

eMa-Hi Times

Fall 2009 – Class of ‘59

REUNION CORNER

Reunion Activities and Information

(After the fact)

It was great seeing all those who were able to make it to the celebration of our “first 50 years” since graduation. Here are a sampling of the emails that followed, confirming what Mike Lucas’s letter had expressed about the reunion, and those who worked to bring the weekend together.

I would like to thank (and compliment) the reunion committee for doing an outstanding job. It was great to see old friends, especially when everything was set up so nicely.

Well done, and thanks again.

Ken Triplett

Wow! Now that I have recovered from the party, I want to thank all of you who put in the time and effort to pull off a really fun 50th Reunion. It was great to see all of our classmates. We were only missing a few!!! Thanks again.

Gary Rossi

Greetings:

Everything at the reunion exceeded my expectations and it was a real honor to see so many class mates attending. I'm attaching a little poem I wrote this afternoon and one that was written in 1999. If you want to share it fine if not also fine. Again thank you for all the work you invested.

Gary VanLandingham

And There We Were:

A hundred pathways brought us back to where we launched into the world.
Some of our childhood community were pictures on the wall and memories in our hearts.
We masked our pain, hid our sorrows, covered up our fears and searched each others eyes.
How wonderful for a few short hours to set aside our badge of worth, the silliness of comparison, and we exchanged matters of the heart. We told our stories.
Some had such stories to tell, all had a story to share, and everyone who gathered needed to be loved and appreciated. That's really why we came from so many places.
So much fun and risk in trying to figure out who was who, dramatic how others had changed!
But suddenly there we were, looking for some hint, or some clue, and reaching out with a gentle affirmation of decades gone by.

So many of us have laid hold of the higher purpose of our lives, others are treading water.
We only suffer the deeper pain from unrealized expectations; wisdom flows into the wounds and equips us for the younger spouts around us.
So many of us have lain to rest a dear ones, we could measure the tears in a cup.
Some have walked near the ragged edge, and still others have cheated death and live in a bonus land.
For those who tirelessly and selflessly planned and provided the gathering we all resound with grateful hearts a thank you!

As we moved from that place in time we get to set in motion fresh new expectations.
We now know for sure that there are others who are watching us. Our family, our close friends and even our Maker have some expectations of us.
We get to lay hold of well earned wisdom, patience, and kindness.
We were there, there to touch one another ever so briefly and to cheer one another on for the remaining seasons of our lives.
For those of you who practice your faith in terms of prayer, keep each of us in your hearts and prayers. Our future as a nation may test us all beyond what we ever imagined.
For those of you who write, don't procrastinate one more day, start your journal and outline a biography as a legacy. For any who write music, don't wait. If you need to make memories for the children in your lives, do it starting tomorrow.

We crossed the big green bridge, moved up the slow curves from the south and then we were there.
Now let's carry with us to that final day a sense of gratitude, honor and respect for all those we began this journey of life with in our wet cement days.

Remember, if you knew everyone's story, you would certainly love them.
For me so many of you have reappeared in a fresh sense of joy and memory. You are there playing a role in who I am and will be forever.

A wonderful friend of mine lost his wife early in 1999. No one doubted his love but he was wracked with the knowledge he didn't tell her near enough. Like so many men he could have done more of the little things. He cried on my shoulder and said-"If I knew this would happen I would have----"

I came home from his memorial service and wrote this poem.

I Would Have:

I would have held you longer
If I thought I never would again.
I would have listened better
If I knew I'd never hear your voice.
I would have given more if I thought
You'd never cross the door,
I would have said, "I love you",
if I only had the choice.

I would have served you tea
all hours of the night.
I would have shared your fears
I would have made things right
I would have prayed a prayer
If I could keep you here
I would have given more of me
I would have held you near

But there is now a quiet
a silence in the air.
More time than I imagined there could be.
Reflected and repeated on my heart
The thoughts of you-
a master film, shown on my memory.
And though I would have given more,
listened more and held you close,
I hear you now, I honor you and hold you
in my heart.

