

To the Class of '61...

I have been very ambivalent about attending the reunion. Knowing for several months that I will be riding the in the MS-150 (century route, 109 miles) from Olathe to Lawrence on September 17th, I have used that as an excuse not to plan to attend. But the fact is I don't seem to feel any motivation to do so. If not the opposite.

Be that as it may, I am sending this note to serve in absentia. There are several classmates that bring back memories, so here goes...

Ralph Ager - "Hit 'em in the mouth Ralph" was one of the unapproved cheers the Boy's Pep Club came up with. Just wondering if you did? Hit somebody in the mouth.

Ken Aikin/Linda Marshall - congratulations!! Absolutely, I am in awe of couples that can stay together and have a successful marriage. I'm sure your lives have been filled with other remarkable achievements.

Leroy Arnett - One of my friends in school who was also an early casualty. We sang together in glee club (I don't remember it being like the current show). He died in a car accident on highway 13 headed back to school at SMS.

Ed Brown - Interesting how we have connected over the years... Life has been something of a trial for both of us, but we are survivors! Live well my friend.

Ron Capps - One of the best looking (still is) guys in the class. Grade school friend. Loved a party! Keep smilin' Ron!

Marge Chinn - Actually Marge and I barely knew each other in high school but connected through some of the early reunion planning committee sessions. One of a kind. BTW - I seemed to have gotten left

off the reunion committee about fifteen years ago. Was it something I said?

Sandra Doolin - I would guess that everyone knew who you were, i.e. the daughter of the Superintendent. That must have come with a mixed bag of advantages and handicaps. From what I have seen over the years you and your sister faired well.

Dave Edwards - What a senior year it must have been hosting a beer drinking German exchange student. Probably drove your parents to fits. I understand why you haven't come to any of the reunions. Thanks for coming to Matt's service. I was truly touched.

John Erickson - One of the true success stories from our class. I can remember your dad trying to teach me how to play the trumpet at Cooley School. It has always seemed a little odd to me that we weren't closer friends but that I feel so strongly connected to you. Play on!

Bob Farmer - I remember a wintry Saturday night Bob picked me up and we were headed for the Red Barn in Overland Park. He made a detour through KCK to pick up a jug of wine and we ended up in a little fender bender. He quickly scrambled and stuck the bottle in the snow so when the cops arrive we filed the report (the other guy's fault) and went on our way. A few short months later he wasn't so lucky.

Ed Fulton - I remember sitting at a reunion about 20 years ago, reminiscing about Journalism class and your aunt Mildred. What a character! Paul Clark and I were Co-Editors of the "BUZZ". What an unlikely pair. I always thought we got that "honor" by default. You turned out to be the real journalist.

Larry Hurtado - I really did not know Larry (read his bio on the class site). He has certainly followed a truly unique path of success.

Jack & Jean Lewis/Don Rea - Class mates since Kindergarten (right?)
Wow, that would be a 60 year reunion. You guys lived in the upscale part of Avondale, actually part of Kansas City. Don, I can remember playing touch football in that dirt field behind your house. Good to see you are all still doing well.

Larry McThompson - Larry and I were neighbors in grade school. Played together a lot. Larry, I can remember how we would tease your neighbor's little dog by jumping off the wall into their yard and then running to the street, trying to outrun the barking dog. Also remember a couple of bits on my ankle when I was less than successful.

Bob Modeer - King of the snappy come back and a child prodigy, so I am told. Some of the stories better left untold. I do remember you telling one on Clark Ferguson. Late in the 4th quarter of a basketball ball game he benched you and said, something like - "I want you to rest up for the 4th quarter" Ah, those were the days.

Eddie Morgan - God knows where you are - last I heard, years ago, you lived in Santa Fe. Great, funny guy. Played drums in Larry Stogsdale's band. Don't remember if the band really had a name. '53 Plymouth, right?

Tom Serviss - Now living in Arizona, I think. I guess, like me, at some point reconnecting lost its appeal.

Dan Smith - My best friend in high school and certainly my alter ego. You were (likely still are) the outspoken, daring, in your face, give a shit guy I couldn't be. With that came an unquenched drive to succeed. Married to the same fantastic woman all these years. There are so many stories that choosing one would diminish all the others...
WOW.

Judith Ann Werner - Great smile. How did a surgeon's daughter end up going to church in Avondale? MYF, not the same as WTF, or is it? One of life's mysteries. See you have been involved in the planning this time around. Thanks for all you've done. Your dad was the one that sewed up my sister Julie's ear after that horrific car accident.

A special acknowledgment of the classmates I went to grade school with. Not all of them were there for the full 8 years at Cooley School and a couple didn't graduate with us from Northtown, but here they are as best as I can recall - Alfred Bradshaw, Ron Capps, Keith Cameron, Carolyn Collins, Marilyn Johnson, Jack Lewis, Jean Lewis, Diane Lewis, Joe Magee, Larry McThompson, Carolyn Mynatt, Don Rea and Gary Westcott.

To all the other grads whose name I didn't mention...I still remember a large number of you. We were in classes, clubs, and sports, sat on the detention bench or have some other connection. My best wishes go out to all of you. Thanks for the memories.

Please read my bio on the class site - I'm on Facebook



Jim Skinner

Now he lives in the islands, fishes the pilin's
And drinks his Green Label each day
Writing his memoirs, losin' his hearin'
But he don't care what most people say

Through eighty-six years of perpetual motion
If he likes you he'll smile and he'll say
'Jimmy, some of it's magic, some of it's tragic
But I had a good life all the way'

Jimmy Buffett

We should all live to at least 86!