

**Oral History Interview**  
**with**  
**Jamie Horning**

Interview Conducted by  
Jerry Gill  
September 10, 2010

O-STATE Stories  
Oral History Project

**Special Collections & University Archives**  
**Edmon Low Library • Oklahoma State University**

# O-State Stories

An Oral History Project of the OSU Library

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## Interview History

Interviewer: Jerry Gill

Transcriber: Miranda Mackey

Editors: Amy Graham, Latasha Wilson, Micki White

The recording and transcript of this interview were processed at the Oklahoma State University Library in Stillwater, Oklahoma.

## Project Detail

The purpose of O-State Stories Oral History Project is to gather and preserve memories revolving around Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College (OAMC) and Oklahoma State University (OSU).

This project was approved by the Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board on October 5, 2006.

## Legal Status

Scholarly use of the recordings and transcripts of the interview with Jamie Horning is unrestricted. The interview agreement was signed on September 10, 2010.

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## About Jamie Horning...

Jamie Horning is part of a special legacy: She is a member of a five-generation Oklahoma State University family. The tradition began with her great-grandmother, Gay Lynn Albright Clark, who was born in 1893 and earned an education degree from OSU. Her grandmother and her mother later attended, and then Jamie enrolled at OSU in 1981. She was born in Sapulpa, Oklahoma, but spent her formative years in Odessa and Longview, Texas. She enrolled at Texas A&M, but shortly thereafter when her family moved back to Oklahoma, they encouraged her to transfer. Her sophomore year, she kept the family tradition alive by enrolling at OSU. She majored in chemical engineering, was an officer in the student chapter of the American Institute of Chemical Engineering, and was in the Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority. She spent time on sorority activities, with friends, and going to sporting events, but the majority of her time was spent studying.

Jamie graduated in 1985, which was not an ideal time for the engineering industry, economically, but thanks to her professors who helped with recruiting, she managed to land a position with Factory Mutual, a business insurance company. She moved to St. Louis, but Jim, her husband-to-be, took a job in Longview, Texas. She eventually went to Texas, too, where they married and where she began working for Thiokol. In 1991, they moved to Charlotte, North Carolina, for a job Jim accepted, and Jamie went to work for Bechtel the next year. In 1999, their jobs took them back to Texas where Jamie is an environmental safety and health manager.

Jamie and Jim's son, Matthew, enrolled at OSU, becoming the fifth generation of the family to continue the legacy. Their daughter Madeline is considering OSU, as well. Jamie and Jim are members of the Alumni Association and get back to Stillwater when they can. In her interview, Jamie discusses her OSU family tradition, the importance of education to all the generations of her family, and what she hopes for OSU in the future.

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## Jamie Horning

Oral History Interview

Interviewed by Jerry Gill  
September 10, 2010  
Stillwater, Oklahoma



**Gill** *My name is Jerry Gill. Today is September 10, 2010. I am visiting with Jamie Donovan Horning in Stillwater, Oklahoma, in her parents' home. This interview is for the O-STATE Stories Project of the Oklahoma Oral History Research Program. Jamie, I know you're here for Parents' Weekend, I think?*

**Horning** Yes.

**Gill** *I appreciate you taking the time out of the activities to do this interview.*

**Horning** You're welcome.

**Gill** *Jamie, you're a member of a very special OSU family. If I recall correctly, five generations of your family have attended Oklahoma State University, beginning with your great-grandmother, Gay Lynn Albright Clark. Then your grandmother, Jamie Dunn, your mother, Gay Lynn Bullock, also graduated OSU, and your son Matthew is now a junior at Oklahoma State University?*

**Horning** Yes he is.

**Gill** *Pretty special. Five generations?*

**Horning** Yes, we think it is, especially being women going to school. I think that's very special.

**Gill** *Well Jamie, for your great-grandmother, it was very unusual, wasn't it, at that time, her wanting to go to college?*

**Horning** Yes, that is right.

**Gill** *In the 19-teens, as I recall?*

**Horning** Yes, 1916?

**Gill** *Speaking of your great-grandmother Clark, what do you remember about her?*

**Horning** I remember she was a pretty sharp lady, and until she got ill she seemed to know what was going on and around. She was very on top of what was going on with her community. She stayed active in what she could. I didn't know her. I mean, I guess she was probably in her late sixties, seventies, when I was old enough to remember besides being a little child.

