

# PLEDGE CLASS FALL 1953

Real and Lasting Friendships

By

Bob Caron

My earliest memories of Beta were when I received a "rush" visit from Dick Anderson and others in my home just west of Dallas. As I recall, they told me all about fraternity life and Beta and how the Betas were dedicated to scholarship. This was music to my parents' ears, since they were not too sure that fraternities were the way to go.

I was invited to a rush party at Lake Murray in the summer of 1953. I was somewhat skeptical about attending, since I had led a pretty sheltered life and did not know what to expect. All that I remember about that weekend was that it was the most fun that I had ever had in my life; water skiing, boating and feasting.

Going through rush was certainly an eye-opening experience. I had never seen houses so huge and so many great-looking girls. I was sure that this must be the beginning of a wonderful experience.

Then the bubble was burst on the first night that we pledges were assembled in the basement for some "instruction". I believe that Erwin Cook was assigned to be our pledge trainer. To my surprise, all of those friendly, cheerful actives turned into a bunch of raving maniacs, who all thought that they were "Drill Instructors". But we survived the harassment and soon we were banded together. I believe it was David Mackay who would call each of us PEJO which he said was the Indian word for 'friend'. Thus we became the PEJOES and the name stuck.

Around Thanksgiving time in 1953, my family had some serious financial setbacks and I was going to have to drop out of school after one semester. But the BETAS came to my rescue and I received permission to move into the house during the spring semester and worked in the kitchen for my meals. That was the beginning of a lifetime of working in kitchens and dining rooms and to this day, I still enjoy cleaning up the kitchen after the meal. I had good training from J.D. Swanson, George "Ace" Lampton and many others too numerous to mention. I learned a lot from our wonderful cooks, Mrs. Reid and Annie. My senior year, I cooked breakfast and some of you will remember the "lacy" eggs, when the grease got too hot.

Our initial pledge class consisted of 25 young men from various backgrounds. I have attempted to reconstruct that list and I hope that I have not forgotten anyone. (D) indicates deceased.

Bob Brown (D)	Clarke Bird	Les Burkett	Jim Callan
Bob Caron	Lon Chesnutt	Dan Clark (D)	Jim Drake
John Dykes	Larry Eakin (D)	Chuck Finklea	Al Frampton
Bob Hall (D)	Pat Hallren	Chuck Lehwald	David Mackay (D)
Bill McAlpine	Bill McKinney	Strauder Nelson (D)	Will Obering
Charles Priddy (D)	John Prince (D)	Bob Reid	Royce Taylor (D)
Roy Williamson			

Beginning in 1989, the PEJOES have had a reunion every two years. The first one was held at Lake Murray Lodge outside of Ardmore. Our most recent reunion was hosted by Bill McAlpine at his ranch in Blanket, Texas which is near Brownwood. The 2007 reunion is being held in Norman in conjunction with the 100th anniversary of Beta on the OU campus. We will be headquartered at the Holiday Inn, 1000 N. Interstate Drive, Norman and we welcome any of you to call or come to visit any of us.

### Memories of the Beta House

By  
Clarke Bird

I was fortunate to have been rushed by several fraternities during Rush Week. I was leaning toward SAE as my best friend in high school had pledged SAE the year before I came to OU. He was a friend of Ralph Thompson, a Beta active and I was immediately impressed with Ralph's personality and the Beta House itself. I ended up with a pink and blue pledge ribbon.

The first week of pledge life was indeed a shock. Where was all the hospitality and friendliness shown during Rush Week? Staying up all night on Friday nights cleaning the house just about did me in. I remember running the floor polisher in the hallways while half asleep. I don't like to even think about Hell Week other than mention one evening as we were assembled in the lobby, not fully clothed and blindfolded to be led down into the basement for more "fun and games" that the front door opened and the paperboy walked in to collect for the newspaper. I hate to think what he told his high school buddies.

Another highlight of our pledge year was our Pledge Walkout to Dallas. We rented a bus and rooms at the Adolphus Hotel in downtown Dallas. Pledge Brother Bill McAlpine was to fix us up with blind dates on the SMU campus. As usual, it was a complete non-event. We ended up having the bus driver take us to Pappy's Showland, an infamous stripper club. Unfortunately our bus driver ended up celebrating as much or more than the pledges. Pledge brother Al Frampton had to drive the bus back to our hotel. The next day, a very hung-over driver was panicked as he didn't know where his bus was parked and brother Frampton wasn't totally sure he remembered where he had parked it.

While living in Boston, my son graduated from high school and decided that he wanted to go to OU. He went through rush and pledged Beta Theta Pi. Ralph Thompson put my Beta pin on him when he was initiated.

