

# ALPHA ARTERY

A PUBLICATION FOR ALUMNI OF OKLAHOMA ALPHA ♦ SIGMA PHI EPSILON



SPRING 2022

## CELEBRATING OUR CENTENNIAL!

On February 26, Oklahoma Alpha celebrated 100 years of Brotherly Love at the ConocoPhillips Alumni Center. The evening was filled with good food, awards and, I'm sure, a few lies! The Alumni and Volunteer Corporation was happy to have among our guests District Governor **Greg Steed, Central Arkansas '93** and his wife, Shannon, Grand Chapter Treasurer **Daniel McVeigh, Texas Wesleyan '90**, and Regional Director **Jon Salmen, Louisville '21**.

Current Chapter president **Luke Meyer '23**—along with past two Presidents **Hudson Rucker '21** and **Kase Anderson '22**—emceed the event. We began the evening by remembering our past, and praying for our meal. Following that, we remembered those SigEp brothers who could not be there that evening due to joining Chapter Eternal. In particular, we listed by name those brothers who passed away during their undergraduate years: **Jerd Rasmussen 1920**, **Gene Sexton '62**, **Michael Codling '93**, and **Trey Kertz '12**. We also honored those who died serving our country: **Private Lake Maddox '44**, **Herbert Patterson '43**, **Lt. Frank Pinney '41**, and **Corporal Russell Keck '64**, who received the Navy Cross (just below the Medal of Honor).

Our evening continued with alumni awards. **Levi Close '17** and **Chas Schoolcraft '14** awarded our Distinguished Chapter Alumnus Awards to **Gary Bridwell '74** and **Mike Reddout '85**. Next, for his service with innumerable boards and community donations, **Dr. Robert Breedlove '69** was recognized as our Most Philanthropic Brother. **Tim Armstrong '60** was recognized as being the “wisest” alumnus in attendance, in addition to Kay Robinson and Vicky Brown being recognized as Centennial Sweethearts.

We were able to celebrate the present by reminding the audience of what a great chapter we have. The chapter has won a Buchanan Cup at six of the last seven Grand Chapter Conclaves. Winning six cups over the past 14 years puts us in the top 10 of all SigEp chapters. These men regularly achieve a chapter GPA of 3.40 while maintaining a membership

of 165 men. Further, they place or win Freshmen Follies every year and continually place high in the Homecoming competition. You, as alumni, can be proud to be associated with such great young men!

Here's to another 100 years!

Fraternally,  
**D. Todd Donavan '86**  
AVC President



*One of the table settings during our Centennial.*

## PERMANENT PLAQUE IN STUDENT UNION

To commemorate the centennial of our SigEp chapter, the AVC and Oklahoma State have approved a plaque to be permanently installed in the hallway of the Student Union Little Theater. While this spot may seem random, there is thoughtful consideration behind the placement and creation of this placard.

In 1915, 12 undergraduate men wished to found a local fraternity different than the other

five already on campus. **Dr. Hilton Ira Jones 1903**, a chemistry professor and future #3 on our chapter rolls, was their sponsor. Dr. Jones allowed the men to use his classroom in the old chemistry building to draft up the first articles of incorporation for Sigma Tau, the predecessor to OK Alpha.

By researching maps from the 1910s, archive record requests from the OSU library, and GPS

survey data, I determined that Class 102 was roughly backstage of the Student Union Little Theater. To best publicly recognize our chapter, the SULT hallway was as close as possible to the exact GPS spot where the first conception of our fraternity occurred. The plaque will give a brief description of our founding and list our charter members—and will also make an addition to our charter members!

*(Continued on page 2)*



# PERMANENT PLAQUE IN STUDENT UNION

(Continued from page 1)

For 100 years, Oklahoma Alpha has had a “lost” chapter founder. **Benjamin F. Harrison Jr. '52** donated a handwritten chapter history from his father, Benjamin F. Harrison Sr. 1919, a Sigma Tau founder. The account detailed the installation of Sigma Tau as OK Alpha as well as a Sigma Tau brother who was excluded from joining SigEp due to his Jewish faith.

By profiling every OSU yearbook, I narrowed my search to Henry Futoransky, a man from Haileyville, Oklahoma, who was among the first 20 members of Sigma Tau; however, he remained the only Sigma Tau not invited to campus to be a SigEp. In addition, I found a Henry Futoransky who rented a room in California from Ben Sr. and his son in a U.S. Census file from 1940, further proving to me that the Harrisons likely had special knowledge of Futoransky’s exclusion. I located Futoransky’s great-nephews in Oklahoma City and, should we get family blessing, we plan on including him on the permanent plaque.



