

THE OWLETTE DISPATCH

Fresno High School Class of 1958

Newsletter No. 8

Spring, 2007

In Memoriam

This issue is dedicated to those classmates who are no longer with us.

Carol Dugan Donaghy, September 2006

Arline Hodge Allor, December 2006

BRING ON THE 50TH REUNION!

From Buddy Arakelian

The last few months have been extremely difficult for me as I faced treatment for my second encounter with head and neck cancer in the last ten years. I want to thank classmates for their kindness and thoughtfulness during this time. It meant so much to me to receive email, cards, letters and telephone calls from classmates telling me they were keeping me in their thoughts and in their prayers.

I was diagnosed with a primary cancer at the base of my tongue with metastasis to a lymph node on my neck. My treatment consisted of radiation five days a week to my entire neck and chemotherapy once a week. After a two month recovery I had a modified/radical dissection to the left side of my neck.

As I write to you, my classmates, on this Valentine's Day, February 14, 2007, I received a call from my surgeon telling me that all 34 of the lymph nodes removed from my neck and the biopsies from my tongue that were taken during the surgery were free of cancer.

I realize that cancer can always come back, but I am thankful that I will have more time to spend with those I love. And, among those I love are my classmates from the FHS Class of '58. I hope that we will have a great turnout next year when we celebrate our 50th.

I know that some of you say you don't know most of the classmates who attend these reunions. Well, guess what? We had a class of over 600, and many of those classmates you never met during your entire three years at FHS. I haven't met a lot of my classmates, but I want to. Come to the next reunion and introduce yourself to me. That way I can guarantee you that you will know at least one classmate at the reunion.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if a lot of classmates made the 50th their first reunion. I think it would. Ask a classmate who attended the 45th how he or she liked it. It was, by far, the best ever. Well, the 50th will be even better. Please come.

A fund is being set up to help classmates who may not have the means to attend our 50th reunion. If you feel you qualify for this, please contact Buddy at one of the info tidbits under the board member listing. All inquiries will be confidential

PAGES FROM THE PAST

*By Catherine "Vernie" Morison Rehart
Fresno High Traditions In 1900*

At the turn of the 19th century, when Fresno High was still a small school, a number of charming traditions developed. One of them was kept on the evening of May 12, 1900, when the entire senior class, consisting of 13 young ladies and four young gentlemen, arrived at the P Street residence of C.L. McLane, Superintendent of Schools. They were greeted by their hosts and hostesses for the evening: their principal, Osmer Abbott, Mrs. Abbott, and all of their teachers and their spouses.

The gardens of the McLane home were decorated with Chinese lanterns. Inside, the rooms were tastefully decorated with spring flowers, greens, and streamers.

The teachers had planned many entertainments for the evening.

Several games were played including the "Prince of Wales Guessing Cap," "Clothespins," and a game created by the teachers in which cards were distributed with the teacher's pictures on them. Then one of the teachers stood in front of a curtain and by using his hands, eyes, or the shadows cast on the curtain as clues, the students had to guess which teacher he was depicting. Much merriment was elicited by this game.

After an elegant dinner, a program of musical selections and recitations were performed by the teachers. Duets in German and Hawaiian were greatly enjoyed. But the high point of the program was a recitation by Misses Ella Reed and Lena Redington based on their memories of school days.

The festive evening ended and the senior class departed agreeing that this evening had been one of the high points of their years at Fresno High School.

Another major event in the history of FHS was also unfolding at the same time. In late May and early June of 1900, a committee of FHS graduates was busy planning for a reunion of all the graduates of the school. This event would not only serve as a social occasion, but it would also be an organizational meeting of the newly formed Fresno High Alumni Association.

The committee had been busy soliciting memberships and, so far, 58 Fresno High graduates had joined the group. Since that number represented not quite one third of the graduates of the school, articles about the event were placed in *The Fresno Morning Republican* hoping to attract more members.

On the evening of June 8, 1900, about 100 people walked through the front door of Fresno High School, located at Stanislaus and O streets. It was a festive occasion as members of the various classes met and talked about their memories of their days at Fresno High. Promptly at 9 p.m., Alumni President Harry Latimer, Class of 1896, welcomed the alumni, teachers, guests, and members of the class of 1900 who had graduated the night before. After a program of musical selections by the Fresno High School orchestra, the business meeting got underway in earnest.

