we were given our charter but returned for a special initiation into the fraternity. Howard and some of the rest of us lived in Whitehand Hall as we were petitioning the Delta Kappa Epsilon headquarters to start an OU chapter. Unlike most fraternities it had been several decades since Deke had started any new chapters. I was a small town boy that knew nothing about fraternities. Howard knew the history of Deke and quickly convinced us that it was the greatest fraternity in existence. We organized a "local fraternity" called the Charter Club and later took the name Rho Lambda. We rented a chapter house in about 1952 or 1953. Our sole purpose was to start a Deke chapter at OU. Howard graduated before we received our charter but kept in contract with the group.

Our Rho Lambda was small and not very competitive with the large national fraternities. But we had a wonderful house mother, Mrs. Isla Harris. She spent a lot of time teaching some of us how to play bridge. She did a good job of teaching us manners and some of the social graces that we lacked. We worked at organizing ourselves into a functioning group to pay the rent and other bills and hire cooks to provide our meals. In the beginning our social life was limited since we were not established in the fraternity – sorority system.

One of the OU professors happened to be a Deke. He frequently visited our Charter Club / Rho Lambda house for supper and a few drinks. Sometimes he had quite a few. A transfer student from Tulane University Deke chapter was also on campus and would sometime visit.

We met with SMU Dekes and University of Texas Dekes at the OU-Texas game in Dallas where we discussed our desire to start an OU chapter of Dekes. I suppose that was in the fall of 1953. During the Christmas break that year, several of us drove to Toronto for the annual Deke convention to petition to start our OU chapter. Then in the spring of 1954 we were initiated in our Rho Lambda chapter house (by

SMU and UT Dekes?). I believe it was the next school year that the chapter moved into the old Tri-Delta house after the Tri-Deltas moved to a new facility.

Sometime later, after I graduated, I heard that the OU Deke chapter became inactive. I would be interested in knowing the history of the OU Dekes since 1954. Are any of the original charter members still alive?

Best regards,

Riley Goldsmith, Rho Lambda 1955
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Houston, Texas 77077
281-558-8882 (home)
713-416-2377 (cell)
RileyGoldsmith@att.net

The Deke Goal Post (An OU Football Relic)

by

George Otey

The Goal Post

In the fall of 1956, Bud Wilkinson's OU team was ranked No. 1 in the nation. Heading into the Cotton Bowl for the annual OU-Texas game, none doubted the outcome of an OU victory but few thought the October 13, 1956 encounter would end in a 56-0 blowout. As the game closed, an exuberate student body flooded the field and ultimately tore down one of the goal posts.

In similar occurrences, news cameras catch the enthusiastic storming and structural collapse but never follow-up on what happened to the game's broken artifacts, most people assuming the pieces to be either left of the field for disposal by stadium staff or individual remnants ultimately tossed into the trash upon the close of the semester or graduation. Yet to the die-hard Sooner fans of the Rho Lambda Chapter of Delta Kappa Epsilon Fraternity, discarding such a treasured relic as the 1956 goal post was anathema.

In 1969 when I joined the fraternity, one of the most interesting accoutrements in the house was "The Goal Post." It hung on the basement wall, a testament to OU's football heritage and to the loyalty the fraternity had for the school. It was an especially prized possession for the six of us who were also Ruf-Neks. But there were two questions: was it real and how did it get there? Given its overall condition, there was really little doubt as to its authenticity especially in digging up old fraternity pictures. It was a number of years before the how was answered.

Celebration of a 1964 basketball victory under The Goal Post. (l to r) Ted Burdett, Scott Cook, Jim Griffin, Jim Reed, Ron Sorter, & Wayne Hughes

In the spring of 1973, do to declining membership, the Chapter surrendered its charter to the national organization. During that time, word of the pending closure had reached the alumni and many older brothers visited the 700 Elm house (now the location of the Zarrow School of Social Work). During one of those visits of recapturing fond memories, the venerable relic happened to disappear under cover of darkness; its whereabouts becoming a mystery.

In 2013 a group of alums decided to rekindle old friendships centered around Homecoming by sponsoring a weekend of events called the Roundup. In organizing the event Richard Burns received a letter from Ron Sorter with an accompanying package. Although not recalling how he came into possession of the "holy relic," he noted how this "piece of red cedar goal post celebrates the day we ground the faces of our heinous arch-enemies into the feculent mud of Texas." The package contained The Goal Post. It was then decided to present the wood as an annual award, the first recipient to be Dennis Clowers (then an Assistant City Manager for Oklahoma City) in recognition of the nearly fifty years of unbroken attendance at the OU-Texas game.

But the question as to "who" still remained. Dennis, putting on his sleuth cap, performed a forensic study of the board and discovered two names lightly drawn in pencil: Rick Kingelin and Bob Ward. Telephone calls were quickly made. The first to Rick Kingelin (a former OU varsity baseball player) went unanswered but the second to Bob Ward held the answer with a brief reference to Jim Matthews.

In talking Matthews, he recalled, "I don't remember details, but Rick Kingelin and I retrieved a piece of a goal post after the victory. I remember it because I had my arms around two necks and went up in the air to come down and break the crosspiece, just as a pair of hands grabbed it. They were quickly withdrawn into the crowd and I never saw who it was." Ward's memory was simply, "I recall Matthews and others struggling for the wood. Some elbows were flying; it wasn't a fight but there were some bloody noses."

Now 65 years later, The Goal Post, remains; an artifact of a bygone football era. But more than that, it speaks of loyalty to friends and school, and reiterates BEAT TEXAS.

