



1955 AUSTIN HIGH REUNION

NEWSLETTER VOLUME 3 ISSUE 2 SPRING 2008

www.austin1955.org — reunion@austin1955.org

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Happy Spring to All!! Here's the latest news from and about our classmates. Be sure to send us yours.

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!!

Donations of \$5 per year, payable to "Austin 1955 Reunion Ltd.", to defray the cost of newsletter production, are appreciated. Many thanks to these donors of \$5 or more: Joyce Anderson, Roberta (Gilbert) Topel, Harry & Paulette Kappos, Evelyn (Karger) Lyons, Norman & Jeannie Kazluski, Charles & Maureen Larsen, James Lupo, Irwin Magad, Sheldon Marcus, Beverly (Morreale) Dalesandro, Angel (Plotkin) Newman, Bruno Popiela, James Plastina, Robert & Ann (Vatta) Smith, Daniel & Lois Wetherall, Richard & Jeanne Wolnick, Sally (Zilka) Daul, and Anthony Zomparelli. If your name is not here, we'd love to put it in the next newsletter. Please send your donation to Ken Rosko at the address on page 4.

SAVE THE DATE!!

Mark your calendars for **Sunday, September 14, 2008.** The Class of 1956 has booked Drury Lane Oakbrook for a 70th birthday party on that date and has invited our class to join them. More details will follow.

MOVES AND TRAVELS:

In January 2006 Irwin Magad merged his accounting practice in with Coleman, Joseph, Blitstein & Stuart, LLC. Irwin has always been involved with small business accounting and has specialized in Restaurant accounting and Income Tax representation before the IRS and state of Illinois. On January 1, 2008 Coleman, Joseph, Blitstein & Stuart LLC changed their name to CJBS, LLC and started a small business division called Questus which is a Latin word for "a source of profit or gain". Irwin is now a partner in Questus in Deerfield, Illinois.

Dan and Lois Wetherall left Juneau on November 25, 2007 for a week of travel through Central Europe, followed by a 17-day Transatlantic cruise from Rome to Ft. Lauderdale on the Star Princess. The cruise included visits to Naples, Pompeii, Livorno, Pisa and Florence, followed by Genoa, Cannes, Monte Carlo, Monaco, Barcelona, Gibraltar and Cadiz, Spain. The last stop before departing the Continent was Madeira, where the world's finest sherry is produced. Dan says that after 11 days of tours that started too early each morning and ended too late to allow for a rest before dinner, they really looked forward to six days at sea, just enjoying the ship, which they did. They had a free day in Ft. Lauderdale before their flight home, so they took an airboat tour of the Everglades in the rain. They finally got to use the rain gear they had carried all over Europe. Dan recommends a shorter first-time cruise, but wouldn't change a thing about the experience.

Lolita (Quiny) and Don Fraser flew last summer from Chicago to Munich, Salzburg and Vienna. A friend of hers, who works part-time for the Salzburg music festival, was able to get them tickets to a wonderful concert where Renee Fleming, the American Opera singer, performed. They also met friends who spend their summers in an area close to Munich. They all drove to the Dachau concentration camp. Lolita says it's hard to believe the atrocities that took place there. It was a very emotional and informative experience. They also took the train to Vienna, which was breathtaking, as was Salzburg. Lots of beautiful music, good food and lots of walking! They will be in Chicago during July, August and September, so if we plan anything locally then, they will try to attend.

In January, Chuck and Maureen Larsen spent a week in the Methow Valley of Washington State and a weekend in Holland, Michigan cross-country skiing; then went off to Quebec and Minocqua, Wisconsin in February for more skiing.

FUNNIES:

Suzanne (Johnson) Peterson wants us to know why she loves Chicago:

It's winter in Chicago, and the gentle breezes blow, at 50 miles per hour and 22 below!

Oh, how I love Chicago when the snow's up to your butt.

You take a breath of winter air, and your nose is frozen shut.

Yes, the weather here is wonderful. I guess I'll hang around.

I could never leave Chicago, 'cause I'm frozen to the ground! (Ain't it the truth?)

Harry Kappos asked his wife Paulette if old men wear boxers or briefs." She said, "DEPENDS".

