

Dear 1956 Fellow Classmates,

In *Alice in Wonderland* the Queen tells Alice she believes in at least six impossible things everyday before breakfast. Well, going to a WPHS 40<sup>th</sup> reunion is certainly something I believed impossible. Now that the big Pow-Wow is about to materialize, I am reminiscing about WPHS with my son, Joey, sitting on the front porch here in Marfa, Texas. Course, I've often thought about high school days and all the people there, classmates and teachers. Such wonderful friendships developed...it's a shame we've been out of touch so long...and teachers...Mr. And Mrs. Weissenburger, Gay Cubbedge, Mr. Orr and so many others...they were such great role models for us teenagers. My son was talking about his school days in New York and I said the top of the Empire State Building, the Staten Island Ferry, and Broadway all rolled into one could never compare to the real live thrills of Olive Parks' driving lessons or her riveting performances in American History. Nor could any of the Big Apple events measure up to the camaraderie, romance and drama that went on in *our* classrooms, cafeteria, the front steps in the morning, etc. not to mention those Saturday matinees and the 101 lemon cokes we drank socializing at O'Brian's drugstore. And there was Lois Burke's typing class (can you image how white-out and correct-a-type would have blown her mind, let alone word-processors). New York could never keep up with that fast pace!..."What about the NY Yankee's or a Knick's game" my son asked me. I told him there would never be the excitement and screaming at Yankee stadium or a Knick's playoff game to match what went on at the WILDCAT games. I saw an old clipping in the Year Book, Winter Park slams Eustis 33-0! Was that a close game or what!! For Eustis...and didn't we still scream for every home score?...I'm not being facetious...what innocent good-hearted, fun-loving days we had. (Everyone is fondly remembered).

The coming reunion has stirred up so many memories. My sister and I visited the school two years ago and wandered around felling the ghosts come up, seeing faces I thought I'd never see again. We were struck by the enchanting beauty of the place; the stately Spanish architecture and the surrounding landscape. Looking back it was an idyllic time. 40 YEARS!! Can you believe it? It's gone like an eye-wink. I doubt we'll have another 40<sup>th</sup> reunion - we're in the golden years and heading for the "choir invisible". Sadly, some of us are already there. Life does move in a circle. When I was 16 I wrote a paper on Whitman for English and Mrs. Weissenburger sent me to interview a Whitman scholar who lived in Orlando. Thanks to her, Whitman has been with me more or less all my life. In Brooklyn I live very near to where *Leaves of Grass* was published, and I just read this today in a copy my son has.

Youth, large, lusty, loving—youth full of grace, force,  
fascination.

Do you know that Old Age may come after you with equal  
grace, force, fascination?

WELL, whatever lies ahead, there is and always has been  
a special place in my heart for dear ole WPHS.

Elaine Cherry Benton