

GRAPEVINE HIGH SCHOOL

Class of 1966

MARCH 2010 NEWSLETTER

March 2010 – who would have guessed we would be communicating with one another some 45 years after our May 1966 Graduation? Not me, I was not even sure I would be alive by this point in time much less still seeing, communicating with, and enjoying spending time with some of the knuckleheads I went to high school with in the mid-sixties (and completely discounting first grade classmates I attended school with in the mid-fifties). Well, I am pleased to say: “I am here!” And, I am also pleased to say that it is a good place to be (excluding the world situation and economy we are experiencing). I continue to receive emails from GHS Ex-students – some I was in school with and some I was fortunate enough to encounter as a teacher or administrator for approximately 40+ years. I received an email just this past week from an Ex-GHS student who graduated in 1972. She was not a student I taught, but nevertheless a student who at least recalled my name and associated it with GHS. More importantly she had read our class Newsletters and viewed our reunion photos and other items on the www.ghsclassof1966.com website.

Below, I have posted a portion of the email I received from Debbie Key Spronz:

I am a member of the GHS graduating class of 1972, but in looking at the wonderful pages that you have put together for the class of 1966, I just wanted to say that it has evoked memories that have been dormant for years. And, seeing the names of students that you went to school with, I am reminded of kids with those same last names who were probably siblings. It has been a great trip down memory lane.

When I was a student at GHS, I remember you, tho at the time, you were one of “them” and I was one of the “now” generation. And, now here we are – alumni with no generational gap between us. I have met your wife a time or two, but we don’t really know each other. I am a member of the Women’s Division of the Grapevine Chamber of Commerce.

There was a picture of someone putting Miss Frank in prison on Western Day (how well I remember that day – they don’t do it anymore, do they?). Anyway, several years ago, when Miss Frank was terribly ill, I went to see her in the hospital. It had been more than 20 years since we had last seen each other, and I had changed a lot since high school. But, I walked into her room, and she was so frail, and I didn’t think she would remember me; but, Miss Frank, being Miss Grapevine High School for many, many years, looked at me and said “Debbie Key, how on earth are you.” It was then that I knew she probably would have recognized and known every student from every class that went through GHS during her time there in the office. She died not long after my visit with her, and I will always be glad that I took the time to see her. I can still picture her behind her desk and hear her voice in the exact way she answered the phone, “Grapevine High School, may I help you?” She is a true memory and legacy of GHS for the ages.

You also talked about Miss Shumate. She was one of my most favorite teachers. How is she doing? Is there an address that I might obtain – I would love to send her a card? I really have enjoyed reading your newsletters and seeing your memorabilia about your class. It would be nice if the class of 72 had something similar. I would really like to see my class take a cruise together – ah well – I’ll enjoy it vicariously through your postings.

I responded back to Debbie Key Spronz and told her that I appreciated her email and told her how important our class friendships were in school and how much more important they have become as we have grown older over

the years. Finding comfort, friendship, the sharing of memories and the sharing of the difficulties of life as well as the times of jubilation have all been enhanced by our remaining close, caring, and friends over the years. I hear this sort of thing all the time from numerous GHS graduates as well as people you meet who attended other schools – a bit of shock and disbelief that we still communicate and see one another almost fifty years after graduation...God has truly blessed us by putting us in Grapevine, Texas schools during the mid fifties through the mid-sixties. I do not find other places that have what we have, and I know it has truly been a blessing from my perspective.

Not unlike months past, we continue to deal with the losses of friends and classmates. I guess we always knew this was a part of becoming older, but it has been a time that makes you feel these losses much more personally. However, it is also a time that makes you appreciate even more those life-long friends you still have. It makes you appreciate the support, love, and prayers of those life-long friends as well...another unsuspecting blessing God has allowed us to share.

In mid-January, Frank Wilkins, brother of classmate James Wilkins passed away. It was only last July that James passed away, so this has been a difficult past few months for the Wilkins family. I know that many of you continue to keep James' and Frank's families in your thoughts and prayers. I also know that it has been truly difficult for Dale Wilkins over the past months, so please continue to keep him in your prayers as well.