Nancy (Baggio) Pasquerelli says, "Sometimes I wake up grumpy. And some days I let him sleep".

1938 – WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER?

We promised you a quiz about 1938, so here it is. No peeking at the answers on page 3 until you get there.

1. Whose orchestra played Carnegie Hall on January 16? Who were the pianist and drummer?
2. What radio broadcast caused a nationwide panic? Who wrote it?
3. What engine made Cadillac America's #1 Luxury Car?
4. How was a dog used for the first time?
5. What military event occurred that would change the world forever?
6. What organization to fight polio was established?
7. What boxing match had world wide implications? Who won?
8. What was the cost of: a gallon of gas? a loaf of bread? a blanket? a new car?
9. What invention changed the way we write?
10. Where did floods and landslides cause 200 deaths?

BONUS QUESTIONS (answers to these were not in the January newsletter):

11. What airplane made its first test flight?
12. What ocean liner was launched in Glasgow?
13. Where was oil discovered?
14. Who sang "Thanks for the Memories"?
15. What rabbit became famous?
16. What Thornton Wilder play opened on Broadway?
17. What famous comic character was launched?
18. What Disney movie was released?
19. What famous place opened in Cooperstown, New York?
20. What song did Kate Smith sing?

HEALTH UPDATES:

Chuck Larsen reports that Maureen had cataract surgery in December and is fully recovered. They are looking forward to the Baltic cruise and are surprised that more are not going! He also says, "So far, my pacemaker is working fine. I just had it checked over the phone - ain't technology great?"

Joyce Rosko came home on Groundhog Day, February 2, after 13 days in the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago following her January 11 spinal fusion surgery. She continues to improve every day, and is happy she can now drive (a scary thought).

BACKGROUND MUSIC:

Chuck Meyer found a website where you can listen to music from the '50's (or any later decade) while surfing the web (or even Excelling with Excel). Once you click on a song, it will play and then automatically play the next song in the list until it has played all the songs for that year. It has a volume control which you should use in conjunction with your computer's volume control. One of the best features is that it will play in the background, so you can be doing other computer work on a different screen while listening to music. This is really cool!!! Pick and play any popular song from 1950 through 1982 or go to the specialty areas. You can't miss them. They are listed in very bright colors. That is for older eyes!!! <http://www.tropicalglen.com/>

1938 QUIZ ANSWERS:

1. Benny Goodman, Jess Stacy, Gene Krupa.
2. War of the Worlds. Orson Welles.
3. V-16.
4. Seeing Eye for the blind.
5. German troops entered Austria.
6. March of Dimes.
7. Joe Louis/Max Schmeling. Louis.
8. Gas: 10 cents; bread: 9 cents; blanket: \$5; car: \$763.
9. Ballpoint pen.
10. Los Angeles.

BONUS ANSWERS:

11. DC-4
12. Queen Elizabeth I
13. Saudi Arabia
14. Bob Hope
15. Bugs Bunny
16. Our Town
17. Superman
18. Snow White
19. Baseball Hall of Fame
20. God Bless America

Dan Wetherall recalls dancing to the music of Benny Goodman and other big bands at the Aragon Ballroom on Sunday afternoons in the '50's. It was great!

JANUARY CLASS 10TH REUNION:

Diane (Guglielmi) Sementa remembers well the cold, icy, snowy weather on January 23, 1965, when the January Class 10th reunion was held at the Chateau Royale on Chicago Avenue. She said they were surprised at the excellent turnout, in view of the nasty weather. Thanks, Diane, for solving this mystery!

PRINCESS BALTIC CRUISE:

The Bakers, Horaks, Larsens, Roskos, Pasquerellis and Schulmans are planning a cruise this summer. The 10-day cruise leaves Copenhagen on July 19, 2008. The trip includes visits to Copenhagen, Denmark, Stockholm, Sweden, Helsinki, Finland, two days in St. Petersburg, Russia, stops in Tallinn, Estonia, Gdansk, Poland, a day trip to Berlin, then back to Copenhagen. An optional trip to Oslo, Norway is available. This trip is not under the auspices of the Alumni group, but if you are interested, contact Joyce or Ken Rosko at 847-623-5800 or at one of their email addresses on page 4.

