



"JHS Class of '64"

Issue 7

Class Newsletter December 1, 2011

Joplin Eagles

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Class Website:

Check the website out.
Click on the tabs & enjoy.

www.joplinmo64.com

The Newsletters are in the last tab on the right. Scroll over, click on it, then click on view. You may have to download the unzipper to view current or past issues.

Celebrating Our 7th & 8th Edition

"Home." We've heard the clichés about it—that we can't go home again—that we can't wait to leave home when we're young, and as we age, can't wait to return to it.

Whatever our experience of home, it's a powerful part of who we have become.

Dolly Parton says that all she has to do is close her eyes and she's back home. For those of us whose homes were destroyed in the Joplin tornado, that may be the only way we can return there.

Whether we remained

in Joplin after graduation or moved on, we are rooted to the memories of the houses in which we grew up and the town that was our launching pad into life.

When hearing the news of the Joplin tornado, and after discovering whether the people we love were safe, the question for many of us who no longer live there was whether the homes we grew up in were still standing.

Fortunately my

childhood home on the east side of Joplin was untouched by the tornado, although not unscathed by the ravages of time. Ross's home, at 26th and Connor was leveled.

Several classmates who have stayed in Joplin lost houses that have been their homes through the years.

The 45th reunion of our class was Bruce McCaw's first trip back home since high school. Even though he had been gone for decades, when the news of the tornado and the

(Continued on Page 17)

On The Inside Looking Out (Part 2)

The feeling of hope beats strong in the hearts of those in Joplin. Day by day, six months have passed with each bringing new sights around town. After the initial devastation, we had to adjust to the new scenes of debris removal leaving very barren land. Today, we have

most of the street signs replaced and are getting used to navigating in neighborhoods that now stand only in our memories. We see one of three things as we drive about residential areas: rebuilding of homes, barren lots waiting to have homes rebuilt, or

"For Sale" signs on empty lots. I'm confident future months will see many more homes being rebuilt as decisions are made and insurance processes completed. Commercially, we are delighted to see several businesses on Range-line open in the last few weeks. Business is brisk

at the new Wal-Mart, Chic-Fil-A, and Burger King. Street lights are up on one side of the road. Main St. and E. 20th now have lights replaced and operating. It has been dark for many months. What a difference the lights made!

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Connie Culton Cox - Bio

"I started working for the Department of Revenue in a tiny fee office on the square of Marshfield."



As a little girl I always pondered over what I would do when I grew up. In high school I decided I wanted to be a CPA. I loved working with numbers, even though we didn't use calculators. However, after two semesters at Juco in accounting I decided I didn't like working behind a desk. Marriage to my high school sweetheart would send me down a path completely different than I had envisioned. His name was Terry Cox and he was from Mt. Vernon, MO. He went to college in Dallas to be a funeral director and licensed embalmer. Back then the funeral homes had the ambulance service and Terry loved the excitement and adrenaline rush when heading to a wreck or ambulance call. This was not what I thought I wanted when I grew up, so living in a small town of Mt. Vernon was very interesting. I loved my job working at the Missouri State Sanatorium. I worked for the federal government on a special study collecting data on patients given experimental drugs for tuberculosis. In 1965 you didn't have to have permission from the patient taking these medications. In the winter of 1967, Terry came

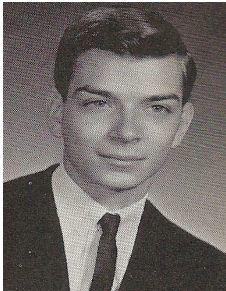
home with an application to join the Missouri State Highway Patrol. Saying I was shocked was putting it mildly!! He was accepted and in the early hours of dawn, in Feb. '68, he left for Rolla, Missouri to start the rigorous training to become a Trooper. Just prior to graduation day, each man is told where he will be located in the state. Terry was sent to Troop D and stationed in Marshfield, MO in May, '68. Another small town I had not heard of, but I was beginning to see my life change with such pride to be married to one of Missouri's finest!

I started working for the Department of Revenue in a tiny fee office on the square of Marshfield. However, when we found out we were going to be parents the decision for me to stay home and raise a family was a wonderful decision. The Patrol did not like the wives working outside of the home, Troopers could not live in trailers, drive a Cadillac, have false teeth, have tattoos, or wear glasses!! Of course, all changed as the organization grew in numbers.

Craig was born Jan. 27, 1971 and on July 29, 1972 he had a little

sister named, Christy. Life was good, but, again, time has a way of changing things. So in 1978, Terry joined the ranks of narcotic agent. Missouri was just starting to work with the DEA and FBI in fighting drug crimes and arresting drug dealers. In 1980 he received his second promotion to Sergeant and was transferred to Jefferson City where the General Headquarters is located. He was given the task of managing the narcs located all over the state. Ft. Leonard Wood had stopped making calls to civilian homes to dismantle explosives. Terry designed the program of heading the Bomb Unit and presented it to the Senators and Representatives and it passed by 100% because he made all of the callouts for the state and was gone a lot, this starting me thinking about going back to college.....hmmm, what to do!!! I loved the life that revolved around police work. It would be perfect to go back to school and get a criminology/science degree and work as a tech in the Forensic Lab housed in General Headquarters of the Patrol.