**Gill** *How old were you when she died?*

**Horning** I think I was probably early twenties.

**Gill** *So you did get a chance to grow up knowing her.*

**Horning** Yes. Actually, every time we came up to Stillwater to see Grandmother Dunn, we would drive over and see Great-Grandmother Clark.

**Gill** *Did she ever tell any stories about her time at OSU or, then, of course, Oklahoma A&M?*

**Horning** Well, she more told about afterwards because she taught in a little one-room schoolhouse, and she had several kids from, like, six to as old as they could be. A lot of them would leave when they were thirteen or so to go work in the field. She talked a little bit about that and how she had fun doing that, teaching the kids.

**Gill** *So she graduated in education and was a schoolteacher most of her career and most of her life?*

**Horning** Right. What I understand was it was kind of a special certificate. You went, I think, about two years, so it was specialized, and it was kind of a teaching certificate.

**Gill** *But she never talked about Old Central or any of her classes or anything?*

**Horning** I remember she talked about knowing it was there and that was kind of the only thing that was there. It would be all new to her if she went back

and saw all the growth.

**Gill** *It would be amazing, wouldn't it? (Laughs) It's amazing if you haven't been here in ten years what has happened.*

**Horning** Oh, yes.

**Gill** *Did your Grandmother Dunn talk to you about her OSU experiences?*

**Horning** Yes, she did. She talked about going—now, she went to school in the late Depression. She talks a lot about having just a few dresses, and she would change them out, going to OSU. Again, it was a little more sophisticated then. She got her degree in administrative. It was a four-year degree. She learned all the things that we don't use anymore like longhand, shorthand, and a Dictaphone. (Laughs) Yes, she learned all that. Of course, she met her future husband there, so she talks about that. Dances, parties, and the fun stuff.

**Gill** *As I recall from conversation, did your great-grandmother meet her husband at OSU, or did she meet him after she graduated?*

**Horning** I don't think she met him there. I don't know when she met him, but she met him later.

**Gill** *So your grandfather, then, also attended Oklahoma State, and they met there?*

**Horning** Yes. I don't really remember much about that, but he was older, and he actually enlisted. He went there, and then he enlisted, and he actually was in World War II.

**Gill** *So your mom graduated from Oklahoma State? You mentioned earlier before we started, this five generations, especially being women coming through is very interesting. What do you remember about her OSU experience?*

**Horning** I remember she always talked about college is really important, and she was very glad she went. She likes socials, so she did talk about that quite a bit, (Laughter) but just meeting people and having a good a time, and it's a good school. I guess even if you live here growing up, it's a privilege to go.

**Gill** *Were there any traditions at that time that she talked about?*

**Horning** I don't remember a lot, but we had yearbooks. See, I got to look at my parents' yearbooks from college, so you flipped and saw all the dresses

and all the different events.

**Gill** *The hairdos.*

**Horning** Yes, the hair and the glasses, the cat-eye glasses. We looked through things, and that is how we knew a little bit about it as kids growing up.

**Gill** *Let's talk about you for a little bit. Where did you grow up?*

**Horning** I grew up, basically, in Longview, Texas. I was born in Sapulpa, Oklahoma, and then my parents moved to Odessa. I lived there about five years in Odessa, Texas. Then my dad got a job with Gulf Oil, and a subsidiary is called Warren Petroleum, so he worked there. We moved to Longview, Texas. So from second grade until I graduated, we lived in Longview.

**Gill** *So you lived in Texas most of your life growing up.*

**Horning** Right. I think the folks in the archives will figure that out with my voice. (Laughter)

**Gill** *Was there a story about how you got back to Stillwater?*

**Horning** Yes, there is a little story. I actually went to Texas A&M my first year. I enjoyed it. My high school was 320 that graduated, so it wasn't small. But there was only a small group that went from high school to college. There were two or three friends of mine, good friends, that were going to A&M. I kind of decided to leave late, so I went to A&M, but in that transition, that summer that I graduated, my dad took another job with Gulf Oil that was a promotion. It was overseas work, so my family ended up moving to Oklahoma. Therefore, after my freshman year, they really wanted me to transfer. I said, "Okay." I didn't start until my sophomore year at Oklahoma State.

**Gill** *Where were your parents living in that area, or at least your mother?*

**Horning** They were right outside of Tulsa in Sapulpa, so kind of moved back to where I was born.

**Gill** *Full circle.*

**Horning** Roundabout way, yes. It took a little while, but I came. (Laughs) So I can actually say I am a double Aggie. I tell people that.

