

Lee High School – Class of 1960 – Emails from January 2021

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Alma Mater

Hi, classmates! I hope all of you are doing well.

Have you seen some football teams struggle to sing their Alma Mater at the end of a game? It caused me to wonder about our Alma Mater song for Lee High School. Do you remember it? It was published in the program for our Commencement held June 8, 1960 at the Duval County Armory.

*To thee, dear Alma Mater, we proudly raise our eyes.
From all our years of service, we've gained a noble prize.
We've suffered toil and hardship, we've worked the whole day through
To bring thee praise and honor and keep thy standards true.
To thee – dear Lee High School, we proudly lift our eyes.
We'll sing our praise forever and bear thee to the skies.
In all our years of gladness, in all our days of cheer,
We'll cherish thee forever, our blessed mother dear.*

By Kirby Rogers (LHS 1953) and Jack Jarrett (LHS 1953)

NOTE: The phrase “alma mater” in Latin means nourishing mother. We use it to refer to the school from which someone graduated, suggesting that the school provided intellectual nourishment to its students. Therefore, the reference at the end of our Alma Mater song to “our blessed mother dear”.

COMMENTS:

Fred Williams said, “Good Deal! I had totally forgotten the Alma Mater. I am sure that it would all come back should I hear it sung again. Thanks so much for sharing.”

Dona Meserve (Hice) said, “How special of you Larry to find this about our Alma Mater. Lifestyle memories get more precious as we add another year to our lives. Thank you.”

Irene Adams (Harper) said, “Thank you. I don't believe I would have remembered it myself.”

Nancy McMillan (Weddington) said, “This is so interesting, and I thank you.”

Beth Ann LeGate (Pickels) said, “I remembered some of it, but for the life of me can't think of the tune. Thanks for sharing. I think we all hummed it because neither did we know the words or the tune.”

Lynn Walker (Ford) said, “Thanks for the updates ... the Alma Mater was interesting ... you are doing a nice job for the Class.”

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Mary Kay Cowart (Montford) said, “I haven't thought of our Alma Mater since 1960. I bet you can sing it. My husband and I had lunch with Beth Ann and Mike today. I bet BA can sing the Alma Mater also. (I can't carry a tune at all.) We were talking about our Power Puff game. It's been so much fun looking at the nicknames. BA could remember how each team scored ending in a tie 12-12. You have really spurred some steps back in history. We thank you so much!!!!”

Pat Sullivan (Rice) said, “Thanks, Larry! You're doing a great job keeping us updated.”

Norma Tate (Rowland) said, “Thank you so much. Had really forgotten.”

Eleanor Chance (Baker) said, “I knew Kirby Rogers way back when. He was a music major and very talented.”

Priscilla Porter said, “Thanks for sending the alma mater and all you do for our class.”

Nelson Hilty Carter said, “Thank you, Larry. I loved this because I had certainly forgotten the words.”

Linda Burch (Hall) said, “I don't think during my one year at Lee that I ever heard the Alma Mater. Thanks for the shout out.”

Beverly Binkley (Simpson) said, “That was beautiful!!!!”

Sandy Sammons (Sutter) said, “Thank you, Larry. You are always the best. Shamefully, I must admit I never knew the words. Happy to know them now and a thank you to the two dear ones who wrote it.”

Alice Whittle (Rzepka-Hammett) said, “How interesting. Thank you.”

John Patterson said, “Fascinating. I wonder if a recording of it exists somewhere. Thanks again for all your hard work, Larry.”

Phone Numbers

Do you recall your phone number during our senior year at Robert E. Lee High School? If you want to check your memory, view this online copy of the 1959-1960 Jacksonville phone directory: <https://www.loc.gov/resource/usteledirec.usteledirec07005/?sp=24>

You can scroll through the directory, or jump by image numbers, to find your phone number, as well as, see the businesses advertised in the yellow pages.

Florida's first telephone exchange began in Jacksonville on May 24, 1880. The Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph Company initially had 34 subscribers.

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The 1959-1960 Jacksonville phone book listed the following phone number prefixes:

- AM = AMherst
- CO = COlonny (was COngress in the 1957-1958 phone book)
- EL = ELgin
- EV = EVergreen
- EX = EXbrook
- FL = FLanders
- PO = POplar
- RA = RAymond
- SP = SPring

For example, the main number for Robert E. Lee High School was EV 9-6828.

I was unable to find my phone number in the online 1959-1960 directory, and then remembered that we had an unlisted number for some reason. Please use our Class of 1960 directory to contact your classmates and renew friendships.

