



great graduates

BROKEN ARROW HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION



2013 HONOREES



great graduates

HISTORY OF THE GREAT GRADUATE HALL OF FAME PROGRAM

The Broken Arrow High School Alumni Association honors a select group of “Great Graduates” who have exhibited – throughout their adult lives – strong leadership and good citizenship, which the Broken Arrow Schools helped develop during their formative years of schooling.

The recipients are individuals who exhibit through a variety of activities a purposeful drive that helps them remain dedicated to service within their community and compassionate towards others. Each one has proven to have personal integrity, courage and has achieved in both his or her personal and professional life. As they continue to soar and live a commitment to excellence, they serve as role models to all of us. Nominations are solicited throughout the community of Broken Arrow and in the media for alumnae who have modeled a selfless life of achievement and service to others for at least 20 years.

The Broken Arrow High School Alumni Association was revived in 1999, starting the tradition of the Great Graduates. The very first Great Graduates class was formally honored as part of the Broken Arrow Public Schools Foundation Banquet festivities in the spring of 1999. In 2001, the Alumni Association began to host their own event, specifically honoring the Great Graduates and their guests. This tradition continues to the present.

Great Graduates 1999

Jim Brewer, Class of 1956 (Posthumously)
John Hudson, Class of 1966 (Posthumously)
Virginia Watts Johnson, Class of 1948
Dr. Alan Keller, Class of 1965
Millie Marshall, Class of 1955

Great Graduates 2000

Ed Cobb Jr., Class of 1943 (Posthumously)
Howard Fisher, Class of 1935
Carl Martin, Class of 1943
Max E. Smith, Class of 1950
Roy Sturgeon, Class of 1959

Great Graduates 2001

Robert Eskridge, Class of 1944
Herb Karner, Class of 1934
Doug Lanier, Class of 1968
Frances McNeely Leonard, Class of 1953
Dr. Jeff Lester, Class of 1964

Great Graduates 2002

Brad Gahm, Class of 1977
Richard Gilliland, Class of 1956
Letha Phillips Nichols, Class of 1931 (Posthumously)
Floy C. Pepper, Class of 1934
Bill Perry, Class of 1948

Great Graduates 2003

Max Brissey, Class of 1948
Larry Deonier, Class of 1964 (Posthumously)
Luke Garrett, Class of 1977
Dr. Gary Gerber, Class of 1968
Janice Worthington Lisko, Class of 1975
Rick Medlin, Class of 1963

Great Graduates 2004

William C. Chapman, Class of 1938
Arnold Kunze, Class of 1946
Major William H. (Hank) Miesner, Jr., Class of 1957 (Posthumously)
Lieutenant Colonel Rowdy Williams, Class of 1958
Johnnie Parks, Class of 1965

Great Graduates 2005

Dr. Jack L. Griffin, Class of 1940
Maxine Layton Dark, Class of 1944
Bob Henry, Class of 1948
H. Delbert Frieze, Esq., Class of 1961

Great Graduates 2006

Paul Hayes, Class of 1940
Onis Lemon, Class of 1956
Mitchell Wilson, Class of 1970
Rebecca Righter Bluestone, Class of 1972
Russ McKinnon, Class of 1977

Great Graduates 2008

Bert Kennard, Class of 1940
Nile Clark, Class of 1955
Elmo Johnston, Class of 1943

Great Graduates 2012

Kristin Chenoweth, Class of 1986
Ivan Brown, Class of 1919
Nick Aston, Class of 1963
Dr. Amy Sturgis, Class of 1990
Dennis Sagely, Class of 1992



Broken Arrow High School
Alumni Association
GREAT GRADUATES OF 2013
Recognition Ceremony and Reception

Varsity Club, Broken Arrow High School
Friday, October 4, 2013, 5:00 p.m.