The first order of business was a speech given by Clarence Edwards, Class of 1897, to welcome the members of the Class of 1900 into the alumni association. Henry Dewelle rose to respond on behalf of the class of 1900. Secretary Oscar Baker read the constitution as proposed by the executive committee. It was adopted by the group. Officers were duly elected, and an executive committee appointed. Superintendent of Schools C.L. McLane gave a short speech commending the alumni association on its method of organization.

After the program, the members of the Fresno High School Alumni Association made their way to the third floor of the building where the hall was filled with beautifully decorated tables done by the ladies of St. Paul's M.E. Church. A sumptuous repast was served. The evening ended at midnight with a rousing rendition of the FHS yell that brought the alumni to their feet:

"Zooligan, Zooligan, Hiloway, Holm!
Goodizen, Goodizen, Bim, Bom, Bohm!
Soqui, Soqui, Ha, Ha, Ha!
Fresno High School, Zip, Boom Bah!



JAMES' JABBER

By James Palmer

Here are a few memories of The Tower District neighborhood during the 1940's. College Avenue tied into McKinley where the original Fresno State College was then located. The Tower Theatre is still on the corner of Wishon and Olive. It was built in 1939.

Times were hard for many people just after WWII, but they seemed enjoyable anyway. You found things to do like play "Kick the Can" using real tin cans. Swamp coolers were a luxury. We left our doors and windows wide open often with no thought of danger. Automobiles consisted of five times more metal than today's autos.



The Schwartz' just purchased a new black Buick four door sedan, the Lauck's had a 1946 Packard sedan, Mr. Chrisman (owner of Chrisman's Restaurant) drove a 1946 Cadillac sedan, our "hot rod" was a 1939 Pontiac sedan. On Friday afternoons, Mr. Earl Maloney drove by taking Jim and his sister Jeanie home in his red 1941 Buick coupe convertible. No computerized gimmicks in those cars!

Some of the people I remember who lived in this area from the class of 1954: Carl Schwartz, Charles Goodrich and Ed Vagim. From the class of 1955 came Bill Richert. From the class of 1956: Fritz Schwartz and Cliff Beagle. From the class of 1957: Bob Beckwith, Duane Lauck and Howard Morgan. From the class of 1960: Arthur Leavitt and Douglas Vagim. From the class of 1962: Bill and Steve Leavitt. And from our class of 1958 were **John Richert, Dale Zanovich, Bill Leavitt, Bill McElroy, Jim Morgan, Virginia Ready** and "Jabber Box" me. Some businesses located there were: Black's groceries, Tony Justison's groceries, Home Avenue groceries, Walter Hyde's hardware, Carnation Restaurant, Zenny's Restaurant, Lauck's Bakery, Sprouse Ritz, Crocker Anglo Bank and more. Our neighbors, the Whites, owned the White Theatre down town.

I had thoughts of attending Fresno High School then Fresno State. In my mind, it was like a dream a century away it seemed. Now it's a half century past that time.

One memory I will never forget is one summer day when Fritz Schwartz wanted me to climb in their new Buick and go for a ride with him. "No thanks, Fritz. I don't want to see that razor strap again," I told him as he drove away on College Avenue. Then Mrs. Schwartz came running out of their house frantically yelling, "Where's our new car?" Here came Fritz pulling up to the curb so I didn't have to answer her. She grabbed Fritz by his ears, hightailed him into their two-story house for some reprimanding and I scrambled home. I thought, "I dodged a bullet that time." If anyone has any information about contacting Fritz Schwartz, I would appreciate it greatly. I love to find old friends.

As elementary school was finished, we all began to see life changing. One group went on to Washington while another went to Hamilton. New friends, learning about life and so much more than we could possible realize happened. Then it was FHS or RHS for the majority. We weren't aware of it but adulthood was real close and the "real world" was about to smack us in the face.