October 2013

My Brothers:

I can't believe I'm not there with you, but it was not to be. Please let this holy relic of Rho Lambda serve in my place.

To my chagrin, all of my progeny worship at alien football shrines. There exists not one who is an OU fan. I am shamefaced. To atone, I must bequeath this treasure to a loyal member of the Tribe That Truly Bleeds Red.

My daughter the Pi Phi says, naturally, that you should just give it to the closest member of her sorority. You could give it to the guy who remembers the Rackmonster Oath the best but if Griffin is in the room, he'll win that one going away. My idea? Give it to whomever of you can still stand tomorrow morning. Whichever method you choose, I am profoundly thankful for your assistance.

Open it up and I'll tell you about it.

Pretty cool, huh? I've racked my brain for years but I can't remember how I came to have it. If I boosted it from any of you, my deepest apologies. It hung in my room at the House so I've had it for almost 50 years. It's had some flagons raised to it, I guarantee you. Some years more than others.

Bud's 1956 team, as you know, were monsters. They were back-to-back unbeaten national champions. This piece of red cedar goal post celebrates the day we ground the faces of our heinous arch-enemies into the feculent mud of Texas.

Two weeks after this glorious trophy was ripped from the soil of the Cotton Bowl by an unknown Deke, the Sooner nation traveled to South Bend, Indiana where we took on Paul Hornung's Fighting Irish. We crushed them 40-0. That would be our sole triumph over Notre Dame until a few weeks ago.

I am forever in debt to the members of the Mystic Circle for helping me find the new guardian for this relic. May he rejoice. May the Holy Goddess of Delta Kappa Epsilon be with each and every one of you.

Ron Sorter
Brother Pi, 1968

Some of the basketball team celebrate after an intramural victory.

THE DELTA KAPPA EPSILON, RHO LAMBDA, CHAPTER

GOAL POST Award

The Goal Post Being "Borrowed" from the Field Following the 1956 45-0 Victory Over Texas

Presented to the University of Oklahoma, Delta Kappa Epsilon, Rho Lambda BROTHER who has exhibited Exemplary Service, Friendship, Support and Camaraderie

For Reaching the Highest Goals of Life and Brotherhood

From the Brothers of Rho Lambda Chapter to:

DKE Rho Lambda Goal Post Winner

1913 Dennis Clowers

1914 Richard Burns

1915 Goerge Otey

2016 Fred Streb

2017 George Otey

2018 Bill Nation

2019 Bob Tierno

2020 Jim Griffin

2021 Jim Reed

2022 Ron Sorter

2023 Terry Miller

2024 Don Burand

2025 Tom Nation

2026 Leo Silva

0 - TEXAS - OKLA. - 45
COTTON BOWL GOAL POST - DALLAS, TEXAS - 1956

0 - TEXAS - OKLA. - 45
COTTON BOWL GOAL POST - DALLAS, TEX
-1956
The "Ron Sorter" Rho Lambda
"GOAL POST" Award
Robert "Bob" Pickup - 2015

RHO LAMBDA

ΔKE

The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA

DELTA KAPPA EPSILON

Gentlemen, Scholars & Jolly Good Fellows

DELTA KAPPA EPSILON RHO LAMBDA LITERARY ASSOCIATION

ROCK SOLID WINNER

Committed Service Award

Inspired by 2020 Cotton Bowl Win

2020 Cotton Bowl

OU – 53 Texas – 45

Longest Game in Series (4 OT)

Most Total Points Scored – 98

(At that time)