You all know that Diane Cherry Stacy's mother, Bobbie Cherry, fell in January and broke her neck. It was only days that Diane emailed me that her mother had passed. The family held a "Celebration of Her Life" at the First United Methodist Church and then had a reception at the Vineyard Steakhouse. As Diane said, "...she lived life to the fullest and unfortunately her body did not know how young her mind was. We are happy that her suffering did not last too long...". Continue to keep Diane, Bill, and Paula and the Cherry family in your thoughts and prayers as well.

At the end of January, I received an email from Shirley Stapleton Foster that her brother and our friend Robert Cordell Stapleton passed away after a long battle with cancer. I know some of you had emailed him over the past several months and I know he appreciated hearing from GHS Grads.

Many of our class and certainly those of more recent years knew GHS graduates Craig, Roger and Dan Dearing. Their mother, Charlotte, and wife of Warren Dearing (former Business Manager for the Grapevine-Colleyville ISD) passed away in early February. She had been suffering from Alzheimer's for some time, I know that it is, as always difficult to lose a family member – especially a mother, but I also know that, as Roger said, her suffering is over.

In early March, Dr. Ed Lancaster – certainly a name all graduates during our lifetime quickly recognize as one of the major icons of recent history in Grapevine, Texas, died. Dr. Ed and his wife Dr. Minnie Lee Lancaster, who had passed on before, probably delivered a number of our classmates' siblings and others during their practice in Grapevine. Many of us went to school with Charles Lancaster and Lanne (deceased) and I was teaching when David and Tim were at Grapevine High School. Dr. Ed and Minnie Lee will long be remembered for their contributions and service to Grapevine.

Shortly after hearing of Dr. Ed Lancaster's death, we were all very surprised to hear of the death of Roger Harrison (GHS Class of 1967). Roger was a long time friend to many in our class and was a well remembered quarterback for the Grapevine Mustangs. I know that all of you join me in keeping Roger's sister Terry and his daughter Andrea in our thoughts and prayers.

March was not through taking those we have loved and known from us. On Saturday, March 6th, Mrs. James K. (Lois) Buckner passed away when her weak heart gave up. I met Mrs. Buckner when I was six years old. She is one of those people you meet at a young age that you instantly like; someone who instantly treated you with respect and you always knew they cared for you. Growing up in Grapevine, she always stopped to talk to me and never treated me like a little kid (that I was). Growing up as a friend of James and Patti over the years and through high school provided me numerous opportunities to visit their home and I always felt welcome. Please keep Jim, Patti, and Joe and the Buckner family in your prayers.

One of the most difficult parts of putting these newsletters together is having to make note of the classmates, friends, and family members that we've lost these past few years. I received a nice note from Travis Lloyd this month saying he appreciated that I was letting people know of these sad notices and how much he appreciated it. I want to thank Travis as well, because it is difficult at those saddest of times to let people know, and I guess I understand why you would all become sort of "gun shy" over even seeing an email from me – knowing all too often what message it brings. I try hard to feel that it brings old friends together to share the loss and burden un-alone at these times. God bless you all for your kind words and thoughts and respect to one another during the most difficult times.

The Grapevine High School Ex-Student Association – led by President Russell Kidd – continues to work toward establishing a place and item of recognition at Grapevine High School where we join with the Board of Trustees, Ex-Students, Faculty, Staff and current students in remembering and honoring former students and faculty members who have been recognized over the years as Distinguished Alumni and Hall of Fame Faculty Members. We are in hopes that we can finalize the design, the work, and installation before the 2010 Homecoming this fall.

In the December Newsletter, I mentioned that Carolyn Cody had moved back to Grapevine. She has arrived in time to join in on our Annual Class Christmas Party and wants to participate in our other activities. It is great to have Carolyn back and joining in with us again. In an email to me a couple of months back, Carolyn said that she has tried to leave Grapevine, but it just keeps bringing her back. Well, many of us have realized we didn't want to leave – it is a place unlike any other, with people and a feeling of community pride that transcends any place else I seen or heard of – great to be a part of this City.