(Continued on Page 6)



Regan Thomas - Bio

"We feel so fortunate to enjoy a terrific, rewarding life and I never pass up a chance to tell people it all started in Joplin."



I left Joplin shortly after graduation in '64 and started my pre-med education at Drury College in Springfield, Mo. as a biology major. Phyllis Payne and Katherine Patterson also attended Drury which was great fun because not only were they from Joplin, but we had all started kindergarten together and attended Joplin schools. My good buddy John Sapp came to Drury to visit Phyllis and he would stay with me in the dorm. John eventually transferred to Drury where we joined the same fraternity (Sigma Nu).

My parents moved from Joplin a short time after I left for college and my father developed a hotel and entertainment business in Branson, Mo. With no immediate family ties to Joplin, I never returned until many years later. College was great and I was active in student government there as class president and eventually student body president. Most importantly, I met Rhonda Churchill at Drury. She was from Lake of the Ozarks where her family owned and operated a marina. We dated through the college years and got married during my

first year in medical school at University of Missouri.

Rhonda was a news reporter while I was finishing medical school. She started law school and then we moved to Yale University where I did my internship and started my surgery training while Rhonda finished Yale Law School. We returned to Missouri and I completed my specialty training at Columbia. Rhonda started her law practice as well as taught law school at Mizzou. We began our family in Columbia and all three of our children were born there. Our daughter Ryan is now an architect in New York City; our son Aaron has an art degree and is an artist as well as a popular DJ here in Chicago; and our son Even is assistant manager of the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Kansas City.

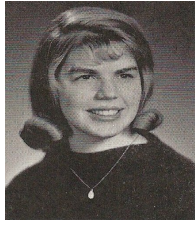
During our years raising the family, we moved to St. Louis in 1981 where I was director of facial plastic surgery at Washington University Medical School and later chairman of ENT surgery and facial plastic surgery at Saint Louis University. In 2001 we moved to Chicago where I am the chairman of ENT surgery and facial plastic

surgery at the University of Illinois College of Medicine.

Rhonda and I genuinely love living in Chicago. It's a very different life than I ever imagined as a Joplin kid. We live in a high rise condo on Lake Shore Drive overlooking Lake Michigan. My medical practice specializes in facial plastic surgery and Rhonda is a senior partner in a large law firm here. We have a boat in the marina near our home which dominates much of our summer free time. I enjoy frequent international travel where I am privileged to present lectures on my medical specialty at various medical education meetings. I am currently president of the American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery and past president of the American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery. I have published five medical textbooks and serve as editor of one of my specialty's medical journal.

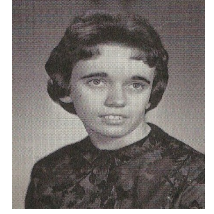
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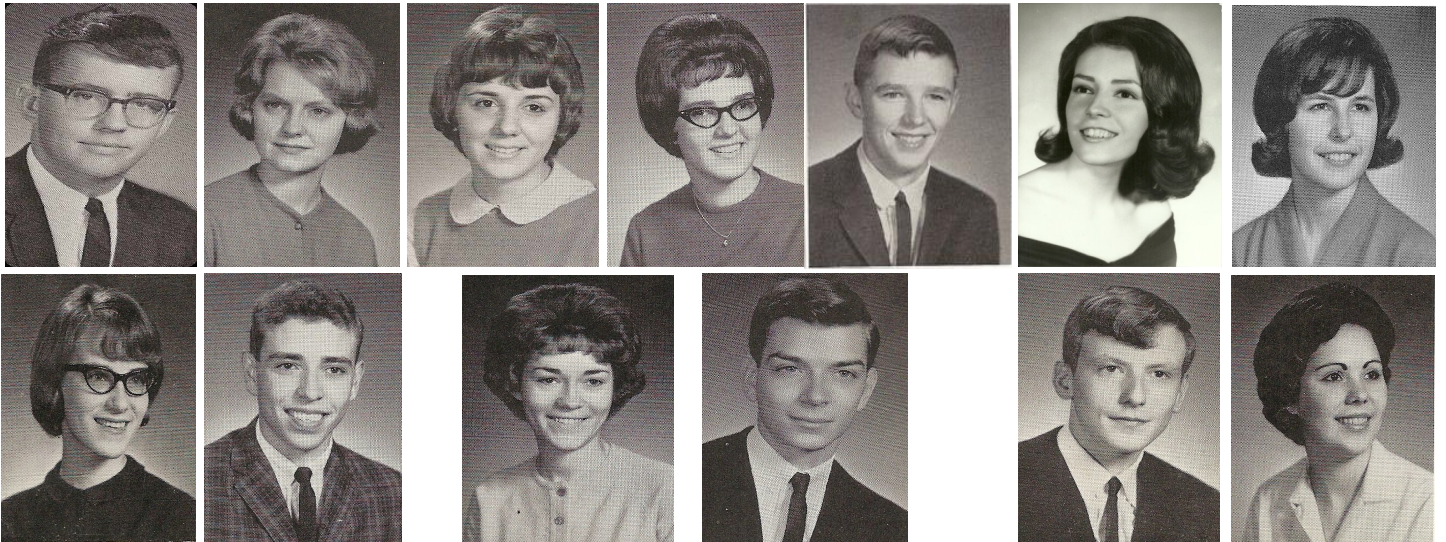


We're Out of Bio's

ATTENTION!!!