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND:

Chuck Meyer tells how he and Peggy graded state-designed tests to measure how Arkansas rated on "No Child Left Behind" last year. There are several companies that do scoring of test results in various places. Each company contracts with states, educational institutions or the federal government for their projects. Employment for scoring tests is temporary and usually runs from March to end of May. One company (Pearson) also does scoring in the Fall with a smaller number of scorers, and tries to use those who have worked in the Spring. The main requirement is that each scorer be a college graduate. At our Questar job last year there were people ranging in age from 22 to the 80's. Check these websites for information:

DRC – Data Recognition Corp. – www.datarecognitioncorp.com Check "Company Overview" and Careers".

Under "Careers", go to "Current Openings" and scroll down to "Test Scoring".

Pearson – www.flexiblescoring-reg.pearson.com Look at "Scoring Centers" for locations and openings.

Questar Assessment Inc. – www.questarai.com Currently only Minnesota has job openings for scoring.

Here's how it works. You get hired for a 7-week "project"; then go thru about three days of training. You must attend all the training sessions (at full pay). We were paid \$14 an hour (plus a \$50 bonus for every week that we worked at least 40 hours). About 450 of us worked at our office exclusively on the Arkansas 3rd thru 8th grade tests. It's all computerized - the test results are scanned in, and the multiple-choice questions are graded by "the computer". We graded the essay questions (remember "Explain your answer"?). The building was generally open from 8:00 to 5:00, plus five hours on Saturday. We could come and go as we pleased, but they "preferred" we work at least 35 hours per week. Over 40 hours, we got standard overtime, but that was authorized only in "busy" weeks, when they had the doors open longer. Peggy was able to take a half-day off for golfing, then work on Saturday, so she still got her 40 hours in. They gave us free, fresh-brewed coffee and tea all day. We could even have snacks and drinks by our keyboards - but the snacks couldn't be noisy! So, no crinkly bags. I assume that bean dip was disallowed for the same reason.

The building was divided into "rooms" of 50-60 each, with each room scoring a different test. I scored 5th grade Math; Peggy scored 7th and 8th grade Reading. My Math test had five separate problems, which had several related questions. We learned how to grade these problems (how much work they had to show, what minimum pieces were required, etc.). Example: For a balance-beam question, they could answer in prose ("I subtracted the left side from the right side, found it was ten pounds; then added five 2-pound weights to the left side"); or they could use algebraic statements (" $r - 1 = 10$; $10/2 = 5$ "); or draw a diagram showing all the weights and how they added up.

We sat at a table with our PC, and would select which question we wanted to work on. We then got a packet of 20 papers with that question. Going thru that packet would take 15-30 minutes. There was a lot of variety because of the time needed to decipher their writing (penmanship and spelling are obviously lost arts - as is logical thinking!). We'd give each paper a number score from 0 thru 4 (sort of like A,B,C,D and F; but reversed). Each paper was graded by two different people. If the two scores were identical or "adjacent" (e.g. 2 and 3), then the first grade was accepted. If the two scores were non-adjacent (e.g. 1 and 3), then those two grades would be routed to our "team leader" who would adjudicate. It seems like a very high-pressure job, but there was absolutely no pressure for speed. They *would* get upset if your "non-adjacent" scores would get too high.

Think of money involved here - 450 of us, 40 hours a week, seven weeks, at \$14/hour. That's over \$1.7 million - and we're just the tip of the iceberg. Add the cost of the company's support staff, the people who designed the tests, the transportation of these tests in a timely fashion, the 450 computers and computer networking systems, then think how many teachers could have been hired with that money! A recent Time magazine cover story was on "Scorecard for No Child Left Behind". It makes you want to cry.

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GOT NEWS?

Photos and items of general class interest should be directed to AustinWebmaster@comcast.net. If you have any news (special trips, births, deaths, anniversaries, moves, etc.) or memories of your days at Austin to share, please email any committee member at the addresses above. Or, send this form. Please date all correspondence.

If your contact information has changed, please send an 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): _____

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NEW EMAIL ADDRESS: _____ PHONE (required): _____