

GRAPEVINE HIGH SCHOOL

CLASS of 1966

MARCH 2008 NEWSLETTER

Greetings Classmates & Friends of the Grapevine High School Class of 1966!

Hard to believe that it is already March 2008...it has been almost five years since I started publishing our class Newsletters on our Class Website! Hard to believe that the majority of our class has reached the age of 60 years old! For those with failing eyesight → **HARD TO BELIEVE THAT THE MAJORITY OF OUR CLASS HAS**

REACHED THE AGE OF 60 YEARS OLD! I know that many of us thought that 60 was ancient when we were in school. Some days I certainly feel that it is ancient (even though I have not yet reached that age)! I just know that our minds seem to disallow us to feel that old – we seem to think it is just the others who really feel their age. As they say, 60 is the new 40, but I don't believe that is being said by anyone under the age of 40!

We continue to be reminded of our age as we have started paying more attention to the Obituaries; started seeing more people at funerals than at social events; feel like staying home a lot more; complaining about the “young people of the day”; watching the stock market & 401Ks; trying to decide just how long we have to work to survive after retirement; keeping abreast of the good doctors in our areas; keeping a keener and keener eye on taxes and the cost of living; having concern about hair loss and color; keeping our dues to AARP paid up; finding clothes that fit and don't look like they're forty years behind the fashion trend; using more and more phrases that sound like our parents; spoiling grandchildren; trying to sell aluminum cans to afford fuel for our car; remembering to take all our medication; trying to remember our birthdays; and all the other stuff that makes us easy to spot in a crowd. We also find ourselves trying to figure out what happened to: barbers, telephone operators, good American-made automobiles, American Manufacturing, State and National Elected Officials we can trust, good schools, safe communities, gun free public schools and universities, gasoline for under a dollar, family vacations, local electrical and gas distributors we knew by name and who could provide service and answer questions, decent grocery stores, cashiers who were courteous and could make change, teachers who didn't dress like the students, children playing outside, Post Offices who had friendly and service- oriented workers, TV shows that didn't need constant censorship, movies that were scary without gore and barrels of blood, loyal and ethical workers, people who worked for a company more than twenty-five years, savings accounts, real worship services, knowing all your neighbors and their families, keeping in contact with your long time friends, and too many other things that we've learned to do without. We continue to look for the exceptions and sometimes find them, and it is my wish that our class's effort to keep in touch serves some purpose in our life expectations.

As most of you know, Randy (Mouse) Flanagan was diagnosed with TB over the past several weeks. He is at home and taking medication. He is sort of restricted and under some control of the County in terms of his being monitored and subject to various restrictions. He has been released from House Arrest, as he was able to join us at the GOLDEN CORRAL in March (more on that later) and is doing much better. Please keep Randy (Mouse), his wife Pat, their family and his doctors in your thoughts and prayers as they go through this difficult time.

I received an email from Diane Stacy on the 1st of March. She is continuing her battle with cancer. She had just finished the third of 12 treatments. She said that they were not nearly as bad as the first series of treatments, only minor inconveniences. Her blood count is still low and falling weekly. It is OK, but it makes her tire easily. Otherwise she said that she was feeling pretty good. Her weight is still down (which she seemed to like) and her

appetite is returning, which she characterized as “bad”. She did say that it was not back to normal for chocolate (which she was ready for). Diane has nine more weeks of this treatment, then she only has one drug that she will continue to receive every three weeks until February 2009. She has determined that they have used every drug possible to make sure “they didn’t miss any little varmints”. Diane was at the GOLDEN CORRAL in March (see more on that later in the Newsletter). Continue to keep Diane, Rick and their family in your thoughts and prayers, I know that are most appreciative.

Randy Doty, who moved away from Grapevine when we were in the seventh grade, emailed me a couple of weeks ago that he was going to Medical City that weekend for either the “old balloon” procedure or by-pass surgery. During the end of February Randy did have a stint in one artery (it had 99% blockage) and he returns in early March for another stint in a second artery with 90% blockage. As Randy said in his email to me, looks like lots of diet and exercise in his future. Keep Randy in your prayers too, he did say to tell everyone hello and he’d see us next time.

Linda and I traveled to New York City with Gary and Jane Cumbie the day after Christmas and returned just before New Year’s Eve. We had a great time! We attended the Metropolitan Opera, where we saw the Russian Opera, War and Peace. Gary and I spent most of the evening translating the language for Linda and Jane. We were able to take a tour of the Metropolitan Opera House at Lincoln Center before the Opera and it was a great tour. This Opera had about 1200 in the cast and lasted about 4 hours, but it was excellent, even for those not fluent in Russian (which was most everyone in the crowd). The back of the seats had translations for everyone to see if they were not close enough to me or Gary for our translation (everyone was so appreciative). In New York we also went to the Broadway Shows Avenue Q and Young Frankenstein. They too were exceptional performances and we had a wonderful time. We got to see the Naked Cowboy at Times Square. We took a carriage ride at Central Park. We had dinner for the Cumbie’s 40th anniversary at Tavern on the Green. Gary and I were fortunate enough to purchase “Heidi Hats” so that we fit in with the Young Gentleman of the Big Apple (see photo below) we noticed that we were continually being admired by the crowds.