We are out of bio's for our next newsletter. We are looking to those that have promised to do a bio, so now is the time to fulfill that promise. We have had some great feedback on past bios and would love to keep this portion of our newsletter alive. So please go for it!!!



Thanks to those that submitted their bio. Very much appreciated.

Help Us Find Our Missing Classmates

We still have classmates that we've classified as MIA's. If you have an idea where any of these classmates may be found, feel free to let us know so we may be able to communicate with them. Please help us locate the following:

Carol Bach, Linda Baugh (Robards), Patricia Kay Belk, Richard Burns, Jo Ellyn Brown (Baker), Carol Blankenship, Danny Clark, Gary Colvin, Larry Conboy, Johnie Coots, Mary Sue Cox (Riley), Merlene Garrison (Burriss), Don Hall, James "Jim" Hilton, Clair Howard, Robert "Bob" Isaacs, Robert "Bob" Jordan, La Donna Miller, Carol Munson (Wrench), Emma Nunn, Mitchell "Pat" O'Brien, Judy Osborne (Gardner), Richard Lee Pearson, Patricia Kay Puckett, Patty Riley (Brewer), Drucilla Short, Connie Smith, Robert James "Bob" Smith, Robert Joe "Bob" Smith, William "Bill" Ray Stow, Calvin Summers, Shirley Teague, Mary Thornton (Reed), Linda Vails, Thomas Ray Warren, Paula Weinacht.

Please help us out. In order to keep you abreast and to value your input as we move toward our 50th Class Reunion, don't forget to include us on any changes in your contact information. You may do this on the website by clicking on the "Contact" tab, then click on the class e-mail address joplinmo64@joplinmo64.com, then enter your information in the e-mail box and click on the "Send" tab, that's it folks. **If anyone has e-mail addresses for Peggy Long Phifer & Linda Yeakey - please share, as what we had is no longer valid.**

Imagine cruising Main without street lights overhead. What a difference the lights made!

One of the most arduous projects was the opening of our schools in mid-August. Not only on time, but our kids received a positive welcome. Some schools are in new locations, but all are assuring our families that it is a safe environment. As a retired teacher still working in the district, I see firsthand the dedication of our administrators, faculty, and staff in supporting the kids. It is nothing less than miraculous to see what has been accomplished. The energetic leadership of the district and the support of volunteers, community business and faith based partners, and people from all over the world made this happen. You may have heard that the United Arab Emirates donated a million dollars toward laptop computers. Each high school student has an assigned computer and Joplin is soaring into the future. Computers have replaced textbooks (which were lost) and our kids are learning in ways ever so different than ours. There are many, many needs still existing.

Joplin High School will soon be removed with plans to rebuild with an expanded campus adjoining the current location.

St. John's Medical Center will break ground in a few months for their facility which will be seen on I-44 at the Main and 50th St. exit.

In the meantime, they are functional in MASH type tents and portable buildings. An interim hospital is being built while awaiting the 2014 completion of their I-44 facility. Dozens of FEMA furnished mobile homes across from the airport will be used for the next eighteen months and have provided housing for many applicants. As you can imagine, local contractors are extremely busy and hundreds of workers and companies have arrived to build our new town.

Churches and community organizations have been very involved. From give away rummage sales, trees and flower bulb distributions, grocery and meal tents there are numerous free projects that have sustained our residents. Habitat for Humanity has just completed ten houses and Extreme Makeover built, furnished and landscaped seven. These will air on their 200th project anniversary in January. Additionally, Cunningham Park has been restored. The city and schools are now in the process of writing thousands of personal thank you notes to everyone who helped in any known way. Yes, our town, your town is moving ahead.

I have never been more proud than now to say Joplin is my hometown. I'm not sure I previously knew how resilient our community was. The stories are real though you find it difficult to im-

agine people have survived them. Each day brings another surreal scenario. One can't go to the grocery without embracing someone you see and share the joy of knowing you are both okay.

You inquire, they inquire. Everyone has been moved by physical or emotional pain. Likewise, all are thankful for what they do have . . . whether it be a house in tact or repaired, no injuries or steadily improving from ones received, gratitude for the volunteers who continue to come and help, and a resolve that faith and hope will sustain us. We know our classmates in town greatly appreciate the concern and correspondence from those away. I hope each of you will consider joining in celebration as we mark the 50th anniversary date of our graduation. In 2014, let us all come together once again and take pride in our community. Joplin and JHS gave us roots as well as wings. 🐦 *Phyllis Payne Sapp*

Witticisms of Ignorance

We have enough youth. How about a fountain of "smart"?

If at first you don't succeed Skydiving is not for you...

Red meat is not bad for you, Fuzzy green meat is bad for you.

I think Congressmen should wear uniforms like NASCAR drivers so we could identify their corporate sponsors.

I enjoyed the classes at Lincoln University so much that I, also, liked the idea of being Probation and Patrol Officer. In 1984 I returned to work for the state in the Office of Communication and Data Processing. I processed and paid the phone bills for the State of Missouri and attended some night classes.

Fast forward to June 13, 1987 when I was awakened, about 5am, by my husband saying, "I think you need to take me to the hospital." Those were the last words he would say. He fell to the floor and I yelled for the kids to get up. I started CPR, but knew it would do no good, as he was already gone.

