



# 1955 AUSTIN HIGH REUNION

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January 18, 2009

HAPPY NEW YEAR!! Here's the latest news from and about our classmates. Be sure to send us yours. **Please, Please, Please, put a date on all correspondence.**

## **THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!!**

Many thanks to these donors of \$5 or more: Jacqueline (Catalano) Ballard, Marvin Glick, Nicholas Kallas, Earl Lassen, Irwin Magad, Peggy Miller, Bill Mologousis, Theresa (Pecord) Graham, Donald Salenger, Beverly (Simons) and Alex Bednarski, and Richard Wolnick. We apologize if the acknowledgement of your donation is tardy. Sometimes the wheels of communication turn slowly. Please send donations to defray the cost of newsletter production, payable to "Austin 1955 Reunion Ltd.", to Ken Rosko at the address on page 3.

## **BELATED HAPPY 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY TO:**

Dennis and JoAnn (Curphey - Class of '57) Keating on October 4, 2008. Dennis says they had a great 50 years. We wish them many more.

## **HEALTH UPDATES:**

Lucille (Spiezia) Tricarico fell on the ice December 16th and broke her left shoulder. Get Well Soon, Lucille!

Well, some people just crave attention. As a result of his broadside collision with an ambulance in September, our esteemed Reunion Committee Chairman, Ken Rosko, developed a subdural hematoma, which required brain surgery. Ken now has two more holes in his head than he had before. The surgery was done on Saturday, November 29, and took less than an hour. He went straight from the OR to the ICU room he had been in before surgery. On Sunday, he was transferred to a regular room and on Monday, he went home. We're pleased to report he is recovering nicely and doing his prescribed exercises. As Joyce (aka Nurse Ratched) says, "Ain't nothin' gonna keep this man down!"

## **IN MEMORIAM:**

We are saddened to report the passing of Warren Geyer and Gloria Wittersheim.

## **MOVES, TRAVELS & NOTES:**

Earl Lassen wrote in August, "I am 71 this month and still teaching Leadership Seminars and Conferences." Good for you, Earl!

Linda and Irwin Magad returned from Israel and Jordan on December 16th. Two other couples from the Class of 1955, InaBeth and Bob Mintz and Susan (Yablon) and Alvin Klein were on the same trip. Irwin writes: "We departed on November 30<sup>th</sup> from Chicago O'Hare to Tel Aviv, arriving on December 1<sup>st</sup>. Upon arrival we checked into our hotel to recover from the long flight. The next day, we toured Tel Aviv, starting at Independence Hall where in May 1948 David Ben Gurion declared the establishment of the State of Israel. From Tel Aviv, we continued north to the Upper Galilee where we checked into the Vared Haglil, a guest farm house built by former Chicagoan Yehuda Avni, who graduated from Manley High School in 1943. This is like a dude ranch, located between Tiberias and Rosh Pina, overlooking the Sea of Galilee (Kinneret). We stayed there for two nights, using this as a base from which to tour the Golan Heights by jeep and the headwaters of the Jordan River and the Tel Dan Nature Reserve. We also visited the Kibbutz Kinneret. From there we continued to Jerusalem, following the Jordan River. We spent five days exploring the Old City, Jewish Quarter, The Cardo and of course, the Kotel (Western Wall). On Sunday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, we spent a good part of the day at Yad Vashem (Holocaust Museum) and the Herzl Museum.

Leaving Jerusalem, we traveled through the Jordan River Valley to the Dead Sea Basin and on to Masada. The next day we traveled to the Ein Zurim Kibbutz and stayed for three days learning about Israel. There were seven Israelis on our tour with whom we shared our experiences. On December 14<sup>th</sup>, our Israel trip ended and the next day, eleven of us went on to Petra, Jordan and the Wadi Ram desert. Petra is considered the most famous and gorgeous site in Jordan, located about 262 km south of Amman and 133 km north of Aqaba. It is a legacy of the Nabataeans, an industrious Arab people who settled in southern Jordan more than 2000 years ago. To get there, we had to walk through the Siq, a long narrow gorge whose steeply rising sides all but obliterate the sun, and then this opens up to the most magnificent ruins that were in near pristine condition. The rock-carved rose-red city of Petra is full of mysterious charm. It was “designed to strike wonder into all who entered it”, and it did. Some of us walked the four miles and some went via Donkey. What a wonderful experience!”