Master of Ceremonies

Justin Rosser
Broken Arrow High School Choir Director
Class of 1995

Dinner

Welcome

Dr. Jarod Mendenhall
Superintendent of Schools

**Greetings from the Broken Arrow High School
Alumni Association**

Kristle A. Lacy, Alumni Association Vice President
Class of 2006

Invocation

Charles Gann
Class of 1955

**Recognition of Former Great Graduates,
School Board Members and Special Guests**

**Introduction of Great Graduates
Class of 2013**

William T. Autry, Class of 1925
Presented by Max Smith
Class of 1950

Dr. Robert A. Rosser, Jr., Class of 1959
Presented by Nick Aston
Class of 1963

Dr. Jill Edwards Steeley, Class of 1968
Presented by Karen Wise Williams
Class of 1972

Tim Lynn, Class of 1984
Presented by Darci Smtih Delso
Class of 1984

Dr. Denise E. Dutton, Class of 1990
Presented by Deanna Dutton Hughes
Class of 1988

Closing Remarks

Derek Blackburn
Class of 1990

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Superintendent of Schools

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Broken Arrow High School Honor Society

Broken Arrow High School Jazz Choir

Michelle Lewandowski
BAHS Multi-media Instructor
For design of the new logo

Great Graduates Escorts
Caleb Cline
Casey DuBose
Tanner Gregurich
Brandon Hatfield
Lee Leong
Kara Borgstrom
Michelle Marx
Alexandria Platter
Andrea Ruiz
Jessica Shannon

GREAT GRADUATES COMMITTEE

Derek Blackburn, Class of 1990
Paula Showman Bridges, Class of 1955
Gwynta Blissit Buchanan, Class of 1970
Carla Dobbins Crow, Class of 1970
Charles Gann, Class of 1955
Carolyn Vaughan Hodges, Class of 1970
Steve Schwab, Class of 1982
Max Smith, Class of 1950
Rowdy Williams, Class of 1958
Glenne Wimpee, Class of 1990

William AUTRY

Class of 1925

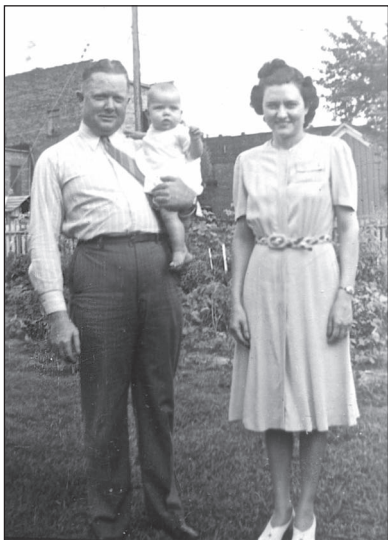
William T. Autry, the son of Tice and Tela Bass Autry, was born in 1906 near Weleetka in what was then Indian Territory, just down the road a piece from his cousin, “The Singing Cowboy” Gene Autry.

While he was quick to applaud his famous relative’s fame and the life of a movie star certainly must have had its appeal, this Great Graduate from the Class of 1925 dedicated himself to earning “leading man” status in a far less visible business – the telecommunications industry.

The first steps down that career path were taken during his time as a sophomore at Broken Arrow High School when he went to work for the local telephone company. From there came years filled with challenges and personal and professional successes that didn’t come to a halt until his retirement in 1970.

In 1939, six years after marrying the love of his life, Vela Laseman, in Duncan, Okla., the Autry family moved up North where he assumed responsibility as district manager for the Iowa Telephone and Telegraph Co. in Dyersville. He did so well, six years later he was lured back home as vice president of the Oklahoma Telephone Co.

Based on his accomplishments in that post, he was tapped to be vice president and general manager of the Nebraska Continental Telephone Co. and five years later took over as president of the company. A year later, following a merger with GTE operations in Iowa, Missouri and Nebraska, he was named vice president of



operations and moved to corporate headquarters in Grinnell, Iowa.

Despite the fact he was too busy working and building a career to take time for college, Autry proved so valuable to the operation he was quickly elected to the board of directors of all three companies.