I continued to work, but going to school nights was not a priority, anymore. I stopped taking classes and worked, but knew I needed to grow up. I made the decision to quit working and started back to school full time, going days at Lincoln U and nights at Columbia College. My life had changed in just a matter of a few seconds and it altered me in so many different ways. I made the decision that money was not important, but people were and changed my major to Sociology and minor to Social Work. It was easy to switch because all of the credited classes I had were transferable.

I was drawn to working with the mentally challenged. I worked for New Horizons after graduation and loved every minute of every single day. It was a joy to see how one person could make such a difference in the lives of 23 clients. Case management can be very stressful, but when you can help someone that struggles everyday with the simplest of tasks, the rewards all worth it all. The smiles on their faces when you have helped them through a situation will bring tears to your eyes.

Oh, did I mention I remarried?? I married another member of the Patrol, who had worked many drug busts with Terry and had been in my home on lots of occasions. He was a Captain and we were married for 10 years. I think I was looking to be back in the "Patrol Family." He lived in a black and white world that revolved around criminals and arrests. I lived in a gray world that was helping clients find their wings to soar. Sadly, it just wasn't meant to be.

After the divorce in 2001, my mother, aunt and uncle were rapidly aging. I made the decision to relocate to Joplin. I started working at Ozark Center case managing as I had done in Jefferson City. Regarding my aging family, I wanted to be available to give

back to these 3 loving people who had such a big influence in my life. My aunt and uncle died in 2007, but my mom, at 95, still lives on her own in Joplin.

My son is divorced and shares joint custody with his 2 boys, ages 9 and 11. They live in Owasso, OK. My son is plant manager at one of the oldest plants in Tulsa. He loves his work and will, probably, always live there. It is so close for me and I see them every chance I have and since retiring in 2007 you can find me speeding...lol...down I-44 a lot.

My daughter has her master's degree and is a licensed psycho therapist and has been in private practice for many years. She decided to work with troubled children many years ago when she was a student at Mizzou. She and her husband live in South Miami Beach, FL. He is a Lt. Colonel in the Marines, active duty. He has been on leave from Anheuser-Busch for 3 years. They have a home in Nashville and I've traveled to see them frequently. I love South Beach and just got back recently from a trip there.

I travel a lot, but my mom, children and grandchildren are the lights in my life!! And you know what??? I decided long ago that I didn't have to grow up! 🐾

Not only does this have some pretty good banjo picking, but some pretty pictures as well. Be sure & look at the lower right corner of each picture that tells you where the picture was taken. Banjo Tour of Beautiful Dixie. Great music. Fabulous photography.

<http://mybeautifulamerica.com/BeautifulDixie.htm>

and how proud I am of that. Thoughts of JHS are strong and I value the wonderful memories and friendships I was privileged to enjoy during that time of my life. Like much of the world, my thoughts and prayers have been in

support of the challenges that so many face there following the tornado. I will never forget being in Istanbul where I was a guest lecturer and turning on the hotel TV to see the damage to Joplin High School on the Turkish television

newscast. A sad and bizarre experience. I know Joplin and the people there and have no doubt Joplin and Joplin High School will spring back ever stronger than before. 🐾

"On The Inside Looking Out Part 2"

One of the most arduous projects was the opening of our schools in mid-August. Not only on time, but our kids received a positive welcome. Some schools are in new locations, but all are assuring our families that it is a safe environment. As a retired teacher still working in the district, I see firsthand the dedication of our administrators, faculty, and staff in supporting the kids. It is nothing less than miraculous to see what has been accomplished. The energetic leadership of the district and the support of volunteers, community business and faith based partners, and people from all over the world made this happen. You may have heard that the United Arab Emirates donated a million dollars toward laptop computers. Each high school student has an assigned computer and Joplin is soaring into the future. Computers have replaced textbooks (which were lost) and our kids are learning in ways ever so different than ours. There are many, many needs still existing.

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Phyllis Payne Sapp

A creative mural now fills an exterior wall at 15th and Main. Originally planned by The Cultural Affairs Committee of Joplin's Chamber of Commerce, the art was to be located downtown. After May's tornado, it was decided that the midtown area would be a meaningful site since it's halfway between the tornado area and downtown. More than 200 area children and 15 local artists have joined Dave Loewenstein, an artist and printmaker from Lawrence, KS, in leaving a wonderful gift for Joplin. He tells us "the mural was inspired by the metamorphosis of butterflies, the myth of the Phoenix, and the capacity for renewal expressed in the imaginations of children. The design is like a short picture story in three chapters." Langston Hughes' poem "In Time of Silver Rain" was added and leaves a lingering hope for Joplin's future.

During the summer weeks of painting, I observed many people of all generations working on the brick wall of Dixie Printing. At first, the outline seemed endless. Each day new details were added, and I came to look forward to what might appear next. When colors were added, I was mesmerized by the softness, the gentle feeling of peace that I experienced. Amidst the extremely heated days of summer, the floating dust of demolition work a few blocks in all directions of the mural, and the constant sounds of dozers and trucks, I realized this new addition to Joplin was among the first signs of hope. Daily I drove by to ease my emotions, and always I continued down Main St. with a special feeling of calmness and caring. I won-

dered how the artists could continue in such high temperatures. There was a magnetic hug being sent out to all who viewed it. We needed that.