FS

DKE Rho Lambda Rock Solid Winner

2021 Tom Vizard

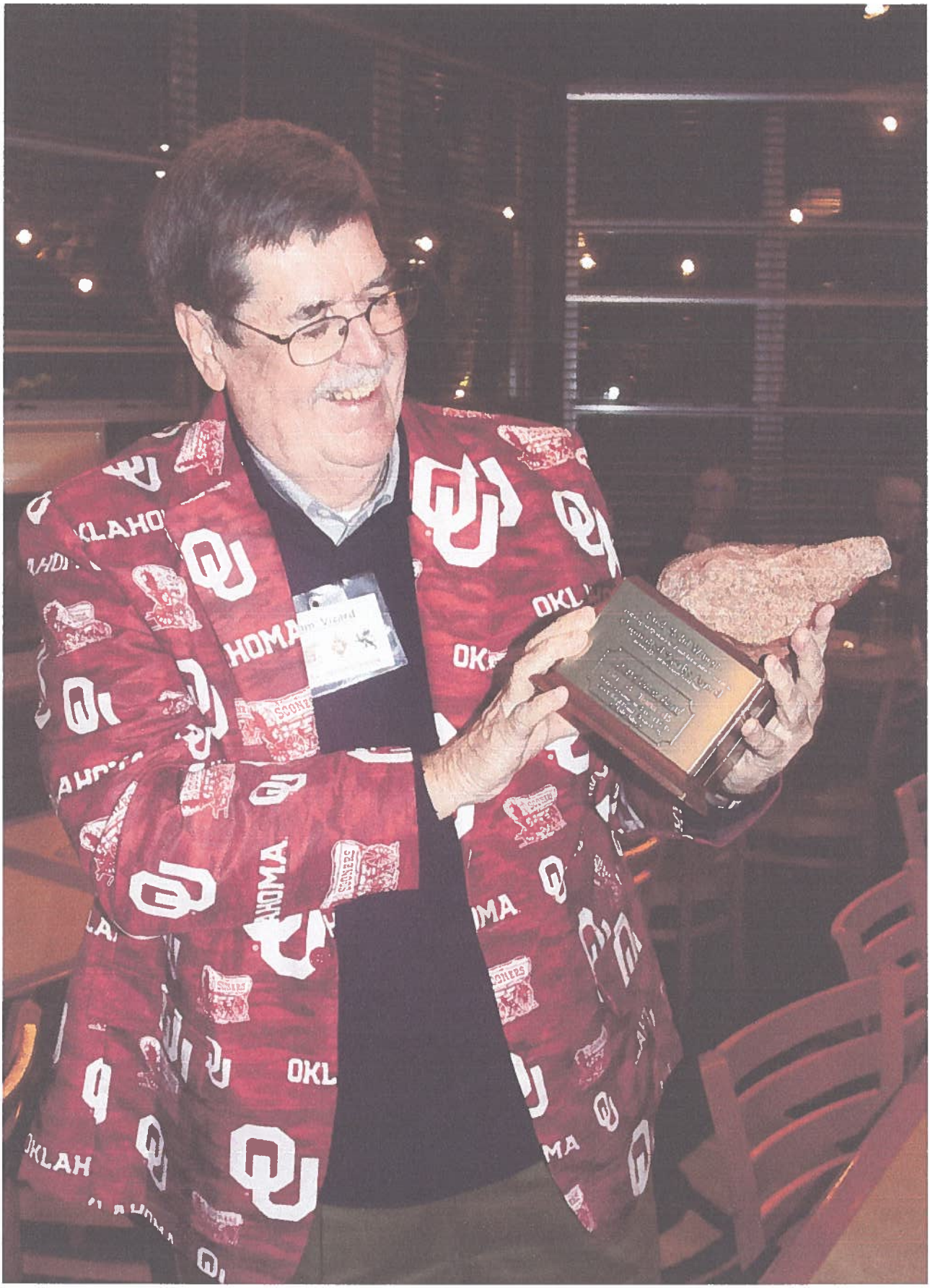
2022 Fred Streb

2023 Richard Burns

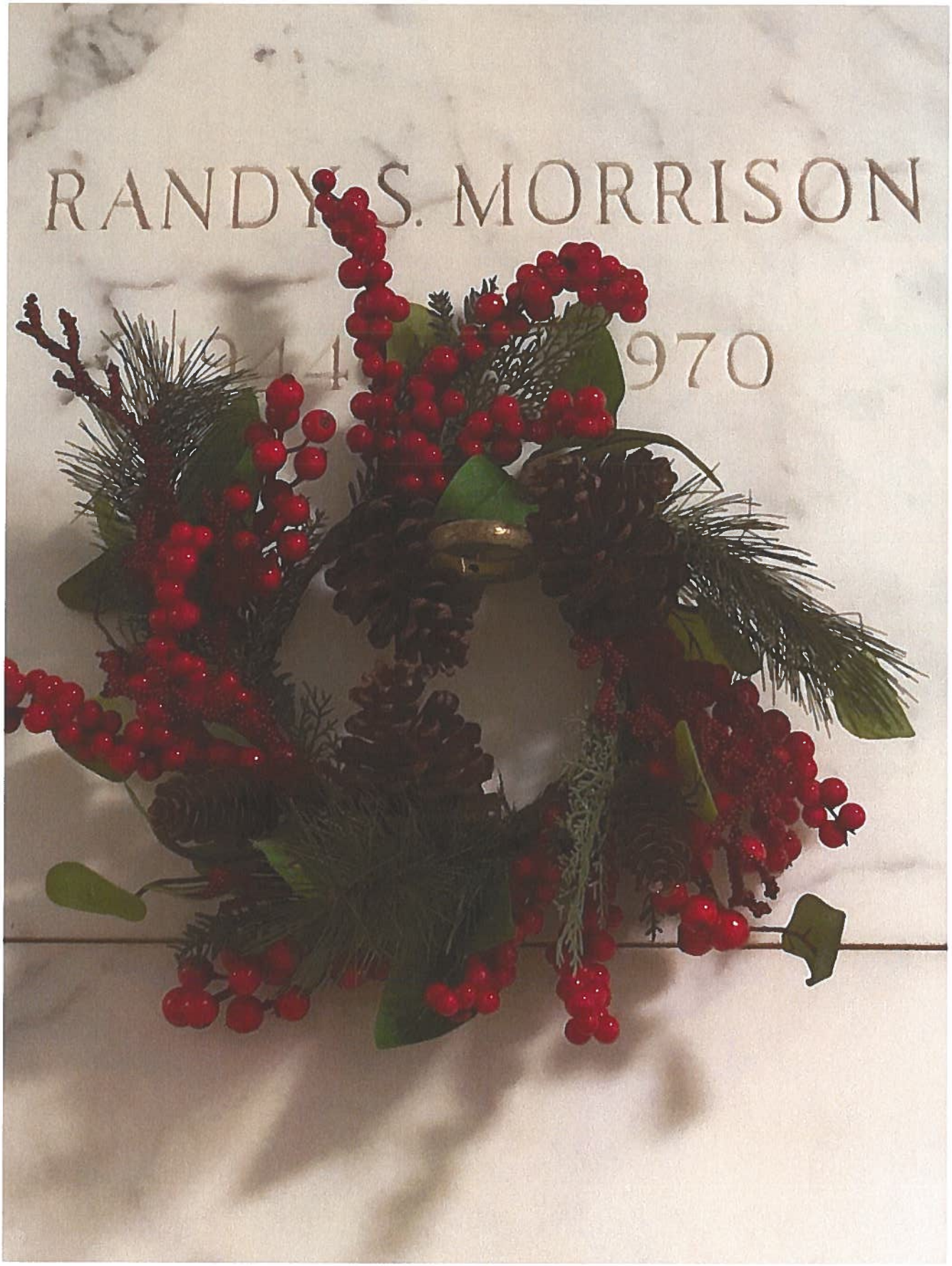
2024 Goreg Otey

2025 Leo Silva

2026 Ron Sorter



THE DELTA KAPPA
EPSILON
RHO LAMBDA CHAPTER
"Rock Solid Award"
Fred Streb


RANDY S. MORRISON
970

From The ΔKE PΛ Literary Association

I want to thank, on behalf of all of us, the Brothers who worked tirelessly on the team I chaired, to launch the **Randy S. Morrison Memorial Scholarship Fund**. The work of **George Otey**, **Bill Nation**, **Rich Burns**, and **Ron Sorter** reminded me of a productive chapter meeting. I urge you to donate to Randy's fund. The OU Scholarship Fund staff has been great to work with, and they look forward to answering any questions you might have. You can access our *Frequently Asked Questions about Randy's Fund here*. See more below.

Kerothen, ***Bob Tierno*, Chairman of the Board**

RANDY STANTON MORRISON

My first words must be these: Randy was a terrific man. My words can't do him justice. I wish we had photos of him and his wife pushing happy kids in a stroller, but sadly, we don't. We do have the conviction that our brother was more than his name etched on Panel 9W, line 108 of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Yes, his death tends to define him, but we live our lives, short or long, and the truth is, we're alive if someone remembers us. And I've found lots of people who remember Randy. I've recently discovered one that may surprise you.

Randy was born in 1944 and grew up in Oklahoma City. His dad was a 32nd degree Mason and Shriner, and his mother, Veda Grace, died when he was eleven. Randy graduated from Northwest Classen High School in 1962. When he entered OU, his creative interests led him to a major in Fine Arts, which included broadcasting. Focusing his classwork on radio, he eventually became station manager for KUVY, the then student-run radio station.

He pledged DKE in 1963 and, I think, found his family. Excelling in the behind-the-scenes world of the brotherhood, he helped set the stage for others to shine. He was always smiling and having a good time. Richard Legatski, his Little Brother, said it best: "He'd keep to himself, but whenever I needed his help, he was always right there. He was a good guy, in every respect."

Randy was a worthy member of our brotherhood. Like many of us, he left his shell at the Deke house. I've got a feeling any reserve was self-confidence without the advertisement.

When he joined the Naval brotherhood, he made an impact:

"I worked with Randy in the OR at Balboa Naval Hospital in San Diego. Once, during a power failure, Randy manually operated the heart-lung machine with a hand crank, saving the patient's life. He was a very special human being." – Darrell Templer, Navy Corpsman