Genny (Luisi) Schroeder didn't see enough of the Panama Canal on last year's trip, so she went back again. Here's her report. “On Thanksgiving Day, I flew to Guayaquil, Ecuador and boarded the Royal Princess to begin a 12 day cruise. Some of our stops were Esmeraldas, Puntarenas, Panama Canal, Cristobal, San Blas, Cartagena and Aruba. Although I have visited some of these ports before, I always find the crossing of the three locks of the Panama Canal fascinating. In Puntarenas, Costa Rica, we took a tour to San Jose (now I know the way to San Jose) and visited their Opera House and the Gold Museum. Then, we stopped for lunch at a wonderful restaurant outside of the city with its beautiful gardens. There is so much history in the building of it. Among my favorite things are the shows on the ship, not to mention the food, but I was really looking forward to Cartagena, Columbia. I did manage to get some Columbian coffee on our tour of the city. We did not get to spend enough time in the ports to wander very far inland, but we did visit the walled city which is a fortress and had a grand view of the new city from a hilltop at one of the monasteries. I apparently came back too soon as it has not stopped snowing since I stepped foot on the ground at O'Hare.”

Neal Guenther writes, “In early November, I cruised on Majestic America line's Queen of the West on the Columbia and Snake Rivers bordering the states of Oregon, Washington and Idaho. This was Majestic America's next to last cruise, as they were ceasing operations. They also offered cruises on the Mississippi River. The cruise line and/or its ships are for sale. The cruise followed the course of the rivers through step-sided and rugged canyons. The ship was raised and lowered through eight locks and dams. The scenery was magnificent and ever changing. The cruise also offered a perspective on the travails of Lewis & Clark and early settlers to the Northwest. An historian was on board, lecturing on the Lewis & Clark expedition as well as the history of the settling of the Northwest Territory. We also toured the visitor center at Mount St. Helen. Back in 1980, the earth trembled as this great mountain erupted. We saw the destructive power of the volcano and signs that nature is renewing itself.”

### **MUSIC MEMORIES: THE ONE HIT WONDERS OF THE FIFTIES (by Chuck Meyer):**

Last month's mystery singer was **Gogi Grant**. Nobody got the correct answer, so therefore we'll double this month's prize. Her mega-hit, in 1956, was "[The Wayward Wind](#)". It was #1 on the charts for eight weeks. Her first record, in 1955, barely made it into the top 10 (it never got above #8) was "[Suddenly There's a Valley](#)". (Click the desired song title to hear it performed.) Gogi has the unusual distinction of being named after a restaurant -- she was given her name by Dave Kapp, the head of A&R at RCA Records, who liked a restaurant called "Gogi's LaRue." He also liked alliteration. But now, let me introduce the ghost of our next guest.

"Hi, All. I'll bet that you'll never remember my name. I was born in New Jersey in 1935. I married a band leader who thought I had a good voice. But with very little musical background, and no stage name, I nevertheless made a big hit in 1955 -- it was number 1 in the charts for four weeks. The song was originally about alcoholism, but Mitch Miller at Columbia Records had it rewritten with a more acceptable name and theme (altho' our current sensibilities would say that the newer name is even less acceptable). The song was first presented on the TV show "Studio One" in November, 1954 (after Mitch Miller had stocked the national record stores), and it sold 100,000 copies in its first week after the show. Many other singers recorded this song (Patti Page, Teresa Brewer, the Lancers, and even Lucille Ball sang it during an episode of "I Love Lucy"), but none ever made it to number 1. While my song was at the top of the charts, I gave birth to my daughter, and was not able to exploit my success. This became my one and only record."

She died in 1981 at age 46 of heart failure while in a mental institution in New Jersey. So, who is this mystery singer, and what was the name of her song? Email your answer, together with a suggestion for another mystery guest, to our website ([reunion@austin1955.org](mailto:reunion@austin1955.org)), or write your answer on the back of a Berkshire Hathaway stock certificate, and mail to Ken Rosko at the address on Page 3. The first response with both correct answers gets bragging rights. Answers (and an audio clip) will be in the next newsletter!

**CONTRIBUTING COLUMNISTS STILL WANTED:**

Do you have a hobby or special interest or area of expertise you would like to share with others? How about your favorite Austin memories? Here's your chance to reach over 500 people. YOUR alumni newsletter welcomes articles on subjects your classmates might find interesting.

**NEWS, PHOTOS AND MEMORIES:** Have you visited our website ([www.austin1955.org](http://www.austin1955.org)) recently? If not, you're missing a treasure trove of Austin High School memories as well as some current news articles about our alma mater. Our most recent newsletter as well as an archive of all our past newsletters can also be found on the site. In addition, you'll find photographs and news about alumni vacations, and there is a series of 15 Chicago photographs that succinctly cover our lifetime.

**TELL US WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOU:** Photos and items of general class interest should be directed to [webmaster@austin1955.org](mailto:webmaster@austin1955.org). 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 below, or write to Ken Rosko at the address below.

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Please email changes to [reunion@austin1955.org](mailto:reunion@austin1955.org) or mail this form to:

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