*Our SigEp plaque to be displayed in the Student Union Little Theatre to commemorate the founding of Oklahoma Alpha.*

While I am of Baptist faith, I have distant Jewish heritage as well. I did not know any of my own Jewish ancestors, but maybe in spite of that I took Henry’s exclusion to heart...and I also thought of our fellow (relatively few) Jewish chapter brothers as well.

The fact remains that Henry was one of the first members of Sigma Tau and bore some responsibility for the century of brotherly love that you, me, and our brothers have all enjoyed as Oklahoma Alphas. Our chapter was one of the first (and among very, very few in the south) to push for integration in SigEp in 1959. As such, opening the red door is in our chapter’s heritage. As your historian, I’m grateful we honor our founders, but we can express our gratitude to brother Henry as well. While we cannot rewrite the charter history, I hope that this small symbolic step goes a long way to making us better brothers to one another.

Fraternally,

**Aaron Cromer '16**

Oklahoma Alpha Historian, Past Chapter Counselor

## OUR MOST PHILANTHROPIC BROTHER

### RECOGNIZING DR. ROBERT BREEDLOVE '69

**Dr. Robert Breedlove '69** has been instrumental in inspiring and continuing the philanthropic mindset within Oklahoma Alpha’s alumni and undergraduates. Having both a journalism and medical degree, his diverse professional and personal career has exposed him to various people, places, and organizations that have all impacted his life. Since graduating from OSU in 1969, he has been generous with his time, talents, and treasure to numerous worthy organizations that have held a special place in his heart. Some of these notable organizations include American Medical Association, Skin Cancer Foundation, Payne/Pawnee/Noble County Medical Association, American Academy of Dermatology Association, Heifer International, lifetime American Legion and Boys State Co-Chairman, Greater Tulsa Officials’ Association, and North Central Officials’ Association.

One organization in particular we would like to highlight is Wings of Hope, a woman’s shelter located in Stillwater. Donations to Wings of Hope are notably recognized by butterfly statues, which some Stillwater Greek houses and businesses have prominently displayed. Dr. Breedlove was generous enough to donate on behalf of Oklahoma Alpha so that our chapter house could also have a butterfly. This SigEp-themed butterfly sits proudly in our front flowerbed of the chapter house. It was for this and his many other philanthropic endeavors that we awarded Dr. Breedlove with our chapter’s Most Philanthropic Brother Award at our recent Centennial Gala. His lifelong generosity embodies SigEp’s vision of “Building Balanced Leaders for the World’s Communities” and inspires us all to be more philanthropic.



*This butterfly was donated by Dr. Robert Breedlove '69 to support Wings of Hope and is on display at our chapter house. Large donors to Wings of Hope are given a butterfly statue, painted in whatever theme they wish. Dr. Breedlove donated his statue to the chapter house and commissioned Mom Val’s daughter, Carlie London, to paint it in a SigEp theme.*



*AVC Treasurer Chas Schoolcraft '14 (left) and AVC Member Levi Close '17 (right) presenting the Most Philanthropic Brother Award to Dr. Robert Breedlove '69.*

Thank you again and congratulations, Dr. Breedlove!

# VIRTUE, DILIGENCE, AND BROTHERLY LOVE

## HONORING GARY BRIDWELL '74 AS A DISTINGUISHED ALUMNUS

**G**ary Bridwell '74 was recently recognized with the Oklahoma State University 2021 Distinguished Alumni Award. Due to COVID, the presentation was held in 2022. "The OSU Alumni Association's Distinguished Alumni Award recognizes graduates who have garnered notoriety in their particular field, and Gary is a perfect example of that. He has made a tremendous impact through his work with Ditch Witch and his involvement with numerous nonprofits and community organizations. Gary served as Pistol Pete No. 19 and, "His passion for OSU is as strong today as it was when he was portraying America's greatest mascot," said OSU's Alumni Association President Rob McInturf.

Gary graduated from OSU with a bachelor's degree in physiology and his MBA in marketing and finance in 1976. In addition to being a dedicated member of SigEp and Pistol Pete, he was also in Blue Key Society and IFC.

Currently, his career spans more than 40 years in construction dealership sales, management, and ownership for Ditch Witch, the leading brand worldwide in the underground construction industry. He is consistently recognized as a top 10 dealer worldwide. In

addition to equipment dealership operations, he leads Silver Edge Dealer 20, a think-tank organization composed of a select group of Ditch Witch dealership owners across the western half of the United States.