In 1970, during Spring Break, Don Burand was alone in the Deke house and heard a knock at the door. It was Randy, saying, "I saw a car in the parking lot and thought I'd see if I could stay here tonight. I'm shipping out to Vietnam tomorrow." Don told me, "We talked into the night, mostly about his girlfriend. He'd decided to wait

until he got back from 'Nam to become engaged but wondered if that was the right decision. That was the one thing on his mind." How fitting for Randy to see Don's car like a candle in the window and have one last conversation with a brother in the Deke house.

It's here that the music changes. Randy landed in Vietnam in March '70, a few days after I did. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 1st Marines as a platoon corpsman, I to the Army's 23rd Infantry as a platoon leader.

A week ago, on Randy's Vietnam Veterans Memorial page, an old note from Roy Overbeck caught my eye. He'd been Randy's platoon commander, and we've since had several profound conversations. Roy is honest, accountable, and selfless. His note asked any family members who knew Randy to contact him. I was the first family member who emailed him, for all of us. You might want to reread "Brothers in Deke" before reading what Roy had to say.

"When we went through his first village, Phu Non 5, Randy kept doing his best for the sick children and would not stop. I said, 'Hey, enough is enough, let's go. The CO's telling me to get to our objective.' He got right in my face and told me off. 'Mr. O, I'm staying here 'til I'm done.' He was an HM2, and I was a Marine officer, but I could not stand up to him. That's when I knew what kind of man he was. Randy was an outstanding influence on

my platoon. He was intelligent, brave to the point of foolhardiness, and a truly great Corpsman.

"A month later, we found an old shrine loaded with ammo. One of my Marines, Mike Moorhead, and I were doing a careful reconnoiter and triggered a booby trap, wounding both of us. Mike said, 'I'm OK.' His best friend and Randy hurried to help us, and there was a horrendous blast. The shrapnel went over my head, but it killed Mike, wounded the other Marine, and wounded Randy terribly. They put us all on a dustoff chopper to the Battalion Aid Station, and as we flew, Randy said four words, 'I blame myself completely.'

"After the Aid Station, I didn't know where Randy was. I couldn't get those four words out of my mind. Days later, at the Japan Naval hospital, a Corpsman came looking for me and asked, 'Do you know a Randy Morrison?' I said, 'Yes! Is he here? I have to see him.' He told me Randy was in the ICU and only lucid periodically. I said, 'He can't die thinking it was his fault.' So, I gave him a note to give to Randy or read to him. It said,' It wasn't your fault. I was the CO. It was my responsibility. Mr. O.'

"A few days later, I was in the solarium; I remember it had an enormous sunroof. A Corpsman walked toward me, and I could tell from his face. He said, 'We lost Randy this morning. But we read him your note, and he

knows that Mr. O said it was not his fault.' I went to the chapel and cried for an hour."

