

gila gram

EASTERN ARIZONA COLLEGE



Don Caldwell leaves a lasting legacy at EAC

(See story on page 2)

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Don Caldwell leaves a lasting legacy at EAC

Donald J. Caldwell grew up in southeastern Arizona and graduated from Catalina High School in Tucson. He moved to Thatcher to complete an associate of science at Eastern Arizona Junior College in 1963.

It was necessary for Don to work nearly full-time at the Safford Valley Cotton Growers Co-op while at Eastern. He became quite proficient at estimating bale weights while at the cotton gin.

He continued his education at University of Arizona where he also worked while studying agriculture.

After graduating from the U of A in 1966, he joined the US Army. He completed basic training and was assigned to be an instructor at Fort Belvoir in Virginia.

Following his time in the army, Don worked for several pharmaceutical companies. Don's career took him around the globe as he sold pharmaceuticals to businesses, governments, and other agencies in Southeast Asia, Central and South America, Europe, and across the United States.

Don planned to attend his 50-year reunion in 2003 for the Class of 1963 at Eastern Arizona College, but was unable as he was diagnosed with mesenteric cancer. His experience in the pharmaceutical world, and the assembling of a team of oncologists and other medical help, enabled him to prolong a 45-60 day life-expectancy into nearly eight years.

During that time, Don established a nursing scholarship at Eastern that has helped 14 students attend Eastern Arizona College, Arizona State University, and Brigham Young University. These students have shown



Donald J. Caldwell (left) was presented with the 2011 EAC Alumni Association award by EAC President Mark Bryce

gratitude and gone on to be successful in their careers as a result of Don's generosity. His help went beyond financial as he shared instruction to help recipients learn about interviewing, writing resumés, and other career advice.

In his estate plans, Don arranged for a significant portion of his retirement savings and his home and property to be donated to create the Donald J. Caldwell Endowment. Earnings from his donation, valued at over \$1.5 million, will be used in perpetuity to help nursing students at Eastern learn the skills necessary to obtain strong employment. It was Don's purpose to help students receive employable

skills to provide for themselves and their families. He believed nursing to be an in-demand field. He was also proud to share that the Nursing Program at Eastern produces some of the best nurses in the country. Mr. Caldwell also enjoyed sharing with others that Eastern's tuition was a great bargain.

Don's life has been one of variety and challenges. Those of us who knew him know he wanted to make the world a better place. We are grateful for his efforts. He has definitely made a difference in the lives of nursing students at Eastern.

The Mary Louise “Mella” Palmer Memorial Scholarship



Mary Louise
“Mella” Palmer

The Mary Louise “Mella” Palmer Memorial Scholarship was started in memory of Mary Louise Udall Palmer, ’50. Known to her friends and family as “Mella,” she passed away on March 10, 2010, in Thatcher, Arizona at the age of 78.

Mella enjoyed her years at EAC where she participated in the music program and built life-long friendships. She married Arden Palmer and they shared an eventful life together.

Mella was the daughter of former Supreme Court Chief Justice Jesse A. and Lela Lee Udall. She and her husband, Arden Palmer, were married for 57 years, living most of that time in Thatcher.

The couple lived in Carmel, Ind., for three years from 1980-83 and assisted her husband as he served as president of the Indiana Indianapolis Mission for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Following that, they lived in Mesa for 10 years while Arden worked under President Ronald Reagan in the Agriculture Department.

They retired to Thatcher in 1985, where she resided until the time of her death. Mella was active in the LDS Church,

serving in many capacities, including Ward and Stake Relief Society presidencies, Primary and Young Women. One of her most enjoyable callings was as ward organist and accompanist for the Singing Mothers. She also accompanied the Gila Valley production of Handel’s *Messiah* for several years.

She was an active member of the Mt. Graham Hospital Auxiliary, Republican Women, and the Gila Harmonizers, and was a great support to her husband, Arden, in his many civic, professional, and church responsibilities. Of all her accomplishments, her greatest happiness came from caring for and loving her family.

