

Excellence

FALL 2005

FOR ORAL ROBERTS UNIVERSITY ALUMNI AND FRIENDS



***Derrick Milne
gets in gear.***

See page 5.

Also inside: Pearson's Rides • 40 Years Ago • New Sports Complex • Business: Suite!

Strength in Numbers

Many of you may know that I began working with Mercy Ships, as vice president of Human Resources, about a month before Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast. Seeing the disaster firsthand, one realizes that only the mighty hand of God could ever clean up such a mess and bring it all to order. He is sovereign, and as we are obedient to His call, we are His workmanship (1 Peter 5:10,11 NLT).

More than ever, the Church is learning the importance of working together prayerfully and *professionally* as a team to bring healing and hope. In the same way that Mercy Ships meets the basic needs of the poor and suffering people in port cities, we must continue to show mercy and meet the basic needs of each other — as we work together. Is a brother hungry? Feed him. Is he depressed? Encourage him. Is he sick? Pray for him and see that he gets proper care. These are all things that Jesus did. And we can do them too: simple acts that strengthen the team — the body of Christ — and make a powerful and lasting impact in the lives of nonbelievers too.

Even before the hurricane hit, President Richard Roberts proclaimed that this is the year of the TEAM (Together Everyone Accomplishes More). So timely are these words! When we believers answer together this call to action — this call to *teamwork* — we will see His work done. And the world will see in us a God who cares for them.

As an ORU alumnus, you are not only trained in your profession, you are also equipped to show mercy and bring healing to those around you. The world seems to be getting tougher, but ORU is getting stronger and better, thanks to so many alumni who are prospering in the whole-person lifestyle and so generously giving back to the next generation of whole people in training right now at ORU.

I'm encouraged to know that so many of you got involved in this year's "I Believe" alumni annual fund campaign. This was a powerful way for you to impact a lot of great things at once, because whatever you gave will go into all of the services the Alumni

Association provides to students, faculty, and alumni.

Through the annual fund, we are continuing to make an excellent way for those who come after us. Through scholarships, leadership programs, mentoring opportunities, networking, and many other services, ORU graduates are equipped and are emerging as leaders in their fields, leaving an impression of excellence and discipline wherever they go.

We are that team that will bring about His mighty works, as we work together interceding and reaching out in business, logistics, engineering, medicine, education, and all of the areas where we are trained to be ready whenever duty calls. Right now, we may feel pressed — but nothing can crush us. We've got His infinite love — and we've got each other too!



E. Rhae Buckley 80
Chairman
Alumni Board of Directors



PHOTO BY EVAN TAYLOR PHOTOGRAPHY

Talk about teamwork . . . a tot and ministry to families in need.

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**Excellence Magazine
Mission Statement**
The purpose of Excellence magazine is
threefold: to make alumni aware of what
their former classmates are doing, to
tell alumni what is happening today on
the Oral Roberts University campus, and
to share the good news about alumni
accomplishments with faculty, staff,
and friends of the University. Excellence
magazine is proof positive that the
mission of ORU is being carried out on
a daily basis all over the globe —
"in every person's world."

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It Takes a TEAM

For several years, my management team and I have focused on making sure that ORU is seen as it truly is: a place of excellence, academically and spiritually. About a year ago, however, we decided it was high time that we devote our energy and resources to answering some questions we had concerning what people *really* think of ORU. *Are we getting our message out successfully? And what is that message? Are we correctly portraying our vision?*

We've learned from successful corporations that research is essential to successful marketing, so this past spring, we contracted with a firm that conducted an image study among current students, alumni, faculty/staff, the Board of Regents, prospective students, Tulsa opinion leaders, business recruiters, pastors, national media, and others. Using telephone, in-depth, and Internet surveys, the firm gathered more than 200,000 data points from about 2,200 respondents. Needless to say, we now have a significant amount of information to help us improve.

So what have we learned so far? The research shows that ORU successfully delivers when it comes to affordable education with exceptional "return on investment." With our balanced mix of theory and practice, our students are well-prepared to excel in the workplace.

You'll also be interested in knowing that we had an excellent response from alumni. Of the 825 who participated in the surveys, 91 percent had a positive overall impression of ORU. We also discovered that 84 percent of you visit the Web site on a regular basis and most of you read every issue of *Excellence* magazine. (We'll share



At his State of the University address, President Roberts encouraged students to work as a team.

more of what we learned in the coming months.)

Late last summer, we asked a marketing company to work with us in developing a consistent look for ORU, which will be carried out through our publications and on the Web. As this magazine was going to press, we were in the midst of making decisions that will make the ORU brand more recognizable in the marketplace.

Since this process started, we've been moving fairly quickly. Our Public Relations staff began a Web site overhaul in July, creating new sites for faculty and students and updating content. In the near future, you'll see even more user-friendly changes at www.oru.edu and on the alumni site.

It's going to be exciting to watch ORU rise to a new level as a result of the image study; I believe we can only get better.

On a related subject . . . at my State of the University address in August, I announced that our theme for the year is TEAM (Together Everyone Accomplishes More). That team includes you, our alumni. I can't tell you how much I appreciate your efforts to get the word out about ORU. You truly are ambassadors to a world that may not have even heard

of ORU! We're becoming less and less of a "best-kept secret" and more of a force to be reckoned with — in the business world, in government and education, in the medical field, and with so many people who are starting to perk up and notice that ORU really has something going on!

I appreciate your prayers and your patience as we go through the process of making some refinements. As I've said, we are married to principles, not methods. If there is something (in keeping with our mission) that we can do to help ORU make a greater impact on the world, I'm all for it.

Emerson said, "Build a better mousetrap and the world will beat a path to your door." Here at ORU, we're more interested in taking what we know to be better — God's love and healing power — out *into* the world, but we're happy to have the world come to us for this good news, too!

Remember: As we increase our presence and value in the public eye, your ORU degree will become even more valuable.

Let's go, TEAM!

Richard L. Roberts
President and CEO

Waste Not, Want Not

Derrick Milne 82 makes the most of his time and talents.

BY DEBBIE TITUS 77 GEORGE

Photos by Ken Peers

Nineteen-year-old Derrick Milne hopped on a plane and headed for Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1,033 miles from his home in Markham, Ontario. It was two weeks into the 1980 fall semester, so Milne was expecting a bustling campus.

But when the taxi dropped him off, the place seemed deserted.



Milne says every day at Trimark is a new adventure. Who will call, and what will they order?

“I could not see a single person anywhere,”

he said, remembering his confusion. “I went into one building, and I couldn’t find anybody. I’m very serious — I actually thought, *Did I miss the rapture here?*”

He finally found someone that Wednesday who told him, “They’re all in chapel.”

It’s not so strange that Milne did not know this basic fact about ORU. Although he was slightly acquainted with ORU — his mother was an Oral Roberts supporter — he had not actually considered going there until he and his twin brother were on a year-long trip to Europe following Milne’s first year at York University in Toronto. During that year, the Milnes were playing hockey in Barcelona when they decided to go south for some sunshine. They wound up at a Christian community run by a missionary named Dan Delveccio.

“That’s when I really made the decision to go to ORU,” Milne said as he sat in the boardroom of the sportswear company he now runs in Canada. “At that point I had never been to ORU. I had never met anybody who had been to ORU.

“For the first time in my life, I went on a three-day fast. I was specifically seeking God about what I should do after this year off was up.”

During those days, he recounted, “literally, three things came across my path to do with ORU. One was in a book, one was on a tape, and another was in a magazine.”

ALUMNI FEATURE

That seemed like a pretty clear message from God to him. So he applied to ORU, was accepted, and made plans to come to Tulsa.

There was just one small problem: money.

Today, Milne is the president and CEO of Trimark Athletic Supplies, a company that did more than \$250 million in business before selling off its U.S. interests last year to focus on the Canadian market. Back then, however, Milne relied on the income from a business that he and his brother operated: selling baseball caps outside the Toronto Blue Jays' stadium.

"It was very lucrative," he said, but could it cover tuition costs at a private university in the U.S.?

With only two months left to raise the money, Milne took a leap of faith. He gave away the \$1,000 he already had, thinking, *This is a chance to really prove the Lord, as it says in Malachi, to see if seed-faith really works.*

God honored that, he said. The cap business went very well, and with some scholarships and a job at the campus bookstore, he was able to pay for his three semesters at ORU and graduate debt-free.



During this trip to France, the Milne family saw Lance Armstrong competing in the Tour de France.



Trimark was honored as one of Canada's "50 Best Managed Private Companies" in 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, and 2002.

Did we mention that Milne is very bright, and industrious, and an excellent manager of his time?

"My first semester I was a freshman," Milne said, "and my second semester I was a senior." That, thanks to test-outs, a correspondence course, summer school, and courses that transferred in from York. All this effort so that he could finish early and spend six months in Africa.

Milne's original career plan called for law school, so he wrote the Law School Admission Test while he was at ORU (and scored in the 100th percentile). Business piqued his interest, however, so he chose it for his major and subsequently sat for the Graduate Management Admission Test.

Interesting story there.

"One of the things I was involved with at ORU was being the leader of the street ministry," Milne recalled, "and I'd been out quite late the evening before [the test], and so I really was not focused on the test at all. But I felt that God honored the time I'd spent." Clearly, since Milne scored in the 100th percentile on this exam, too.

As long as you're earning an MBA, you might as well get it from the most respected business school in the world, Milne reasoned, so he applied to Harvard (and only Harvard), completing his application just hours before the deadline. This was right after he finished his third and final semester at ORU. Forms done, he left for Africa.

"One of the things I learned at ORU was 'Go,'" he said, describing his decision-making process. "I look around and so many times, [I think] we don't accomplish what we're supposed to accomplish because we don't actually go. We look at the obstacles in the way or we just don't get up and do it. So I looked at that application to Harvard, and all I did was go."

While he was in Africa, two things happened. He found out he was graduating summa cum laude from ORU, and he received his acceptance from Harvard.