Our moments are God's gift,
they're rich in touch and feel
and make our time on earth the best.
They make the living real.

Don't waste one day, don't let the moments
slip away, don't ever say-I would have.
Because you can, lean into life and listen
with your soul, obey the law of love, the Master's plan.

Thanks for all your hard work. I know several of you worked long hours on the reunion and the book and it is much appreciated. I thought the reunion was a smashing success and I enjoyed every minute of it. The decorations were wonderful and I especially enjoyed seeing the old grade school photos on the wall. In addition, honoring those who are no longer with us (both in slide show and photos) was a very thoughtful thing to do. It was poignant remembering all of them and brought tears to my eyes as well as many others.

One thing stood out to me and that was the huge Pirate image on the wall. Nicely done. I hope someone stashes it away for the next reunion.

Thanks again for all you did to make the reunion a joyous one. You certainly succeeded.

Sincerely, Cecilia Ash Watson

I agree with Mike - Kudos are in order!!! I felt the entire weekend was incredibly well organized and a wonderful success. It was my first reunion and I was amazed at the large turnout. Jim and I both had a wonderful time and it was awesome just having the opportunity to reconnect with friends I hadn't seen or even corresponded with in 45 to 50 years. Thanks to everyone involved in planning such a delightful time together with friends from our past. It is truly amazing how time vanishes when friends get together after long absences and are able to pick up where we left off many years ago. It was TERRIFIC!

Louise Reinhart Miller

The 1st thing I think of when I remember a particular classmate is Betty Major. She was one of the most popular girls in High School...but she was everyone's friend. This meant a lot to someone who wasn't as popular. I shared this with Betty at the Class Reunion.

The Class Reunion was wonderful and I'm looking forward to future ones.

Mary Lou Nelson Munyon

I think of the good times I had at school with my friends and talk to my wife about the friends I had all the time. Any of them can e-mail me at majorl8443@msn.com or call at 541-888-4970.

Larry Wingert

This is nice to hear. I don't communicate much, but I like reading about all the others ... Besides why quit communicating ...

Also, would you pass on some "pat-on-the-backs" to those who worked on the 50th Reunion Booklet and CD. The old pictures were pleasant surprises, and the whole thing was just really well done ...

Dorothee Moore Pelham

So... Where in the World is Sylvia?

Here is a bit from the Writer's Almanac on the founding of the Peace Corps:

(John F) Kennedy first spoke about the idea of a Peace Corps in his final weeks of campaigning for the presidency. At 2 a.m. on October 14, 1960, after a long day of campaigning, the young senator stood on the steps in front of the student union at the University of Michigan. The journalists had gone home, thinking that nothing more would happen that day, but 10,000 students remained, hoping to see and hear Kennedy. He gave a short speech, in which he said:



"I think in many ways it is the most important campaign since 1933, mostly because of the problems which press upon the United States, and the opportunities which will be presented to us in the 1960s. The opportunity must be seized, through the judgment of the President, and the vigor of the executive, and the cooperation of the Congress. Through these I think we can make the greatest possible difference.

"How many of you who are going to be doctors, are willing to spend your days in Ghana? Technicians or engineers, how many of you are willing to work in the Foreign Service and spend your lives traveling around the world? On your willingness to do that, not merely to serve one year or two years in the service, but on your willingness to contribute part of your life to this country, I think will depend the answer whether a free society can compete."

Within two months of taking office, Kennedy signed an executive order establishing the Peace Corps. Then, on this day, Congress authorized the executive order that Kennedy had signed, creating an agency whose purpose was "to promote world peace and friendship" by

making available to interested countries American men and women "qualified for service abroad and willing to serve, under conditions of hardship if necessary, to help the peoples of such countries and areas in meeting their needs for trained manpower."

Since the start of Peace Corps, 195,000 volunteers and trainees have served in 139 countries. Currently, there are more than 7,800 volunteers (60 percent of whom are female) serving abroad in 76 countries.

