



MAY 2022



FROM OUR GRADUATES:

Clara Sue Griffis Arnsdorff: "I enjoyed the newsletter as always, and I especially loved Judith Hamff Murphy's account of memories of teachers at WHS. I am appalled that she was told not to take Calculus---that would be grounds for a parental complaint today.

I remember Mrs. Dawson so well---she required a number of 'book reports' for her class, but instead of asking them to be written, we went to her and sat by her desk and 'discussed' the book with her. I remember one of the books I read involved one of the wives of an early President---purely fictional I am sure---and probably more of a romance novel than one appropriate for her book report, but she asked me interesting questions about the book, even though she had no idea what it was about.

I also remember discussing Mr. Cornelius and Ms Caufield with someone---maybe Carol Leskin. We thought they spent so much time together during the speech tournament that they must have some kind of a 'thing' going---silly me."

Bev Murphy Wells: Loved all the "show and tell/short stories" our classmates submitted. Lots of happy memories from youth forward. They were all fun to read! I know Sharon Odell's community is in good hands with Sharon at the helm. I've always wanted to go to Big Bend, maybe someday (after I get my last 5 states in hopefully this year). I hear Big Bend is beautiful. Not sure if I would be as adventurous as Tommye Ruth and her daughter though.

Judith Hamiff...how things have changed through the years for "girls"! Glad you found a tutor!

Keep the stories coming. They all delight us and provided joy to our memory. Looking forward to more!

UPDATES:

Cathey White Land: Cathey's specialist on ankle surgery in North Carolina suddenly retired and cancelled all surgeries that he had scheduled. So, Cathey is back to square one to get her ankle corrected. Such disappointing news!

Gayla Miller Webb: Gayla is doing great after her last shoulder surgery. She is even thinking of having the other shoulder done.

Robert Wilson: wants to remind us:

1960 WHS 80th Birthday Party will be held at:

Lake Air Towers Poolside & Clubroom

4924 Cobbs Drive

Waco, TX 76710

Please RSVP to Robert Wilson at :

(210)287-9490 text or call

or e-mail- rwilson60waco@gmail.com



1. Ambrosio Silva:

"Unable to pay tuition at Baylor, I joined the army in 1961 and remained for 30 years. I was an Infantryman, went from private to Command Sergeant Major before I had been in 20 years. After my retirement from the army, I returned to Waco and went to Baylor, graduating in 1994 with a BA in Political Science. I had planned to attend Law School but suffered a traumatic brain injury. I am classified by the VA as 100 percent disabled and am unemployable because I suffer from PTSD."

-Ambrosio Silva Jr Class of 94

2. Howard Dudgeon:

In the Fall of 1957 Mr. Knipper caught himself on fire in Biology class while heating some alcohol with a Bunsen burner. Milton Kerr came running up from the back of the room and threw a fish bowl of water on him to put the fire out. Mr. Knipper said, "Nice move, Kerr."

3. Gayla Miller Webb:

"I would like to share something that Judith Hamff reminded me of when she told about what Mrs. Dawson said to her. Mrs. Dawson was not so kind to me. She was my home room teacher. She told me that if I would cut my hair, I would make better grades. I wore my hair parted on the side and one side waved down close to my eye. Guess she thought I was trying to be sexy. It did hurt my feelings and made me think I was put in a less-than-nice person position. I never forgot that comment and it really bothered me that she had a bad opinion of me. Just my feeling: We should never judge a person on looks alone."

4. Mickey Lavy:

"All this talk about old age and 80th birthday. Melody and I celebrated our 30th wedding anniversary recently. We returned to the scene of the crime (Salado) and the bartender at the Inn asked if we were senior citizens. I answered that " We are almost to the age where we can see the beacon at the approach of the runway that signifies upper-middle-age." I believe upper-middle-age is a good place to be.

I still haven't been sick since 1978 when I was off for three days with the flu. Or was it 1987. Regardless, I'm only ever off work for a day or two to get something done about my back. Or is it irregardless. Probably the first one. Like flammable and inflammable.

Trust me. Life begins at 50. The first 20 years were fun, mostly, the next 30 were the roller coaster into the abyss, and the past 30 have been like a sailboat at sunset on Lake Whitney in June. Warm, calm, nice scenery. I don't have a sailboat, but it's probably nice.

