

Greetings Classmates, it is September 2004....In 1966, 2004 seemed a rather unimaginable time in the future – well...here it is! It has gone by rather quickly most seem to feel and think. As we've grown older, if you're like me, you treasure those good times we all shared in the fifties and sixties! Not that all times afterward have been bad, but as we reflect, those were some great times, shared with some people who are even better people today. We have been so fortunate and so fortunate that so many of us still communicate. Ours was a unique group, and nothing seems to have changed in that regard!

However, we are reminded that as we grow older some difficult times have been a part of our lives too. We had several classmates who experienced a loss since our last Newsletter. Lavoy Grider and his wife, Jeannette, went to visit Jeannette's brother and sister-in-law, Doug and Sue at the hospital in late June. They arrived about 15 minutes prior to Sue's passing. She had lost her fight to breast cancer, leaving behind her husband, Doug, three children, family and friends. I hope that our prayers were able to provide some comfort to Jeanette and her family.

My heart poured out, as yours did, to Terry Stephens during the week of July 12, 2004 when within a few hours lost his mother and brother. I can not imagine how difficult that had to be. One loss of that magnitude, even though you know it is coming is difficult, but two – unimaginable. Terry, I hope that our prayers, your family and other friends helped you during that time and continue to give you strength.

Then, on July 16, 2004, Betty Derby Vandiver's Mom, Alice Faye Derby, passed away. Again, notification was emailed out attempting to let classmates know of Betty's loss and time of sorrow. Once again, many expressed sympathy and support to Betty during this time. Please continue to keep Betty and her family in your thoughts as they continue to cope with this loss.

Only days after Terry Stephen's loss and Betty Derby Vandiver's loss, Sandra Bible lost her father, Herbert Bible on July 22, 2004. Sandra's dad had been in poor health for a couple of years. Most of us remember her dad as a Dallas police officer (he served for 29 years). I know that everyone's prayers for

Sandra these past nine months have been very important. With the sudden unexpected loss of her husband in December and her Dad in July, few of us understand the feeling and loss experienced in such a short period of time. Continue to keep Sandra and her family in your prayers.

I also heard from Terri Gregg Spann, who had back surgery in August and is recovering at home. Please keep Terri in your thoughts and prayers and send her a note or email letting her know that you are thinking about her during her recovery time.

I also know that Diane Cherry Stacy is going through a lot with her mother, who has good days and difficult days. Diane has spent a lot of time dealing with doctors with her mother and is taking good care of her these days. Keep Diane, her Mom, and the Cherry and Stacy families in your prayers as well.

Richard Creecy emailed me just a few days ago that Clayton Biggers (Hank's dad) was in the hospital and had just been diagnosed with cancer. Darrell Faglie talked with Hank's mother, Stella, and at that time, Clayton was in Baylor Hospital Grapevine. They had stopped the loss of white blood cells, but he had a long way to go. He had a number of transfusions. He can have limited company, but visitors have to wear a mask and wash hands before going in. Please keep Clayton and the Biggers family in your prayers.

I started out this Newsletter talking about good times, but quickly reminded us of the difficulties in life we seem to be experiencing more of these days too. Even though there are very difficult times we are all experiencing, it is those relationships and friendships that have lasted over our lives that help us cope and deal with the difficulties life brings our way. I know that with the loss of my daughter three years ago and my father seven months later, it was friends, family and God that allowed me to go on. I know that each of you are having similar experiences and join me in realizing how important those long-term friendships are – we have such a wonderful group of classmates who would do anything to help or assist one another – we are truly blessed in so many ways. But, we must not lose sight that there are many wonderful things that come our way too.