**Gill** *Well, it's quite a bit of a social pride. You started out as a Texas A&M Aggie, but it wasn't much of a transition with your family being*

*Oklahoma State Aggies.*

- Horning** Right. And they're real similar, I mean, as far as they're both agricultural mechanical schools.
- Gill** *Do you remember what year you enrolled at Oklahoma State?*
- Horning** Nineteen eighty-one.
- Gill** *Your major was...*
- Horning** Chemical engineering.
- Gill** *There probably weren't a lot of chemical engineering women at that time, were there?*
- Horning** Actually, there wasn't a lot, but there were four in my class of thirty or thirty-five. So there was a little bit, but that's when they were really starting. I think they were actually trying to, in a way, recruit if there were women that were making good grades because some of the other engineering disciplines had more. Now I understand it is probably 50 percent or more.
- Gill** *Was Ruth Erbar in charge, or did she help with the women's engineering program at that time?*
- Horning** Yes. She was there. I don't remember her being in charge of the women's engineering, but she was there as a professor. We had a class with her. She taught one of our classes.
- Gill** *Do you recall some of the professors that you worked with? Were there some professors or administrators that had influence on you while you were a student?*
- Horning** I kind of laugh because the answer is yes and no. (Laughs) In engineering, I'm not sure they're really there to influence you more than torture you. (Laughter) That's not their forte. They all taught well. They all wanted the kids to succeed, and they pushed us. I was in a class of—I think it's a little unique, but it probably happens every four or five years, but my particular class had some really smart kids in it. That is why I think they kind of punished you, because there were two 4.0s in my class. There were many of them that had 3.5 averages and better in engineering, so it was almost like they were going to push us just to break us a little bit. It didn't happen, but... (Laughs)
- Gill** *Congratulations.*



**Horning** Dr. [Kenneth] Bell, he was there. Both of the Erbars were there, but Dr. [John] Erbar, he was teaching graduate school students at that time. Dr. Willis, I think he went to the other university. He moved on. (Laughs) There were a few others, but they were all good.

**Gill** *We talked about Billy Crynes. Was he there at that time?*

**Horning** Yes, but he more taught the graduate students.

**Gill** *He was head of the School of Chemical Engineering?*

**Horning** Right. Good group of professors. You know, you came out of there prepared. I mean...

**Gill** *Where did you live on campus?*

**Horning** I actually was in a sorority. I was in Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority house. When I transferred, I was actually a pledge at Texas A&M and initiated there, so when I moved up, I moved into the house. I lived there, and my fifth year, I lived in some apartments on Hester that are no longer there. They were actually pretty new, but they were very close to the stadium, so they razed them to put in the new parking lot and stadium.

**Gill** *What about some of the other activities you were involved in, organizations, student groups?*

**Horning** I was in American Institute of Chemical Engineering student chapter. I was an officer and had a lot of fun. They had three or four events during the year, so we actually did some social events. That was a lot of fun. Of course, I was in my sorority, and we did philanthropy. We did parties, social events, and Homecoming. Lots of pumping, staying up all night, yes. (Laughter)

**Gill** *It's an OSU tradition.*

**Horning** It is actually, I think, from what I have seen, a little better organized than when we were going to school. Not that we were unorganized, but I think we thought we could get everything done in a much shorter time period. They seem to start earlier here and be a little more—I am sure they stay up all night, too, but it seems a little less intense than it was when I was going to school.

**Gill** *What do you remember about Engineering Week? There were usually a lot of activities, I remember, in that era. Were you involved in any of*

*those?*

**Horning** I actually don't remember a lot about that. I remember lots of homework and late nights. (Laughter) There was always something going on. If you wanted to participate, there's something to participate in. It's up to you to choose what you want to do.

**Gill** *What were some of the favorite student activities at that time?*

**Horning** Going to the games. They were always fun, basketball and football games. That's fun, and just hanging out with friends, that's fun. The engineers kind of took over the library a lot. We had our little study groups in the basement where the tables are, so we did that. I think I just had fun being with people. I had fun in the sorority even if it was just being in the house. There was always something going on.

