LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

The 2016 Oklahoma Military Academy Alumni Association Reunion is now a memory, but what a memory it was for those who attended! Our 2016 theme of “We Were All Once Rabbits” resonated with every single individual. The military memorabilia display at the Ice Cream Social, the “Rabbit Tales” on Friday night, as well as the first Grand March since 1971 led and orchestrated by Officer in Charge B.G. Jones ’64 were all great hits. Everyone who participated in the Grand March left with not only a fantastic memory, but a huge smile on their face!

It has been 97 years since OMA opened its doors as the premier military school in the southwest and we were in existence for 52 years. Over the years, one particular legacy has emerged. OMA produced leaders! One only has to talk to our alumni and ask them what they did during their lives to see the important roles that OMA alumni have filled. Whether it is in the military (approximately 80 percent of alumni served our country in times of war or peace), a percentage only eclipsed by the Service Academies), industry, business, philanthropy, medicine, health care, banking, oil, construction, non-profit, teaching, farming, law enforcement or countless other endeavors, you will find OMA alumni leading the way.

Our ranks continue to thin each year. If attending OMA had ANY influence, impact, and effect, changed, or shaped your life in ANY way, I urge you to come back to the Hill next year to our 2017 OMA Alumni Reunion, which will be held on June 9 and 10, 2017. (We are giving you PLENTY of notice, write it down on your calendars NOW!) One day we will not have the alumni numbers to conduct a reunion any longer and you do not want to regret not having attended when you could and had the chance. It doesn’t matter if you attended OMA for one semester or six years. It doesn’t matter if you were a PFC or the Corps Commander. Once a Cadet, Always a Cadet!

With Courage, Loyalty and Honor,

Phil Goldfarb HS ’67, JC’69
OMA Alumni Association President

Order your DVD of the 2016 OMA Alumni Association Reunion

only $10 each
Order now by contacting Dr. Danette Boyle at dboyles@rsu.edu, 918-343-6888 or 918-343-6889

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

OMA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION REUNION
JUNE 9-10 2017
LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

“Beyond Fabulous” are the only two words I can think of to describe the 2016 OMA Alumni Reunion. I have never seen anything like it. We had nearly 200 OMA Alumni and more than 200 family members and friends. There was something for everyone!

“Rabbit Tales” were extraordinary, the food was delicious and words cannot describe the GRAND MARCH! It was out of this world! The best part may have been that so many of you were able to connect with some of your best friends and roommates that you had during your years “On the Hill.” We had so much fun and made so many memories. And we captured a lot on DVD. You can get a copy now.

This campus just gets more beautiful each year. It is truly a magical place and now that we have BOOTS BACK ON THE HILL, it is just great to see the military students posting the colors at the reunion, participating in “Rabbit Tales and the Grand March” and just walking around on campus.

Even I am amazed at how the OMA Alumni Association just gets better each year, and some of your fellow alumni are already letting me know they will be here for the 2017 Reunion, scheduled for June 9 and 10. It is never too early to register, so call me now or email me to let me know you will be here.

With Courage, Loyalty and Honor!

Danette Boyle
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MINI-REUNION
OCTOBER 9-11, 2016

Hilton Garden Inn
Rate: $85/night
956-761-8700 Ext. 0 | www.hiltonsouthpadre.com

To ensure you get the discounted rate, please mention you are with OMA Alumni Reunion Group.
Please request the special rate (available until September 9) if you plan on arriving early or staying later.

For more information, contact Dr. Danette Boyle at 918-343-6888.
2016 OMA ALUMNI REUNION WAS “EXTRAORDINARY”

WOW is what comes to mind when you reflect on the 2016 OMA Alumni Reunion. The attendance was the largest number in many years. Alumni were calling the day before the reunion still trying to register and we had others just show up. It was the most exciting and fun filled reunion ever!

More than 400 OMA Alumni, OMA Honorary Alumni, family members and friends made their way to “The Hill” on June 10 and 11 for what was mentioned over and over as an EXTRAORDINARY REUNION.

OMA Alumni traveled from more than 20 states. It was the most incredible event in Claremore in years. The hotels were jam-packed full of OMA Alumni and family members.

