Gordon State College

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Fall 2016 | Volume 14, Number 1

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CLASS OF 2016

602
Total Graduates

77% Female

23% Male

Ages Receiving Degrees

18	26	71
min.	avg.	max.

DEGREES

AS	199
AA	157
ASN	65
BSN	39
BS (excluding BSN)	118
BA	24

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On the Cover: Zane Wolf provided this photograph of herself and the Robert Berks' statue of Einstein on the northwest corner of Tech Green on the Georgia Tech campus in Atlanta.

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DEDICATION

Doris Watson "never gave up on a student and always believed that with a little help and encouragement students were capable of greatness," according to her son, Bert. She expected no less from him, teaching him to excel in reading and writing, and appreciation of art.

"As a lawyer," he said, "my ability to comprehend the written word and express myself in prose is a foundation to what I am, but her insistence that I tour every major art museum between New York and Chicago (there were nine) before my 15th birthday, provided me with a perspective of which things in our life are important and which things seem trivial next to a Seurat."

She attended Gordon Military College as a freshman and sophomore and then received her Bachelor of Arts from Tift College in Forsyth. After she earned her master's degree from Mercer, she attended the University of Cambridge in Cambridge, England, for two years of additional graduate study.

From 1964 to 1972, she taught English at Gordon Military High School and College, where her students came to appreciate her sense of academic rigor.

Mrs. Doris Watson

Doris Watson (left) with Julia Caldwell in 2000.

One such high school senior, set to attend Emory University, was told her final term paper was "not of the quality that would be necessary to succeed as a future Emory student," and if she did not rewrite it, she would receive an F. When she complained to her father, a prominent doctor and graduate of Emory, her father told her she had better rewrite it quickly.

According to Bert, his mother believed that "music was a different world that human beings can create to present concepts of perfection, emotion and achievement." So it was fitting that a tribute concert was held for Mrs. Watson by her former students, the Bach Society of Atlanta, and Gordon State College as part of Alumni Weekend 2016.

She died on Jan. 6, 2014.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Friends,

As many of you know, in 2006 Gordon State College became a four-year college, and I am proud to report that our baccalaureate programs have grown, but not at the expense of our two-year associate programs. This is clearly shown in the number of degrees we awarded this last year.

In the 2014-2015 academic year we awarded 148 baccalaureate degrees. This year we awarded 181 baccalaureate degrees, an increase of 22 percent.

In the 2014-2015 academic year we awarded 400 associate degrees. This year we awarded 421 associate degrees, an increase of 5 percent.

Overall, we had nearly a 10 percent increase in our graduation numbers. In an era of low graduation rates, Gordon is proving itself, once again, to be a leading educational institution.

One reason for our success is that Gordon provides first-class support for its students as evidenced by our newly renovated library, transformed from the Dorothy W. Hightower Library to the Dorothy W. Hightower Collaborative Learning Center and Library. I invite you to come visit the new Hightower. Come see what a state-of-the-art library looks like.

Another reason for our success is that we are ever mindful of our mission to provide an exceptional education through innovative teaching and engaged learning for the benefit of the world in which we live.

Our commitment to our mission is evidenced by the work we are doing for our reaccreditation with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. As part of our reaccreditation, we will be initiating a new quality enhancement plan we are calling First Things First: Mastery in Quantitative and Communication Skills.

This action plan will focus on pathway courses in English and mathematics, making them more learner-centered. For the next 5 years, this plan will focus on improving student learning and providing students with a stronger foundation for upper-level courses.

As alumni, you can join us in this work and in our future success by continuing your financial support of Gordon State College. Please take a few minutes right now to send a check or making an online donation to the Gordon State College Foundation. You will find the College's mailing address and web link on the back cover of this magazine.

I know you have worked hard for every dollar you have earned, so I want you to know we at Gordon will make every one of those dollars work just as hard.

Thank you,

Max Burns, *President*
Gordon State College

The DEMANDS of Curiosity

Zane Wolf Explores the World

by Peter Boltz

"My driving force in life is my need to know why the world works as it does," Zane Wolf said, and for her, this "need to understand the world and to explore it as thoroughly" as she is able is best done through the dual sciences of physics and biology.

Zane poses with a leopard seal in front of Palmer Station, Antarctica. Notice her footwear and that she is not in a heavy coat. She said that after a while, she grew acclimated to the lower temperatures.

I'm going where I want to go right now and hope I land where I need to be.

In an extremely rare occurrence, the crew of the Antarctic Research Support Vessel Laurence M. Gould saw thousands of Gentoo penguins, as well as a few whales, migrating through the Lemaire Passage. Scientists are currently looking into this phenomenon.

Her curriculum vitae is evidence that her ambition is well founded, having graduated in May 2016 with a bachelor of science in the dual major of applied physics and biology from the Georgia Institute of Technology (more widely known as Georgia Tech). In addition to the degree, her research experience includes biomechanics, astrophysics, protein biology and behavioral biology. Phrases like "accreting neutron starbursts," "recombinant florescent proteins," "Cherenkov gamma radiation," and "tomographic PIV" are everyday usage for her.

About two months after graduating from Georgia Tech, she set out for Cambridge, Massachusetts, to work on her Ph.D. at Harvard University in its department of organismic and evolutionary biology. This is quite a jump from her time at Gordon State College as a dual-enrollment student, working as a math tutor in the Student Success Center during the day with Mr. Peter Higgins and in the residence halls after 6 p.m. with Dr. Ed Wheeler.

Academia attracted this home-schooled student early in life because it gives her not only a way to understand the world, but also the means to travel and explore it. She was just a sophomore at Tech when she spent four months at the University of Queensland, Australia, in an exchange program. In her junior year at Tech, she spent five weeks at Palmer Station, Antarctica. In applying for a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship, she drew the attention of Harvard's Dr. George Lauder, who wrote her a letter of recommendation for the fellowship and also encouraged her to apply to Harvard. He is now her research adviser.

In speaking with her about her scientific interests, it is easy to imagine a rarified community of individuals all around the world who are as interested as she is in understanding not only this world and its life forms but worlds and life forms other than our own. At present though, her curiosity is focused on the terrestrial rather than the extraterrestrial.

For example, her time at Palmer Station was spent studying pteropods. These are sea snails and sea slugs which use their feet to swim in the ocean. The motion of their feet gives them the appearance of flying through the water, and thus the Greek prefix ptero, or wing. As part of Tech's Dr. Jeannette Yen's research team, she collected pteropods from the Bellingshausen Sea and then studied their movements in an aquarium using tomographic particle image velocimetry, or tomographic PIV.

A simplified way to understand this method is that very small harmless particles are introduced into the water with the pterpod. A special camera is then used to record the movement of these particles, which are disturbed as the animal moves through the water. The results give information about the fluid dynamics involved.

Likewise, Zane is joining a research group at Harvard that studies the biomechanics and locomotion of fish and other water-dependent species. Here, Zane's double major in applied physics and biology, as well as her computational experience, will no doubt be useful. Her research is set to incorporate soft robotics.

"Soft robots are more lifelike," Zane said. "They are squishy and flexible, like a caterpillar. These are used to study the locomotion of living things, allowing researchers to better understand all the many variables that go into movement."

She explained that building such a soft robot begins with a study of the animal. Once the robot is built, researchers see if it can move like the living model, which typically it can't on the first try.

So they "adjust and tweak until the robot performs as desired, and then the fun begins," she said. "Researchers can use the robot to investigate an animal's movement in ways not possible with the living organism, which can yield important results about the biology of the animal, the physics of its movement, and how it utilizes the environment to complete movement."

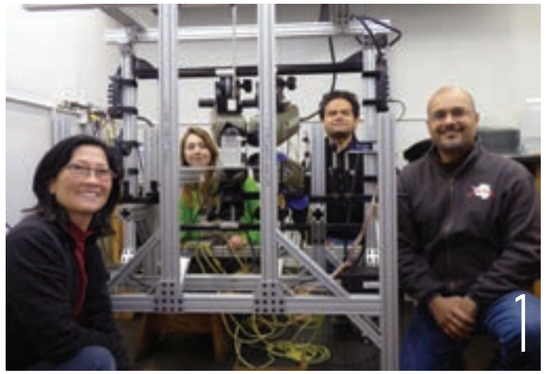
Where such work will lead is anyone's guess – perhaps the myth of Icarus will be rewritten and people will strap on robotic wings and fly like birds – but in Zane's case, such work satisfies her curiosity, her need to know.

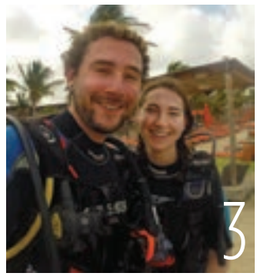
Such work, and the academics that go along with it, is also a source of fun for her and an outlet for her love of animals. While in Australia, she wasn't locked away in a classroom and then a laboratory. She went out on excursions, like a visit to the Lone Pine Koala Sanctuary. There she got to hold a koala in her arms, which she said had a very thick but very soft fur. A picture of this moment clearly shows her delight.

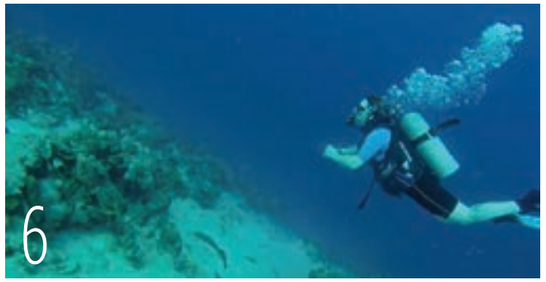
Zane also was invited to do a little sport climbing on Mount Tinberrwah with the University of Queensland Mountain Club. Sport climbing involves the use of ropes, anchors and bolts to make ascents and descents, a sport she already knew something about and enjoyed.

During her five weeks at Palmer Station, she kept a blog and posted a number of YouTube videos which show some of the fun she had. One is called the polar plunge. As her blog explains, this is a farewell tradition at Palmer Station, done whenever someone leaves Palmer on the Antarctic Research Support Vessel Laurence M. Gould. In the video you can watch her and others, in just swimsuits, leap into the ice cold water of the station's harbor. This may sound like torture, but all you have to do is see the faces of the swimmers to realize they are indeed having fun.

In another video, a group of researchers, this time dressed for the cold, find a nice snow-covered hill to slide down head first on their bellies like penguins, or feet first on their backs taking pictures as they slide down. Anyone who's been sledding or skiing knows the fun of them, but imagine







how much more fun it would be to say you made like a penguin in Antaretica.

She also is an outdoor sport enthusiast, having skydived from 14,000 feet while in Australia, enjoys hiking and climbing in mountains all around the world, and is a certified scuba diver. As a graduation present (summa cum laude from Georgia Tech), her father took her and a friend Steven Forsyth to Bonaire in the Leeward Antilles in May 2016 so she could complete her advanced scuba certification and Steven could receive his open water certificate.

She is also certified for CPR and wilderness first aid, and considering the hazards of her sporting interests, these two make sense.

The year 2016 has been a good one for Zane. She won the Outstanding Undergraduate Research Award and the H. Fukuyo Outstanding Physics Undergraduate Award from the Georgia Tech School of Physics. In addition to these she was awarded the Theodore H. Ashford Graduate Fellowship in the Sciences and the James Miller Pierce Fellowship from Harvard University.

In her 2014 Palmer Station blog, Zane wrote the following about herself: "I don't really have a goal for what I want to be in life. I'm going where I want to go right now and hope I land where I need to be."

It would appear she has landed where she needs to be.

1. Jeanette Yen, Zane, Deepak Adhikari and Rajat Mittal pose around a portable tomographic particle image velocimeter (PIV) they assembled at Georgia Tech. The instrument is used to measure the movement of sea creatures.

2. While on an exchange program to Queensland, Australia, Zane visited Lone Pine Koala Sanctuary near Brisbane in 2013. And yes, she said, the fur is very soft, and dense.

3. Zane completed her advanced scuba certification in May 2016 in Bonaire, Leeward Antilles. Her friend Steven Forsyth joined her on the trip, which was a graduation present from her father.

4. Two elephant seal pups keep watch while warming themselves in the sunshine.

5. Although arriving after most of the Adélie penguins had left for their seasonal migrations, Zane was able to see this stunning pair while visiting Janus Island.

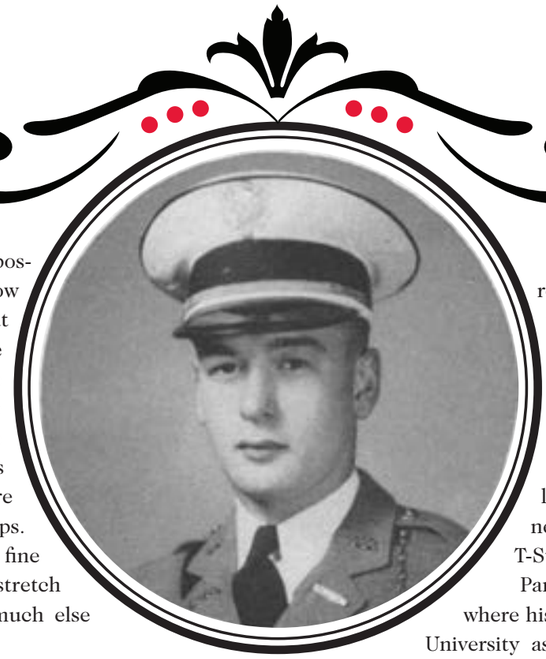
6. Despite having suffered massive damage from a hurricane within the last decade, this reef off the coast of Bonaire in the Leeward Antilles in the Caribbean still holds a plethora of sea life. Zane takes a closer look.