COMMENTS:

Jack Huddleston said, “The listing for my Dad, PM Huddleston, is correct. You may also know that **Ray Van Landingham**’s family bought 3221 Tivoli in 1957, when we moved to 4368 Water Oak Lane, but we kept the same number, EV 9-4216. As you said, Prefix “2” became Evergreen 9. My mother kept the same number until she passed in 2012 at age 93. That was a span of 66 years!

Prefixes 3, 4, and 5 became the downtown exchanges: ELgin 3 (353), Elgin 4 (354), and Elgin 5 (355). Prefix “6” was, I think, a northside exchange, of which I have no recollection. Prefix “8” became a Southside exchange, EXbrook 8 (398), and “9” became Flanders 9 (359), an exchange centered in the San Marco Area. My grandparents, who lived in St Nicholas, had number FL 9-7320. These are from memory, but I believe correct. Interestingly, Ray and Linda have for many years now lived also on Water Oak Lane, at 4887.”

Randy Wilcox said, “Yes, I remember my old phone number. Actually, it is one of the few things I recall from 60 years ago. The number was EV91191. That number is very distinctive considering the 911 aspect.”

Larry Harvin said, “My old phone number was EV9-7404, I think.”

Linda Burch (Hall) said, “I sure do remember ... EV8-3904.”

Hank Breitmoser said, “Yes, I found it, EV 8-5527. That brings back some vivid memories.”

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Lorene James (Carroll) said, "I didn't remember mine. But I found it on the listing. I remembered it then. Thanks for sharing the telephone directory."

Elvin Farris said, "I have a good memory. I checked the phone book and found the number I remembered. Thanks for posting for everyone."

Fred Kirchhoff said, "EV8-1650, at some point changed to 388-1650. How could I forget? What I can't remember was the phone number I had in Fort Wayne, Indiana for 26 years or the one in Minneapolis for 6 years. Our Portland number (224-2444), thanks to Ron, is unforgettable, although the young man who had the number before us had a habit of not paying the bills he kept ringing up for expensive clothes."

Stan Cooper said, "Thanks, Larry. I remembered! EVERgreen 8-9806."

Pat Sullivan (Rice) said, "Don't even hafta look ... Evergreen 8-8870. Memorable because I was born in a neighborhood in North Florida called Evergreen. The neighborhood we lived in in South Florida before moving to the North Georgia mountains was Evergreen."

Nelson Hilty (Carter) said, "I can't remember what happen 5 min ago and yet I remembered my old phone number."

Vesta Hammond (Udall) said, "Thank you for this email information from the Jacksonville phone book ... so much fun. Great memories of those wonderful years."

Brenda Harrington (Fields) said, "WOW Larry! Thanks for posting! What memories this directory stirred up. I found my parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, employers, and many more family and friends. The only number I could recall was my grandparents. Special memories with them and very special people in my life."

Terry Ward said, "Mine was EVERgreen 8-4832. No lookup needed, but don't ask me what I was looking for on Aisle 3 of the grocery store yesterday."

Lewis Parrish said, "Hey, Larry. You did a great job. I found my number as well as my Dad's brother's number which is on the same page. My home address was 4061 Gilmore Street and it was under Inous S. Parrish and my uncle's number was under Louis C. Parrish on King Street, which was a line or two below. Thanks for the memories."

Penny Gilberstadt (Smith) said, "Larry, this is a very interesting bit of past trivia. It's humorous to me because I have always remembered my earliest phone numbers. Matter of fact, I have used it as a password from time to time. Same with my growing-up address. My Mother told me that I had to know my address and phone number to be able to go to school. So, I had those memorized by the time I was 4. I guess those early memories are imprinted on our brains. Thanks for the day brightener."

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Jim Terrell said, “Don’t need memory help with some things ... mine was EVERgreen 387-2666. It is the important things I forget.”

Fran Nelson said, “I was just telling my husband that I had the same phone number from the time I was born until I went to college. AND ... when my family first got the phone, there was only 5 digits. I still remember it: 2-3197.”

Ray Van Landingham said, “Mine was EVERgreen 9-5287. Later became 384-5287. I remember Elgin, Evergreen and Exbrook, but not the others. I would guess that most people at Lee had Evergreen numbers and a few Elgin.”

Alice Whittle (Rzepka-Hammett) said, “Thank you - how fun. No, I didn’t remember. I remembered it was Arapahoe and EV for Evergreen, but not the numbers.

Mary Jane Parramore (Kramer) said, “hanks Larry, that was fun to try. I remember EV8 ... but those were the days when doctors and dentists didn’t list their home numbers, so I’m clueless.”

Ed Brand said, “I used the directory and found my Dad’s business number listed, but not our residential number. There was a two-digit difference between our residential number and my Dad’s business number. I remembered my home number: 388-2752.”

