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How the University of Arkansas' Change in Conference Affiliation set off Realignment in Intercollegiate Athletics

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How the University of Arkansas' Change in Conference Affiliation set off Realignment in
Intercollegiate Athletics

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in Journalism

by

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University of Arkansas
Bachelor of Arts in Journalism, 2010

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Abstract

The era of realignment within the conferences that make up the largest football-playing division of the National Collegiate Athletic Association can be traced to one event.

In the 1984 Supreme Court case *NCAA v. Board of Regents*, the court ruled the NCAA had violated antitrust laws by not allowing individual colleges to negotiate their own TV contracts for football games. The decision nullified and voided existing TV contracts with the NCAA, allowing a free market for colleges. Many programs partnered with the College Football Association to negotiate TV contracts in the 1980s and early '90s.

Five years after the Supreme Court ruled, major conferences began to expand to become more appealing to TV networks. By adding more colleges, a conference was able to expand its geographical footprint to include more large media markets. In turn, it could request higher payments from networks that wished to televise football games and other sporting events.

In 1990, the Southeastern Conference added Arkansas as its first new member since the Great Depression. In joining the Southeastern Conference, Arkansas broke a 76-year partnership with the Southwest Conference, a league that had fallen from past prominence after years of scandal and declining attendance.

Arkansas became the first college program in the modern era to leave one major conference for another. Over the next quarter-century, the financial success for Arkansas and the Southeastern Conference paved the way for several more notable college programs and conferences to make similar moves.

This paper will analyze the events that led up to the start of conference realignment and how the profitability of football has had a positive impact on universities' academic profiles.

Table of Contents

I. History of College Football on TV.....	1
II. Overview of 1984 <i>NCAA v. Board of Regents</i>	2
III. History of Arkansas in the Southwest Conference, 1915-1992.....	4
IV. Arkansas in the Southeastern Conference, 1990-Present.....	6
V. Athletics and Higher Education.....	8
VI. Bibliography.....	10
VII. Appendix A.....	13
VIII. Appendix B.....	32

History of College Football on TV

The first televised college football game was played in 1939 between Fordham and Waynesburg (Vander Voort, 2015). Pennsylvania also played its first televised football game that season and beginning in 1940 had all home games televised for the next decade (Dosh, 2013).

In 1951, after its own polling concluded that televised football games would impact attendance at other games, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) began to regulate how often and when teams could appear on TV.. Between 1953 and 1984, the NCAA maintained only it could negotiate TV rights on behalf of its members. Revenue earned from TV was split between the NCAA and the teams that played on TV (Dosh, 2013).

The NCAA eventually limited the number of times each college football program could appear on TV to six times every two seasons, including no more than four times on national TV every two seasons (Tucker, 2010).

The NCAA's limitation on national broadcasts led to oddities in programming. The most notable was a 1966 game between undefeated No. 1 ranked Notre Dame and undefeated No. 2 Michigan State. Because Notre Dame had already played on national TV earlier that season against Purdue, ABC Sports only aired the game live on regional TV while airing a game between two teams with losing records - Tennessee and Kentucky - to the rest of the country. After receiving numerous complaints, the network agreed to air the game nationally on tape-delay later that night (Weinreb, 2013). In 1981, a game between No. 1 Southern Cal and No. 2 Oklahoma was televised regionally, and the schools received the same amount of money as Appalachian State and The Citadel, which played on fewer regional channels the same day (Rohde, 2004).

Larger universities became unhappy with the NCAA's TV agreements (Dosh, 2013). In 1976, 68 high-profile colleges formed the College Football Association (CFA) as a like-minded alliance to vote on NCAA rules. The CFA was initially formed to combat new NCAA rules on scholarship allocation and the number of assistant coaches a team could have (Strauss, 2014).

In 1981, members of the CFA took their affiliation a step further and began challenging the NCAA's TV contracts. Members of the CFA wanted popular teams to be able to appear on national TV as many as four times every season (Strauss, 2014). The CFA began negotiating its own TV contract with NBC. At the same time, the NCAA was also in negotiations with ABC and CBS (Dosh, 2013).

The purpose of this paper is to examine the relationship between the court cases that came about as a result of the dueling contracts, and how their verdicts influenced schools like Arkansas to change conference affiliation.

Overview of 1984 *NCAA v. Board of Regents*

The NCAA threatened to impose sanctions on colleges that participated in the CFA's separately negotiated contract, including postseason bans. As a response to the NCAA's threats, the University of Oklahoma and University of Georgia filed a class-action lawsuit against the NCAA in the United States District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma. Knowing it could benefit from the ruling, NBC offered to pay half of the court costs for the universities (Dosh, 2013).

Instead of challenging the NCAA on the basis of property rights, the colleges decided to challenge the NCAA on the basis of antitrust laws. One claim was that the NCAA was engaging in price fixing, which violated antitrust laws (Dosh, 2013).

U.S. District Judge Juan Burciaga ruled in September 1982 that the NCAA had violated antitrust laws by not allowing schools to negotiate their own TV contracts and ruled the NCAA's existing contracts null and void. The 10th Circuit Court of Appeals upheld Burciaga's ruling in June 1983 (McConnell, 1986). The NCAA was allowed to continue broadcasting games in 1983 when it received a stay from Supreme Court Justice Byron White, a former football player at Colorado (Greenhouse, 1984).

The Supreme Court heard arguments in the case in March 1984. In June 1984, the Supreme Court affirmed the lower court rulings in a 7-2 vote (Greenhouse, 1984).

Writing the majority opinion, Justice John Paul Stevens cited the 1890 Sherman Antitrust Act and wrote the NCAA had a price structure that is unrelated to prices that would prevail in a competitive market (Nocera & Strauss, 2016).

In his dissent, White and Justice William Rehnquist cautioned that unregulated contracts could threaten the NCAA's principle of amateurism (Greenhouse, 1984).

Revenue for televised college football games actually dropped in the years immediately following the Supreme Court ruling because of the surge in telecasts. By the late 1980s, however, revenue began to increase (Strauss, 2014).

In 1989, Notre Dame broke away from the CFA to sign its own TV contract with NBC (Wojciechowski, 1990). At the same time, conferences were looking to expand their geographical footprint in order to become more appealing to TV networks. By allowing their conference office to negotiate TV contracts, conference members agreed to pool TV revenue and receive payments through revenue distribution plans.

History of Arkansas in the Southwest Conference, 1914-1992

Arkansas joined the Southwest Conference as a charter member in 1915 (Townsend, 2015). In its early years, the conference included Oklahoma and Oklahoma A&M (now Oklahoma State), but had evolved into a two-state league by 1926. (Wangrin, 2005).

For the conference's final 70 years, Arkansas was the only member located outside the state of Texas. The Southwest Conference was a seven-member league for 30 years until it added Texas Tech in 1956. Houston became the league's ninth and final member in 1976 (Wangrin, 2005).

The Southwest Conference was considered one of college football's best conferences in the 1960s with Arkansas and Texas combining to win three national championships. Arkansas, Texas and Texas A&M continued to field nationally-competitive football programs in the 1970s. The Southwest Conference's image became tarnished in the 1980s, however, as seven of the nine schools were put on NCAA probation at various times for recruiting violations. In the most notorious case, SMU was given the NCAA's "Death Penalty" in 1987 for repeated violations that included paying players. As part of the Death Penalty, SMU did not field a football team for two years (Wangrin, 2005).

The proliferation of professional sports teams in Texas also began to hurt the Southwest Conference in the 1980s. Houston and Dallas had developed professional teams in football (Wangrin, 2005). The popularity of those teams began to lure spectators away from college games, especially at metropolitan universities like SMU, TCU, Rice and Houston (Ferritor, 2015). In 1989, the combined home football attendance for the eight Southwest Conference teams in Texas was 65 percent of stadium capacity (Wangrin, 2005).

With the popularity of the Southwest Conference declining, Arkansas athletics director Frank Broyles began to look for alternatives. At some point prior to 1986, Broyles explored moving Arkansas to the Big 8 Conference when Kansas State explored leaving that league (Ferritor, 2015). Ultimately, Kansas State never left and Arkansas was never invited to join.

During a golf outing in 1988, Broyles told Southeastern Conference commissioner Harvey Schiller that Arkansas would be interested in changing conference affiliation if that conference ever looked to expand (Lee, 2003). Two years later, the Southeastern Conference voted to expand and added Arkansas as its first new member in 57 years (Jones, 2015).

Penn State joined the Big Ten Conference nine months prior to Arkansas joining the Southeastern Conference, but Arkansas was the first program to leave one major conference for another. Prior to joining the Big Ten, Penn State played football independent of a conference affiliation (Jones, 2015).

Arkansas had one of the Southwest Conference's most successful all-sport male programs. Arkansas won 13 Southwest Conference championships in football, 22 championships in basketball, two championships in baseball and 38 combined championships in cross country and track & field. The football, cross country and track teams had won national championships during their years in the Southwest Conference, while the basketball team had been to multiple Final Fours and the baseball team had been to multiple College World Series.

Losing Arkansas was not only a blow to the Southwest Conference's ability to boast one of the nation's best all-sport programs, but also to the league's ability to appeal itself to national TV networks. When Arkansas left, the league became comprised of eight universities from the same state and represented just 6.7 percent of TV sets in the United States (Townsend, 2015). Arkansas was allowed to begin playing in the Southeastern Conference in 1990-91, for all sports

but football. It played its final game as a member of the Southwest Conference in November 1991. Less than five years later, the all-Texas Southwest Conference folded after more than eight decades. (Townsend, 2015).