As you view the first section you see two children seated at a table drawing. To their left are images of a coal miner and George Washington Carver. Next is a serpentine design modeled after Wilders frontage sign. Unfolding in front of the children to the right is an imaginary landscape over which a butterfly emerges from their drawing. It is this idea that prevails down the brick wall and highlights dozens of images contributed by young children after their post-tornado expressions through art workshops. The center section displays how the children depicted cleanup activities taking place in town. Among them is a dozer lifting fallen trees stripped of bark with jagged limbs, another dozer applying a Band-Aid to a fence, an emergency vehicle passing by, and a house with the all too familiar blue tarp covering a damaged roof. Moving down the wall, flowers bloom, a rainbow appears, and colors become slightly bolder. The now infamous carved eagle of the high school watches guardingly over all as the butterflies and Phoenix soar upward and we are left with the lines of "In Time of Silver Rain"

In time of silver rain

The butterflies

Lift silken wings

To catch a rainbow cry,

And trees put forth

New leaves to sing

In joy beneath the sky

It is my hope that you will feel you have experienced this remarkable gift titled The Butterfly Effect, Dreams Take Flight.

What an effort of talent and dedication the artists and children have shared. It is a memorable experience for those who have viewed it in person; for those who are not here, may you feel connected to our heritage. 🖱

Phyllis Payne Sapp

(Pictures of the mural are on the following 2 pages)

Salary Information

Salary of retired US Presidents\$180,000 FOR LIFE

Salary of House/Senate\$174,000 FOR LIFE

Salary of Speaker of the House \$223,500 FOR LIFE

Salary of Majority/Minority Leaders\$193,400 FOR LIFE

Average Salary of a teacher\$40,065

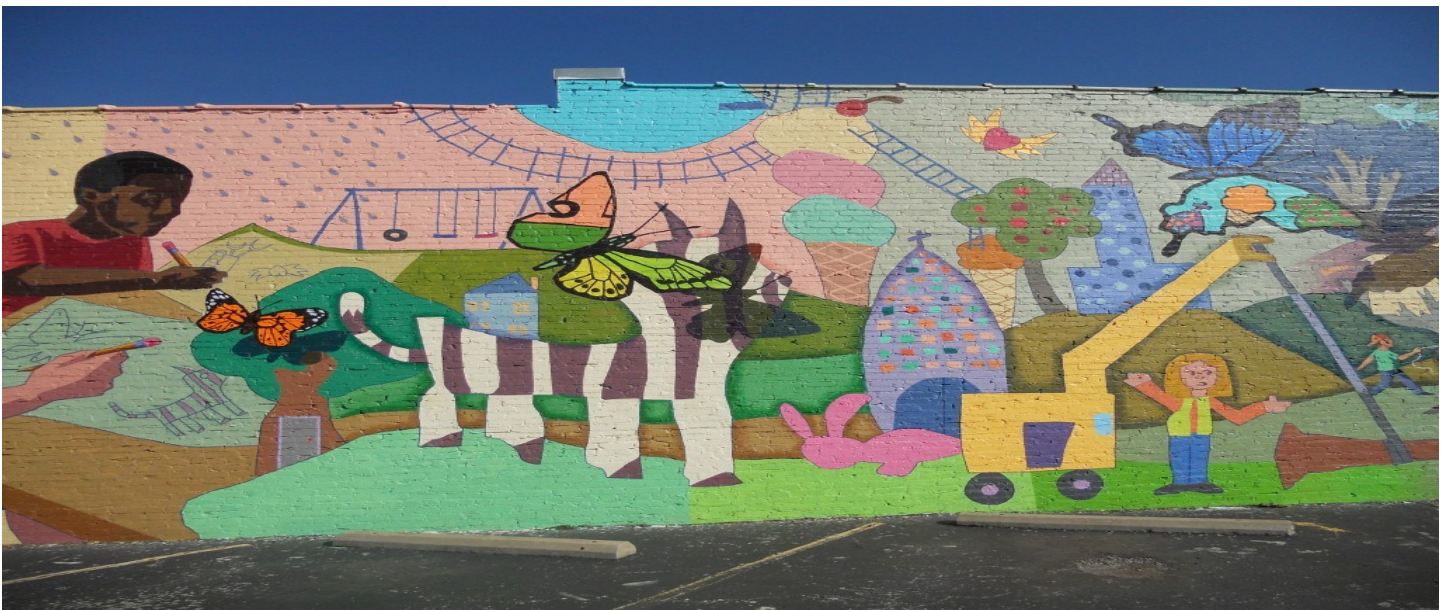
Average Salary of Soldier DEPLOYED IN AFGHANISTAN\$38,000

To help with the deficit, I think we just found where the cuts should be made!

Continuing to Follow the Chapman's

As we reported in the last 2 issues, Mike & Twyla Chapman leased their home in Joplin, bought a boat and hit the waters around North America. They also have a blog set up and post their adventures on it almost daily.

<http://yw8t.blogspot.com/>





On November 17th we had a preliminary meeting in Joplin at Jon Buck's place (Carol Corbin Buck's son) and it was to discuss some advance plans for our 50th Class Reunion. We also had a fashion show of contributions that were made to tornado victims. There will be more information in future newsletters about the 50th. Your input would really be appreciated as to what you would like to see or participate in. We already have some great ideas and have high hopes on making this the best event one could attend. Donations are appreciated, but we have some ideas to raise a few coins, so volunteers would be another avenue to help out the class gathering.... More on all this at a later date.