ONCE IN A LIFETIME EXPERIENCE

By Dennis Libby

I was employed with the Golden Gate Bridge for 8 1/2 years when I decided that it was time to retire at the age of 66. A month before I retired, I had the chance to go up to the top of the south tower of the bridge. It was arranged for my son, his wife, my nephew and me to go up at 5:00 p.m. on September 25, 2006. I was concerned about the weather because it is always unpredictable that time of year. If it was foggy we wouldn't be able to see anything and if it was raining we

would not be permitted to go up. But as it turned out, it was a perfect weather day.

A certified employee took us to the tower in a Cushman golf cart and opened the locked door to a small two person elevator which carried us to the access platform about 60 "floors" up, or the equivalent of about 600 feet. While this was happening, there was heavy commuter traffic so it was pretty noisy going up at first, but as we ascended, the noise just faded away. It was eerily quiet. At the "60 floor" mark, we got out onto this enclosed chamber platform, turned on the lights and climbed straight up a steel 15' ladder to a hatch cover. After going through the hatch cover, we climbed out onto the top strut of the tower. On this structure we could walk back and forth to the west or east saddle. The saddle is the thick main cable that rides on the top of each tower and holds up the bridge. I was extremely cautious about moving about this area as you could easily trip and go over the side. As we moved about over a grated floor, we were able to see straight down past our feet to the roadway and water below.



What a beautiful view up on top. We could see for 40-50 miles. It is 746' from the water to the top of the tower. On the top of this tower are two microwave dishes used for communication up to Mt. Tamalpais and down to San Rafael. Before our tour was up, I happened to be leaning against the hand rail and felt the tower gently swaying about an inch or two back and forth. As the sun was setting, we descended to the sidewalk and went home with a big rush and in total awe of what we experienced.

WE'VE HEARD FROM

Judy Tradewell San Filippo: I love the newsletter. Keep up the good work. See you at the 50th. **Sharon Tranberg Kelley:** Many thanks for all your work over almost 50 years. I love the newsletter; it always brings back warm memories. **Tom Haverty:** Good job. Thank you. **Jenice Portere Vandagriff:** Hi everyone, and thank you so much for all your effort in putting together the Owlette Dispatch. Really fun to read. Looking forward to our 50th. **Barbara Talbert Rainville:** Thanks for the wonderful newsletter and memories. Those were the days, my friends. Will see you at the next reunion. **Pat McCauley Golden:** Thanks for the newsletter. It's fun to hear what our classmates are doing. I really look forward to receiving it. **Yvonne Mason Lyman:** Thank you so much for sending me the newsletters. I don't know everybody on your staff, but they do a great job. I do remember Jim Maloney. Man, I had a crush on him. Such fun to remember. **Joyce Sheppard Markarian and Frank Markarian:** We look forward to receiving the FHS newsletter and enjoy the articles. Thanks for everything you do. **Tamara Koerner Beeler:** I look forward to every edition of the newsletter. Each issue brings back more wonderful memories of my years at Fresno High -- they were good years!

We've Heard From (Con't).....

Lonna Enos Hiatt: I was reading my September 2006 Dispatch (actually re-reading) and enjoying all the memories. Just want to say "thank you" for keeping us up-to-date and reminding us of the wonderful days in the 50s. I see so many names I once knew and so many close friends. Where has all the time gone?

WERE YOU A HOPPY FAN?

By Garilee Schneider Cave



My grandmother wrote to Hopalong Cassidy because she thought he was "dreamy". His real name was Bill Boyd and his wife was Tippy and one day he and his wife showed up on our front porch. I thought my grandmother would have a heart attack. My grandmother was 60 the day I was born and this was when I was in Jr. High so she was no spring chicken. He had come to sign a contract with Producer's milk as he was their spokesperson for years. He and Tippy and my grandmother corresponded until she died at age 91. Do you remember the jingle, "PRO-DUC-ERS spells Producers?"

A STRANGE COURSE OF EVENTS

By Guy E. Shannon

In November 2005, I became Field Superintendent building a large addition to and remodeling of the engine shop at FANG (Fresno Air National Guard). One of the other contractors on the site was Haverly Plumbing, run by Dudley Haverly and Tom. One of the supers on my job was a Mr. Fred Schroeder; an older retired gentleman who knew everything asked about electricity and electrical parts. Fred was much older than I, and not able to get around well (he had no driver's license) so I would take him home every night after work. We became more than working friends and I would speak to him about his life and experiences.