**Gill** *What were the favorite student hangouts at that time on campus and off campus?*

**Horning** I guess the one is probably the Student Union, just to go get a cup of coffee or a coke and just sit. The Fox, and then Eskimo Joe's was just getting popular then. It really wasn't—in fact, I went with someone, my boyfriend at the time, and we lived pretty close. He said, "Let's go over here." I said, "That looks like a place we don't need to go." We went in there, and I was like, "I don't want to be here." (Laughter) But he had apparently bought it at that time, and it wasn't a hit with the kids yet, but it quickly became.

**Gill** *What about Washington Street, better known as the Strip?*

**Horning** I actually didn't go down there that much. It was just me, but that was always popular of course.

**Gill** *You're not just saying that because your mom is in the room, right?*

**Horning** No, no. Actually I didn't. I actually didn't go down there. (Laughs) I tell her that I am old enough now I can go. (Laughter) But I remember the kids would go get hotdogs, which I think that's still here, Coney Island.

**Gill** *Yes, Coney Island.*

**Horning** Oh yes, there was always popular folks. See, I never saw Garth Brooks, and he was here when I was here. (Laughs)

**Gill** *Didn't get an autograph, huh?*

**Horning** No, no.

**Gill** *Along those lines, what were some of your favorite memories at Oklahoma State as you look back and think about your time at OSU?*

**Horning** I think just going to school here. There wasn't anything in particular. Before I forget to say it, I did not discover the Dairy Barn until I think it was either late junior year or my senior year, so I really missed out on that. (Laughs)

**Gill** *And for the archives, can you explain what the old Dairy Building, what you called that?*

**Horning** Well, it was the agricultural students, and they had ice cream, cheese, and milk, but everybody went for the ice cream. I just didn't know about it. I guess I was buried in the sand or something. Finally, we were talking about ice cream, and somebody said, "Well, you have to go there because that is where the best ice cream is." And I was like, "What are you talking about?" My husband now, (we were dating at the time) we started going over there, and I gained a lot of weight. (Laughter)

**Gill** *Did you ever have any of the half and half, the half chocolate, half regular milk?*

**Horning** No, I never did. I am not a big milk fan, but I like everything else, cheese, ice cream, and yes. I think some of the memories are that kind of thing. You find out something fun, somebody talks about it. We drank a lot of quart Koolies from the QuikTrip. We'd stop by there. (Laughs)

**Gill** *It was the Red Bull of that era.*

**Horning** Oh, yes. We'd go get a quart Koolie. I think just being with people and meeting people, that was a lot of fun.

**Gill** *Do any administrators stand out in your mind, presidents, deans, department heads, people you remember?*

**Horning** No, not really. In fact, when we were going to school and things I can look back on when I'm visiting, I don't know if that was a financially bad time for Oklahoma State at that time because when you are going to school there, you're not paying attention. I do remember it looked a little more run down than it looks now or five years ago or even ten years ago. It looked like it was just kind of suffering.

**Gill** *So what year did you graduate, then?*

**Horning** Eighty-five.

**Gill** *And '85 really was right in the middle of that bust.*

**Horning** I think it was, yes. I think it was kind of suffering.

**Gill** *There probably were some deferred maintenance, I'm sure.*

**Horning** But we would laugh about the flowers dying at the Student Union. Somebody would plant the flowers, and they'd turn brown. But, again, we weren't really paying attention that much. It's so much better. I can tell that they try to manage the money and get endowments and trusts.

**Gill** *Did you have some scholarship support when you were in school?*

**Horning** No, I actually didn't.

**Gill** *The 4.0s got that?*

**Horning** They probably did. (Laughter)

**Gill** *Jamie, I didn't ask you earlier about brothers and sisters in your family. Did any of those attend Oklahoma State?*

**Horning** Yes, I have two sisters and a brother. The sister that is next to me, Melissa, she did go to Oklahoma State and graduate, and she met her husband, and he graduated also. I think he was maybe one of the first in his family to go here. She graduated in computer science.