Long-time Broken Arrowan Estelle Faull, described her brother as an executive who believed strongly in giving back to his industry and community. He began early in his career doing exactly that by serving as president of the Broken Arrow Chamber of Commerce and as a director of the Oklahoma Telephone Association. Over the years, he was volunteer leader of the Nebraska Telephone Association, Columbus Chamber of Commerce, the Grinnell Kiwanis Club, Grinnell Elks Lodge, Independent Telephone Pioneer Association and the Consistory and Shrine Masonic bodies. In addition, he was chairman of the Grinnell Planning and Zoning Commission, chaired the lay advisory board of St. Francis Hospital, was a member of the board of directors of Grinnell General Hospital and for three years served as its chairman.

In addition, he was a trustee of the Mayflower Home and served on the boards of the Grinnell Industrial Development Corp. and Grinnell Federal Savings and Loan Association, which recognized him with the title of Life Member, Emeritus.

Autry passed away on June 4, 1995 after dialing up a list of professional and civic accomplishments that distinguished him personally and as a member of this year’s Broken Arrow High School class of Great Graduates.

Robert ROSSER, JR.

Class of 1959

Quickly, now: Name a Broken Arrow High School Great Graduate who grew up in a log cabin.

If you answered Bob – or more accurately today, Dr. Robert A. Rosser, Jr. – you are correct.

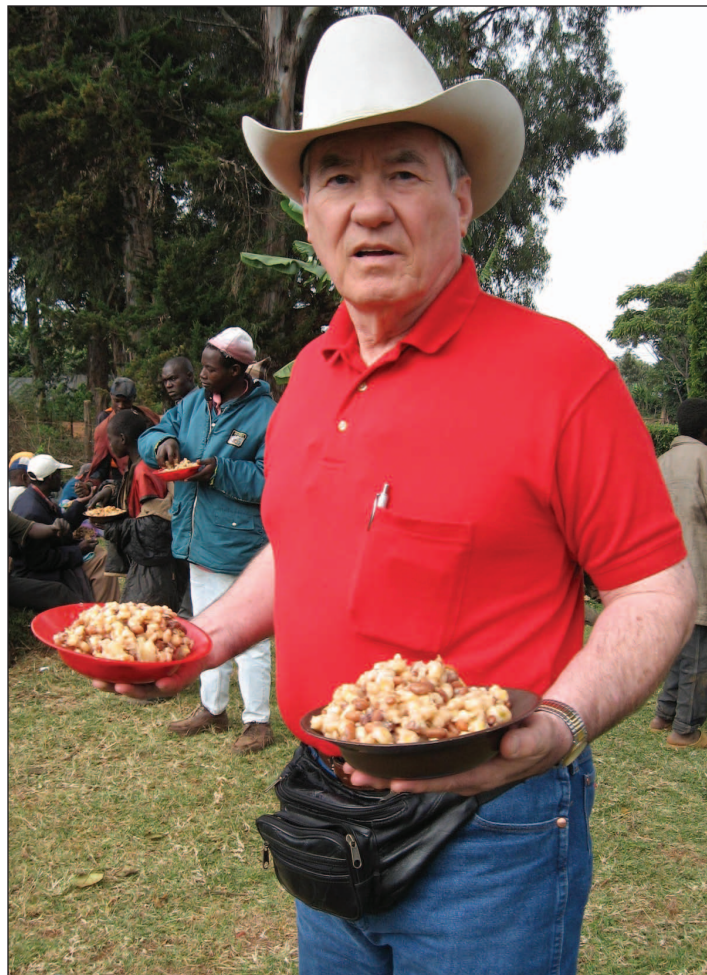
His grandfather came to this area by covered wagon in 1903 and purchased his own farm at 111th Street and Elm Place. His father, Robert Rosser, Sr. was a farmer, mechanic and according to his son the hardest-working man he had ever seen.

The oldest of seven children, Bob grew up in a log home at 121st and Lynn Lane. It was on a creek and he recalls he and his brothers were like “wild Indians wearing breech cloths” and running up and down that creek bank.

Representing the class of 1959, Rosser completed all 12 years in the Broken Arrow Public Schools system. It was during this time he met Ann Highfill who was later to become his wife and worldwide travel companion.