7. Zane joined her fellow Georgia Tech researchers on top of the glacier near Palmer Station. To her left is Deepak Adhikari, Jeanette Yen and Rajat Mittal. In April, the length of a day, from sunrise to sunset, is similar to Georgia's.

A Living History

Ellis Parker Mosley Jr., Class of '42

by Peter Boltz



It can be hard, even impossible, to remember how things once were at Gordon. Where there are now paved roads – and have been for decades – there were once dirt roads. Where there are now classroom buildings and student housing, there were fields planted with crops. And where there is now a fine new city park, there was a stretch of boggy ground unfit for much else than frogs.

Given the proper dose of curiosity and the knowledge of where to look in the library, anyone could discover all kinds of things about the way Gordon State College and Barnesville used to be.

Or you could show up for one of Gordon's Alumni Weekends and find a living history like Ellis Parker Mosley, 92. A graduate of Gordon Military College, May 1942, and the child of a Gordon Military Institute math professor, Parker has a store of memories he is happy to share if you just ask him.

When President Franklin D. Roosevelt visited Barnesville in 1938 to dedicate the Lamar Electric Cooperative, the 14-year-old Parker moved through the crowd selling the Barnesville Gazette.

"I didn't see anyone reading it," he said. "People were using it to shade themselves from the sun."

"The stands were full hours beforehand, and 'fast food' restaurants sprung up around the house where I lived on Thomaston Street next to what was then the T-Street barracks."

Parker was born in 1924 in Macon where his father took a job with Mercer University as athletic director. Before his birth, his family lived in Barnesville where his father taught mathematics at Gordon Institute (a direct ancestor of today's Gordon State College) from 1915 to 1921.

But times were hard, Parker said, and his father lost his job at Mercer and then went into the insurance business. But the Great Depression was just as hard on business as it was higher education, and his father was once again out of a job.

So, in 1935, his family returned to Barnesville, his father returned to work for Gordon Institute, and the 11-year-old Parker entered Gordon Grammar School.

"I had Mrs. Ethridge, who was from Milner, for English," he said, "and she did a good job of preparing me for Miss Marion Bush in high school and college. Grammar was kind

of a game for me; I loved it. Literature, not so much."

At the time, the Institute's auditorium and the Methodist Church next to it on Thomaston Street were still extant, later to be destroyed by fire. He witnessed the church's destruction in 1938, but not the auditorium's in 1946.

The Depression wasn't much kinder to Gordon, but the Institute still had a place for the Mosley family.

"At the time, student enrollment was low, so the top floor of Turner Hall was empty," Parker said, and the family was housed in six student rooms and a two-room apartment.

As enrollment grew – with the help of Parker's father's recruiting efforts – the family of six had to fit into three rooms. Eventually, with the growing enrollment, the family moved out of Turner Hall (later to be known as T-Street barracks) into a house next door that Parker called "the flat-top house."

This was once a two-story house, and before Parker was born, the family had lived in its second story. While the family was in Macon, the house caught fire, destroying the second floor but sparing the first. Thus the name flat-top house.

He graduated from Gordon Military College in May of 1942 with an associate degree and a war raging in the Pacific and Europe. At that time, the youngest age that a man could be drafted was 20, and so Parker decided he would wait a year before joining in hopes of being accepted into the United States Military Academy at West Point. Congress lowered the age to 18 in November 1942, and his dream of West Point came to an end when he was drafted into the Army.

He was sent to New Guinea and four months later to Australia where he entered Officer Candidate School (OCS) and graduated as a second lieutenant.

"My six years at Gordon Military High School and College helped. At Gordon I learned things like the names of different infantry weapons, how to assemble and disassemble them, and other military matters."

After earning his parachutist badge, he joined the 11th Airborne Division on its way to the Philippines after its liberation in 1944. Before he saw extensive combat, the Japanese surrendered, and his division became an occupation force on the Japanese island of Honshu – it was one of the two divisions that were first sent into Japan. The division's orders were to occupy the Atsugi airfield outside of Yokohama, about 20 miles south of Tokyo.

The deployment was a gamble despite the surrender of Japan, but, as Parker put it, "The Japanese were very cooperative."

He was in Japan until 1947 training GIs who wanted to join the Army Airborne, and by that summer, he returned to Barnesville in a manner worthy of the Airborne – he landed his Cessna 140 on the city's 9-hole golf course.

"I had seen others land their planes on the golf course, so I figured it was okay," he said. "I looked over the field before landing and saw that there were about 12 people on the ground watching me. My first attempt was so terrible that I just bounced back up for a second attempt. I noticed a boy, about 10, laughing at me, and this got my blood up so much that my second attempt was perfect."

In June 1947, he flew to Norman, Oklahoma, where he entered the University of Oklahoma and earned a Bachelor of Science in geology. He spent another two years working on a Master of Science, but before he finished, he went to work for Humble Oil Company for the next 35 years searching for oil in Texas, then Indonesia, then California and finally back to Texas.

Along the way, he married Lorraine who bore three children: daughter Kelly, and sons Ken and Brian. Lorraine passed away in 2012.

Parker's trip from Houston to Barnesville for Alumni Weekend 2016 was a family affair that included his niece Linda Rogers, his two sons and three of his grandchildren: Jackson, Brian's son; and Garrett and Conner, Ken's sons.

Parker, 92, traveled from Houston to attend Gordon's 2016 Alumni Weekend. Here he is at lunch held on the courtyard of Alumni House on April 23.

Left to right: Parker served with the 11th Airborne Division during World War II. Here he is (left) with his friend Ken Tyrrell. • As a geology student at the University of Oklahoma, Parker was often in the field for his studies. Here he is (leftmost) near Florence, Colorado, August 1949, with two fellow students. • Parker worked in Indonesia for the Humble Oil Co. Here he is (rightmost) with four of his colleagues. • Parker (with camera) and Lorraine (second from his right) at a New Year's Eve party in Pendopo, Indonesia, Dec. 31, 1959. • Parker cools off his children in Singapore.

COUNTING SUCCESS
One Student at a Time

by Tamara Boatwright

When you ask Peter Higgins to look back on his years as director of the Student Success Center he squints in a thoughtful way before a smile breaks across his face.

"I think there is some degree of success in all the students who have come through here," he said. "But if I had to pick just one, I'd say Ornella."

Ornella Oluwole, a native of Nigeria who was raised in Italy, came to Gordon State College in 2011 and graduated with a degree in biology spring 2015. She entered medical school at the Medical College of Georgia in the fall of 2015.

"Mr. Higgins has been a crucial figure in my academic career and in my acceptance to medical school. He helped me with English grammar by tutoring me throughout my time at Gordon. He encouraged me to apply to medical school and to believe in myself," she said. "I am forever grateful to Mr. Higgins for all he has done for me."

"She came to the SSC for help with English. When I looked at her first paper I thought, 'Oh no, this just isn't going to work out,' but she worked so hard and every day I would see some improvement," he said. "Eventually she came to work as a tutor herself and now she is on her way to medical school."

"That's what the Student Success Center is all about, students who come here for help relate better to peer tutors," Higgins added. "At any given time I have 25 to 30 of the smartest, coolest kids working hard to help fellow students succeed. The tutors and the students seeking help bring an energy to this place which drives what we do."

But, "Attention K-mart shoppers…," Higgins' career didn't start out in the classroom.

"Actually, my first real, grown-up job was in Hickory, North Carolina, as a manager of a K-mart," Higgins said grinning. "I wanted to be near a girl, and the money for someone in management was okay." The job and the girl lasted about 18 months.

"I have nothing but respect for retail work, it's hard work and the experience was good for me, but things just didn't work out so I headed back to school." That's when he realized that he could do what he loved most – read – and get paid for it. So he went back to earn a master's in American literature at Memphis State University (now the University of Memphis) and did further graduate work at the University of Tennessee.

He came to Gordon as a temporary, full-time English instructor in 2001 and was hired in 2008 to develop and coordinate the Student Success Center. The Center opened the next year.

"I absolutely love what I do," he said. "I love that it helps the students, and I feel like we do make a difference in their academic journey."

During the academic year, and especially as finals near, the SSC is a beehive of activity. Computers line the U-shaped room while tutors and the students they are assisting sit at round tables scattered through the middle. "It can get pretty busy and sometimes hectic in here," Higgins said. "It's a good busy though; you know good things are happening."

Any downtime is spent with his son Sean, 15, riding bikes, traveling and debating.

"Sean is a very skilled debater for his age," Higgins notes. "He could have a long and lucrative career as a lawyer."

Higgins has lived in one of the residence halls on campus for three years, two as a faculty member in residence and the last one because, he says, he is too lazy to relocate.

He considers himself a "rabid" Boston Red Sox fan who gets very loud and obnoxious when the Sox play poorly.

"People would be very surprised at how I get at a game or watching one on TV. I grew up in Boston so you have to be loud and obnoxious when the Sox play," he explains. "But otherwise I am a very quiet reader."

A quiet reader who counts *Moby Dick, A Confederacy of Dunces* and *The Sound and the Fury* among his favorites and one who still opts for the dog-eared paper version over its computer-generated competitor.

"Oh my books," he says. "I can't bring myself to get rid of my books."

Keeping America's Wildlife Safe

MATTHEW WALTER AND THE SOUTHEAST COOPERATIVE WILDLIFE DISEASE STUDY

by Peter Boltz

The contraption resembles a homemade Coleman camp lantern, but it's really a trap for a particular species of the genus *Culicoides,* a particular type of bloodsucking midge or "no-see-um." The trap may look like a bug zapper people hang near their patios to keep the little devils away, but it has a more important and wider function than keeping the family barbecue comfortable.

The trap is helping the United States better understand the spread of epizootic hemorrhagic disease and the bluetongue virus, and Matthew Walter, AS '09, is one of the researchers setting these traps.

Matthew works for the Southeast Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study, which is under the auspices of the University of Georgia's College of Veterinary Medicine.

According to the College's website the SCWDS provides "high quality wildlife disease expertise to state and federal Agencies responsible for this nation's wildlife and domestic livestock resources." It is a cooperative in the sense that state and federal agencies share "facilities, vehicles, scientific equipment, salaries, and other costs" in its efforts to protect wildlife and livestock.

Neither epizootic hemorrhagic disease nor the bluetongue virus sickens humans, Matthew said, but it can devastate deer populations, which are a valuable natural resource. According to the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, the economic impact of deer hunting in Georgia in 2011was $537 million in just retail sales. This figure does not include the economic impacts of salaries and wages, and income taxes. The same study reports that the economic impact of deer hunting on the nation's retail sales for 2011 was nearly $18 billion.

This economic impact is good enough reason for the work of the SCWDS, or "squiddus" for short, but an additional and perhaps more important reason for Matthew is his love of wildlife and the outdoors. Should you ever travel the highways with him, don't be surprised if he pulls over to move a turtle or snake well away from the pavement.

Matthew earned his associate of arts degree in general studies from Gordon in 2009 and then attended the University of Georgia to earn his Bachelor of Science degree in forestry and natural resources with an emphasis in wildlife and tourism in 2012.

After graduation, he went to work for the environmental education department at Rock Eagle 4-H Center. The center, located in Eatonton, Georgia, is "operated by the University of Georgia as support for the state's 4-H Program," according to UGA's College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences website.

There he taught a variety of courses including ecology courses (forestry, stream ecology, herpetology), living history courses (Native American and pioneer studies), team challenge-based course (low ropes, field games), and outdoor skills (hiking, canoeing). He worked with pre-kindergarten to adult groups to foster an appreciation for each other "as well as the natural world in an outdoor classroom."

One day when he was looking through job postings on a wildlife and natural resources job board, a summer job in Wyoming caught his eye. He had traveled out west and had wanted to go back for a longer time period and so, in the summer of 2014, he set off to work for the Wyoming Game and Fish Department.

Left: The cattle egret on the Puerto Rican island of Vieques can carry the tropical bont tick.

Below: The common ground dove on the Puerto Rican island of Vieques can carry the tropical bont tick.

"My project, which lasted from June to August, was to help plot the range of the federally endangered Preble's meadow jumping mouse *(Zapus hudsonius preblei),*" he said. "I was on a team of four that would trap small mammal's along streams in eastern Wyoming every week, releasing everything but jumping mice. We would take physical measurements, tag ears, and implant an electronic PIT (passive integrated transponder) tag."

It was during this time that a friend of his rang him up and told him about the job at SCWDS.

"The first day on the job was paperwork," Matthew said, "but by the third day, I was in North Carolina working in the state and federal forests around Asheville to start my first two-week *Culicoides* trapping session. My coworker and I went to Cold Mountain our first night of trapping, and he showed me what to look for. *Culicoides* can be found from the edge of a pond, to cavities in trees, to a drying puddle on a dirt road. These are the kinds of habitats I was taught to look for and trap near."

Ticks, mosquitos and poison ivy are among the many hazards of his work, but he doesn't seem to think these things too bothersome. People disturbing his traps, however, do bother him, especially when they steal the batteries, which Matthew jokes are the "bane" of his existence. Animals typically don't disturb his traps because they hang from a line about chest high, but if he has to set traps on the ground, it can be another story.

In Wyoming he had to set traps at ground level near a river to capture jumping mice. When he came back to check them the next day, he found them thrown about, one after another, along the water.

"I'm guessing it was a raccoon trying to get at the bait," Matthew said. "He probably grew frustrated with the first trap and tossed it aside, and then went down the entire line without success."

