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Sooner Scene

LAST month this column was devoted to an examination of the financial crisis facing higher education in Oklahoma. Shortly after it appeared I received the following letter, which encouraged me to believe that some serious, constructive thinking is going on among alumni about the problems facing this state:

Dear Boyd:

I have read with interest your very well written editorial commenting upon the needs of higher education in Oklahoma in the future. I am writing this letter to you because I strongly believe that our school system at all levels should receive more money than it is now receiving. To me, our young people are the future of our state and nation and each should receive as much education as he or she can possibly assimilate. Further, I personally think that each of the tax increases suggested by you is reasonable.

I think you do the cause of education a disservice, however, when you tie the needs of education to a tax increase. Unfortunately, some of our County Commissioners have not spent the money turned over to them wisely. Our state highway program could be handled to better advantage than is now occurring. Our Welfare expenditures apparently are not achieving the desired results. Finally, a small group of educators are seriously hurting the cause of education by participating in demands that small sub-standard high schools remain open. When you suggest a tax increase as the sole method of meeting the needs of education, it is my opinion that you unnecessarily ally yourself with those groups of public servants who have not properly discharged their duty to our State. I see no reason for such an alliance.

I would suggest that the needs of education be presented to the people and to the legislature solely on their own, without in any way allying them with County Commissioners, Highway Commissioners, Welfare recipients or a minority block of country school educators. I think those of us who believe in greater expenditures for public education, have a strong enough cause that we do not need to ally ourselves with any group other than the general public. I suggest that it be solely up to the legislature, as representatives of the people, to determine where they should obtain the money which is needed for education.

If at any time I can be of any service in promoting higher salaries for qualified teachers, and higher educational standards in our Oklahoma schools at all levels, please feel free to call upon me.

John R. Wallace
(34ba)

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A total of 5,514 alumni gave \$196,585 to O.U. Alumni Development Fund in 1960. This is an impressive amount of money, and the 2,000 class representatives who wrote letters to their friends on behalf of the ADF can be proud of the results. A great many worthwhile programs can be financed during the coming year as a result of the alumni generosity.

Of the total amount only \$35,695 was received as unrestricted gifts. At the annual meeting of the ADF board on March 17, the members were assigned the task of stretching this amount



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Class Reunions May 21

The Class of 1911 will be honored as the Golden Anniversary Class with special reunions for 1916, 1921, 1926, 1931, 1936, 1941, 1946, 1951, 1956.

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over requests from University departments totalling nearly a half million dollars. The balance of the money was given by the donors for specific purposes equally as useful as unrestricted gifts.

The Class of 1911 took the honors in the percentage of the class participating with 46 per cent. They were followed by the classes of 1913, 1910, 1914, 1912, 1915, 1919 and 1908. The real strength of the ADF is in the number of people who participate annually in the program, regardless of the amount they give. One of the most encouraging things about the Fund is that from the standpoint of the number of contributors, seven of the top ten classes in this category are alumni who graduated since World War II. In the three categories of competition, the greatest number of contributors come from recent classes; the highest percentage of contributors comes from classes prior to World War I, and the classes sending the greatest amount of money are those in-between years—1929, 1920 and 1936.

Here are a few examples of how the unrestricted money was divided this year. Scholarships again received the highest total with a \$12,000 grant. These scholarships are awarded by the regular University scholarship committee, and all students are encouraged to compete for them. Two grants were made to the College of Law, one for the collection of Indian land materials and the other to continue support of the new collection on space law. Grants in the support of research were made to both physics and chemistry. The second highest allocation, \$4,900, went to develop the new O.U. natural gas research lab at the University Research Park, equipped by industries interested in this field. Equipment gifts already received have an estimated total value of \$40,000, with additional grants from various research agencies to finance the program. The ADF money will be used primarily to set up the laboratory and place it in operation. Other grants were made to fine arts, humanities, social studies and the library. A complete report will soon be mailed to all alumni.

The ADF money enables the University to participate in highly specialized programs that cannot be financed by state appropriated funds. This money usually starts the pot boiling. More often than not, encouragement and support which come from the ADF lead to much greater support from other sources in terms of equipment grants of money and service. This is the reason that the annual alumni support is so important.

—R. BOYD GUNNING



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