Most importantly, many of the OMA Alumni commented often what a great time they had. It was a special time for the alumni to share some of their incredible “Rabbit Tales” on Friday evening while enjoying a very delicious Mexican buffet. One of our alumni, Steve Smith, Class of 1965, had the most beautiful Rabbit Tale. It was such an emotional story about the kindness Randy Vierling, Class of 1963, showed Steve’s mother when she came to visit that he asked Phil Goldfarb to read the story. Please see page 6 for a reprint of this wonderful story.

The weather was perfect and the campus was more beautiful than it had ever been. It was a most fitting place for more than 400 alumni, family and friends to spend the weekend. All the events seemed to be so great this year, but as the saying goes, “We saved the best for last” and that was certainly true at this reunion.

The dinner and dance Saturday evening began with the most incredible prime rib and all the trimmings. Shortly after dinner, B.G. Jones, Class of 1964, began to put into motion all the moving parts to have the first GRAND MARCH ON “THE HILL” since 1971. B.G. was the OIC of the Grand March and he and his wife Julie had worked on the details for months. It was the most awesome event of the reunion. A huge number of alumni, spouses, and many others participated. It was such a beautiful sight in the Centennial Ballroom and as you looked around, some alumni had great big smiles and others had tears streaming down their faces.

The GRAND MARCH was definitely the highlight of the 2016 OMA Alumni Reunion. A DVD of the Grand March and major reunion activities is available to order.

Continue on page 8
Thanks in large measure to the efforts of the Oklahoma Military Academy Alumni Association, the Oklahoma Army National Guard’s Guard Officer Leadership Development (GOLD) Program will be retained on the Rogers State University campus despite budget cuts that have forced closure of similar programs in Oklahoma. In early May, RSU President Dr. Larry Rice and Major General Robbie Asher, Oklahoma’s Adjutant General, signed a reaffirmation of their commitment to keep boots on the ground on College Hill.

OMA alumni have played a critical role in establishing scholarships and endowments that help fund the educations of these citizen-soldiers. This support includes the GOLD program endowment established by the family of one of OMA’s most decorated alumni, Lt. Col. Ed Ramsey and his widow, Dr. Raquel “Raqui” Ramsey.

The GOLD Program includes classes, leadership labs, physical training and field training exercises that train Oklahoma Army National Guard’s citizen-soldiers to lead and conduct missions as Army officers. Upon completion of the GOLD Program, students attend Officer Candidate School to earn the rank of Second Lieutenant and become a commissioned officer in the Army National Guard. The RSU program started in fall 2014, and interest in the program has remained strong.

OMA ALUMNI HELP KEEP GOLD AT RSU

OMA ALUMNI SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM FOR THE RSU GOLD PROGRAM

We need your help with Boots Back on the Hill by supporting scholarship endeavors for the RSU students in the Guard Officer Leadership Development (GOLD) Program. The GOLD Program provides an opportunity for soldiers to attend college fulltime, attend Military Science classes, and prepare themselves for an exciting and challenging career as an Army National Guard Officer. Your generous contribution today will not only have a positive impact on a young military student, but it will also help perpetuate the OMA legacy.

If you would like to continue the OMA legacy and help with a scholarship for our RSU students in the GOLD Program, call or email Danette Boyle at 918-343-6888 or dboyle@rsu.edu to make a contribution.
eventually graduating from junior college in Flourish at the rigorously demanding school, Morrison was able to attend OMA and then generations by selflessly giving back his in defining the OMA legacy for future generations. Jim Morrison ’52 has been instrumental in the work of its alumni association, serving for many years on its board of directors and faithfully participating in OMA events over the years. He was selected as an OMA Distinguished Alumnus in 1990 and OMA Hall of Fame in 1996. A passionate believer in the power of education, he also has given back to OMA’s legacy institutions, with service to the schools’ governing boards and foundations. Morrison and his wife have established the Jim and Norma Morrison Scholarship Endowment at RSU, as well as supporting initiatives both small and large on campus, including the establishment of the Oklahoma Army National Guard’s GOLD program at RSU.

Whenever there has been a need, Jim has stood on the front line, ready and willing to carry on the OMA legacy while strengthening educational opportunities for all Oklahomans.