I was invited to a reunion of sorts of the GHS Class of 1978 (some of my ex-students) during the fall. They were discussing a cruise for their class and I told them about our Class Cruise in 2005 to Alaska. I also shared photos of our class cruise. They have one planned for this June (2008) to various ports in the Caribbean and are very excited!

I think we may need to see about our class trying to put something together for a trip in 2009! Let me know if you have any interest in looking at a possible train/rail trip in Canada leaving Vancouver, visiting Victoria Island, Banff, Lake Louise and all the wonders of the Canadian Mountains, or the possibility of flying to Hawaii and then boarding a cruise ship to tour the islands for a week. Anyway, if you think this might be of interest, let me know and we will check out the prices, possibilities, and interest.

Darrell & Donna Faglie's youngest son, Brad, will be graduating from Texas A&M Medical School in May to start his internship! I know that they are so very proud of Brad for this long and difficult journey in completing his studies. He will be certain about where his internship be on March 20th, and will soon be out practicing...and no one better than our class can appreciate having good doctors out there!

March 8, 2008....After more than a year of discussions and trying for another two months to come up with a place in Grapevine to hold one of our OLD WHISKERS GET-TOGETHERS somewhere in Grapevine, IT HAPPENED! Thanks to Darrell Faglie, who checked out the Golden Corral in Grapevine (out at the Grapevine Mills Mall perimeter) we set a date for March 8th. I received an email from Vicki Leighton McDonald (GHS Class of 1970) and with a few others helping we managed to have our first GOLDEN CORRAL GET-TOGETHER. What a great first turnout. We had 45 people show – all but nine of those attending were actually GHS graduates from the Classes of: 1970 (8 classmates), 1969 (1 class member), 1968 (2 classmates), 1967 (10 classmates), 1966 (11 classmates), 1965 (3 classmates), 1963 (1 class member), and 9 non-GHS graduate guests! What a great time we had visiting. Randy Robinson came down from Oklahoma to join us this time! Also, we had Rick and Diane Stacy join us, and it was great to see Diane – she is doing so great. We hope to plan on another similar GOLDEN CORRAL GET-TOGETHER in the near future and I certainly hope that we can encourage more from our class and others to attend! We even had a good number of regular to semi-regular OLD WHISKERS folks unable to join us – we could have easily had 50-60 attend! Maybe next time! By the way, just under ½ of those attending were able to take advantage of the 60 year and older discount!

During March, we lost some long-time Grapevine citizens and hometown contributors. Dentist, Dr. William Wilkerson passed away in March. Dr. Wilkerson was a long time Grapevine Icon and former mayor of Flower Mound, Texas. I still have cavities that Dr. Wilkerson filled when I was in the fifth grade! Louise Emery, the mother of Doug, Francis and Kelley Emery passed way in early March too. The Emery family is another icon of Grapevine.

Tom Walker told me that during a short journey to southern Oklahoma (property owned by Native Americans) he was engaged in a mathematical experimental game of chance. During a time there in early March he was able to return from Oklahoma after, by mere chance, with a multi-thousand dollar return from a one-armed bandit. Congratulations Tom! I know some poker players like Bob Stevenson, John Yancey, Gary Cumbie, Gus Linthicum, Joe Lipscomb, Jim Box, Darrell Faglie, Rick Stacy, and David Florence who could use some tutoring! Tom was to have joined us at the Golden Corral GET-TOGETHER, but he forgot – not unlike those from our class who ever so often “forget” things as well.

In case you've not heard, Butch Tiller was involved in an auto accident the first week of March. His main injury was a broken neck and he had some minor cuts on his back and legs. On Thursday, March 6th, he had surgery to put a screw into his neck that was successful. However, the area of the neck where the screw was put had a bone chip and they were unable to tighten the screw as much as they wanted. He was fitted with a neck brace and they will continue to monitor his situation. At the time of the newsletter he remained in the East Texas Medical Center in Tyler Texas. Rick's Mom forwarded an email to me that Coach Woodson had been to Tyler to visit with Butch and check on him on Friday where he was able to also visit with Butch's sister for a time. As a continuing update on Butch, when they performed an MRI to check out the surgery for his neck, they discovered a mass on his thyroid

gland. They will now be keeping him for a period to perform additional tests to see how to deal with this discovery. Of course, if he had not have had the accident, they would not have discovered this mass on his thyroid. Please continue to keep Butch and his family and his doctors as he recovers from the accident and as the medical staff determine what to do concerning the discovery on his thyroid. (This update was through Friday, March 7th)

This seems like an appropriate time to express a BIG THANK YOU to Rick Stacy's Mom – Merrill Stacy who provides me with a great deal of information that I then am able to share with you. She does an excellent job in helping me stay aware of what is going on with GHS Classmates and people around Grapevine that we all know!

Larry Cox is still working too hard and not taking as much care of himself as he should....so, if you have a chance and see Larry...tell him to take care and not work so hard!

