



# **BRIDGE** of Eta Kappa Nu

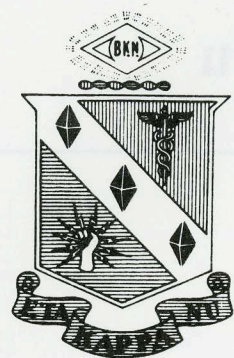
## **The End of an Era**



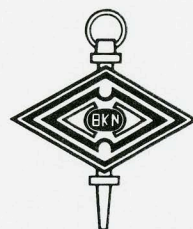
**Dr. J. Robert Betten  
1932 - 2000**

**Special Memorial Issue**





**Editor and Business Manager**  
**Ron A. Spanke**



The Bridge is published by Eta Kappa Nu Association, an electrical and computer engineering honor society. Eta Kappa Nu was founded at the University of Illinois, Urbana, on October 28, 1904, that those in the profession of electrical and computer engineering, who by their attainments in college or in practice, have manifested a deep interest and marked ability in their chosen life work, may be brought into closer union so as to foster a spirit of liberal culture in the engineering colleges and to mark in an outstanding manner those, who, as students in electrical and computer engineering, have conferred honor on their Alma Maters by distinguished scholarship activities, leadership and exemplary character and to help these students progress by association with alumni who have attained prominence.

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## In Memory of J. Robert Betten

**HKN Executive Secretary and Bridge Editor  
 1988-1999**

**On the evening of July 22, 2000 Dr. John Robert Betten passed away in his home in Rolla Missouri. Bob Betten served HKN as Director, Vice-President, President and most recently as our Executive Secretary at the International HKN Headquarters office. This issue of the Bridge is dedicated in memory of Bob Betten and brings to a final close that part of Eta Kappa Nu History known as the Betten era. Its format is laid out in the style that Bob used throughout his tenure as Executive Secretary. Bob and his beloved wife Connie served Eta Kappa Nu over the past decade and their story is retold here with Connie's permission.**

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## President's Corner

This special memorial issue is dedicated to Professor J. Robert (Bob) Betten who most recently served as the Editor of the Bridge and the HKN Executive Secretary between 1988 and 1999. Bob passed away on July 22, 2000 and left behind a long history of dedication to HKN. It will certainly be impossible to review all of his contributions in this issue, however, the selected articles and photographs bring back several memories of his activities as a friend, educator, engi-

neer, administrator and HKN member. I had the pleasure of being introduced to Bob when he presented the C. Holmes MacDonald Award to me in a ceremony back in 1990, and we remained very close ever since. Bob was a true gentleman who fought vigorously for what he thought was right, and many of us at HKN will remember him for his love of his profession. That love and enthusiasm for higher education continues to live on through the establishment of the Betten Memorial Scholarship Fund at the University of Missouri-Rolla.

I extend my personal condolences to Connie Betten and recognize her contribution of many thoughts and photographs to this issue.

*Mohammad Shahidehpour*  
*HKN President*

I first met Bob when I had an informal interview for a faculty position at Missouri - Rolla. We reminisced about our common Iowa State experiences.

While Bob impressed me with his knowledge and commitment, I was most taken by his infectious smile and his sincere interest in me and my family. Over the years, Bob and I have worked together on the National

Electronics Conference Board and most recently with Eta Kappa Nu. The smile and the warm friendship were always a part of the interaction; Bob never failed to ask about my family. He will be missed.