The traps he sets for the midge collects the insects in a pool of ethyl alcohol, which kills and preserves them. In the next step in the process, they are transferred to vials which are labeled as to where they were caught. The vials then make it back to the laboratory for the time-consuming and exacting work of sorting.

This can be a daunting experience because each vial can contain thousands of insects, and not all of them are midges, and not all of them are the particular midge species of interest. Those that are kept are then identified by species, which helps plot the ranges of each *Culicoides* species.

Now imagine a 50-gallon storage bin filled with these vials and the staggering number of insects to sort. Then imagine plotting the incidence of disease-carrying midges on a map, and you will have a general idea of how SCWDS keeps a watchful eye over the livestock and wildlife of the Southeast.

Matthew has worked in the field in many of the Southeastern states. In Texas, his team's focus was to survey wildlife for cattle fever ticks *(Rhipicephalus (Boophilus) annulatus* and *Rhipicephalus (Boophilus) microplus)* which in turn carry the disease-causing protozoans *Babesia bigemina* and *Babesia bovis.*

According to the United States Department of Agriculture, the cattle fever ticks "are the most dangerous cattle ectoparasites [ones that live on the exterior of a host] in the United States." Cattle fever caused "enormous economic losses to the U.S. cattle industry in the late 1800s and early 1900s."

Matthew explained that the disease was eradicated in the United States in the 1900s, but it still lives on in the ticks (and cattle) of Mexico, which shares a 1,200-mile border with Texas.

Another "door" through which wildlife and livestock diseases can potentially enter the United States is through the Caribbean. Since 2014, Matthew and his coworker have traveled to the island of Vieques, Puerto Rico, for approximately 5 months of fieldwork. There he and his coworker were in search of another ectoparasite, the tropical bont tick (*Amblyomma variegatum)* which in turn can carries the bacterium *Ehrlichia ruminantium.* It is from this bacterium that cattle can come down with heartwater disease, which causes fluid to build up around the heart of the animal.

According to Matthew, it is believed the tick, with heartwater disease, was introduced to the Caribbean by cattle shipped from Africa during the 1700s. Tropical bont ticks have been eradicated from many Caribbean islands, but occasionally they pop up and are dealt with accordingly.

Matthew Walter is the grandson of Jack Wheeler. He said it was "cool" that he went to the same college as his grandfather but was glad he didn't have to wear a uniform and stand in formation every morning. "I preferred taking tai chi instead."

See Jack's story, *The Jack Wheeler Show,* in this issue of the *President's Report.*

The work of SCWDS isn't always a matter of sending people out into the field to the animals. Sometimes the animals are sent from the field to a SCWDS office at the University of Georgia. Typically this happens when someone discovers an animal that is exhibiting atypical behaviors or if an animal or multiple individuals are found dead and the cause isn't obvious. SCWDS receives cases from state and federal agencies across the nation, like the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Upon arrival at the office, the animals are necropsied, which is basically an autopsy for wildlife where histological, pathological and a host of other tests can be performed to help determine the cause of death. This is an important step in helping identify whether or not an outbreak is occurring, and how an agency should react if it is an emerging wildlife disease.

At the beginning of summer of 2016, Matthew was collecting midges in Whitehall Forest, UGA's teaching forest of 840 acres along the North Oconee River. By midsummer he was working through several southeastern states, starting in northeast Alabama, then throughout western Tennessee and south into Mississippi and back east through the hills of Alabama, and finally back to Athens, Georgia.

Matthew is planning on studying for a Master of Science degree in wildlife management, but at this point he is still deciding on a school.

"I would like to do habitat work with any kind of endangered species," he said. "Ideally this would be working on protected property, modifying the landscape to make it habitable and safe for the species."

He's not sure what species he would like to work with over any other, but at this point in his career, even a species of mouse would suit him.

"Every creature needs taking care of," he said.

Remember this the next time you see a turtle or snake too close to the road.

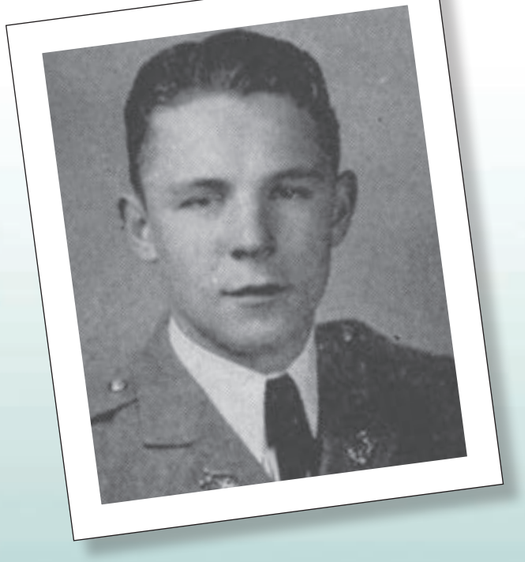
Top: While he was in Puerto Rico, Matthew helped free little guys like this caught in debris or roots.

Middle: While fishing on the beach on St. Simons Island, Georgia, Matthew caught this blacktip shark. An advocate of catch-and-release fishing, Matthew returned it to the ocean after this shot was taken.

Bottom: The biting midge is so small, it takes a microscope to view them closely.

THE Jack Wheeler SHOW

by Peter Boltz



"My mother wanted me to get away into the wider world," Jack Wheeler said. "She wanted more for me."

So his mother and father drove him from Iron City, Georgia, to Barnesville, Georgia, in 1943 and enrolled him at Gordon Military College for his senior high school year. They, like so many other parents, made sure he was properly settled in and then left him in the care of such well-known teachers as Miss Marion Bush, Gus Witcher and Reynolds Bush.

To this day, one of his strongest memories of this time was the cadet uniform and its similarities to the ones worn by visitors to his home in Iron City.

"I remembered Royal Air Force (RAF) pilots who were training at an airbase near Bainbridge brought home by my father. I was very impressed with their uniforms," he said.

And while he did well in Miss Marion's English class, he said he wasn't one of Reynolds Bush's best chemistry students. It might have been this lackluster performance as a chemistry student that helped him understand his future did not lie in dentistry, the profession his parents wanted him to go into.

Even if he were a good chemistry student and interested in becoming a dentist, a larger matter was his fate after his graduation in 1944. America's victory over Germany and Japan in World War II was still very much uncertain, and having just turned 18, he was either going to be drafted or he was going to join. He joined the Navy.

After boot camp, he was eventually sent to Buckner Bay, Okinawa, in 1945, but by then the war was over. From Okinawa he went to Sasebo, Japan, where he joined the crew of the minesweeper, the USS Dour AM223, serving as a pharmacist's mate.

Even though the war was over, he and his shipmates still had work to do. For the next 22 months, the Dour cleared the sea-lanes of mines, oftentimes exploding the mines with shots from a .50 caliber machine gun.

"I remember being pelted by the shrapnel that came down after the crew exploded a mine," he said. "I was lucky I wasn't injured because I wasn't wearing a helmet."

At the end of this service, the Dour went home via San Pedro, California, and then through the Panama Canal to Orange, Texas, where the ship was decommissioned. Jack boarded a train to Jacksonville, Florida, and then to Iron City by bus.

For him and millions of others, the war was over, and so Jack made what he called the "obvious choice" to enroll at Gordon Military College where he had connections. One of them was Professor George Connell who was now president of Mercer University in Macon, Georgia. With Connell's help, he transferred to Mercer, uncertain of his path but pretty certain it wasn't dentistry.

Jack Wheeler is the grandfather of Matthew Walter. See Matthew's story *Keeping America's Wildlife Safe* in this issue of the *President's Report*. "It's fantastic to be in the same issue of the *President's Report* as Matt," Jack said. "He's done extremely well in his field and has a great future."

A placement test at Mercer indicated he was better suited for criminal law or broadcasting, and Jack chose law. Not long afterwards, he discovered law was not his path either – you might say this revelation came by divine intervention.

"At Mercer, everyone is required to take religion courses, and one day my religion teacher passed out a quiz," he said, "and one of the questions was 'Who were Noah's sons?'"

Why, he asked himself, should he have to know such a thing. It had nothing to do with what he had done or wanted to do, and he decided to look for a job in radio, leaving Mercer after a little more than a year and a semester and without a degree.

"Mom and dad were not happy. I was their only child and their future," he said.

He inquired at WCOH in Newnan, Georgia, but was turned down. He inquired at WNEX in Macon where the program director told him to get some experience first. He was finally hired by WKTG in Thomasville, Georgia, as an announcer for $50 a week. In 1948, this was not great money, but neither was it bad.

And from such a humble beginning, he began a career in radio that had him rubbing elbows with many of America's great entertainers and politicians.

From WKTG, he continued his work as a radio announcer, but he also became a radio station owner, three of which were WCRY in Macon, WKTX in Atlantic Beach, Florida, and WIVY in Jacksonville, Florida.

"Talk radio took off in the late 1960s, but I started my own show in 1961 called "The Jack Wheeler Show" at WKTX, and it worked," he said.

About this time, he realized he did better as a broadcaster rather than a broadcast station owner, and so he sold off his stations and focused on his show, which he took to WBIX, a station owned by a friend of his. Jack was so certain his show would be a success that instead of a salary he would be paid 50 percent of the gross advertising revenue the show brought in.

"I was making $500 a week, and in 1968 this was very good money," he said.

Confident that his show was capable of a much wider audience, he sent a tape of his show to Westinghouse, the owner of the Group W network that included KDKA in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. This was a prime broadcasting station for a couple of reasons. First, it was a clear channel station, which means it's signal could reach beyond any other radio signal in its market – so strong that it reached the West Coast. Second, it was the first commercially licensed radio station in the United States, which was one of the reasons it was licensed as a clear channel station – there were no other stations to object to KDKA's privileged reach.

Westinghouse liked Jack so much that KDKA is where they placed him doing his show six nights a week, from midnight to 6 a.m. in the summer of 1969. He understood "the lonely yearn for a human voice," and he gave voice to some of the loneliest hours of the 24.

People could call him and get airtime if Jack thought they'd interest his audience. If he thought a caller wouldn't, he would simply hang up and go the next caller in the firm belief that no one had the right to bore his audience, or him.

At other times during his show, he would be the one making the calls. He once tried to reach Telly Savalas on location for a movie in Yugoslavia and got Don Rickles instead. His address book contains the names and numbers of many of the top entertainers of the time including Lucille Ball, Phyllis Diller, Buddy Rich, Milton Berle, Tony Bennett, and Frankie Avalon. He tried reaching Frank Sinatra several times, never connecting with him, but eventually starting a lifelong friendship with his son, Frank Sinatra Jr.

Jack retired in 2000 while at WJAS in Pittsburgh, but he kept his hand in the broadcasting business first by trying to help a station owner in Costa Rica start a station for American expatriates, and then doing a morning show for WKII in Florida.

In 2006, he moved to Barnesville at his daughter Susan's urging, and it is in Barnesville that he works on a book about his career and the many characters, famous and not so famous, he met along the way.

In his book, he is likely to recount how he called Miss Marion, waking her up after she had gone to bed.

"One night I was watching Richard Burton narrating poetry on TV," he said. "I thought this would be something Miss Marion would be watching, so I called her."

She didn't chastise him for waking her, he said. She just wanted to know why he had called. So he told her about Burton and that he had learned a lot from her.

"She replied that she was glad something she had said had rubbed off on me."

Then they bid each other good night and hung up.

Clockwise from top left: Jack served in the Navy as a pharmacist's mate, also known as a naval corpsman, during World War II. • This shot was taken June 17, 1973. From left to right are Donald, Harry and Herb Mills. • Jack once asked Milton Berle when he was going to retire. Berle joked, "From what?" • Jack met Richard Nixon at the beginning of his successful run for president in 1972 against George McGovern.

Trading Places

Angela Bailey goes from being the student to the teacher

by Peter Boltz

Angela Bailey stays busy, very busy, especially at the end of an academic year. Shortly after graduating from Gordon State College with a bachelor's degree in English in 2014, she decided to get certified to teach English in middle school education.

"The Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy (TAPP) is very challenging," she said, "because the four years you would go through in an education program is condensed into two years while you are working full time in the classroom. There are seminars and ethics classes to attend, and at the end of the two-year program, there is the edTPA (education teacher performance assessment)."

And as if all these responsibilities were not keeping her very busy, she has her own projects, like the five different books she is writing…, all at the same time.

Angela graduated with an associate degree in 2007, after which she worked for GEICO in Macon, Georgia, as a licensed insurance agent for five years. Her husband, Matthew, who still works for GEICO, finally convinced her to go back to school.

"He was tired of hearing me say I hated my job," she said.

She would have liked to work in journalism after she earned her associate degree, but by 2007, the newspaper industry had shrunk and jobs were scarce. So when she decided to go back for her bachelor's degree at Gordon State, she went into the English program doing what she loved – reading and writing.

By the time she graduated in 2014, she realized "the academic world was where I wanted to be. I wanted to write, and I wanted to teach English."

This is where TAPP came in handy for Angela who had her bachelor's, but not in education. The program has allowed her to begin teaching English, under supervision, while earning her certification with the state of Georgia. Today it is possible to earn a middle grades certification at Gordon State.

She started her first of two years of certification work at Southwest High School in Macon, teaching 10th and 12th grade English.

"Many of my seniors were older than 18, and some had children, even the sophomores. Most of these students were struggling to be better, to have a better life," she said. "They knew if they didn't make it through high school they would be stuck, and they wanted out."

It was obvious from the tone of her voice that many of these students had earned her respect.