Top Songs

Hi, classmates. Music was an important part of our lives during high school. You probably remember many of these top ten songs from 1959 and 1960. I found YouTube links for each one. Just click on the song titles to hear these favorite tunes. Enjoy!

Top ten songs in 1959 were:

1. [The Battle of New Orleans](#) – Johnny Horton
2. [Mack the Knife](#) – Bobby Darin
3. [Personality](#) – Lloyd Price
4. [Venus](#) – Frankie Avalon
5. [Lonely Boy](#) – Paul Anka
6. [Dream Lover](#) – Bobby Darin
7. [The Three Bells](#) – The Browns
8. [Come Softly to Me](#) – The Fleetwoods
9. [Kansas City](#) – Wilbert Harrison
10. [Mr. Blue](#) – The Fleetwoods

The top ten songs in 1960 were:

1. [Theme from a Summer Place](#) – Percy Faith
2. [He’ll Have to Go](#) – Jim Reeves

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3. Cathy's Clown – The Everly Brothers
4. Running Bear – Johnny Preston
5. Teen Angel – Mark Dinning
6. I'm Sorry – Brenda Lee
7. It's Now or Never – Elvis Presley
8. Handy Man – Jimmy Jones
9. Stuck on You – Elvis Presley
10. The Twist – Chubby Checker

COMMENTS:

Terry Ward said, “Many thanks for the links to these great songs. I have fond memories of listening to them on my GE clock radio in my room at home, especially the Everly Brothers who had such good harmonies and style. My first guitar was a Sears Silvertone arch top. I learned chords from a book and, as long as there were only three chords in the song, I was OK! I learned harmonies from the Everly Brothers and was really impressed that they were only a few years older than we were. (Those were the days of Dean Martin, Perry Como, and the “older” crooners.) That guitar was my entry into music, and I have sung and played guitar (a Gibson, sort of like the ones Don and Phil played) ever since. I still have it. Out of that came a love for men’s choral music—glee club, ensembles, etc. When I moved to Asheville in 1996, two friends and I formed a trio called The Three Wise Dudes. We played original music and did some covers. Great fun. So. thanks for this reconnection with music of our era.”

Linda Burch (Hall) said, “I listened to Running Bear ... was my husband and my “dating” song. He’s been gone two years now, but I felt like he was standing beside me listening. Thanks so much for easing my night.”

Lorene James (Carroll) said, “I remember all those songs. I’m humming them in my head now. Thanks for sharing.”

Jerry Hightower said, “GREAT selection, I actually remembered all of these “records”. Brought back memories, mostly good ones.”

Jim Baskerville said, “Wow ... well, all great sounds. Hard to believe no Johnny Mathis, Tommy Edwards, or the Platters. Maybe they were '57 and/or '58.”

Fred Williams said, “Very entertaining. Good memories.”

Charlene Hoolehan (Fisher) said, “Thank you so much for sending all these songs! My husband and I spent a couple of happy hours this afternoon listening to them and enjoying lots of old memories. Thanks for taking the time to do this for all of us.”

Sandy Sammons (Sutter) said, “Thank you Larry. Brought back so many fond memories.”

Norma Tate (Rowland) said, “Thanks for this great music.”

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Penny Gilberstadt (Smith) said, “Thank you so much, Larry. I cooked to these wonderful oldies this evening.”

Darlene Jones (Adams) said, Thank you so much! That was so thoughtful of you.”

James Copeland said, “Thanks for sharing!”

Vangie Futch (Gault) said, “Well, Larry, how did you know we all needed this!?”

Suzanne McCully (Wallman) said, “Thank You, Larry! Just reading the names of the songs, makes me smile. I can picture you exactly how you looked in 1960!”

Mack Crenshaw said, “Thanks for sharing! That was a fabulous gift to us all for Christmas!”

Robert Meredith said, “Thanks, Larry. These songs bring back a lot of good memories.”

Ray Van Landingham said, “I remember them all and can sing a line or two from each one. I'm surprised a couple of them made the top 10.”

Irene Adams (Harper) said, “So many memories. Thanks for sharing.”

Harriett Brown (Strickland) said, “Thanks for another reminder of the good old days.”

Eleanor Chance (Baker) said, “Thanks for the tunes!”

Janice Phillips (Buck) said, “Cool. Thank you. I love it!”

Beth Ann LeGate (Pickels) said, “Thanks, Larry ... I do remember all of these. Thanks for sharing.”

Paul Genho said, “Great tunes ... thanks, Larry.”

Eating Places and Hangouts

Hi, classmates. Do you remember these favorite places to eat and hang out?