This is a story he related to me: Fred's wife had passed away and he was living alone in Coarsegold. He had a few friends in the valley and mountain area. As a young man, he left home at an early age and knew little about his family background until one day years back, an aunt had related to him he had a brother who was given up for adoption during the war. This was interesting to me since I also was given up for adoption. So I continued the conversation wanting to know more.

One day Fred was lonely for company and wanted to get out, so he called a friend of his at the *The Fresno Bee* and made arrangements to go into the Millerton area and picnic along the riverbank. The friend agreed to the idea, but asked if he might bring along another friend. Fred acquiesced to this and they met at the appointed place on a nice summer day.

As they were relaxing, Fred and the invited person began to talk. As talk goes sometimes, they began to speak about their family backgrounds and found that each had come from the Santa Rosa, CA area. Finding that interesting, it turned out, that the invited person had been adopted. More talk ensued and soon they both realized they were brothers.

I asked Fred about this person and he told me that he had gone to Hamilton and Fresno High. He said his first name was Donny. I, of course asked, was his last name "Murphy."

It wasn't long after that **Don Murphy** and I became re-united. Last time I saw him at Fred's house in Coarsegold was about a year ago. Don was nearly blind, could barely hear, and had physically aged more than I, but his spirit and determination were high. Every time I would see him after that he would ask if I remembered various classmates from Fresno High and Hamilton. When I received the last issue of the *The Owlette Dispatch*, Don's name was on the lost list.

I called but found the telephone disconnected. I am going to take a run up to Coarsegold to see if he is still at the same place, or try and find where he might be now.

When I think of this story it brings happiness to my heart; especially when I think of **Lonna Enos**, my cousin. We went to Fresno High at the same time and never knew we were related. I can remember looking at her and always feeling I wanted to know her better. There was always something there that I could not explain. Her mother, my Aunt Dorothy who is now deceased, was the one who united me with my biological mother and father, and my half sisters and brothers. There are still many mysteries in this world that await us.

ALUMNI HARVEST FESTIVAL AND CAR SHOW

Thirty-two cars entered the October Harvest Festival and Car Show which benefited the Fresno High Alumni Association. Nearly 120 people attended the event, catered by Gary Lanfranco (Class of '64), and had fun bidding on fantastic desserts, which were shared with others begging for a sample of the culinary delights.

Five awards were given: Harold Cox won the Best Muscle Car with his 1957 Chevy; Bob Cook won the Hot Rod division with his 1937 Ford coupe; George Butcher (Class of '45) won the Best Classic with his 1934 Ford; Dick Smith's (Class of '53) Cobra was the Car Most People Wanted to Drive and George and Sharon Tilley's 1957 Buick Wagon was Best of Show.



ABOUT GROWING OLDER...Will Rogers

If you don't learn to laugh at trouble, you won't have anything to laugh at when you are old.

The older we get, the fewer things seem worth waiting in line for.

I don't know how I got over the hill without getting to the top.

YOUR STORIES

Help us make your newsletter interesting to our readers. Just as seven of your classmates have contributed to this issue, so can you. Send us your stories so we can let the rest of your classmates know what is going on in your life.

LOST AND FOUND CLASSMATES:

We are only one year away from our golden 50th reunion. Find here a partial list of our lost classmates. If you know of any information that will help us locate them, please

contact someone on the reunion board. Even if all you know is the last where-about, it would be helpful.