Getting old is not for sissies. On the other hand consider the alternative. The key is to get up every morning. After that, severe stretching is in order. And then a walk. I'm lucky enough to still have a job to go to every day. I don't always go to it but it's there if I wanna. I get out every day and drive around this beautiful town, this town I was lucky enough to grow up in. It's growing but it is still beautiful. Ten years ago, gridlock was having to sit through two red lights on Waco Drive. Now, two red lights is good traffic karma. But, the old parts of town still have great character, less traffic.

Another key to getting to upper-middle-age is to marry up. Always marry up. Doesn't matter if you are a he or a she or not sure. Always marry up. It'll make you a better person than you were. I'm living proof. I've done it twice and it worked both times.

Another key is friends. Get some. Designate one as the best (as in best friend). They are usually younger than you and might be able to do a little heavy lifting for you. And they drive nice trucks. My best friend (besides the obvious) is Jerry. Jerry and I are gonna take his new red pick-up on an expedition to a desert region of northeast New Mexico, to a 6,000 acre ranch. We were there for an hour December one and it was cold. The attraction there is a village of stone houses built by ranchers after the Civil War. We only saw one for a few minutes and the others are scattered a half mile away from each other. There's also a small cemetery which gave us a little info. I'll have pictures when we return in May.

I'll write again soon to tell stories about my favorite teachers, Ms. Sanders and Mrs. Garland. And Taylorville, New Mexico. "

Mick 7.9

5. Joe Riley: "Inasmuch as we all are focusing on turning 80, if not already there, here was a page from a *Page-a-Day* calendar for seniors. Not exactly uplifting, but worth a laugh, perhaps. We need to keep our sense of humor, that's for sure."

*"You heard people say
40 was the new 30 and 50
was the new 40 and 60
was the new 45, but you
never heard anybody say
80 was the new anything.
80 was just 80."*

—NOVELIST/JOURNALIST
JOHN LANCHESTER, *Capital*

6. Marvin Schutza: Marvin sent some life lessons in growing older:

Life is too short. Enjoy it.

Your job won't take care of you when you are sick. Your friends and family will.

Don't compare your life to others. You have no idea what their journey is about.

Take a deep breath. It calms the mind.

Get rid of anything that isn't useful. Clutter weighs you down in many ways.

No one is in charge of your happiness but you.

Frame every so-called disaster with these words: "In 5 years, will this matter?"

Forgive

Believe in miracles.

Envy is a waste of time. Accept what you already have, not what you want.

Burn the candles, use the nice sheets, wear the fancy lingerie. Don't save it for the special occasion. Today is special.

When it comes to chocolate, resistance is futile.

If we all threw our problems in a pile and saw everyone else's, we'd grab ours back.

Life isn't tied with a bow, but it is still a gift.

Medical Corner:



According to  **these are America's Best Hospitals:**

The 2021-22 Honor Roll:

- 1. [Mayo Clinic](#), Rochester, Minnesota.
- 2. [Cleveland Clinic](#).
- 3. [UCLA Medical Center](#), Los Angeles.
- 4. [Johns Hopkins Hospital](#), Baltimore.
- 5. [Massachusetts General Hospital](#), Boston.
- 6. [Cedars-Sinai Medical Center](#), Los Angeles.
- 7. [New York-Presbyterian Hospital-Columbia and Cornell](#), New York.
- 8. [NYU Langone Hospitals](#), New York.
- 9. [UCSF Medical Center](#), San Francisco.
- 10. [Northwestern Memorial Hospital](#), Chicago.
- 11. [University of Michigan Hospitals-Michigan Medicine](#), Ann Arbor.
- 12. [Stanford Health Care-Stanford Hospital](#), Stanford, California.
- 13. [Hospitals of the University of Pennsylvania-Penn Presbyterian](#), Philadelphia.
- 14. [Brigham and Women's Hospital](#), Boston.
- 15. [Mayo Clinic-Phoenix](#).
- 16. [Houston Methodist Hospital](#).
- 17. (tie) [Barnes-Jewish Hospital](#), St. Louis.
- 17. (tie) [Mount Sinai Hospital](#), New York.
- 19. [Rush University Medical Center](#), Chicago.
- 20. [Vanderbilt University Medical Center](#), Nashville.