- Dixie Sandwich at 1258 McDuff
- Dobbs House, 4260 Herschel Street
- Dreamette, 3646 Post St (near Edgewood Avenue)
- Lee High Shop at 1228 McDuff
- Joseppi’s Pizza at 910 King
- Green Pig Bar-B-Que at 302 Edgewood
- Milligan’s Hamburger Shop, 1020 Cassat Avenue
- Womack Bar-B-Que, 2003 Blanding Blvd.

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- Thompson's Restaurant, 1023 Park (owned by **John Runton's** parents)
- Toddle House, 529 Riverside Avenue and 749 Park Street
- Whiteway Deli on King Street

Joseppi's, Tad's, Penny's and the Sandwich Inn all had advertisements in the back of our 1960 yearbook. **Sid Linton's** parents ran the Lee High Shop for a while. **John Runton's** parents owned Thompson's. **Jack Chancellor** met his wife-to-be at Joseppi's. **Gerry Frees'** parents owned the Whiteway Deli.

Some of our favorite Drive-Inn restaurants were:

- A&W Root Beer Drive-Inn, 866 Edgewood
- Pat's Drive-Inn, 5220 Normandy Blvd.
- Penny's Drive Inn at 4040 St. Johns (owned by **Bill Williams'** parents)
- Pop Berrier's Drive Inn at 1934 Cassat
- Sandwich Inn at 530 Park
- Tad's Drive Inn at 400 Park

Don Meadows was engaged at Penny's. **Jerry Hays** worked at Tad's. **Louis Andre** worked at Joseppi's and Pop Berrier's. **Linda Burch (Hall)** became engaged at Penny's.

Some of our favorite neighborhood soda fountains were:

- College Pharmacy at corner of College and King (added by Penny Gilberstadt Smith)
- Doc Mundy's, Edgewood Avenue
- Doc's Ortega Pharmacy at 2923 Corinthian Avenue (added by **Gena Whitten Wilhelm**)
- Easterling Pharmacy, 2052 Blanding Blvd.
- Friendly Store, 975 McDuff
- Griffin's Drugs at 4118 Herschel
- Liggett-Rexall at 2625 Park (added by **Moiralynn Sheddan Mefein**)
- Woods Pharmacy, 1959 Blanding Blvd.
- Woolworth's in the Cedar Hills Shopping Center

Classmates that were soda jerks: **Ray Van Ladingham** at Friendly Store, **Dee Hargett** at Doc Mundy's, and **Larry Kirkman** at College Pharmacy.

We didn't just stick to our side of town. Classmates remembered Morrison's Cafeteria on Monroe, as well as, the downtown Krystal and White Palace hamburger shops, plus:

- Beach Road Chicken Dinners, 4132 Atlantic Blvd. (all you could eat)
- Lester's Soda Shop, 210 Laura Street
- Lou Bono's Bar-B-Cue, 4907 New Beach Blvd.
- Texas Drive-Inn, 1321 San Marco

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- Wolfie's Restaurant and Bake Shop, 3824 Beach Blvd. (added by **John McDaniel**)

We also went to nicer restaurants for special occasions (after saving up our money):

- Green Derby, 578 Riverside Avenue
- Green Turtle, Phillips Highway
- Leb's, Adams Street
- Le Chateau, Atlantic Beach
- Lobster House, Durand Avenue
- Patti's, 7300 New Beach Road
- Sea Turtle, Atlantic Beach
- Steer Room, Beaver Street Viaduct
- Strickland's, Mayport and Jacksonville Beach

COMMENTS:

Dee Hargett said, "A couple of other places were Doc Mundy's Drugstore on St. Johns Avenue. I worked there for a couple of years as a soda jerk. Griffin's Drugs on Herschel Street. It had a great jukebox and pinball machine. Bailey's on Main Street. Cute car hops on skates, and if you worked hard, you could pick a fight some nights."

Jacque Tubbs (Lattie) said, "So many wonderful memories of years at Lee. Yes, I remember that first time I had that sub sandwich ... it was so good! Didn't really hang out there."

Margie Beatty said, "I agree about the Liggett-Rexall on Park and King. The soda fountain cokes were better than any others to me. It was across the street from my cousin's drugstore, A.B. Williams Pharmacy, which back then I thought was for old people, unlike Liggett's. I passed through there the other day and it looks pretty much the same."

Larry Kirkman said, "I met **Barbara Rulkiewicz** at College Pharmacy in 1959. I was working there as a soda jerk making 65 cents an hour. She walked in one night and within 3 months we were going steady. We got married in December 1960 and have 3 daughters, 5 grandkids and 2 great grandkids. Just celebrated our 60th wedding anniversary. Life is good!"