Don Burand, Terry Miller, and Joel Ketonen attended Randy's funeral. Joel told me he saw Randy's girlfriend there. Don didn't know her but remembers seeing a girl Randy's age. "You know how funerals like that are; you're not sure who people are or what to say to them. I always wish I'd asked her if she was Randy's girlfriend. I could have told her his last thoughts before shipping out were of her."

An officer is responsible for everything his platoon does or doesn't do until the end. Roy and I have both found tremendous closure in our conversations about Randy. We've also located Mike Moorhead's family, and Roy is reaching out to them.

"Now you know Randy received his fatal wound in the VERY best of company as possible... What a hideous waste, one great young man, trying to save his brother, another great young man." – Roy Overbeck

At this point in our lives, I guess Roy and I are just two old platoon leaders who perhaps see our lives more clearly. We've both seen our blood mixing on a chopper floor with others', whipped by the wind into the jungle below. Vietnam was a wasteland. But when the world reduces in size to a perimeter of men you will die for, we would both want Randy to be there. His kind-

heartedness, resoluteness, and iron spine made him a man among men.

Yesterday, on National Vietnam War Veterans Day, the Rho Lambda Literary Association approved two motions. One was to establish the Randy S. Morrison Scholarship Fund at OU. The second was to give the Randy S. Morrison Award to Roy Overbeck. (I was honored to receive that award in 1971). We will arrange for a Deke chapter in North Carolina to present him with this award.

Randy's Scholarship Fund is open now (see below). I would humbly ask you to donate what you can in the name of our brother who "for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his own life," gave everything he had.

Ron Sorter

Rho Lambda DKE Member of the Month Article

November 2021 – Fred Streb

December 2021 – Dennis Clowers

January 2022 – Gordon Bullivant

February 2022 – Bob Ward

March 2022 – Bill Iseminger

April 2022 – Randy Morrison

May 2022 – Stan Germond

July 2022 Bud Parker

August 2022 – Mom Harris

September 2022 – Alan Bauman

October 2022 – Jim Griffin

November 2022- Dave Bulter

December 2022- Jim Matthews

January 2023 – Wayne Hughes

February 2023 – Terry Miller

March 2023 – Richard Legaatski

May 2023 – Bill Nation

June 2023 – Bob Tierno

July 2023 – Harry Raliegh

August 2023 – Joel Ketonen

September 2023 – Bob Pickup

October 2023 – Don Burand

February 2024 - Paul Buntz

May 2024 – Dunlap Vanice

August 2024 – Rick Kingelin

November 2024 – Charles Gill

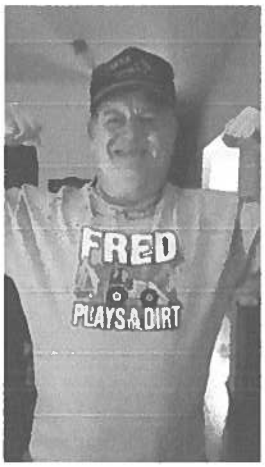
August 2025 - Richard Burns

November 2025 – Leo Silva

February 2026 – Chip Filipski

PA Brother of the Month – FRED STREB

Wait, a balloon?



Yep. In winter, in Wisconsin. Fred's in the red T-shirt above. And yes, that's Fred's fire engine. Of course, he designed that "Bar Cannon," too, for the express purpose of "letting everybody in a bar know the Red Barons have landed." That's ***Fred Streb*** in a nutshell.

OU

Fred and ***Bob Pickup*** are from Wellsville, NY. Bob's dad is an OU alum, and that influenced their choice. Fred's dad gave him some good advice, too. Fred said, "He told me to 'Take ROTC.' I'm glad I did."

When it came time to choose an Army branch, Fred showed them his Math Education major and the Army said, "Great! We'll put you in the Corps of Engineers!" So Fred made the most of his 21+ year career in the military, in Korea, Europe, and around America. He got a Masters Degree in Civil Engineering Management while teaching ROTC at Florida U. Making him a Sooner-Gator Deke.

In Los Angeles, while supervising an LA River repaving contract for the LA District Corps of

Engineers, he learned that an architect who had worked for him, John Lackens, had a Hot Air Balloon.

The Red Barons

"Later, in, maybe, 1984," he said, "I was at Nellis AFB in Nevada, and John called me and said, 'How'd you like to be a member of the Red Barons?' Turns out, they're a bunch of great guys in Wisconsin who do good deeds, fly around in balloons, bar hop on snowmobiles and play "Catch a Parachute Flare." (I took notes. That's what he said.)

"They have an annual "Stomp" ("Party") in February; turns out balloons are more buoyant in frigid air. Anyway, I flew up there from a warm Los Angeles and landed in Minneapolis. It's *minus 18* and exactly 100 degrees colder!! My jackets were in my suitcase.

"I get initiated, we go to bars in little towns, have a great time. I've been to 25 of the 39 Stomps since then. We've also been invited to Lake Tahoe's Winter Festival, too, to help them enjoy that a little more."

In 1987 he hooked up with his Significant Other, Anita and they've made the most of their life. That includes him finding the coolest barn find ever, his childhood dream, a 1950's firetruck. He has it shipped to a pal in Wisconsin who repaints and

restores it, so now Fred drives his bar-hopping Baron buddies in style, with flashing lights and siren for all. That's him above, hanging onto his firetruck.