Arkansas in the Southeastern Conference, 1990-Present

Arkansas' move to the Southeastern Conference helped spur change across the college athletics landscape, prompting several other conferences to expand, although Broyles said he expected an upheaval in college athletics regardless of Arkansas' decision (Wojciechowski, 1990).

After adding Arkansas, the Southeastern Conference added South Carolina in September 1990, to become the first 12-team conference within the framework of the NCAA (Kendall, 2015).

The timing couldn't have been better for a move to the SEC. With burgeoning cable networks such as ESPN, conferences signed elaborate TV contracts for football in the 1990s that resulted in unprecedented exposure (Jones, 2015). The SEC also signed a five-year, \$85 million football contract with CBS in 1995 (Wangrin, 2005).

The Atlantic Coast Conference added Florida State in 1991 (Jones, 2015). That same year, the Big East Conference - formed for the purposes of basketball in the Northeast - added five new football-playing members: Miami, Virginia Tech, West Virginia, Rutgers and Temple (Gall, 2012).

The Pacific-10 Conference also explored expansion in the early 1990s. In 1996, the Southwest Conference dissolved, resulting in half of the Southwest Conference teams - Texas, Texas A&M, Texas Tech and Baylor - merging with the Big 8 Conference to form the Big 12 Conference (Wangrin, 2005).

The Southeastern Conference and Big 12 Conference capitalized on an NCAA exemption that allowed 12-member leagues to play conference championship games in football. The TV rights for the SEC Championship Game have been valued at more than \$15 million, prompting other conferences to expand to 12 teams as well (Jones, 2015).

The Atlantic Coast Conference added its 12th member and football championship game in 2005 (Rohde, 2004). The Pacific-10 Conference and Big Ten Conference each added 12th members and began playing a football championship game in 2011 (Skretta, 2011). The Pacific-10 Conference changed its name to the Pacific-12 Conference, but the Big Ten Conference has not changed its name to reflect its number of members, which is now 14.

The era of realignment has continued in the two decades since the first major shift. Notable college programs such as Nebraska, Maryland, Colorado, Missouri, Texas, Texas A&M, Texas Tech, Baylor, Miami, Virginia Tech, West Virginia, Boston College, Utah, Louisville, Pittsburgh and Syracuse have changed conference affiliation since Arkansas' move to the Southeastern Conference (Jones, 2015).

Programs such as Miami, Virginia Tech, Texas A&M and West Virginia have changed conference affiliations twice. TCU, a program relegated to a smaller league when the Southwest Conference dissolved, played in five conferences between 1995 and 2012 (Jones, 2015).

Even Notre Dame switched from the Big East Conference to the Atlantic Coast Conference for all sports but football (Jones, 2015). Notre Dame remains under contract with NBC and is the most high-profile program to play football independent of a conference affiliation.

As a member of the Southeastern Conference, Arkansas' revenue sports have struggled to win championships. Arkansas' football team has played in three Southeastern Conference

championship games but has not won a conference title since the days of the Southwest Conference. Arkansas' basketball team hasn't won a regular season conference title in more than two decades.

Despite its lack of championships, Arkansas' program has remained profitable and relevant nationally as a member of college football's most successful conference in the realignment era. In 2011, it declined an informal invitation to join the Big 12 (Voigt, 2011).

Athletics and Higher Education

Conference realignment caused profits associated with college athletics to surge. For instance, Arkansas' annual athletics revenue rose from \$9 million in 1991 to \$49.5 million in 2006, to \$99.8 million in 2013 (Jones, 2014; Lee, 2003).

While individual apparel and multimedia contracts, and licensing fees have played a role, the surge has primarily been the result of universities' affiliation with conferences that have revenue-sharing plans. Boosted by the launch of the SEC Network - its own 24-hour cable network - the Southeastern Conference paid more than \$31.2 million apiece to its 14 members - including Arkansas - in 2015 (Wolken, 2015).

By comparison, the Southwest Conference paid Arkansas \$760,000 in 1990 - or just less than \$1.38 million when adjusted for inflation in the year 2016 (Doyle, 2000).

The increase in televised football games has had two positive impacts on universities in general. First, winning football teams have helped boost the notoriety of some previously lesser-known universities. Second, the influx of TV-aided revenue has helped many universities expand their enrollment, hire better faculty and build new academic facilities (Dosh, 2013).

Boise State University experienced enrollment spikes following its first two appearances in the prestigious Fiesta Bowl in 2007 and 2010. In the five years following its first appearance

in the bowl game, the university's percentage of out-of-state students increased more than 20 points, its admission rate decreased 16 percent and its freshmen ACT scores improved - all signs of a healthy university (Dosh, 2013).

Similar trends can be noted at Arkansas, where student enrollment has nearly doubled in the 25 years since the move to the Southeastern Conference (Jones, 2015). Arkansas' academic profile has also risen dramatically since that time, with the university ranked the 62nd-best public university by *U.S. News & World Report* in 2015 (University of Arkansas, 2015).

As enrollment has rapidly increased at Arkansas, the university has rebuilt, renovated or built several academic facilities on campus - an endeavor that has been aided by the athletics department. Beginning in 2008, the athletics department at Arkansas began giving back more than \$1 million each year to the university's general fund. The initial contributions helped fund the construction of the Nanoscale Material Science and Engineering Building (Jones, 2011).

After the launch of the SEC Network, the Arkansas athletics department pledged even more assistance to the academic community. In 2015, the athletics department promised to pay \$23 million - or 87 percent of the construction debt - for a new 62,000-square foot classroom building on the university campus called Champions Hall (Jones, 2016).

It is necessary for a university to have a vibrant athletics program if it wants to recruit the best students (Ferritor, 2015). During a *60 Minutes* segment, University of Alabama president Robert Witt said a university's most important financial investment was a winning head football coach because of the revenue potential (Gribble, 2013).

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Appendix A

Production Narrative

The inspiration for a documentary exploring Arkansas' role in conference realignment was formed from a myriad of events.

My original plan was to conduct a thesis exploring the life of J.B. Hunt, the Arkansan who started the nation's largest publicly traded trucking company without a high school diploma.

I first pitched the idea of the Hunt film for my beginner's documentary class in September 2014. That class required each of us to work with partners, so my classmates were able to vote on which films were most appealing. The Hunt film was not approved.

Through my first year in graduate school, it was assumed that my thesis project would be the Hunt documentary. However, after initially receiving overwhelming support from Hunt Ventures - the management company owned by J.B. Hunt's widow, Johnelle Hunt - for the production of such a film, my interactions with the company became more infrequent by the spring 2015. Emails and phone calls were returned with less consistency and responses were delayed by up to three weeks. When a scheduled June 2015 meeting with Mrs. Hunt was delayed until September, I began to think about alternatives for my thesis.

In July 2015, the new idea for a thesis project came to me. Within 10 minutes I had the entire story conceptualized. I wanted to tell the history of Arkansas' move to the Southeastern Conference through the viewpoint of those who were outside of the athletics department, but were still influential to the decision.

I knew of Arkansas' role in conference expansion from a number of ways. As I grew up, my dad and grandpa told me many stories of the team's time in the Southwest Conference. I was 5 years old when Arkansas began playing football in the Southeastern Conference, so my

recollection of the Southwest Conference is vague. However, I have been fascinated with the SWC's demise for many years. By the time I became a sports reporter covering the Razorbacks, I had written several stories that dealt with the program's past in the SWC.

I had also read several books and articles that focused on the business of college sports. One that I leaned on considerably during this process was *Saturday Millionaires* by Kristi Dosh. I also researched several newspaper articles published in the *Tulsa World*, *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Washington Post*, *San Antonio Express-News*, *Dallas Morning News* and *Orlando Sentinel*, as well as work published in *Sports Business Journal*. In addition to these articles, my research focused on legislation such as the Sherman Antitrust Act of 1890, Clayton Antitrust Act of 1914 and Sports Broadcasting Act of 1960, in addition to the 1984 Supreme Court case *NCAA v. Board of Regents*, and 1953 and 1961 federal district court cases *United States v. NFL*.

Because my graduate school requirements mandated I take classes outside of journalism, I developed a greater awareness of the influence of TV in college athletics through Professor Steve Dittmore's courses on sport media and the relationship between higher education and intercollegiate athletics. It was in these classes that I developed an interest about *NCAA v. Board of Regents*. Prior to those classes, I was unaware that the case had such an influence on college sports, including at Arkansas. My interest in the case was reinforced through lengthy conversations about the business of college athletics with my wife's grandfather, Brad Jesson, who was a member of the University of Arkansas Board of Trustees at the time of the Supreme Court case, and a former judge.

While on vacation in July 2015, I made the decision to move forward with the documentary on conference realignment. I hoped to answer three questions through my research:

How did the Supreme Court outcome affect Arkansas' decision to move to the SEC? How did Arkansas' move affect other schools thinking about realignment? And did the athletics move have an impact on the overall academic community at the university?

Ideally, the film would have had a look of one of ESPN's "30-for-30" series. However, I knew those films had large budgets for travel, music and graphics, and utilized advanced shooting and editing techniques. Those films also often employ large staffs. Because I was working alone, I wanted to style my film more like the ones that had been produced in the journalism department by students before me. I had watched Clint Fullen's documentary on Jim Lindsey and thought I could make a comparable one comprised of sitdown interviews and archived video. The targeted length was at least 20 minutes.