Beverly Binkley (Simpson) said, "Ortega Pier and Jacksonville Beach Pier were hangouts."

Larry Dixon said, "Remember Downtown Jacksonville ... you could walk through Woolworth's into J. C. Penny? Chocolate Malt? Hot ham sandwich at the counter? Wish I could do that again!"

NOTE: You brought back a memory for me. I was on a date and we stopped at the soda fountain. I got a banana split with whipped cream and a cherry on top. When I put the cherry in my mouth and bit down, it splintered. Some clown had used a plastic cherry. I quickly looked around but couldn't see anyone laughing, except my date (who I later married).

School Play - Gidget

Look what **John Patterson** found! An article and picture about our Senior Play on May 19-20, 1960. The cast in the picture:

- **Vicki Warden** as Gidget
- **John Patterson** as the Great Kahoona
- **Lucinda Credle** (deceased 2020) as Gidget's friend Larue
- **Fred Williams** as Moondoggie

Other cast members were:

- **Frank Dougherty** (deceased 2021) as Stinky
- **Mike Carter** as Don Pepe
- **Jim Baskerville** as Malibu Mac
- **Mack Crenshaw** as Lord Hathaway
- **George Wilke** as Muscles
- **Randy Wilcox** as Golden Boy
- **Lucy Decuers** as Mai Mai
- **Ann DeHoff** (deceased 1991) as Buff
- **Audrey Jones** as Stella
- **Jim Seaward** as the Fire Warden

Kaye Johnson and **Nancy Pike** were the student directors.

Billy Rye (deceased 2001) and **Luther "Buddy" Foley** were stage managers.

Gary Fetters and **Richard Butler** (deceased 2018) were sound technicians.

Charles Murray and **Woody Hoffman** (deceased 2019) were lighting assistants.

Lee High Seniors Present Annual Play Thursday and Friday Nights



ROBERT E. LEE SENIORS WILL PRESENT THEIR ANNUAL PLAY TODAY AND TOMORROW EVENING, MAY 19TH AND 20TH, AT 8:00 O'CLOCK, IN THE SCHOOL AUDITORIUM. THE PUBLIC IS cordially invited to see this 3-act, comedy comedy by FREDERICK KOCHNER, "GIDGET", with VICKI WARDEN PLAYING THE TITLE ROLE. THE SETTING IS ON THE BEACH AT MALIBU, CALIFORNIA, AND THE SENIORS ACTUALLY PORTRAY THEIR ROLES IN A TRULY SIMULATED BEACH SCENE. LEFT TO RIGHT IN PHOTO ABOVE OF A SCENE FROM THE PLAY, ARE: JOHN PATTERSON, THE GREAT KANOOKA; VICKI WARDEN, GIDGET; (SEATED) LUCINDA CREDLE, GIDGET'S FRIEND LARUE; (KNEELING) FRED WILLIAMS, MOONDOGIE, IN LOVE WITH GIDGET. OTHER FEATURED CHARACTERS ARE STIN KY, THE SURF-BOARD SALESMAN, PLAYED BY FRANK DAUGHTERY; DON PEPC, ACTED BY MIKE CARTER; JIM BASKERVILLE AS MALIBU MAC; MAC CRUNSHAW AS LORD HATHAWAY; GEORGE WILKE AS MUSCLES; RANDY WILCOX, GOLDEN BOY; LUCY UEGERS, MAI MAI; ANN DEHOFF, BUFF; AUOREY JONES, STELLA; AND JIM SEAWARD AS THE FIRE WARDEN. MISS EUNICE A. HORNE, THE DIRECTOR, IS ASSISTED BY KAYE JOHNSON AND NANCY PIKE AS STUDENT DIRECTORS; BILLY RYE AND LUTHER FOLEY AS STAGE MANAGERS; GARY FETTERS AND RICHARD BUTLER, SOUND TECHNICIANS; CHARLES MURRAY AND WOODY HOFFMAN AS LIGHTING ASSISTANTS; AND A LARGE GROUP OF OTHERS. YOU ARE INVITED TO ENJOY THE NIGHT, TONIGHT OR TOMORROW, AT LEE HIGH'S "MALIBU BEACH".

COMMENTS:

Fred Williams said, "Moondoggie is still alive and well. I remember that **Jim Sullivan** (big football team lineman) was sitting on the front row of the auditorium and yelled out when I kissed Gidget (**Vicki Warden**), "French her Fred". It got a good laugh. Ah, those days gone-by. Good memories. Speaking of football, we all remember **Larry Whittington** as the great Lee High running back. He was the best. P.S. I still have this Gidget picture, as well."

