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The Crook Comes Clean

Dale Crock

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My name is Dale Crock. I was the Purdue Forestry Club president during the spring and fall semesters of 1961. You can’t possibly know me, but I have a short, mostly true, story that could be of interest to the Iowa State Forestry Club members.

During late April or early May of 1961, your club hosted the Forestry Conclave. For fear that the visiting schools would not know where they were, your former members hoisted a large “Iowa State Forestry Club” flag up a 25-foot flagpole then proceeded to grease the pole. I suppose the latter was to discourage some type of Iowa vermin from chewing the pole down. I surmise that your club either delegated the flag hoisting duty to freshman loggers or to some willing engineering club that may have wanted to be helpful but did not know their knots.

At any rate, some time after the Ames bars closed on Friday night, I was dutifully checking the area for any members from any of the other schools who may not have found their bunks and possibly would not be properly rested for the ensuing competition.

While on this charitable mission, I was searching the area near the flagpole when low and behold the flag’s securing knots came loose, and that flag ended up in my hands. Wanting to protect such a fine piece of art from any of the villainous club members from the other schools, I took the flag to my cabin for safe-keeping. Throughout the weekend and the remainder of my time at Purdue, I could not find anyone who wanted to claim an item from Iowa State.

Upon my graduation from Purdue, I left the flag with underclassmen. It is reported that they, too, tried in vain to find someone to reclaim the flag. But no one from Iowa State seemed to want it.

Last spring, in Phoenix, Arizona, while hosting 5 of my 28 K through 12 primary school classmates to an afternoon “tea” party, one of my classmates brought along Ed Carlisle, a Purdue forester who was one year behind me.

Ed immediately recalled how that flag fell into my hands and my efforts and his later efforts to get someone from Iowa State to claim said flag. He had dutifully maintained custody of the unclaimed flag for about 40 years and said that it was again my turn to store said flag and continue to try to get rid of this Iowa State momento.

Now I’m hopeful that you will have more compassion than your predecessors and will be willing to reclaim this Iowa State relic. Purdue graduates no longer wish to fill their storage shelves with this Iowa State item. What say you?

OH yes, one more thing, I don’t know how it happened, but the clothes I was wearing that night were ruined by a heavy coating of grease from somewhere. They no longer fit, so you shouldn’t worry about my clothes.


P.S. Was knot tying added to your curriculum?
Editor's Note:
The flag was returned to the club in fine condition, as displayed by Dr. Joe Colletti, Meg Sweeney, and Dr. Michael Kelly below. It was displayed at the NREM department tent at this year's VEISHEA celebration in April. We extend our warmest thanks to Dale Crock for returning this precious artifact.