I began to talk with reporters who covered the Razorbacks during the transition to a new conference. Through those conversations, I developed a list of people I would possibly interview. I used my position as a credentialed reporter to gain access to some of them. A crucial date in the film came on Saturday, Sept. 26, 2015, when Arkansas played a football game against Texas A&M in Arlington, Texas. Prior to the game, I talked at length with multiple people who would help me during the subsequent months. Perhaps the most beneficial conversation was with Herb Vincent of the Southeastern Conference office. We exchanged business cards with the understanding that I would be contacting him to facilitate an interview with former conference commissioner Roy Kramer.

I also spoke with Charlie Fiss of the Cotton Bowl Athletic Association that day. He had worked for the Southwest Conference when Arkansas was a member and suggested some names to contact for potential interviews. While none of those interviews came to fruition, Fiss was someone I leaned on multiple times for content throughout production.

Initially, I wanted up to five voices for the film, with the thought process that Roy Kramer would be the lead voice. I also hoped to interview a sports reporter with Arkansas ties, former University of Arkansas chancellor Dan Ferritor, at least one UA Board of Trustees member from that era and at least one expert on the business of college athletics.

I made a conscious decision to not request an interview with former UA athletics director Frank Broyles for this project. My thought process was that Broyles' version of the story had been heard many times and I wanted to interview those who had been part of the decision-making process but did not work for the athletics department.

The interview with Ferritor was a must. He served as the UA's interim chancellor during the fall 2015, so he was easy to contact. I made the request through Steve Voorhies, who had facilitated my previous interview requests with past chancellors.

Nate Hinkel from the University of Arkansas system office supplied me with a list of members of the UA Board of Trustees in 1990. Jim Blair was on the board at that time as chairman. I had been introduced to Blair about 18 months earlier when he spoke at the judicial investiture for my father-in-law, Tim Brooks. I asked my father-in-law to help facilitate the interview request and he obliged. He provided me with an email for Nancy Blair, Jim's wife. Nancy Blair helped coordinate the time and place for the interview.

At some point in October, Herb Vincent gave me an email address for Roy Kramer. I wrote Kramer and told him that I would be willing to travel to his home in Sweetwater, Tennessee, for the interview. After several weeks of waiting for a reply, I assumed Kramer did not want to do the interview and moved in a different direction. At some point during the process, Kevin Trainor, the longtime UA sports information director, suggested I try to interview Mark Womack from the SEC office. Womack worked for the league at the time it added

Arkansas and Trainor said he would have first-hand knowledge of the negotiations. Vincent helped facilitate the interview request with Womack.

For the reporter, I targeted George Schroeder, a national college football columnist for *USA Today*. Schroeder grew up in Little Rock, worked for the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* and authored a book about the Razorbacks in 2005. My co-worker, Bob Holt, gave me an email address to reach Schroeder. When I learned Schroeder would be speaking at the Northwest Arkansas Touchdown Club in October, I emailed him and asked if he would be willing to do an interview. He agreed and we kept in touch over the course of a couple of months.

Hoping that work travel would cross our paths, I requested an interview with Kristi Dosh as the sports business analyst. Dosh wrote the book *Saturday Millionaires* on the relationship between athletics and academics. She was happy to accept my request, but cautioned that she lived near Jacksonville, Florida. Because I was already planning to travel some for interviews, I told her that may not be an issue and that we would keep in touch.

My first interview was with George Schroeder on Wednesday, Oct. 21, 2015. After he spoke at the Northwest Arkansas Touchdown Club, he had a radio appearance on *Sports Talk with Bo Mattingly*. I interned for the show as an undergraduate, so I had no trouble obtaining permission to do the interview in the same office building.

The set-up for the interview was tricky. I was instructed to use an empty office that had no furniture. I was able to collect old furniture and office equipment - a patio table, a computer monitor, keyboard and mouse, and a chair - to construct a makeshift office desk behind the seat where Schroeder would be located. I wasn't thrilled with the look.

The interview went well, but the person who was supposed to run the camera that day canceled. I asked my sister, Lindsey, to fill-in and listen to the audio during the interview. She obliged, despite the fact it was her 21st birthday.

Because I was using a camera for the first time in a while and my sister had no knowledge about how to use one, two errors were made during this shoot: it was recorded in the wrong aspect ratio and the lapel microphone had some audio interference. Neither mistake was known until the shoot was over, but what I had was salvageable. It taught me to pay better attention to camera settings before hitting the record button.

After talking with Schroeder, it became increasingly apparent to me that the film was going to need an abundance of archived video. Because I had requested video from a number of news stations for the film in my beginner's documentary class, I was aware of the fees most local TV stations charged for archival footage. For instance, I requested archives from KATV in Little Rock for the beginner's documentary class and was told it would cost \$1,000 for 30 seconds of video. Because the only budget for my thesis film was my own money, I had to go in a different direction to obtain courtesy footage.

I reached another road block when I requested archived video from the Arkansas athletics department. Kevin Trainor told me that when the SEC Network was launched in 2014, all SEC programs signed over the rights to all of their archived video in perpetuity. That meant in order to use video shot by Arkansas in the past, I would have to negotiate with the ESPN, the owner of the SEC Network. I opted to not do that.

Instead, I contacted the Pryor Center for Arkansas Oral and Visual History. I knew about the Pryor Center in Fayetteville from my undergraduate work. The center was endowed to preserve the visual and audial history of the state, and I had read at one point that KATV donated

thousands of hours of archives to the center. KATV owned the Arkansas Razorback Sports Network, which is no longer affiliated with the university but at one time owned the multimedia broadcast rights to all of its football and men's basketball games. By requesting archived video through the Pryor Center, I would be able to obtain archived video without having to jump through the hoops I was sure ESPN would require.

I asked my thesis adviser, Dale Carpenter, for suggestions about who to contact at the Pryor Center and he told me to call Randy Dixon, the executive director. I met with Dixon in his office on Friday, Nov. 6, 2015, to talk about the film and go over the exact materials I would need. Dixon was hesitant to help me because he said a previous documentary student was granted archived video but did not properly credit the Pryor Center. I told him that as a working journalist, I knew the frustration of having work copied without proper attribution and assured him that I would give the center due credit for any video used in the documentary. We agreed that I would use the Pryor Center logo in the credits for my film.

Because the material I would need was shot before the digital age, all of the film had to be digitized. Dixon told me this was a lengthy and expensive process that had to be conducted in Little Rock. He said the Pryor Center would pick up the tab for the costs associated with digitizing. I left his office with the understanding that I would email him a comprehensive list of requests.

Four days later, I conducted my second interview at Jim Blair's home in Fayetteville on Tuesday, Nov. 10, 2015. For this interview, I did not have a production assistant. I encountered a problem shortly after beginning the interview when the battery I picked up earlier in the day began to die after about 10 minutes. I did not have a backup battery and had to pause the interview.

I tried not to panic and told Blair I was having some technical difficulties. I recalled an earlier conversation with UA journalism instructor Hayot Tuychiev, who told me the Anton Bauer camera batteries would power the LED light boards if an electric outlet was not available. I thought the opposite might also work - using the light board's electrical extension to plug-in to the camera. I was correct in my assessment. I had to reallocate light from three boards to two, but was able to complete the 45-minute interview without further interruption.

As I suspected he would be, Blair was a wealth of knowledge when it came to the Razorbacks' move to the SEC. He recalled in great detail the behind-the-scenes events of realignment in the early 1990s, not only at Arkansas, but nationally. He also provided insight to the university's board of trustees, which was important to the film. I was sure his interview would help carry the film.

On Saturday, Nov. 14, 2015, while in Louisiana covering Arkansas' football game at LSU, I emailed Randy Dixon with my list of requests. That night in the press box, I was seated next to SEC commissioner Greg Sankey. Before the game, I introduced myself and told him I would be at the league office the next week to interview one of his associates, Mark Womack. Sankey pointed to the man seated next to him and said, "Well, this is your guy." I had never met Womack, so I did not know the man sitting two seats away was him. I was somewhat frustrated that I had not inquired as to whether he would be at an Arkansas game, as it would have saved me a significant amount of travel.

I left for Birmingham, Alabama, on Sunday, Nov. 22, 2015. Coupled with work, it was my third long road trip in as many weekends. In addition to being in Louisiana the week before, I had traveled to Mississippi for a football game two weeks earlier.

My wife, Ashley, and I stayed in the Birmingham suburb of Homewood the night before the scheduled meeting. She is a school teacher and has no previous experience running cameras, but because she was out of school for the week of Thanksgiving, she agreed to be my production assistant for this interview, as well as the one with Dan Ferritor back in Fayetteville the following day.

On the morning of the interview at the SEC office, I set-up the camera and tripod to instruct my wife on how to run the equipment. When I turned on the camera, I could not see any video in the media finder. I could see video through the eyepiece, but it was in black and white, which was insufficient, in my mind, for knowing if a shot looked correct.

I was able to get in touch with Hayot Tuychiev in the journalism department. He and I spent about 45 minutes on the phone troubleshooting the issue until he told me to reset the camera preferences. Fortunately, that corrected the problem.