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Jim Terrell said, “**George Wilke** was miscast as Muscles.”

George Wilke said, “It is where I learned to dance.”

Joan Pugh (Avent) said, “Thanks for the memories! Forgot all about it!”

Mack Crenshaw said, “Very cool!”

Mary Kay Cowart (Montford) said, “Wow! What a discovery! Such fun to remember. Thanks for sharing.”

Dona Meserve (Hice) said, “Wow. Awesome to see and read.”

Vaden Bessent said, “Larry, Wow. Thanks. Would have never thought of that.”

News Stories

Hi, classmates. We were busy our senior year at Robert E. Lee High School with classes, homework, music, chores, dating, sports, dances, clubs, television, movies, and part-time jobs. Maybe you missed some of these news stories during our 1959-1960 school year 😊

- Alaska and Hawaii were admitted as the 49th and 50th states
- LeRoy Collins was the Governor of Florida
- Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens, and The Big Bopper died in a plane crash
- New 49-star flag debuted after Alaska became the 49th state
- Twilight Zone with Rod Serling premiered on CBS
- Cost of a first-class stamp was 4 cents
- United States announced it was sending 3500 troops to Vietnam
- Top song in 1959 was “The Battle of New Orleans”
- President Dwight Eisenhower signed the Civil Rights Act into law
- Highest grossing film in 1959 was “Ben-Hur” with Charlton Heston
- Haydon Burns was the Mayor of Jacksonville
- United States launched the first weather satellite
- New 50-star flag debuted after Hawaii became the 50th state
- Theme from “A Summer place” was Billboard #1 in 1960
- American U-2 spy plane shot down over Russia
- Cassius Clay (Muhammad Ali) won the Olympics boxing gold medal
- First working laser was built in the United States
- Highest grossing film in 1960 was “Spartacus” with Kirk Douglas
- Supreme Court declared segregation illegal on public transit
- IBM introduced the first fully automatic production line for transistors
- John F. Kennedy at 43 was the youngest man elected as President

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Only 41% of people graduated from high school in 1960. I didn't realize the percentage was so low. By 2018, the number of high school graduates had increased to 90%.

Movie Theatres

Hi, classmates. During our school years, you probably went to one or more of the movie theatres listed below. Although the preferred American spelling is now "theaters", they advertised themselves then as "theatres", the preferred British spelling.

As youngsters, we walked or biked to a neighborhood theatre for Saturday matinees to see serials, cartoons, news reels, and hopefully, a double feature movie. As we grew older, we went by car with our friends and dates to downtown theatres and local drive-ins.

Some neighborhood theatres would admit you for free with six RC Cola bottle caps. I remember riding the city bus from Lake Shore to see movies at the downtown theatres. Do you remember the pipe organ that rose up and was played before movies at the Florida Theatre?

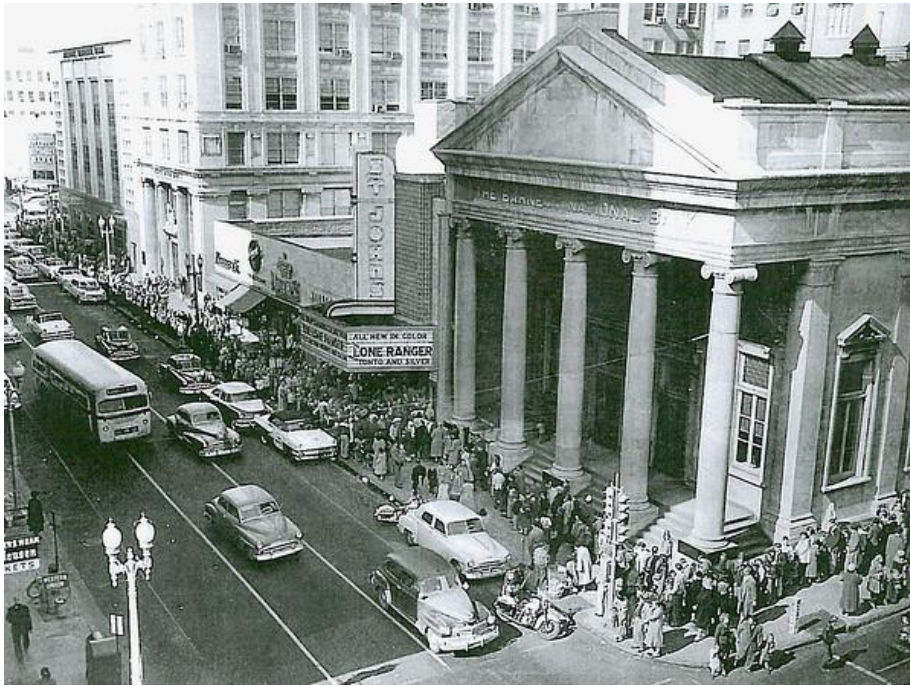
What snacks besides popcorn and a drink did you buy at the movies: Jujubes, Sno-Caps, Whoppers, Milk Duds, Bit-O-Honey, or Raisinets? I hope you weren't one of the kids that threw candy at those in front of you. I loved my Milk Duds too much throw one away ... maybe popcorn.