In her information for the Reunion booklet Sylvia (Burles) Clark wrote:

“ I have been accepted by the Peace Corps at a University English Teacher in Southwestern China. I will depart for Chengdu, China, on July 1, 2009, and return on August 12, 2011. This will be an amazing experience, and I will have so much to share at the 55th or 60th Reunion.”



What follows are excerpts from several of Sylvia’s emails (slclark@dslextre.me.com) on her experiences thus far:

I feel like "Alice in Wonderland" here. For good background on Chongqing, China, Ted Koppel did "The People's Republic of Capitalism" on the Discovery Channel in June. I am very fortunate to be witnessing the emergence of the Chinese middle class, and all the ramifications to the world that this implies. I am also very fortunate to see some unbelievable historic sites like the Dujianygyan Irrigations System built over 2,200 years ago. This is a gravity irrigation system that divided the Minjiang River into two parts controlling flooding and managing draught.

My greatest joy so far has been the students who are just amazingly warm and friendly. I can hardly leave a class sometimes because everyone wants to have their picture taken with me.

I am really an oddity in China because grandmothers here just stay at home, and care for the grandchildren - not go halfway around the world by themselves. The Peace Corps says that we can't travel for 90 days after we arrive at our sites so I won't be able to travel until after December. Tell everyone to come visit me.



... I just have to tell you about my week. Instead of having AH HA moments, I have OH!

GOOD GRIEF or OH! MY GOD jaw dropping flashes. In the Business English Writing class, the students started all in unison reading the lesson on abbreviations. I would read one sentence and then they would all together repeat it. So that is the "teaching method" in China.

Last night three girls from the writing class came over, and before I knew it all my clothes were out the window drying on hangers instead of strung across the kitchen on hangers from a bungee cord. Next, was dinner which they all shopped for and cooked. We had my favorites "fangie jidian tang" (tomato and egg soup), rice, shredded potatoes, and bok choy [not unlike Swiss chard]. While they were shopping for food and bowls and cooking utensils, they came back with a pole with hooks on the end. This is used to put and take off the hangers on a rod high above the window. Eva asked me what the pole was called in English, and I had to tell her that we didn't have such things in America. Shocked she asked how we dried our clothes? I explained a dryer. Not only did they all cook, they cleaned the dishes, and the floor. Then we all sat around my computer while I searched my pictures for any picture of an American house. Then we took pictures of them posing with me. I'm sure my picture is going to be all over China soon. I invited them all to come back next Friday. What a hoot!

... I am at my permanent location now in Chongqing. It is the fourth largest city in China, after Beijing, Shanghai and Tianjin. It's a combination of San Francisco hills, New York skyscrapers, and a peasant village of 5 million people. It is located on the Yangtze River and often the embarkation city for tourist cruises down the Yangtze. I will be here for two years so please, if you can, come visit me. I have a nice two bedroom apartment. It's not totally Western so if you prefer there are many inexpensive hotels nearby.

I am just beginning to find out about the education problems in China, and I found out first hand when I walked into three of my scheduled classes to find from 78 to 88 students in each class. The notation "Classes 1 & 2 was" on my schedule, but I assumed, wrongly, that this meant like in America that they were probably a combination of 40 students. Also I assumed, wrongly, that the desks were moveable, that there would be some kind of working technology like a microphone and or computer in the class, that there would be fans or air conditioning in the classroom. Wrong on all counts. I did what any red-blooded American would do, I whined and complained to everyone, particularly the school department heads. I now have a guarantee of air conditioning and technology or I don't teach the class. You must realize by now that I am not at a Tier 1 school in China. It is a college, and most of the students are not qualified by their scores on the Gao Tao, (high school exam) to attend a prestigious university or even a good university in China. I like the students and the school, and feel that I can accomplish the Peace Corps Mission here....

... There are many things that China does do right!

1. There is a Farmer's Market every hour of every day just steps from my apartment.
2. Bicycle lanes so wide that it looks like a bicycle race.
3. Paying for plastic bags. You either bring your own or pay extra for the bag.
4. Friendliness is a national passion here.
5. Respect for elders. I almost always get a seat on a crowded bus.