The "Bar Gun"

I'm not sure exactly how it works, but I think he said plastic pipe, hairspray, and something else. It's a privilege to know someone so knowledgeable about his local cannon-store inventory. Check out the photo on the top right. The gun has some punch, doesn't it? Just the thing to snap the local barstool denizens out of their stupor.

And it gets better. See the "Little People" skit below? Fred arranges the whole thing: the hidden guy behind shaves the guy in front, whose head is sticking out of the sheet. That looks familiar, right?

And the middle guy in the hockey mask, down below? That's Fred, wearing his "Crazy Eyes." One year, he brought 25 of those masks to help enliven one bar scene. I've seen him wear those eyes somewhere, too. (cough, Reunion).

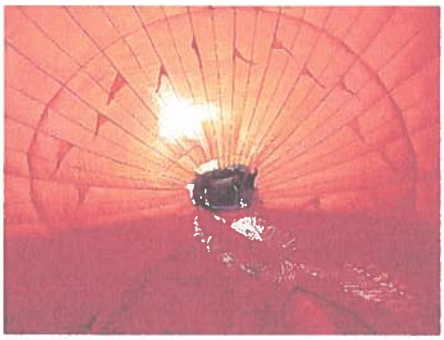
Brotherhood

I'm often thinking about our brotherhood these days. Fred and I talked about the Deke house and the good times we all had there. It seems we've

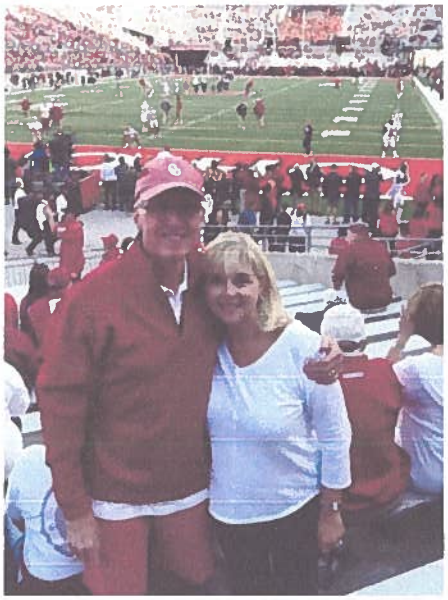
spent a lifetime having the same good times with other friends. We learned how to do that at 700 Elm St. in Norman.

Fred told me, "I try to have a good time most of the time." I'm convinced Fred has the best time when others are having a good time, too. That's why Brother Streb does what he does. He engineers good times for everybody.

Ron Sorter



Brother of the Month – Dennis Clowers



Dennis and Suzi

Suzi, family, OU football. There's more to Dennis' life, but his priorities are easy to see. Consider this: Suzi went to OSU, Dennis to OU and, even after all the Bedlam, they love each other like crazy. For me, that says it all. Cute grandkids, right?

Dennis graduated in '73 with an Engineering degree and an MBA. He ran his own engineering consulting company in OKC for 20 years, specializing in utilities. Then he was hired as the city's Public Works Director, and six years later the Asst. City Manager. He retired in 2019.

46 years in one paragraph. Time flies for us all, doesn't it?

We had a great conversation about our times at the Deke house. Dennis pitched the '69 softball game when we crushed Sigma Chi. That's him and ***Pickup***, above, at the pledge/member football game, and they and ***Stites*** at the '71 formal.

The Goalpost

Let's see, what else? Oh, there's his 65-year stint of attending every OU-Texas game since 1956. See the goal post pictured above? It's from the 1956 game. That's the year we went on to beat Paul Hornung's

Notre Dame team 40-0 and win back-to-back national titles.

Dennis' dad and mom are below, with Dennis and Suzi when they got married. When Dennis was 8, he and his parents arrived at the Cotton Bowl with only two tickets. The ticket taker insisted Dennis needed a ticket, but his dad insisted "Dennis is eight; we can all fit in two seats."

When the man resisted, Dennis' dad gave him both tickets, saying, "If Dennis can't see the game, we won't either." The man relented at that, saying, "OK, go in, but don't tell anybody." So Dennis saw his first OU-Texas game with no ticket. And he was there when the Goalpost came down.

When, at 17, he saw a piece of it hanging in the Deke house during rush, his decision was easy. There'll be more in the January 2022 Newsletter about the Goalpost's odyssey. Even though the Goal Post Award goes to a different Deke every year, the Goalpost itself, in OU colors of red cedar and white paint, hangs proudly in Dennis' office.

DKE Bonds and Golf

The Deke house formed lifelong bonds for us all. Below, there's Dennis and his son with Burnsie and his son at Telluride in the 80s.

A lot of we Dekes play golf, too. Suzi and Dennis were at the Masters last April.

And here's Ben Hogan, I mean, Dennis, at the first tee at St. Andrews, celebrating his 60th birthday with Suzi and friends.

He shot 3 over par and, typical great guy Deke, he gives his caddy the credit.

Ron Sorter

ΠΛ Brother of the Month – BOB TIERNO

GROWING UP

"I was the first of three kids," said Bob. "Our family was Italian and vocal. Pop was career Army, a colonel with a Purple Heart and Bronze Star with a V for valor. Mom ran the house like a general, but they always had our backs; me, my sister Susan, and my brother Skip, a fellow West Pointer.

"Like most Army brats, my family lived all over: Massachusetts, Georgia, Germany, California, Norman, Kansas, New Mexico, Virginia, Bolivia...

OU

"In '67, I graduated high school in Virginia. You could say I hadn't excelled in math, but OU must have pitied me since they're the only school that accepted me. After a summer as a lifeguard swimming instructor, I hopped on a plane to Norman as my family moved to Bolivia.