After her year at Southwest, she chose to teach in Forsyth, Georgia, at Monroe Middle School Banks Stephens campus, where her eighth grade students are a stark contrast to her high school students.

"They aren't as mature, and they are not old enough to be thinking ahead to the future," Angela said. "However, they are of an age when they have dramatic mood swings. One instant they hate you, the next they love you, and then they want you fired."

One thing she's observed of her students from both schools is that they don't read much. It's not that they are unable to read; it's that they don't read enough or any books, especially those from a reading list she was introduced to in her middle and high school years. She mentioned *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding, *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens, *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald, *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee, and *A Separate Peace* by John Knowles.

Her personal taste in literature isn't just the classics, although she holds a special place in her heart for Jane Austen. She also favors contemporary authors like Nora Ephron (*When Harry Met Sally, Heartburn*, and several books of essays) and Gillian Flynn (*Gone Girl*). A good dystopian novel like *Blade Runner* by Philip Dick will also end up in her hands.

She also reads books that help her get into the mind of the generation she teaches. One such book is the 2012 novel *Ready Player One* by Ernest Cline. The hero is a teenager named Wade out to save the world,

> "It's a very rewarding profession, although I think many go into it with a vision that it will be something like the movie *Dead Poets Society.*"

and himself, by playing a game in a virtual world on the internet.

But it's writing not reading that's the focus of the eighth grade at the Middle School in Forsyth, and so Angela spends a great deal of time grading papers. Most often, these are typed, but when school laptops are unavailable, she has to decipher students' penmanship. She said that sometimes the students themselves cannot decipher their handwriting.

The writing assignments she assigns include essays, narratives and arguments.

Angela recalled what a girl wrote in an essay that required her to pick a famous personality and write the advice she would give that person. The student chose Caitlyn (Bruce) Jenner, criticizing her for her make-up and choice of clothing. She advised Jenner not to become a woman because he was not pretty.

The striking bluntness of this student is something Angela has found to be fairly common among her eighth graders.

Narrative assignments, unlike essays, are fictions, and probably her students' favorite of all the writing assignments because they can use their imaginations. A narrative that stands out in Angela's mind is a 20-page story that had elements of fantasy à la *Lord of the Rings* and science fiction. Eighteen pages longer than the assignment called for, Angela said she was impressed with the sci-fi/fantasy "epic."

Argument papers in Angela's class call on students to apply the elements and logic of a well-crafted argument, which she teaches them about beforehand. Writing an argument paper is likely the most difficult writing assignment they have, and it's her students' least favorite writing assignment. She said they consider it "dry."

Although the middle school's last day was June 3, her students were done with their writing assignments, dry or otherwise, before Memorial Day weekend. Coincidentally, Angela was done with all she had to do for her teaching certification. Well ahead of the June 1 deadline, Angela submitted her edTPA and portfolio.

Included in the portfolio were two 10-minute videos of her in action in the classroom. Anyone familiar with the process knows that it takes more than 20 minutes of video recording to produce 20 minutes of finished video. In Angela's case, it took five days to get all the material she needed. The associated "ton of paperwork" took her three months.

Looking back over all she's had to do to become certified, she said it's been worth it.

"It's a very rewarding profession, although I think many go into it with a vision that it will be something like the movie *Dead Poets Society.*" Such teaching experiences, she said, packed with grand moments are not the norm, whereas getting students to pay attention and behave in class are.

Still, when the grand moment occurs, it is deeply gratifying as she can attest to from her experience with one of her special needs students during a class discussion of *Nothing Gold Can Stay* by Robert Frost and the *Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton. The teenaged characters in the novel are familiar with Frost's poem, but what did it mean to them? Angela asked her class this very thing.

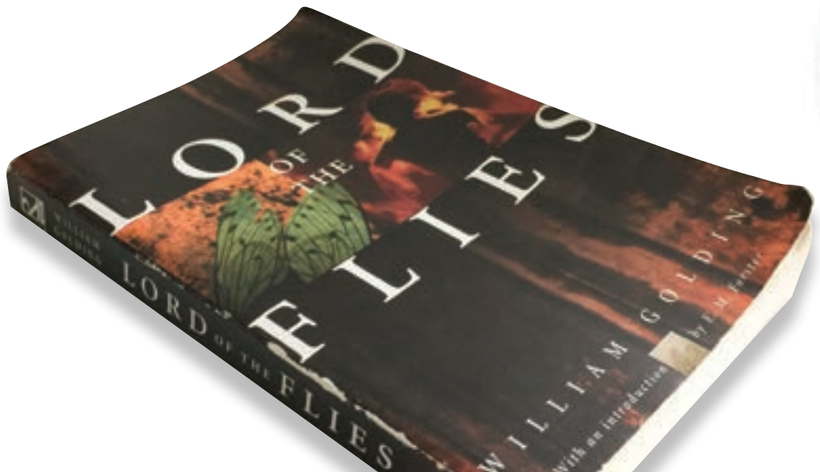
The question, the book, the poem, the student and the teacher must have all been in harmony, for her question set off a spark in one student's mind, and he volunteered his answer.

"He understood that when Johnny saved the children from the burning church, he became 'golden' again. Johnny regained his goodness," she said. "Frost's poem is meant to highlight the idea that what is good and innocent is hard to keep, but it is possible."

Such are the rewards of teaching. Her student "had turned a corner. He had made a connection."

Is there a master's degree in Angela's future? She doesn't rule it out, saying that if she does enroll in a master's program, it will be in creative writing.

And she'll stick with teaching, which she recommends, "because it is where you can serve people."



No Typical Days for A.P. HENRY

by Peter Boltz

Andrew Henry has a pair of pants so encrusted with paint, he no longer wears them, not even to work in. They are so stiff, that they can stand up on their own.

"I can look at a particular splotch and remember what I was painting at the time," he said. He jokes that he will save them – perhaps one day they will become a collector's item.

Andrew, also known as A.P., calls himself a blue-collar artist, a sign painter, a muralist, and a portrait painter, but he favors the first name more than the others.

"I really am a one-stop shop for most people's needs, from portraits and paintings of all kinds in practically every medium, to cars, trailers, large-scale models, window signage, fine art, distressed signs, gold leaf, all types of painting on brick, block, and drywall," he said. "You name it, I can probably do it, and if I can't, I know a guy who can."

Homeschooled in Orchard Hill, Georgia, Andrew majored in art at Gordon State College and graduated with a straight-A average in 2014.

"I took on the two-year program so I could study under Marlin Adams," he said. In all, he took six of Adams' courses: painting I and II, drawing I and II, three-dimensional design, and two-dimensional design.

"I was halfway through the program when I started working on commissions while working at Chick-fil-A and going to school," he said. When he realized he didn't have time for all three things, he left Chick-fil-A to work full time painting whatever people wanted him to paint. Since 2012, he has steadily built his business.

"Do a good job and people will talk about it," he said. "Happy customers are the best advertisement by far. At the moment I have an established customer base in Forsyth, Thomaston, Griffin, Jackson, Locust Grove, Barnesville and Zebulon with the occasional commission from Atlanta."

His name has also been spread through his association with other artists like himself who paint signs and murals who call themselves walldogs.

According to the *Pittsburgh Tribune Review*, "The name 'Walldog' became a popular way to refer to these craftsmen during the heyday of the hand-painted sign because of how they tended to 'work like a dog' in conditions that often could easily be categorized as perilous."

It was a pejorative in the late 1800s and early 1900s, but walldogs of today are proud of the label. There is even a website called thewalldogs.com that serves as a place where a sign painter or muralist can be hired or a "pack" of walldogs can be hired to paint murals all over a town in a short amount of time.

In fact, Andrew had two such jobs in summer 2016. The first was in Marshall, Illinois, in June, where 16 murals were painted in four days. Andrew's mural was of Abraham Lincoln on a wall near the Guinnip family well where he would stop to drink when he traveled Illinois as a circuit-riding lawyer. The second was in Butler, Pennsylvania, where 10 walls were painted in four days. Andrew's mural was of a waitress serving a milkshake, an image to honor the diners and drive-ins that Butler was once known for.

Andrew said that he not only loves art and being an artist, but also loves making art that is accessible to large numbers of people. The idea that anyone can view a mural from the street and enjoy it at no cost is deeply appealing to him.

"It does good for people to be able to appreciate a piece of art, especially without having to visit a museum," he said. "Making art part of people's everyday life is an expression of my love for art, the craft, and my fellow sign painters and artists."

When he finished these jobs, he set off on "a two-and-a-half week pilgrimage to visit sign painting friends and brush factories in London, Dublin, Glasgow, and then the International Letterheads sign painter meet in Amsterdam," where he joined 200 other sign painters – many of whom he already knew – and looked forward to meeting.

"We're a tight-knit group and meets like this give us a chance to expand the network and keep the craft alive in a computer-driven world," he said.

He said he expects to learn from his colleagues things that he doesn't know and to teach them things they don't know. And there is much to know. More to the point, he said pursuing all there is to know about sign and mural painting was like "going down a rabbit hole."

And who knows where that rabbit hole will lead him next? As his work becomes more widely known, he has found that he gets referrals from personal connections to places like Marshall and Butler. He has also received email inquiries from Paris, Sacramento, Chicago and many more places.

"Mongolia hasn't emailed yet, but I'm keeping an open mind," he said.

And will he be surprised when Mongolia finally does call? Maybe a little, but as he says about himself, "I don't have typical days. Never have – doubt I ever will."

AN UNBROKEN RECORD

by Peter Boltz

In 1962, when Danks Seel was just a high school senior at Gordon Military College, Capt. Roy E. Congleton asked him if he would like to compete for a spot on the 3rd Army ROTC High Power Rifle Team which would then compete at the National Matches. As a member of Gordon's rifle team, Seel was no stranger to the sport, and Congleton knew he had the right stuff.

Danks' concern, however, was not about his abilities as a marksman, but about money. How could he possibly afford to go for a month's training at Fort Benning, Georgia, and then go to Camp Perry in Ohio for the National Matches?

It would all be paid for by the Army, Congleton told him, since Danks would be representing the Reserved Officers Training Corps (ROTC). All he needed was the money for a bus ride back to Gordon when the competition was over; he could ride with Congleton to Ft. Benning.

Danks did not need to be asked twice.

At Gordon, the rifle team competed in an indoor range with .22 rifles, but at Fort Benning, the rifle was the high-powered .30 M1 Garand rifle.

"It was quite the experience," he said, "going from shooting a .22 in an indoor range to an M1, at an outdoor range, shooting from 200 yards, 300 yards and 600 yards. It was like going from Pop Warner to major leagues."

Danks was already familiar with high-powered rifles as a hunter in his home state of Florida, but the discipline of shooting five days a week from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. was new. He was in a new level of competition too, working with several trainers including Congleton and another Gordon military science instructor, Staff Sgt. Troy Turner. Twenty ROTC cadets from all over the Southeast were trying out for 12 spots on the team that would go to the Nationals, and every shot they made, or missed, was recorded. At the end of the month, the scores were tallied, and Danks made the cut.

He said his first year at Camp Perry was "almost overwhelming. There were more than 2,500 competitors from all the services and civilians, and many rifle ranges set from 200 yards to 1,000 yards."

Danks remembered what he first thought about the 1,000 yard competition.

"I was stunned by the idea of shooting a target at 1,000. I asked how the target could even been seen. A sergeant told me that the bull's-eye was 3 feet in diameter, which would show up as a black dot in the sights."

If a shooter completely missed the target three times (normally due to wind), he was disqualified. This happened to Danks in 1964, but he would manage to break a record at Camp Perry in the National Trophy Individual Rifle Match.

Competitors at the National Matches fall into one or more of 13 categories. As a ROTC cadet at Gordon Military College, Danks competed for the Hearst Rifle Trophy, "awarded to the highest scoring service academy or ROTC competitor."

This competition consisted of four stages.

The first stage was slow fire at 200 yards in a standing position. Slow fire means the shooter can take up to 10 minutes to shoot 10 rounds.

The second stage was rapid fire at 200 yards in a sitting position. Rapid fire means shooting 10 rounds in 60 seconds.

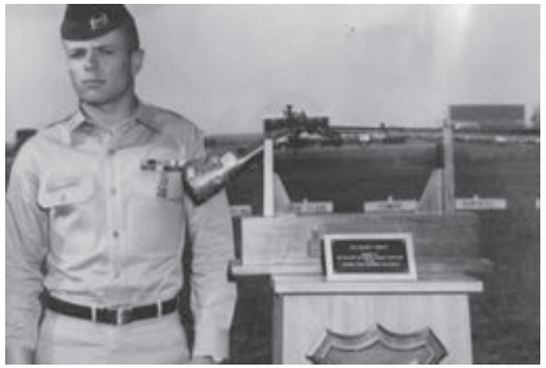
The third stage was rapid fire at 300 yards in a prone position.

The fourth stage was slow fire (20 rounds in 20 minutes) at 600 yards in a prone position.

In his first two years at the Nationals, Danks won medals for 2nd and 3rd places as well as a great deal of experience, practice time, and good advice from coaches and fellow team mates. His high scores moved his classification from expert to master in his second year, adding to his confidence. All these things came together for him in his third year at Nationals in 1964 in

TOP: This shot of Danks shooting in the standing position was taken at Ft. Benning during practice in 1964 using one of two M14 match grade military rifles assigned to him. Notice the Gordon Military College pin on his cap.

BOTTOM: Capt. Roy E. Congleton presented cadet Sgt. Danks Seel with a shooting trophy at an award ceremony at the end of his senior year in high school at Gordon in 1962. Two years later Congleton was killed in action in Vietnam and posthumously promoted to major.