For years, Gary led the Oklahoma Alpha AVC, serving as president when the decision was made to start a fundraising campaign for a new house. His leadership and dedication to SigEp resulted in the beautiful new home Oklahoma Alpha occupies today.

"SigEp gave me a deeper understanding of teamwork in action and what a close brotherhood truly looks like. I learned from older brothers and alumni advisors how to be a servant leader and positively represent SigEp and our brotherhood on campus. I've carried forward those lessons and the traits they instilled throughout my career and everyday life. I'm thankful and still proud today to say that I'm a Sigma Phi Epsilon!"

Gary is the definition of virtue, diligence, and brotherly love. He has been—and will forever be—a supporter of Oklahoma Alpha. He and his wife, Mary Ellen, continue to be servant leaders in their community. Most of all, they are genuinely good people.

Kay Robinson  
Past Oklahoma Alpha Chapter Counselor and  
Past Oklahoma Alpha AVC Treasurer



*Levi Close '17 presents Gary Bridwell '74 with the Distinguished Alumni Award.*

## CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION



*Our last three SigEp Presidents emceed this year's centennial. From left: Hudson Rucker '21, Kase Anderson '22, and Luke Meyer '23.*



*Grand Chapter Treasurer Daniel McVeigh, Texas Wesleyan '90 was welcomed as one of our guests.*



*Undergraduate brothers celebrating 100 years of Oklahoma Alpha!*

# DARNELL BROTHERS WIN NATIONAL CHEERLEADING CHAMPIONSHIP...AGAIN!

**B**roken Arrow brothers **Tucker Darnell '22** and younger brother **Parker Darnell '24** are both national champions after competing with the Oklahoma State Cowboys' co-ed cheerleading squad.

The success is not new to the brothers, who won with the Cowboys squad last year. These SigEp brothers balance their time between cheering at football games, studies, and SigEp responsibilities. The eight-time large co-ed champion Cowboys have featured SigEps like brother **Dr. Matt Henson '13** in their past squads.

We're proud of these men exemplifying the cardinal belief of a Sound Body!



*SigEp brothers (and actual brothers) Tucker Darnell '22 and Parker Darnell '24 hold up the national championship trophy after helping OSU cheer team win its second consecutive title.*

# CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

See More Photos Inside!



Past and present members of the Alumni and Volunteer Corporation. From left: Aaron Cromer '16, Chas Schoolcraft '14, Gary Bridwell '74, Vicky Brown, Kay Robinson, Mike Reddout '85, Darrell Pulliam '84, Todd Donovan '86, and Jake Pulliam '19.



Mom Valerie Silvers embraced by some of the chapter men after being honored as one of our SigEp Sweethearts.

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## Sigma Phi Epsilon Oklahoma Alpha

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## THANK YOU, ALUMNI, FOR HELPING US BECOME BALANCED MEN

Thank you all very much for your generosity and continued dedication to our Oklahoma Alpha Chapter. Your donations have helped ensure that the men of SigEp can continue to develop into balanced leaders for the world and uphold the SigEp name as scholarly gentlemen. We are extremely grateful that you are passing on the gifts Sigma Phi Epsilon has given you, and we gladly embrace you as a lifelong member of our brotherhood. — **Jacob Surber '24**

I want to thank the AVC members for their generosity and for awarding me this scholarship. Your donations have helped me, and others, continue our education and remain active in Sigma Phi Epsilon. Thank you not only for this scholarship, but also for your time facilitating the fraternity that has helped me become the man I am today. — **Michael Kimmerly '22**

Over my four years as a new member and brother of Sigma Phi Epsilon, I have been blessed to receive three scholarships through the AVC. As a result from the generosity of our alumni, I have been able to give back to the chapter in a multitude of ways. Rather than having to worry about getting a part time job, I have treated these scholarships as reimbursement for my time serving as new member class president, head engineer of Homecoming, head of Homecoming, and chaplain. Without the continued support from the AVC, I would not have had the opportunity to grow and serve in all these different roles. Thank you for your giving of your time, talents, and treasures throughout my time in Sigma Phi Epsilon. — **Kramer Pascal '18**

## CONSIDER SUPPORTING OUR BELOVED CHAPTER

If you are interested in donating to help our men, you can donate to the chapter house or one of our endowments by visiting the website below for your tax-deductible donation.

[www.classy.org/give/212555/#!/donation/checkout](http://www.classy.org/give/212555/#!/donation/checkout)