Once at the SEC office, Herb Vincent pointed us toward a board room where we could conduct the interview. A wall decor with the SEC logo caught my eye and I knew I wanted it in the backdrop, but the room was relatively dark. Because I had only used two LED light boards to shoot my interview with Jim Blair a couple of weeks before, I knew less than three lights looked OK on camera. I made the decision to light the interview with Mark Womack with two boards and use the third board to illuminate the SEC sign. I'm glad I did as it added depth to an otherwise empty room.

The interview with Womack went OK, but it was obvious that he was not willing to share some of the proprietary information that Blair had. He did share some insight on the league's decision to add Arkansas that I had hoped to obtain from Roy Kramer. Being in Birmingham, I was also able to get cover video of the SEC office.

My wife and I left Birmingham around 4 p.m. and headed back toward Fayetteville for the interview with Dan Ferritor that was scheduled for the next day at 1 p.m. We arrived home well after midnight.

Of all the interviews, I was most excited for the one with Ferritor. While Frank Broyles was the architect of the move to the SEC, I knew Ferritor had a great deal of influence in the decision. As chancellor in the 1980s and 1990s, and again in 2015, I thought he would be able to speak about how the move to the new conference may have helped the university in ways other than just athletics. That was important to me because I did not want the film to be a story about games, but rather the business behind them.

Ferritor did not disappoint. We spent more than an hour in his office, about 45 minutes of which were on camera. He recalled with great detail the meetings he had with Broyles and Kramer leading up to the decision. He also shed light on something I had not previously known, which was that Arkansas had been a candidate to move to the Big 8 Conference in the 1980s. Like Blair, he was willing to share information that is not known to much of the public and I was sure that those two interviews would carry my film.

To my surprise, Roy Kramer called me in early December. He apologized for not returning my email from several months earlier and said it had been sent to the spam folder in his email. He said he would be willing to do the interview at his home in east Tennessee.

As I awaited word of where Arkansas' football team would play its bowl game, I kept his offer and Kristi Dosh's offer in mind. If the Razorbacks would have played in the TaxSlayer Bowl in Jacksonville, I would be able to interview Dosh. A game at the Music City Bowl in Nashville would put me within a few hours of Kramer's home. However, the Razorbacks were

placed in the Liberty Bowl in Memphis. From there, driving to either place was not doable and I opted to not do either interview.

In November and much of December, I emailed, called and texted Randy Dixon several times to inquire about my request for archived videos from the Pryor Center. For more than a month, I did not receive any response from Dixon, which made me concerned that I may no longer have his cooperation. I called Dale Carpenter to ask if he would reach out to Dixon. He did and later that day I received a call from Dixon, who apologized for his lack of communication. He told me he was out of the office and would call me the week after Christmas to go over details of my request.

I reserved a camera during the Christmas break with the thought I may conduct one more interview. I have covered several bowl games and knew it was possible to run into people unexpectedly there, so I took the camera with me to Memphis. Unfortunately, I did not come in contact with anyone who I thought could enhance what I already had. When I returned home on Saturday, Jan. 2, 2016, I knew the interview phase of the documentary was complete.

Production halted for a couple of weeks in January when Brad Jesson became hospitalized and died. In many ways, he was the inspiration for the film because of our conversations about the business of college sports, the trustees and the reasons behind realignment. I saw him at Thanksgiving and he looked frail, but I was hopeful he - maybe more than anyone else - would be able to see the finished product. That is why I dedicated the film to his memory.

Throughout January, I stayed in touch with Randy Dixon about the archived video. He informed me that one of the conversion machines was not working properly in Little Rock and

that it had caused a delay on his end. He instructed me to drop-off an external hard drive at his office and that he would take it to Little Rock. I did so on Tuesday, Jan. 26.

On Friday, Jan. 29, Dixon called to tell me that the video had been converted and was now on the hard drive. However, he said he would not be traveling back to Little Rock for another couple of weeks. If I wanted the hard drive before then it would be up to me to get it back. Knowing I was pressed for time, I told him I would take care of it.

My employer, the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, is headquartered in downtown Little Rock just a couple of blocks from where my hard drive was located. I asked my supervisor there, Barry Arthur, if he could help. Dixon and Arthur were old friends, so the process was easy. Dixon's contact in Little Rock, Stewart McLendon, dropped off the hard drive at the newspaper office and it was transported to my Springdale office by way of a courier.

While waiting on the hard drive to arrive, I began transcribing the four interviews I conducted a few months earlier. I spent several hours transcribing during the final weekend of January. The transcriptions from those interviews totaled 33 pages single-spaced. When I completed the transcriptions, I went back through and highlighted sections that I thought could be included in the final script. Although they were highlighted did not mean they were sure-fire soundbites. After highlighting the scripts, I listened to the interviews again and determined which sections had the best combination of sound and substance. This helped expedite the process when it came time to write the script.

I received the hard drive on Wednesday, Feb. 3, and quickly began to log the archived material. It included most of my requests, including archived footage of Arkansas football and basketball games from the early 1990s, as well as the entire UA Board of Trustees meeting in

which they voted to accept the SEC's invitation. Also included was the KATV newscast from the night Arkansas voted to join the SEC.

Once I had all of the archived video in my possession, I set out to write my script. Finding the time to write the script was harder than the actual writing process. I broke the script into three sections: the lead-up to Arkansas' move, the day of the move and the result of the move. Within the first section were multiple short stories about the people and events that led to Arkansas' move; the second section focused on the SEC's interest in Arkansas and the trustees' vote; and the final section focused on how the move to the SEC helped impact academics at the University of Arkansas.

While I am a print writer by trade, I was trained as an undergraduate to write for TV and radio. I earned a bachelor's degree in broadcast journalism. More so than the technical style, the difficulty associated with writing a script came from deciding where and when to insert music, as well as attempting to visualize what material would go with the various soundbites. Because I was limited in video to what the Pryor Center could provide, I knew I would have to intertwine video and photos in the film. I had not collected all of the archived photos when I wrote the script, so I did not have definite answers for the visuals that would cover some soundbites. Instead, I had ideas for what the visuals may look like and tailored later photo requests to match those ideas.

I finished the script on Friday, Feb. 26, and sent it to Dale Carpenter for review. We met on Tuesday, March 1, and he told me that it was ready to edit. He suggested a handful of fixes, but seemed to be pleased with it. He told me it was clear that I knew the story and that was important.

For the script, I made the decision to use a narrator. I made this decision because of difficulties we had with the documentary a year earlier when we did not use a narrator. In my opinion, the use of narration makes the film flow together better because you are not depending solely on the words of those who are interviewed. With narration, you are able to fill in the gaps of information others did not cover in interviews, as well as add pieces of information found during research following the interview process. It would have been impossible for me to tell the story of Arkansas' role in conference realignment as thoroughly without the use of narration.

David McKinney agreed to narrate the film. McKinney is a band leader at a church in Fayetteville and I had heard narration work he did for the church. However, he became sick with the flu the week he was supposed to narrate. Because I was pressed for time, I changed narrators and asked an old friend, Brandon Bolin, to help. Bolin was a broadcast major at John Brown University and narrated the lead-in to my company's podcast several years earlier. I sent the script to him a few days before we met for him to record the voiceover. He did a fine job and I was pleased with the end result.

Around the time I finished the script, I began to collect the rights to use several archived images. I used my Football Writers Association of America guide to email sports information departments across the country and request archived photos from the late 1980s to mid 1990s. I received archived shots from Arkansas, TCU, SMU, Rice, Houston, Penn State, South Carolina and Missouri. South Carolina's media relations director, Steve Fink, also sent a short video about the Gamecocks' move to the SEC that I was able to use.

I also received archived material from Charlie Fiss at the Cotton Bowl and from Herb Vincent at the SEC office. Jim Blair pointed me toward old photos in the 1934 Razorback yearbook and put me in touch with Archie Schaffer at Tyson Foods for a picture of Don Tyson's

yacht, which is referenced in the film. The yacht was the subject of some controversy at the time as it had been referenced in a negative campaign commercial targeting Arkansas Supreme Court justice Courtney Goodson. Schaffer told me the Tyson family did not want to release a photo of its yacht.

Through a Google search, I found two pictures of the yacht on a message board devoted to boating. I joined the message board and sent a message to the owner of the two photos, who gave me permission to use them in my documentary.

Chip Souza, the sports editor for the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette's* northwest edition, forwarded me scanned newspaper clippings about SEC expansion that he had used for a picture book about Frank Broyles.

I spoke with Bobby Swofford of KFSM-TV in Fayetteville. He said he would provide me with additional archived video free of charge, but was unable to help when he learned none of the video from that era had been digitized. Jason Carroll, executive producer of the Razorback Nation on KNWA-TV, provided me with some archived fan video. Jarrett Hobbs at UATV supplied me with archived video of students on campus after a camera I reserved late in the process did not work properly.

Kelly Dohre at XOS Digital provided photos of past SEC Championship Games. Barry Arthur at the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* gave me permission to use photos from the newspaper's archive. A request for a photo of Billy Graham from the Billy Graham Library was never fulfilled. I made too many requests for archived images to list here.

I inquired about advanced graphics work from a couple of sources, but opted to build the graphics myself when I learned of the costs associated with my request. Although they work to

illustrate geographical similarities, the graphics are a weak point of the film. If I had a larger budget for the film, I would have outsourced that work to a professional.