Despite the look on Danks' face, he was loving every minute when he was awarded the Hearst Trophy for winning the ROTC Individual Rifle Match with his near perfect score of 249 of 250 points. The frown on his face is a look of disapproval for the West Point team members making snide remarks nearby. They could not believe they were bested by a 20-year-old Gordon cadet.

the Hearst Rifle Trophy individual match. However, now he was shooting an Army M14 rifle, not an M1.

In the first stage, he made a perfect score, but in his second stage he dropped a point. In the third stage, he made a perfect score, and then it started raining stopping the competition until the following morning.

"That night, I called my mother telling her I had a good chance at winning the competition. 'Well, you get a good night's sleep,' she said. Then I asked to speak with my father, but she said he was out and wouldn't be back until late. She told me to call them up after the competition the next day."

He followed his mother's advice and got a good night's sleep, and the next morning, he followed the advice he had heard over the years about eating before a competition.

"Before a match, you don't drink milk or coffee, and you avoid a big meal," he said. All these things and more affect accuracy."

For example, a shooter's own heart beat can affect accuracy. He wore two sweatshirts under his padded shooting coat to help reduce the chance the beating of his pulse would cause movement. If you are trying to put a bullet no bigger than a third of an inch in diameter into a small bull's-eye hundreds of yards away, the slightest vibration can cause the bullet to go wide of its mark.

The next morning, everything came together for Danks on the 600 yard range. He was well padded with his two sweatshirts and shooting coat, and he was a seasoned master competitor.

And there was another thing in his favor, something he had no control over – the wind. That morning, there was no wind; it was dead calm.

"I went through all 20 rounds in a relaxed and focused zone that is hard to describe," he said. "I didn't realize I made my last shot until I reached for another round and there wasn't one."

Of his 20 shots on the 600 yard range, 20 were bull's-eyes for 100 points. This pushed his total score over the course of the match to 249 points out of a possible 250 with 19 V's.

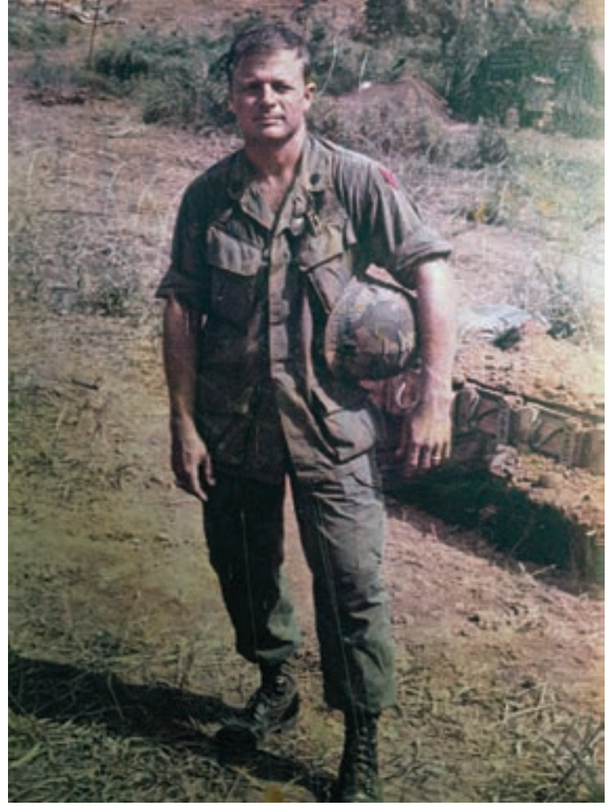
The V is a smaller "eye" in the center of the bull's-eyes whose purpose is to break ties. That is, a score of 249 points with 20 V's would be greater than 249 points with 19 V's.

So, what is the record?

You can find it on the Civilian Marksmanship Program's website (thecmp.org). There you will find the name Howard D. Seel in bold, meaning he's the record holder. Also listed is his score, 249-19V, and the year of his record, 1964.

Knowing he had fired the highest score and won the Hearst Rifle Trophy, he called his parents. This time his mother informed him his father was not available the previous day because he had suffered a heart attack and was still in the hospital and to call him at the hospital. When he did, his father assured him he was out of danger and explained that his mother did not want to upset him when he had called the previous day.

If an unbroken record can be taken as evidence, his parents did not upset him.



TOP: Danks served with the Army's Transportation Corps with the rank of captain. The above shot was taken in 1969 while assigned as the logistics officer to a battalion of the 5th Mechanized Infantry on a search and destroy mission in Vietnam.

BOTTOM: Buck sergeant Danks Seel in his dress uniform. A buck sergeant is the lowest ranking sergeant with just three stripes.

OUTSTANDING SCHOLAR

Amy Droegmiller

Amy Droegmiller is the Gordon State College Outstanding Scholar for the '15-'16 academic year.

As Gordon's Outstanding Scholar, Droegmiller was recognized along with students from other University System of Georgia institutions on Academic Recognition Day during the recent session of the Georgia General Assembly.

Academic Recognition Day was first held in 1987 as a "celebration of individual academic achievement and recognition of those students who exemplify that which is best about the University System of Georgia and its institutions."

A nontraditional student, Droegmiller promised her eldest daughter when she was in kindergarten that mom would go to college. That daughter is now 9 and has a 6-year-old sister.

Droegmiller has officially earned a degree in biology but will now start working on her teaching certification. She is on track to graduate in December 2018 and would like to teach biology in Spalding County where her daughters attend school.

A little older than a traditional student, Droegmiller says her fellow students have always been respectful and inclusive. She also praises the professors at Gordon.

"The small class size here is a bonus and professors are so accessible and so supportive," she said. "I would advise anyone thinking of going to or returning to college to not put it off. Just jump right in, everything has a way of working out."

"Amy was a very hard worker," said Amanda Duffus, assistant professor of biology. "She always asked good questions and was a pleasure to have in class."

In April, Droegmiller was recognized, along with other outstanding students, during a banquet attended by parents and faculty. She was also recognized for her work as a tutor in the Student Success Center.

Students chosen for academic achievement by their respective department or schools included Kaitlyn Ballew, School of Education; Rebecca Bostwick, School of Nursing and Health Sciences; Toni Creson, Department of Business and Public Service; Amy Droegmiller, Student Success Center; Jared Gillis, Department of Math and Physical Science; Gregory Jones, Department of History and Political Science; Sarah Kimbrel, Department of Humanities; Madelynn Mount, School of Education; Matthew Ringler-Lantzy, Department of Biology and Computer Science; and Julia Whitt, Honors Program.

GSC CONTINUES TO POSITIVELY IMPACT REGIONAL ECONOMY

Gordon State College contributed more than $134 million to the regional economy and provided 1,289 jobs in fiscal year 2015, according to a report by the University System of Georgia.

The economic contribution is an increase of $7 million from FY '14.

Of the jobs provided, 337 are on campus while 952 are off campus jobs that exist due to institution-related spending.

The report also revealed that spending by Gordon students accounted for $76 million of the total $134 million contributed to the economy. There were 4,000 students enrolled at Gordon State College during FY15.

"This report shows that Gordon State College and its students have a tremendous – and according to these numbers – an increasing impact on the local and regional economies," said Gordon State College President Max Burns.

The University System of Georgia's economic impact on the state was $15.5 billion in FY 15.

The System's impact grew $1.3 billion, an increase of 9 percent, from FY 14 to FY 15. Student spending in communities where USG institutions operate was a primary driver in the increase with overall higher student enrollment in the University System creating significant impact.

"The University System is part of the economic engine of the communities we serve," said Chancellor Hank Huckaby. "We take the responsibility of positively impacting the economy of the state as seriously as we do educating and graduating our students."

The FY 15 study found that the University System generated nearly 150,191 full- and part-time jobs. Approximately 32 percent of these positions are on campus as USG employees and 68 percent are off-campus positions in either the private or public sectors.

To calculate the economic impact for FY 15, the Selig Center for Economic Growth at the University of Georgia's Terry College of Business analyzed data collected between July 1, 2014 and June 30, 2015. The annual study is conducted on behalf of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia.

The full study with data for all USG institutions is available at: http://www.usg.edu/assets/economic_development/documents/USG_Impact_20152.pdf.

New Research Assistants

Gordon State College students Bruno Trottier, left, and Jessica Bailey, right, assisted the Griffin-Spalding Honor Our KIA group with research on soldiers from Griffin-Spalding County who were killed in action during the five major wars.

Trottier and Bailey are members of a research team at Gordon State College under the direction and guidance of Dr. Tom Aiello, associate professor of history. Cynthia Barton, center, director of the local Griffin archives, helped the students with their source documentation as well as research for the project.

The Griffin-Spalding Honor Our KIA group honors the men and women who were killed in action during World War I, World War II, Korea, Vietnam and the current War on Terror. Last year the group honored 20 local heroes. Oral histories are recorded and plaques honoring the local heroes are in place throughout downtown Griffin.

GORDON STATE COLLEGE *Recital Series*

The Bach Society of Atlanta
Thursday, Oct. 20
Artists with the Bach Society of Atlanta will present a concert celebrating the music of Johann Sebastian Bach as well as other composers of the baroque and classical eras including Vivaldi, Handel and Haydn.

D'anna Fortunato, Peter H. Bloom and Mary Jane Rupert
Monday, Nov. 7
Grammy-nominated mezzo-soprano, D'Anna Fortunato (photo, right) is widely considered to be one of America's premier concert/oratorio singers. Joining her will be Robert H. Bloom, flute, and Mary Jane Rupert, piano.

Jonathan Adam Hayes
Wednesday, Feb. 22, 2017
Jonathan Adam Hayes is an internationally recognized performer, educator, and clinician. A versatile musician, Hayes has performed on trumpet throughout North America, South America, Europe, and Asia, including performances with over 40 professional orchestras throughout the world.

John Boonenberg
Thursday, April 6, 2017
John Boonenberg is a highly versatile, prize-winning pianist who has performed both nationally and internationally to great acclaim. He has appeared in solo recital and as concerto soloist in Germany, Poland, Puerto Rico, Czech Republic, Italy, and across the US. He has participated in festivals including the Internationale Konzertarbeitswochen in Goslar, Germany, the Prague International Piano Masterclasses in the Czech Republic.

All performances will feature an opportunity to enjoy a gourmet dinner and a show for $25 per person. The dinner will be prepared by Chef Bill Littiken and served in Highlander Dining Hall prior to the performance. Tickets for a performance only are available at the door and are $10 adults, $7 senior citizens/non-GSC students. All performances are presented on the stage of the Gordon State College Fine Arts Theatre and begin promptly at 7:30 p.m.

Gordon State's Theatre Season

A Midsummer Night's Dream
Sept. 28-Oct. 2
Join Gordon State College Theatre as it opens its season with one of Shakespeare's beloved comedies. Filled with lovers, fairies and players, A Midsummer Night's Dream has something for everyone. Join a misapplied love potion, mistaken identities and lovers lost in the dangerous woods of Athens and you have a perfect recipe for hilarity.

Bechdel Project
Nov. 9-11
An acclaimed New York City Company will visit campus and work with students, faculty and the general public with a culmination of performances of creative work generated during the workshops.

Fences
Feb. 15-19
The riveting, touching tale of Troy and Rose Maxson, Fences explores a family's hope and dreams in a rapidly changing 1950's America. Troy Maxson, a former Negro League baseball player, must grapple with the reality of his life as a sanitation worker in Pittsburgh.

Improv-Musical Theatre Fusion Program
March 20-24
New York City based composer/performer/pianist Joseph Brewer and Chicago comedienne Kristin Hopkins (Improv Sondheim Project, Second City and Baby Wants Candy) join forces for a week of learning and fun, culminating in performances on the last day. Students, faculty and the general public are invited to laugh, sing, dance and move your hearts out in the theater department with these world class teaching artists.

All productions are presented on the stage of the Gordon State College Fine Arts Theatre.

Gordon's New Quality Enhancement Plan

As part of Gordon State College's reaffirmation of accreditation process for the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), GSC has developed First Things First for its quality enhancement plan (QEP).

The plan involved the redesign of the college's algebra and composition courses (Math 1111 and English 1101). The plan will improve student learning in these courses and in all other courses for which these courses are foundational.

FIRST things FIRST

Front, from left, Gordon alumnus Mike Howard, Trisha Walker, Patricia Justice, Carlos Walker. **Back row, from left,** Larry Dudney, Thomas Shedd, Christopher Deal, Gordon State College President Max Burns.

ROLL CALL 2015

In his address during the National Roll Call event at Gordon State College, retired Brig. Gen. Larry Dudney asked those present to remember what Veterans Day is about.

"Today what we need to remember are the patriots that have served and continue to serve," he said. "We need to remember their selfless service. Time passes and wounds heal, but we should always as a nation remember to honor our own. To honor these young men and women who met the challenge of combat unflinchingly."

The National Roll Call project began on Nov. 11, 2011, when thousands of students, faculty, staff and community members at more than 180 colleges and universities nationwide came together and demonstrated their commitment to remembering those who, as President Lincoln described, "gave their last full measure of devotion while serving our country."

The Roll Call is annually sponsored by the Gordon State College Student Veterans Association.

Also speaking Wednesday was Gordon alumna Patricia Justice, a 1996 nursing graduate and a major in the U.S. Army Reserves.

"Today I honor those heroes to remember the sacrifices they made and the courage it took to defend honor, duty and country," she said. "We stand in the midst of patriots and the family and friends of those who have nobly served."