Past recipients of the Lt. Gen. William E. Potts Award includes: Col. John E. Home, 2007; Dr. Danette Boyle, 2007; Gene Little, 2011; Dr. Richard Mosier, 2012; and Dr. Larry Rice, 2013.
GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY
IMPACT OF THE OMA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION’S SUPPORT TO ME AS A STUDENT IN THE GOLD PROGRAM

I consider the opportunity afforded me by the Oklahoma Military Academy Alumni Association to be “golden” in that it launches me on a path for future success and national service. The benefits of the GOLD program are invaluable: a solid curriculum, structured activities, financial help, time conservation, emotional support, and character building experiences.

The financial help provides significant relief. The GOLD Program, my family, and the faculty of Rogers State University have assisted in paying my college expenses. Because of the generosity of the alumni, those payments have substantially decreased the amount I personally pay each semester, allowing me to focus on my studies rather than stressing about collegiate finances. I have always known the statistical fact that the majority of college students graduate in debt, but now I see it on more of a personal level. I never knew how early debt started for many students until I started researching and talking with students from multiple schools. It astonishes me to know that, without the generous funding of the GOLD Program, I would have been a part of the statistic.

Additionally, the Alumni Association and Rogers State pay for my housing, which allows me to stay on campus. For many GOLD students, including me, housing provision is a huge relief. If housing were not provided, our living situations would be much different. The housing opportunity allows for all the Soldiers in the GOLD Program to live door by door, which enables us to build a type of family atmosphere. To be able to attend such a school as RSU and not be burdened and worried about how I will pay for classes, or stressing about where I am to live, is an undeniable relief—one for which I am eternally grateful to the OMA Alumni Association.

Along with the financial side of the program, other numerous attributes make the GOLD Program absolutely ideal. The structure of the program is ideal to fitting the college lifestyle. It allows drills to be made during a class period instead of taking away from time we have on the weekends for studying. Being a person who prefers things to be a particular way, I find the structure of the program to be extremely gratifying. This structure is also quite helpful in the sense that if I am unsure of anything, I am always able to obtain answers in an easy and timely manner. Though the program is primarily designed to help cadets obtain officer status if they so choose, it also provides a support system like no other, for we students develop a bond with one another as well as other National Guard members all across the nation. The GOLD Program has not only given me the opportunity to work toward gaining a degree in Nursing, it has provided me with connections and friendships I will cherish for years to come.

As to my needs as a student in the GOLD Program, all I would ask is continuation of the GOLD Program. The continued generosity and helpfulness from the OMA Alumni Association will enable me to reach my goal of becoming an officer in the National Guard or going on active duty in the Army Nurse Corps. All other basic needs from the program are encompassed within the continuation of the program. I couldn’t ask for more from the GOLD faculty with the opportunity to meet new people, and have continued opportunities to expand my education.

The golden opportunity I was given allows me to further my education in hopes of becoming a more helpful and admirable citizen of this great nation. I am majoring in Nursing so that I may help others and give back to society. I will persevere in this journey toward fulfillment.

On behalf of the students in the entire RSU GOLD Program, and with the utmost respect and gratitude, I sincerely thank the OMA Alumni Association for giving us opportunities which would not be available to us otherwise. It is truly an honor to be a part of a tremendous and giving program with the incredible history and legacy of providing outstanding citizens and officers. I hope to one day leave my mark on this program, as so many officers have before me. I thank you all.

