

## December 2003

It is already 2004 by the time this Newsletter reaches our Website, but the info was compiled before the end of December 2003. What a year 2003 has been! It seems that time is traveling at “warp speed”. The [www.ghsclassof1966.com](http://www.ghsclassof1966.com) website has eclipsed more than 340 hits before 2004. I finally purchased a scanner and got some additional assistance from Shelley McDade to get the old reunion photos from 1976, 1981, 1986, 1991, 1996, and 2001 online for all to see. I hope to be adding additional photos from newspapers, yearbooks, personal files, etc. in 2004. I plan to mail out copies of this Newsletter to our classmates that I have addresses for, but no email address. We need to gather all the email addresses we can for more efficient and effective communication.

December 2003 ended on some very sad notes for some. Sandra Bible Wallace lost her husband Mike just before Christmas. Barbara Curry Childress lost her older brother, David, on Tuesday before Christmas. Many of you know that Joe Lipscomb’s Mom passed away a recently, and John Yancey lost his Mom and Dad this year.

I hope that those of you who can access the website have looked over the Grapevine School Song and its three verses. Makes you wonder what happened that made them stop singing all three. Kind of like changing from purple and gold to red and white!

I did receive an invitation to attend Bob Havran’s 55<sup>th</sup> birthday party at his beautiful home in Fort Worth . I was very fortunate to meet many of Bob’s and Joy’s friends and family. You know, Bob is still a nice guy, and his friends’ comments were a testament to that. Joy, thanks for the invitation to help “Old” Bob celebrate, it was exceptional!

I asked Gary to send me something about what he was doing to include, he did.

Gary Cumbie ended a 32-year career with Lone Star Gas / TXU in May of 2003 and began a new career as Vice President for Advancement at Texas Wesleyan University in September. VP of Advancement is higher education jargon for money pirate. Gary did however say that his new job reminded him of John Yancey’s SMU career – going to college everyday, but never attending classes! Jane, Gary’s wonderful wife, is continuing to work for the Fort Worth ISD as Personnel Records Supervisor.

A number of us have been fortunate to have renewed an old high school pastime of playing poker at Cumbie’s home during 2003. However, I do know that Gary purchased a new home, but failed to notify any of us about a new address! I want to publicly thank Jane and Gary for making those of us who attended feel very welcome (John Yancey, Bob Havran, Jim Box, David Florence, Darrell Faglie, Joe Lipscomb, Gus Linthicum, Bob Stevenson and me).

I should share parts of an email from Bob Stevenson titled “Musings of a Poker Player, or, Things I Noticed Last Friday Night”: 1) Cumbie tells jokes much better than he cooks; 2) Stevenson is still cheap; 3) Oliver is perfectly suited to be a Chief Financial Officer since he kept the ante correct all night long – managed to keep Stevenson honest most of the evening; 4) Faglie didn’t start anything (joke)...or win anything; 5) Box is still the smartest one, except for his inability to remember the intricacies of playing “mish-mash-pass-the-trash”; 6) Linthicum can still come from behind and pull out the big win...even when he has to pass off a pat Full House; 7) Lipscomb still has the skills to tie for the winning hand and win one half of one pot in a mere 4 hours of card playing. He won half a pot more than a dead man; 8) Florence still hates cats and scotch and has added Coach Bobby Knight to that list; 9) Cumbie can not hold a job; 10) Yancey still gets the blame for anything that breaks, goes wrong, or spills....and justifiably; 11) Oliver never lies about having 7 Jacks.

Gary did take some time off between TXU retirement and starting his money laundering job for Texas Wesleyan. During this time he took several trips and completed his goal of having visited all 50 states – I will assume that he meant states as in those representing the stars on our U.S. Flag rather than multiple states of mind. Jane would have matched the same milestone, but she balked at a weekend trip Gary took to Anchorage – she said that she preferred to wait a year or two until they can take an Alaskan cruise. Although Gary made the trip to Alaska alone, Jane was able to take several trips during 2003 with Gary to Key West, New York City, the Carolinas, the Dakotas, Denver, and Honolulu. Sounds like Gary’s last months with TXU were spent hiding out.

Gary’s Mom is still living, but has had several health issues over the past year – please keep her in your thoughts and prayers. Jane’s Dad is doing incredibly well, and celebrated his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday in July.

Gary reported that his and Jane's children are happy and healthy. Steve finished his MBA in May (tops in his class), married Jennifer Fowler in June, and entered SMU law school in September. Gary said that meant another three-year wait for grandkids! Laura is still single, works at American Airlines, and will finish her MA in Criminology next year (if she can get her thesis written).

Gary said that if there were troubles for his family in 2003 that they were overshadowed by the joys. He said that he feels very blessed and thanks God for his many blessings. He did say that being a part of the GHS Class of 1966 was to be counted as one of his blessings – I think that one is shared by all. By the way, Gary's new mailing address is 400 Willow Ridge Road, Fort Worth, Texas 76103...home phone is the same.

