

With great fondness I remember carefully putting an album on my parents' stereo console, gently lifting and applying the needle to the edge of the record, and listening to the Goin' Band from Raiderland. My family loved this album, and on more than a few occasions, my sister and I may have used a towel as a cape to simulate a bullfighter with a bull. The music of Texas Tech is probably my earliest memory of this great educational institution, but Tech's influence had already permeated throughout my family's lineage.

My Grandpa, Coleman Cowan, graduated from Tech in 1935 with an Agricultural degree. He attended Tech on an athletic scholarship, and won the 1934 Border Conference Championship with a Pole Vault of 12' 2.5," setting a school record. He held this record until 1936 when his younger brother, Maurice Cowan, also a Tech student, topped him with a Pole Vault of 13' 2".

While at Tech, my grandpa dated Virginia Magee who was also a student there. The two married before she could complete her student teaching which is all she lacked to obtain her degree in education. They were the parents of six fine young men, and four of these became Tech graduates with two of them receiving both a Bachelor's and Master's degree from Tech.

My dad, David Cowan, returned to Tech in 1967 to finish his degree in accounting. Married with four small children, working three part-time jobs, he was extremely motivated to obtain this degree, which he did in December of 1969. While attending Tech, he made sure each of his professors knew his name, his home situation, and the four little motivators who were driving him to succeed.

I, Kristie Cowan Garnett, completed my degree in Occupational Therapy at the TTUHSC in December of 1988 graduating Summa Cum Laude. I was the top graduate of the School of Allied Health, and this honor brought the privilege of delivering a graduation speech to the School of Allied Health.

My sister, Patrice Cowan Sharbutt, received a degree in Accounting in 1986, and my younger sister, Melanie Cowan Johnson, received a degree in Interior Design in 1995. Both sisters married Tech graduates. Albert Sharbutt, received his Bachelor's and Master's Degree in Electrical Engineering, and Scott Johnson earned a Restaurant and Hotel Management Degree.

The tradition of higher education from Texas Tech continues today where my son, Logan Garnett, is a sophomore, seeking a degree in Petroleum Engineering, while my niece, Sammye Sharbutt, is a junior, majoring in Restaurant and Hotel Management. My nephew, Chris Sharbutt, is a freshman pre-med major. In the wings, we have four other cousins who are chomping at the bit to attend Tech. Age is the only thing holding them back.

We love Tech because each of us received a valuable education that has enhanced and provided for our livelihoods. But, looking back, Tech is where our stories began because that's where my grandparents met. And, none of this would have happened without Tech!