May Birthdays:

- 2- Terrell Reagan**
- 5 Carol Leskin Allen**
- 11 Carol Adams Scarborough**
- 13 Tom Kittlitz**
- 15 Darell Gill**
- 23 Janene Loftis Jett**

David Ditto



JIM MONNIG



I am so excited to get Jim's story!! I have been working on him for quite a while. As you all are aware, Jim is a most colorful graduate. Probably he was always colorful....maybe one of the reasons he was elected one of our cheerleaders. Jim said he had a lot more to tell as he did not mention much about his marriages nor did he reference any poetry that means a lot to him. Jim has also taken other trips that he did not tell about because he felt he had already written so much. Maybe in future newsletters he will tell us more in the new segment **DID YOU KNOW** that I am hoping will take root. Anyway, I hope you will enjoy his story. It gave me some chuckles and I feel it will for you, too.

"Awhile back my wife, Mimi, and I had dinner with Jeanne Harman and Jack Martin. Jeanne said she thought my life was somewhat interesting and that I should write up a story. I told her I did not think it was that interesting but in any event, this is the story. Let me assure you that it is nowhere as heroic or accomplished as some of our graduates.

I went to UT for a year and then transferred to Baylor and graduated with a degree in Accounting. I passed the CPA exam right away and got a job with Arthur Andersen which at that time was one of the Big 8 accounting firms with the largest accounting office in Houston. It was a prestigious job but it was miserable for me, and I was in no way successful in that job. So, after a year I resigned much to their happiness and went to law school at the University of Texas School of Law. Vietnam was getting pretty hot in those days and at one point I tried to join the Texas National Guard. The day I planned to join, I got an exemption from the accounting firm; therefore, I did not join. Later, toward the end of law school, I figured I was going to get drafted so I went down and took a physical to join the marine corp. As it turned out I could not hear then, and I cannot hear now. I had to get hearing aids. That took care of my military career. I did spend one day in the military getting my physical. They took away just about all my clothes and made me walk around in my underwear with a bunch of other guys and stuck needles in me and it was generally not a terribly pleasant experience. My service to the country was somewhat limited.

I had not done particularly well in high school but made better grades in college and in law school. After law school, I worked with a state agency for a couple of years. During this time, I got married and divorced and remarried. After the second marriage I went up to Denver and practiced law there for a year and a half. After that, I came back to San Antonio which was the home of my second wife and have practiced here in San Antonio ever since. I worked for a firm in Denver and for a firm in San Antonio until I was about 35. These jobs went better than the accounting job, but still did not go real well. My dad died when I was 35, and at that time, it seemed that a new clock started ticking. I opened up my own office and somehow or another got involved in doing divorce work and that is what I have done ever since. We do not call ourselves divorce lawyers anymore. We call ourselves family lawyers. I like to joke around that we are really family destroyers , not family lawyers. Most of my colleagues who take themselves pretty seriously do not think that is real funny.

I have had a good career, I am still working, and I still have a lot of fun being a family lawyer. I have tried a hundred jury cases and thousands of non-jury trials, hearings, and things of that nature. I have gotten nice recognitions, although a lot of these recognitions do not mean a whole lot to me. Lawyers commonly put on their resume that they are Texas Super Lawyers which Texas Monthly magazine puts out. I have always been in that and note that there are people so listed who I do not know nor have ever heard of them. I have plenty of nice recognitions and sometimes tell clients that my reputation far exceeds my abilities. Some years ago, I got involved speaking at seminars. I have spoken all over Texas dozens of times and have also had the pleasure of speaking in Santa Fe, Florida, New Orleans, Charleston, South Carolina and Chicago. I am sure enough not a legal genius. I am, as it turns out, fairly amusing and people like to hear me talk. They don't pay you to give these speeches although you do get to go to these seminars free and the seminars are at really fun places to go. They pay for your transportation, room and board, so it is a good deal.

I have been married four times now and have 5 kids and 9 grandchildren. I have great relations with some children, fair relations with others and no relations with one child. I figured out a while ago that children are just like me and that they are people. Sometimes people like each other and sometimes they don't. I am sure many of you have had difficulties with your children and we all live with this as best as we can.