During his years in Massachusetts, Milne had the opportunity to compare his ORU education with Harvard's.

"Harvard taught me how to make a living, and ORU taught me how to live," he said. "Harvard, particularly the business school, is very focused on practical application, whereas ORU is much more about lifestyle, values, and how to live." What the two schools shared, he added, were "the quest for excellence" and "the international component"; both schools are culturally diverse.

Degrees in hand, Milne began his climb up the career ladder, first in investment banking with Morgan Stanley (in New York and London) and then in his own business, Regency Capital, which he launched with a Harvard classmate.

Then came a fateful phone call in 1995 that caused Milne to change course.

His father, David, was one of five partners in Trimark Athletic Supplies. When the partners received an offer to buy the company, they asked Milne for his advice. At the time, Milne and his wife, H el ene, a ballerina, were thinking of moving back to Canada from London with their 1-year-old son, Daniel. To make a long story short, Derrick and his father decided to buy the company themselves.

"I knew a little bit about the business," Milne said, but he was far from an expert. One thing he *did* know from his Harvard classes: "We studied a lot of cases of bright young graduates going into and taking over [and] ruining businesses, so I wanted to make sure I didn't do that.

"I came in very low-key . . . I was just presented as a young blood being brought in to help develop some new ideas."

During the next 18 months, the former partners were gradually phased out (with the exception of David, Milne's father, who has been a key part of the ongoing success). Milne had to hire a new management team. Another ORU lesson came into play — "Dream big" — and has resulted in a healthy bottom line these past 10 years.

"The first thing I realized," Milne said of those early days, "was that we were in a different business than we thought we were in." The original business, selling sportswear to teams, had "migrated more into the corporate side . . . And so, we made a very conscious decision to get more involved in the corporate side." This was at a time when the business community was relaxing its dress code, "so it was good timing. And we developed products that would meet those needs."

Trimark supplies blank apparel products to a network of Canadian distributors who sell the products "to the IBMs and Coca-Colas of the world," Milne said. The distributor handles the decoration (embroidery of names, logos, etc.). The company's headquarters is in Markham, Ontario, with offices, showrooms, and a warehouse — a total of 110,000 square feet.

A sales force of 25 serves 2,500 customers.

Given the vagaries of a business like his ("We are a discretionary item from a budget point of view," Milne notes, and fashion is fickle), it's easy to understand his quandary. "When I come in the office in the morning, I don't know where we're going to sell that day. I have no idea . . . But having said that, you can see the long-term trends, and that's really what my job is, to try to step back a little bit and see where the business is heading.

"That's another thing I learned at ORU and along the way: you can't worry. You have to put your trust in God at the end of the day."

"Cerebral" might not be a word that Milne would use to describe himself, but he's certainly introspective. This father of two (daughter Genevieve is 9) is someone who has spent time thinking about his purpose in life. Having passed on law, at one time he considered full-time missions; he has been to 105 countries and led a missions team to the Philippines during his ORU days. In Africa, however, visiting with missionaries, he was encouraged to use his gifts in the business world and provide support for those already in the field.

As the head of one of Canada's "50 Best Managed Private Companies" (for five years running), Milne also sees how God can use him to influence others. "I try to be salt and light in this environment, in dealing with the employees and the customers and suppliers," he said.

Milne himself benefited from that kind of influence when he was just 10 years old. A teacher named Mr. Mandell asked him what he was going to do with his life. When Milne said he didn't know, Mandell said he should think about it. "You could be a doctor, a lawyer, or whatever. You've got some gifts," the teacher said.

"That was a turning point," Milne said. From then on, "I focused on my studies, and on hockey. Otherwise, I think I would have probably gotten into a lot of trouble. That was sort of the direction I was heading, so I felt like God just kept me away from a few things early on."

Seven years later, three things happened that changed Milne's life. First, at his mother's urging, he started reading the book of Proverbs. Second, he recognized the sovereignty of God. "When I was training for hockey, I used to run long distances," Milne said. (He eventually completed four marathons.) "While I was running, I knew it didn't matter what I did or how hard I worked; there was a Higher Power that ultimately was in charge. So that whole process meant yielding control of my life to the Lord." Lastly, he was challenged by a convicted murderer-turned-Christian, Israel Narvaez, to "stand up for the truth."

"That was my salvation experience."

And salvation, unlike apparel, never goes out of style.

Blue Bird of Happiness

Rick Pearson found his calling on a bus.

BY DEBBIE TITUS '77 GEORGE

Photos by Ken Peers

In the story of the relationship between God and man, the number seven has always held great significance. There were seven lean years and seven fat years in the story of Joseph. Jacob spent seven years working to earn each of his wives.



Pearson says, "The bus business has been where God has called me."

And in modern times, Rick Pearson spent seven years sweeping out buses when he first joined his family's bus company, Pearson Bus Sales, Ltd., following his graduation from ORU in 1977.

Pearson has a theory about the number seven. He says that "every seven years you learn new concepts that [make you think], 'I can't believe I thought that seven years ago.'"

Certainly, he didn't think his degree in business management might have prepared him for nothing more than a job as a vehicular Merry Maid.

You could blame his ignoble position on the U.S. government. They're the ones who told this Ontario, Canada native, back in 1977, that there were too many unemployed commercial pilots in the U.S. — Pearson had earned his pilot's license and all his flight ratings and had started a charter business that combined flying with missions work — so he couldn't have a work visa. Back home he went, to join his father and brother at Pearson Bus Sales. Given the title of vice president, he nonetheless could not shake that broom.

"They had a weird way of training and motivating!" Pearson laughed. He's always laughing. If ever a man had the joy of the Lord, this is the one.

"I remember sweeping those things out, crying, thinking, 'God, what happened?' There's a verse in Ephesians that says — I forget it verbatim — but it's 'If you want to serve Me, serve others' (chapter 6, verse 7). Okay, I'm supposed to serve these people in cleaning the buses, and that's what I did."

During those seven years, Pearson did more than just sweep, gaining experience on the assembly line and in sales. "I've done everything that I'm paying everybody else to do now," he says. Twenty-four years later, he was named president of the company.

No bumps in the road, right? Wrong.

"We were at the height of — let's call it a price war," Pearson said. "I think it was the first time in 46 years that we lost money. The college boy took the bull by the horns!" Laughter flows freely now, but "at that time I was sleeping about two hours a night, and I was praying a lot in tongues; it was very easy to have a prayer language, because I was afraid I was going to lose the whole thing!"

"I said to my wife, Karen, 'If we go broke, the only consolation I have is that I *honestly* went broke!'"

A larger competitor had come in and was trying to drive the smaller bus companies out of business, "and I was caught in the squeeze," Pearson said. He continued to practice something that he heard ORU chaplain Bob Stamps preach about one time: "When you have a problem and you're trying to make big decisions, you just have to do the next right thing."

Being honest with the customers, working hard, maintaining the covenant relationship you've built with God, keeping up with your tithing — do these things, Pearson said, and "God will see you through the rest."

Today, Pearson's company is the largest distributor of Blue Bird city buses in North America, and has been in business longer than any other Blue Bird distributor, save one. The company does about \$30 to \$40 million annually in sales of both commercial and school buses. Pearson is cautiously optimistic that this year will be the company's best ever.

Despite the lost sleep, Pearson can see the value of a trial by fire. "Sometimes God will let you go through certain things," he says. "He's more concerned about your character and growing you than He is about growing your bank account, and sometimes those tests are part of the deal."

There have been other character-building moments in Pearson's life. He spent six years and \$250,000 of his own money to produce "Journey into the Fourth Dimension," a laser light show that streaked through the 66 books of the Bible in about 35 minutes. The show ran for three months, had 30,000 viewers, and resulted in about 350 salvations.

"I really felt I was supposed to do that as a ministry," Pearson explained, "so I went to my brother and my dad and said, 'I've got to take three months off.'" He lost \$70,000, trying, as he says, "to do God's will in my life."

The company celebrated its 50th anniversary this year.

Pearson
BUS SALES LTD.

“At the end of the summer, I thought, man, I’ve really missed it here. I packed it all up. Financially, it hadn’t been blessed. And because it hadn’t been financially blessed, I thought I was missing God in my life.”

Then came the evidence that what he’d done wasn’t so crazy after all.

After the show closed, a customer from Newfoundland called, someone who had purchased one or two buses for two or three years. He wanted 100 brand-new buses. “This was four months after I had sowed my seed in ministry,” Pearson noted.

Four weeks later, a Quebec producer called and ordered 50 buses; two weeks later, he called back and said he needed another 50 buses.

“Within 12 months after I sowed seed into the ministry, I ended up selling one deal for \$7 million and another for \$6 million,” Pearson marveled. “I went to my dad and said, ‘I told you I was supposed to minister!’ I said, ‘That is God. That is a return. He tested me.’ And my dad said, ‘Rick, I believe you.’”

“Two big deals, and they came out of nowhere. That is hearing — ‘Go do this’ — and sometimes it may not make financial sense, but we’re not supposed to do everything financially that’s correct; it’s faith. If it all made sense, you wouldn’t need faith.”

In a good year, the company would sell 500 buses. Selling 200 in such a fashion was a big deal.

Then there was Pearson’s book of prophecy, called *Babylon Rising*.

In 1986, Pearson was serving on ORU’s Board of Regents. The primary topic of discussion at one of their meetings was fundraising for the City of Faith.

“When I left that board meeting, I felt that I was supposed to sell my plane and give the money to the ministry,” Pearson said, and he did. “I realized at that time that I had not really been tithing. I’d been sowing seeds, but not really tithing.”

Once he had made the gift, he said, “I started to go into what I perceive as revelation knowledge.” During a seven-day period, he saw and heard information concerning what would be happening in the future in North America, so he wrote a book, completing the manuscript in 1989. No one would publish it, so he put it aside and finally published it himself in 1999. It’s interesting to note that many of the prophecies he recorded have come to pass.