Rosser’s love of agriculture was shown through leadership of the Future Farmers of America chapter. One of his proudest moments, he said, was earning the Oklahoma Junior Master Farmer Degree in statewide FFA competition. Former BAPS Superintendent Dr. Clarence Oliver was editor of the Broken Arrow Ledger during those days and had a number of opportunities to witness and report on the lad’s exploits.

It was obvious “he was on his way to receiving dozens of awards



in his college and university years and even more in his business ventures,” Oliver said.

After high school, Rosser became the first member of his family to attend college, earning both bachelor and master’s degrees from Oklahoma State University. That was followed by a PhD degree in animal nutrition from Virginia Polytechnic Institute.

Rosser’s resume is filled with a variety of career path shifts ranging from Bible salesman, to corporate employee; oil lease operator to college professor, rancher and real estate salesman.

While his business cards changed frequently, one unwavering aspect of his life was a love for youth athletics. A highlight was the opportunity to coach his daughter’s under 14 soccer team to a Green Country championship at Skelly Stadium in 1981.

An ordained deacon in the Baptist Church, Rosser found his passion for mission work taking on a far greater role in his life. Classmate Tom Gann applauds his friend’s current position as president of Bridges International Development Inc. and marvels at the continuing outings he and Ann undertake in such unsettled areas as Kenya, Ecuador and Swaziland.

Fellow Great Graduate Nick Aston says Rosser’s “lifetime accomplishments are almost overwhelming for a country boy born and raised here in Broken Arrow.” Rosser says simply he feels blessed to be living the American dream with a raft of awards from a highly diverse career, a beautiful wife, two loving kids, three grandchildren and two great granddaughters.

Jill EDWARDS STEELEY

Class of 1963



Dr. Jill Edwards Steeley knows a lot about winning awards. While justifiably proud of all the accolades she has accumulated in four decades as a teacher, this Great Graduate from the Class of 1968 is quick to say her most appreciated recognition comes when one of her students flashes a big smile to show he or she “gets it” and is ready to move on to the next challenge.

Steeley is one of those rare and special people who feel a calling to be an educator. It is something she has done in environments ranging from kindergarten to college, while in the process becoming a paragon of excellence to legions of students, fellow teachers, administrators and parents whose lives she has touched.

One of the secrets of her success is seen in the way she deals with her second grade students at Coweta. “You have got to get to know them well enough to know if there are struggles at home. What is their personality like? You have to get in there and dig out all that about the child,” she said.

While noting that education is the only career she ever wanted, Steeley admits teaching is more difficult than it was when she took over her first classroom in the early 1970’s and part of that rests squarely on the shoulders of the folks in Oklahoma City. “Every lawmaker should be required to spend a full day in a public school

classroom to see what educators deal with daily,” she said.

A life-long learner, Steeley holds reading and elementary principal certifications and is National Board certified in early and middle childhood literacy. She has been honored as a 2009 and 2010 finalist and then 2013 winner of the prestigious Oklahoma Foundation Medal of Excellence Award in Elementary Teaching. She has been recognized in nine Who’s Who publications and was 2012 Coweta Public Schools Teacher of the Year. Earlier, while teaching in Broken Arrow, she was named site teacher of the year at Arrowhead Elementary School.

At Oral Roberts University, she was twice named outstanding faculty member in the School of Education and also received the university’s award for outstanding faculty service.

On the home front, she is wife to husband Clyde, mom to two adult children and grandma to three grandchildren.

“Strong character,” “integrity,” “spiritual,” “loving,” “compassionate,” “intuitive,” “intelligent” and “humble” are a few of the words friends, associates and former students use to describe Dr. Jill Steeley. Now another set of well-deserved words can be added to that list: “Great Graduate.”



Tim LYNN

Class of 1984

To say 1984 Great Graduate Tim Lynn has distinguished himself in the national arena of law enforcement would be akin to saying Van Gough was a pretty good painter.