I almost got killed a bunch of times. Back when I was in college, I pretty much nearly killed myself and three other guys hitting a telephone pole. I was driving and this was in Waco and the pole was over there on Hillcrest right across the street from where Jack and Jerry Smith lived. We had been at the Brass Rail drinking a bunch and of course we were minors at the time. I remember Randy Farrar was in the car and I think the other two guys were Jack Ewing, and Bobby Cathey. I cannot remember for sure. Later, I nearly drowned in a canoe accident. I broke my neck surfing. Breaking my neck was kind of neat in this respect: I was surfing down at Port Aransas on a real rough day, and I really do not know what happened. I think that a wave closed out and just drove my head right into the sand. I broke my neck in two places. When I came to shore, I was talking to some people, and I had my surfboard under my arm. I have no recollection of what happened even to this day. This was back in 2007. These folks had already called an ambulance and the ambulance showed up and took me to the hospital in Corpus Christi. After they saw that I had insurance, a nurse came in and gave me a shot of morphine that made my hair stand up on end. I have never in my life had a rush like that. After the morphine, they took me up to the ICU and I spent the night there. It was some experience. It was real cold in there and there were all these red and green and blue and yellow lights and all kinds of sounds like *BING BING BING BING. Bam Bam Bam*. The whole thing was extremely pleasant. I

was vaguely aware that somebody was in a whole lot of pain, but I could not exactly tell that it was me. I would not care to break my neck again, but I would not mind another shot of morphine. A couple of years later, I was riding motorcycles with some guys up in Arizona. We were on the road on the North Rim of the Grand Canyon that goes from one lookout to the other. These guys were better riders than I was, so I was riding by myself. I went off the road and went down this terrific incline. I remember rolling and rolling and wondering when I was ever going to get to the bottom. When I was rolling, I happened to remember I had broken my neck a couple of years before that. I was sure hoping that I was not going to break it again. Fortunately, the motorcycle went one way, and I went the other way so I was not hurt at all. I climbed back up the hill, flagged down a motorist and that motorist found the guys I was riding with, and they came back. We were able to push the motorcycle at kind of an angle up to a point where we could get it up on the road. It was all torn up. The lights were broken, and the shifter was bent into a U shape. It is amazing what you can do with duct tape. We got a pipe and straightened up the shifter and duct taped the lights and things back onand off we went. We rode another 2,000 miles after that and it was a great trip. On that trip I had one of what I think was one of the neatest experiences of my life. I was at a place called Monument Valley Utah, which no doubt some of you have seen. It is a high desert and sort of plopped down here and there are these great big rock formations. They looked kind of like skyscrapers. I was doing about 100 mph, it was a hot day and the road stretched out like a string in front of me and behind me. I could not see another soul in the world. I do not know if I have ever had such a feeling of freedom as I had that day at the time. This is the road that Forest Gump was on when he stopped running and said he was tired. Some of you may remember that.

I was never much of an athlete, though I did play some tennis. When I was 37, after my second divorce I was trying to make time with a schoolteacher. She was a runner and I thought, "Well, I maybe I should be a runner too". In hopes of impressing her, I started running and one thing led to another and I ran for many years. I had the good fortune of running the New York City marathon and a really neat race I did was the New York City New Year's Eve 5-miler. That race took off at the base of Central Park and went up past the museum which I believe was the Guggenheim Museum and then circled back. There were all kinds of fireworks going off and Central Park is surrounded by buildings. The fireworks reverberated off the buildings and the whole scene and lights were just out of this world. After the race we went to the Russian tearoom and had a very late dinner. That was a marvelous experience. I continued running off and on and still do to a lesser extent.

My son was born in 1984 and when he was 4 or 5, he got interested in Karate. I started going to karate with him and did that for quite a few years. I always lifted weights and stayed in fair shape. Back around 12 years ago I started going to a boxing gym and that has been a really great thing in my life. The gym is owned and operated by Jesse James Leija who was a two-time world champion. It is the greatest place. There are mostly men although there are quite a few women who also workout. The people are from all different parts of society and the place has a terrific supportive vibe. I go there about three times a week. After I had been working out at the gym for 2 or 3 months, I actually started boxing. I have had the good fortune of having boxed 100's of rounds in the ring and that is something that I enjoy and has been a lot of fun. I recently had a stent put in my heart and they put you on a lot of blood thinners. At this point, I cannot take a chance of getting hit in the head so I am not actually boxing. I expect to be able to get back to boxing toward the end of the year and still work out a lot.