If it sounds like Pearson is more focused on God than on buses, that would be true. “I’m not a bus salesman who happens to be a Christian; I’m a believer who happens to sell buses,” he says. He was saved at age 7, had two grandfathers who were Pentecostal preachers, and has a father who was introduced to Oral Roberts at a tent meeting in Florida back in 1955 (and has been a ministry supporter ever since). It was father Claude who wanted Rick to go to ORU.

“When I went there [to visit], I knew I was supposed to be there. Like so many other students, you know?” said Pearson. “The best decision I ever made was those four years to go there and get indoctrinated in seed-faith and in giving and the lifestyle covenant.”

And what a time he had in Tulsa. Flying those planes, of course — ferrying missions teams to out-of-town assignments, playing the bass for Souls A’Fire Choir (“and I had the Afro to prove it,” he laughed), taking a discipleship class with Bob Stamps, and getting involved in several other music groups. Of course, he also went to class, and well remembers Dr. George Gillen and his teachings.

“Theory Y and Theory X,” Pearson intoned. “Theory Y says that most people want to do well and want to succeed, and you need to encourage them in order for them to succeed. Theory X says everybody’s lazy, and you’ve got to just constantly stay on them.” Theory Y is definitely the most productive.

Pearson also adheres to Management by Objectives, one of Dr. R. Henry Migliore’s favorite practices. “You set the objective, and then take progressive steps to get there. I do that in theory.”

Long-range planning, Pearson finds, is a little bit tougher.

“I don’t know anyone that has a five-year plan,” he says. “It used to be [valid], but everything now changes so fast.” He gives an example of a time he ordered 100 International buses. “I’m committed, I’m locked in,” he remembers. Then the exchange rate dropped 15 percent before the buses were even built, annihilating any profit margins. “I still have 13 buses left, and I’m just giving them away. That’s business.”

After 28 years on board, Pearson is pretty savvy when it comes to knowing how many buses customers will be buying in any given year. But there are variables, so he has had to learn how to shift gears. If a school district decides to keep its buses on the road for an extra year or two instead of buying new ones, Pearson could find himself sitting on extra inventory.

“These are all the parameters that keep me prayed up,” he says, “because you cannot control that.”

Through the ups and downs, Pearson has held fast to his beliefs: that honesty and integrity are crucial in any business, that as a Christian, his interactions with customers must line up with what he professes, and that his relationship with God is the key to everything.

“When I was in Africa once on a missions trip with Richard [Roberts],” Pearson said, “I called home. And they told me to call one of my customers. I called him and he bought 44 buses over the phone. When I told Richard, he laughed and said, ‘You are anointed to sell buses.’”

You’d better believe it, brother.



CAROLINE, NANCY, AND GRACE GEIGER

Open-and-Shut Case

BY LACEY L. CLAY AND DEBBIE TITUS '77 GEORGE

Due diligence (and some financial miracles) convinced the Geiger sisters to choose their father's alma mater.

This is the story of Grace, Nancy, and Caroline Geiger, but as with any family story, this one begins with the parents — specifically, with the father, **Greg 75**. He's the one who called and said, "Do a story on us. My daughters are incredible."

Scholars. Vocalists and instrumentalists. Award-winning athletes. Missions-minded, rock-climbing, backpacking, motorcycle-riding world-changers.

Yup, that pretty much sums up these three sisters from Waynesboro, Pa.

And the dad? Wife Nina will confirm that it's a miracle he's still around to brag on their five children (which include Jack and Molly).

This is just a small part of their story . . .

Stormy Weather

It started out as a normal evening of running errands. Then that snowy December evening in 2003 changed, turning into a hellacious nightmare that almost cost Greg Geiger his life.

As Geiger was driving home, a truck slid out of control and smashed into his car. "I didn't realize it, but I was telling the police officer that I was okay. In actuality, my liver had been severed into two pieces," Geiger said.

Two hospitals later, Geiger found himself in surgery. The first surgery failed; the second, which doctors considered hopeless, turned out to be a success. But his chances of surviving were still slim. Six weeks, three more operations, two collapsed lungs, a case of sepsis (which can be more deadly than the liver laceration), and 70 units of blood later, Geiger was finally on the road to recovery.



Clockwise from upper left: The Geiger siblings: (back row) Jack, Caroline, Grace, (front row) Molly, and Nancy. Greg and Nina Geiger. Caroline is a scholar in the honors program.



“The sterling part of the whole experience for me,” said Geiger, who works as a residential counselor with at-risk adolescents, “was the way [my] children rose to the occasion. Through their grief, they wound up spending Christmas Eve and Christmas Day in the hospital. . . . With a wonderful attitude, they all pulled together as five children and just proved the bonds that make a family strong.”

While the first part of this drama was taking place in Pennsylvania, the Geigers’ two oldest children were at ORU. Grace, the one who’s headed to medical school, described the difficult week. “It was very hard. It was finals week. . . . I had all of my finals still to take, and not only that but they were very difficult *without* the added stress. That was a point that I was unable to focus.”

Nancy, the second oldest, remembers the most traumatic experience of her freshman year. “It was the day before my first final, ever. We decided to stay here and take them. . . . It was awful being 1,300 miles away, not knowing if your dad was dead or alive. God was just really a lifeboat to cling to because I had nowhere else to go.”

After finals were over, the girls went home and spent Christmas break in the ICU. According to Nancy, they “basically moved in and took over.” Christmas dinner was cooked in an electric skillet, a crock pot, and a toaster oven as the family supported one another through a tough, trying time.

No one can explain why accidents like this happen, but for Grace, it will probably give her a new perspective and extra compassion when she becomes a doctor.

Prepping for Service

During her first three years at ORU, Grace has gained valuable experience in the medical field while on medical missions trips to Ghana and Mexico. In Ghana, she was able to assist with two clinics. “In the clinics, we set up various stations where we rotated. . . . we got to see the kinds of diseases and sicknesses that were coming through and how the doctor prescribed the medications,” she said. She also participated in a pharmacy station, where she filled prescriptions, and a spiritual care center, where the missions team was able to witness to patients.

Medicine was not Grace’s original career choice; she wanted to pursue classical piano. But while preparing the music that she had to play to be accepted as a music major, it became what she calls a “drudgery” for her. “I realized that if this is how it is just to prepare to get in, then this isn’t something that I’m called to do.” At that point, she had narrowed her college choices down to two schools, one of which was ORU. When the other school told her it was too late to switch from music to science, she considered that God was closing one door and directing her to ORU.

Grace says she saw a difference on the ORU campus. “I’ve visited several different Christian schools, and you can talk to students and see if they are serious about their relationship with God or if they are just going to a Christian school because that’s the thing to do. There was definitely a marked difference that I saw between talking to students at other schools and talking to students here,” she said.

Greg Geiger will tell you that his oldest child puts her whole heart into everything she does, from academics (she received a Presidential Scholarship) to athletics (she played on a national champion volleyball team at her Christian high school) to music (an ORU professor says Grace sings the blues “like a pro”). And when it comes to Grace becoming a doctor, “nothing deters her,” says her dad. “She works incredibly hard toward this goal.” As Grace sees it, she has to do her best in *every* area in order to get into the medical school of her choice. “It isn’t a cakewalk to get into med school,” she says. “You have to have the credentials and the GPA and the MCAT scores as well as the experience. What it comes down to is every day . . . this exam and this quiz, and doing that (being consistent) every single time.”

Then There Were Two

Sharing her sister’s interest in athletics, missions, and academics didn’t influence Nancy Geiger’s choice of ORU. Just the opposite. In fact, her alumnus dad and her older sister were the top two reasons she *wasn’t* attracted to ORU. This Mensa candidate wanted to carve her own path. Still, if God would deal with the financial aspect, she remained open to the possibility of ORU.

Her choice was made when she was chosen to be a National Merit Scholar, which would pay for all of her schooling at ORU. She saw that as a clear sign from God. “I wasn’t fighting [going to ORU]; I wasn’t digging my heels in. I just wanted to make sure that was God’s will and really make sure that was where I was supposed to be,” she said.

Since coming to ORU in the fall of 2003, Nancy, who also plays the cello, has led her wing teams to championships in volleyball, soccer — and in football, a sport she had never before played. If you read her admissions essay, that’s exactly the kind of challenge she was looking for. “When I visited ORU,” she wrote, “I was struck by the electricity of the students, the vitality, the current of excitement and spiritual presence that I acutely sensed. I realized I wanted that in a school, that I wanted to be surrounded by kids who are in love with the Lord, where I can grow deeper and be stretched and be prepared for a life of service.”

Looking back at the past two years, Nancy said, “I remember four weeks after I got here, high school seemed so far

away. Every single semester God has stretched me. It’s been so beautiful because I’m finally in a place where I’m not fighting the current. I went to a Christian high school, but even there it was more of a spiritual scoreboard, everyone trying to out-Christian each other. When I got here I exhaled and was like, ‘Oh, wow, I’m surrounded by people who are all walking with the current. They’re all trying to go to Christ.’”

This international community development major, who is minoring in Spanish and TESL (Teaching English as a Second Language), started out as a missions major, but changed course to get more practical preparation. “As far as what I want to do with it, I really have a passion for missions,” Nancy said. “Anything I can do with international missions is where I am going.”

That passion is reflected in the way she spends her time off from school. Last summer she returned to Honduras for a missions trip. “I’ve been to Latin America a few times . . . I’ve worked with children in Honduras and I love it there,” she said. In her admissions essay, she described a missions trip where she took part in a construction project: “Scorching heat, little knowledge of the language or the people, no skills that could aid me. And there is nothing I would rather do for the rest of my life.”

Burning Down the House

It might sound as if Geiger life is a little idyllic, but it’s anything but. Accidents seem to happen — and mostly around Christmastime, like Greg’s car accident. Caroline, the third daughter, remembers the Christmas of the house fire very vividly. “It was one of those things that was literally burned into my memory,” she said.