Mella and Arden raised six children who also attended Eastern Arizona College - Jim (Celinda) Palmer, Mellani (Jeff) Larson, Shari (Jimmy) Elkins, Dave (Cyndi) Palmer, John (Shelley) Palmer, and Charlotte (Andy) Stewart.

The Mary Louise “Mella” Palmer Memorial Scholarship is awarded to a student in the EAC Nursing Program who demonstrates financial need while building skills to aid those in need of medical care.

If you would like more information about setting up a scholarship at EAC, please call David Udall at the EAC Foundation, (928) 428-8295. Donations can be sent to Eastern Arizona College Foundation, 615 N. Stadium Ave, Thatcher, AZ 85552.

The Graham County Hispanic Heritage & Scholarship Fund to benefit EAC students

The Graham County Hispanic Family Heritage & Scholarship Fund hosted a day of celebration last September that included live bands, games, and dancing. They also raised funds for local students to attend college. Their successful day will now help three students attend Eastern Arizona College during the 2016-2017 school year. Two students will receive \$1,000 scholarships and, thanks to the generosity of McDougal’s Caldwell Funeral Home, an additional student will receive a \$500 scholarship for the 2016-2017 year.

Event organizers Guadalupe R. Muñoz and Michael R. Andazola, Sr. were pleased to see so many people attend the Hispanic Family Heritage Celebration in its first annual event. In



The first annual Graham County Hispanic Family Heritage & Scholarship Fund’s Day of Celebration

a shared statement, they said, “We look forward to next year’s event and are grateful to those who shared to help us be successful in our first year. We had a lot of fun and were able to help our youth at the same time.”

Students and future students who would like to apply for this and other donor-funded scholarships at East-

ern Arizona College should apply online through the link on their Gila Hank account. High school counselors or the staff at the EAC Admissions Office at (928) 428-8472 are happy to help those who may have questions about applying at Eastern.

“The Graham County Hispanic Family Heritage & Scholarship Fund volunteers and many other service organizations in our valley make it a pleasure to live here,” said Executive Director of EAC’s Foundation and Alumni Association, David Udall. “There are so many good people in our community who share their time and finances to help others receive a great education and a brighter future.”



Monster A

Chris Knudsen, '03, and **Shawna Frost Knudsen, '03**, Mesa, Arizona, met and married while students at Eastern. After graduating, both continued their schooling at Northern Arizona University. Shawna completed a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education with a minor

in Music and Chris completed a Bachelor of Science in History. They moved to the east valley of metro Phoenix where Shawna taught music in the Gilbert School District and Chris worked

for University of Phoenix for six years. For the last six years Shawna has worked for Saladmaster and Chris for Delta Career Education. He completed a Master of Business Administration at University of Phoenix and was recently promoted to Facilities Manager overseeing an operation with more than 300 employees.

The Knudsen's are currently raising two sons and two daughters with ages ranging from one to nine.

Shawna's parents, **LeRain Lee Frost, '65**, and **Robert Frost, '65**, also met and married while attending Eastern Arizona Junior College. Robert and LeRain had two other children attend Eastern, **Mashell Frost, '86**, and **Boyd Frost, '90**.

Chris was also one of three from his family to attend Eastern. **Dawn Marie Knudsen Echols, '01**, and **Jennifer Knudsen Biggs, '03**, also attended EAC and met their spouses here.

Jon Peacock, '02, Brooklyn, New York, was mentored by Dr. Crae

Wilson, who helped him start the career he has had for over a decade. After leaving EAC, Jon transferred to Arizona State University to get a Bachelor of Arts in Acting.

Since gaining his Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing from Long



Chris Knudsen, '03, and Shawna Frost Knudsen, '03 and their four children.

Island University: Brooklyn Campus, he was in the world premiere of the play, *Little Rock*, about the integration of Little Rock High School in 1957-58. Jon writes, "On November 2, my fellow castmates and I were awarded the Barrymore Awards

for Excellence in Theatre 'Outstanding Ensemble in a Play' Award! It was a hard competition, and the Barrymore Awards are the Philadelphia equivalent to the Tonys!"