For some of you OLD GHS Band Members, I was invited, but unable to join with the likes of Van Morrison, Rick Vaughn and Mark Shryack who met and had lunch with George Gaidosch in Plano in late January. I hated that I could not attend. Mr. Gaidosch taught private lessons to lots of GHS students over the years; including the likes of James Buckner, Rick Vaughn, Brent Germany, Mark Shryack, John Mitcham, Doug Alberts, Jim Stockton, me, and numerous others. We also were privileged to have him work with our Stage Band at various times – thanks to Jess Stockton for bringing him our way. During a couple of years, I was in a band of young students who played at all sorts of things from Debutante Balls at White Rock Lake, the Miss Irving Pageant and other events....I especially remember going over to the Highland Park area to practice in a home with an elevator to a ballroom on the top floor – that was an amazing experience for a saxophone player from Grapevine, Texas! I also well remember Mr. Gaidosch's red 1963 Ford Convertible that had a 406 cu. in. engine in it – I don't think he liked the way we looked at this car! I envy Rick's, Van's and Mark's visit with him in Plano and hope I get to join them in the next visit!

The latest word on Hilda Adams Coker (class of 67) is that she just got out of the hospital after spending 11 days there and for treatment of a "bad" infection. She did get news that her cancer is in remission. She praised the Lord for healing her and wanted to thank all of you that have been praying for her and supporting her during

these difficult treatments. She says that she still has “chemo brain” and asks for prayers that this will heal/go away soon. She said she was excited to start to feel better and get her life back. Continue to keep Hilda and her family in your prayers.

Lee (Eddie) Davis emailed me that his brother James was in the Decatur hospital awaiting a triple bypass. The doctors are attempting to thicken his blood so it will clot – he is on a couple of blood thinners. The doctors also found an aneurysm in James’ chest, but are not too worried about it rupturing at this point. Lee also said that his sister Margret laid to rest her youngest daughter, LaReece on Tuesday, February 9, 2010. Please keep the Davis family in your prayers.

On the birthday of Donna Young Faglie, January 25th, their daughter-in-law, Jennifer Faglie presented Darrell and Donna with a new granddaughter – Olivia Elaine. I guess we have to give their youngest son, Brad, some credit as well! At any rate, Olivia is doing well. Of course she does have an autographed photo of her Grandfather Darrell and Uncle Larry framed and in a place of honor in her room. I would not want to say that the grandparents are really proud, because it would be an understatement! Olivia joins the ranks of cousins Katlyn, Arissa, and Elexia in getting spoiled!

With record snow falls in the DFW area, it has been an eventful winter, but it has not kept GHS classmates from spending some time together and supporting one another. It is that support that we seem to offer that makes so much of the negative things in the world bearable these days. I can not tell you how often I hear from graduates about how great it has been to have technology like the internet and Facebook and cell phones and text messaging to keep up with one another. And I also know that so many of us appreciate the support we offer one another during these difficult times. But, I also know that there have been a lot of sharing of “good” times as well and that combination makes life all the richer for us all. God continues to watch over us, help guide us, and take control of our burdens each and every day.

As I mentioned in the last Newsletter, a small contingency of GHS grads are planning on invading a few Scandinavian countries and Russia this summer. I will try not mention specific names, but there will be at least four GHS grads in the group that include two Lindas and a Gary and a Larry... So, in the early summer watch the news media to see if some of us need you to petition Congress to get us safe passage back to Texas! I say this to let you know...we will be planning another “excursion” soon and will be putting the word out for anyone who would like to join us on the next trip. It is a blast to spend time with great friends while traveling to new places to see!

Spring is on the way...plan to spend some time with some of your OLD school buddies and friends from Grapevine High School soon!

God Bless the GHS Class of 1966 and all our friends!

Respectfully,
Larry