It was early in the morning on that December day in 2000 when Grace came to wake Caroline up. “You’ve got to know Grace; she’s very calm, take charge,” Caroline said. “The way she said [the house is on fire] was like . . . something that was a common occurrence. I’m like, ‘Okay — OH MY GOSH!’ But it’s funny how in times of disaster — we’ve had several disasters in my life — God put His hand on my body every single time and it was just peace and slowness.”

Caroline said the family all knew what to do during the fire; nobody panicked. Her mom went back into the house to try to put the fire out, but it was already too big to handle. “When she ran out, she left the doors open — and two rooms over is a huge gas furnace. If [the fire] had hit the furnace, it would have taken our house and two houses on either side of us down,” Caroline said.

After numerous attempts to call 911 (there was no answer), the firemen finally arrived and put the fire out. When the firemen emerged from the house, they told the Geiger family that if they hadn’t shut the doors, the furnace would have exploded. Caroline said, “Mom was like, ‘I know I left those doors open

because they were too hot to close.” The firemen assured them that the doors were closed.

“That’s kind of our fire story and how God shut the doors for us,” recounted Caroline.

Caroline has seen a growth process in her life through the family tragedies. “I would never take back one of those things that happened, because I have grown so much through them. I would have never picked them, but looking back at the things that have happened, I’ve grown in my faith. I’ve grown in my trust in God because He has never forsaken us.”

When it came to choosing a college, Caroline gave serious consideration to several other schools before choosing ORU and enrolling this past August. (Once she arrived, “it was like she had been here all the time,” says Nancy.) Geiger daughter No. 3 jumped in with both feet, settling on a psychology major with a Spanish minor and reveling in dorm life. She also plays intramural volleyball, a sport she has loved since high school. And this classical pianist, who began playing at age 4, says she would “love to get involved” with campus music in some form, and at some point in the next four years, indulge her love of travel and languages by studying abroad.

And Now There Are Three

A National Merit Scholar like her sister Nancy, Caroline is a scholar in the honors program and, as such, is seriously focused on her studies. She gets that love of education honestly; a few years ago, Nina Geiger decided to teach all of her children Latin and Greek. Before she arrived in August, Caroline was looking forward to being reunited with her big sisters. “My family is so close-knit and Grace and Nancy are two of my best friends, so I know we’re going to have so much fun,” Caroline said. In fact, she decided to room with Grace. All three girls live on the first floor (upper level) in Braxton Hall.

Caroline has her missions war stories to tell as well, such as the time in Mexico when she and a team composed mostly of teenaged girls built a house — without power tools, working 18 hours a day. “I have never worked so hard in my life or been so entirely satisfied,” she said of this experience, “and I will never forget the tears running down the mother’s face as she unlocked the door to her new home for the first time.”

Why did Greg Geiger’s three oldest children *really* choose to attend ORU? Maybe it was the effect that the university had on Geiger while he was here. (He actually attended Duke University for one year before transferring to ORU.) He talks about having “rock-solid relationships” with people from ORU, like his former roommate, **John Fickett 78**, who pastors a church that Geiger helped him start in Pennsylvania. Another classmate, **Dave Besecker 80**, is a music minister in Waynesboro; his wife helped deliver all five Geiger children.

Geiger told his girls that they could go to graduate school anywhere they wanted, “but they would not get the opportunity to rub shoulders with the kind of people they would meet at ORU anywhere else in the country.

“Every one of them had the opportunity to go somewhere else,” he added, “and they all decided they would go to ORU.” He said that when they put the factors together — physical education, spiritual life of the campus, people they would make friends with, and academics — it was obvious that ORU had a lot to offer. “Plus, the fact that they earned financial aid to the degree they did was very helpful.”

View from the Top

This family’s idea of fun, aside from riding motorcycles, is backpacking and mountain climbing. “I’m going to say we’ve done about 150 miles on the Appalachian Trail,” Geiger says. “We’ve also done Mt. Washington (New Hampshire), which is the highest mountain on the Northeast seaboard (at 6,288 feet), and Mt. Katahdin (Maine), which is a more enjoyable climb. All five children made it to the top of both mountains, although it was quite a challenge. For Mt. Washington, for instance, you have to pass two signs that say, ‘You are entering one of the most dangerous places in the world. Many people have died on this mountain. If there is any threatening weather, do not attempt to go to the summit. Turn around and go back home.’” The Geigers got caught in a thunderstorm, but decided to press on. “We made it,” Geiger said, but, he admits, “it was rather foolhardy.”

Experiences like these have found their way into his older children’s valedictory addresses and, more important, have informed their lives.

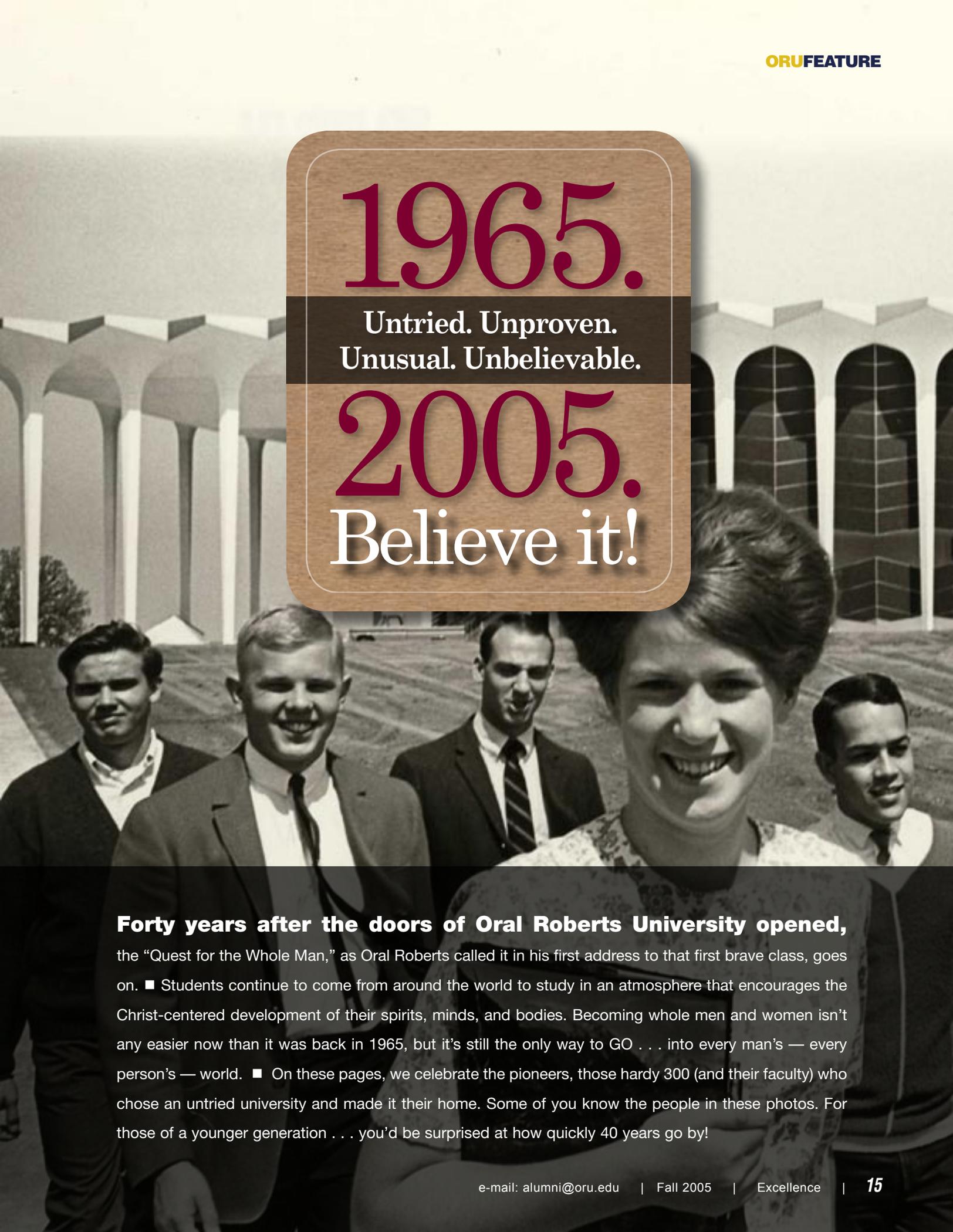
“Backpacking is just one of the ways I have learned life’s lesson that harder isn’t always less desirable and easier isn’t always better,” wrote Caroline in one of her essays.

Families that God has blessed with brains, talent, and physical strength are not immune to the vagaries of life; the Geigers are Exhibit A when it comes to making that case. As all seven of them will tell you, however — especially in light of Greg’s accident — each day is a gift, and the struggle is worthwhile.

Nancy delineates the Geiger attitude toward “the things that Satan has tried to do to our family — house fire, my dad’s car accident, financial difficulties . . . at the time, you don’t really see yourself as growing through those, you just see yourself as trying to get through them. But you look back and, really, those were the best experiences for my family.

“My family isn’t perfect. [But] I really love them, and we’ve come through the hard times and landed on our feet. And we have the grace of God to thank for that.”

You can contact Greg at misterfunster@comcast.net.



1965.

Untried. Unproven.
Unusual. Unbelievable.

2005.

Believe it!

Forty years after the doors of Oral Roberts University opened,

the “Quest for the Whole Man,” as Oral Roberts called it in his first address to that first brave class, goes on. ■ Students continue to come from around the world to study in an atmosphere that encourages the Christ-centered development of their spirits, minds, and bodies. Becoming whole men and women isn’t any easier now than it was back in 1965, but it’s still the only way to GO . . . into every man’s — every person’s — world. ■ On these pages, we celebrate the pioneers, those hardy 300 (and their faculty) who chose an untried university and made it their home. Some of you know the people in these photos. For those of a younger generation . . . you’d be surprised at how quickly 40 years go by!



