



Stillwater Pioneer Athlete Memorial



PAUL MOONEY

August 10, 1943 - November 26, 1982
Stillwater High School Class of 1961

7th Annual Memorial Induction Ceremony
October 12, 2002

Dr. Paul Mooney, who possessed the skills for piano playing and performing among other skills, looked more like a basketball coach than a research scientist. Paul Mooney was the son of the late John and Alma Mooney. John, his father, was a former Canadian Olympian who came to Stillwater after World War II to pursue graduate studies. Mooney Hall, the old Recreation Center on the OSU campus, was named for the elder Mooney. Alma, Paul's mother, was a Jefferson Elementary School teacher. Paul received piano lessons from Margaret Nichols while in grade school. Music became part and parcel of Paul's life. He was a concert pianist. There is no doubt that he provided much entertainment in his short lifetime - he died at the age of 39. Paul played music in supper clubs in the Tulsa area up to the time of his death. His music was just another extension of his relationship with all who knew him or heard him.

Paul was outstanding at Stillwater High School. Tall Paul - 6'11" - was an excellent student. He was not a gifted athlete; however, he gave 120% effort in basketball and track. You might say his coordination never caught up with his physical size. Basketball was never mastered, but his drive and determination was so obvious that he was a Pioneer Spirit Leader by just being part of the team. Stillwater High School basketball finished 2nd in State in 1961. Paul, who did not play a second in this tournament, helped the team exceed their expectations. By example, he led.

In track he was a pole vaulter and did score points for the team in several meets. Again, it was not the individual success of Paul that was critical, but his attitude was "I can do better". By example, he led.

Paul was a wannabe athlete while being an outstanding trumpet player and drum major in the band. There is no doubt he was the tallest drum major in the United States of America. He performed the Drum Major role with aplomb. On Band Night, during football season, he crowned the Band Queen, Sharon Cottongim, with a short kiss and bear hug. He was at least ten feet tall in his drum major hat. It took him an eternity to bend over to kiss Sharon and another eternity to stand tall again.

After graduating from Stillwater High School, Paul excelled in the world of chemistry and biochemistry. He received three degrees from Oklahoma State University, two in Organic Chemistry and a Doctorate Degree in Biochemistry. He went from OSU to Yale on a three year Fellowship at Yale Medical School. It is not well known that Paul was in the first year of Law School at the time of his demise.

After leaving Yale, he took an Associate Professor of Biochemistry position at the Oklahoma School of Osteopathic Medicine in Tulsa. He received a two year \$29,000 research grant from the American Cancer Society which was one of three awarded in Oklahoma in 1976. Cancer research was his whole career with anti-tumor drugs being his focus for sixteen years. Paul was teaching Biochemistry and doing research on drug treatments of cancer at the time of his hunting accident at Kaw Reservoir on November 26, 1982. In closing, God called Paul to heaven at the age of 39 to play the piano for the angel's choir. I am sure they ask him to play solos often.

*Presenter
Barry Epperley
Stillwater High School Class of 1962*