**Gill** *Was she the only one?*

**Horning** Yes, the other two went to the other A&M. They both went to Texas A&M.

**Gill** *As you indicated, your husband—did he graduate the same year? Did you all graduate together in '85?*

**Horning** Yes, we did. We were in the same class.

**Gill** *Can you share about your professional life and journey after you left Oklahoma State?*

**Horning** Well, as you mentioned, early '85 was not a good year to graduate, especially in the engineering field with OPEC [Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries] and all the things that were going on. We were both real fortunate. Our professors tried very hard to bring

companies on campus and recruit for us and help place everybody. I got a job with Factory Mutual, and it is a business insurance company. It is all over the world. I moved to St. Louis, and my husband and I were dating at the time. He got a job with Texas Eastman in Longview, Texas, where I grew up, just coincidentally. We still continued to date, and then he asked me to marry him. He tried really hard to get a job in St. Louis, and I was seeing what was available in Longview. We ended up moving to Longview and getting married. Then I worked for another company, Thiokol, for a few years. He got a phone call to be interviewed in Charlotte, North Carolina, just kind of out of the blue in '91. We decided that sounded like a good deal, so we moved to Charlotte, North Carolina. Then I went to go work for Bechtel. I went to work for Bechtel in '92. I've been working for them since 1992. We've moved a little bit, yes. (Laughs)

**Gill** *Then you moved to...*

**Horning** Moved to Beaumont, Texas, in '99, both with work, both associated with work. He was asked to transfer, and then I was asked to come to a job in the Beaumont area.

**Gill** *Will you share a little bit about what you do there with Bechtel?*

**Horning** I am an environmental safety and health manager for Bechtel, and I am normally the manager in the field, so if the project is in the field that is what it normally is. People tease me because I am a woman. They say, "Do you like telling the people what to do all the time?" I said, "Yes, that's kind of fun, (Laughter) telling a bunch of men what to do all the time." I just set up the programs and the processes out in the field and, yes, tell people what to do. But hopefully I am telling people the right things to do. I am currently in Houston. I am currently in the office managing a pipeline project from the office. I do travel a little bit. That's where I am now.

**Gill** *Your kids—I know you have Matthew, but are there other children you have?*

**Horning** Yes. Matthew is at Oklahoma State. He is a junior. Madeline is a senior in high school.

**Gill** *Is she going to be the fifth girl [to attend OSU], maybe?*

**Horning** She's thinking about it. (Laughter)

**Gill** *Are you working on her a little bit?*

**Horning** Yes. She is a very good soccer player, and we would like her to go to OSU and play soccer. She's not against going. She has got a couple of soccer offers, and we are going to see how that pans out.

**Gill** *So Matthew makes the fifth generation to enroll at Oklahoma State.*

**Horning** Right.

**Gill** *Let me hold that thought for just a minute. It is sort of interesting. We have interviewed your family line, and it has been women, as we've indicated.*

**Horning** Right, yes.

**Gill** *Your great-great-grandmother, and then your grandmother, and your mother, and yourself. If you had five women in the family, five generations, it would be pretty special, wouldn't it?*

**Horning** Oh yes.

**Gill** *I'm sure there are not too many five-generation women families in Oklahoma State University history.*

**Horning** I don't know. I would think not. I think that would maybe be something. I think that would be difficult because the college was just starting. People kind of move and go about different places.

**Gill** *We are excited to have Matthew at Oklahoma State. Can you tell us a little bit about Matthew? He's a junior here?*

**Horning** He's a junior. He's an architectural engineering major. He loves it. He loves all those things. He is probably more active than Jim or I were. (Laughs) That was one of the things I told him. I think I did miss out on some things because I actually had switched majors. I was pre-med and switched to engineering, so I was just behind. I was behind in every class, and I was trying to catch up. He entered in knowing what he wanted to do, so he's got a pretty good workload. He's very involved. He's in a fraternity, but he loves to play intramural sports and volunteers for quite a bit, so he's having a good time.

**Gill** *Student volunteerism is really strong at Oklahoma State. It's great that he is involved in that. Did you say which fraternity he's in?*

**Horning** He's a Sigma Chi. I think they push him a little bit. They're always talking about if you join something, then you need to run for an office and not just join, but participate and be a part of it.

**Gill** *So Matthew was in the Beaumont, Texas, area.*

**Horning** Yes.

**Gill** *Did he have a choice about Oklahoma State, or...*

**Horning** Oh, yes.

**Gill** *I say that jokingly, but was he excited about coming to Oklahoma State?*

**Horning** Actually, we told him, “You choose where you want to go. If you have a major you like already in high school, you need to find a school that has that. Don’t go to a school that is not going to have what you need because then you will be miserable and probably switch anyway.” He’s wanted to do architecture engineering for quite some time, so he knew they had a good program. He’s been pretty set on it for a while.