As you can see, we take our class reunion meetings very seriously. Thanks to all committee members for attending. Jim Christiansen, Sharon Peters Arnold, Connie Culton Cox, Phyllis Payne Sapp, Carol Corbin Buck, Stephanie White Everitt and David Knisley. Missing was Mardell Thomas Rouse. Pictures by Carol Buck.



Dave Knisley



Phyllis Sapp - Dave Knisley - Steph White

Connie Cox - Sharon Arnold - Jim Christiansen



Jim Christiansen looking for his dinner

My first trip back to the old hometown since the tornado of May 22nd was exactly what I had expected. Devastation abound. Of course the folks that live there are seeing the improvements daily, but in all, there is much that still needs to be done. I did see the Extreme Makeover homes that were constructed on Connor. Also, Dude's Donuts construction was being wrapped up and word has it that Dude himself is back at the helm and the maple bars are flowing out the door in the new and larger building, which happens to be the only structure on the block.

The reason I went to Joplin was threefold, first, the class reunion committee had a kickoff meeting, planning our 50th reunion in two years. Then to see progress in action and finally to see what it was like to have a high school (juniors & seniors) in North Park Mall. What an outstanding environment the young adults have to matriculate in. All students have laptop computers, docking stations and big screen TV's abound. The conference rooms, break areas & rooms, as well as the cafeteria & snack bar brought to mind that we should've been so lucky. They even have a tech repair person on staff to keep all computers up and running. The following are just a few of the pictures that we took while on tour of this college environment facility. Go Eagles!!!!!! 🐉 *David Knisley*

Joplin High School at North Park Mall



Joplin High School at North Park



Main Entrance

Storm Shelters

Franklin Technical School at 4th & Kentucky



Seeing what really took place on May 22nd is so surreal....

Below is a picture of the Joplin tornado taken from the MO/KS state line area.



*****Remembrances*****

We wish to pass on condolences to classmate Janice McBride Bond in the loss of her mother. You are in our thoughts and prayers Janice.

I have been in many places, but I've never been in Cahoots. Apparently, you can't go alone. You have to be in Cahoots with someone.

I've also never been in Cognito. I hear no one recognizes you there.

I have, however, been in Sane. They don't have an airport; you have to be driven there. I have made several trips there, thanks to my friends, family and work. I live close so it's a short drive.

I would like to go to Conclusions, but you have to jump, and I'm not too much on physical activity anymore.

I have also been in Doubt. That is a sad place to go, and I try not to visit there too often.

I've been in Flexible, but only when it was very important to stand firm.

Sometimes I'm in Capable, and I go there more often as I'm getting older.

One of my favorite places to be is in Suspense! It really gets the adrenalin flowing and pumps up the old heart! At my age I need all the stimuli I can get!

And, sometimes I think I am in Vincible but life shows me I am not.

People keep telling me I'm in Denial but I'm positive I've never been there before!

So far, I haven't been in Continent; but my travel agent says I'll be going soon.

THIS WILL BRING BACK SOME MEMORIES

SIMPLY SUPERB.....!!!!

1960s This is the one of the best presentations of the sixties that I have ever seen online. It is very well done. Just click on the link and sit back and enjoy the memories. Great photos and facts.



<http://objflicks.com/TakeMeBackToTheSixties.htm>

TRUE ROMANCE

A few things have changed, but not love

By LAURA SCHWED
Staff Writer

He was "the geekiest kid in my class."

That's what Beverly Horton told her twin sister Kathy the day she met the boy who would become her husband.

They were seventh-graders who shared a homeroom class in Joplin, Mo.

"She was beautiful," Greg Moore says. "She was one of the tallest girls in her class. I was short and kind of dumpy — the youngest kid in our class."

Compared to the other kids, Greg was a little behind maturity-wise.

"I was playing with trucks, and I wasn't dancing yet," admits Greg, 64. "I wasn't very socially adept."

Within a year that all changed. They became friends — then best friends, and later double-dated.

"I had dated all her friends since ninth grade," says Greg, who used Beverly as a sounding board for his relationships.

"I was his Dear Abby," she says.

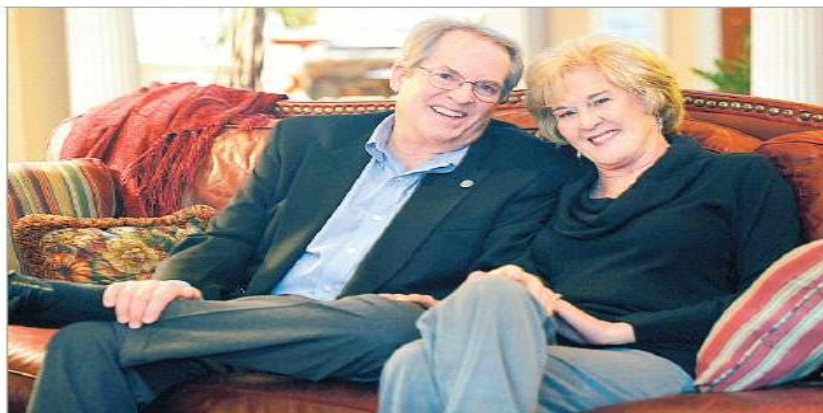
Though Beverly went out with others throughout high school and into junior college, "I saw he had a lot of potential." Greg was the first person to go to college on his mother's side of the family, she says. And there's no denying that he was hardworking. From the time he was 10, he got up around 3:30 a.m. to help his father with paper routes. After delivering the morning paper, he went to school, then helped deliver the evening paper. In high school, he added a job at the grocery store into that schedule.