– Brian Moran
2016 OMA ALUMNI REUNION WAS “EXTRAORDINARY” – CONTINUED

RABBIT TALE

My name is Steve Smith and I attended OMA from August 1961 through May 1965 when I graduated from High School. We lived in Venezuela at the time, as my dad worked for a subsidiary of Standard Oil of New Jersey. I had never been away from home for any length of time before I came to OMA. I was probably the most homesick kid on the Hill, to the point that it interfered with school work, eating and sleeping, and my wellbeing in general. I was struggling so much that my mom asked Col. Tanner if she could take me off the Hill for a few hours some Saturday, as she would soon be heading back to Venezuela soon, and it would be several months before they would be back for vacation. Rabbits weren’t allowed off the Hill nor were they allowed to have any visitors for the first 18 weeks of school, otherwise known as “The Rabbit Period.” Col. Tanner agreed that it might be a good idea for mother and son, as she was struggling with it too. When she came to pick me up at the Guard House, and while she was waiting for me to appear, she engaged in a conversation with the OD (Officer of the Day.) Somewhere in the conversation, she asked him if all the boys got as homesick as I did. His reply was “Mrs. Smith, some boys come from better or closer homes than others, and it’s natural for them to miss home.” My mother was so comforted by that statement that she never forgot it. Mom died two years ago, and for 50 years, if she knew I had been back to OMA for a Reunion, she would always ask me “Did you see Randy?” She was referring to the OD that was on guard that day... Randy Vierling, Class of 1963. Mom never forgot his kindness and it proves that an act of kindness can be remembered for a lifetime.

– Steve Smith, OMA ’65

Announced at the 2016 OMA Alumni Reunion, Steve Smith, ’65 and his wife Kathy are establishing a Scholarship Endowment for the RSU GOLD Program in honor of Steve’s parents, Carl and Nelda Smith.
RSU GOLD students performing as OMA Rabbits at Friday night opening reception.

First time reunion attendees, Susan Albertson and Jim Albertson '66.

The oldest, Larry Lantow '38 (99 years old), and youngest, Larry Kelley '71, to attend the OMA Alumni line up to share their favorite Rabbit Tale.

Remipients of 2016 President’s Awards: David L. Morgan (receiving awards on behalf of Hap Sharp and Glenn Wright); Judy Wright, widow of Glenn Wright ‘53 (Posthumous); Phil Goldfarb, OMA Alumni Association President; and Jim Sharp, son of Hap Sharp ’46 (Posthumous) accepting award for his father. Not pictured: Charles Emerson ’56

Phil Goldfarb, OMA Alumni Association President, presents Charles Emerson ’56 with the 2016 President’s Award.

OMA Alumni line up to share their favorite Rabbit Tale.
2016 OMA Honorary Cadets: Sue Harris, Norma Morrison, Margaret Inhofe, Charlotte Little, Frank Podpechan, First Lady Peggy Rice, Jennifer Williams, John Wooley, Ron Boyle and Michael Henry.

OMA Alumni and guests enjoying a moment on the dance floor.

Seated: Carlene Webber, Dan Duggan ’53, Ann Armbruster, Pat Elder, Jim Elder ’67, Julie Jones, B.G. Jones ’64, Ida Ramsey, John Ramsey ’65

First time reunion attendees, Paul Manning ’58 and wife Sheila.
Phil Goldfarb, President OMA Alumni Association, receiving Gold NFL Football donated to the OMA Museum by Stewart “Smokey” Stover ’56, who received this honor from the National Football League for having played in a Super Bowl in celebration of the 50th year Anniversary.

Phil Goldfarb, OMA Alumni President promoting Honorary Cadet LeRon West ’69.

Members of the Rendevoux Band play at the 2016 OMA Alumni Association Reunion dinner and dance.

John Harris, Bill Harris ’54, Stephanie Harris Stevens, Kyndal Stevens, and Garvin Stevens
OMA ALUMNI, FRIENDS SHARE REUNION MEMORIES

Following the 2016 OMA Alumni Reunion, we heard from many of the alumni, honorary cadets and other friends who attended the event. Below are some of the stories and memories they shared.

Members of OMA’s 1960-61 First Squad, Company C: Pictured are, front row from left: Mike Koda ’62, Bill Knox ’61, Malcolm Branch ’61; back row, Ron Sadler ’62 and Bill Casey ’62.

BILL CASEY ’62 SHARES:
Yes, history was certainly made at this year’s OMA Alumni Reunion. The first Rabbit Tales, appointment of OMA Honorary Cadets, the Grand March, the NFL Super Bowl football and such a large attendance. Wow, what a success!

For the first time ever, and after 55 years, all members of the OMA 1960/61 First Squad, Company C were re-assembled. Our Squad Sergeant, Malcolm Branch, once again led all four of us “Rabbits” through the drills and brought back good memories of many events we experienced when “We Were All Once Rabbits.” We once again fit together smoothly and effectively as a team, clearly showing that our individual personalities were the same as back when “We Were All Once Rabbits.”