*Jim Melsa*  
*HKN Vice-President*

**Bob and Connie enjoy a recent HKN Awards Banquet with members of the HKN Board of Directors**





# The End of an Era

## J. Robert Betten Executive Secretary and Bridge Editor 1988-1999

By Ron A. Spanke



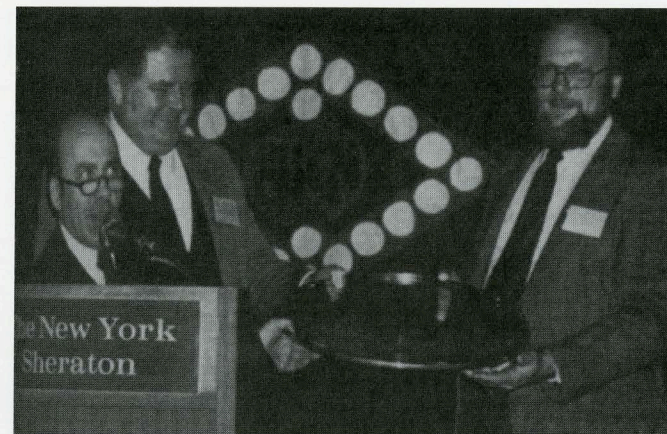
J. R. Betten, New HKN Director - July 1977

### Background

Within a year following the founding of Eta Kappa Nu's first Alpha Chapter at University of Illinois, the founders put in place the concept of a National Executive Council to operate and guide the organization as a whole, while allowing Alpha chapter and the other college chapters yet to come to operate at their local university level. The initial officers of the NEC were elected from among the original founders of Alpha Chapter. In the early years, the Secretary, as well as all officers, of the National Executive Council were elected annually. The organization continued to be governed by the NEC until 1928 with volunteer officers elected annually.

The role of Editor of the Bridge was first handled by Alpha chapter, and then responsibility for the Bridge began to rotate among the chapters. In 1913, a vice-president was added to the National Executive Council, who became the Bridge editor. The Bridge, having been edited and published by volunteers without publication experience, became unsatisfactory and too expensive. In 1928 a National Advisory Board, NAB, was created. The position of Executive Secretary was defined and for the first time a paid national officer was employed by HKN. Throughout the history of Eta Kappa Nu, five members have had the distinction of holding the title of Executive Secretary and Bridge Editor: J. A. Umhoefer, L. A. Spangler, A. B. Zerby, P. K. Hudson, and J. Robert Betten. Umhoefer and Spangler each served in this capacity for their 3-year term in 1928 and 1931. A.B. was elected to the executive secretary position in 1934 and continued to be triannually reelected to eventually hold that title for 24 years. Paul Hudson, chosen in 1958, was to hold the position for 30 years until his death in 1988.

Bob Betten, was appointed as interim Executive Secretary in 1988 to serve the remainder of Paul's term, and was subsequently elected as Executive Secretary, holding that position until his resignation at age 67 in December 1999, serving 12 years in the role.



Bob, as HKN President, presents the OYEE Award at the 1983 Spring Awards Dinner

The visibility and character of the Eta Kappa Nu organization as a whole is influenced and shaped to a large degree by the Executive Secretary. Since the last three executive secretaries have each held their positions for a large number of years, the terms Zerby era, Hudson era, and Betten era, indeed reflect the different characters of the organization under the different Executive Secretaries. Each served the organization differently, bringing their own personalities and character to the position. With this in mind, we bring to a fitting close the Betten era, as we say farewell to Bob and remember him throughout this issue.

### Bob's Early Years

J. Robert Betten was born in Omaha, Nebraska on November 10, 1932. He attended public school there and graduated from Omaha Technical High School in 1950. In 1950, he enrolled at Iowa State University where he met his future wife Connie Moore. Bob and Connie were united in marriage on Sept 7, 1952. They have two daughters, Barbara and Amy. Bob was initiated into HKN's Nu chapter at Iowa State in 1955 and received the B.S. degree in Electrical Engineering in 1955.

From 1955 to 1957 he served as lieutenant in the Army Signal Corps, teaching radar and anti-aircraft fire control electronics. He attended graduate school from 1958 until 1962, receiving the M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Electrical Engineering from Iowa State University in 1959 and 1962 respectively.

### Employment Years

Bob worked as an electrical engineer for Convair Aircraft Company in the Advanced Electronics Systems Design Group from 1957 to 1958. During the summers of 1960 and 1961 he returned to Convair in San Diego.

In the fall of 1962 he joined the Electrical Engineering Department at the University of Missouri-Rolla (UMR) as

an Associate Professor. In 1964, he was promoted to the rank of Professor. From 1967 to 1978 he served as the Electrical Engineering Department Chairman. From September 1978 until 1988 he served as Director of the Electronics Research Center in the School of Engineering.