Carolee Peterson Flaum	Charles Rubey
Richard Phelan	Joseph Russell
Lonnie Phelps	Kenneth Ruth
Carolee Pickert	Stella Ryan
Vern Pickrell	Richard Saaf
Sue Pizzo Jury	Delores Sanchez
Charles Polley	Judith Schiebelhut Pavolich
Marcia Porter Magnotti	Rosemary Sexton
Frank Quatraro	Jeanne Shepard
William Reece	Fred Showalter
Leah Rieber Freewald	Mary "Kathryn" Shuemake
James Reifert	Dennis Smith
Phil Reihms	John "Jack" Smith
Lloyd Repp	LeeRoy Stevens
Dee Revolinsky Gonsalves	James Stewart
Dean Reynolds	Roger Stewart
Don Reynolds	Judith Sturges Snyder
Dorothy Reynolds Anderson	Eugene Terry
Zachary Reynolds	Barbara Thacker
Earl "Eddy" Richardson	LoLana Tranmer Toner
Marilyn Riffel	Dale Traylor
Carol Riggs Graham	Daryl Tufts
Reba "Arlene" Robins Hagemann	Noel Turner
Judy Robinson Rossmussen	Bruce Ursenbach
John "Jack" Romano	Clemens Van Beurden

Pete Van Gelder
Charles Van Valkenburgh
George Volz
Linda Wagner Delphia
Virginia Waldron Rings
Richard Warren
Lola Weaver Pursell
Melinda Whyte Natale
Wanda Wilhelm Cox
Wynona Wilhelm Weaver
Imogene Williams
Wanda Williams Redell
Irene Witbeck Dowell
Thomas Woodruff
Charles Wright
Susan Wristen
Pat Wyatt
Keith Yee

FOUND: Shirley Greco Brown, Mary E. Hanson, Norman Kohl, Donna McGuy Eschback and Linda Weems Tyler.

Notification

Please notify someone on the reunion board of any changes to your personal information. Updates on changes for street address, email address, phone number or name will keep the FHS Class of '58 database in tip-top shape.

Editor's note: When contacting any classmate by email, use FHS, Class of '58 or something similar in the subject line so the email will not be deleted.

CONTINUING THIS NEWSLETTER: Without your support, this newsletter cannot continue to be published. Each issue costs nearly 90 cents and consumes money that can be used towards future reunions or helping others who cannot afford to attend our reunions. Send your tax-deductible check payable to FHS Class of '58, c/o Buddy Arakelian, 529 W. Scott Ave., Fresno, CA 93704. Any amount will be greatly appreciated.

 \$5 \$10 \$15 \$25 Other

**CONTRIBUTORS**

The following classmates have recently made contributions to our newsletter: Diane Doman, Lonna Enos Hiatt, Larry Evans, Brent Graham, Tom Haverty, Tamra Koerner Beeler, Doug MacDonald, Sandra Mandeville Seibert, Ken Marcantonio, Frank Markarian, Yvonee Mason Lyman, Loren Matlock, Pat McCauley Golden, Jenice Potere Vandagriff, Joyce Sheppard Markarian, Barbara Talbert Rainville, Judy Tradewell San Filippo, Sharon Tranberg Kelley.

DECEMBER COLORADO BLIZZARDS

By Bill McElroy

Maggie and I had an interesting adventure on our recent trip to Greeley, Colorado during Christmas to see our triplet grandkids. We had just bought a new car so we decided to give our old car to our son, Wes, in Greeley. We waited in Pinetop, AZ until the roads opened because of Colorado's pre-Christmas blizzard. The day the roads opened, we took off for Colorado. I followed Maggie in our four wheel drive Explorer. It was a terrible experience. The Interstates were bumper-to-bumper with people leaving Colorado or trying to get to Colorado before Christmas. The roads were not fully cleared and were very dangerous. The rest areas, restaurants and gasoline stations were overloaded and we were unable to get any food. Fortunately, we had some cookies to keep us from starving. In spite of the circumstances, we did get to Greeley OK.

December Colorado Blizzards (Con't).....

On December 30, I checked the weather report before going to bed and it looked like we had a window of opportunity, before the next storm hit, to make it back to Arizona. We came in and told us to stay as the weather conditions in Southern Colorado were very dangerous and Raton Pass was closed. Instead of listening to our son, I decided to leave and hope that Raton Pass would be open by the time we would arrive in that area. A very bad decision. I should have **listened to my son**.