Lynn's biography, produced in small type, is a 14-page recital of education, job experiences and outstanding performance accomplishments in service to the people of the United States. Specific assignments have included:

- Three years of managerial duty with the Secret Service with supervisory authority for monitoring security systems in the White House complex, diplomatic embassies and chancelleries. As a first responder, he also was directly responsible for protection of the First Family while they were in Washington.
- During his time at Camp David, he became a trained structural firefighter and was a primary ambulance operator on call should a member of the First Family or a camp guest require medical attention.
- Among a long list of responsibilities at the National Forest Service, he was a member of the senior executive safety working core team chartered to establish employee and stakeholder health and safety initiatives.



Other governmental agencies he has been part of include the Department of Defense, U.S. Marine Corps, and United States Navy Seabees.

Lynn currently serves as Assistant Director for the Law Enforcement Division of the Department of the Interior's Office of Law Enforcement, Security and Emergency Management. His responsibilities include development of policy and programs related to drug enforcement, border coordination and training; law enforcement and security operations during critical incidents or national emergencies, and management of border management in the north, southeast and southwest sectors of the nation. A duty that he says is especially close to his heart involves overseeing the Victim's Assistance Program.

Lynn notes that too often law enforcement on public lands focuses almost entirely on bringing to justice the offenders. His charge is to expand that focus to include training of Department of the Interior personnel in the treatment of the victims of these crimes with the aim of minimizing the frustration and confusion they too often endure. Another aspect of this program involves working with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to oversee victim specialists in 12 areas working with underserved tribal victims from 20 different tribes.

Rather than jumping off the education bandwagon following his high school career, Lynn has escalated the process to acquire the training and special insights required to handle his varied areas of responsibility. He earned a degree in police science at George Washington University and another in behavioral science at the University of Maryland. Specialized training has come through the University of North Florida, University of Florida, Department of Defense seminars, United States Secret Service and Federal Law Enforcement Training Center programs, Marine Corps and Navy schools.

Denise DUTTON

Class of 1990

Look up the word “focused” in the dictionary and you may well see a picture of 1990 Great Graduate Dr. Denise Dutton illustrating it.

Her father, Dave Dutton, recalls shortly after the family moved to Broken Arrow, they purchased some acreage outside of town and, lacking nearby neighbor kids to play with, Denise and her older sister, Deanne, became “farm girls” who were quite comfortable sitting astride tractors. When Dutton built a backyard swimming pool, the attention of the girls shifted to their new aquatic playground and acquiring the skills that would later lead to positions on the Broken Arrow High School swim team.

Showing her focus, Denise took on the demanding role of being the team’s distance swimmer and was good enough to represent her school in state competition.

This same approach was carried into the classroom. An example came when, as secretary of the Student Council, she played a major role in hosting the state conference of student councils. “It was really a big deal and quite an intense time,” her dad said. “But she dug in, did what had to be done while maintaining her position as having the highest grade point average her last two years of high school. She was always a list-maker and wouldn’t quit until every item had been checked off.”



Following graduating with distinction from BAHS, Denise earned a Bachelor of Arts, Magna cum Laude, in English from the University of Tulsa. From there, it was off to the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University where she received a Master of Arts in International Relations with emphasis on Central and Eastern Europe and then to Princeton where in 2003 she earned a PhD in Politics.

After 10 years on the East Coast and six years teaching at Missouri State University, she returned to Oklahoma as Assistant Provost at the University of Tulsa with responsibility for the school’s Honors Program. She is also founding director of the Henneke Center of Academic Fulfillment.

Despite reaching heights many can only marvel at in the academic world, this Great Grad points with equal pride to her years of community service that include being a member of the Intern Minister Advisory Committee for All Souls Unitarian Church, serving on the board of the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence, being a member of the 45th class of Leadership Tulsa and serving on the board of Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Oklahoma.

Now a new mom of twin daughters, her dad says he wouldn’t be surprised to see his daughter begin making lists to help her accomplish her new job – showing her kids the kind of focus it takes to be great swimmers – and accomplished tractor drivers.