



1955 AUSTIN HIGH REUNION

NEWSLETTER VOLUME 4 ISSUE 3 SUMMER 2009

www.austin1955.org -- reunion@austin1955.org

July 4, 2009

HAPPY BIRTHDAY AMERICA!! HAPPY BIRTHDAY to you other Yankee Doodle Dandys: Leonard Cooper and Anthony Pagliaro. If anyone else has a July 4 birthday, let us know, and we'll include you in next year's July newsletter. Here's the latest news from and about our classmates. Be sure to send us yours.

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!!

Many thanks to these donors of \$5 or more: Bernard Derango, Donald P Gurney, Norman Kazluski; Ronald Kenyeri, and James Plastina. Please send newsletter support donations, payable to "Austin 1955 Reunion Ltd.", to our Treasurer, Irwin Magad; 2100 Sanders Road, Suite 200; Northbrook, IL 60062-6141

SAVE THE DATE FOR OUR 55TH REUNION IN 2010:

Your reunion committee is working diligently to select a weekend and location for our 55th reunion. They are "this close" to a decision. The date(s) and place will be announced in the October newsletter. Meanwhile, please put a hold on the weekends of September 25, 2010 and October 2, 2010. It will be one of them.

HAPPY 60th ANNIVERSARY:

Marie and Ken Iversen celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on June 15. Ken writes, "Marie and I had a party celebrating our wedding anniversary. The entertainment was a "Sing-a-Long", with songs appropriate for a wedding anniversary. This included "The Anniversary Song" and "Our Love Is Here to Stay". Guess who played the piano!" Congratulations Ken and Marie! Long may you love!

IN MEMORIAM:

Janet Westergren-Johnson writes: "I have a bit of sad news. Anne Lynus was an Austinite from 1951 to 1955, but quit two months before our June graduation. She married Nemo Herrera. They were together 54 years. Nemo passed away on June 20 from cancer. I'm sure some alumni will remember Annie. She had a twin brother, Carl." We extend our deepest sympathy to Anne and family for their loss.

Our classmate, Dr. John P. Gelsomino, passed away on June 14 of an apparent heart attack. John received a Bachelor's degree in music from DePaul University and a Master's in education. He joined the staff at Kelly High School in 1965 as a music teacher and band director. He left in 1972 to become assistant principal at Curie High School. He returned to Kelly and was principal from 1990 to 2001. In 2000, a new performing arts building at the school was named in his honor, family members said. While in charge at Kelly, the former Army intelligence officer once drove gang members out of the school, chasing them down an alley and ripping his pant leg in the process, his family said. "The great thing was that they never returned because they thought John was nuts," said his wife. "He sometimes had that effect on people." In retirement, Dr. Gelsomino was a musical director at Fenwick. He also conducted the annual 4th of July concert at the Chicago Historical Society and was in the River Forest Community Band. We extend our deepest sympathy to his wife Susan and family. For the full obituary, go to: <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/chi-hed-gelsominojun24,0,3697879,print.story>.

HEALTH UPDATES:

Joyce Rosko is currently in Northwestern Memorial Hospital, following her fourth back surgery. She has been on a recovery roller-coaster since the end of March. Our hearts go out to her and Ken. Get Well Soon, Joyce!

Bernie Wiczer tells us that Tony Vitale had serious spinal surgery in early April. We are pleased to report the operation was a success and he is planning on playing this weekend with Milt Trenier again. Good for you, Tony!

YEAR BOOK WANTED:

Adrienne [Lieberman] Reimer will gladly buy a 1955 year book, if anyone wants to sell one. Contact Adrienne at: 9430 W Lake Mead Blvd., Las Vegas, NV 89134, 702-254-1566

MUSIC MEMORIES: THE ONE HIT WONDERS OF THE FIFTIES (by Chuck Meyer):

Last quarter's mystery singer was Grace Kelly, who sang in the 1956 movie "High Society". This was a musical remake of the earlier "Philadelphia Story", with music by Cole Porter. Grace sang a duet with co-star Bing Crosby; This was her first recording. "True Love" was the name of the song and of the yacht they were on. Frank Sinatra was a member of the cast, and he also sang a duet with der Bingle. Grace was a well-respected film actress, but after this movie, she married Prince Rainier of Monaco and made no further movies. She soon presented Prince Rainier with a male heir, which ensured the continuing independence of Monaco. (Monaco and France have an agreement that Monaco stays independent as long as there is a male heir to the throne. After that, Monaco reverts to French control). She did, however, make one other recording - in 1980 - entitled "Birds, Beasts & Flowers: A Programme of Poetry, Prose, and Music". To see and hear a film clip that includes the Crosby/Kelly duet, click on <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pmXQFFsjzKM>

Two people answered all the questions correctly. [Rita \[Aniszewski\] Simonaitis](#) answered first -- by snail-mail, yet! [Ray Yelich](#) answered later via email. Congratulations to you both! Now let's hear from our next One-Hit-Wonder!

"When you guys were graduating from high school, I was a mere 11 years old, but I had already achieved fame in England as a boy singer, recording in both English and German. In 1957, I recorded an up-tempo gospel song that became a big hit both in England and the U.S. In the U.S., it was number one for four weeks. To this day, it remains the only gospel song to reach #1 on a U.S. pop singles chart. A few other singers recorded this song, but none was ever a significant challenge to me.