We sure laughed a lot and having our wives join us added beauty as well as a very special dimension to our squad. They patiently endured way toooooooo….

This was the first time Mike Koda and Bill Knox had ever been back to Oklahoma and OMA. They were impressed with the OMA Museum and the beautiful RSU campus, emotionally moved by the KIA memorial. They were glad to see several former classmates and very pleased that they had returned to the Hill where “We Were All Once Rabbits.” This reunion was a once-in-a-lifetime memory maker in itself for our wives and all of us who “Were All Once Rabbits.”

Mike came the farthest from Pennsylvania and he showed us again that he was still the best of us all at shining his brass and spit shining his shoes.

Bill and Sherri Knox drove from North Carolina. Each of them expressed several times how worthwhile and enjoyable it was for them to have come back to OMA for this year’s reunion. Sherri was Knox’s sweetheart when he was “Once a Rabbit” and she had previously been to OMA only once in the spring of 1961.

The OMA Alumni officers and staff made this year’s reunion very successful and enjoyable for everyone and especially for our squad. Thanks for a great reunion for all of us who “Were All Once Rabbits.”

The Saturday dinner was the perfect ending to the 2016 OMA Alumni Reunion. The Grand March was very impressive. Those cadets didn’t miss a beat or turn! I visualized my brother, Mike, with his sweet smile, marching and standing beside David and loving every minute of it. I so enjoyed the band’s music while sitting quietly watching the young and older cadets dance! Their smiles, affection, respect and loyalty for each other were uplifting!

The reunions just get better and better! My friends told me that of all the times spent together, being there with me at the reunion was their best time ever! Thank you for giving me, my family and friends the opportunity to attend the OMA Alumni Reunions! They make my heart sing and bring tears to my eyes! What a Blessing!!

Looking forward to the 2017 OMA Reunion!
**GUS GUSTAFSON III ’67 SHARES:**
I just want to thank Danette Boyle and her team for an exciting weekend at OMA during the Cadet Alumni Reunion “On the Hill” this past June. It was so great to see and visit with many of my classmates from 1966 and 1967. We had the opportunity to attend OMA, go to class together, and play sports together, so it was nice to relive those years. The time spent with Coach Easley was really special, and he is still such a great role model! As one of our high school football coaches and history teachers, he made a positive impact on my life. Shelley, my wife, and I truly appreciate all the hard work you and the committee put forth to make our weekend such a pleasure. Things were well organized, and we enjoyed all the events.

**BILL SHAFFER ’65 SHARES:**
I was in awe during the entire Grand March at the OMA Alumni Reunion. Being kind of the new kid on the block, with just recently returning to the Hill, this was only my third reunion. I was frankly shocked and amazed to be included in the Grand March plans. I haven’t been that nervous in years. Standing next to men that I admire and respect, and a few that still terrify me a little bit, was definitely a shock to the system. To be included with them was a treat and totally undeserved. Thanks go to B.G. Jones for thinking of me when he put the Grand March together. I so regret not allowing myself to gently grow old together with these gentlemen. I didn’t know what I was missing. But now that I’m back, I’m going to hang on for dear life. The Grand March is a new chapter and a new beginning for me. Thanks for making it possible.

**CHARLES WILLIAMSON ’58 SHARES:**
I want to thank all your staff for their time and hard work making the recent OMA Alumni Reunion a success. As always, the program and events were excellent. Also, I can’t believe how good the food is every year. This was my third reunion, and I was fortunate to see some of my old classmates this year. Again, thanks to everyone for preserving the traditions and memories of the Hill and OMA.