... Tomorrow is National Day here [written September 29], and everything is closed. It is to celebrate the 60 years of the New China (the communist rule from 1949). Then on October 3rd is the Mid-Autumn Festival celebration so more vacation until Oct. 9th. I will take this time to prepare as many lessons as I can. Also will do some site seeing in Chongqing. Joann, a Peace Corps volunteer from New York, and I are going to Dazu Stone Carvings built in 650 AD in grottoes in the mountains. The 50,000 statues, and 100,000 character inscriptions are a

World Culture Heritage by UNESCO. Just also found out that a student is from Dazu, and will meet us there to show us around.

...Most American food is hard to get here like cheese, raisins, mayonnaise, mustard. I spent two hours last Friday getting to a store that carries cheese. Then on Saturday about six of us including John Garner – from North Bend, of all places, and his wife Kate, both PC volunteers, Joann, and two younger volunteers went to the downtown area just to eat a hamburger and French fries. We literally sat in the restaurant all afternoon just shooting the breeze. It was so relaxing just to speak English for half a day.

(If you'd like provide any materials to help Sylvia, here's a short shopping list)

I could really use any books on writing, English novels, current top paperback novels, English dictionary, magazines, file folders (they don't exist here), any appropriate English magazines, paperback books, music, DVD's for any age from preschool to adult. Don't send too many religious pubs, but a few would make it to me. Any freebies, such as, book markers from the library or stickers or the like. Anything from the Houston Rockets, or the LA Lakers for the boys, or teen or fashion magazines for the girls. Pictures of America and your families. They love learning about American families and culture. A personal letter to a student would be welcome, too. They love children's songs such as, "Twinkle Little Star" and "You are my Sunshine". I had a hilarious time at a teacher training seminar leading a rousing rendition of "Ten Little Monkey's Jumping on the Bed." Don't try to mail any food though. I have heard weird stories of how food arrives here. Don't send anything of value through the mail. I have heard that any Amazon boxes never make it.

Mailing Address:

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Group photo with US Ambassador to China.

(Sylvia is in 3rd row, 4th from the right)



Sorry to Report...

Steven V. Weeks

Published: Sunday, November 01, 2009

Aug. 20, 1941 - Oct. 29, 2009

At his request, no services will be held for Steven V. Weeks, 68, of Coquille.

Steve was born Aug. 20, 1941, in Bandon and raised by his parents, Virgil and Lucile Weeks, in Green Acres, along with his brother Paul. He died Oct. 29, 2009, in Coquille.

He attended Marshfield schools through grade 11 and obtained his GED after entering the U.S. Army in February 1960. He served 3 1/2 years (two years in Germany) and 2 1/2 years in the reserves receiving an honorable discharge in 1966. Following his discharge, he worked for Weyco and later as a sawmill superintendent for Stu Lyons which became Coastline Timber Products. In 1975, he and a friend, Ray Tompkins, formed Tompkins & Weeks Inc., a small trucking company, and subsequently bought Ray out in 1980. He and his wife, Faye, were sole owners until his retirement in 1997, at which time the company was sold.

Steve was a lifetime member of the Eagles Lodge No. 538 and 26-year member of the Coquille Valley Elks Lodge No. 1935.

Steven is survived by his wife of 33 years, Faye; his stepsons, John Bishop and wife, Tamatha of Mesa, Ariz., and Michael Richert of Roseburg; stepdaughter, Lori Carnine of Grants Pass; six grandchildren; six great-grandchildren; and brother, Paul and wife, Judy of Coquille.

The family suggests memorial contributions to the South Coast Hospice and Palliative Care Services, 1620 Thompson Road, Coos Bay, OR 97420.

Arrangements are under the direction of Myrtle Grove Funeral Service, 396-3158.

Font Size:

BOOKMARK



Steven Weeks

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Stay in Touch

Be sure to let us know if any of your contact information changes (address, etc.) so we can keep the files up to date. Listed below are changes that have been reported since the reunion:

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