Downtown

- Arcade Theatre – Forsyth Street and Adams Street (1914-1960). Two entrances. Became Center Theatre (1960-1983).
- Florida Theatre – Forsyth Street (1927-1980). Now a non-profit Performing Arts Center.
- Imperial Theatre – Forsyth Street (1911-1971).
- Palace Theatre – Forsyth Street (1919-1956).
- St. Johns Theatre – Forsyth Street (1941-1960)

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This 1956 picture shows very long lines to see the Lone Ranger movie at the St. Johns Theatre.



Neighborhood

- Edgewood Theatre – Edgewood Avenue (1947-198x)
- Fairfax Theatre – Herschel Street (1941-19xx)
- Five Points Theatre – Park Street (1949-1977). Riverside Theatre (1927-1949). Reopened as Sun-Ray Cinema in 2011.
- Lake Shore Theatre – Timothy Lane (1946-196x)
- Murray Hill Theatre – Edgewood Avenue (1949-1994)

Drive-In Theatres

- Air Base Drive-Inn – Roosevelt Blvd. (1948-1960+)
- Normandy Twin Drive-In – Normandy Blvd. (1948-1962)
- Wesconnett Drive-In – Blanding Blvd. (1955-1960); Twin Hills Drive-In (1960-1968), then Playtime Drive-In (1968-2008).

Did you ever hide people in the trunk to avoid paying at a drive-in movie? They finally wised up and started charging a fixed price per car. Did you ever ride off from a drive-in and forget to remove the speaker from your window?

Families with small kids would park near the screen to be close to the playground equipment. Teenagers would park in the back rows. I read an article that said, *“Those who parked on the back rows were up to no good and their reputations were pretty much ruined. Their mamas would know about it before dawn.”*

I hope recalling these old theatres brings back some fond memories of your school years.

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COMMENTS:

Vangie Futch (Gault) said, “I vividly remembered walking all the way to the Edgewood Theatre on a Saturday to see cartoons, a serial, a newsreel, then the main feature ... all for 9 cents! But, on that day, to my dismay, the price had gone up to 11 cents! Happily, as I was about to return home, my aunt provided me with a nickel. Oh, joy replete!”

Vangie also remembered the phrase, “*This is where I came in.*” She said it would seem pointless to our grandchildren, but there was a time when we could come and go throughout the feature, and even sit through it twice.

NOTE: Vangie’s story triggered a similar one from me: My father dropped me off at the Edgewood Theatre with a dime for the movie. But I found out at the ticket counter that the price had increased. My father had already driven off, so I just sat on the curb and cried, knowing I’d have to wait a couple of hours for him to return.

Someone must have told the theatre manager, because he came out and told me I could get in with my dime, plus he gave me a free bag of popcorn. When my mother heard the story later in the day, she was upset that my father had only given me a dime, with no money for a snack.

Jim McDaniel was an usher at the Imperial Theatre and related this story: “I was positioned taking tickets for entry into theatre and I had my eye on a young lady just recently hired who was working the concession nearby. One day an enlisted man came up the counter and asked her for one of those "Male Hershey Bars" and pointed to one. She looked and looked but finally told him she didn't see one called that and could he explain in more detail. He replied, sweetie, it's the one with the nuts. Her face turned as red as a stoplight, she looked over at me as I was laughing so hard tears were running down my face.”

Jim also mentioned the Dixie Theatre on Beaver Street, near McDuff Avenue: “I spent many a day there watching serials like Lone Ranger & Tonto, Gene Autrey (*anyone remember his horse's name?*) & Roy Rogers with his horse "Trigger".“

NOTE: *The name of Gene Autrey's horse is revealed at the end of this email.*

“One of my favorites was the Superman Serials ... I couldn't wait until next week to see what happened. And of course, cartoons, like Bugs Bunny & Elmer Fudd, Foghorn Leghorn, Woody Woodpecker, Tom & Jerry, Yosemite Sam, and Popeye to name a few. I would go in when they opened the doors for the weekend matinee and not come out until it was dark. My dad would give me a quarter, which got me a ticket, which was 9 cents, big bag of popcorn, soda & snickers candy bar. I remember the first time I put my arm around a girl while watching the movie and didn't dare move it, even though it went to sleep ... no way was I moving that arm.”