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**TAPS: IN MEMORY OF OMA ALUMNI RECENTLY DECEASED**

- **1920s**
  - Edwin Adair ’21, Deceased March 8, 2016
  - Everett Adair ’29, Deceased March 8, 2016

- **1940s**
  - Warren Don Arnold ’41, Deceased September 15, 2015
  - John W. Boulton ’42, Deceased April 15, 2016
  - Moses L. Courington, Jr ’42, Deceased January 2013*
  - Robert M. Drescher ’40, Deceased November 9, 2012*
  - Joseph R. Forner ’42, Deceased January 13, 2013*
  - Laddie L Frazier ’41, Deceased December 13, 2014*
  - Col. Rolla E. Griffin ’42, December 28, 2015
  - Mr. John Scales Hardwick ’43, Deceased September 10, 2015
  - James W. Hubbard ’43, Deceased March 2, 2006*
  - Douglas R Laubhan ’49, Deceased October 11, 2015
  - Granville Clark Lawrence ’46, Deceased February 21, 2016

- **1950s**
  - Jim (Jimmie) Dallas Barrack ’56, Deceased July 25, 2016
  - Matt Braun ’53, Deceased March 21, 2016
  - Paul W. Cheney ’52, Deceased January 31, 2015
  - Frederick N. Christman ’53, Deceased August 29, 2013*
  - William (Bill) Collier ’53, Deceased December 3, 2015
  - Verson L. Gourd ’59, Deceased September 30, 2014*
  - LTC Donald Ray Hedgespeth ’59, Deceased July 11, 2015
  - Carol J Jackson ’50, Deceased October 10, 2015
  - Donald L. Mayor ’55, Deceased July 4, 2015
  - Bob Roy Miller ’54, Deceased March 20, 2016
  - Richard Morris ’50, Deceased April 15, 2015
  - Thomas E. Patford ’50, Deceased September 2, 2015
  - Lewis Adelbert Rockwood ’54, Deceased August 5, 2015
  - Herbert N. Standeven ’53, Deceased October 22, 2015
  - Llewellyn (Lew) Orcutt Ward ’50, Deceased March 20, 2016
  - Harold E. Wardlow ’58, Deceased November 24, 2015
  - Glenn A. Wight ’53, Deceased April 11, 2016

- **1960s**
  - Phillip A. Cathey ’60, Deceased May 2013*
  - Ralph M. Clink ’63, Deceased February 13, 2015
  - Lee Mark Cohen ’69, Deceased September 17, 2015
  - John W. Culwell ’67, Deceased March 14, 2013*
  - Fred L. Friend ’65, Deceased March 20, 2013*
  - Ralph Huchterman ’66, Deceased December 2, 2002*
  - Glen D. Humes ’62, Deceased October 14, 2012*
  - Gerald D. Lynch ’67, Deceased April 12, 2016
  - Patrick Kelley McNamara ’65, Deceased May 12, 2016
  - Michael W Moore ’69, Deceased April 24, 2014*
  - Raymond Bruce Nance ’60, Deceased December 23, 2015
  - Sam Duane Nimmo, 1964, Deceased June 2, 2015
  - Richard Lloyd Romans ’61, Deceased November 8, 2015
  - Steve D. Shirley ’64, Deceased May 14, 2015
  - Thomas Simpson ’66, Deceased June 7, 2015
  - Dexter Allen Stone ’61, Deceased October 31, 2015
  - Harry Trevor Williams ’66, Deceased November 11, 2015

- **1970s**
  - David S. Hearon ’71, Deceased May 21, 2016
  - Phillip M. Suchan ’70, Deceased October 1, 2011*

- **Faculty**
  - Bobby Gene Cone, Football Coach, Deceased September 6, 2015
  - Mike Schooling, OMA Faculty, Deceased April 24, 2016

* Recently notified
THE GRAND MARCH KEEPS MARCHING AFTER A 45-YEAR PAUSE

The year was 1971 when Oklahoma Military Academy closed its doors and lowered the flag to end the only state supported High School/Junior College Military School in the nation. In the legacy of every cadet who attended OMA were many ceremonies, events, and traditions all dripping with nostalgia. One such ceremony was the Grand March, which every cadet knew about and several cadets participated in as long as they were a member of the Saber and Chevron Society. Always held during the formal Military Ball, it became a rite of passage for anyone who attained the rank. Practices were held, orders were barked out to the newcomers (neophytes and cruds) assuring the commanders that no mistakes were made in the elaborate marching scheme that was the Grand March tradition. With the closing of the school in 1971, the last step of the Grand March was taken.

