

Keith Westbrook's 50th Reunion Recap

I may be slightly biased, but I think this was one of the best (if not the best) reunion celebrations we have had! We had a great time at the reunion! The main attraction in my estimation was having the Hospitality Room. We had a chance to reminisce about our school days and get caught up with current life events.

Thursday, September 13, 2012

The Reunion started at about 12:15 PM with reunion committee members getting the Hospitality Room setup for visitors. Bill Winters brought and displayed an array of memorabilia from the good old school days. Classmates gathered in the Hospitality Room as they arrived to get their name tag and keepsake class photo. Thanks to Marilyn Fick Luttinen and Karen Doden Coburn for decorating the room and developing the name tags that displayed the classmates' graduations picture.



About 1400 songs from the 50's and 60's on an old MP3 player were played in the background on a small CD player over the course of the reunion in the Hospitality Room. The committee members provided snacks and drinks for the attendees for the three days we had the Hospitality Room. A special thanks to Tom Rock for providing more than his fair share of snacks and liquid refreshments.

We left at about 5:10 PM from the Hotel to go watch the Homecoming Parade (Thanks to Jackie for making arrangements with her former neighbor to allow us to use her backyard to view the parade. A special thanks to Jackie's neighbor). We collected an enormous amount of candy that was thrown to us by the parade participants. There was so much candy that some local classmates took bags of candy home for their grandchildren, at least we used that as our excuse for taking it home.



We returned to the hotel after the parade and gathered in the Hospitality Room at about 7:30 PM for Pizza from Mama Lacona's and specialty Tamales that Lyman Fogel so graciously provided. He brought 5 or 6 dozen frozen tamales with him. Thanks, Lyman. They were great!



Friday, September 14, 2012

We left at about 10:00 AM to take a bus tour of Johnston, Camp Dodge, and the Gold Star Museum. Special thanks to Jan and Jerry Jensen for providing sandwiches, snacks, and drinks for lunch that they served at the Museum. After lunch we all toured the Museum then returned to the hotel.

Obe Herrick stopped by on Friday afternoon at the hotel so we had a few moments to visit with him. The classmates that were present took an opportunity for a photo-op with Obe. It was great to reminisce about our experiences with his driver's education and for me, his *hall monitor* prowess.



A number of us left at about 6:30 PM to go to the Johnston Homecoming Game against Waukee. Our class was introduced by the announcer and recognized by the fans. What a difference 50 years makes - a stadium now versus a football field during our school years. Unfortunately, Johnston lost the game.

Saturday, September 15, 2012

No activities were planned for the day until the cash bar at 5:30 PM. Dinner was served at about 6:30 PM.

Dinner was attended by twenty-five (25) members of our graduating class at dinner, seven (7) former classmates, and a number of spouses and friends.

Ray Pugh and his wife, and Jay Cookman and his wife came for dinner. Mr. Lancaster was not able to attend. Garland and Marlys Seibert could not join us for dinner but did stop by to visit later. Ray Pugh presented each classmate with a copy of his book "Reflections".



The Reunion ceremonies followed dinner. Nancy Pontious Budrevich was the Master of Ceremonies. The ceremonies included the following but not necessarily in this order:

Karen Doden Coburn, Sue Strauss Lake, Rachel Canon, and Marilyn Fick Luttinen came running into the room in cheerleader outfits and proceeded to do a number of cheers. Their enthusiasm and spirit certainly matched that of the school days some 50 years ago.



Ken Jarvis delivered a Toast to the attendees. Several other classmates made impromptu toasts as well. A copy of Ken's Toast has been included on the 50th Reunion DVD that each classmate has or will receive.



Judy Sullivan gave a few highlights of what we had intended to be a formal presentation to Obe Herrick for his time and patience given us in drivers education. Classmates donated about \$1,600 for the Johnston Schools, Driver Education Department in honor of Obe Herrick.

Judy Sullivan also led the group in an activity, “Recognition by Hairstyle”, to identify several pages of classmates’ photos from our high school years. Seemed like it would be a fairly simple task but the photos had the face removed so it was more like a silhouette. Thanks to Judy and Sandy Reier – it was fun!



Jackie Weatherspoon Reineke made the traditional presentation of gifts for various accomplishments. Larry Jurgensen, Jon Schuler, and Dick Tasler came to the reunion - their first reunion. Jackie presented a T-Shirt to each of them and instructed them to wear it to the next in 50 years. Lusijah (Jean Jacobson) Marx was recognized as the classmate that had to travel the farthest. Jerry Jensen was recognized for having the most grandchildren. Several other classmates were also recognized for various activities.



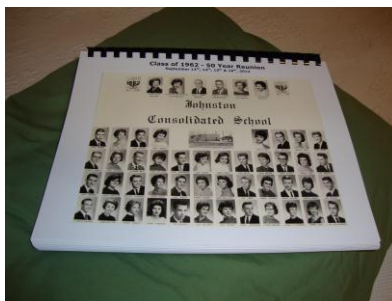
JoAnn Theisen (John’s widow), with assistance from Nancy Pontious Budrevich, presented chalkboards that John had made to the classmates that had not yet received them. A copy of her presentation is also included on the DVD.



Jerry Jensen with the help of Karen Doden Coburn and Marilyn Fick Luttinen paid tribute to deceased classmates. The memorial consisted of Jerry identifying each of the eleven (11) deceased classmates one at a time followed by a candle being lit in front of their photo by Karen or Marilyn. It was a very emotional presentation as we took a few moments to remember them.



The final item of the formal ceremony was my presentation of two (2) slideshows. The first slideshow was a brief look at our school years from kindergarten through graduation. The second slideshow consisted of all of the photos I had been able to gather from previous reunions and other photos classmates had shared over the years. While the second slideshow was playing I handed out the Reunion Books with the able assistance of Tom Rock.



After the formal ceremonies, we just visited for a few hours before we had to vacate the dining area and the Hospitality room at midnight.

Sunday, September 16, 2012

A number of classmates met at Ryan's Steak House for a breakfast buffet. The food was great and we certainly enjoyed the time we had to visit and say our good-byes.

Each classmate received a Johnston Dragon etched candleholder with purple votive and a glass plate base with a painted inscription. Thanks to Judy Sullivan, Carol McCurdy Culver, Jan Jensen (Jerry's wife), and Nancy Pontious Budrevich for their tireless efforts to prepare these delightful 50 Year Reunion mementos.



Marilyn Fick Luttinen and Karen Doden Coburn were in charge of the decorations for the reunion. Fantastic settings – Thanks!

On behalf of the Class of '62 I extend our extreme gratitude to Judy and Lamoine Darr for their efforts to design and order the 50th Reunion T-Shirts and Sweaters. They also graciously provided the champagne and sparkling water for the formal Toast. Great job!

I want to extend my special thanks to all of the other reunion committee members for the fabulous job they did. All of their planning and coordinating various events with the hotel and other venues made this the best reunion ever! THANKS!