Dr. Betten has been involved in Public Service work in various technical professional societies at the national level. Bob has been a member of the Board of Directors, IEC (International Engineering Consortium) from 1972-2000. Formally known as the NEC (National Electronics Conference and National Engineering Consortium), Dr. Betten also held the offices of NEC secretary in 1970, NEC vice-president in 1971 and President in 1972. Bob held several positions with the Electrical Engineering Division, ASEE (American Society for Engineering Education); including secretary/treasurer 1974-1975, vice president 1975-1976, and president 1976-1977.

### Eta Kappa Nu Years

Bob was elected as a new Director on the National Board of Directors of Eta Kappa Nu in 1977 and served as director until 1979. He subsequently held the offices of HKN Vice-President 1981-1982 and as HKN President 1982-1983, during which time he worked in close association with Paul Hudson.

As early as 1986, Paul Hudson began indicating a wish to retire from the Executive Secretary position within one to two years. Bob had expressed a strong interest many years earlier to Paul Hudson about taking on the role of Executive Secretary upon Paul's retirement, and began to work more closely with Paul to learn some of the operations of the HKN office.

Several qualified candidates were recommended for the new position. The HKN Board of Directors in late 1987, under the direction of Harold Knudsen, President, formally selected Bob to fill the position of Acting Executive Secretary.

### President Bob Betten and Connie preparing for the 1983 Awards Banquet in New York







**Bob as HKN President, presents the 1982-1982 OCAA Honorable Mention to Gamma Theta Chapter at UMR**

tary and Editor of the Bridge, in part because of his recent experience and knowledge of the HKN office procedures that he had gained working with Paul over the past few months. Dr. Betten accepted the position of Acting Executive Secretary to begin whenever Paul Hudson would relinquish his position until June 30, 1988. Paul Hudson passed away shortly thereafter on February 3, 1988. Bob was also selected as the Board's candidate for the office of Executive Secretary for the next three-year term starting on July 1, 1988. He was elected by the chapters to begin his first of four successive terms as HKN's Executive Secretary.

Bob's first major challenge was to relocate the HKN headquarters office from University of Illinois at Champaign/Urbana to the University of Missouri at Rolla, Missouri. His wife, Connie Moore, took on the duties of the HKN Office Manager, handling the majority of the financial work and contact with chapters. Mrs. DonaFay Culp joined the HKN Rolla office to handle the address changes and new member data entry functions. This allowed Bob to concentrate most of his efforts on the editing and content of the Bridge Magazine. Bob, Connie, and DonaFay ran the national HKN office throughout the Betten era.

The Eta Kappa Nu organization experienced great expansion during the previous Hudson era, adding significant numbers of new chapters and members. The Betten era can be characterized as operating and maintaining the status quo of this larger organization. A few additional new chapters were added throughout the 1990s to the HKN family with the most recent chapter being Kappa Omicron. Unfortunately, not all of the student chapters on record are currently active, some of which have not submitted new members in several years.

The Bridge Magazine also changed during the Betten Era. Most notably, it is remembered for its standardized cover and consistent format. An annual cycle was adopted, where the various award events banquet reports, and chapter re-

ports were reported and published consistently throughout each year.

The Bridge was characterized by a 24-page issue published every quarter. Winning outstanding chapter reports were reproduced 1/4 size to enable the full chapter reports to be published. The logo and standard cover design and general Bridge format used throughout the Betten era was also for this final memorial issue, in remembrance of Bob.

Bob led the HKN headquarters office through some increasingly difficult times over the last decade as the membership rates had been slowly declining from their all-time highs in the early 1990's. The decreased revenue from the initiation fees was beginning to cause the office to operate in the red and draw upon the HKN financial reserves to meet annual expenses. In addition, the Board of Directors over the past few years began requesting additional programs and effort from the Headquarters office to modernize and revitalize the HKN organization resulting in additional workload for Bob and the headquarters staff. Throughout these times Bob always continued to cheerfully smile, as he kept the office running.