Last year, Jon left his teaching position at St. John's University (Freshman English, 2010-2014) to pursue acting full time. Jon is happy to report, "So far, so good!"

Kristie Berg Putnam, '94, Kirkland, Washington, completed a Bachelor of Science in Psychology at Grand Canyon University. She worked in the health care industry which took her to Washington. She completed a Master of Business Administration at University of Washington in 2008. She enjoys her work at Providence Healthcare and living in the beautiful Seattle area with her husband Patrick. The Putnams recently established a scholarship that helps single parents complete schooling and obtain skills they can use to provide for their families.

Kristie's parents, Karen & Jerry Berg, are skilled

woodcarvers and Jerry is an instructor at Eastern Arizona College.

Susan Welker Turley, '80, Huachuca City, Arizona, joined Raytheon Missile Systems in Tucson as a supply chain advisor. In this position, she provides procurement and negotiation assistance to support the company's global annual supplies expenditures of about \$3 billion. Previously, Susan was the contracts and fiscal law attorney at the Office of the Staff Judge Advocate, Fort Huachuca, Arizona. Susan and her husband, Carl, live in Whetstone, Arizona.

Dale Holladay, '65 and Janice (**Green**) **Holladay, '67**, Thatcher, Arizona, were both born and raised in the Gila Valley. After graduating from high school, they each attended EAC (Dale from 1963-65 and Janice from 1966-67). Dale enjoyed EAC and found his experiences here to be very beneficial. Some of his favorite teachers were Mr. Flake in algebra, Mr. Bingham in microbiology, and Mr. Lundell in chemistry. Janice also has fond memories of EAC. Teachers that she especially enjoyed were Mr. Johnson in biology, Mr. Peterson in English and Mr. Shroyer in band. The list of courses and teachers they enjoyed could go on and on. The small school atmosphere, the attention from teachers, and many social events were all huge pluses only found at EAC, not to mention Hazel's Cafe, pinball, and ping-pong during down times.

Dale served a mission for the LDS church in Peru, and upon his return, he and Janice met and were married in 1968. They continued their education at ASU, graduating in 1970, each receiving degrees in education. Their first teaching positions were in the Mesa area. In 1972, their love for the Gila Valley and family brought them back to their roots where they taught in the Safford School District. Dale taught high school biology and Janice taught first grade.

Around 1975, they took a 'leap of faith' and established a photography business, which they have successfully owned and operated for over 40 years.



Jon Peacock, '02

Alumnotes



During these years, they have each served as adjunct faculty at EAC, teaching photography classes. In later years, two of their daughters took over teaching these classes.

The Holladays are the parents of five children, Trevor, Trisha (Simmons), Stacey (Lunt), Kristen (Seale), and Mandy (Farris). Three of their daughters attended EAC. They also have 17 grandchildren. In the near future, they will most likely have grandchildren who will also enjoy the EAC experience.

Much of the success Dale and Janice have had they credit to the Gila Valley and the many opportunities that are here. Down through the years, they have taken advantage of the many courses that EAC has to offer in professional and personal growth. "Our associations with EAC have greatly blessed our lives."

Judith Farley, '60, Glendale, Arizona, graduated from EAJC and then went on to Arizona State University to complete a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. She worked at the Safford Inn Hospital and then helped in the transition to the new hospital. The Safford Inn Hospital was a motel that had been transformed into a hospital until better facilities could be built.

She later moved to the Phoenix metro area and worked at Phoenix Baptist Hospital for twenty years where she enjoyed working in their operating room. She helped with surgeries, especially heart surgeries, as they developed new procedures.

She is now retired and looks back fondly of her memories at Eastern and encourages other youth to attend college here.

On January 16, EAC Women's Basketball Coach Ryan McAdams and his team were at a pregame meal at an IHOP in Phoenix January, when a gentleman approached him and his staff and explained he was an alum of EAC. His name was **Wilfred**



Wilfred "Sonny" Gomez Peña, '57, and EAC Women's Basketball Coach Ryan McAdams

"Sonny" Gomez Peña, '57, Peoria, Arizona, who played on the men's basketball team for the Monsters during the 1955-56 and 1956-57 seasons. During his sophomore year, he helped the team advance all the way to the national tournament in Hutchinson, Kansas, where they lost in the championship game to San Angelo College. "This was the furthest any

basketball team, men or women, have advanced in the national tournament in school history that I can find," says Coach McAdams.