As the years passed and the OMA Alumni Reunion became an organized event, the topic of having a Grand March was raised during Board Meetings, but logistics and procedures always seemed to delay it for the next year. For approximately eight years, it seemed like a cause worth fighting for, but not everyone was on board with the idea. Timing always plays an important part in reviving a tradition at a reunion and the Rogers State University GOLD Program advanced the clock to a consideration of a revival. The normal logistical questions of where, how, when, music, sabers, march order, etc. were raised, but with the introduction of the GOLD Program to RSU there was a keen interest in reviving the Grand March. The idea of former OMA Cadets demonstrating to the GOLD Program Cadets the Grand March sparked an interest and willingness not seen in those last eight years. All alumni had a story about the Grand March, even remembering the names of their dates, their rank at the time and some exclaiming that their date when they were a Cadet in the Grand March is today their wife.

As the Officer in Charge (OIC), B.G. Jones ’64 had planned out and answered every possible logistical question in his mind for those eight years. The Board of Directors invited him to speak at the February 2016 meeting and they all saw the vision; OMA Alumni inviting the GOLD Program Cadets to participate in a march that was a sacred part of the OMA Cadet legacy. Individual Board members contributed, Dr. Danette Boyle offered her full support, and Alumni President Phil Goldfarb and past Alumni Presidents were “all in.” Many board members volunteered and participated in an abbreviated practice (with sabers) after the 2016 OMA Alumni Reunion Saturday luncheon in the Centennial Center. No one knew how many OMA Alumni would be interested in staying for the Dinner/Dance later that night to participate in the Grand March. At first, the sign-ups were slow but the Cadre who were selected as Saber Bearers, replacement Saber Bearers, Directors, Guidon Bearer and all with dates added up to a total of 18 couples plus the GOLD Program participants (at that time there were five cadets all being single). Would these be the only marching participants? Only time would tell which Alumni would attend and who they would HONOR by marching in the Grand March (their Legacy, their family who sent them to OMA Legacy, 101 names on the OMA KIA Memorial, 10,000 Cadets who attended OMA or the GOLD Program).

The final numbers can best be stated by the attendance of the Dinner/Dance; 60 more attendees than any past Dinner/Dance. The Grand March 2016 participation numbers were 108 participants; 51 couples and 6 singles. Included in these numbers are the two GOLD Program National Guard Commanders Major Deneen and Major Reed and Dr. and Mrs. Larry Rice, RSU President and First Lady and Honorary Cadets, all whom had never participated in a Grand March. Additionally, the Decade of the 1950s had nine participants, the Decade of the 1960s had thirty-eight, and the Decade of the 1970s had two. Surprisingly, the GOLD Program had nine participants, eight with dates and one single. Seeing the GOLD Program Commanders and Cadets all in Class A uniforms fulfilled and exceeded all expectations, dreams, and visions along with a few tears shed from alumni memory bank. Former Cadets who are now in their 60s, 70s and 80s answered the Bugle Call of Reveille to assemble and take a step to set a historic record of marching in the 45-year revival of the OMA Grand March in 2016.

As an epilogue and quoting OMA Alumni President Phil Goldfarb, “we will always have a Grand March at future OMA Reunions.” A CD of this historic event is available through the OMA Alumni office and the proceeds go to the GOLD Program. Also, those very few who came to the Dinner/Dance at the last minute and didn’t reserve a place in the March will have an opportunity to wear your Sunday best and march in the Grand March 2017.
HISTORY OF TANKS ON THE HILL

OMA changed from a Horse Cavalry school to an Armor school during the 1946-1947 school year with the receipt of the first M24 Chaffee Tanks. In November, 1952 the M24 tanks were replaced by three M4A3 Sherman tanks. The tanks left the Hill in the fall of 1955.

THE LEGACY OF SAM HOUSTON III

The M41 Walker Bulldog light tank (also called the T-41) sat at the entrance to OMA from 1963 when it was transported to Claremore from Ft. Sill by Bill Larkin, father of Larry Larkin '66 until the school closed in 1971. Larry stated recently that the Army specifically wanted to keep the tank on their "books" so that no one would sell it for scrap. Prior to the M41 gracing the entrance, OMA had a M4A3 Sherman Tank at the bottom of the Hill which was moved in 1963 to sit in front of the Military Department.

