



# LETTERS

## Recognition for “Uncle Bob”

Congratulations to Mr. Ron D. Burton upon being the new leader for Rotary International.

It was nice to see recognition of my “Uncle Bob,” Everett Wentworth Hill, as the first leader elected from Oklahoma many years ago. Uncle Bob believed so much in the work of the Rotary that I had the Rotary seal engraved on his tombstone out in Memorial Park Cemetery in Oklahoma City.

*Carol J. Thompson  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*

## Remembering Boyd Gunning

Thank you for your account (*Sooner Magazine*, Summer 2013, pp.21 ff.) of Ron Burton’s election as president of Rotary International, and especially for your picture (p. 24) of him with Boyd Gunning in the ’70s. Much earlier, throughout my five years (1948-1953) at OU, Boyd Gunning was repeatedly my benefactor, and it was his initiative which enabled me to spend my Rotary Foundation Fellowship year (1953-54) at Oxford University in England—an opportunity which radically and durably changed my life.

*J. I. Miller, ’52 ba, ’53 ma  
Hales Corners, Wisconsin*

## A Nattily Attired Greeter

While reading the article on the “Visitor’s Guide to OU” in the winter issue of *Sooner Magazine*, I couldn’t help but smile at my personal memories of the Visitors Center at OU during my college years. At that time, President Boren’s current home, Boyd House, served as our Visitors Center. As part of my student employment with the Office of High School and College Relations, Paul Massad arranged for me to spend President’s Leadership Class service hours as “The Greeter at Boyd House” on Saturday mornings.

I remember asking my mom for an increase in my clothing allowance so

I could buy a *crimson* Pendleton wool pantsuit I’d seen in the window at Street’s Department Store to wear on Game Day Saturdays. I think it cost in the neighborhood of \$60 at the time, which was an outrageous amount of money to spend on any item of clothing in the late ’70s. But I had to look the part as the “University’s Hostess,” as Mrs. Sharp reminded me when she appeared one fall weekend and admired my new suit.

It was money well spent, and I considered it my privilege to welcome many potential students, alumni and guests to our alma mater from that stately home. I’m sure the current Visitors Center is just as hospitable, and I’ll bet there’s a greeter wearing crimson on any given Saturday.

*Gayle Machetta  
Henryetta, Oklahoma*

## A Great American Hero

The *Sooner Magazine* came up with a five-star production in the Summer 2013 issue. The “Postscript” gave an incredibly accurate definition of a hero. The article portraying Colonel Edwin Price Ramsey was a well done overview of a truly great American hero. I was deeply moved as I read the story.

As described in the autobiography of Ramsey, the unbelievable account of three years of life in the wilds of the Philippines unfolds—leading through an adventure nothing short of miraculous. Ramsey co-authored the book, *Lieutenant Ramsey’s War*, with Stephen J. Rivele. I taught high school history for some thirty years, and the Ramsey adventure is one of the most courageous accounts I have ever read.

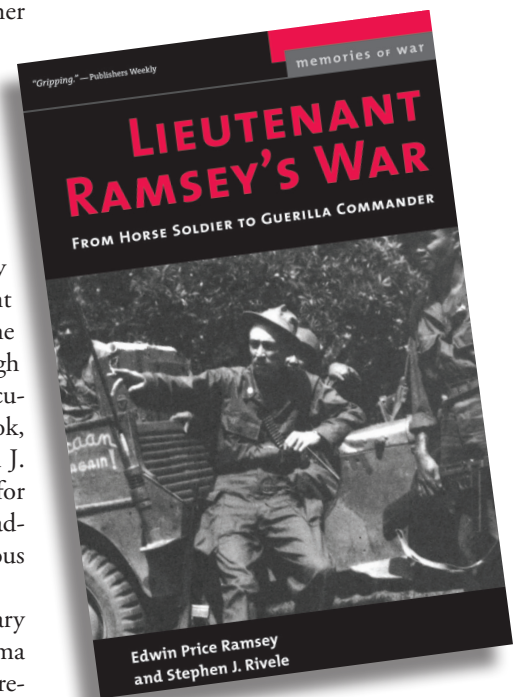
Colonel Ramsey acquired his military training as a young man at Oklahoma Military Academy (O.M.A.) in Claremore, Oklahoma. I grew up on a farm three miles west of O.M.A. I can promise you everyone in Rogers County who is old enough remembers the “rabbits” from the hill. The academy is now Rogers State University, but the old O.M.A.

memories remain.

After reading Ramsey’s book, I realized we had something in common—the Claremore connection. If you have not read *Lieutenant Ramsey’s War*, you owe it to yourself to do so. I have no idea how many copies I have given to friends and acquaintances.

My wife and I went to Claremore in June 2008 and met Colonel and Mrs. Ramsey. That brief encounter began a warm friendship that has grown over the years. We were deeply saddened to learn of his passing.

