

GRAPEVINE HIGH SCHOOL CLASS of 1966

DECEMBER 2006 NEWSLETTER

I hope this Newsletter finds you resting up from a Fun and Spirit filled Christmas as you consider the prospects of a coming new year. I want to wish each of you and your families a Wonderful and Prosperous New Year!

For those of you who were able to attend the Class Christmas Party and White Elephant Gift Exchange at the home of Darrell and Donna Faglie, I know that you were blessed with Great Food and Great Entertainment and a Great Time of Fellowship. I am not sure who got the photo of Darrell (circa 1965), but I do suspect that Mary Ann Sparger Ashton is truly enjoying the Mouse Pad with my Photo on it! Some other recipients of great gifts were Darrell, who got a Big Ass Ham; Jim Box who got Harley Davidson Beer that everyone agreed was probably not something he would want to actually drink; and a new Brief Case showed up again for our lucky neighbor! Thanks to Pat Flanagan for the Great Chicken & Dumplings, Pies, and gifts that she did by hand! Pat always comes through great for us! And, thanks to everyone who made the December 10th event very special – even Wiley! It was also great to see Randy Flanagan up and around and recovering well from his November heart surgery....Randy put away the smokes...we enjoy having you around ya know!

It doesn't seem like 2006 could already be over...time continues to fly by at warp speed it seems. I do hope that each of you took the opportunity to enjoy family and friends during this past Christmas Season. I hope you remembered those fond Christmas times of your past. I hope you spent time thinking about why we celebrate Christmas and that you took the time to thank God for the birth of his Son and all of the blessings we have. I know that Christmas can be a difficult and depressing time as well – all the more reason that our class step up and make sure those less fortunate see the true meaning and spirit of Christmas.

Lots going on these past several months - we zipped through Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years...seemed like each was only a day apart as time flies by. Larry Powers, Mildred Hilliard Power's husband, had a defibrillator "installed" in late October. Last word was that it is going well. Randy "Mouse" Flanagan had a series of by-pass work done as well....He is doing well, but I know that he is struggling with trying to quit smoking and could use our prayers with that! Kathy Barnes Dirmeier had knee surgery and is recovering (saw her dancing on it at the Anniversary Ball the first weekend in December). Darrell Faglie as you recall let Dr. Jim Box perform knee surgery on him this fall as well – Darrell's knee is recovering well.

In late October, I sent out an email concerning Larry Hamlin (Class of 1965 & brother of Linda Hamlin, Class of 1967). Larry was taken to Baylor Hospital on the evening of October 26 and was diagnosed with a descending aortic aneurysm. He was taken by Care Flight to Houston Herman Hospital the next day. Larry has had many complications and was just moved to Arlington from Houston the week before Christmas where he is recovering and trying to get strong enough to have surgery. The aneurysm has not been repaired yet as he needs to gain enough strength to handle the surgery. He has been moved to a rehab place in Arlington to get him well enough to consider surgery.

With the reports above, please keep these individuals and families in your prayers. It seems that so much of our newsletters are filled with difficult times for our classmates and friends. I know from their comments that having old friends and classmates praying for them helps provide them with added comfort and support. God Bless all of you for your prayers and deeds as we continue to help one another deal with the difficulties of life. That only makes the joys and celebrations that much better.

Just this past month, December, Zoe Ann Dickerson-Bell lost her dad. It was after the services that we got word about it. I know that you join me in extending our deepest sympathy to Zoe Ann and the Dickerson family in their loss of Pete. I have known Pete for a long time and did get a chance to visit with him a couple of months ago.

Just a week before Christmas, Ellen lost her dad, C.W. "Bill" VanDeventer. Bill has been going through very difficult times these past weeks, but has faced it all as we would expect. What a wonderful gentleman Bill VanDeventer was. His contributions to the City of Grapevine and the people touched each and every day will be missed so very much. Ellen said that "He would be with her mom for Christmas". I know that Bill has missed Pat so very much. God Bless Ellen and Charles and John. What a wonderful family.

We are moving quickly into 2007. If the years move any faster, we're going to miss an entire year before long. Time is getting by so very fast. I again, as always, want to encourage you to contact, visit, and get together with your families and old friends every chance you get. As we get older, we need to think about what life has been about, and how so many people have impacted us, helped us, influenced us, taught us, and modeled for us those characteristics we have learned to treasure. Tell someone from your past just how much they've meant to you and how they have helped guide you...do it before the opportunity no longer exists.

As I was attempting to complete this December Newsletter (into the New Year), Bogey, our dog and best non-human companion anyone could have, developed cancer. He became sick just two days before the end of 2006 and this morning – January 5, we let him go – to say that was difficult after a wonderful 10 years and 7 months of a loving, understanding, and loyal pet leaving you so sudden was very painful as many of you know. He always listened and always seemed to agree with me or Linda (whoever was talking to him). Even after being without food for a week and feeling very ill, he spotted a three or four year-old little girl before going into the Vet's to be put to sleep...started wagging his tail and went over to see her and let her pet him to be his friendly spirited self. He turned to come and go into the Vet and he looked very ill again. He was a very special soul.

Anyway, we continue to speak of losses these days and thanks to those who help share those burdens and losses with us. I know that many more of you would be happy to be there too if called upon. That is one of the things that make being a part of the GHS Class of 1966 so very special. In 2007 and the future, don't take that for granted! I apologize for the short newsletter, but I am just not up to anything today.

God Bless the GHS Class of 1966, their families and their friends for the coming year!

Respectfully,
Larry Oliver