Joining Dudney and Justice in addressing the crowd of about 150 students, faculty, staff and friends of Gordon, was Carlos Adams, a Gordon nursing student and staff sergeant in the Army; Trisha Walker, associate biology professor and captain in the Georgia Army National Guard; Thomas Shedd, a Gordon student and chief warrant officer in the Georgia Army National Guard and Christopher Deal, president of the Student Veterans Association and veteran of the U.S. Air Force where he served as a staff sergeant.

The colors were presented by the Lamar County High School ROTC. *Taps* was played by Macon resident Athens Carter.

A COSMIC HONOR

Gordon State College chemistry professor and amateur astronomer Richard Schmude has been recognized with an asteroid named after him.

"I feel so very honored by this," Schmude said.

Schmude Asteroid, formerly known as 2000 EY3 was discovered 16 years ago by the Catalina Sky Survey. Dr. Schmude says it takes a while for objects to be named and he does not know who chose to give his name to this particular object.

"I hope I can find out and thank them," he said.

The information on Schmude/2000 EY3 notes that he is a professor at Gordon State College and has served as coordinator for five observing sections in the Association of Lunar and Planetary Observers (ALPO), as executive director and associate director.

Schmude has also received the ALPO Walter Haas and the Peggy Haas awards given to an amateur astronomer for excellence in observational solar system astronomy and for outstanding service to the organization.

Continuing as an active member in ALPO, he is currently measuring the brightness of the planets.

Schmude was featured in the Gordon State College *President's Report* magazine in 2010. To learn more about him and his love of the sky visit:

http://www.gordonstate.edu/pdf/PR2010.pdf

Gordon President Elected to National Boards

Gordon State College President Max Burns was elected to two national boards, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) and the U.S. Fulbright Association.

SACSCOC is the recognized regional accrediting body in 11 Southern states for institutions of higher education that award associate, baccalaureate, master's or doctoral degrees. The SACSCOC board of trustees is the representative body of the College Delegate Assembly and is charged with carrying out the accreditation process.

Established in 1977, the Fulbright Association is a private, nonprofit organization whose members are Fulbright Program alumni. The Fulbright Association supports and promotes international education and cultural exchange leading to mutual understanding among the people of the world.

In 1993 Burns was a Senior Fulbright Scholar teaching and conducting research in Sweden. He has also been a visiting professor in Australia, New Zealand and China.

"I am honored to serve on the boards of these two significant organizations," Burns said. "Being a part of the governance body of SACSCOC and the Fulbright Association affords me the opportunity to support and promote the development of Gordon State College and the University System of Georgia."

Burns was named the 29th president of Gordon State College in 2011.

A Woman's Best Friend

An "awwww" moment came during the procession of Spring '16 graduates of the Gordon State College biology program when service dog Indy, decked out in his own mortar board, was recognized by Gordon State President Max Burns.

Burns presented Indy a bone tied with blue ribbon and the human he serves, Maria Pesce, a bachelor's degree in biology with secondary teaching certification.

Pesce, who is visually impaired, said that Indy has been with her since high school and has attended all of her classes and internships with her.

"I feel that he was as much a student at Gordon as I was since he has shared in my experience as a student here. Service animals are an extension of the people they assist, and they become a part of us," Pesce said.

"Graduating means that I have accomplished what others told me I could never do because of my disability. The fact that I graduated in such a visual subject means that I took control of my disability, and I owned it; it did not own me," Pesce said.

"Graduating with this degree shows that any person with a visual disability can do what they love if they try and put their mind to it. I poured my heart and soul into my school work, and the fact that I never dropped below a 3.0 shows that yes, I may have struggled, but I overcame that struggle. I refuse to be a slave to my disability."

Maria, accompanied by Indy, will begin her teaching career in the fall.

As for the bone, Indy made quick work of it, unfazed by the excitement of graduation going on around him.

CAMPBELL WINS PRESENTATION AWARD

Jennifer B. Campbell received one of three awards given for undergraduate poster presentations at the Georgia Academy of Sciences Conference held during the academic year at Gordon State College.

Her work, "Are Partial *Ranavirus* Major Capsid Protein Sequences Enough for Phylogenetic Reconstruction?" was done as an undergraduate research project that was supervised by assistant professor of biology Sarah Rosario and associate professor of biology Amanda Duffus.

Jennifer graduated with a Bachelor of Science in biology in 2015 and intends to use her education to make prosthetic limbs.

Gardening 101

Gordon State College honors program students and other student groups have prepared raised garden beds on the west side of campus to grow a variety of plants and herbs.

The project is designed to create a campus gardening community and hopefully produce enough to distribute to those in need.

Honors student Julia Whitt's family helped build the raised beds and about 20 students recently gathered to haul dirt and prepare the beds.

"We were happy to do this," Whitt said of her family's involvement. "I think it is a great project that can reach so many people on campus and off."

"The next step is to get dirty and get planting," said Susan Finazzo, interim dean of the School of Arts and Sciences and associate professor of biology who, along with David Janssen, professor of English, is helping to coordinate the activity.

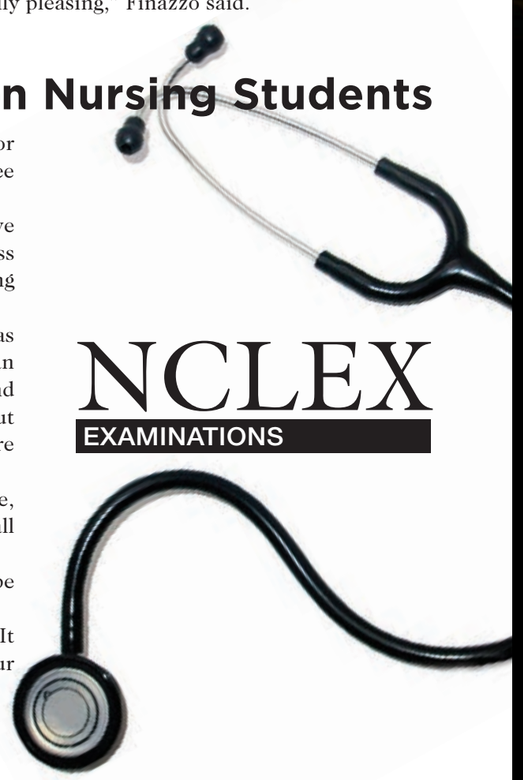
Finazzo came to Gordon from Georgia Perimeter College and said a similar project on that campus was very successful.

"The gardens were wonderful for the morale of the campus. People would wander around the beds. Classes would meet by the gardens for art and composition projects," Finazzo said. "It was wonderful to see a bed of sunflowers as you walked from your car to your office. I thought it would be a good idea to replicate the project here."

Finazzo said she would love for this project to be completely student run and has asked students to develop bylaws for how the gardens will be used and to develop standards like whether the gardens will be organic or nonorganic.

"Gardens can be so educational in addition to being aesthetically pleasing," Finazzo said.

Enviable Pass Rate for Gordon Nursing Students



Students are drawn to Gordon State College's nursing program for many reasons, but certainly one of the big ones is that a nursing degree from Gordon will lead to a job.

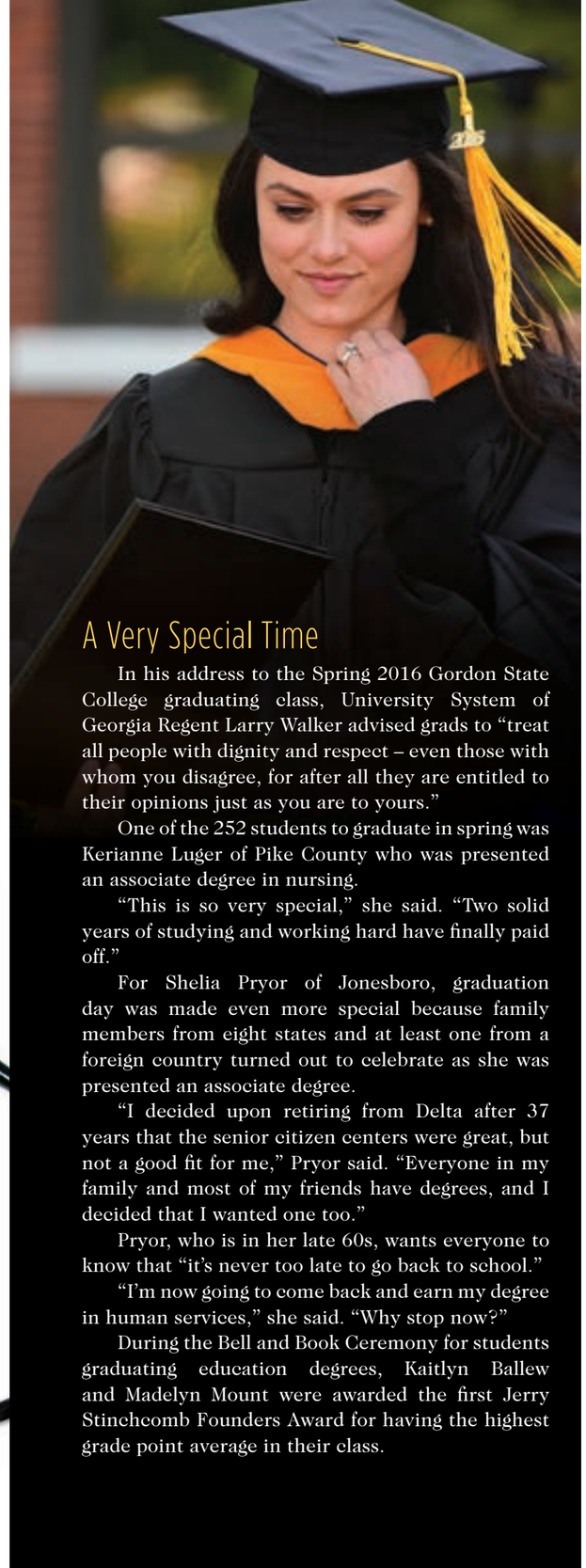
And yet, even with a degree in hand, nursing graduates still have another hurdle before they can practice as nurses – they have to pass the National Council Licensing Examination and Gordon's nursing graduates go into this exam very well prepared as history shows.

Oftentimes, Gordon boasts a 100 percent NCLEX pass rate, as was the case with Gordon's graduates in spring 2015. At the time, Dean Anne Purvis of the School of Nursing and Health Sciences said she and her colleagues could not be prouder, not just for the perfect score but because of the great benefit the public would experience under the care of the new nurses.

The next graduating class, fall 2015, had a 97 percent pass rate, and the class after that, spring 2016, had a 91 percent pass rate – all enviable rates in the world of nursing education.

Purvis said most of the nurses will remain in the region and will be employed at hospitals and other health care facilities.

"Our nurses always perform well on the NCLEX," she said. "It speaks well of our program, our instructors and most of all of our excellent students."



A Very Special Time

In his address to the Spring 2016 Gordon State College graduating class, University System of Georgia Regent Larry Walker advised grads to "treat all people with dignity and respect – even those with whom you disagree, for after all they are entitled to their opinions just as you are to yours."

One of the 252 students to graduate in spring was Kerianne Luger of Pike County who was presented an associate degree in nursing.

"This is so very special," she said. "Two solid years of studying and working hard have finally paid off."

For Shelia Pryor of Jonesboro, graduation day was made even more special because family members from eight states and at least one from a foreign country turned out to celebrate as she was presented an associate degree.

"I decided upon retiring from Delta after 37 years that the senior citizen centers were great, but not a good fit for me," Pryor said. "Everyone in my family and most of my friends have degrees, and I decided that I wanted one too."

Pryor, who is in her late 60s, wants everyone to know that "it's never too late to go back to school."

"I'm now going to come back and earn my degree in human services," she said. "Why stop now?"

During the Bell and Book Ceremony for students graduating education degrees, Kaitlyn Ballew and Madelyn Mount were awarded the first Jerry Stinchcomb Founders Award for having the highest grade point average in their class.

A Newly Renovated Hightower Library

Friends of Gordon State College, officials from the University System of Georgia and others joined students, faculty and staff April 21 in a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the transformation of the Dorothy W. Hightower Library into the Dorothy W. Hightower Collaborative Learning Center and Library.

For several months the building, originally built in 1978, underwent a renovation that, while not adding more to its 35,000 square-feet, opened up the floor plan.

Now, instead of shelf after shelf of books and study carrels, students can check out books, study in one of the many group or individual study areas, top off a project in a presentation practice room or use one of the many computers that will be available.

There are also classrooms for up to 60 students, study tables with a surface that supports the use of dry-erase markers, and many areas for quiet study time.

The entrance of the library contains study space that can be used after hours.

Sonya Gaither, GSC's director of library services and professor of library science, said "the library has been transformed into a welcoming, open, and collaborative learning space that is undeniably breathtaking."

The original library was named after the late Dorothy W. Hightower of Thomaston, wife of former Foundation Board of Trustees President George Hightower Sr.

Joining in the ribbon cutting celebration was C. Thomas Hopkins, vice chair, Board of Regents, USG; Shelley Nickel, vice chancellor for fiscal affairs and planning, USG, and Merryll Penson, assistant vice chancellor of library services and executive director of GALILEO, USG.

ALUMNI WEEKEND 2016

The weather forecast for the weekend of April 22 was for a sunny and cool weekend, but people wondered if the forecast might be wrong, since the rain was heavy that Friday morning. But then, as if on cue, the rain stopped and the skies cleared by the time alumni started showing up at Gordon in numbers. Alumni Weekend 2016 had begun, and would end, with beautiful weather.