“We are striving for ORU to be big enough to meet the needs of its students, but small enough to know each one by his name . . .”



“Here you can reach for excellence and find it.”

“I think you can emerge as the world’s most wanted college graduates.”



“We are a team here. We want you on that team. It’s not the third team, or the second team; it’s the first team. It’s brash, it’s cocky, it has stars in its eyes; but it’s humble, too, and dependent on God.”

(Oral Roberts quotes from the “Quest for the Whole Man” address, Sept. 7, 1965.)

“You are a person here, not an IBM card!”



Meet Yonah Cole

By Elissa K. Harvill

Although she was born in Nahariya, Israel, Yonah (pronounced Yoh-na) Cole, a junior music education major, did most of her growing up in Tucson, Ariz. Raised in a charismatic church, Cole was drawn to music even as an infant in the church nursery. “My parents have told me that when the worship became anointed I would scoot closer to the intercom speaker that allowed the nursery workers to hear the service.”

She wrote her first song at the age of 4 and has been writing music ever since. Her call to lead worship came early during middle school when she was leading the worship for a “See You at the Pole” event. “It was then that I realized that for the rest of my life I wanted to lead others to worship Him,” she said.

Cole’s ultimate goal is to be a worship leader and music director, incorporating dance, drama, vocal, and instrumental ministry. She’s studied piano since she was 4 and is currently learning to play the violin and will soon learn the guitar. “I like the fact that you can take a guitar anywhere!” she said.

As a trained musician, Cole can definitely tell the difference between performance and worship. “Standing on the stage with a smile tattooed on your face and words pouring out of your mouth is *performance*. Whereas in leading worship, you guide others into the presence of the living God. However, when praise becomes self-recognition, the service quickly becomes performance or *self-worship*. It is then *our* presence in the room rather than the desire for *His* presence in the room,” she explained.

Addressing the observation of late that so many worship leaders come across as divas or rock stars, in love with

their own voices, Cole commented, “How one ‘comes across’ is determined by the meditation of their heart. Some artists choose to spend the majority of their time preparing musically for their ‘performance,’ rather than truly seeking the presence of the Lord. Worship is impacted by the attitude of your heart and by the time spent with Him in your prayer closet. When our hearts are off-center, we begin compromising.”

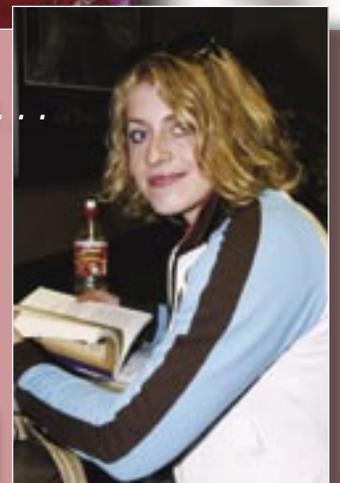
Cole enjoys studying music and is also minoring in worship leadership. Above all, Cole says the ORU music department has equipped her for the real world. “I am thankful for ORU’s excellent teachers who have imparted not only academic and musical expertise but also godly wisdom for life. I know that as a result of having been part of the music department for four years of college, I will be prepared for God’s call.”



Cole appreciates the encouragement and training she receives from music department faculty members.

Also appearing on the ORU campus

BELOW: A lively bunch (L to R): Mallisa Bentley, Andre Campbell, Stephanie Mena, Valerie Castillo, and Yonah Cole are all studying music and/or theater. Cole shared, “My goal this semester is to learn to make the most of every opportunity that comes my way. The Lord has placed me here at Oral Roberts University to prepare me for fulfilling the call He has placed on my life. I believe ORU is the launching pad to reach the nations for His glory!”



ABOVE: Jenny Knier, an elementary education major, takes a moment to relax at the Java Stop during registration. “This year, I’m most excited about a reading and language arts class I’m in where we’re learning different methods of teaching reading and writing to elementary students.” she said.

Business Is **BOOMING!**

By Elissa K. Harvill

Just over a year ago, **Dr. Mark Lewandowski 88, 92 MBA** had returned to ORU and was getting ready to transition into a new role as dean of the School of Business. So, how was the first year?

“We’re doing EXACTLY what we said we’d do a year ago,” Dr. Lewandowski stated.

(For those who need a recap: the former dean, **Dr. David Dyson 73, 78 MBA** decided some time ago that the time had come to take the School of Business to the “next level,” and that Lewandowski was the man to lead the charge. For his part, Dr. Dyson relished the chance to go back into the classroom on a full-time basis and tackle other university projects, such as strategic long-range planning.)

Since the switch, Lewandowski has focused on enlarging the School of Business’s national presence — speaking at major business functions, publishing articles, and making industry connections that will be key to the school’s future success.

The word is definitely getting out and the excitement in the newly decorated School of Business suite is tangible. This year alone, the school will be actively consulting, marketing, and aiding distribution in major industries, and taking new products to the venture capitalist market; in one case, if the students are successful, the school could stand to make about \$4 million in commissions. The school has also become very active in the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and the Tulsa Metropolitan Chamber. Lewandowski himself is serving as co-host of the latter’s monthly breakfast network.



A new couch and three “chairs”: Dr. Marshal Wright (left), chair of Graduate Business, is joined by Dr. James Russell and Terry Unruh, co-chairs of Undergraduate Business.

“I’m having to increase the staff because of a lot of the things we’re doing,” the dean said, pausing only briefly to catch his breath. For example, with grant money from the Bank of Oklahoma, the School of Business has been assisting a nonprofit women’s organization called Resonance that is actively developing job opportunities for women coming out of prison. Lewandowski is chair of the jobs committee.

The explosion of activity in the School of Business will have an even greater impact this year because there is now a new structure in place that allows Lewandowski to move about more freely from coast to coast — and within the local community too. A team concept has created co-chair positions for **Terry Unruh 77, 80 MBA** and Dr. James Russell in the undergraduate school, with **Dr. Marshal Wright 83, 89 MBA** chairing the graduate school. (For those who are wondering — no, the “Czar,” Dr. George Gillen, is not retiring.)

Meanwhile, Dyson is spearheading the process of gaining specialized accreditation for the School of Business through ACBSP (Association for Collegiate Business Schools and Programs), a national accrediting body that values teaching excellence along with academic research and industry outreach. It’s a perfect fit for ORU, Lewandowski says.

Site visits could begin as early as next year, but the School of Business, the dean confirms, is ahead of the game and in “great shape” for the process. In preparation, the school’s offices have been appropriately transformed to reflect its professional nature. Thanks to an obliging alumnus, the school was able to purchase brand-new leather furniture, coffee tables, lamps, and artwork to give the space the feel of a real business suite and a first-class business school.

“We’re moving and shaking!” Lewandowski said. And with the new structure and the old guard, the school can count on a winning team going forward.



Extreme Makeover, ORU Web Site Edition

In the coming months, visitors to the Oral Roberts University Web site (www.oru.edu) are sure to notice some new cyber curb appeal. In response to the recent image study, the ORU Public Relations team has spent countless hours industriously reconstructing displays and layouts, adding thoughtful splashes of fresh content and graphics here and there to reveal the vibrant and thriving students, faculty, and alumni within.

“Because the Internet is now the easiest method for researching colleges, ORU understands the importance of having a site that is continuously updated and easy to maneuver,” said Jeremy Burton, director of Public Relations.

“Especially with admissions and financial aid, the university wants to make sure that students and parents can easily locate all the information they need.”

In addition to the various nips and tucks on the main ORU site, the

Public Relations team has also engineered new Intranet sites, tailor-made for students, faculty, and staff. ORU Intranet, known as “Eli,” has never looked better or been so user-friendly.

And what about the alumni site? you ask. As no site shall be left untouched by this makeover mission, it too will be receiving a streamlined look that will complement the overall feel of the main site. According to Burton, the new-and-improved Web site is scheduled to debut in January 2006.

Who Could Forget?

When **Doug Coil 78** was reading the spring issue of *Excellence*, it triggered some memories that he wanted to share concerning those electrifying days in Mabee Center, circa 1974-77, when Arnold Dugger and the Titans were kings of the basketball court.

“I hope this blesses [Arnold] when he reflects on his time at ORU,” Coil wrote. Here’s what he had to say:

I wanted to comment on your article “Back in the Spotlight” on Arnold Dugger in the spring 2005 *Excellence* magazine. It’s great to hear that Arnold was inducted into the ORU Hall of Fame. I was a student from 1974 to ’78, and saw Arnold play the three years he was at ORU, from 1974 to ’77.

I wasn’t a huge basketball fan until I saw the Titans play two or three games. I saw some talent that I had never seen in person before. Anthony Roberts (what a scorer) and Alvin Scott (boy, could he leap), Lionel Worrell (a pesky defensive guard), and others, and this point guard, Arnold Dugger, who dribbled, had moves, and passed like no one I had ever seen — including any NBA ball I had watched. After this I would pack some homework, and my wife and I would arrive at least one hour before every home game started so we could get the front-row seats of the student section.

My wife, Paula, at first came along because she knew how much I enjoyed the games. But it didn’t take long for her to become a fan also. The team, the facility, the fans, and the entire experience were first-class. Many times the women’s games were scheduled ahead of the men’s, and they also had a pretty classy team. But even after all of these years, I can still remember one of Arnold’s moves. He stole the ball in the opponents’ side of the court, and the two opposing guards made it back down the court ahead of Arnold and set up defensively just inside the free throw line. Arnold beat all of the other Titans down the court, and it was a 1-on-2.