He was often so tired, Beverly recalls, that "when we'd go to the movies he'd sit there and snore."

At the high school graduation dance, they spent more time talking to each other than to their dates. Greg had heard that Beverly and her boyfriend had broken up, so he asked her out.

The next night they went for a soda, and the night after that they had their first kiss.

They dated through the first year of junior college but were separated when she went to the University of



Stewart F. House/Special Contributor

Greg and Beverly Moore were in the same seventh grade homeroom class in Joplin, Mo. They have been married 42 years.

Kansas and he went to the University of Oklahoma. Greg tried to persuade her to marry him before they finished school and to commute 60 miles to where he was, but Beverly wasn't having that.

She did agree to marry him after they finished. So on June 21, 1969, they wed at a Joplin church with 125 friends and family watching.

In the 42 years since, the couple raised a daughter, Lynette, and weathered more than a few life-threatening health problems. Beverly had breast cancer nine years ago and has fibromyalgia and neuropathy.

"Any of those things could have knocked you down and kept you down," says Greg. "She is a survivor."

"We both wish she was able to do what she did back then," he says, but "you just deal with it."

"Now things take a lot longer," Beverly says. She relies on Greg more — for driving, errands and other things, but they have always enjoyed spending time together. They talk, read, work in the yard, do projects around their Plano house, and take trips around the United States.

They've traveled quite a distance from that homeroom class, and along the way, Beverly made a few alterations.

These are the things she's changed: Greg's chronic lateness, untidy ways and less-than-forthcoming communication style.

"He was late everywhere," Beverly says. Now he's ready

and waiting on her.

"She hounded me until I changed," Greg admits.

Also, "he was a slob, but now he's neat," says Beverly, 65.

How did she straighten him out?

"When you threw your clothes on the floor I put them under your pillow," she says.

She's still working on the communication. "You have to pull it out of him," she says.

These are the things Beverly wouldn't change: his values, strong work ethic,

sense of humor, supportive nature and his friendship.

"I always thought he was a special person."

Despite that initial geekiness.

"We're still best friends," Beverly says.

"She's still tall," Greg says, "and she's still beautiful."

If you have a True Romance story, email Laura Schwed at lschwed@dallas-news.com.

The following contribution comes to us from Phyllis Payne Sapp.

This is the young man, JHS Sr. who lost both parents in tornado and had several weeks of surgeries before returning home. He's made it to the last 12 finalists. He's a remarkable young man.

http://www.highschoolrudyawards.com/football/football_applicant.aspx?nid=748&B=258

destruction of Joplin hit his radar, he galvanized his connections with several foundations such as Eli Lilly, St. Vincent's Health and IU Health Systems, as well as personal resources to donate money to Joplin High School and its sports programs.

Many other classmates contrib-

uted time and money to the rebuilding effort. Our Joplin roots run deep.

Whether you've never left or never returned, whether your childhood dwelling is still standing or long gone, I'll bet you can close your eyes and you're back home again. 🐾

I wrote the article that follows for The Joplin Globe a few years ago. It describes my connection to the neighborhood I grew up in that, although not destroyed by the tornado, no longer stands.

Jeanne Looper Smith

City Council Can't Vacate Memories

Home is where one starts from. – T. S. Eliot

East town in Joplin was never a fashionable address, but it's the wonderful neighborhood where I started from, and where I return to, in my thoughts of home.

A recent page one article in The Joplin Globe, reporting that the city council approved vacating streets around the Tamko manufacturing plant, really hit home for me. High Street, Franklin Drive, and G Streets are not just names on a Joplin city map but are the roads that lead to every memory I have from my childhood.

The house I grew up in on High Street, directly across from Tamko, now sits vacant and forlorn, belying the beauty that was its past. Constructed out of logs cut from the property on which it regally sat, the house was unique in both its design and layout. When we moved there in the early 1950s, the large one-story structure was lushly landscaped and beautifully appointed with striped canvas awnings and large

flagstone porches.

My parents, who could have lived anywhere in Joplin, chose this setting because they loved the house and they appreciated the neighborhood for its racially diverse character. Washington School, where I attended grade school, was integrated early in the 1950s and many of the students from the former Lincoln School were my neighbors and friends.

Broadway Street bordered the neighborhood and boasted businesses such as Earl Smith's grocery store--complete with a meat department with a sawdust floor and a butcher named Roy. Across the street was the hardware store where I bought jump rope from big spools and, a few doors down, watched bottles pass along the assembly line through the glass windowed 7-Up bottling plant. The delicious aroma of Harper's Barbecue, which remains my standard for barbecue today, permeated the area. And

Johnny Powers' Sinclair Station kept local cars full of 20-cents-a-gallon gas.

The neighborhood was a mid-century enclave of tidy bungalows that were full of my playmates who, like the houses, began life in the late 1940s. Growing up in the shadow of Tamko might have seemed undesirable to some but to us it was an adventure.

