



Phil Rees '64

Has been elected to membership in the

Beta Phi Hall of Honor

Class of 2019

Brother Phil Rees spent his professional life in four impressive areas: instructor pilot in the U.S. Air Force, high school basketball coach, high school principal, and life coach at his church -- not to mention teaching in an Eskimo Village on the North Slope of Alaska for 20 years.

Brother Rees grew up in Southern California before pledging Beta Phi in 1960. He admits to being a “rather shy young man,” but he soon became popular with his brothers, who elected him as Magister. He graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1964 from the UA and later earned his master’s degree in counseling and guidance from the University of North Dakota.

He spent 21 years in the USAF, retiring as a lieutenant colonel. During that period he flew more than 400 missions in Vietnam and later became part of an important covert operation in Thailand that he calls “the highlight of my military career.” He also was an Aircraft Commander in a B-52.

After the military, Brother Rees taught in California before he and his wife Eva began a new adventure. They sold everything and moved to Alaska. Teaching in the bush in an Eskimo village “is one of the greatest adventures anyone could ever have. We had beachfront property on the Arctic ocean.” He even raised and developed an 11-dog recreational mushing team. He also was invited to become part of a Native whaling crew (a very special honor) to chase bowhead whale for three springs, where they “caught” a whale each year.

When he returned to the lower 48, he became a pastor and a certified life coach for 20 years.

He and Eva have three adult children and seven grandchildren.

Brother Rees praised Sigma Chi for “honing my leadership abilities and helping to expand my social skills. I took to heart the characteristics of the founders, especially that of being a high-minded man and full of integrity.”