



Scott Stone, CPL, OU Energy Management Director Mike McConnell and Spartan Resources Land Manager Lars Noble, CPL

## ▶ department/ MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

# The Ultimate Retirement Gift

Noble family establishes Scott L. Stone Endowed Scholarship at OU

by/ RACHEL STOWE MASTER

**At his December retirement party, Scott Stone, CPL, was deeply touched by celebratory wishes and heartfelt words from treasured colleagues and industry friends.** But he was stunned by his employer's generous gift: the establishment of a scholarship in his name at his beloved alma mater.

"In celebration of Scott's 42-year career with Spartan Resources and other Noble family entities, the Noble family has created the Scott L. Stone Endowed Scholarship that will benefit future generations of energy management students at the University of Oklahoma," said Lars Noble, CPL, land manager at Spartan Resources. "Scott, a 1977 OU graduate, has been a loyal employee and a friend of the Noble family since his childhood, and

he has been an active supporter of the Energy Management Program at OU for many years."

"It was the best gift I could have received — the culmination of my career working for the Noble family," said Stone, who retired as manager at Spartan Resources' Oklahoma City office. "I hope it will help a deserving OU energy management student with financial need to fulfill their dream of graduating from the university and becoming a contributing landman to our profession."

Stone is passionate about equipping future generations of land professionals for success. He has served as a guest lecturer in OU's Robert M. Zinke Energy Management Program since 2002, is involved in its mentoring program, conducts scholarship interviews and

sits on its board of advisors.

"Scott is an amazing person and has a passion for land, industry and helping young people," said Mike S. McConnell, Energy Management Program director. "Having an endowed scholarship in his name is such an honor and seems so appropriate for how much he has helped students for two decades."

Established in 1958 as the Petroleum Land Management program, the Robert M. Zinke Energy Management Program is the nation's largest EM program and AAPL's oldest accredited university program. The first Stone Scholarship will be awarded this spring.

"This endowment is very significant and one of the top endowed scholarships for the University of Oklahoma Energy Management Program," McConnell said.

## FAMILY TIES

Stone's connection to the Noble family stretches back to second grade in Ardmore, Oklahoma, when he began lifelong friendships with Nick and Rusty Noble, grandsons of legendary oilman Lloyd Noble.

"I spent a lot of time over at their house until heading to OU," Stone said.

After completing his bachelor's degree in management, Stone sought the wisdom of his longtime friends' dad, Sam Noble, who was chairman of the board of SAMEDAN Oil (Noble Energy) and Noble Drilling at the time.

"After visiting with Sam, I became excited at the opportunity to begin my career in the landman profession," Stone said. "He directed me to several land service companies, and with his counsel, I started as a field landman in 1978, learning the business from the ground up. I had a background of title from some of the college courses I had taken, so it was a good place to start. Then in 1981, Sam called and said he would like me to go to work for him at one of the privately held family entities as a landman."

Stone accepted the job on the spot — without even knowing what his salary would be.

"It was the best decision I could have made," he said. "It's been great to work for three generations of the Noble family: Sam, his kids and then his grandkids."

## GIVING BACK

A member of AAPL since 1980, Stone earned his CPL designation in 1985 and served as an AAPL director representing the Southern Oklahoma Association of Petroleum Landmen in 1994.

"It is important for all of us to give back to our profession and voluntarily serve in whatever capacities we can. I wanted to do what I could to advance the landman role in our industry," he said.

Actively involved for more than four decades, Stone has chaired numerous AAPL committees, served on the boards of the Landman Scholarship Trust and Educational Foundation and was treasurer in

1997-98 and president in 2002-03.

"The impact of AAPL on my career has been enormous. Volunteering for our industry was also encouraged and supported by the Noble family, which enabled me to become even more involved over the years. It was indeed a privilege to have these opportunities," he said.

As AAPL president, Stone traveled over 66,000 miles to 26 states and three Canadian provinces for 61 speaking engagements.

"One of the highlights of my time serving AAPL has been the opportunity for my wife, Joan, to travel with me to many wonderful destinations, making lifelong friends," he said.

## ACTIVE RETIREMENT

Stone now manages his own oil and gas interests and investments as well as continues volunteering for his profession, community and church.

As a guest lecturer for OU's introductory EM class, Stone — who also holds an MBA from Oklahoma City University — gives a two-part "prospect to pipeline" presentation. He equips students with a real-world perspective of the process, starting when a geologist turns a drilling idea over to a landman all the way through drilling and completion.

"We walk each step until we either cash the revenue check or plug the well," he said. "I describe real-life situations and explain some of the challenges they may incur and how to handle them. I give some advice on how to succeed in the business world but most of all how to build relationships and have integrity. I also encourage them that they can make a difference," he said.

To help his students remember him, Stone always ends his second lecture by yodeling, a skill learned from his dad.

"It's a pretty unique 'talent' and a great way to leave a lasting impression," he said. "A little known fact is that I have yodeled on stage in Switzerland."

Looking back over the decades, Stone said he has loved the excitement of the land profession.

"There's never a dull moment, and it's never the same thing. There are always many challenges to overcome and a sense of accomplishment on getting a well drilled from beginning to end," he said. "However, the most treasured part of the profession are the relationships I have made over my career. The land profession is full of wonderful people. The Lord has blessed me with such a rewarding career and to Him I give thanks." ▲



**Scott Stone, CPL, pictured with current and past OU energy management program directors he has served with over the last 20 years. From left: Mike McConnell (2019-present), Steve Long (2006-2019), Stone and Ted Jacobs (1997-2006).**