Thanks again to Gary Cumbie for chairing this class committee and

a special thanks to his committee of Darlene Tillery Florence, Diane Cherry Stacy, and Van Morrison (ex-Fire Chief, not the singer) for their help and time spent on helping make this happen. We have a number of classmates who have signed up to go on the Alaskan Cruise (departing June 3, 2005). Linda Bowden-Cox, Darrell Faglie, Donna Young Faglie, Larry Oliver, Gary Cumbie, David Florence, Darlene Tillery Florence, Chris Ashton, Mary Ann Sparger Ashton, and Rick Stacy have signed up – that is ten classmates – and Judy Logan is trying to work out a way to go as well – we all hope Judy is able to work things out. Rick and Diane are also bringing along their children and grandchildren...and, Rick's brothers Randy and Ronnie (with their family) and Rick's sister Rhonda & family....and Rick's parents, RJ and Merle....and Diane's brother William (Bill) Cherry and family....I keep waiting on the other names for Diane to email me. At any rate we will have over 40 travelers going with or are a part of the GHS Class of 1966 Class Cruise to Alaska...please keep the other cruise travelers in your prayers as they have to experience us for seven days and nights!

Thanks to Barbara Curry Childress, Gary Cumbie, Darrell Faglie, and Linda Oliver who also were able to attend Van Morrison's retirement reception at the end of June. It was a great celebration and a great time. I know that I and others in attendance were more than in awe of all the contributions Van has made as a public servant over the years – as a fireman and as a soldier (so we heard at the reception). Van and I have been friends for longer than either of us would want to publicly admit...heck we even attended some college classes together and had some correspondence while he was in Viet Nam. He is a wonderful individual and deserved all of the accolades received at that event. Congratulations again, Van.

In the last Newsletter, I mentioned a few “get-togethers” of our classmates that took place over that prior several months. There were some others I know of since our last newsletter. Our low-stakes poker group gathered at the home of David Florence in July. Gus Linthicum, Gary Cumbie, Rick Stacy, Jim Box, Darrell Faglie and Larry Oliver were there to enjoy the fellowship and Cumbie's usual array of dumb jokes...and most of us lost money too!

David and Darlene Florence also hosted a little cookout for Gary &

Jane Cumbie, Darrell & Donna Faglie, and Larry & Linda Oliver to discuss possible “after-the-cruise” excursions in June....actually David & Darlene and Gary & Jane are going on a 5-day trip inland after we arrive in Seward.

During August, a number of our classmates and others attended another catfish dinner at Ole Whiskers Catfish & Seafood Buffet in Plano, Texas. Those classmates in attendance were: Lavoy Grider, Randy Flanagan, Darrell Faglie, Donna Young Faglie, Mary Lynn Millican Fuller, Darla Eubanks Cooper, Barbara Ethridge, Johnnie Mae Washington Braddock, Terry Stephens, Doug Moore, and Larry Oliver.

Doug Moore suggested that we do the Ole Whiskers thing again soon...so we are inviting any of our classmates who can attend – please make arrangements to join us at 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, September 18, 2004 at: Ole Whiskers Catfish & Seafood Buffet
1301 Custer Rd.
Plano, Texas 75075

Please mark your calendars and come enjoy a GREAT time with some OLD friends and catfish and shrimp and good food! You’ll be so grateful that you did.

I hope that you’ve had a chance to check out our www.ghsclassof1966.com website in the past several weeks to see the little note from Randy Flanagan’s son about our class of OLD PEOPLE. I also hope you’ve had an opportunity to see some of the new photos and newspaper articles that have also been added.

The one thing that we don’t have enough of on the website is people signing in on the guest book (please do) and posting things for comments or discussion on that page. It would be nice if you guys would use that once in a while!

At any rate...school has started back, Thanksgiving and Christmas will be here before we know it. 2005 will also be here more quickly than we want to realize. And, that also means that 2006 can’t be too far off – which is reunion time again. Remember, we are shooting for a late spring 2006 reunion and we hope to try and make a weekend of it...for those who can stay awake.

If you know where classmates are that we have not located...please help us out. I will be putting a list of missing classmates out to our email list soon and most likely a new list for the December Newsletter.

By the way, Gayle Shumate is now getting our newsletter, and we have a link on the Grapevine High School Website.

Until then, keep me posted on all you can, and thanks for all the prayers and support to our classmates who have had times of loss and difficulty these past months. God Bless you and the entire GHS Class of 1966.

Respectfully,
Larry Oliver