Now, this doesn’t sound like good fast-break odds, and any sane coach would demand that his player wait for some help and set up an offensive play. But everyone in the arena had seen Arnold before and knew this guy had some unreal moves. He dribbled up to the two defenders who had closed the gap between them to about two to three feet, leaving him seemingly nowhere to go. He then did his spin move between them, dribbling the ball between his

legs as he spun — and then took off for a finger roll and an easy two! I’ll never forget the look on the defenders’ faces. Their feet hadn’t moved an inch and they stared at each other like, “Did he just do what I think he did?” And then they hurriedly brought the ball in, trying not to show their amazement. Yes, he did put on a show. And yes, he made many people happy with a show that I’ve not seen since.

It’s nice to hear that Arnold has found life after basketball. It sounds like he has a great wife and that they have been blessed with four children. But make no mistake, when I talk with anyone about some of the greatest basketball moves I’ve ever seen — Dr. J., Larry Bird, Magic Johnson, Michael Jordan, etc. — I always mention this guy from the Bronx, New York, I saw play at ORU named Arnold Dugger.

Dugger makes ballers out of another opposing team.

HEAR YE, HEAR YE

Audio feeds of ORU Golden Eagle basketball games can be found at this address:

<http://www.orugoldeneagles.com>

Click on GAMEDAY CENTRAL and select the Audio/Video link.



Building Up Winners

BY ELISSA K. HARVILL

Alumnus Rick Fenimore (far right), a project sponsor, joins President Roberts and Athletics director Mike Carter for the Sports Complex groundbreaking.

“Our student-athletes have won almost 90 regular-season championships and tournament championships in the Mid-Continent Conference — without a weight room,” Mike Carter, director of Athletics, shared. “With the Aerobics Center holding classes from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and students and alumni who are also coming in to work out, student-athletes usually have to train early in the morning — at 6 a.m.! Even then, only about 35 of the 200-plus athletes can work out.”



Those days will soon be over. ORU Athletics broke ground for the construction of Phase 1 of the Golden Eagle Sports Complex on August 25. The building will include a new strength and conditioning center (with a 2,300-square-foot state-of-the-art weight room), baseball offices, and the Jim Brewer Champions Room. Situated right off the first base line of J. L. Johnson Stadium, this more-than-\$800,000 privately funded addition will benefit *all* student athletes and allow more breathing room in the Aerobics Center. Together, Phases 1 and 2 will cost about \$1.6 million to construct.

“We are very thankful to alumni and the people of the Tulsa community and surrounding areas for their commit-

ments which are allowing us to build these much-needed facilities,” Carter said. “While we have been successful in the Mid-Continent Conference and on the national level, these new facilities are critical for recruiting quality student-athletes and continuing to improve our programs.”

Construction on the second phase — a 35,000-square-foot indoor practice facility, to be located between the stadium and the tennis courts — will begin as soon as fundraising is completed. This space will include a full-size infield, batting cages, and plenty of practice space for soccer and track and field athletes.

Carter expects completion of the first phase by February of '06 and the second phase by the summer of '08.

“For a school our size with our programs, these [new buildings] will put ORU well ahead of [our competitors],” Carter beamed. “The indoor practice facility for our nationally ranked baseball team will just help us get better and better.”

Baseball head coach Rob Walton is looking forward to the day when his team can begin workouts in the new facilities.



Summer in the Cities

Alumni events held in June and July give new meaning to the words “warm welcome.” Hot or mild, the heat couldn’t stop Alumni Office representatives from sharing good food and good times with alumni in three sun-drenched cities.

Just south of Tulsa . . .

Dallas, Texas • June 26

At the Double D Ranch, owners/operators **Ted 72** and **Betty (A) Gellert** were the hosts with the most. Bandana-bedecked, they and the crew from ORU greeted 60 alumni with a down-home Texas howdy amidst a fanfare of blue and gold balloons.

There were snacks, snow cones, and iced beverages for everyone as children were mesmerized by domesticated ranch livestock — horses, goats, sheep, newborn colts, and the all-time favorite, a pot-bellied pig.

Temperatures soared as Alumni director **Tim McKittrick 97 MA**, Winnie Perdue, and **George Paul 69** (associate vice president for Alumni and Development) hosted hayrides, trail rides, and repeated trips to the snow cone stand. Meanwhile, small children enjoyed the cool comfort of the water slide, occasionally splashing their unsuspecting parents.

The dinner bell signaled the chuck wagon barbecue. **Brad Clawson 88** blessed the dinner of barbecued beef, beans, coleslaw, potato salad, and assorted pies and cookies. The children were delighted to find hot dogs too. Everyone sipped (or rather chugged) lemonade and iced tea to stay cool.

There were door prizes galore, along with campus updates and memorable athletic moments from the past year at ORU, all compliments of Tim and Winnie. And, as they rode off into the sunset, they all agreed: *we must keep meeting like this.*

Two time zones away . . .

Los Angeles, California July 22

Off to the West Coast for some fun in the sun, Tim, Winnie, and ORU regional director **Michael Jelsing 04** met up with 37 alumni at Marie Callender’s on Wilshire Boulevard. Guests enjoyed complimentary parking, outstanding food, and the best of fellowship with old friends from days gone by.

Four members of the Socash family attended: **Janna (Craven) 70** and **Vance (A)** and their son, **Ross 00**, and his wife, **Allyson (Sutherland) 00**. It was a delight to see two generations of alumni enjoying a good time.

Tim, who just became the alumni director in June, proved to be the man of the hour; everyone wanted to meet him. His popularity was rivaled only by the spring ’05 *Excellence* cover girl, **Lauren Kitchens 88**, who boasted



Los Angeles

of “inviting and delivering at least eight alumni to the event.”

Pastor **M.C. Campbell 92, 95** and her husband, Gene, arrived with gifts for Alumni staff and Tulsa friends and entertained one and all with memories of the 2003 alumni gathering at the Taix French Restaurant. (You had to be there.)

The California alumni couldn’t get enough of reminiscing, but alas, the restaurant had to close sometime. The party continued, spilling out into the courtyard and parking lot until it was absolutely time to say goodbye *until next time!*

Down the road from L.A . . .

**San Diego, California
July 23**

Location: The Fish Market. Winnie knew she had a winning spot for this event when the hotel staff confirmed that “the food is wonderful.” And you have to know the address is right when you’re on *North Harbor Drive*: water to the right and left, the lovely

California sunset . . . outstanding.

San Diego alumni gathered for their choice of delicious Pacific mahi mahi or Angus steak (talk about the ultimate surf and turf), followed by delicious apple crisp with vanilla ice cream.

The entire Audesmore family attended — **Jan 79 MBA**, Barbara, Jamie, **Angel 99**, and Luke, a junior at ORU. Jamie was delighted to win a door prize. A seasoned “regular,” **Bonnie Crain 99**, was a hoot, Winnie said — always enthusiastic, always sharing. **Sarah (Tucker) Hughes 88** and her husband, David, brought their beautiful little daughter, who entertained one and all.

Michael Jelsing 04, ORU’s regional director for California, once again joined Tim and Winnie to report the latest goings-on at ORU. Everyone, the trio reported, had a blast looking back until it was time to go. The ORU crew finally departed, knowing they can always go back to San Diego for a good time.



Dallas



Dallas



Los Angeles



Dallas

1970s

This past year, **Paul Ott 71** won an ad campaign competition that placed him on five billboards throughout the Austin, Tex., business district for three months. He is a commercial real estate broker and proudly displays his ORU class ring in the picture. He wants to say “hi” to his friends from the Class of ’71. He and his wife, Pat, have two children, Kristin, 25, and Jeffrey, 23. He asks his friends to look him up if they are ever in the Austin area.

Tom 71 and Dottie Aldrich (A) Wickersham have been married 36 years and have a son, **Nathan**, who also attended ORU (1989-90). Dottie would like to hear from **Linda Caffee Shiller 73, Esther Crozier Taravella 69,** and **Shirley Lock 71.**

Bobby Hamilton 76, who co-led the Sunday-night Vespers (500 strong!) at ORU with **Don Austin 76**, writes that after graduation, he became the founder and president of Hamco, Inc., a baby products company in Baton Rouge, La. Fifteen years later, he sold it to a public company and finally left in 2001. Since then, he has lived in Conway, Ark., with his wife, Jill, and their children: Julie, 18, Jonathan, 15, and Michael, 10. Bobby now serves as executive pastor of New Life Church with two campuses in Central Arkansas, near Little Rock (www.newlifechurch.tv),

and is loving life. He says that he is “so thankful for my time at ORU!”

Mark Liston 76, 81 M.Div., currently single, is a professional Christian counselor who speaks on Jesus healing the broken-hearted. He’s working on a book titled “How Can You Mend a Broken Heart?” Mark would love to hear from old friends — especially theology majors, seminary grads, Vespers music team, and the guys from the Disciples wings.

On Aug. 26, **Jonathan Brooks 79, 85 M.Div.** and his wife, Susan, celebrated the one-year anniversary of the adoption of their son, Bodan Livingstone Brooks, from Smolensk, Russia. Also, after 21 years with Delta Air Lines, Jonathan was ordained into the ministry by Rev. Bob Yandian of Grace Fellowship Church in Tulsa and has recently joined the Voice of China and Asia Missionary Society, Inc., as Minister of Missions. He will be coordinating missions projects in the Far East. He welcomes any news from his ORU friends and may be contacted at the ministry Web site: <http://vocamissionarysociety.org>.

1980s

Rhae Buckley 80, chair of the Alumni Board of Directors, has been appointed vice president of Human Resources at the International Operations Center of Mercy Ships located in Tyler, Tex. He will be responsible for providing strategic leadership

for the Human Resources department of Mercy Ships internationally (ships and land bases). He and his wife of 19 years, Debbie, have three children: Sarah, 17, Rachel, 15, and Jonathan, 12.

John Showman 82 was named superintendent of the South Haven (Kan.) school district this year. He is also the pre-kindergarten through fifth grade principal. According to the *Wellington Daily News*, John received his master’s in educational administration from Wichita State University in 1997 and is completing his doctorate in educational administration at Kansas State University.