**Gill** *And that’s good that it is a good, strong program at Oklahoma State.*

**Horning** Oh yes.

**Gill** *It’s great that it worked out for him. Having attended Oklahoma State University, how has that impacted your life?*

**Horning** I think it’s a good, solid school. It’s something you can be proud of, going and graduating. I don’t think it affects my life hugely. It’s just the fact that you can finish and go and have a career. There are a lot of people from OSU in Texas, and you run into them. It’s just nice to be part of something that you see in other people.

**Gill** *Are you a member of the Alumni Association?*

**Horning** Oh yes.

**Gill** *Got that orange sticker on the back of your car?*

**Horning** Right, yes.

**Gill** *All right! I had to ask that question. I was the alumni director of twenty-three years.*

**Horning** Oh, okay. We pay every year. (Laughter)

**Gill** *Just get a life membership, and then you don’t have to worry about it!*

**Horning** That's right.

**Gill** *At family reunions or get-togethers of the family, does discussion about Oklahoma State ever come up?*

**Horning** Oh I think so, yes. Especially with my mother living in Stillwater, it's hard not to. (Laughter)

**Gill** *Are there some kinds of generational stories that you remember or some different experiences?*

**Horning** I don't really remember too many.

**Gill** *So none of these favorite stories that are told and retold?*

**Horning** Not about Oklahoma State, but my grandmother Dunn does talk a lot about dances and, of course, that was around the war, right around that time, also, in the Depression, and they didn't have as much. I guess the money wasn't there, but you could still socialize and have fun at the dances. We didn't go in Theta Pond. We didn't walk on the bushes and everything. I heard all about that, but we never did any of it. (Laughs)

**Gill** *You were a serious student, it sounds like to me. (Laughter)*

**Horning** That's right! (Laughs) I think the only excitement that happened that I can talk about, (and I get a tickle out of this) but Engineering North, the stairs for an engineering building, they are really horribly designed, and you fall up the stairs because the rise and the run is not correct. We'd always watch the students, and you would fall flat on your face.

**Gill** *Oh, falling up the stairs?*

**Horning** Falling up, yes, but we'd watch people. Of course, we fell too, but you'd watch people, and you would just go straight down because there is no catching yourself. That's my one big memory. (Laughter) I mean, there are always little things you catch. I had a roommate in the sorority, and we had a five-girl room. There were different sized rooms, and we had a five-girl room. One girl was a very serious student, and she would stay up all night long studying, but she would fall asleep, and she'd have her light on. When I'd wake up because the light was in my face, I would turn off her light and then she would turn it back on. Then one day I was walking in the library, and she was out stone cold in the library, so I went and woke her up, and I was like, "No, no, no! No sleeping during the day. You need to sleep at night." (Laughter)

**Gill** *Tough! As you kind of reflect back on the experiences, you talked a little*



*bit about different times in the 1910s and the Depression Era, and then the dip when you were in the '80s. As members of your family have talked about their OSU experiences, how are their experiences different at OSU?*

**Horning** I think the difference is just the growth when they talked about it because talking about where it is just two or three classrooms, and prairie, and I guess some of the places they lived. So I guess when you hear from everybody, you hear how it's grown and what's come about, and the majors and the different things that they offered. I think that is the thing I remember.

**Gill** *What stayed the same? The things you think about at Oklahoma State, what sort of stayed the same through the generations?*

**Horning** I think the spirit of the school. And their vision, what they want to be as a school has probably stayed the same. Yes, just conservative, agricultural, mechanical, producing a good student. That seems to have stayed the same.

**Gill** *The land-grant tradition.*

**Horning** Yes.

**Gill** *You said that an A&M school was kind of a people school.*

**Horning** I think the jokes have stayed the same against OU. (Laughter) They probably have not changed.

**Gill** *Good point. How proud are you of how Oklahoma State has grown through the years since you graduated?*

**Horning** It is good that it has. That is always nice to see that it could sustain.

**Gill** *As an alumna of the university, how do you feel about all of the facilities on campus?*

**Horning** That is always nice. Again, saying I was here during the '80s, it is always nice to see that there is some money coming in and there are good things happening. I think that's good, and I think that helps the school. I've been on school boards. I was on the high school school board, and alumni are very important. They feed the school, they help people come in, and they literally [provide] money. They really support the school, so I think that is important that that's happening.