We'd sneak into the plant, dodging forklift trucks and the plant foreman, to buy candy from the vending machines. And in the summer, we took our bottles of baby oil spiked with a splash of iodine and baked by the pool that Tamko provided for the residents of the neighborhood. It was filled each Thursday with well water that could be used to put out a fire at the plant and was so cold it put us out of the pool until it, and we, warmed up a few days later.

(Continued on Next Page)

If we weren't swimming or sunning we'd hang out on the playground adjacent to the plant or climb huge piles of asphalt shavings. We'd pop inside our houses just long enough to eat lunch and show our mothers we were still alive. Bill Cook (Billy then) was my best friend and cohort in neighborhood escapades. Bill, now a Joplin orthodontist, gave me my first kiss on Tamko prop-

erty. (I'm sure he was just checking my bite!)

Only eight of the original 47 homes remain on the streets that soon will be vacated in my old neighborhood in East town. It's hard enough to "go home again", but harder still when home is no longer there.

Even so, the memories of growing up in that place glow as

brightly as the lightning bugs we collected in jars on summer nights in the yard of the house on High Street. 📍

Jeanne Looper Smith writes a column for The Joplin Globe about growing up in Joplin in the 1950s and '60s. You may contact her at wistfulwordsmith@gmail.com

Classmates Hook Up for Lunch

Making a trip to San Antonio, TX in December can be a delight, even if the weather was better in Kansas City than San Antonio. The delight for me was hooking up with former classmates John Keeling and Mike Mullenix. The event was threefold, first I was promised a bio from John Keeling for our next class newsletter and was told that Monty Gavin would also be contributing to the cause. Pressure was then placed on Mike to come through, so I await in suspense for three mini biography's. 📍 **David Knisley**

Below is a picture of the three of us. Please excuse the Band-Aid on John's forehead. It seems he was pulling down a 2X4 and it hit him in the forehead, yep, it broke the darn board.



Mike Mullenix

John Keeling

Dave Knisley

I had NO idea where Rudolph came from. I think most everyone thought that it was a Gene Autry original. Since it's being played on the radio and CD's today, I thought we should be able to know its origin.

******True Story of Rudolph******

A man named Bob May, depressed and brokenhearted, stared out his drafty apartment window into the chilling December night. His 4-year-old daughter Barbara sat on his lap quietly sobbing. Bobs wife, Evelyn, was dying of cancer. Little Barbara couldn't understand why her mommy could never come home. Barbara looked up into her dad's eyes and asked, "Why isn't Mommy just like everybody else's Mommy?" Bob's jaw tightened and his eyes welled with tears. Her question brought waves of grief, but also of anger. It had been the story of Bob's life. Life always had to be different for Bob.

Small when he was a kid, Bob was often bullied by other boys. He was too little at the time to compete in sports. He was often called names he'd rather not remember. From childhood, Bob was different and never seemed to fit in. Bob did complete college, married his loving wife and was grateful to get his job as a copywriter at Montgomery Ward during the Great Depression.

Then he was blessed with his little girl. But it was all short-lived. Evelyn's bout with cancer stripped them of all their savings and now Bob and his daughter were forced to live in a two-room apartment in the Chicago slums. Evelyn died just days before Christmas in 1938.

Bob struggled to give hope to his child, for whom he couldn't even afford to buy a Christmas gift. But if he couldn't buy a gift, he was determined a make one - a storybook! Bob had created an animal character in his own mind and told the animal's story to little Barbara to give her comfort and hope. Again and again Bob told the story, embellishing it more with each telling. Who was the character? What was the story all about? The story Bob May created was his own autobiography in fable form. The character he created was a misfit outcast like he was. The name of the character? A little reindeer named Rudolph, with a big shiny nose. Bob finished the book just in time to give it to his little girl on Christmas Day. But the story doesn't end there.

The general manager of Montgomery Ward caught wind of the little storybook and offered Bob May a nominal fee to purchase the rights to print the book. Wards went on to print, Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer and distribute it to children visiting Santa Claus in their stores. By 1946 Wards had printed and distributed more than six million copies of Rudolph. That same year, a major publisher wanted to purchase the rights from Wards to print an updated version of the book.

In an unprecedented gesture of kindness, the CEO of Wards returned all rights back to Bob May. The book became a best seller. Many toy and marketing deals followed and Bob May, now remarried with a growing family, became wealthy from the story he created to comfort his grieving daughter. But the story doesn't end there either.

Bob's brother-in-law, Johnny Marks, made a song adaptation to Rudolph. Though the song was turned down by such popular vocalists as Bing Crosby and Dinah Shore, it was recorded by the singing cowboy, Gene Autry. "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" was released in 1949 and became a phenomenal success, selling more records than any other Christmas song, with the exception of "White Christmas."

The gift of love that Bob May created for his daughter so long ago kept on returning back to bless him again and again. And Bob May learned the lesson, just like his dear friend Rudolph, that being different isn't so bad. In fact, being different can be a blessing.

***MERRY CHRISTMAS ***

IF A FAT GUY GRABS YOU AND PUTS YOU IN A BAG, DON'T WORRY, I TOLD SANTA I WANTED A GOOD FRIEND FOR CHRISTMAS!



MERRY CHRISTMAS

and

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Your newsletter editors, Jeanne Looper Smith, Phyllis Payne Sapp & Dave Knisley