The high school class of 1966 started their 50th reunion in the lobby of the Instructional Complex Building, and as typical at reunions, once people started visiting, they didn't want to stop. It took some doing to get everyone's attention and organize them on the steps of the building's north entrance, but eventually the Class of '66 had its picture taken.

For the next few minutes, the elevators in the IC kept busy ferrying people to the top floor where a dinner of salmon with a lemon dill butter sauce or beef tenderloin with a Madeira pan sauce was served.

The class's vice president, Terry Thrasher, was the evening's humorous master of ceremonies, while its president, J.K. Robertson took on the more solemn duty of reading the names of classmates who had died. Thomas Torbert then played *taps* on his trumpet.

The class's English teacher, Karen Martin, called out the names of her former students to collect CDs made by classmate Tyrie Boyer of their favorite songs in 1966. When she went off script to mention Lucius Vaughn's Gordon cadet cap, her audience erupted in applause.

Another round of applause erupted when Terry recognized football coach Jerry Garden. A quote from the '66 Taps yearbook had this to say about him: "Coach Jerry Garden was everybody's All-American coach this year. This is his first year at Gordon, and he gave Gordon its first winning season in the high school section."

Two members of the class had an especially unique reunion, since one of them thought the other had died.

"We were roommates for four years," Bob King said of his friend Rik King. "When I heard he was dead, it broke my heart. He was like kin; it was like losing family."

Bob cannot remember how he was misinformed, but Rik was happy to paraphrase Mark Twain: The report of my death has been greatly exaggerated.

The last time the two saw each other was 38 years ago when Bob attended the christening of Rik's son in Atlanta. Bob became a commercial jet pilot, and Rik became a commercial real estate agent in New York City. It took the hard work of the golden reunion committee to reunite the two.

Alumni lunch was held the next day in the courtyard behind Alumni House with fried chicken, corn and basil salad and potato salad on the menu. In addition to the lunch, alumni enjoyed every one of the knockout roses Bobby Wines (C '62) donated a couple of years earlier. It was if the roses had been orchestrated to all come out at the same time – the effect was dazzling in the midday sun.

At the same lunch, a contingent of the high school Class of '56 sat together a few steps away from the rest

of the alumni to enjoy a 60th reunion luncheon. Present were Barrett Hawks, Roland Watts, Catherine Redd Cloud, Lynn Voelker Warren, Frank Jones, T.J. Van Houten, Paula Reeves Wilde, Bill McKoy, Peter Banks, Robert Cherry, Dohn Bonner and James Stocks.

After lunch, alumni continued what they had been doing since the morning – they socialized; they shared memories; they told, and retold, stories; and made their own schedules.

Alumni regathered for a dinner of grilled flank steak and barbecued chicken thighs in Highlander Hall at 5 p.m. Once everyone's appetite had been satisfied, Junkshun took the stage. The band, consisting of Jim Graham (keyboards), Creché Navarro (lead vocals), Gil Bray (lead guitar, vocals), Mark Gooden (keyboard, guitar, vocals), Gary "Jett" Jackson (bass) and Cal Ruffin (drums), kept dancers on their feet until 10 p.m.

A good number returned to Highlander Hall the next morning for a farewell breakfast. And then, once again, Alumni Weekend was over.

Safe travels until next year.

SAVE THE DATE.

Join Us for Gordon State College Alumni Weekend 2017
Friday, April 21 – Sunday, April 23, 2017

Come join fellow alumni for a weekend of renewing friendships, making new friends, reminiscing, good food and drink, and fun. Alumni Weekend is for all Gordon alumni, no matter what year you graduated.

If you've never been and have questions, let us know. If you've been before and have ideas to share about AW 2017, let us know.

Contact Candi Babcock at **candib@gordonstate.edu** or call her at **678-359-5739.**

We can also be reached via the U.S. Postal Service: Gordon State College, Alumni Relations Office, 419 College Drive, Barnesville, GA 30204.

Paying Tribute to Mrs. Doris Watson

Doris Watson was an English teacher, but it was her love of music that led to an event that drew together family members, former students and admirers. The Bach Society of Atlanta in cooperation with Gordon State College held a concert in her honor on April 22 in the Fine Arts Auditorium. Sopranos Shala Whitehead and Victoria Wilson, tenor Khary Wilson, and pianist Olga Pikus performed pieces from Vivaldi, Handel and J.S. Bach.

Doris' son Bert, his wife, Marlys, his daughter Annaliese, and his niece Jenny Kelly represented the family.

Bert's son, Forrest, a musician and composer working in the Netherlands was unable to make the trip back for the concert, but he was present for her funeral on Jan. 9, 2014.

"He was Doris's favorite," Bert said. "Before she passed away, she made Forrest promise that he would sing the Lord's Prayer at her funeral. It was a fitting selection for her."

Bert recounted a story about the influence his mother had on her students. It seems that while Forrest was still in grade school, he had gotten into some kind of trouble and was sent to the vice principal's office. The likely punishment was suspension, but before the vice principal made his final decision, he asked one question.

"Who is your grandmother?"

Hearing the answer, he was told to go back to class. The vice principal was a former student of his grandmother's, and so the matter went no further.

David Hinely, HS '69, was present at the concert and remembered his teacher as someone who "worked hard to bring out the best in all her students," even "not great" English students like himself.

"The thing she taught me the most was vocabulary," he said, recalling two words that she taught him, myriad and frugal.

"She cared about me even though I was not her favorite," he said.

Deborah Johnston had her in the 9th grade, in 1964.

She remembers the time when she and her family were in a car accident. Although no one was seriously hurt, the accident was bad enough that they had to climb through the windows to free themselves of the wreckage.

Even after they got home and things had calmed down, Deborah didn't – she was still shaken. She told her parents that she had a book report due for Doris the next day, but she was too upset to write. So her mother called Doris and asked her if she could help.

She could, and she did. Deborah got an extra day to write her report.

"This is the kind of compassionate and understanding person she was," Deborah said.

John Johnson, the founder and president of the Bach Society of Atlanta, was also a student of hers at Gordon Military College in 1969. He said that of all the teachers he's had over the years, the most influential was Doris Watson, but he never had the chance to tell her so.

"This is one of the downsides of teaching," he told the audience, "not knowing the difference made in students' lives."

This is Doris Watson's faculty picture in the 1967 TAPS, the Gordon Military College yearbook.

Gordon State College President Max Burns (right) thanked Shala Whitehead and Victoria Wilson, and tenor Khary Wilson for their performances at the tribute for Doris Watson.

The Common Denominator –

LANNY MCALISTER

Angie Chisolm told Lanny McAlister that she was nervous about playing piano in front of him.

"In fact," she said, "I'm scared to death of you."

Lanny just smiled and did his best mean dog impression, "Rrrruf, grr, rrruf."

No one found his impression scary, but there had been times in the past that this former music and theater director of Gordon Junior College had intimidated the alumni who had gathered to honor him on June 25.

Ann Shockley Izadi and other former students spoke about holding a reunion, but it was just talk until about two years ago, after she and several others traveled to Birmingham, Alabama, to visit him.

After this trip, these students began to concretely talk about hosting a reunion. They started a Facebook page dedicated to this event. The response from former students was overwhelming. By February 2016, Ann, Danny Bates, Kim Keadle Thomas, Stan Greene, Hugh Coffee and Karen Coffee started planning "The Gordon Singers Reunion: The Lanny McAlister Years 1972-1982" in earnest.

Gordon's Highlander Hall was filled with former members of the Singers, Lanny's wife, Gayle, and their grandson Zeke Lowery to honor "Mr. Mac," as his students knew him, for his dedication. The theme for the evening was "thanks for the memories."

After everyone ate, people were invited to say a few words about their former mentor.

When Danny took the podium, he said that his time working with Lanny was a "major blossoming time" for him. In high school he felt he didn't fit in, but at Gordon, working with "Mr. Mac" and the Gordon Singers, he felt worthwhile and accepted – a part of a something, not apart from it.

"He molded us into what he knew we could be," Danny said.

Ann echoed his words: "We've all been influenced by Mr. Mac. He was more than a professor, more than a teacher, more than a leader. We've reached further in our lives than we ever thought we could because he spurred us on. He saw things in us that we didn't realize ourselves."

Danny remembered visiting with Lanny and his wife, Gayle, one night when he was still a student at Gordon. He was struggling with what to do for a profession and was looking for advice.

"Well, what do you like to do?" Lanny asked him.

"I like to go to school," was the response.

"Why not become a teacher?"

Danny ended up teaching second, third and fifth grades in the Griffin-Spalding County school system for 23 years and another 12 years with Griffin-Spalding teaching gifted children. Today he is retired, and at the reunion, he thanked Lanny for his advice from so many years ago.

"I am who I am today because of you."

At the podium, Ann observed that they were "all one under Mr. Mac."

"We all have a common denominator under Mr. Mac," she said. "We share the same memories of joy and laughter even though we are not all from the same years or musicals."

Another thing all of his students share was the dreaded Mr. Mac critique after each dress rehearsal.

"You chewed us out," Danny remembered, "and we knew we deserved it because by the time we reached this point we had gotten so full of ourselves that we were sloppy." Unapologetically, Lanny explained he was just serious about "doing a good job."

One of the finest moments of the evening's program, and there were many, was the sing-along. Show tunes included *Getting to Know You* from *The King and I,* and *Oklahoma* from the play *Oklahoma!*

The music bound everyone in the room together as did the fun and memories they shared. But more than this, they were joined together by their friend Lanny McAlister.

For his part, Lanny recalled story after story, some of them ribald, about his memories from his time at Gordon.

There was the time when Susan Payne Smith fainted during the annual Christmas show, *Christmas with the Singers.* However, she didn't fall to the floor because Joni Strickland Brown and Stephanie McCrary Carlson, on either side of her, held her up until the curtain came down.

"I didn't even know she had fainted," he said.

"You have made an old man happy, hearing you sing. This has been so much fun, and I thank you for all the work."

Then he added, "You make me want to stay alive and do it all over again."

CLASS NOTES

Yvonne Sticher Smith, ’55, and her husband Willis have been married 60 years.

Larry Lynch, ’61, serves on the Pike County Water Authority. He served as mayor of Zebulon from 1990 to 2003.

W.D. Strictland, ’64, was appointed to the Georgia Department of Corrections board. After earning an associate degree at Gordon, where he was also the 1964 class president, he earned a bachelor’s from the University of Georgia. He then earned a master’s from Valdosta State College, and finally a doctorate from Nova University. He and his wife, Susan, live in Waycross, Ga.

Charles Van Rysselberge, ’64, and his wife, Joan, have moved from Charleston, S.C., their home for more than 13 years, to Gainesville, Ga. They will be in a more central location to visit family who live in the Atlanta metropolitan area.

Benjamin Horne, ’68, has been serving as the Barnesville postmaster since 2014. A 32-year veteran of the U.S. Postal Service, Benjamin attended Gordon as a high school freshman in 1968.

Truman Boyle, ’73, conducted motorcycle crash testing for the 15th Annual Pennsylvania State Police Crash Reconstruction Seminar in October 2015. Truman helped develop the crash testing program for the Georgia Public Safety Training Center in Forsyth, Ga.

Kathy B. Martin, ’73, is a probate judge and recently completed the Georgia Probate Court Judges’ Certificate Program.

Joe Patterson, ’78, appeared in the New Year’s Eve 2015 edition of the *Jackson Progress-Argus* newspaper for his woodworking. He is a member of the Barnesville Woodturners, a chapter of the American Association of Woodturners, and was jointly enrolled at Gordon and Jackson High School from 1976 to 1978.

Scott Tenney, ’79, was named United Bank in Barnesville 2015 Employee of the Year.

Randal Jackson, ’80, published his first novel, *The Girl in the Maze,* a psychological thriller set on the coast of Georgia. Jackson grew up in Milner and Griffin, and now lives in California with his wife and son. He attended Gordon from 1978 to 1980 with a focus of study on theater and journalism. He appeared in several theater productions at Gordon under the direction of Lanny McAlister.

Amanda Akins Gunnels, ’95, was named Lamar County Elementary School Teacher of the Year. She earned her associate degree from Gordon and then her bachelor’s degree in early childhood education from Georgia Southern University. She has two children, Abigail and Everette.

Tiffany Bentley, ’96, was chosen Upson-Lee South Teacher of the Year by her peers. Bentley is a special education teacher and will serve as ULS Teacher of the Year for the ’16-’17 school year.

Robert Steven McDonald, ’97, was named a Henry County teacher of the year semifinalist. Steven earned his associate degree in teacher education at Gordon and is now a fifth-grade talented and gifted teacher at Woodland Elementary in Stockbridge, Ga.

J.B. Stallings, ’97, became the youngest mayor in Thomaston, Ga., history at age 39. As mayor-elect he graduated from the 2015 Region 4 Multi-Day Training Program offered by the Georgia Academy for Economic Development. J.B. graduated from Gordon with an associate of science degree in business administration.

Ben Coker, ’98, was elected district attorney for the Griffin Judicial Court. He earned his associate of arts in business administration at Gordon.

Bryan Hoover, ’98, signed on with the Road City Explorers of the East Coast Baseball League. The founder and former pastor of The Avenue Church in Walton County, Ga., attended Gordon from 1996 to 1998.

Melanie Sutton, ’99, was chosen as the outstanding clinical nurse manager for the south central zone of Healogics, the nation’s largest manager of Wound Treatment Centers in the United States. Melanie earned her associate of science in nursing from Gordon.

Ashley D. Phillips, ’04, is a fifth-grade teacher of math and science at Samuel Hubbard Elementary School in Forsyth, Ga. She earned her associate of arts in teachers education from Gordon.