Perhaps the best story I have about collecting material for this film centers around the dominoes used for the opening scene. For several months I had searched the Internet and local stores for a set of Razorback dominoes, which I thought would work well given the title of the documentary. All of my attempts were unsuccessful and one store owner said he did not think team dominoes were manufactured anymore. I decided to appeal to Arkansas fans. I posted a message on the HawgsIllustrated.com message board in February asking if anyone had a set that I could borrow. To my surprise, Mike Quimby, who lives in Stonewall, Louisiana, replied that he had two sets and I was free to use either of them. Even better, one set had the Razorbacks logo that was in use at the time of expansion.

Using a pair of LED boards to light a black table top, I shot the domino scene in my living room. The finished product didn't look quite as good as I hoped it would, but like the graphics, it worked OK.

I also shot cover video inside Razorback Stadium, Baum Stadium and Randal Tyson Track Center. I shot exterior cover of Bud Walton Arena, and some cover of statues on campus, including the one of Frank Broyles on the north end of the football stadium. Most of those cover shots did not make the film because it ended up focusing more on the past than the present, which made it hard to incorporate many current images.

Although Dale Carpenter gave me a tutorial on how to use Adobe After Effects, I used iMovie to add moves to all of the archived photos in the film. I had used the iMovie software before and felt more comfortable with it than I did with After Effects. I would estimate that I

exported nearly 30 photos from iMovie during the editing phase. I used Adobe Photoshop to doctor some of the photos before importing them into iMovie.

The editing phase went relatively smooth. I edited the majority of the film during the week of spring break, March 21-25, working on it most days from early morning until late into the night. Thinking that I was basically repeating some of what I said earlier in the film, I made a few cuts from the original script during the editing phase. I also reworked the open in my script, but by and large the finished product looks similar to the script. By the Friday of spring break, the film was ready to export with the exception of a couple of spaces left for archived material.

The biggest decision I made during editing was to incorporate an 80-second clip without any edits. The clip includes Roy Kramer's official invitation for Arkansas to join the SEC and Dan Ferritor's subsequent comments to the board of trustees. I also included longer soundbites from Frank Broyles and Jim Blair from the board of trustees meeting, and a few clips from the KATV newscast from Aug. 1, 1990. My intent was to give viewers the feeling that they were in 1990 watching history take place. I like the outcome, but understand if some filmmakers were to say the clips were too long.

For music, I used Incompetech.com, which is the same site we used for music in the beginner's documentary class. It has several songs on the site and all can be used royalty free. Other free music websites I had used in the past - such as Freeplaymusic.com - have since changed to pay services. Most of the songs I selected were from the soundtrack section of the website, but I took a chance and picked two songs that were from different sections. One of the songs has a country music sound and is used in a couple of portions about the SEC. The other has a tropical sound and is used when Jim Blair talks about a trip he took to Costa Rica. Most of the music is played softly, but there are a couple of times I allow it to build in volume.

I met with Dale Carpenter again on Thursday, March 31 to go over some sections of the film. He made a few suggestions about narration spacing and natural sounds, but told me I was on the right track.

I made several of the touch-ups that Carpenter had suggested throughout the first weekend of April and turned it to my advisory committee on Tuesday, April 5 - nearly nine months after coming up with the idea. The finished product is both similar and different from the documentary outline that I turned in last September. While I kept several of the same themes, it ended up focusing almost exclusively on Arkansas and less on other schools across the country, which was not necessarily the intent. I had hoped to tell a more detailed story about realignment nationwide, but was limited by resources - notably time and budget for travel.

My initial reaction is that the film offers a very broad look at Arkansas' move to the Southeastern Conference and has plenty of room to include more substance if the film were longer in run time. There are many events that contributed to the Razorbacks' decision to join the Southeastern Conference, including a decade or more of events in Texas that had a negative impact on the Southwest Conference. I hit on many of those, but would have the ability to explain more thoroughly with a longer film. Despite that, I think I answered the main questions that I set out to answer.

I found in my research that Arkansas actually had little to do with the Southwest Conference's fall from prominence in the 1980s, but it did deliver the knockout blow to the league when it left for the Southeastern Conference. After the Supreme Court decision, conferences had to expand to new states to thrive. The Southwest Conference did the opposite and folded four years after Arkansas left. In order to better tell this story, a documentary about the rise and fall of the Southwest Conference may have been more ideal.

I learned during this process that I enjoy print writing more than documentary-making. I enjoyed the process and it challenged me to learn new skills, but making full-length documentaries may not be in my future. I think as an online news reporter, there are many techniques I can take away from this process to grow in my full-time job. Most importantly, I developed a better feel for editing, which was something I was not comfortable doing as an undergraduate. More comfortable now, I'll soon pitch the idea of producing some short documentaries to my company. I would also like to expand on my research for this film by writing a book or investigative series for newspaper or online on the demise of the Southwest Conference.

Finally, I am a bit overwhelmed by the number of people and hours it took to collect all of the information for this documentary and research paper. I spent hundreds of hours gathering resources for a 25-minute film and short research paper. Much of the process was spent problem-solving and making decisions, and I struck out in obtaining resources nearly as much as I succeeded. The process has given me a greater appreciation for the work done by professional documentary filmmakers and investigative reporters. While its production was challenging, the completion of this documentary is among the most fulfilling moments in my academic or professional career.

Appendix B

Documentary Script

The First Domino: Arkansas and the era of conference Expansion

Matt Jones

NARRATION IN BOLD

SOTS in Italics

--

Music builds; Fade from black; SEC associate commissioner Mark Womack on camera

It was a fun and exciting time, and a challenging time to make some very, very difficult decisions.

(:05)

Cover video of SEC T-shirts with Bill Clinton SOT

I understand why they're doing it and it certainly will be exhilarating and highly competitive.

(:04)

Fade to Black; Title on Screen: A film by Matt Jones

Cover video of Frank Broyles with Jim Blair SOT; video transitions to Blair on camera

Frank Broyles did more to build the Arkansas program than any other 10 people ever coming across the campus. I mean he is the absolute heart and soul of the program. (:14)

Fade to Black; Title on Screen: In association with the University of Arkansas Lemke

Department of Journalism

Fade from black; Former UA Chancellor Dan Ferritor on camera

I think the lede on this is it was the right decision, we made it and it's been a good decision.

(:08)

Cut to shot of domino falling in slow motion against a black backdrop

Title Overlay: THE FIRST DOMINO

Delayed Subtitle Add: ARKANSAS AND THE ERA OF CONFERENCE EXPANSION

It's a decision that probably has accounted for at least one restructuring of college athletics.

(:09)

Music fades out; screen fades to black

NATS up full...Arkansas vs. Texas basketball broadcast 1990

Cheers build before announcer says "Miller. Home run. Outlet to Day. Slam by Howell!

Exclamation!" followed by more cheers

NATS down, cheers remain below narration; cover video of basketball players celebrating.

Narration up.

BY THE SPRING OF 1990, ARKANSAS HAD BECOME ONE OF THE MOST WELL-KNOWN PROGRAMS IN COLLEGE SPORTS.

Cover shots show Arkansas football, basketball, baseball and track teams in the late 1980s, early 1990s

THE RAZORBACKS WERE TWO-TIME DEFENDING FOOTBALL CONFERENCE CHAMPIONS, A FINAL FOUR TEAM IN BASKETBALL, A REGULAR BASEBALL COLLEGE WORLD SERIES PARTICIPANT AND HAD ESTABLISHED A TRACK DYNASTY.

ALONGSIDE TEXAS, ARKANSAS WAS CONSIDERED ELITE IN THE SOUTHWEST CONFERENCE.

Ferritor on screen with super:

Dan Ferritor; University of Arkansas Chancellor; 1986-97

I have 37 national championship as chancellor. I probably will go down in history as having earned more championships than anybody in the history of college sports. (:12)

NATS low, video shows more celebration from 1990 Elite Eight win over Texas

WHILE THE RAZORBACKS WERE MAKING IT LOOK EASY, BEING IN THE SOUTHWEST CONFERENCE CAME WITH CHALLENGES.

Music starts, graphic shows logos of nine SWC universities

THE CONFERENCE WAS A UNIQUE MIX OF UNIVERSITIES, MADE UP OF FIVE PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND FOUR PRIVATE SCHOOLS, INCLUDING THREE WITH RELIGIOUS AFFILIATIONS.

SWC family portrait drawing zooms in on Arkansas mascot

FOR ALL ITS DIFFERENCES, THE CONFERENCE HAD ONE THING IN COMMON: ALL OF THE SCHOOLS WERE IN TEXAS...EXCEPT ARKANSAS.

Schroeder on screen with super

George Schroeder; Reporter; USA Today

It was a rip-roaring, wild, fun league, but it was clear that Arkansas was the outlier. (:08)

Moving old photo of Arkansas football

ARKANSAS' AFFILIATION WITH THE CONFERENCE WENT BACK ALMOST AS FAR AS THE RAZORBACK MASCOT. ARKANSAS JOINED THE S-W-C AS A CHARTER MEMBER IN 1915.

Old SWC video, primarily Arkansas vs. Texas; transition to photo of Richard Nixon and George H.W. Bush

IN ITS HEYDAY, THE CONFERENCE WAS ONE OF COLLEGE FOOTBALL'S GRANDEST. TEXAS AND ARKANSAS FOUGHT FOR SUPREMACY THROUGHOUT THE 1960S.

