

2017 LIFETIME IMPACT AWARD—D.M. & PHYLLIS SOKOLOSKY

Award presented by Dr. Kathy Campbell

The story of our honorees begins on the campus of Southwestern Oklahoma State University in Weatherford, OK in the early 1950's. A young nursing student Phyllis Wright met a determined pharmacy student DM Sokolosky. Each pursued their education, Phyllis graduating in 1954 with a BS in Home Economics and Biology, Soc in 1955 with a BS in Pharmacy, all while building a relationship and partnership that would serve as the foundation of this award.

62 years ago, January 21, 1956, wearing the wedding dress she had made, Phyllis and Soc were married and began their life together in Pryor OK where Soc began his career as a pharmacist. Soc once mentioned to me that when they were starting out they were looking for a place where they could own a pharmacy, support their community and build a life.

August 1956 brought just that. Soc and Phyllis purchased Shahn Drug Store on the corner of 76th and Main St. In Owasso, Oklahoma and reopened as Soc's Drug Store. The rent was \$80 a month, and Owasso's population was about 1300. Phyllis managed the cosmetics and jewelry counter and the their growing, young family, while Soc served his patients in the pharmacy, often day and night.

And support their community they did.

The next decades brought foundational efforts that each of us benefit from still today.

1961 has Soc serving his first stint as president of the Owasso Chamber of Commerce and Phillis serving one of her many stints as secretary.

1962 began Soc's coordination of Owasso's first financial institution, First Bank of Owasso.

1965 Soc recognized that many families living outside Owasso's city limit were with out a stable and safe source of drinking water. He organized the Rogers County Rural Water District #3, which is now the largest water district in Oklahoma.

1967 Soc served as the contractor for Owasso's first post office building.

1974 Soc helped the Owasso Public Schools acquire a piece of property 'way out of town' at the corner of 86th and 129th. Included in this transaction was a 10 acre donation dedicated to the Owasso FFA, which laid the foundation of what is now a unique agricultural education in a suburban school district.

1979 Brought the sale of the pharmacy. *Soc's uncanny talent to envision a future that most could not see*, continued in his efforts to develop many of the real estate subdivisions that built Owasso. Ator Heights, Elm Creek, Bushland Estates, Cornerstone, Caudle Estates, Trail's End Estates, Timbergate, Champions and the Home Place to name a few.

1992 Soc and Phyllis were one of the four couples founding Freedom Baptist Church.

Through all of their years of business, it was never forgotten, that business is about people. From their beginning, Phyllis has sought out people in need and worked to bring comfort. Whether it a news clipping and a note of encouragement, or her decades of ministry serving Owasso's home bound or as in 1980 in leading the massive effort to raise \$200,000 to save the life of infant Benjamin Marquette with a successful liver transplant, *Phyllis Sokolosky showed up, worked hard and loved harder.*

This is just a very small piece of their lives of service. Add to this cumulatively hundreds of years of local board service, and hundreds of thousands of dollars raised for the many, many causes that they knew would move our community forward.

After having known Phyllis and Soc for several years, I was once giving Soc a hard time, suggesting the real secret of his success was indeed Phyllis. He did not deny it and responded, “It is a partnership.” And what a partnership it is.

Partners in business, partners in community, probably their greatest legacy is their partnership in raising their 4 children- Dee, Noble, Ann, and Sue. *I have been told that each of them are very experienced at cleaning pharmacy shelves.* Hard work, community service and a deep sense of family is the ripple that continues with each of them and with each generation.

Often what has a dream come to reality is the impeccable management and execution of the details. Even many of the details of this speech were lifted from Phyllis’s 12 meticulously documented volumes of their history. *With Soc’s vision and talent and Phyllis’s elegance, love and diligence, their dreams turned into our reality.* It is for this we recognize and thank you.

**It is my privilege to know Phyllis and Soc
It is my privilege to serve Phyllis and Soc
It is my privilege to be loved by Phyllis and Soc
And as Chairman, and as a friend, it is my profound privilege to present the 2018 Owasso Chamber of Commerce Lifetime Impact Award to DM and Phyllis Sokolosky.**