Janice Schober-Blanchett 85 wrote to say that she has been named assistant children’s ministry director at Christ Church in Nashville, Tenn. She and her husband, Mark, have five children: James, 20, Jared, 15, Jillian, 12, Jessica, 11, and John Mark, 8.

Celia Wilcox 85 wrote to say, “I was in Hurricane Katrina and lost our home, photos, etc., in the tidal flood. I need to reach former friends and roommates who may have photos, yearbooks, etc., that can be duplicated. ORU alums need to keep the entire Gulf Coast region in their prayers, as it will take years to rebuild the areas that were devastated within a few hours on Aug. 29. We pray for guidance and protection most of all.”

Joy Ware Miller 86 and husband **Charles (A)** have been married for 18 years and have four children: two boys, Matthew and Christopher (both deceased), and two girls, Lauren and Olivia. Joy says she “did go on to utilize my degree in television and radio. Currently, I do the morning drive time for a Christian radio station in Ohio.” The Millers have established a Web site in memory of their son Christopher and dedicated it to the Lord. They want to share Christopher’s story to help draw others to Christ. www.areyoureadyyet.com.

Faith Kilgren 86 Thomson has worked as a public health nurse for 13 years and loves the diversity of that area of nursing. She has been married to her husband, Marc, for 16 years and they have two boys, Anders, 5, and Soren, 7. She wants to say “hi” to all of the nursing alumni from the Class of 1986. She would love to hear from classmates and friends who remember “the Canadian who said ‘eh?’ all the time.”

Steve Button 87 has been appointed chief financial officer of NextWeb, California’s largest fixed-wireless Internet service provider for business. Previously, he was the VP of finance. The company’s founder and CEO says that under Steve’s financial leadership, “we have achieved triple-digit annual growth.”

Troy Todd 87 is a chaplain with the U.S. Navy, based in Jacksonville, Fla.



OTT 71



HAMILTON 76



BLANCHETT 85



DIPALMA 90



LEE 94

1990s

Allen DiPalma 90 has recently been named the director of the Office of Research at the University of Pittsburgh. He received his MBA in 1996 from

the University of Pittsburgh's Joseph M. Katz Graduate School of Business and has served in various capacities at the university since 1991. He is now responsible for ensuring that the university complies with complex regulations associated with sponsored research, and for creating programs that foster a culture

of customer service to Pitt's research community.

Kimberly Cearley 94, after spending time in Kandern, Germany, serving with Wycliffe Bible Translators, is moving to Nashville, Tenn. She reports, "God has continued to provide for ALL of my needs. This has been such a faith journey for me being here

in Germany. Therefore, I praise God for all of you who have given financially, who have prayed and just been interested in the work of ministering to missionary kids (at Black Forest Academy). You are awesome! Thank you!"

You've got a friend . . .

@ <http://alumniweb.oru.edu>

Looking for a former roommate, an old friend, or a new mentor? You can find all three and more at your friendly ORU alumni Web site. Just click on "Online Community" and log in, and you'll be on your way to reconnecting and making new connections with your fellow alumni nationwide.

You'll have access to the extensive online alumni directory, chats and discussions, career services, affinity groups, class notes, event registration, and more!

(And, once you find those friends and decide you need to visit in person, don't forget to shop our discounts for hotels, rental cars, food, and entertainment. Just click on "Alumni Resources" and discover all the ways you can save money just because you're an ORU grad!)



ADAMS 97



FRANK 97



SNAVELY 98



HAGRELIUS 01

Notes From Alumni

Shayne Lee 94 received his Ph.D. in sociology from Northwestern University in 2002 and is currently an assistant professor of sociology at Tulane University. His first book, *T.D. Jakes: America's New Preacher*, was set to be released in October; go to http://www.nyupress.org/product_info.php?products_id=3838.

Nick Fossett 95 has accepted an attorney position with the Columbia, Tenn., law firm of DuBois & DuBois, P.C. He has been practicing law in Tennessee

for four years and his areas of emphasis include bankruptcy, insurance defense, and general civil litigation. Nick and his wife, Erin, have been married for three years and are blessed to have two girls, Katelyn Grace, 2, and Kristin MacKenzie, who was 7 months old in July when Nick wrote.

Adriane Evans Adams 97 wrote to announce the birth of her third child, Duncan Alexander C. Adams, on July 7, 2005. She and husband **Drake (A)** also

have two daughters, Aislinn, 5, and Ana, 3, who Adriane says "are excited to have a little brother to love." The Adamsons recently moved from Tulsa to Lynn Haven, Fla. They ask that friends keep in touch.

Vernon Frank 97 and his wife, **Kaaryn (A, 1995-97)**, welcomed twin babies, Sarah James and Paige Marie — "our double blessings!" — in December 2004.

Aaron Snavely 98 and his wife, **Kelly Opperman 99**, had their first baby, Audrey Catherine, on July 27. She weighed 6 lbs., 2 oz. The Snavelys were planning to move from Tulsa to Nashville to be closer to their families. They would love to hear from you.

Benjamin Sluder 99 graduated with his MBA from Regent University in May of this year. He and his wife, **Meredith Kelly (A)**, have three children: Isaac, 4, Israel, 2, and Annabelle, born May 24. Benjamin works as a sales representative in the pharmaceuti-



[AOY2007]
(Who are these people?
You tell us!)

Do you know an alumnus who is really making an impact by serving God, or his or her community? Or an alumnus who's done a bang-up job of helping ORU? (Of course you do! — there are thousands of you out there!)

Every year, the Alumni Association honors those who have gone above and beyond the call of duty with the Alumnus of the Year awards for Distinguished Service to God, the Community, and the Alma Mater. It doesn't matter if they've been working quietly and behind the scenes or loudly and publicly — we want to encourage them to keep up the good work and give them a platform to inspire students, alumni, and others who connect with ORU.

If you have someone in mind who you believe deserves to be recognized, just go to the Web at <http://alumniweb.oru.edu>, click on "News Archives," and scroll down to "Time to Think About 2007." There is a brief form for you to fill out and guidelines for the nominating process.

And if you think of more than one person to nominate, that's even better! The entry deadline is July 1, 2006.

cal industry. His territory covers the greater Pittsburgh, Pa., area. His future plans and interests include marketing, missions, and entrepreneurial ventures.

2000s

On May 21, **Lisa Dawn Hagrelius 01** graduated from Southern Illinois University School of Medicine. She entered an orthopedic surgery residency at Michigan State University and Grand Rapids Medical Education and Research Center in July.

Lynnae Santos 02 married Christopher Tasi “in a beautiful Polynesian wedding” on June 25. “God gets all the glory and honor,” Lynnae said. “He made everything possible.” Lynnae wants to send “a warm ALOHA to ORU alumni, especially Imago and Armor.”

Courtney Bacon 03 M.Div. received her master of theology degree from Princeton Theological Seminary on May 14. **Joel 03** and **Rebecca Corman 03 Isaacs** wrote that Rebecca was selected to receive a graduate assistantship at TU while she works on her doctorate in clinical psychology. Joel graduated from the Tulsa Police Academy on June 24.

Laurie Leer 04 married Oscar Martinez on July 3, 2004.

Lindsey Michael Miller 04 and **Phillip Griswold 03** recently teamed up to write and illustrate their first children’s book, *The Circus*. The book is based on a poem that Miller wrote for a creative writing class; Griswold did the illustrations. The book was released on May 15.

For more information or to order the book, go to www.hickorytales.com/circus.

Associates

Joann Megow Fortier and her husband, Dick, have been blessed with two children, Jeffrey, 16, and Kevin, 13. Joann is the accountant for Ticonderoga Federal Credit Union in Ticonderoga, N.Y. Joann would love to hear from her ORU friends.

David King recently finished his graduate work in marriage and family counseling. He and his wife, **Christine (Grothe-03)**, have moved to Colorado Springs, where David has accepted a job as a therapist at a youth correctional facility. They are excited to be attending New Life Church and to be moving into their first home.

Obituaries

Angelia Bollinger, a 1999 graduate, passed away on October 12, 2005. She earned a bachelor’s degree in elementary education at ORU.

William S. Carter, a 1992 graduate, passed away on January 15, 2004. He earned a bachelor’s degree in business at ORU.

Sarah Jo Hirsch Erwin, a 1975 graduate, passed away on

Nov. 12, 2005. At the time of her death, she was the collections manager and curator of archival collections at Gilcrease Museum in Tulsa. At ORU, she majored in history and minored in English literature. She is survived by her husband, David, their son, Jason, and other family members.

e-mail: alumni@oru.edu
<http://alumniweb.oru.edu>

Feeling ‘Board’?

Perk up! You’ve got some new (and returning) Alumni Board members ready and willing to serve you.

When the ORU Alumni Board of Directors convenes in January for its biannual meeting, two new directors will take their seats in the Regents’ Board Room.

Joining the board and serving Segment 5 (1991-94) will be Jason Ophus, a 1993 business department graduate. Ophus was the founding RA on the Covenant wing. Today, he’s a pharmaceutical sales representative with Roche Pharmaceuticals. A big ORU basketball fan, Ophus and his wife, Kerri, and their four children live in Broken Arrow, Okla.

Max James is a new director for Segment 1 (1968-78). He received his degree in business administration in 1975. During his student days, he was a basketball team manager and heavily involved in intramural sports. Currently, he owns his own computer software company. Since graduation, James and his wife of more than 30 years, Carol (Merchant-A), have lived in Austin, Tex. The couple has three children and two grandchildren.

Returning to the board for a second term are:

For Segment 1, Joanne (Olson) Crain, a 1977 School of Nursing graduate. Crain is a nurse at Northwest Oklahoma Cardiology and resides with her husband, Bruce, and four children in Enid, Okla.

For At-Large: Joleen Minyard, a 1989 graduate with degrees in business administration and communications who is in the process of completing her MBA. After graduation, Minyard became a Wing Backer and a member of the Board of Directors of the Golden Eagle Club. She and her husband, Ray, live in Broken Arrow. Their son, Mike, is an ORU student.