Our pledge class has a mini-reunion every two years and the majority of those still living make an effort to attend. The stories and lies haven't changed in the last 54 years although some waistlines have expanded and some hair has disappeared.

I've been blessed to be a Beta and have greatly enjoyed the friendships that were formed a long, long time ago.

1953 Pledge Class Walkout  
By  
John Dykes

In November of 1953, the Pejoes 'walked out' and took a weekend trip to Dallas on a chartered bus. My recollections are hazy, both from my condition then and old age now. Maybe someone else can add to the details of the trip. It was a pledge class tradition at the time.

I do remember that our bus driver partied with us and was in no condition to drives us back to our lodging (where did we stay?). (The next part differs from Clarke Bird's version). However, no one in the pledge class knew how to drive a bus, so we put the driver at the controls and Bob Caron stood beside him and told him when to turn and where to stop. For some reason, the chartered bus did not have a place to park, so Bob guided him to the Dallas bus station where he parked in a stall. The next day when we went for the bus, it had been towed to a distant storage site.

Our big night out was at Pappy's Showland in Dallas. That is where we met up with a group of traveling magazine sales girls (at least that is what they told us) and we partied on. I have enclosed pictures which I hope will be included. The men in the pictures are imposters; they just resemble members of our pledge class.

## Beer Bowl - 1953

By  
John Dykes

The annual Beer Bowl between the Kappa Alphas and the Betas was reportedly the second oldest football bowl game; second only to the Rose Bowl. The first Rose Bowl was played on January 1, 1902 and reportedly the first Beer Bowl was played in 1908. At least the December 1953 Pejoe Beer Bowl was reported as the 45th annual Beer Bowl Classic. The game was played at Owen Stadium and was a fully equipped, contact game. We borrowed equipment from some high school.

I have included a copy of the program for the 1953 game. (Included are the players and their positions in case the program cannot be reproduced. Most of the players were members of the pledge class with a few exceptions).

Left End	Chuck Lehwald	#65	175 pounds
Left Tackle	Roy Williamson	#16	185 pounds
Left Guard	Bob Hall	#53	163 pounds
Center	Bob Caron	#95	175 pounds
Right Guard	John Dykes	#99	140 pounds
Right Tackle	Wayman Thompson	#11	165 pounds
Right End	David Mackay	#88	150 pounds
Quarterback	Pat Hallren	#22	140 pounds
Left Halfback	Jim Drake	#51	145 pounds
Fullback	Bill McAlpine	#77	165 pounds
Right Halfback	Royce Taylor	#35	165 pounds

### Substitutes

End	Bill McKinney	#23	160 pounds
Back	Al Pugh	#33	150 pounds
Back	Larry Eakin	#12	145 pounds
Guard	Jim Callan	#85	140 pounds
Guard	Bob Brown	#76	145 pounds
End	Charles Finklea	#75	171 pounds
Back	Clarke Bird	#25	160 pounds
Tackle	Al Frampton	#18	181 pounds
Guard	Les Burkett	#13	150 pounds
Back	Dan Clark	#15	175 pounds

Coach: Eddie Crowder

Water Girls: Jenny Ware, Barbara Haines

Cheer Leaders: Sue Stokes, Melody Starks, Joe Wolfenberger, Fred Turner and Beverly Barton

Announcer: George "Ace" Lampton

The big campus charity at that time we called the Community Chest. At half time, we crowned a Miss Campus Chest who was very well endowed (was it Joe Wolfenberger in drag?)

Anyway, I understand that the game is no longer played. Too bad - it was a fun tradition.

The Mud Fight  
By  
Lon Chesnutt

During our pledge year, we were assigned various chores and duties to do around the house and outside. Someone suggested that we challenge the whole chapter in some kind of contest. The only one we figured that 25 could win over 95 was a mud fight, so we chose the day and didn't tell them. On the appointed day, several of us were assigned to outside yard clean-up and managed to water all the flowers and bushes around the house from about one o'clock till the appointed time of 4 PM. That meant that there was plenty of mud available for our adventure and we all showed up in appropriate old clothes for the contest. On the signal from within, we caught two members just coming home from class, separated them from their books and promptly threw them in the mud. They screamed for help and we were ready at each of the doors. As a member would dash out to see what was happening, we would first splash them with the hose and then a couple of us would wrestle them into the mud. That was great fun for about the first 10 to come out to rescue the members. But then they kept pouring out of the house and pretty soon they were overpowering us and we were the ones being thrown into the mud. My last memory was trying to tackle Joe Wolfenberger--this huge former tackle on some football team. Since I was already low to the ground, he just dragged me to the mud, sat on me and started dunking my face in the mud. Oh, but it was fun that afternoon to catch them by surprise and cause such a ruckus. I have attached a copy of our pledge class photo.