"Pop made it clear he'd pay for the first two years, with the second two on me. I made a poor showing out of the gate, so I asked a chemistry prof my dad knew to tutor me. I aced the chem final, letting me skip math

altogether. And to have the grades to pledge Deke the following semester.

"Having traveled all over, the Deke house was my terra firma, where I first formed long-term friendships. I wouldn't have graduated without it. I met Karen in '68 on a blind date, and that was it; we became inseparable. Our 51st anniversary is this year.

THE STUDENT STORE

"Starting the Student Store was the most significant event of my college life. I got on the OU Student Association board just after Kent State. Students demanded we do something about stores ripping them off for pencils, notebooks, Cokes, and smokes. I volunteered. I studied how Berkeley did it, then roomy ***Bill Nation*** and I figured out how to fund it.

"With our $10,000 loan from the OUSA as collateral, we told suppliers they should give us inventory up front since we had three 12-story buildings full of students as a captive market. They jumped at that. Bill, Karleen, Karen, and I picked goods from their catalogs to fill the walls of shelves Brother Streb made. We had food, drinks, canned goods, cigarettes, fans; you name it.

"We repaid the OUSA loan and ended the first year having made $100,000! I appointed Bill the

revenue/financial guy. We counted huge stacks of cash each night on the floor of our fraternity room. Starting that store while going to school full-time fueled my later career. Bill and I have remained close ever since, and he feels the same."

RON'S TRIBUTE FOR ROCKY'S GIFT TO HIS MOM

In '70, as an infantry company commander in 'Nam, a booby trap sent me to the rear, minus a leg. The Army notified my mom but with few details. She called the Deke house to let them know. ***Joel Ketonen*** *answered the phone and soon informed Bob, who called his dad. Rocky knew a guy at the Pentagon who kept Rocky apprised of where I was, how I was, and all the rest. Rocky told Bob, and Bob called Mom every day until I landed in the States.*

"***Wayne Hughes*** and I both got draft notices in '70, so we brothers signed up for Army ROTC's two-year program. We went to Ft. Benning for six weeks in the summer of '70 and Ft. Sill for six weeks in '71. When I graduated in '72, Pop flew in from Bolivia to pin on my bars with Karen, but after three months of active-duty training, the draft was abolished, we were released into the Army Reserves, and I started looking for a job in Virginia.

KAREN AND I

"While selling jeans and paint and looking for a teaching job for special kids, I flew Karen to Virginia, proposed, she said yes, and then flew back to OU. When she

graduated, we eloped. She got an interior design job in Georgetown, and we started looking for something bigger and better.

"I got a line on a great position with Denver's Bureau of Prisons (BP). We packed our VW and headed west, staying with Ron until we found our own place. Karen was soon the top salesperson at a local Toyota dealership with a new demo car.

"In '75, I got a promotion to Durham, N.C. as a systems manager, where Karen bought us matching furniture with a bonus she got as (again) top salesperson at a local Mercedes Benz dealership.

"Then I was promoted to San Diego in '76, where Ron now lived. Here's us in Mexico. Karen and I learned how to sail in San Diego Bay. I was soon offered the legal assistant job at a BP regional office near San Francisco, where I got an MBA from Pepperdine. Glaser Brothers, a specialty food supplier, hired Karen. We spent every weekend in Napa or San Francisco. We made a deep web of friends there: our best friends asked me to be their daughter's godfather, and it's been great to be part of her life and see what a wonderful person, wife, and mother she's grown to be.

INTEL

"My next move on the Warden track would be back to D.C., and we decided that was out. I called a fellow Pepperdine student. She arranged an interview with her boss at Intel, who hired me in their planning/manufacturing department. Life changed. We bought a house with a pool in Roseville, CA.

"I traveled a lot. I spent almost every week in Detroit—untold trips to Japan, Texas, and Colorado. Finally, we beat out Toshiba and Motorola, convincing Ford to buy Intel chips. Karen and I worked constantly. We began to speak past each other. She was offered a position as a regional sales manager in Dallas. We agreed we needed to do that.

"I started my sales career in Texas as a field sales engineer. We both had company cars, and soon Karen was flying all over the region. At Intel, I was helping launch the conversion of PCs and development systems throughout the U.S. Army—lots of traveling and drinking. Too much. Karen and I, inseparable, decided we had to give it a rest. She moved to Northern California, and I to Cleveland.

WE REUNITE

"Time passed. We had time to remember what brought us together and what had torn us apart. In counseling, we

practiced discussing emotional issues from our hearts and financial problems with our heads. We no longer mix them. I relearned that our glue was integrity. We decided to get married again.

"This time, we had a big church wedding, the parents finally got to meet each other, and we bought a sailboat to cruise Lake Erie! I was also handling Intel's *Intel Inside* program for the east coast. Then in '93, we left Ohio for San Francisco to manage Intel's U.S. distribution of Semiconductors. In '95, we bought a Bed and Breakfast in Sutter Creek, California, in the Sierras. Karen ran that, with me coming up every weekend.

OUR B&B

"I finally retired from Intel in '99. Our B&B earned us the coveted AAA Four Diamond award four years running. We sold the place in 2008, and for anyone who wants to get into the B&B business, my advice is: don't. I was a certified business coach and strategic advisor for the next seven years, and Karen ran a home staging business.

"In 2012, Pop died, and Mom soon after. We buried them at West Point.