One of Bob's philosophies was that he believed that if new programs were wanted or needed, the championing and work to put those programs in place would come from the dedicated members in our student and alumni chapters. "If it doesn't happen spontaneously, it ain't gonna happen" was a phrase that Bob often used to reinforce that trying to put new programs in place that didn't come up from grass-roots membership, would most likely be doomed to failure.

#### Executive Secretary Position

Many of our members may have no idea of what Bob's job as Executive Secretary entailed. Many of the basic

#### Bob, as HKN President, serves as a member of the 1983 OYEE Award Jury



responsibilities are enumerated in the Constitution and By-laws of our association.

- The Executive Secretary shall be a member of the association and a duly elected member of the Board of Directors and the National Executive Council. He is accountable to the members of the Association, responsible for and has the authority to carry out the general responsibilities enumerated in the Association's Constitution and By-laws.

- Keep records and minutes of the National Convention and meetings of the National Executive Council and the Board of Directors.



**Bob, as the new Executive Secretary, with Trudy Hudson, present a recognition plaque to University of Illinois, which housed the HKN Headquarters from 1958-1988**

- Keep the seal of the association and execute and issue the charters for the new chapters, the membership certificates, and copies of the Constitution and emblems.
- Stimulate college chapters' and alumni chapters' interests and activities.
- Have in his immediate charge, all funds of the national association, and pay out money upon the order of the Convention, signed by the National President, or when the Convention is not in session, if so directed by the National President and Vice President.
- Oversee HKN's investment portfolio and other assets.
- Edit and publish the Bridge magazine

For all these and other services, he shall receive compensation. He shall give an approved bond, the amount of which shall be fixed by the National Executive Council.

Of course, an Executive Secretary Position entails more than just the above basic responsibilities, since it forms the glue to hold the organization together and in many ways must do whatever is needed to keep the association running

smoothly and making progress above and beyond what is strictly stated in the constitution. I personally remember long telephone conversations with Bob late in the evening, where he was ascertaining my availability and interest in becoming a member of the national Board of Directors, in addition to discussions of various issues on a one-to-one basis during my tenure on the board. All of this interaction with the many key volunteer players in HKN is vital to keep the organization well-oiled and running smoothly.

#### Epilogue

Eta Kappa Nu has now experienced several Executive Secretary eras that have shaped our society over its existence. Each executive secretary has served this role differently, following their own vision, and setting their own priorities. Bob has held this role for more than a decade, following in the footsteps of Paul Hudson. He kept the National headquarters office in Rolla operating and published the Bridge magazine, all the while exhibiting a jovial personality to those who had the opportunity to work with him.

Once Bob related to me some of his own experiences prior to being inducted in Eta Kappa Nu. As a college EE underclassman, he noticed the junior and senior new HKN inductees wandering the halls with their Bridge emblems, equipped with flashing lights, hanging around their necks. Inquiring about what was going on, he was told that those were the new initiates who had been invited to join the Eta Kappa Nu honor society. He related that his thoughts at the time were "Boy, I sure hope they ask me to join!"

Join he did. Serving the organization over several decades and holding all possible elected positions of Director, Vice President, President, and finally Executive Secretary. J. Robert Betten and the "Betten Era" will be remembered by the many HKN members and volunteers who worked closely with Bob for many years to come. Bob, as brothers and sisters of Eta Kappa Nu, we all thank you for all the years of your life that you have devoted to lead and serve this organization.