The M41 tank was given to the JM Davis Gun collection in Claremore in 1972. Dr. Richard Mosier, the first President of Claremore Junior College, recalls the tank being towed down Will Rogers Boulevard. The tank remained on the Ft Sill property books until 1988 (25 years) when the army officially turned over the tank to the Davis Museum.

The OMA's M4A3 Sherman tank which was in front of the military department is now located at the 45th Infantry Museum in Oklahoma City and according to the museum's curator Mike Gonzales it is: "one of the crown jewels of our WWII collection."

The first Sam Houston (1793-1863) was a General in the Texan Army, President of the Republic of Texas and helped bring the State of Texas into the United States where he was also its first Senator in 1846 and finally a Texas Governor. The city of Houston was established and named after him in 1836 and it was the first capital of Texas until 1839 when Austin became the capital.

His grandson, Sam Houston III (1892-1952) was an OMA instructor from the fall of 1930 until the spring of 1936 teaching Engineering, Mechanical Drawing and Geology. He was also the Academy's Property Custodian. In addition, the Headquarters Battery of the Oklahoma National Guard 160th Field Artillery in downtown Claremore during the early 1930's was made up of cadets from the academy and was under the command of Oklahoma National Guard 1st Lieutenant Houston.

When Houston came to OMA in 1930, he started the Polo Team. One hundred and five cadets answered the first call of Lt. Sam Houston III for polo players which was more than any other sport at that time! While in the OKNG, Houston was promoted to Captain and built his polo team to become one of the best in the country. Many OMA Alumni recall the story of Will Rogers transporting the team (and their horses) on a train out of Claremore to Palo Alto, California to play against Stanford University where Will Rogers Jr. was attending college and on their polo team. Of course the OMA Flying Cadets won! Dr. Jesse Bushyhead, Will Rogers' cousin who was the OMA cadet physician after whom the fieldhouse is named after accompanied the cadets on the trip.

After his tenure at OMA, Sam Houston III moved to his grandfather's namesake city of Houston, Texas where he became a Civil Engineer. He died on December 12, 1952 at the age of 60 and is buried at the San Jacinto Memorial Park in Houston, Texas.
RSU RECOMMENDED FOR FULL, ACTIVE NCAA DIVISION II MEMBERSHIP

RSU Athletics Director Ryan Erwin is interviewed by media following announcement of RSU’s acceptance into NCAA Division II.

Rogers State University in mid-July received confirmation from the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) that it has been recommended for full NCAA Division II membership.

RSU President Dr. Larry Rice said the move to Division II will be good for the university, its students, and the community.

“The NCAA Division II model places significant emphasis on students, including their academic achievement, personal development, and commitment to improving their communities. As a result, we can better prepare our student-athletes to leave RSU as well-rounded graduates ready pursue their next opportunities, whether it’s a job within their field of study, attending graduate school, or continuing their athletic endeavors,” Rice said.

The membership change will take effect Sept. 1. At that time, the Hillcats will be eligible, for the first time, to compete in NCAA-sanctioned Division II athletics postseason competition after concluding the three-year membership process.

“This is a major milestone for Rogers State University and a crowning moment of several years’ worth of work from so many individuals at RSU,” Erwin said. “We would not be here without the support of Dr. Larry Rice, Mr. Tom Volturo, Dr. Keith Martin, our entire athletic department, and numerous individuals from across the RSU campus. We are excited about this new chapter in the life of Hillcat Athletics. Our student-athletes have trusted us throughout this transition and we are looking forward to watching them compete in the postseason and strive for a NCAA Division II national championship.”

As a provisional member during 2015-16, RSU was required to follow all NCAA Division II legislation, including violation reporting and filing for waivers and took part in an audit of the university’s compliance procedures during an on-campus visit.

RSU currently supports 12 intercollegiate programs and competes in the Heartland Conference for 10 sports, with men’s and women’s track and field participating in the Great American Conference as affiliate members.

For a schedule of game times, visit www.rsu.edu/athletics.