TEXAS

"The cost of living in California became ridiculous, so we sold our home and moved to Denton, Texas, where I drive a splashy OU golf cart. In 2018 I was diagnosed with prostate cancer. On my da Vinci robotic surgery day, Karen was seriously injured, falling down the hospital staircase. After three surgeries and much PT, she's almost back to 90%. So far, I'm cancer free.

"We're both caregivers now. And still inseparable, with the 50-year OU medals to prove it. I've written a book about my prostate journey, I'm a moderator for ProstateCancer.net on Facebook, and I'm thankful to be working so closely now with my fellow Dekes. Here's me with Ron and a golf scorecard.

Our gypsy life on interstates and dirt roads had its surprises, but we constantly evolved. The true upside is everyone we've met, of every possible variety. Maintaining and growing those friendships has deepened us. Our countless friends, those fascinating people, have proved to us that the road we took was our own, and we indeed traveled the hell out of it. Had I not been a Deke, I wouldn't have known how to make those deep friendships. Our Reunions are now stitching us back together, and, who knows, in 2025, some other

gypsies may find their roots as Dekes at OU. Their bonds will be iron."

"In life, it's not where you go – it's who you travel with."
– Charles M. Schulz

Ron Sorter.

PΛ Brother of the Month

LEO SILVA

Brother Leo has stepped up, big-time, to be the Advisor to Keyln Grindstaff, whom the new Founders have elected as President of their new Rho Lambda chapter. I had a terrific conversation with Leo about the vast range of experiences he's had in his life, all of which will be useful to young men trying to make a go of a new fraternity at OU. Here's what Leo told me:

"I was born on the Lower West Side of Chicago. My first neighborhood was in an old Italian area, and when they tore that down to build the new University of Illinois, we moved south into Pilsen, an inner-city neighborhood. Pilsen's famous if you've ever watched the TV show 'Chicago PD'. It was a rough neighborhood. This is a photo of where we lived. We weren't well off.

"Our family's always been active in the church. I went to high school at Benedictine Fathers with about 800 other students, and after graduating in '70, I decided to attend Saint Gregory's, a junior college in Shawnee, Oklahoma. From the inner city of Chicago to the flat, open plains of Oklahoma. Wow! It was a different place entirely.

"St. Gregory's was a junior college, so in '72 I went from a couple of thousand students to 24,000 students at OU. I went through Rush as a junior, and, a little bit more mature, I had some

serious conversations with ***Brother Don Burand.*** *You can blame him for getting me into the Deke house.*

"I graduated in '74, and I got a job in Chicago with NL Industries, only three blocks from my old home. I worked in sales in their precious metals division. They eventually moved me to the West Coast, where I ran their sales operation in 13 states. They eventually sold out in '83, and I joined Merrill Lynch as a retail stockbroker.

"In '81, my son Sean was born, and as you can see from his cap, he chose to go to Notre Dame. He enrolled in AF ROTC, and after graduating, flew AC-130 gunships in Afghanistan. He and his wife, Ashley, now have two wonderful kids—a son, Landon, and a daughter, Lennox. Sean's a pilot for Delta now, flying out of LA.

"In '93, I joined Pacific Life as Director of their Wirehouse Channel. Wirehouse is an old term for the private-wire telegraph offices used to keep all a financial company's offices in sync with real-time data. Now they're worldwide, internet-based, full-service brokerages like Pacific Life. I had 88 employees and lived the SoCal life in Newport Beach.

"Then, in '07, I was offered a really great job. In Omaha, Nebraska. So, what did I do?Newport Beach or a great job in

Omaha? Here's me in Omaha blowing snow. But Oklahoma also came into play. I drove over to see the Sooners play Iowa State on the road, and who am I sitting behind? Mary Fallin, the first and only female governor of Oklahoma. I asked her if I could get a photo with her, and one of the guys with her said, 'That's why we came!'

"I retired in 2017 and returned to Norman. I met Porter Mosler, OU's new basketball coach, soon after he arrived in 2021. It turns out we went to the same Benedictine Fathers high school in Chicago, several years apart!

Boomer and I think OU is number 1!

"In fact, that explains my life. Sean's motto at Notre Dame was/is 'God, Country, Notre Dame.' I made that motto my own: 'God, Country, OU.' That, and my family.

"I met Sonny Omosigho last year at an OU soccer game. He sat next to me, and we started talking about soccer. I educated him a bit about that sport, so now he swings by to

say hello when he sees me there. Sometimes he brings a pal. That's R Mason Thomas on the left.

"I've long believed in community service, and I'm always active in my local church. In California, I served as a Governor's aide and was an active member of the Rotary Club. At Pacific Life, we'd pack trailers full of food for the Food Bank, even gleaning the green bean fields after they'd been harvested so as not to waste anything.

"In Omaha, I helped our employees win an award for performing the most community service in the company. We built playgrounds for kids with special needs and managed events for 5K and 10K runs; anything to serve the community.

"I've also enjoyed helping Rho Lambda become active again at OU. Ethan Woodard is DKE International's Chapter Advisor here in Norman, and he's the guy with the Roadmap of when and what the RL chapter needs to do. I've taken the guys out to dinner, and I talk with them about ideas for rushing other potential Founders. Simply put, that's my role as Advisor to Keyln, the new Brother Beta of Rho Lambda. For me, it was just something that needed to be done."

See what I mean? Leo has a vast range of experience, excelling at everything he's done in the financial world and in his community. He's the perfect Brother to be a guidepost for the new Founders. I've really enjoyed getting to know him. Imagine the terrific conversations Leo and Sean will be having this Thanksgiving about the Playoffs.