THEY COMBINED FOR THREE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS IN THE DECADE AND IN 1969 PLAYED THE SPORT'S FIRST MADE FOR T-V GAME - A ONE VERSUS TWO MATCHUP IN FAYETTEVILLE THAT WAS ATTENDED BY THE LIKES OF U.S. PRESIDENT RICHARD NIXON, TEXAS CONGRESSMAN GEORGE HERBERT WALKER BUSH, AND EVANGELIST BILLY GRAHAM.

Schroeder SOT; covered by more black and white photos from Arkansas' time in the SWC

It was a fun time to watch college football and the Southwest Conference was a good conference.

(:07)

Schroeder on screen, music fades

It was all about conference identity and conference identification. It really, truly was. It's hard to imagine now because we're so focused on winning national titles and going to the playoff, but it used to be winning the conference title was all. And so being the best in your region - these conferences were regional; that's why they were built, they were regional, formed from regional ties - that was the thing. Winning your region, basically was the big deal. (:22)

Moving photos of SWC late '80s, music begins

BUT THINGS BEGAN TO CHANGE ACROSS THE COLLEGE FOOTBALL LANDSCAPE IN THE 1980S, INCLUDING IN THE SOUTHWEST CONFERENCE.

A WIDE RANGE OF SCANDALS TARNISHED THE LEAGUE'S IMAGE. ARKANSAS WAS ONE OF JUST THREE S-W-C SCHOOLS THAT ESCAPED NC-DOUBLE-A PROBATION IN THE '80S.

Cover video of Frank Broyles as AD and football coach

ARKANSAS ATHLETIC DIRECTOR FRANK BROYLES - A LEGEND IN THE SOUTHWEST CONFERENCE FOR HIS YEARS AS THE RAZORBACK FOOTBALL COACH - BECAME CONCERNED ABOUT THE LEAGUE'S STABILITY.

Music ends; Frank Broyles on screen speaking at 1990 UA Board of Trustees meeting

Graphic: Aug. 1, 1990

(:14)When the Southwest Conference was the strongest it had six members - six in Texas and one in Arkansas. There was no professional sports in the state of Texas. In the last two decades we've added two teams. We now have nine Southwest Conference members. (:14)

Photos of 1990s games between the Dallas Cowboys and Houston Oilers

At the same time in the last 28 years they have developed seven professional teams - three in Dallas, three in Houston and one in San Antonio. (:10)

Broyles on screen

So the pie in Texas has been shrunk as far as the Southwest Conference is concerned. They don't get the paper coverage, the sports pages, they don't get the TV coverage and it has developed a lack of interest and some indifference among fans which is evidenced by the fact in the Southwest Conference we have 50 percent empty seats at our football games. (:20)

Ferritor SOT; photos of Ferritor and Broyles

When I first became chancellor in '85, one of the first conversations I had with Frank Broyles...we were just talking about the Southwest Conference and our place in the Southwest Conference, which was an odd place. We were the only Arkansas, non-Texas school there. (:21)

Ferritor on screen

He said well, we might move someday. And I said, 'Where? I hope to the Big 8.' And he said, 'We have looked at the Big 8 and in fact at one point K-State was thinking about getting out of the Big 8.' (:15)

Music begins; Graphic of the SWC and Big 8 states in comparison to Arkansas

LIKE THE SOUTHWEST CONFERENCE, THE BIG EIGHT FIT THE RAZORBACKS FROM A GEOGRAPHICAL STANDPOINT WITH MEMBERS LOCATED IN BORDER STATES LIKE OKLAHOMA AND MISSOURI, AS WELL AS IN KANSAS, NEBRASKA, IOWA AND COLORADO.

Cover photo of K-State football in 1980s

KNOWN AS FUTILITY U BECAUSE IT HAD COLLEGE FOOTBALL'S WORST PROGRAM IN THE 1980S, KANSAS STATE HAD CONSIDERED LEAVING THE CONFERENCE, WHICH WOULD OPEN UP A SPOT FOR THE RAZORBACKS.

Music ends; Ferritor on screen

I remember saying that would be a good fit. And he said, 'But I think the Southeastern Conference is interested in us.' And I said, 'Are we interested in them?' And he said, 'Yeah.' And I said, 'Let's think about it.' (:12)

Cover video of Southeastern Conference office exterior in Birmingham, Ala.

CONFERENCE EXPANSION WAS A TERM BEING THROWN AROUND AT THE ADMINISTRATIVE LEVELS IN THE MID '80S.

Newspaper clippings from 1984 detailing the SCOTUS case

IN 1984, THE U.S. SUPREME COURT DECIDED AGAINST THE N-C-DOUBLE-A IN A LANDMARK ANTITRUST CASE THAT CREATED AN OPEN MARKET FOR T-V RIGHTS IN COLLEGE FOOTBALL.

Archived video of NCAA/college football TV open

THE COURT RULED THAT THE N-C-DOUBLE-A HAD ILLEGALLY FIXED THE T-V PRICE FOR GAMES, LIMITING THE REVENUE MORE POPULAR TEAMS COULD EARN.

Cover video from 1991 Arkansas-Miami football game

THE RULING GAVE SCHOOLS - AND BY ASSOCIATION, THE CONFERENCE OF WHICH THEY WERE MEMBERS - THE ABILITY TO NEGOTIATE AND SELL THEIR OWN T-V RIGHTS. PROFITS EXPLODED.

1984 ABC college football intro video merges into 2014 Rose Bowl intro with low NATS

IN 1984, THE ENTIRE COLLEGE FOOTBALL SEASON PACKAGE ON A-B-C WAS WORTH ABOUT ONE-HUNDRED, TEN MILLION DOLLARS WHEN ADJUSTED FOR INFLATION.

THIRTY YEARS LATER, A-B-C PAID EIGHTY MILLION ALONE FOR THE RIGHT TO TELEVISION THE ROSE BOWL GAME.

NATS FULL, Notre Dame on NBC open

NATS BEGIN TO FADE, Jim Blair SOT with cover video of Notre Dame on NBC

What really rocked the boat was Notre Dame leaving and signing its own television contract with NBC. (:10)

NATS Out

Blair on screen with super:

Jim Blair; University of Arkansas Board of Trustees; 1985-95

And the SEC had a brilliant commissioner, his name was Harvey Schiller. And I think he saw early on the marketing possibilities if he could spread the footprint of the conference for a major television contract. And my understanding is from the very beginning he wanted Arkansas as a part of that and was talking to Frank. (:25)

Music starts; NATS of golf club hitting a golf ball; cover photo of Frank Broyles playing golf

DURING A 1988 GOLF OUTING IN BIRMINGHAM, BROYLES HAD A CONVERSATION WITH S-E-C COMMISSIONER HARVEY SCHILLER ABOUT ARKANSAS' INTEREST IN JOINING A NEW LEAGUE.

Side-by-side photo of Broyles and Schiller

BROYLES TOLD SCHILLER, "HEY, IF YOU EVER WANT TO EXPAND, JUST ASK US."

Ferritor on screen

The story has to be told: the vision of the University of Arkansas in the Southeastern Conference was the vision of Frank Broyles. (:09)

Cover photos of Broyles

We made that decision together, but I relied very much on somebody that I thought knew a lot about college athletics and what was best for the University of Arkansas' athletics program. (:12)

Old SEC logo transitions into SEC family photo portrait pre-1992

THE S-E-C WAS MADE UP OF TEN SCHOOLS LOCATED IN SEVEN STATES.

LIKE ARKANSAS, MOST OF THE S-E-C MEMBERSHIP WAS MADE UP OF FLAGSHIP PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES. BUT IT HAD NOT EXPANDED SINCE THE GREAT DEPRESSION OF THE 1930S.

Ferritor on screen

We had good university mates in Texas, but you know when you go to Georgia and Alabama and Florida and Auburn and Tennessee, and Mississippi and Mississippi State, those are schools like us. (:15)

Still video of SEC logo transitioning into graphic with Big Ten, ACC and Pac-10 logos

THE S-E-C WAS NOT THE ONLY CONFERENCE LOOKING TO EXPAND AS A RESULT OF THE SUPREME COURT CASE. THE BIG TEN, A-C-C AND PAC-TEN ALSO WERE HAVING SIMILAR DISCUSSIONS BY THE LATE '80S.

Music fades, Southwest Conference logo on screen

EVEN THE SOUTHWEST CONFERENCE HIRED A CONSULTING FIRM TO WEIGH ITS FUTURE OPTIONS.

1990 Dan Ferritor interview with KATV

Graphic: 1990

I think the issue in college athletics is where do you want to be in 1995? And I think there are some strategic decisions that conferences all around the country are making. (:11)

Music builds, Cover photos of Penn State football

IN DECEMBER 1989, THE BIG TEN FIRED THE FIRST SHOT IN CONFERENCE REALIGNMENT WHEN IT ADDED AN ELEVENTH MEMBER, PENN STATE. BUT UNTIL IT JOINED THE BIG TEN, PENN STATE PLAYED FOOTBALL INDEPENDENT OF A CONFERENCE AFFILIATION. THE MOVE WAS

NEWSWORTHY GIVEN THE NITTANY LIONS' STATUS AS A FOOTBALL POWER, BUT THE MAJOR CONFERENCES HAD AVOIDED BEING POACHED.

Cover photo of Harvey Schiller

BY THE TIME PENN STATE MOVED, SO HAD HARVEY SCHILLER TO WORK FOR THE U.S. OLYMPIC COMMITTEE.