After meeting the team at the restaurant, Mr. Peña then attended the EAC games at Phoenix College that afternoon and cheered on his alma mater!

Coach McAdams writes, "In a conversation I had with his daughter, Terri (number 6 of his 7 children) after the game, she shared with me how excited he

had been to tell his family who he ran into that morning. She told me he turned 80 years old in October and he and his wife hope to come see us again this season.

"We are very fortunate the Gila Monster family seems to find us in different places at different times and lends its support to our cause."

"Thank you, Mr. Peña and your family, for your support and thank you Monster nation for all you do for us," said McAdams.

Ivan Tyler, '53, Columbia Falls, Montana, went to Brigham Young University the summer after graduating from Eastern. He soon left as a missionary to the North Central States Mission mostly serving in Minnesota. Immediately on returning to his home in Fort Thomas he was drafted. In the US Air Force, Ivan flew fighters and reconnaissance bombers for seven years. He returned to BYU and completed a Bachelor of Science in Agronomy and a Master of Business Administration. Mr. Tyler worked as a pilot for 18 years for Frontier Airlines which was eventually purchased by Continental Airlines. He also served with the Air National Guard in Salt Lake City, Utah, for 17 years. He bought a farm in Montana and has been farming there since retiring in 1995.

Alumni! TELL US WHAT'S NEW

Send us your information for Monster Alumnotes—the most read section in the *GilaGram*! We want to know your latest news...jobs, promotions, milestones. Please type or print your information clearly and include a photo (if you'd like) so we can share your news with your fellow classmates and friends.

Send to:
Alumnotes - EAC Alumni Association
615 N. Stadium Ave.
Thatcher, AZ 85552
or by e-mail at: alumni@eac.edu

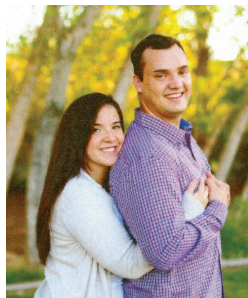
Wedding Bells Rang

August 1, 2015 – **Heather Leaman, '13 & William Black, '15**
 August 1, 2015 – **Katherine Roper & Mitchell Spencer, '12**
 August 28, 2015 – **Rachel Wooten, '15 & Jayden Sanders, '13**
 August 29, 2015 – **Chantel Udall, '15 & Eric Pearce, '15**
 October 10, 2015 – **Kayley Wright, '12 & Antonio Martinez**
 October 16, 2015 – **Karley Sanders, '15 & Brandon Boone, '15**
 October 23, 2015 – **Jessica Maner, '15 & Andrew Nolan, '15**

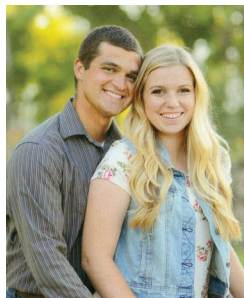
November 6, 2015 – **Kelli-Marie Smith, '16 & Nathan McNair, '16**
 November 20, 2015 – **Michelle Weatherhead, '15 & Tanner Johnson**
 November 21, 2015 – **Kali Mangum, '10 & David Solomon**
 December 12, 2015 – **Sabrina Smith, '15 & Devin Hatch, '15**
 December 19, 2015 – **Annee Alder, '15 & Brandon McMaster**
 December 19, 2015 – **Mackenzie Wearne, '14 & Jason Sandoval**
 December 26, 2015 – **Heather Udall, '15 & Joseph Ward, '15**



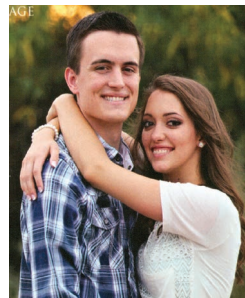
**Chantel Udall, '15 &
Eric Pearce, '14**