I received word on Monday, March 10, that mother of Kathy Post passed away on Saturday, March 8th. I am sorry that I didn't hear about this until the day of her funeral and was unable to get word out to people about this loss and about the services. Please keep Kathy and her sisters and the Post family in your prayers.

After being able to work only two or three days a week with Dallas ISD (starting this past September 2007), I have become a little more involved in civic activities again – I rejoined ROTARY – the Grapevine Rotary Club. I was in Rotary some 15-20 years ago, but finally just could not keep up with work and all. It has been a great experience to return and become involved again. As a part of my reinstatement, each new member must provide a short portion of a weekly program to tell about themselves. I used a portion of this time to relate what it was like growing up in Grapevine, Texas during the 1950s and 1960s and attending school and having a father with a business on Main Street and then Northwest Highway during that period of my life. I tried to relate what a wonderful environment that was and how much me and my colleagues of the day learned about life and didn't even realize it at the time. I told the Rotary Club that I did not realize until I was over 40 years old how much of an influence so many Grapevine citizens impacted my life, my character, and my personality. I listed a number of individuals who truly had much more of an influence on my life than I ever thought and how I was disappointed that I had not appropriately thanked them for the things that they taught me that I didn't even realize at the time. I wanted to share, at least a portion of that list with you, my fellow GHS graduates in hopes that you felt the same way about many of these people: Bill and Betty Yancey, Preacher and Florence Florence, Earl Deacon, Ira E. Woods, Bob Burrus, Gene and Zena Oxford, J.B. Daniels, Slim Chambers, Carolyn Frank, Annie B. Watters, Helen Lucas, Dr. Joe and Laura Allison, Joe and Cecelia Box, Ted and Gloria Ware, Bill and Pat VanDeventer, Henry C. Yancey, Charles and Margaret Wood, Harlan and Inez Jewitt, Warren Deacon, George and Frances Wilkins, James K. and Lois Buckner, Gordon Tate, Ed and Edith Pewitt, Willis Pirkle, Ruby Moore, Arthur and Barbara Simmons, Earl Yates, Ed Langley, Leon Wright, Jess Stockstill, Paul and Kathryn Barnes, Bob Crews, Dr. William Wilkerson, Joe Lucas Wright, Huber Lipscomb, Ted Willhoite, Cliff Stowe, Tommie & Maxine Eidson, Melvin McGrue, Bill and Janice Crabtree, William D. (Bill) Tate, J.C. Seals, Earl Deacon, Starr Frank, Tom and Gladys French, Hugh and Mary Virginia Simmons, A.J. Harper, Madeleine Hemley, Katherine Redmon, Hugh Lee and Lula Higgins, Robert and Phyllis Lawrence, Dorothy Bess Francisco, L.W. and Imogene Parker, Jimmy Payton, Carl and Irene Simmons, Cleo Tillery, Billy and Ann Trigg, and Floyd Deacon are some of those who impacted my life growing up in Grapevine, Texas. I know that there are others, but I hope you noticed just how many listed are parents of our classmates! What a wonderful and incredible time.

Some time back, I sent out a request asking classmates to submit some original and wise sayings that we might put together some day in some sort of formal display...I thought this might be an opportunity to share a few. I will not divulge the name of the person who submitted it for several reasons – don't want you to immediately discredit the words due to the person who submitted it and I want you to examine the words and meditate on them before dismissing their intent:

- “Nothing in moderation.”
- “Some people are so slow; they have to speed up to stop.”
- “As we get older, we often come to appreciate the excitement of others as much as we used to appreciate our own.”
- “It takes a true friend to answer ‘ what do you think?’ truthfully, and a better friend to accept it.”
- “No Masterpiece, no great discovery, no great invention, nor any great decision was made by a committee.”
- “Policemen have unusual egos, but they never expect others to have them.”
- “You never learn anything with your mouth open, unless it is during a scream.”
- “If you stay ready, you don’t have to get ready.”
- “Sometimes life gets in the way of living.”
- “No amount of wisdom or forethought can equal the genius of Divine guidance.”
- “Treat everyone always, the way you wish to be remembered by them when you are gone.”
- “It is easier to be critical than creative.”
- “We are smothered by opportunities we never see.”
- “When at the farm, we talk like we are at the farm, however, for most of us, when we are in Japan, we still talk like we are at the farm.”
- “If you don’t have your integrity, you don’t have anything.”
- “Anything worth doing is worth having a good time doing.”
- “Old age is like a bank account, you withdraw from what you put into it.”
- “Software is not smarter than people.”
- “Gray hair doesn’t make one wise any more than a degree makes one intelligent.”
- “Live your life so that you won’t be disappointed when your kids turn out just like you.”
- “Politics are too political for my taste.”
- “The only thing separating me from that which I desire, is me.”
- “There are a lot of things worse than death.”

See you’re not doing so bad with this....send more!

In closing, I hope the March 2008 Newsletter finds each of you and your families well and I hope you continue to value so much of our past and keep in touch with so many good friends! Hope you didn’t mind too many editorial comments I tend to throw in!

GOD BLESS YOU ALL AND THE GRAPEVINE HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 1966 and FRIENDS!

Respectfully Submitted,
Larry Oliver