



1955 AUSTIN HIGH REUNION

NEWSLETTER VOLUME 1 ISSUE 4 AUTUMN 2006

www.austin1955.org — reunion@austin1955.org

September 23, 2006

Dear Classmate:

We hope you've been enjoying a lovely summer and that this finds you in good health.

2007 CRUISE NEWS:

There are still a few cabins that can be booked at our special group rate for the January 22-February 1 cruise to the Southern Caribbean and the Panama Canal. 12 cabins have been booked so far. Please consider joining us on this exciting journey. See www.hollandamerica.com for itinerary details. Final date for the special group rate is October 20. Also, two of our classmates are looking for others share cabins. **TO RESERVE A CABIN OR TO SHARE ONE, CALL HERTHA PRAGER AT 847-519-4786 or 800-882-0499 (Outside IL)**



SPECIAL NOTE: PASSPORTS WILL BE REQUIRED FOR TRAVEL TO CANADA, MEXICO AND THE CARIBBEAN AFTER DECEMBER 31, 2006. BE SURE YOU HAVE ONE AND IT HAS NOT EXPIRED.

AUSTIN BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP ACADEMY OPENS:

Please see enclosed excerpts from articles about the new school. Our classmate, Mike Bakalis, CEO of American Quality Schools, has this to say. "Our work at Austin is a real challenge. The students coming to the school are academically at about the 6th grade level. This is really a tragedy considering they were in elementary school for the past 8 or 9 years. We need a great deal of help in trying to give these young people a decent education and a chance at a productive life. I would like to tap into the many talented and successful people who have graduated from Austin not only in our class, but also in all the other classes. As a start, do you think there would be some people in our class who might want to help in some way? Let me know and perhaps we can set up an exploratory meeting." Please contact Mike at mbakalis@aqg.org or 312-492-3010, if you are willing to help.

FOR SALE:

We have LOTS of leftover Memory Books from the 50th reunion. They are \$5 each or 3 for \$10. Contact Ken Rosko if you would like one or more.

MEMORABILIA WANTED:

Please consider bequeathing your Austin memorabilia to the Austin 1955 Reunion Committee for the Class of 1955 Archives. While we all hope to live long and prosper, there will come a time to go to the Green Grill or Wally's in the sky. Rather than tossing the stuff in the dumpster, let's keep it for future generations. If you agree, please leave a note for your heirs.

GOT NEWS?

We want to hear from **YOU!** Please consider this YOUR newsletter. If you have any news to contribute, please email Kaye Aurigemma (kaurige@comcast.net) or Nancy Pasquerelli (npasq@comcast.net). Email items of general class interest for the website to AustinWebmaster@comcast.net. If you don't have email, send a note to Ken Rosko (address at bottom of page 2).

B-17 ADVENTURE:

Remember the movie “Twelve O’clock High”? Remember the B-17 Flying Fortress? Well, some of those planes are still flying, and three of your classmates took a ride in one on September 2. It was a great experience – we had a ball! Take a look at the photos on our website www.austin1955.org.

SHARE A MEMORY:

Many of us have memories of our time at Austin that are funny, poignant or unique. How about sharing yours with us? They might trigger other memories of people, places and significant events. Please email or write your favorite memories to the addresses noted in “GOT NEWS?” above.

ATTENTION! ATTENTION!

Do you enjoy this newsletter? If so, we could use your help to pay the cost of postage and printing. A donation of \$5 per year will be appreciated. Please send your donation, comments and/or news for future publication in the enclosed envelope to Ken Rosko. Thanks in advance for your help.

MISSING PERSONS:

Please tell us if you know the whereabouts of any of these classmates:

MARY JEAN MOODY LOIS KERNS PHIL DANNA JOHN OLSON
DAVID EWALD DONNA WALSH ROBERT PRITCHARD DONALD SCHWILK

STAY CURRENT, LOG ON:

Log in often to www.austin1955.org to keep abreast of what’s going on. The site includes a graduate list, reunion photos, old school photos, class relevant articles and the latest newsletter. **NEW PHOTOS HAVE BEEN POSTED.** **NOTE: This September newsletter is going to EVERYONE via U.S.P.S.** Future newsletters will be emailed to everyone who has email. Others will receive hard copy.

HAPPY AUTUMN! KEEP IN TOUCH!

Your Austin 1955 Reunion Committee

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Please let us know if your information has changed. Email to reunion@austin1955.org or mail this form to Ken Rosko, Austin Class of 1955, 3233 West Grand Avenue – Suite 103, Waukegan, IL 60085-2234.