Nikki Steerman Neal, ’05, was a featured artist in the Coweta County Administration Building.

Michael Glisson, ’06, is an International Society of Arboriculture certified arborist and a member of the Forsyth Tree Board. He is also the grounds superintendent for the Middle Georgia State University campus in Macon. He earned his associate of arts in criminal justice at Gordon.

Ansley Fowler, ’07, was named Rabun County High School’s teacher of the year for 2015. Ansley graduated from Gordon with an associate degree in teacher education and then transferred to North Georgia College and State University. There he earned a bachelor’s and then a master’s in education. Ansley and his wife, Laura, have a son, Barnes.

Whitney Futch Andino, ‘08, was named teacher of the year for the Lamar County school system. Whitney, a special education teacher at Lamar County Middle School, attended Gordon from 2005 to 2008 in the teacher education program, before transferring to the University of Georgia for her bachelor’s degree in special education.

Kellie Lively Mercer, ’10, is the executive director of the Lamar County Family Connection Cooperative. Kellie attended Gordon from 2008 to 2010 before transferring to Georgia Southern University where she earned a bachelor’s in psychology. She and her husband, David, reside in Barnesville.

Rondrikus Fletcher, ’11, was nominated by the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning as a finalist as one of Georgia’s Pre-K Program Teachers of the Year for ’16-’17. Rondrikus earned his bachelor of science in early childhood education at Gordon.

Melissa Gates Sutton, ’11, joined the pharmacy staff at CVS in Barnesville. She transferred as a pre-pharmacy major at Gordon to the University of Georgia where she graduated with a doctorate degree of pharmacy. She lives in Barnesville with her husband J.T.

Sarah Hampton, ’12, is a first-grade paraprofessional at Samuel Hubbard Elementary School in Forsyth, Ga. She earned her associate of arts in general studies from Gordon.

Margaret Van Gorder, ’13, was chosen for an internship with the FBI. She earned her associate degree in criminal justice and is currently working on a bachelor’s degree in criminal justice at Life University in Marietta, Ga.

Matthew McDaniel, ’13, announced his engagement to Ashley Karaline Wilson. Matthew earned his Bachelor of Arts in history from Gordon and is the lead guitarist for Drake White and the Big Fire.

Aaron Mizell, ’13, is playing right field for the Georgia Southern University Eagle’s baseball team. Aaron played baseball for Gordon for two years.

Julie Anderson, ’14, is a first-grade teacher at Samuel Hubbard Elementary School in Forsyth, Ga. She earned her bachelor of science in early childhood education from Gordon.

Ashley Childs, ’14, will be a paraprofessional at Monroe County Middle School. She earned her associate of arts in psychology from Gordon.

Kasey Smith Cone, ’14, will be teaching first grade at T.G. Scott Elementary in Forsyth, Ga. Kasey earned her bachelor of science in education at Gordon, and then earned a masters in early childhood education from Georgia Southwestern.

Stephanie Lauren Hogg, ’14, released *Pirate III: A Shift in the Tides,* her new adventure novel written under the name S.C. Lauren. It is the third in her Pirate series. She earned her Bachelor of Arts in English from Gordon.

Kelly Marie Watkins Rogers, ’14, named Piedmont Henry Hospital’s nurse of the year. Kelly, who earned her associate of science in nursing degree from Gordon in 2006 and then her Bachelor of Science in nursing in 2014, works in the hospital’s emergency room.

A**mber Byous, ’15,** was awarded a New Teacher Assistance Grant by Georgia Power. The $1,000 grant is for classroom supplies and to help Georgia’s newest teachers start their careers. Nominations are submitted by state public colleges and universities that have schools of education. Amber teaches at Lamar County Elementary School and is one of two teachers in the Lamar County school system to win the grant.

Justin Gunnels, ’15, was awarded a New Teacher Assistance Grant by Georgia Power. The $1,000 grant is for classroom supplies and to help Georgia’s newest teachers start their careers. Nominations are submitted by state public colleges and universities that have schools of education. Justin teaches at Lamar County Middle School and is one of two teachers in the Lamar County school system to win the grant.

Sharon Holcombe, ’15, is a nurse at Eternal Hope Hospice and also a nurse on the low birth weight strategy team of the Lamar County Family Connection Collaborative. Sharon earned her bachelor of science in nursing from Gordon, receiving the U.S. Army Spirit of Nursing medal at the time.

Chad Hutsell, ’15, teaches at Dutchtown Elementary School in Hampton, Ga., after having graduated from Gordon with a bachelor’s degree and teaching certificate in early childhood education and special education. He completed a tour of Iraq in 2008 as a senior airman with the 15th Air Support Operation Squadron.

Ornella Oluwole, ’15, was accepted into the Medical College of Georgia. Ornella not only earned her bachelor’s degree in biology at Gordon but served as its student government association president.

Paul Lindner, ’16, was promoted to campus superintendent of State Offices South at Tift College. He will be responsible for the coordination of full service facilities management for the Georgia Department of Corrections headquarters and training academy located at the former college in Forsyth. He is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in human services at Gordon.

Celebrating a 100th Anniversary Tom Torbert, College ’68

Lt. Col. T.E. Torbert (U.S. Army, retired) recently went to Washington, D.C., to direct the Leadership Program of the 2016 U.S. Army JROTC Leadership and Academic Bowl. During the four-day event the Army celebrated the 100th anniversary of Army ROTC and JROTC with a cake-cutting ceremony officiated by the vice chief of staff of the Army. The saber in the photograph was used to cut the cake and is the one he carried at Gordon from 1966 to 1968.

“I have the distinct privilege of serving as the leadership program manager of the annual Army JROTC Leadership and Academic Bowl in Washington and continuing to work and influence the future leaders of our country,” Tom said.

He retired in 2012 as the director of Army Instruction of Atlanta Public Schools and currently works for the College Options Foundation, which is dedicated to supporting the nation’s JROTC program.

Make a Note to Write a Class Note

The *President’s Report* is a good way for you and your classmates to stay in touch with each other.

Have you been promoted, changed jobs, gotten married, moved or visited an exotic corner of the globe? Share your news with Gordon’s Alumni Relations Office and have it reported in the Class Notes section in next year’s magazine.

It’s easy, just send your news by USPO to the Alumni Relations Office, Gordon State College, 419 College Drive, Barnesville, Ga., 30204 or e-mail it to **pboltz@gordonstate.edu**, or call Peter Boltz at **678-359-5257.**

If you prefer to use your fax machine, here’s the number to use: **678-359-5738.**

Gordon’s Uber Driver

Rick Roquemore, HS ’71, College ’77

It all started when Rick Roquemore went to a UGA football game with his daughter Kellie. Her boyfriend Brandon, who joined them, asked Rick if he knew about Uber. He didn’t.

According to Uber’s website, Uber is an alternative to hiring a taxi cab. As the story goes, two men had trouble hailing a cab “on a snowy Paris evening in 2008,” and inspiration struck. Why not get a ride by tapping a button on a smart phone rather than futilely trying to wave a cab down?

The idea interested Rick, and so he looked into it. What he found interested him so much that he decided to become an Uber driver himself in Athens, Georgia. He’s been at it now for a year and a half.

“I was nervous the first time I went out because I didn’t know what to expect; I didn’t know what I was getting myself into,” he said.

Now he goes out most weekends, from 5 p.m. to 2 a.m., picking up mostly college students.

Top: Gordon State College Foundation trustee Jeff Manley was the evening’s auctioneer.

Middle: Larry Perigo (left), Bill Howe and George Slone are three of the five-member band The Headliners. Not pictured are drummer Mark Husbands and keyboardist Steve White.

Bottom: Gordon State College nursing student Josue Padillo accepts a check for the Founder’s Day Scholarship from President Max Burns. Gordon State College Foundation trustees Kenny Coggins (left) and Jeff Manley (right) join them.

Third Annual Founder’s Day

The Third Annual Founder’s Day event raised nearly $56,000. The event, given the name ShamRock and Roll, was held on Mar. 19, in the Student Activity and Recreation Center.

Josue Padilla, a nursing student who received the first Founder’s Day Scholarship, told attendees that he is proud to represent Gordon State College as a nursing student doing his clinical work at local area hospitals.

“This is definitely significant in my life,” he said, and he thanked everyone for providing him with a “brighter future.”

Gordon State College President Max Burns added that “thanks to the support of all of you and others, we can help students like Josue realize their dreams.”

This year’s fundraiser featured The Headliners, a five-piece band from Hilton Head, South Carolina, that played hits from the ‘50s to the ‘90s.

United Bank, Sodexo, Chick-fil-A, Raymond James, the city of Aldora, Coggins Funeral Home, George Hightower Jr., Connell and Wheeler trial lawyers, and McDaniel and Associates Insurance were this year’s gold sponsors.

The Annual Donor Roll includes the names of those whose gifts were received between July 1, 2015, and June 30, 2016. In preparing this document every effort has been made to ensure accuracy and completeness. If a mistake was made in the way a donor is identified or if a donor's name was omitted from a gift list, we sincerely apologize. Please report any corrections to the Office of Advancement at **678-359-5124** or **rhondat@gordonstate.edu.** Thank you.

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From Negative to Positive

C.B. Howard Jr. graduated from Gordon Military High School in 1943; he was also an amateur photographer.

Seventy-three years later, C.B.'s son, Chuck Howard, decided to have a closer look at his father's collection of negatives. Here are three examples of what he found.

MEMORIES FROM THE GREATEST GENERATION

Tom Brokaw made the term "greatest generation" popular with his 1998 book of the same name, and many graduates of Gordon were of this generation. Some, like Bobbie Carol Burousas Waller, are their children. She is the daughter of Staff Sgt. Jimmie Burousas of the U.S. Army Air Corps in World War II and then of the U.S. Air Force in Korea.

In World War II he served with the 414th Bomb Squadron, 97th Bomber Group in North Africa and Italy as a radioman and waist gunner on a B-17. In Korea he was a crewman on a B-17 adapted for sea rescue.

Because of a donation of memorabilia by Bobbie Carol and her husband, Buddy Waller, patrons of Gordon State College's Hightower Collaborative Learning Center and Library can gain some insight into what members of the greatest generation like Jimmie lived through.

The Waller donation is a collection of photographs, magazines and papers. The magazines include *Life* and *Yank: The Army Weekly, Mediterranean Edition*. There is even a book of poetry written by World War II servicemen called *Puptent Poets,* published by Stars and Stripes.

Bobbie Carol said the donation was made "in appreciation of the people who served their country at that time," adding that such memorabilia is getting harder to gather "since that generation is leaving us."

Left: This June 8, 1945, issue of *Yank* is one of several magazines in the Waller donation.

Below: Jimmie Burousas wrote "Ma" Slayden on the back of this photograph, one of many in the Waller donation. She was Myrtle Slayden, Gordon's dietician. She was also a registered nurse.

Leadership Lamar Starts Scholarship Fund

Members of the Leadership Lamar Class of 2015 established a scholarship endowment fund for the Larry and Glenna Waller Scholarship at their recent graduation ceremony.

The group made an initial gift of more than $2,000 and expects to raise the required $25,000 in the next five years.

Patricia Gavel, executive director of Towaliga Accountability Courts, Inc. and a 2015 graduate of Leadership Lamar, spearheaded the effort.

The late Larry Waller was a former Lamar County sheriff and faculty member at Gordon State College.

Anyone wishing to contribute to this scholarship may send a check to the Gordon State College Foundation, 419 College Drive, Barnesville.

Checks should be marked as being for the Waller Scholarship. Gifts are tax-deductible.

Golden Reunion

CLASS OF '66

1st row: Phil Meeks, Dee Bankston Kitchings, Patty Newsome Lee, Marcia Littleton Edwards, Patsy Carter Fountain, Phil Diemer, Julie Belote Albright.

2nd row: Mary Ann Meeks Leverett, Janice Ball Moore, Linda McCard Reems, Susan Ware Byars, Thomas Torbert, Faye Sullivan Walker.

3rd row: Dianne Foster Perry, Carol Barnes Sorrow, Brenda Kimbell Thrasher, Pete Reems, Deidra White Arends.

4th row: Haygood Keadle, Becky Sykes Chambers, Donny Parks, Carolyn Shockley Parker, J.K. Robertson, Rebecca Duke Bates, Lynn Holland Coleman.

5th row: Barry Newell, Mary Ann Parker Salmons, Jimmy Mason, David Johnson, Linda Milam Rainey, Yates Johnson, Daniel Jopling.

6th row: Jim Wharton, Clayton Harper, Archie Ray, Terry Thrasher, Tom Baber.

7th row: Jimmy Abbott, Ricky Rooks, Lucius Vaughn, Bob King, John Spiller.

8th row: Fred Henderson, Ronnie Smith, Terry Brown, Tyrie Boyer, Ricky King, Jimmy Garrett, Randy Lovett.

9th row: Smitty Zollie Smith Graham, Lester Lifsey, Roy Gene Williams, David Stewart.

Not pictured: Wick Hatch.

The PRESIDENT'S REPORT Is for All Gordon Alumni

Whether you attended Gordon when it was a private military school or after it became part of the University System of Georgia, the *President's Report* is for you, and about you. Even if you attended Gordon for only a semester, you are part of the Gordon State College family.

If you know of an alumnus who does not know about the *President's Report*, let us know who he or she is. Contact Peter Boltz at **pboltz@gordonstate.edu** or call him at **678-359-5257.** You may also fax your contact information **to 678-359-5738.** We want you on our roll of alumni. Gordon College, Advancement Office, 419 College Drive, Barnesville, GA 30204.

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