**Mackenzie Wearne, '14
& Jason Sandoval**



**Heather Udall, '15 &
Joseph Ward, '15**



**Rachel Wooten, '15 &
Jayden Sanders, '13**



**Kayley Wright, '12 &
Antonio Martinez**

In Memoriam

TJ Becenti Cheney, '07 – July 3, 2015
 Donald Grady, '49 – July 5, 2015
 Edwina Lemons, '64 – July 6, 2015
 Delta Layton, '49 – July 7, 2015
 Corene Carpenter Peterson, '58 – July 7, 2015
 Elaine Russell Hoopes, '47 – July 10, 2015
 J.W. Hawk, '56 – July 11, 2015
 Francis Neff, '68 – July 16, 2015
 Caleb Q. Casillas, '09 – July 17, 2015
 Larry J. Keenan, '56 – July 17, 2015
 Vera Saenz Irvin, '78 – July 18, 2015
 Anne Skinner Butler, '63 – July 21, 2015
 Julia Daley Hardy, '64 – July 31, 2015
 Henry Kessay, Jr., '70 – August 2, 2015
 Darelyn Barlow Barrowclough, '59 – August 5, 2015
 Marvin E. Warbington, '68 – August 10, 2015
 Mary "Giane" Francis Powell, '90 – August 12, 2015
 Bethany Greenwell, '12 – August 15, 2015
 Chloe Rogers Hansen, '45 – August 20, 2015
 Sarina Niessen Larson, '87 – August 21, 2015
 Randall C. Evans, '66 – August 27, 2015
 Lee H. Maylen, '49 – August 27, 2015
 Bobby J. Tadlock, '59 – September 1, 2015
 Cleora Colvin, '42 – September 2, 2015
 John C. Nason, '51 – September 2, 2015
 Donald J. Caldwell, '63 – September 8, 2015
 Rene Victor Sanchez, '76 – September 17, 2015
 Virginia "Kay" Hancock Hawkins, '57 – October 6, 2015
 Orville "Wells" Allen, '49 – October 7, 2015

Louise Ream Flower Villarreal, '59 – October 7, 2015
 Wendell S. Thatcher, '68 – October 21, 2015
 Dixie E. Black, '86 – October 25, 2015
 Iris Janeen Zufelt Curtis, '73 – October 27, 2015
 Elwood A. Maloy, '52 – October 29, 2015
 Dennis G. Donnelly, '65 – October 31, 2015
 Kenneth Bowman, '97 – November 5, 2015
 Berry E. West, '59 – November 11, 2015
 Ina Thompson Gable, '39 – November 13, 2015
 Robert M. Rodriguez, '94 – November 13, 2015
 Anna M. Morales, '94 – November 17, 2015
 Everett Bowman, '57 – November 19, 2015
 Marilyn Nichols, '74 – November 19, 2015
 Douglas Russell Slade, '91 – November 25, 2015
 Genevieve A. Endfield, '70 – November 26, 2015
 John C. Robinson, '60 – November 29, 2015
 Connie Shreeve, '79 – December 1, 2015
 V. Jeannine Nuttall Carpenter, '71 – December 6, 2015
 Edith Louise Chapman Elledge, '94 – December 7, 2015
 Emer Joy Wiltbank, '63 – December 7, 2015
 Gordon E. Blake Jr., '67 – December 9, 2015
 Norma Mortenson Howard, '51 – December 15, 2015
 Jacqueline McFadden Hadley Lee – December 19, 2015
 Patracinio T. Romero, '72 – December 21, 2015
 Loretta N. Chisem, '70 – December 22, 2015
 Ophelia Edward Robertson, '89 – December 27, 2015
 Jeff Waters, '65 – December 28, 2015
 Ray G. Fleenor, '65 – February 15, 2016

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The individuals and organizations listed below are appreciated greatly for helping us continue making a difference in the lives of more than 100 students each year. The following donations were received between July 1, 2015 and December 31, 2015. Thank You!

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