I also asked Pam Cooper to send me something to include in this newsletter. Pam now lives in Cave Junction, Oregon. She sent me a story, too long for the newsletter that talks about having orphans share Christmas with her and her family as a child....

*"It wasn't hard to forget that we had 'given up' anything as we watched older children from the orphanage carefully untie each ribbon, meticulously peel off tape, unfold and re-fold wrapping paper with infinite care. Some of them had never known a real family Christmas; others had only cobwebbed memories. I remember seeing a lip quivering; a few eyes fill with tears and look away in a hurry as they opened their gifts. Oh, there was no pity here. We gave them time to flow through their sorrow for what was and often never was. The tree and presents weren't what counted. They knew it and we knew it.*

*Obviously, I've never forgotten that Christmas. Two big-hearted adults opened a lot of doors for all the kids in their household that day. The future lay beyond those doors with a vague shape of something to strive for in our lives, something our present-day world seems to forget. Our hearts were full with giving and receiving. Not consumer items, not stress-timed shopping, wrapping and mailing, but caring and sharing, with Family, whether by blood or not. We went outside of ourselves, our cocoon of existence in our middle-class life. Our family, then, and those children from the orphanage, all of us there that Christmas, we were luckier than most.*

Pam, thanks for sharing this with your classmates.

I also have something from Sharon Cooper Scott that I received sometime back, but feel compelled to share.....This is Sharon Cooper Scott and I am living in Rock Hill, SC and have for the past 34 years. I am married to James M. Scott and we have been married for 36 years. We have two living children and one deceased. Our daughter Tauna Kimbrell is 34 and is married to Fred. They have two children, Jamie who is 13 and Jessica who is 10 and expecting another (who should already be there). Timothy would have been 32 this past year, but he only lived for twelve hours. And, Michael is 26 years old and married to Terri. They have a little girl named Lauren Elizabeth, who is one. My husband, Jimmy works for Duke Energy at the Catawba Nuclear Power Plant as a nuclear maintenance supervisor. In 1988 we bought a small print shop. Our daughter was employed for the local newspaper at the time and quit her job to help us run the shop. I learned to do it all, except for the typesetting and the secretarial service. I did the setups, shot the negatives, did the stripping, burned the plates, did all the printing as well as managed the shop. We had good success for ten years, and then BOOM, cancer struck. IN 1995 I was diagnosed with breast cancer. For ten months I underwent chemo, radiation and then chemo again. I worked every day. Just when we thought things were starting to look up, I developed more problems that required surgery that would put me out of work for three months. We sold the shop on the Friday before I had surgery on the following Monday. I am presently employed at Carolina Kids Child Development Center and have been there for four years. That is my true calling; there are so many children that are just crying out for a little attention and love. I work with the babies from six months to a year. I talk to Pam from time to time. Billie Cooper is now living in Smithfield Texas down the street from her youngest daughter Jeannie. I come home about every four of five years. I see Barbara Curry Childress and keep in touch with her. The only people I have seen since I left Grapevine in 1963 are Barbara Curry, Aileen Buford, Danny Buford, Roger Hardin and Linda Murphree Forester. Every time I come home and go to town in Grapevine, I search everyone's face to see if there is anyone I recognize. Hope to make it to a reunion some day!

Please know that Mr. John Yancey is now a Mortgage Banker with Bank of Texas in Dallas. Please check out the photos of John in the Photos section of the Website! John, we all wish you the best as the Bank of Texas attempts to try and figure you out!

I received a nice email from Barbara Robinson, Larry Robinson's wife this month. In the email was an attached photo of Larry giving us the old "thumbs up" sign. Larry looked great! I know that all of you wish Larry and Barbara the best of everything. Thanks again Barbara for sharing that photo with me and many of Larry's Classmates.

A number of us have seen a more than a usual amount of Bob Stevenson this past year. Bob still looks the same, but unfortunately acts pretty much the same as well. Bob, even though you deserted us for St. Marks Academy in the mid-sixties, we still consider you one of us. It has been very nice to visit with you as you've become so well adjusted to computers and internet communication – especially after the discovery (by Joe Lipscomb) some of your early literary classics.

Rick (“if you're not shopping with me – you're burning money”) Stacy opened a new furniture store in Allen , Texas at the close of 2003. Congrats Rick!

Ted Willhoite passed away this December at the young age of 92. Ted is one of those Grapevine Icons that will truly be missed. Darrell Faglie, Joe Lipscomb and I rode to the funeral service together. We talked about those individuals we grew up with in Grapevine and probably had more influence on us than we ever really noticed. Ted and many others were true role models who provided so many insights into being a good person and a positive contributor to his home town.

John Yancey lost his Mom and Dad this year and we all know and remember the influence Bill and Betty Yancey had on so many of us growing up in Grapevine. They were involved parents. They knew us all and never shunned from feeling some responsibility in helping raise us, whether you played in the Grapevine Little League Baseball Association or were fortunate enough to be in Mrs. Yancey's Cub Scout Den (Rick Stacy, Jim Box, Bob Havran, Kent Kennedy, Larry Robinson, Gary Dettenmayer, Bobby Lawrence, Jim Stockton, and me). They cared, we knew it, and we felt it.