Go to alumniweb.oru.edu and click on Alumni Board to meet the rest of the directors.



ISAACS 03



KING 03



MARTINEZ 04



CRAIN



JAMES

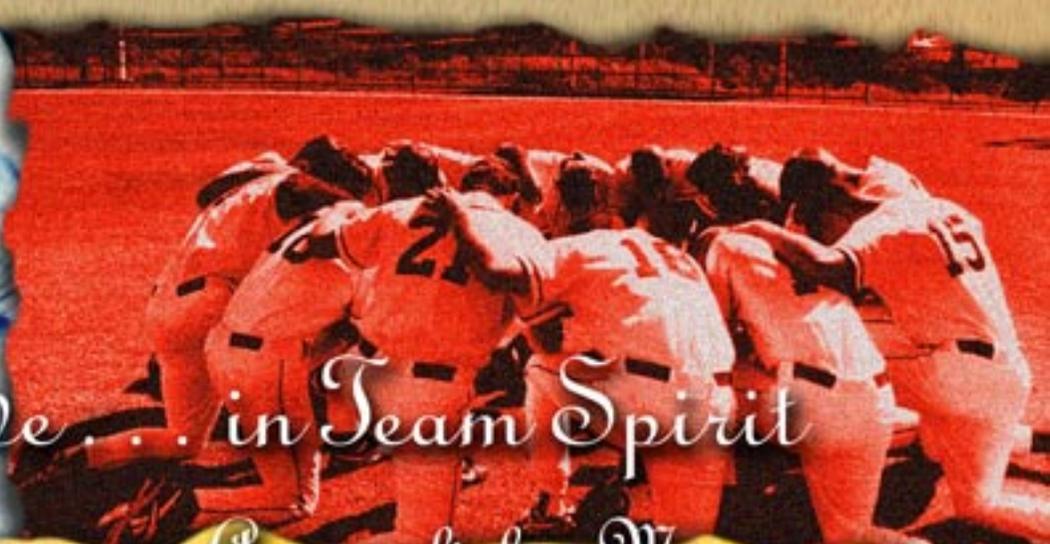
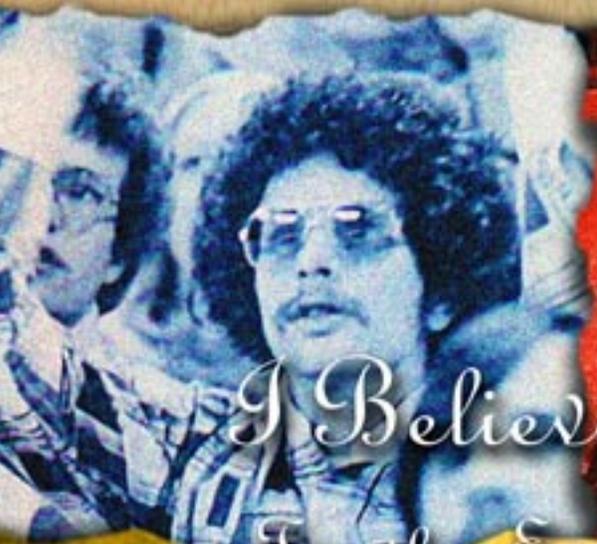


MINYARD



OPHUS

2006 HOMECOMING



*I Believe . . . in Team Spirit
Together Everyone Accomplishes More*



Homecoming Highlight: **PRESIDENT'S ALUMNI BANQUET**

Hear from President Richard Roberts and enjoy a delicious meal, compliments of your Alumni Association. Be on hand to celebrate the 2006 "Alumnus of the Year" awards as Tom Newman, Tim Elmore, and Tim and Lorrie Reiterman take the stage. (Request your free ticket with your registration.)

Reunite with old friends . . . Get your game on (Golden Eagles vs. IUPUI Jaguars) . . .
Make connections and have some good old ORU fun!

Join the home team at ORU, January 13 and 14, 2006!

HOMECOMING IS A TEAM EFFORT. SUIT UP AND JOIN US!

In the summer issue of *Excellence*, we neglected to mention that **George Wiland 74** is another “Before Brooker” alumnus who has politics coursing through his veins . . .

Called to Action

BY ELISSA K. HARVILL

They call him “Mr. Zip.” George Wiland, who can handily rattle off random ZIP codes from coast to coast, is using his 25 years of U.S. Postal Service experience as a Constituent Representative for Oklahoma Congressman John Sullivan. Today Wiland interacts with more than 10 federal agencies on behalf of the congressman to resolve issues of claims, payments, military records, medals, and federal taxes. He also oversees the congressional nomination process to all five U.S. military service academies.

As a history major at ORU, Wiland developed a ferocious appetite for government and public policy, devouring Barry Goldwater’s two books, *The Conscience of a Conservative* and *Why Not Victory?* as well as Francis Schaffer’s work, *How Should We Then Live?*

Passionate to get out the vote, Wiland has registered ORU students to vote since 1987, and in the past 20 years has registered nearly 20,000 voters from many Tulsa-area churches. Regarding his personal impact on political results, he shared, “In the 1986 Oklahoma Primary for the open Congressional seat, Jim Inhofe won over two other candidates (one had seven times as much financing), and avoided a runoff by only about 100 votes. My voter registrations that year were close to 1,000. And in 1994, Steve Largent won the nomination for the open Congressional seat against four other candidates, all of whom had previous political experience. He avoided a runoff by only about 500 votes. My voter registrations that year were well over 2,000. In 2001, John Sullivan won the Special Election Primary on December 11, over four other candidates, including Oklahoma First Lady Cathy Keating, who had more than four times the financing. I began knocking on doors for him some five months before the primary, when few even knew his name.”

The consummate public servant, Wiland has served as Precinct Chairman, a member of the Tulsa County GOP Executive Committee, and as an active participant in numerous

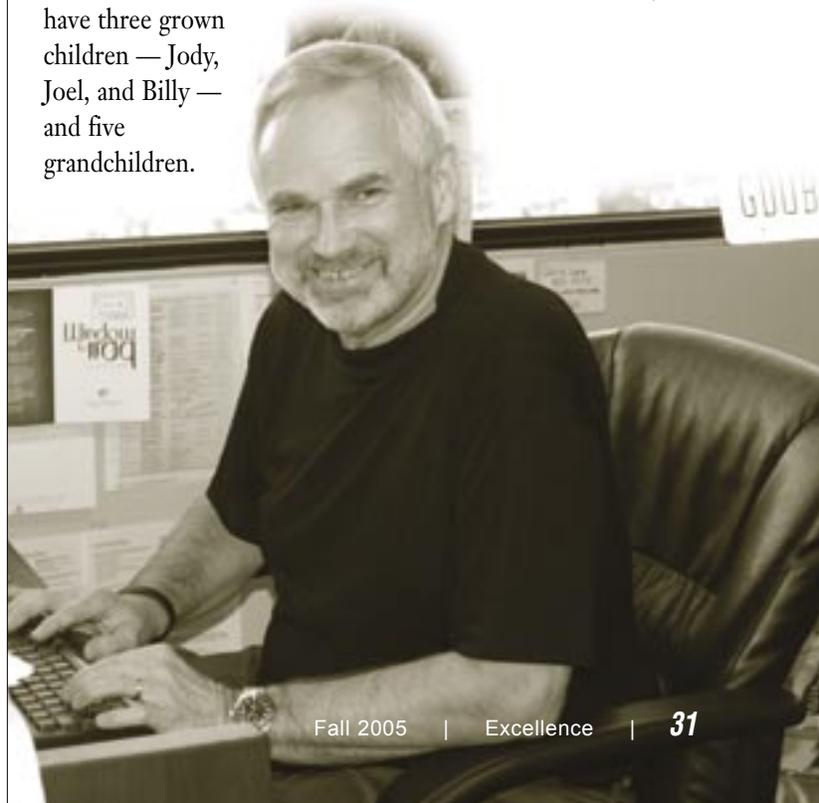
Though he occasionally travels to Washington, D.C., with Congressman Sullivan, Wiland offices in south Tulsa where he can directly serve his district’s constituents.

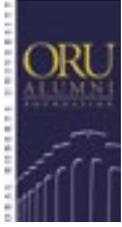
campaigns, in addition to serving as a member of the 54th meeting of the Electoral College in December 2000. (His youngest son, Billy, a 2005 University of Tulsa law school grad, enjoyed the same honor as part of the 55th meeting last December.)

When asked if he ever gets discouraged, Wiland countered, “No! I could not imagine being more fulfilled in anything besides what I am doing now.” He then gave a recent example of an incident where he felt led to go above and beyond the call of duty: “I had been working on obtaining medals for a World War II veteran at the request of his daughter from North Carolina, with the notation that he was failing with cancer. The Congressional inquiry was noted ‘time-sensitive’ . . . I called North Carolina and learned that the entire family was in Oklahoma from other states. The Lord impressed upon me that I should offer to deliver the medals personally to expedite the delivery. The presentation was made the same evening with the whole family present. The veteran passed away around six o’clock the next morning.”

As for how he’s making a difference in “every person’s world,” Wiland shared, “I understand that everything that I do in the Congressional office involves carrying out the responsibilities of the Congressman to serve the needs of the constituents. I am confident that the Lord has blessed it, in that ‘Whatever you do, in word or in deed, do it as unto the Lord.’ There are scores of thank-you notes and responses from constituents who have expressed their appreciation for a result that was to their benefit. A scripture that states my mission is First Corinthians 15:58 — ‘Be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.’”

Wiland and his wife, Linda, live and work in Tulsa. They have three grown children — Jody, Joel, and Billy — and five grandchildren.





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Nancy Geiger, daughter of Greg 75 and Nina, spent part of her summer in Honduras on a missions trip. It's one of the many interests that she and her sisters, Grace and Caroline, share.

See story on page 11.