#### Executive Secretary Bob Betten installs Kappa Kappa Chapter at University of Texas in November, 1995





# **J. Robert Betten**

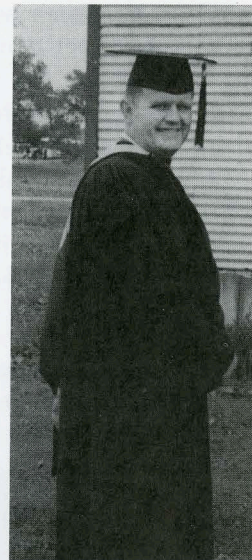
## **. . . A Picture Story**



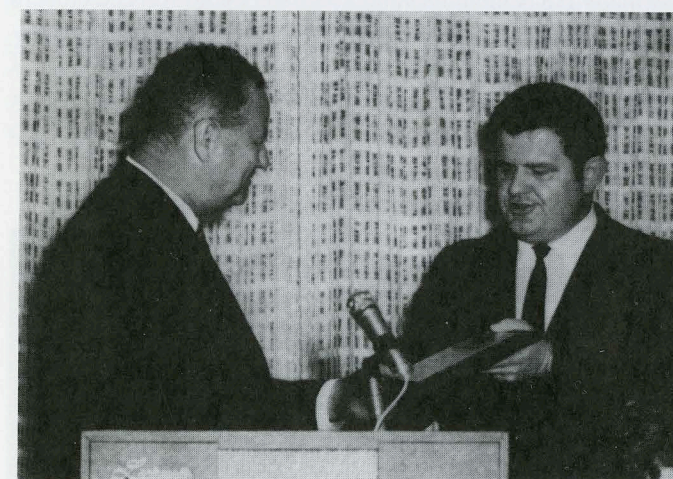
**Wedding Bells chime for Bob and Connie on September 7, 1952**



**Lieutenant Betten, Army Signal Corps Instructor in 1956, spends some off-duty time with Connie**

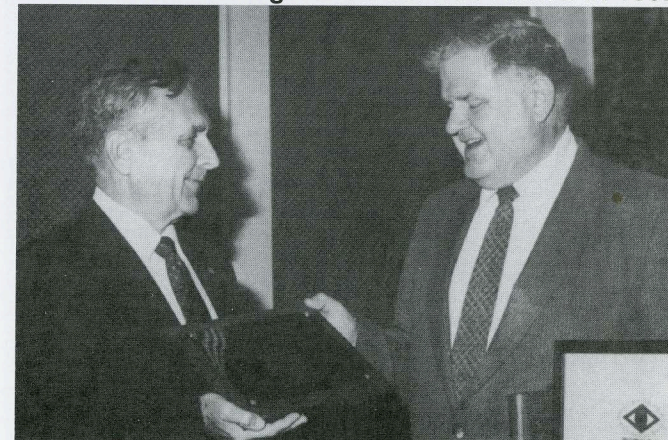


**Confident New Graduate receives his Ph.D from Iowa State in 1962**



**University of Missouri - Rolla Alumni Association presents Achievement Award to Bob in 1968**

**Bob, as Executive Secretary, presents Paul Jacob with the HKN Distinguished Service Award in 1992**



## **Bob Betten and the International Engineering Consortium (IEC)**

**Robert M. Janowiak**  
**Executive Director**  
**International Engineering Consortium**

I was deeply saddened to learn of Bob Betten's death. Having known Bob for over 30 years, he seemed to always be the same friendly, caring person of unusually deep faith.

Bob had many things of which to be proud. Above all, he had a wonderful wife and two great children. Whenever he was in his wife Connie's presence, he glowed. And it was a radiant glow, not just a flicker. His smile grew broader and his enthusiasm sparked. It was as if he was on his first date. And Connie responded. They had a love affair that played out for 47 years. Every day, Bob told Connie that he loved her.

Barbara and Amy are the Bettens' daughters and they were deeply loved. Bob and Connie spoke of the girls often and were concerned about raising them well. When Bob and Connie traveled, they took separate planes with Bob traveling first. No accident was to deprive their daughters of both parents. At their destination city, Bob would be waiting for Connie at the gate, a rose in his hand, saying, "I love you".

Bob was active in many professional organizations, the IEEE, Eta Kappa Nu (HKN), American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE) and the International Engineering Consortium (IEC). He gave much of himself to each and everyone, attending meetings, assuming leadership roles and helping however he could.

HKN was his particular love. Bob served as President in 1982-83. Later, Connie and he ran the HKN office tirelessly for 12 years. He attended many functions and they worked hard to keep HKN functioning effectively. It was truly a labor of love.

The IEC family consisting of the Board of Directors, volunteers and staff met often and Bob was there supporting and advising. Everyone enjoyed Bob with his infectious smile. His words were carefully chosen, to provide wisdom, to not offend, to praise. He helped to make life fun for us all.