**Gill** *And the flowers are growing now?*

- Horning** The flowers are growing. (Laughter)
- Gill** *That's good.*
- Horning** I see the flowers. (Laughs)
- Gill** *Oklahoma State is expanding, it is growing, and it is changing, but what would you hope would stay the same about Oklahoma State?*
- Horning** I think the students, the people, the staff, just again the same, I don't know if you would call them traditions, but the same culture. I think, like you said, the land-grant philosophy. It's a conservative school, and I think it should stay that way. There are enough liberal schools. They can stay on the East and West Coast. (Laughter)
- Gill** *What strengths do you think Oklahoma State needs to build on going forward? You said you had been on a school board and you kind of understand how physical plants, curriculum, and how things need to grow. How do you think Oklahoma State is going to need to change in the future to remain a great university?*
- Horning** I think they just have to keep up. They have to keep up with technology. They have to keep up with what the students are getting or not getting in high school and keep attracting—you know, they want to keep Oklahoma kids. They don't want them to go off into other schools, which they can, because physically it's just not that far of a drive. Just as a little background, Texas has a 10 percent rule. The top 10 percent can go to any college in Texas and be accepted. Well, that has actually caused a lot of kids to go to Oklahoma State, which is good. That is a good thing, but Oklahoma doesn't need to do something like that. You're going to drive kids out. My kids went to a parochial school, which was a preparatory school, and that actually hurt that school a little bit because people were nervous sending their kids there. If they were not in the top 10 percent, they weren't going to get in somewhere. It is a negative thing, and I would encourage Oklahoma not to do that because it drives kids away.
- Gill** *How do you feel about the importance of Oklahoma State families that have had two or three generations or more that are now living out of state? How do you feel about OSU being open and welcoming and recruiting students out of state, typically children of the alumni, to come back to Oklahoma State?*
- Horning** Yes, that is good. I just wish they gave us a little bit more money. (Laughs) Matthew has a scholarship, but the Alumni Scholarship is

actually pretty poor. It doesn't really make a dent in out-of-state. We are paying out-of-state. If I could plug that—if we've got this many generations I don't think my son should be paying out-of-state tuition, but we still do it. We still support it.

**Gill** *Have you ever been engaged in any of the alumni activities, attended any of the events?*

**Horning** We haven't really. In Beaumont there's not a big group. Houston's got a really active group. There's a handful of Oklahoma State people. We try to do things when we can. We support it through membership, and read the online newsletter is how we find out what is going on.

**Gill** *Where do you get most of your information about Oklahoma State? What are your sources?*

**Horning** The newsletters. There is a parent newsletter, and then there is actually the *OSU Alumni Newsletter*.

**Gill** *Electronic newsletter.*

**Horning** I think we've even got the sports. We get a lot of things. (Laughs) I think we get plenty of information.

**Gill** *In your opinion, is it important for alumni to stay connected to Oklahoma State University? You've lived literally all over the world almost, but certainly throughout the United States. Is it important to stay connected?*

**Horning** Oh, I think it is. There's always a common ground. My sorority is the same way. There's always a common ground. You can go to any town, and you can find somebody. One of the first people I met when I moved to Beaumont was actually a Kappa, which was a little odd. (Laughs) She was married to a husband named Jim, and my husband's named Jim. They've become our friends, but you always have that bond of something.

**Gill** *Do you get back to Stillwater very often?*

**Horning** Once or twice a year. We try to make Parents' Weekend, and I come up for Mom's Weekend for the sororities and fraternities.

**Gill** *Can you tell me a little bit about some of the activities for Parents' Weekend and Mom's Weekend?*

**Horning** Well, for Parents' Weekend, we participate in the Dad's, so I am kind of

up here—I don't really count. (Laughter) The Sigma Chi fraternity puts on a pretty nice golf tournament and a dinner and then the tailgate, so we try to participate in that. We walk around the campus and see what's new, and my son shows me all the places he's been. He's done the rave thing. He says he's not on the video, but you all can watch him. He's on there. (Laughs) When they run in there and do that rave thing at night, (Laughter) he's done that before. But, yes, we just kind of relax because my family is here. We see my grandmother.

**Gill** *What's impressed you the most about changes in the campus? You said you go on campus and look around. What has changed in your mind most?*

**Horning** I think just the growth. I'm glad they can still grow and that there's still the student body. You've got to have the students here. Not really anything in particular. T. Boone Pickens Stadium.