Back in 2013, there was a charity event here in San Antonio that was put on at the Joe and Harry Freeman colosseum. That is a colosseum that I would guess it is about the same size as the Heart of Texas colosseum in Waco. In any event, it was a wonderful experience. They had a professional announcer and really first-class lighting, sound system, and a great ring and professional judges. All the fighters had to come up with a ring name. I boxed as “**Jim Bad to the Bone Monnig**” and the music was George Thurgood’s *Bad to the Bone*. It was fantastic. When you walked out on this kind of a stage all the lights came on, and the music was blaring. The crowd was yelling, and it was more fun than you can even think. I got beat in the fight, but definitely believe I won the ring walk. The crowd loved us as we were both pretty old and we got a big standing ovation. The announcer who had done this event several times (who I have seen on T.V. fights) said I was the oldest guy and the toughest he had ever seen, and I liked that a lot. I think the tough part has to do with not going down as the other guy really was a good deal better than I was. About that time, I also went up to Kansas City and fought in the Ringside Nationals which is a big event and has about 1500-2000 fighters every year. Randy Turner went with me to the tournament and we had a lot of fun. I am proud to say my record is perfect. I have 0 wins and 2 losses. That is perfect, I guess.

Back in 2000, I built a house down in Port Aransas and that is something I have enjoyed a lot. I fished a lot at first but was always on the lookout for something else to do. One time I was at the doctor’s office reading a magazine and looking at their travel adventure ads. There was a little ad that said, “Learn to surf in paradise.” It went on to talk about the Corky Carroll Surf School in Costa Rica. This was in October. That November I found myself spending Thanksgiving at the Corky Carroll Surf School. It was great. The place was just a little surf camp cut right out of the jungle. At night you could lie awake and listen to the Howler Monkeys in the trees. Howler monkeys growl like lions and just make a wonderful sound. I ended up going down to Costa Rica several times in those days and surfing. I also used to go out to the West Coast and surfed a lot in Southern California. I surfed a lot of famous waves there and it was a good thing to do. I was never much of a surfer, but as I already said, I was never much of an athlete. I did have a lot of fun doing those things. Like I said, it has not been a particularly heroic life, but I have had a lot of fun.

There have been large portions of my adult life when I was single and those were good times. I have concluded that the best life you can have is a happy marriage and the worst life you can have is an unhappy marriage and somewhere in between is being single. I have had the chance to try all three. I hope some more of you will send in your stories. I love reading what my classmates have done and are doing and I hope you folks have had fun reading this.”

Jim Monnig



One of our Cheerleaders -1960



Jim and Mimi Monnig at 60th reunion- 2020



Jim- Cozumel- 1981



Bob Easter, SuEllen Golden Wilson, Jim Monnig - 45th reunion 2005

Jim Sparring with Jesse James Leija



Yoga pose was at a Yoga school in Rhinebeck, NY.



Jim and his grandson surfing in Port Aransas, TX



Jim and his floral blue jeans. Funny story behind these jeans that Jim is wearing-- Mimi, Jim's wife, was throwing the jeans away but Jim got them and wears them. Just goes to show that one person's trash is another's person's treasure!



Jim is singing a Christmas Carol to Mimi after seeing the NUTCRACKER in Denver.



Jim and a 'statue' in Aspen. Jim likes to say that he talked to this fellow a while before he figured out it was not a living being.



The Racecar is at the Grand Prix of Mexico in Mexico City.



Jim and Leija, a two-time world Champion, after a boxing show. Jim reports his face is pretty beaten up in this picture..



Jim and a granddaughter



Jim and his youngest grandson watching a Lions/ Bears game. Jim is teaching his grandson to 'growl'.

Jim in New Orleans enjoying a good cigar.



Help !! We seem to have lost contact with Douglas Crook who lives in Germany. This is all that is known right now from his Facebook page. I do not do Facebook so if any of you have been in contact with him, please let me know.



Douglas and a grandson

Worked at German Federal Government Language Service

Do you remember when.....

It took three minutes for the TV to warm up?



Nobody owned a purebred dog?



When a quarter was a decent allowance? And made with real Silver!



www.whs60.org