For 32 years I worked with Bob on the IEC Board. He was always a positive voice, seeking clarifications, offering suggestions. He never once raised his voice or became angry. There were opportunities for such a display, but Bob's inner peace guided his actions.

He spoke often of his students. They held an important place in his heart. I think he loved them like his children, and he would follow their progress as they continued through life.

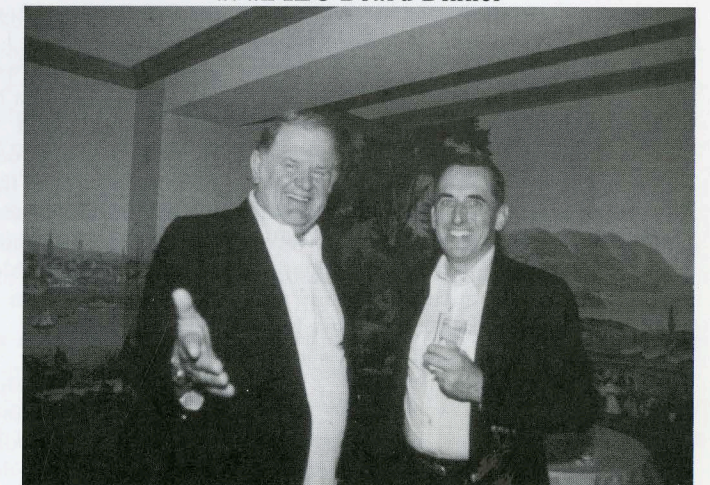
He had many friends over the 32 years on the IEC Board. One of his closest was Warren Boast of Iowa State. Since Bob received his three degrees from that school, being close to Iowa State's EE Chair and one of the county's top educators was logical. But with Bob, it was a deep friendship. The two of them spoke often and long on the subjects of education and many other things.

The IEC Board meets annually for a retreat. At one such meeting in Boston we were having dinner at Cheers. After we ate, it was decided that each table would create a poem around the theme, "This is Table Number X" and recite it loudly to the other tables. Quickly it became a competition to see which group would be most creative. Bob and Warren worked together earning their table a first rate standing and much applause. We all laughed with them. It is a fond memory.

As I think of Bob, I know that I have lost a good friend. He was so supportive of everything we did at IEC. More than that, he saw a much more lofty vision of our purpose. One day he asked if we might pray together. It was a deeply moving experience as he prayed that our mission would help many professionals be of help to all of mankind. And that is what Bob was all about.

Bob, you have left all of us much too soon, but your spirit remains with us. If I could peer into heaven, I'm sure I would see you and Warren Boast talking about family and education and students and service. And your legacy is the vision, energy and love you brought to them all.

**Bob Betten and Bob Janowiak Share insights at an IEC Board Dinner**





## Dr. Betten Remembered by His HKN Colleagues

My personal contacts with Bob Betten were mostly at the annual Awards Banquets for the Outstanding Young Electrical Engineer, and formal correspondence while I served as Publicity Chairman of HKN.

Bob conveyed a memorable credo "I Think the Best...I Expect The Best", as was expressed so aptly by his daughter Amy Betten, in her winning Optimist contest declamation.

We have lost an important friend of HKN. I want to extend my sincere sympathy to his wife Connie and the family.

*Berthold Sheffield*

It was with profound sorrow, shock, and deep regret that I learned of the recent passing of my friend and colleague, J. Robert (Bob) Betten. Bob was a unique individual and a loyal friend. I first met Bob when he and I arrived together in the fall of 1962 at the University of Missouri - Rolla; Bob as a young professor from Iowa State, and me as a brand new graduate student in Electrical Engineering. Bob was a wonderful and inspiring teacher, possessing that rare talent to communicate complex technical material to students. It is partly due to his inspired leadership that I also entered the teaching profession.

I was pleased to observe that Bob went on to many great professional achievements and awards over the years, but the fact that I treasured most was simply that he was my friend. He was one of the few people I know that I felt I could count on when the chips were down.