"In the early 1960's I recorded two more songs, but they were never even noticed. After that, I gave up on the music industry. By 1990, I began keeping my hands busy running a hotel in my world in northern England, and I now reside in London. Who am I, and what was my song?"

MOVES, TRAVELS & NOTES:

Mike and Nancy (Baggio) Pasquerelli had a cross-country auto adventure in June. Here are excerpts from Mike's travelogue. "On June 2, we left for Yosemite National Park. We stayed in a cabin in the Park for four days. I took pictures, while Nancy climbed Vernal Falls with two friends. After much hiking and sight-seeing in beautiful Yosemite, we travelled to San Marcos, CA to stay with friends and visit Nancy's uncle. We also went to La Jolla for a day of sunshine and many more photos of the beautiful California coast. We then headed for the Grand Canyon. I stopped the car half way to the Grand Canyon, spotting airplanes! It was the "Planes of Fame Museum of the Grand Canyon!" There were planes that I had my hands on at one time or another. We checked in at the "Red Feather Hotel," one mile from the Park entrance, then went to the Park. The sky was overcast, which wasn't great for photographs, but my new "ExpoDisc" did well, setting the white balance on my Nikons, so we shot many photos anyway! The Grand Canyon is FABULOUS and the National Park Service is still EXCELLENT! Very thorough, efficient, friendly workers and Rangers! There is a shuttle bus service in Yosemite and Grand Canyon Park. You park your car and take the bus. They run every 15 minutes so you can get off and on to see the sights. Tuesday was an exhausting day. We had a great steak at the "Yippee-ei-o Steakhouse". We also went to the IMAX "Grand Canyon Movie." We learned from a Ranger that the "Skywalk" is outside of the Park. It is on an Indian reservation near the California and Nevada borders; cost is about \$85.00. We didn't go. The next day, we were going to leave because it was raining, but Nancy wanted to go back to get her Park Service Passport stamped. Then, we saw holes in the clouds. Blue Sky! We changed our plans on the spot! Nancy called back to the "Red Feather" and booked us back for the night. We had some sun, so got some great photos of the Colorado River and the Rapids. On Thursday, June 18, we departed for "Canyon De Chelly" (de-shay), then either Santa Fe, NM or "Four Corners" and Colorado. We've travelled over 3300 miles so far. We drove through a Navajo Reservation which was mostly desert on U.S. 160. Some interesting "Road Construction Novelties" included driving on the base underlayment. The road crews were rebuilding from "the ground up." The U.S. Highways are excellent. We stopped at one of the Navajo roadside jewelry & pottery sales. Part of it was a viewpoint of the dry "Little Colorado River" Canyon. Next, was a stop at "Four Corners". We took pictures and videos of each other with hands and feet in all four States! Geography lesson: Guess the States!

We then headed north to Mesa Verde, and saw "Cliff House." I barely made the steep descents and climbs. Whew! 35 years ago it was a breeze. Saturday, June 20, we headed east on U.S. 160 through the San Juan Mountains to the east slope of the Rockies. We arrived home on Monday, June 22, after 5200 miles of driving. We were exhausted, happy to have seen so much of our beautiful USA. I hope all the photos and videos turn out well.

Then and Now



Suzanne Johnson-Peterson, pictured above as 1959 Miss Illinois was recently entered in the Pageant Hall of Fame. What is the old saying... "Natural beauty is ageless." Congratulations to Suzanne on her most recent achievement!



April 11, 1959



April 11, 2009

Austin High School classmates Jim Vail (1955) and Mary Ann Damato Vail (1957) celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on April 11, 1959.

Residents of Scottsdale, Arizona, for the past 10 years, Jim and Mary Ann lived next door to each other on North Avenue as youngsters. They raised four sons and now have eight grandchildren

RETIREE THOUGHTS:

My wife asked, "Whatcha' doin' today?" I said, "Nothing". She said, "You did that yesterday". I said, "I'm not finished".

"I'm retired. I was tired yesterday, and I'm tired again today". With age comes wisdom.....and Discounts!

CONTRIBUTING COLUMNISTS STILL WANTED:

Do you have a hobby or special interest or area of expertise you would like to share with others? How about your favorite Austin memories? Here's your chance to reach over 500 people. YOUR alumni newsletter welcomes articles on subjects your classmates might find interesting.

NEWS, PHOTOS AND MEMORIES: Have you visited our website (www.austin1955.org) recently? If not, you're missing a treasure trove of Austin High School memories as well as some current news articles about our alma mater. Our most recent newsletter as well as an archive of all our past newsletters can also be found on the site. In addition, you'll find photographs and news about alumni vacations, and there is a series of 15 Chicago photographs that succinctly cover our lifetime.

TELL US WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOU:

Photos and items of general class interest should be directed to webmaster@austin1955.org. If you have any news (special trips, births, deaths, anniversaries, moves, etc.) or memories of your days at Austin to share, email Kaye (Beecroft) Aurigemmma or write to her at 10846 Martindale Drive; Westchester, IL 60154-5021.

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CONTACT INFORMATION CHANGE: If your contact information has changed, please let us know.

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Please email changes to reunion@austin1955.org or mail this form to:

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