Video of Roy Kramer speaking at 1990 board of trustees meeting

THE S-E-C REPLACED HIM AS COMMISSIONER WITH ROY KRAMER, WHO SAW BIG TEN EXPANSION AS A TIME FOR THE S-E-C TO DO THE SAME.

Cover photos of Fred Jacoby

IN THE SPRING OF 1990, SOUTHWEST CONFERENCE COMMISSIONER FRED JACOBY LOBBIED FRANK BROYLES TO FEND OFF S-E-C ADVANCES. JACOBY HAD HIS OWN VISION OF EXPANSION: MERGING THE SOUTHWEST CONFERENCE WITH THE BIG EIGHT, AND CONTROLLING T-V SETS THROUGHOUT THE CENTRAL TIME ZONE.

Cover photo of Broyles, Kramer and Ferritor at board of trustees meeting

BUT BY THEN IT WAS TOO LATE. ACCORDING TO JACOBY'S ACCOUNT, BROYLES AND FERRITOR MET KRAMER IN THE MEMPHIS AIRPORT THE NEXT DAY.

KRAMER TOLD THE ARKANSAS DELEGATION WHAT THEY HAD BEEN WAITING TO HEAR: THE S-E-C WANTED THE RAZORBACKS.

Ferritor on screen

He said, 'I'd like you to go home and think about it.' And I said, 'We don't need to go. We'll do it.' He said, 'What?' I said, 'We'll do it. We're in.' He said, 'Don't you have to?' I said, 'We've

been thinking about it. This is the place for us.' By that time we knew it was the right decision. We knew that we were leaving something good and we were going to something good. (:28)

Cover video of Razorback statue on campus and "Home of the Razorbacks" sign at the football stadium

ARKANSAS HAD MADE UP ITS MIND. IT WOULD BECOME THE FIRST SCHOOL IN THE MODERN ERA TO LEAVE ONE MAJOR CONFERENCE FOR ANOTHER.

Archived video of Broyles at board of trustees meeting

BROYLES HAD ONE HURDLE LEFT TO CLEAR. HE HAD TO SELL THE UNIVERSITY'S BOARD OF TRUSTEES ON THE IDEA.

Newspaper clipping of Orville Henry column "Hogs' days in S.W.C. are numbered"

THE SUMMER OF 1990 WAS A WHIRLWIND OF SPECULATION AND APPREHENSION, NOT ONLY IN ARKANSAS, BUT IN TEXAS, WHERE THE REMAINING SOUTHWEST CONFERENCE TEAMS EAGERLY AWAITED THE VOTE.

Archived video of Aug. 1, 1990 - people walking on campus, exterior of the law building

ARKANSAS' BOARD SCHEDULED TO MEET AUGUST 1ST, 1990 AT THE LAW BUILDING ON THE FAYETTEVILLE CAMPUS.

Agenda from Aug. 1, 1990 board of trustees meeting

ON THE AGENDA: WHETHER TO BREAK A THREE-QUARTER CENTURY RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SOUTHWEST CONFERENCE AND JOIN THE S-E-C. JIM BLAIR WAS THE BOARD'S CHAIRMAN.

Blair on screen

We had a very cohesive board that I had taken five members fishing for a week off the coast of Costa Rica and we had bonded and we stayed very close in tune with each other's ideas. (:14)

Music begins with NATS of waves and cover photos of Don Tyson's yacht

At that time I was general counsel of Tyson Foods, I had access to Tyson's boats and I could use them so many times a year. (:10)

Blair on screen

We had a chance to really spend a week sitting out on a fishing boat out on the ocean. (:10)

Photo of Blair and other UA board members

Talking about what our hopes and aspirations were for the university and were for the state of Arkansas. (:09)

Cover video of Sandy Ledbetter, music fades

Then Sandy Ledbetter kind of became a member of the gang. She's the one that made it six, so we always had a majority of the vote. (:09)

Archived video of Broyles setting up for a news conference

IT WAS UP TO BROYLES TO SWAY THE GANG OF SIX AND THE REST OF ARKANSAS.

Music builds with archived slow-motion video of Frank Broyles leading football team onto the field in slow motion

IF ANYONE COULD CONVINCING THE STATE THIS WAS THE RIGHT MOVE, IT WAS THE BELOVED BROYLES.

AS FOOTBALL COACH, HE WON THE RAZORBACKS' ONLY NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP AND AS ATHLETICS DIRECTOR HAD A KEEN EYE FOR IDENTIFYING THE NEXT BIG THING.

Cover video of Broyles statue on campus

SMART AND CHARMING, BROYLES COULD HAVE DONE ANYTHING AFTER COACHING, BUT HE DEVOTED HIS LIFE TO THE RAZORBACKS.

Photo of Frank Broyles calling the Hogs at field dedication in 2007

WHEN BROYLES RETIRED AFTER 50 YEARS AT THE UNIVERSITY, NATIONAL COLUMNIST PAT FORDE WROTE, “SAY GOODBYE TO COLLEGE FOOTBALL’S LAST EMPEROR.”

Broyles on screen speaking at BOT meeting

The national scene is changing in college athletics. There is a consensus among knowledgeable people that the ‘90s will not be anywhere near resembling the ‘80s. There are many reasons for this but what has already happened has to get everybody’s attention. (:16)

Broyles SOT; Cover video of crowd listening

The Southeastern Conference has decided to expand. Other things have been happening to prove that these people who are knowledgeable about the national scene correct. (:09)

Newspaper clipping of Wally Hall column transitioning into photo of Broyles

Frank Broyles has a lot of legacies and I think they’re well-earned. From my point of view, what I saw from Frank Broyles was the ability to see the future with a clarity that was mind-boggling. (:25)

Music fades, Ferritor on screen

He was not only able to see the future with a great clarity, he was able then to motivate people to see it in the same way he did. Frank was both a visionary and a motivator. (:12)

Broyles on screen speaking at BOT meeting

The big conference, the super conference we are talking about today some people have said it is to get regional television. I disagree. I think the big major conferences are organizing themselves for national television. (:13)

Blair on screen

Frank Broyles knows marketing, Frank Broyles knows television, Frank Broyles knows money. And Frank just absolutely swore to us that it would be a financial plus, a strong financial plus, no way would it be a financial detriment. (:26)

Schroeder on screen

I do think he knew that this situation, there were potential shifts in the college landscape and he needed to do the best he could by Arkansas and the Southwest Conference was maybe an untenable situation. (:14)

Schroeder SOT; NATS of Bill Clinton yelling, "Go! Go!" and other fans cheering as fight song plays

You're asking for a tremendous amount of trust if you're the University of Arkansas saying we're going to change everything we've ever done and we're going to go to the SEC. And you're asking for a greater amount of trust, I think, than you would be from a fan base that was less invested. (:16)

Broyles on screen speaking at BOT meeting

If we thought and I thought, and our staff felt that the Southwest Conference could move in a viable way and be as competitive as the major conferences that we're talking about, our decision today would likely be different than we're going to recommend. It's improbable that could happen. We are moving in another direction. (:19)

Broyles speech transitions to Blair on screen

Frank totally convinced the board and totally convinced Danny Ferritor that the Southwest Conference was not going to really survive in its current form. (:14)

We left because we didn't think they could survive in the current environment of football TV contracts. (:09)

Kramer speaking at board of trustees meeting

Graphic: Roy Kramer; SEC Commissioner; Aug. 1, 1990

Chancellor Ferritor, the Southeastern Conference proudly invites the University of Arkansas to be the eleventh member of the Southeastern Conference. (:11)

NATS of cheers and applause; video transitions to Ferritor speaking to the board

Mr. President, we have before us an outstanding opportunity to do many things. We have an opportunity from my point of view most importantly to not only enter an outstanding conference, but to be aligned to peer institutions whose mission are virtually identical to ours. A move of this magnitude won't be easy - it won't be easy for our coaches, for our fans, for our students, for our most regrettably our longtime friends in the Southwest Conference. But throughout the institution, all those that I talked to said it is best for Arkansas to move, it is best for Arkansas to move to the Southeastern Conference and it is before for Arkansas to move to the Southeastern Conference now. (:46)

Blair on camera speaking at BOT meeting

Now therefore be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of the University of Arkansas accepts the invitation to become a member of the Southeastern Conference and looks forward to new rivalries and friendships. (:14)

Ferritor on screen

I was very hopeful that we were going to get the votes that we wanted. Hopeful enough that we had Commissioner Kramer there and I had a Hog hat hidden under my desk and there's a very famous picture of him with the Hog hat on. (:16)

Archive of Ferritor speaking at BOT meeting, includes Kramer putting on the Hog hat

There's one other thing we have to do. You always have to seal a deal and this signature only partially seals the deal. To truly seal the deal, we need Commissioner Kramer to become not only just an honorary Razorback, but a Razorback. And to do that, you have to wear the Hog hat. (cheers and claps) Woo Pig Sooie! Is that correct? (:29)

NATS fade

Up NATS full...Cheerleaders call the Hogs on KATV newscast open for Aug. 1, 1990

They're calling the Hogs across the SEC tonight as the University of Arkansas Board of Trustees approves a move to end a 76-year tradition....This is the day the University of Arkansas ended its affiliation with the Southwest Conference and set its sights to the east. Paul Eells beginning our coverage from Fayetteville tonight. Paul.