There were many things about this giant of a man that were just outstanding. He was deeply loyal to say the least. His love and dedication to the people of the Philippines was recognizable to anyone. Humility was also very much a trademark of his character. He would tell you in a heartbeat, “I’m not a hero.” Sorry, Colonel, I’m not a hero worshiper; however, I will always recognize you as a real hero.



What Ramsey and his 40,000 guerilla soldiers did made it so much easier for MacArthur to make his famous return to the Philippines. The good Colonel was highly decorated for

---

his masterful and unselfish service. However, I will never understand why he was not given the Congressional Medal of Honor. Ed's medal collection is on display in the O.M.A. museum, which is still housed on the hill at Rogers State University in Claremore, Oklahoma.

Two years ago, while eating lunch with the Ramseys, the Colonel said, "I'm a survivor." That was the utterance of a true statement. The Colonel is no longer with us in person, but for those who knew him, he will always be a survivor. I am a better person for having known Colonel Edwin Price Ramsey and his wife, Raquel. They will always remain among our most treasured friends.

*Sooner Magazine*, thanks for remembering a fellow Sooner and a true hero.

*Dr. Jack C. Garrison, '85 mls  
(A born Sooner)  
Enid, Oklahoma*

### Service to His Country

Thank you for this article on Edwin Price Ramsey, who served his country so well as a soldier and citizen.

*Mary J. Caffrey, '94 ma  
Gretna, Nebraska*

### An Extraordinary Tale

Amongst the stack of books and copies of *The New Yorker*, *Vanity Fair*, Bloomberg mags and assorted other clutter in my Arizona Room, I have kept the summer issue of *Sooner* as a reminder to write you about one of the stories.

It is your "Postscript" tale of Edwin Price Ramsey and his extraordinary heroism in World War II.

I have had the good fortune to have known a good many Medal of Honor recipients over the years as well as such heroes as my friend Ken Taylor of Pearl Harbor fame. Few transcend Ramsey's ordeal living through the terrible brutality of the Japanese on Bataan.

Apparently he finished up at OU just as I was arriving, and I much regret I never had the opportunity to know him and to have heard his story firsthand. So

thanks for going back into history to give your readers a glimpse into what he endured.

*John Martin Meek, '58 journ  
Green Valley, Arizona*

*Editor's Note: The Winter 2008 issue of Sooner Magazine carried an article by John Martin Meek, based on his book, The Other Pearl Harbor, about OU Alumnus Ken Taylor, a hero in the December 7, 1941, attack on Pearl Harbor. The book is also the basis for "Hardcore Heroes," produced in Toronto by The Discovery Channel and tentatively set to air on the History Channel in August.*

### Locating the Right Place

What town is on the front cover of *Sooner Magazine*, Spring 2013, Volume 33, Number 3?

*Cecil Gibson, '58 mech eng  
Wimberley, Texas*

*Editor's Note: George Dotson's cover illustration for the article "What Makes a Good Place?" began with a photograph taken in downtown Norman from the concrete bench that is on the north side of Main Street near the railroad tracks and the James Garner statue. The Sooner Theater is directly across from the building in the foreground, which was once the Landsaw Furniture building.*

### The "First" at Lloyd Noble

Thanks for returning my call in reference to "The House that Basketball Built," Jay C. Upchurch, Winter 2003, *Sooner Magazine*. Actually, however, my expectation based on my fifty plus years of professional and educational experience with Oklahoma University was that I would be contacted immediately. I was.

I have only one complaint about OU: I cannot go back and start it all over.

My actual comment about Mr. Upchurch's work is that it is a good piece of writing. He is clear and more akin to

Hemingway than Tolstoy.

I looked up the 2003 story because I love the Lloyd Noble [Center]. It is a fine place to watch anything, ball game, music, gymnastics, etc., easy in, out, around. I even watched my children graduate there from Norman High School. My son performed as the chimney sweep there. Oh, it really is part of my heart.

My comment is that Mr. Upchurch has not given the true history of the opening of the Lloyd Noble.

Bob Hope did not open the Lloyd Noble. The Dakotan, Lawrence Welk, did, on Labor Day of 1975, the house filled to overflowing. We bought tickets for my mother and my in-laws. Of course, that was my excuse, but I loved Lawrence, too.

The parking experienced growing pains on this first day: A major star was out here on the Oklahoma Prairie back before OU had helped create traffic flows.

Who could expect more? It was a disaster; no one ran over anyone, but that is about all that can be said for the parking experience.

We were willing to take half-a-show, however. I heard no one grouse. So, we suffered through the heat and worked our way through the herd of cars. One-half-a-show beat no Lawrence Welk at all.

But the Champagne Guy came out on stage at the close of the first hour. He told us all to sit still, that he and the "boys and girls" were going to go through the first half again. Also, he told those who had been there for the first half they did not have to leave. . . .

By the way, my graduation present for both my children was a lifetime membership to the Alumni Association; every family should do that in perpetuity. The older I get the more I understand and value what Oklahoma University provided my soul and my pocket book. We need to support her; she is our alma mater, you know.

*Tommy McConnell, '65 ba, '76 jd  
Norman, Oklahoma  
Life Member, OU Alumni Association*