It was with great anticipation that I looked forward to working together with Bob for Eta Kappa Nu, and great disappointment at his sudden death. The Electrical Engineering Educational Community, the IEEE, and particularly Eta Kappa Nu, has lost a loyal friend, a selfless worker, and a staunch supporter. Bob will be sorely missed.

*Charles A. Gross  
HKN Director - East Central*

## J. Robert Betten and the University of Missouri - Rolla (UMR)

E. Keith Stanek  
Chair, UMR EE Department

Dr. J. Robert (Bob) Betten joined the UMR faculty in 1962 after completing his BS, MS and Ph.D. degrees in electrical engineering at Iowa State University. He served as the Chairman of the Department of Electrical Engineering from 1967 to 1978. During this term as department chair the faculty strength in electrical engineering peaked at over 50. He hired many faculty members over his twelve years as department chair. Twelve of these faculty spent the bulk of their professional lives at UMR and were the backbone of the department throughout the 70s, 80s and 90s. He was known as an excellent recruiter.

Enrollments and faculty strength made wide swings during Dr. Betten's term as chairman, much of the lows could be attributed to the winding down of the space program in the early 70s.

After Dr. Betten's term as department chair he served a decade as the Director of the Electronics Research Center at UMR (1978 to 1988). Shortly after assuming the reins as center director, Dr. Betten started a program that is now called Introduction to Engineering. This is a summer program for high school students designed to allow them to be exposed to a number of engineering disciplines for the purpose of making a career decision.

This program grew from one week-long

session per summer with an enrollment of 37 to three week-long sessions with as many as 345 enrollees per summer. Over the years about 4500 high school students have been exposed to the challenges of careers in engineering through this program.

Two other things highlighted Dr. Betten's term as department chair; textbook publishing and continuing education. During and after Dr. Betten's chairmanship the UMR EE Department became noted for its contributions to engineering education through the publication of a wide spectrum of textbooks on subjects such as machines, communications, circuits, signal processing, etc. In addition, during his chairmanship a broad spectrum of workshops, symposia and short courses were started in a wide range of topics such as grounding & shielding, small motor design, power systems, EIT/PE reviews and the aforementioned Introduction to Engineering. Most of these courses continue to be offered.

Dr. Betten left a real mark on the Department of Electrical Engineering through adept faculty recruiting, inspiring faculty to write textbooks and launch continuing education programs. His personal efforts through the Introduction to Engineering course has literally influenced an entire generation of young adults to choose careers in engineering.

"During my first decade or so of chairing the Outstanding Chapter-Activities Award program (OCAA), I had repeatedly suggested to National we send all the college chapters a copy of a National Winner's annual chapter report. It would serve as an example of what an outstanding chapter was all about. And each time I made the suggestion, National advised against it. Their rationale was reasonable: because the winning report was formidable, it could discourage many chapters from ever sending in their own report.

About a year after Bob Betten became Executive Secretary and Bridge Editor, that changed. After consulting with me, Bob decided to print a full copy of Beta Chapter's

National Winning report in the February, 1989, issue of BRIDGE. That forever changed the nature of the OCAA. After that publication, annual chapter report submissions surged upward and the report quality increased substantially. Plus, many chapters designed their reports to compete directly against the National Winner.

Of Eta Kappa Nu's many award programs, the OCAA is one of few that provide recognition to whole chapters. Bob's initiative helped expand the scope of participation in the OCAA, and as a result, increased the number of chapters that could receive important recognition for a job well done."

*Alan Lefkow, OCAA Chair*

## I Think The Best • • I Expect The Best

by Amy Betten

*In 1984, Miss Amy Betten, then the fourteen-year old daughter of Robert and Connie Betten entered a declamation contest sponsored by the Optimist Club. Amy was the co-winner for the entire state of Missouri. She was invited by the HKN Board of Directors to present her speech at the HKN Student Award Dinner in Lincolnshire in 1984. Paul Hudson published the text of her speech in the Bridge Magazine, Vol 82, No 4 in August 1986. Since Amy and her speech have already become part of the Eta Kappa Nu fabric, it is reprinted here as a tribute to her father. (Editor)*

Which would you rather have? A brilliantly shining diamond, or a cold dark stone? It's just a matter of choice. As Abraham Lincoln said, "Most folks are just about as happy as they make up their minds to be." I believe people are just about as successful as they make up their minds to be.