Paul Eells interviewing Frank Broyles

The significance of this move by Arkansas today is going to have ramifications all around the country I would suspect. Well, I think it will just make others think that they need to move faster than before. But regardless of what Arkansas had done, I see a major upheaval around the country.

Ferritor on screen

I didn't think it was a difficult decision. In fact, I thought it was a no-brainer. (:07)

Ferritor SOT; cover of old SWC football teams

I looked and saw us playing at Rice and TCU and sometimes SMU, and we're playing in front of 3, 5, 6-thousand fans. (:12)

Ferritor on screen, music builds

And I'm thinking how is it that we can go recruit athletes to go play in front of nobody. (:06)

Newspaper clippings from August 1990, transitions to photo of Larry Wahl and graphic of Wahl quote

AS NEWS SPREAD ABOUT ARKANSAS, ADMINISTRATORS ACROSS THE COUNTRY SCURRIED TO MAKE THE NEXT MOVE. LARRY WAHL, AN ADMINISTRATOR AT MIAMI TOLD THE ORLANDO SENTINEL NEWSPAPER, "THERE HAS BEEN A LOT OF TALK ABOUT EXPANDING CONFERENCES, BUT THEY ACTUALLY MOVED. IT MAY BE THE THING THAT REALLY STARTS SOMETHING."

Music fades, Ferritor on screen

I started getting calls, I don't know how many calls, but more than one, from the president of the University of Texas and he was encouraging Arkansas to go on ahead and make that move, to go on ahead and go to the Southeastern Conference. I wasn't altogether too sure why until later it became a little more apparent that he was interested in moving the University of Texas out of the Southwest Conference. (:19)

Photo of Texas mascot; transitions into graphic of Texas, Texas A&M, Florida State, Miami, South Carolina and Virginia Tech

TEXAS WAS ONE OF MANY SCHOOLS INTERESTED IN FOLLOWING ARKANSAS TO THE S-E-C. IT WASN'T ALONE. AT LEAST A HALF-DOZEN SCHOOLS HAD DISCUSSIONS ABOUT BECOMING THE LEAGUE'S NEXT MEMBER.

Womack on screen with super:

Mark Womack; Southeastern Conference; Associate Commissioner

Certainly a lot of schools either expressed some interest or the conference had some interest in whether they had any interest. We won't get into any naming a lot of names, but I think the speculation has been out there of a number of schools that may have expressed an interest in joining. (:20)

Blair SOT; Florida State vs. Miami cover photo

I think initially they really wanted Florida State. Roy Kramer certainly talked to Miami. (:08)

Blair on screen

They looked at Virginia Tech briefly and thought it didn't fit. That leaves South Carolina. (:06)

Music begins, video of South Carolina press conference, football team and fans

NEARLY TWO MONTHS AFTER AFTER ARKANSAS JOINED THE S-E-C, THE LEAGUE WELCOMED THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA AS ITS 12TH MEMBER.

Womack SOT

Very big state schools, strong fan bases, very much alike the existing membership - the 10 schools in the league at that time.

Womack on screen

So when you looked at all that if you fit geographically, it added a team in the east, added a team in the west, gave us an opportunity to split into divisions for all of our sports at that point. It gave us then the opportunity to add two programs that were very, very similar and add two new states to our footprint as well. (:27)

Archive photos of SEC Championship Game, music fades

THE S-E-C WAS ALSO ABLE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF A LITTLE-KNOWN EXCEPTION IN THE N-C-DOUBLE-A RULEBOOK.

WITH TWELVE TEAMS, THE LEAGUE WAS ABLE TO CREATE A CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIP GAME IN FOOTBALL - AN EVENT THAT WOULD EVENTUALLY BECOME WORTH MILLIONS OF DOLLARS.

Womack on screen

It gave us the ability to go to the marketplace with a much stronger product and that provided a lot of things. It provided revenue to the league, it provided exposure to the league. (:13)

SEC Championship Game photos

THE CHAMPIONSHIP GAME BECAME THE ENVY OF EVERY LEAGUE. WITHIN 20 YEARS, EVERY MAJOR CONFERENCE HAD SOUGHT A 12TH MEMBER TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE SAME EXEMPTION.

Music begins, photos of Southwest Conference later years

AS THEY DID, SOME HISTORIC LEAGUES FELL BY THE WAYSIDE. ONE WAS THE SOUTHWEST CONFERENCE.

YEARS OF SCANDAL AND DECLINING ATTENDANCE HAD TAKEN THEIR TOLL. WITH AN ALL-TEXAS CONFERENCE UNAPPEALING TO T-V NETWORKS, THE LEAGUE DISSOLVED FOLLOWING THE 1995 FOOTBALL SEASON - FOUR YEARS AFTER ARKANSAS HAD PLAYED ITS FINAL GAME THERE.

Music fades, Blair SOT; cover photo of 1934 Razorbacks basketball team

My father had played basketball for the university under Glen Rose. He told me stories about the great players in the '20s and the '30s - I grew up on those stories. (:13)

Blair on screen, music begins to build

I hated to see the conference go down and I hated to see us leave. I would have said that if it was an absolutely equal choice, I would have voted against it. But it wasn't. I'm convinced then and convinced now in the long run we really didn't have a choice. (:25)

Cover video or photos from basketball championship, transition to photo of track SEC title win and Arkansas advancing to College World Series

ARKANSAS' BASKETBALL TEAM WON A NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP IN ITS THIRD YEAR IN THE S-E-C. OTHER SPORTS LIKE TRACK AND BASEBALL HAVE ALSO WON BIG.

Photos of football since 1992

BUT FOR FOOTBALL, THE DRIVING FORCE BEHIND EXPANSION, THE BIG WINS HAVE BEEN FEW AND FAR BETWEEN FOR THE RAZORBACKS IN THE S-E-C. A QUARTER-CENTURY AFTER THE MOVE, A CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIP HAS ELUDED ARKANSAS.

Ferritor on screen; cover of newspaper clippings or old scores

We were 6 or 7-0 and then we had to play Texas and Texas A&M, and that's our season. And that's not the kind of competition you want your athletes to have. You want them to play the best. You want them to compete for a national championship. And I think the SEC provided that. (:17)

Cover video of football stadium

AFTER COLLECTING ONE MILLION DOLLARS ITS LAST YEAR IN THE SOUTHWEST CONFERENCE, THE RAZORBACKS RECEIVED A RECORD THIRTY-ONE MILLION DOLLAR PAYOUT FROM THE S-E-C IN TWO-THOUSAND, FIFTEEN.

Cover video of band and fans, transitions to cover video of Champions Hall

ATHLETICS HAS ALSO HELPED TO RAISE THE ACADEMIC PROFILE OF THE UNIVERSITY. TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AFTER JOINING THE S-E-C, ATHLETICS FUNDED TWENTY-THREE MILLION DOLLARS TOWARD A NEW CLASSROOM BUILDING ON THE U-A CAMPUS.

Cover video of students walking on UA campus

AND SINCE EXPANSION, ARKANSAS' STUDENT ENROLLMENT HAS NEARLY DOUBLED AND IT IS ON THE BRINK OF BECOMING A TOP 50 PUBLIC RESEARCH UNIVERSITY.

Blair on screen

We have a climbed a ladder in academic competition since 1990 and I give Danny Ferritor a lot of credit for that, but I have to give Frank Broyles a lot of credit for that. (:17)

Frank Broyles statue

It's a team sport and everybody has pulled their different levers. (:05)

Fade to black

GRAPHIC: In the 25 years following Arkansas' move to the SEC, teams within the NCAA's largest football-playing division changed conference affiliation more than 150 times.

Fade to next graphic

GRAPHIC: Among The Changes:

Baylor	Boston College	Colorado
Florida State	Louisville	Maryland
Miami	Missouri	Nebraska
Pittsburgh	Rutgers	South Carolina
Syracuse	TCU	Texas

Texas A&M

Texas Tech

Utah

Virginia Tech

West Virginia

Fade to next graphic

GRAPHIC: Every major university cited football TV revenue as a reason for the move.

CREDITS ROLL (seats at Razorback Stadium in background)

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ADDITIONAL ARCHIVAL IMAGES

ABC Sports/ESPN

Arkansas Athletic Communications

Arkansas Democrat-Gazette

Associated Press

Broyles Foundation

CBS Sports

Chicago Tribune

Cotton Bowl Athletic Association

Dallas Cowboys

Houston Athletics

Kansas State Athletics

KNWA Razorback Nation

NBC Sports

Penn State Athletics

Razorback Yearbook

Rice Athletics

SEC Courtesy of XOS Digital

South Carolina Athletics

SMU Athletics

TrawlerForum.com

University of Arkansas System

UA Library Special Collections

Wichita State Athletics

MUSIC

Kevin Macleod, Incompetech.com

“Black Vortex”

“Carefree”

“The Complex”

“Corruption”

“Five Armies”

“Guts and Bourbon”

“Hitman”

“Thunderbird”

SPECIAL THANKS

Barry Arthur

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Jim Blair

Nancy Blair

Jim Blankenship

Betty Brodie

Tim Brooks

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Randy Dixon

Dan Ferritor

Susan Foley

Molly Arnold Gay

Bob Holt

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Patrick Pierson

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Mark Womack

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Music ends, fade to black

IN MEMORIAM

Bradley D. Jesson

(1932-2016)

Fade to black

-30-