NAME (1st, maiden, last): _____

NEW STREET ADDRESS: _____

NEW CITY, STATE, ZIP: _____

NEW EMAIL ADDRESS: _____ PHONE: _____

News About the New Austin High School

Excerpt From: Austin Weekly News by Terry Dean April 10, 2006

Title: Business Academy Looks Ahead to '06 Former State Supt. Bakalis Heads Consortium Behind New School

Austin High School's 2006 senior class was the last class of Austin High School as we know it. The new school hoped to have its new class in place by the summer of 2006 and in accordance with the Chicago Renaissance 2010 plan.

The Austin Business and Entrepreneurship Academy will open its 2006-2007 school year at the Austin High School campus on Pine Street, with a total of 200 freshmen, said Michael Bakalis, CEO of American Quality Schools. American Quality Schools has charter schools in Chicago and Indiana.

Bakalis, an Austin graduate of the 1955 class claimed, "We're recruiting and marketing for students." Bakalis is a former state superintendent of schools, former president of Triton College in River Grove, and previously ran for governor of Illinois.

Under Mayor Daley's Renaissance 2010 school restructuring plan, Austin High School stopped accepting freshman in 2003. The plan was to close underperforming schools and reopen them as a cluster of smaller schools.

The Business and Entrepreneur Academy is one of three schools planned for the Austin Campus. Two additional schools will be chosen for Austin by 2007.

Bakalis said new faculty are currently being interviewed for the business school. Funding for the Academy will come from the city on a per-pupil basis. Bakalis said the business school expects to have a first year total enrollment of 200 freshmen. A new class will be added each year. Under Renaissance 2010 guidelines, new schools cannot accept more than 200 freshmen its first year.

Bakalis also said the new school has a proposal to Chicago Public Schools to organize several advisory committees for groups such as parents, faculty, students and local business leaders. He also emphasized, "We want broad community involvement."

A number of West Side schools have closed or are slated to close and reopen as small schools. West Side aldermen and community activists have tried to call a halt to school closings and want a study done on the impact the school closings are having on students. Critics have cited an increase in violence at schools accepting students from consolidated schools. On March 13, 2006, Austin parents and activists held a protest and prayer vigil outside Austin High School concerning violence associated with the school closings.

Update: Austin Business Academy Opens
Excerpt from: Austin Weekly News by Terry Dean, August 30, 2006

The Austin Business and Entrepreneurship Academy (ABEA) officially opened during the last week in August 2006 in the former Austin High School building at 231 N. Pine. There are 250 students in the freshman class. The academy is the first of three schools slated for this site. Two additional small schools will be chosen by Chicago Public Schools CEO Arne Duncan. They are scheduled to open in 2007 and 2008. (Austin High School's last senior class from the old school will graduate in 2007.)

The Austin Business Academy is one of 100 schools expected to open at converted school buildings under the Renaissance 2010 (Ren 2010) school restructuring plan

American Quality Schools (AQS), the Westside Ministers Coalition, and the Allstate Corporation, also a major financial backer, are partnering the new school.

Michael Bakalis, president and CEO of AQS said, "It's a really important thing for me. I grew up in Austin, I went to this school, I worked four years here, and I graduated from this school. This is a very important thing to get this off the ground."

Allstate gave a check for \$500,000, as part of the Renaissance Schools Fund. The school will also receive partial funding from Chicago Public Schools on a per pupil basis.

The school will start with 15 teachers this fall and 23 students per class. The curriculum will include the basics, but the focus is on preparing students to become business owners and community leaders. "The school will prepare kids to go to college if that's what they want to do-it is a college curriculum-but our goal is to get some of these kids to start thinking about opening their own businesses, and staying in the Austin community," Bakalis said. "That's what we want to do, help revitalize businesses in the Austin community."

The school will use Wednesdays for workshops, seminars, field trips, etc. Regular classes will take place the rest of the week. The school will place students as interns with area businesses.

"We want to be hands on," said Ade Onayemi, CEO of Urban Resources Inc. and member of the Austin African American Business Networking Assn. (AAABNA), one of the community partners of the school.

The Austin school campus received a \$3 million renovation, including new lockers, desks, and chairs. More than half of REN2010 schools serve black students. Black and Latino students make up the majority of students attending Ren 2010 charter schools.

"Austin is not closing," said Malcolm Crawford, executive director of the AAABNA, and director of communications for the Business Academy. "We have programs for the kids to help them become successful in life and business."

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE SEE www.austinweeklynews.com, www.aqs.com or CALL 773-534-6316.

CONTACT: tdean@wjinc.com