Maggie and I made it past Walsenburg, Colorado before it started to snow. The snow got worse and it became a complete whiteout with cars and trucks sliding off the road. There were no snowplows on the Interstate and the exits were not plowed. Traffic was at a complete stop much of the time because of slide outs. During one of the stops, I got out and talked to a trucker who was in front of me. I told him that since it was a whiteout, I was going to follow him in hopes of making it to a rest area near Trinidad, Colorado. The trucker, whose name was George, told me to stay behind him and he thought we'd be able to get to Trinidad or the rest area.



We made it about 10 miles before George's truck slid off the Interstate. I was following a little too close and also slid to a point where I high centered my Explorer. Now we were both stuck. I called AAA and they said they would tow me out of the snow after the

highway opened. I called the Highway Patrol and they said they would try to reach us and take us to a shelter. Again, I should have **listened to my son**.

The Colorado Highway Patrol had their hands full. Cars and trucks were stuck everywhere you looked. A Colorado Fish and Game employee, who was helping the Highway Patrol, picked us up. We were only about four miles from Trinidad but that town had already filled up with snow refugees. The next refugee center was back about 40 miles at Walsenburg. Believe me, it was an ordeal getting to Walsenburg. George stayed with his truck as he had ample food supplies and heat. He also was able to keep an eye on our Explorer. He had a cell phone and kept me posted on what was happening on the Interstate.

Our shelter, in Walsenburg, was the Community Center. The Red Cross arrived in the afternoon and gave us refugee packets and provided dinner. The National Guard arrived in the evening and provided us with Army cots. There were approximately 100 people in our shelter. Believe me, they were a cross section of our society. My hat's off to the Red Cross and the National Guard. The shelter was adequate but sleeping with 100 strangers is not how I like to spend the night.

The next morning, the Highway Patrol gave us special treatment and allowed us to get to our Explorer by getting a ride from a Trinidad resident. The roads were plowed but the Patrol had not yet opened them. They also allowed the tow truck company to pull us out before the Interstate was reopened. The Patrol told us that they expected Raton Pass to open by noon. Unfortunately, New Mexico was also hit with the same snow storm, and they couldn't get their part of the pass and Interstate opened until 4:30 p.m. in the afternoon. Maggie and I waited in line until the Interstate reopened and then took off for Pinetop. We decided to drive straight through

fearing another storm would hit us. We arrived in Pinetop at 1:30 a.m. It took us three days to recover from this ordeal. By the way, George was having a problem getting a tow truck that was large enough to pull him out of the snow. He may still be in the divider strip on I 25 stuck in the snow.

Both Maggie and I are too old to do this again. Of all the years I've driven in snow and lived in Colorado, when they had the 100 year blizzard in 1982, this was the absolute worst snow storm I have ever seen. We may be getting old but we definitely have learned our lesson. That lesson is "**listen to your children**," sometimes they do grow up and become wise.

WHEELS

By Rich Ballow

It was a good time, long after coon tails on antennas and shortly before big red Chrysler 300's; it was the 50's and we loved our cars! There was that canary yellow Vett---one to die for--- and Daddy's girls in their robin egg blue '56 T-Birds. What a time! There was Buddy, Steve and Dick with their shiny new '57 Chevys, all claiming the fastest car as if it really mattered. There were the cool cars, and the not so cool cars---like my family's push button transmission Dodge station wagon painted green and white. But it was wheels



after all. Life wasn't too serious then in spite of the occasional "rumble" or

a screeching challenge at the corner light. We dragged the main for hours, called Fulton in our town, girls changing cars at the stoplights like changing partners on a dance card. From one end of town at Stan's Drive-In to the other end at Mar's for a cherry coke and burger---all just burnin' gas at 20 cents a gallon and listening to Wolfman Jack or DJ Al Radke spin a disc.

Let's not forget the street rods and the guys who drove them. With duck tails (DA's) about as greasy as the engines they constantly tinkered over and low slung levis, white T-shirts, pack of Camels rolled up in the sleeve, they must have all been cousins of James Dean.

Looking back at our time, I've wondered if James Dean was merely a reflection of our culture or the model inspiration of the counter culture growing up among us. The classic "Rebel Without a Cause" that so well defined Dean, displayed a rebellious spirit that had infected us all.



1958 – 2008

Watch for lots of information about our golden reunion in the next issue of *The Owlette Dispatch*.

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