I think the best, I expect the best.

In the 1912 Olympic games, the team was traveling by steamship to get to Sweden. On the deck almost all of the contestants were practicing their various events. There was one young man, however, who was sitting in the corner looking almost asleep. The coach walked over to him and said, "Jim, what are you doing?" The boy looked up, opened one eye and said, "I'm practicing coach." This man thought the best, this man expected the best, this man was the best. This man was Jim Thorpe, the proud winner of the gold medals in the pentathlon and decathlon. Fifteen gold medals in all.

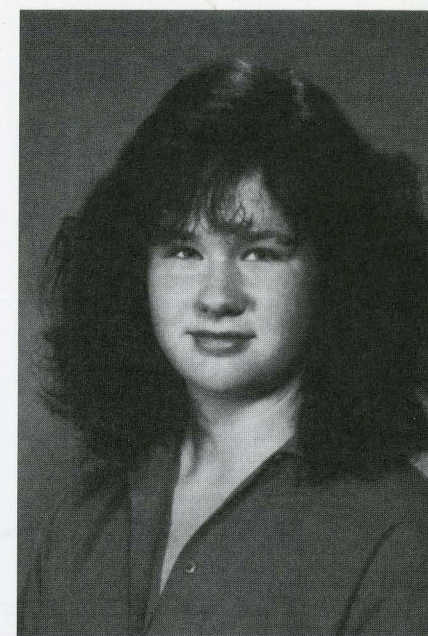
You may say, wonderful, that was the Olympics, this is everyday life. Yet, with the love of God, the love of family and friends, and with love and confidence in yourself, you can bring excellence and prosperity into your own life. First, you must make sure that you are being the best person that you can be. Then you can definitely think the best and always expect the best. Second, you must not look at people and pick out their bad points. I have a friend who I didn't feel was being the best friend that he could be. That really irritated me! Then I be-

gan to think about two things. I'm definitely not perfect, so before I start judging him why not take a look at myself. Why was I always picking out the things I didn't like instead of the things that made me want to be his friend in the first place. I started focusing on the good points, and the bad points just seemed to disappear. Now he's like the brother I never had.

Another aspect of having a good life is to trust in God. If you put your life in His hands, then He will help you become all that you want and can be. There is a famous person who I believe is a good example and who exhibits these practices in his daily life. His name is Norman Vincent Peale. He lives by the power of positive thinking. He thinks the best, he expects the best and he accomplishes the best.

Not only famous people exhibit these qualities. I happen to know a man, just like any other man, who isn't ordinary in the least. I see this man five days a week, every week. so I know him pretty well. He is my geometry teacher, he doesn't let us say "I can't do this": he makes us do it, he helps us do it, but most of all he makes us know that we can do it. He thinks the best of his students, he definitely expects the best of his students, and he exhibits the best for his students.

What do we really mean when we say "best?" Each person is so special and unique that, of course, we each have a different "best." What the best means to me is always trying to do better, to strive



**Amy Betten, age 14, at the time of the original publication in the BRIDGE**

for perfection. If you believe in something, concentrate on it, work on it, put everything you have in you behind it: and whatever it may be, it will definitely be your best. Each of us should know that if our best isn't always the first place or the big piece of pie, that for our ourselves it is the gold medallion: and we should be more proud of than any other person's judgment could ever make us. As for excellence, I don't think it is something you define; it is something you achieve. Once you have achieved it, it is something that cannot be taken away like a material item. It will make you stand up for what you believe in and always strive to do better.

Our generation is faced with difficult decisions everyday. Easily accessible to us are things such as drugs, alcohol, cheat sheets, and other questionable items. If young adults our age, however, were always thinking and expecting the best they wouldn't ever have to consider using such artificial crutches.

Thinking the best and expecting the best are easy words to say. But to accomplish these things is a much greater task than just saying them. You must live them. Always!



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