As mentioned before, Sue Lipscomb (Joe's Mom) passed away a few months back. What a wonderful lady. What a wonderful person who gave so much of herself to her hometown of Grapevine. Teaching the likes of children like us who gained so much from our Grapevine Public School education.

A special thanks to so many of you who kept Roger Hardin and his family in your thoughts and prayers while Roger fought cancer. He still has need for your prayers, but I know that our class was very helpful during his time of treatments.

Linda and I were happy and surprised to hear a knock on our front door a few months back (and after dark). Opening the door we discovered Caroline Cason Wilkinson and her husband John. They came in and we had a great time visiting. Hopefully more of that can happen in 2004 with many of our classmates! John and Caroline, thanks for the visit it was really nice!

I guess I should also bring you up to date on FOP (Faglie & Oliver Partners) efforts. As most of you know, Darrell Faglie and I formed a Partnership in 2000. Of course Donna and Linda had to sign the legal documents, but have no voting rights. However, I need to be completely honest by saying that even though Donna and Linda do not have voting rights in the General Partnership Darrell and I formed, they have seemed to acquire the ability to veto ideas – not sure how that happened, but it has.

Anyway, FOP has purchased about 80 acres of beautiful property just outside of Forestburg , Texas (between Gainesville and Decatur ) in an area that resembles the Hill Country....lots of live oaks and other hardwoods with elevations that vary as much as 130 feet. We are in the process of building a small lake (about 3 or so acres) in the middle of the wooded area. The lake will be about 35 feet deep in the channel and we are awaiting an opportunity to finish it by constructing the dam. We hope to get the dam completed within the next few months – in time for the spring rains.

We have also drilled a water well and built a well house structure that can house our two mules. Don't jump to the conclusion that this refers to Donna and Linda, it actually refers to our two Kawasaki Mules that we use on the property for fun and work. We can camp out there and try to spend as many weekends and time there as we can – it is very beautiful. We have met some of our neighbors and they have yet to reject us completely.

Oh, the name of the place purchased by FOP is the Shooting Star Ranch. We have no cattle (we are members of the Texas & Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association). Our property keeps agricultural zoning under Wildlife Management. Blue Bird housing, Wood Duck housing, Horny Toad/Lizard Census Taking, Constructing brush piles for safe places for birds and small animals, Lake building for supplemental water, cutting down red cedars, and a few other we work on allows to qualify for agricultural attachment on the property. We are also members of the Upper Clear Creek Range and Wildlife Management Association. Linda is the secretary for this group in 2004. We hope some day to have a party there for our class! It will be a blast!

I get to talk via email to James Wilkins (retired FBI guy) several times a month. He is still the Chief of Police in Marshall , Texas . Darrell, Donna, Linda and I were through Marshall in September. As luck would have it we were there during the 28<sup>th</sup> annual Fire Ant Festival. Only in Texas can a community rally around such a fierce small critter and make it seem like a celebration. As we visited the exhibits and crafts I spoke with a nice lady in the information booth about James. She told us that he was involved in the parade and usually was there participating. I assured her that while growing up in Grapevine he often mentioned a desire to pay tribute to ants and that I suspected that was one of the reasons he ventured to Marshall . I think she bought it. She said she would give James my business card, but when I last checked he had never talked to this lady or received my business card.

While in Marshall , during the Fire Ant Festival, Darrell and I sent out a few post cards to some of our classmates with a photo of the Fire Ant Festival showing a group of adult sized people in fire ant costumes standing beside some wolf-like creature in some sort of Super Amdro suit. We immediately decided to send that out signing the card next to Super Amdro with AMDRO WILKINS. It was mailed from Marshall, and everyone that we sent it to fell for it. They gave James a hard time in some emails, so I finally told him what happened. However, those who received the mailings are finding out as they read.

I think Linda Bowden Cox and her husband Jerry also received a couple of strange post cards from San Antonio recently. Strange post card things seem to be happening of late.

Thanks to Bob Havran, John Yancey, Gary Cumbie, Lavoy Grider, Van Morrison, Bob Stevenson, James Wilkins, Linda Bowden-Cox, Larry Cox, Pam Cooper, Rick Stacy, Joe Lipscomb, David & Darlene Florence, Kent Kennedy, Larry & Barbara Robinson, Barbara Curry Childress, Sharon Huffman Smith, Mary Alering Wiggins, Wylie Hokett, Jim Box, Chris & Mary Ann Ashton, Richard Creecy, Barbara Ethridge, Terri Gregg Spann, Linda Murphree Forester, Johnnie Mae Washington Braddock, and numerous others for your encouragement and support. A special "THANK YOU" to Darrell and Donna Faglie, who help me keep the website going, and for their wonderful friendship.

GOD BLESS the GHS Class of 1966! What a great GROUP to be a part of!

Thanks to you all, Larry