**Gill** *It's a pretty impressive stadium, isn't it?*

**Horning** It's a nice stadium, but we always tell folks that—I know a lot of folks just from the Big 12 because I work with a lot of them. They cannot stand Gallagher because of the way it's so loud. So I guess that's the thing that impresses me. They don't like playing up here. None of those teams like playing in Gallagher Iba Hall. It's very loud, it's very intimidating, and there's a lot of students. They do not like playing up here, which is fun.

**Gill** *I'm not sure how many, but there are very few five-generation OSU families, and as we talked about earlier, particularly when you've got four generations of strong women. Is that special to you when you think about that?*

**Horning** Oh yes. I am really proud of what they did. It just doesn't happen. Even teaching was very important on the frontier back then and to go there, and her family didn't have a lot of money. They were farmers, and they did well, but to send their daughter off to school to do that was a big thing back then. And even my grandmother, again, that was in the late '30s, but again, not everybody got to do that. She likes to tell the story about having three dresses and that's all she had. But to go off, that's a big thing, and graduate and have a certificate. Even my mother, I mean there still wasn't a lot of women going even in the late '50s, early '60s. That was not the thing to do.

**Gill** *When you're talking to friends or other OSU people, does it ever come up in conversations? Do people find out that it's been four, five generations in a row like that?*

**Horning** Yes. I'm pretty proud of it. I like to tell them.

**Gill** *What is their response when they hear?*

**Horning** "Wow!" You know, that it's unusual. It's very unusual.

**Gill** *How did Matthew feel about that? I guess he sort of knew about the family history. When he was enrolling as the fifth generation, was he excited about that?*

**Horning** I think he thinks it's neat, but he's too young in a way. He'll get out, and I think in five or ten years he'll appreciate it a lot more. I think it was just for him to go here, he really likes a lot of the traditions. So he likes to go to all the different places, and he likes the football. He actually leaves his tailgate party, his little Sigma Chi tailgate party, early because he wants to get a good seat. (Laughs) He doesn't want to be stuck up too high. He wants to see the action, you know. He makes it a point to be early and make sure he's right where the action is. He has cowboy boots. (Laughter) Beaumont, Texas, people wear cowboy boots and everything, but it's more Cajun influence. There are not a lot of hunters and fishermen there, but it's not really a cowboy influence there in southeast Texas. He actually got up here, and he had to have some cowboy boots. I wanted to buy them before he got up here, but he said, "No, no, no, no, no, no." I said, "Oh, no. You've got to have some." So he's got his cowboy boots now. Not sure how much he dances with them, but he's got his boots.

**Gill** *Can he do line dancing yet?*

**Horning** Yes, I think he gets out and does it. He says he goes, but I don't know how much he does.

**Gill** *Jamie, it's been great having this conversation. What have we left out? What have we not talked about, about your family and OSU that we need to cover?*

**Horning** I think you've covered everything. I just think it's real interesting. There's a picture of Jim's side of the family (we haven't talked about him) where they all had their OSU shirts on. That's kind of fun to see.

**Gill** *What about his family, quickly? How many of his...*

**Horning** He's one of six brothers and sisters, and they all went.

**Gill** *Six of them?*

**Horning** Yes.

**Gill** *Wow.*

**Horning** And they all graduated.

**Gill** *Did his parents go?*

**Horning** His parents did not go. His parents are from Kansas, and they went to school in Kansas, but they moved to Bartlesville. They're all very, very smart and could've gone different places, but they all went [to OSU]. Two have master's from Oklahoma State, so they stayed on to get master's.

**Gill** *Any of their kids in the next generation?*

**Horning** They're actually just not quite old enough yet. (Laughs)

**Gill** *Working on them? (Laughs)*

**Horning** Yes, there's a lot of kids. Let's see, one married an Oklahoma State graduate. They met here. Myself and Jim graduated, and then one of his sisters married a man that graduated from Oklahoma State.

**Gill** *There are a lot of OSU folks in your families.*

**Horning** There certainly is, and they actually have a daughter. Jim's the oldest, so Matthew's the oldest grandchild.

**Gill** *So there's...*

**Horning** Yes, there is a niece that's one year younger than Madeline, so two years from now we'll see if they go to OSU. I'm sure some will. I'm sure their parents will want them to go.

**Gill** *Jamie, thanks I appreciate it very much.*

*----- End of interview -----*