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NOTE: Jim's story reminded me of a similar story. I was in grade school that I first held a girl's hand in the movie at the Lake Shore Theatre. Sue Alice Moore. The courage it took to work up my nerve to hold her hand. Then, I didn't know how to stop holding it when our hands got sweaty.

Linda Burch (Hall) said, "Talk about fond memories! We walked to Edgewood Theatre most, then followed by the Murray Hill Theatre. I looked forward to the stage "show" before the movie. Remember the Hobby Horse races? Saved our bottle caps ... there were five Burches! Lucille, my sister, and I took dancing lessons above the drug store, I think. An elderly couple always waited in their rocking chairs to stop us for a show of what we learned that week.

NOTE: Linda caused me to remember the yo-yo contests they'd have on stage. I wasn't good enough to participate.

Fred Williams said, "I loved the Normandy Outdoor theater. What a great place to climb into the backseat with your girlfriend to "make-out". Ladies, I will not mention names. And, it was not that far from my home. Those were the days of fun irresponsibility."

Jack Chancellor said, "Thanks for the memories. Saw movies at most of these venues. I remember waiting in line to see War of the Worlds at the St. John's Theatre ... visited the Normandy Twin Drive In high school ... not on the back row, but wished I had a reason to."

Joan Pugh (Avent) said, "Thanks again for the memories! The Edgewood and Florida Theaters were my hang outs, as well as, the Normandy Drive-In!

Dona Meserve (Hice) said, "Lake Shore Theatre. Ten cents on Saturdays."

Elaine Perry (Starling) said, "Love it! So true, right on the money. Remember all of them. The children of police officers had "special" discounts for admission. My father, Ed Perry, was a Detective Sgt., Homicide, along with Joyce Smith's (class of 1960) father, Sgt. John Smith. We got discounts for our friends also.

Vaden Bessent said, "Hid people in the car trunk but never forgot to remove the speaker."

Beverly Binkley (Simpson) said, "I lived in Lake Shore and when I was 6 yrs. old Marsha Gibson's mother and father loaded up Marsha (8), Marsha's brother, Ronnie;(10), Billy Barwick(8), my late sister, Gail Binkley (8) and I to take us all to the Normandy outdoor Theatre to see "Frogmen". Just before we got there a city bus ran a stop sign and hit the rear side of the car. Everyone started climbing out of the upside-down car except for me. The front seat was upside down on the back seat and the back seat was upside down on me inside the car so I could not be seen. I was unconscious and the only one left in the car as they had all climbed out. My sister, Gail started running around the car yelling my name and when the police got there, they

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found me and pulled me out. When I woke up, I looked up at Mr. Gibson and said, "Does this mean we don't get to see "Frogmen"? I went to the hospital with a concussion but was okay. It was a miracle everyone else got out with just scratches and bruises. The car was demolished. It was a miracle. I never got to see Frogmen."

NOTE: Beverly, you can watch "The Frogmen" at this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pz6c-xU-jg>. The movie starred Richard Widmark, Dana Andrews, Gary Merrill, and Jeffrey Hunter. I'm sorry you had to wait so long to see it.

Ray Van Landingham said, " There was a drive-in on either Beach Blvd or Atlantic Blvd and of course the Main Street Drive-in. There was also a movie theater on Main near 8th street in Springfield Also the San Marco Theater. Not sure when the Town and Country Theater was built. Could be late 50s or early 60s. Just across Mathews bridge in Arlington on University Blvd. I'm reminded of the song about "just a smooching in the balcony on the very last row."

NOTE: It was the Atlantic Drive-In on Atlantic Blvd and the Main Street Drive-In at 5601 Main Street. The Capital Theatre was at 1741 Main Street, near 8th Street. The San Marco Theatre was at 1996 San Marco Blvd. The Town & Country Theatre was at 845 Chaseville Road. It was listed in the 1957 telephone book. Chaseville Road was renamed University Blvd. in 1958.

You can listen to Eddie Cochran's "Sittin' in the Balcony" at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3txNhsV63Eo>

Ray Van Landingham said, "Wasn't there also an Empress Theater downtown? Maybe next to or near the Imperial."

NOTE: The Empress Theatre, the Imperial Theatre, and the Palace Theatre, were all in a row on Forsyth Street. The Florida Theatre and the St. Johns Theatre were also on Forsyth Street, called "Theatre Row".

NOTE: Gene Autrey's horse was "Champion, the Wonder Horse". Champion appeared with Gene Autrey in 79 films between 1935 and 1952, and 91 TV episodes between 1950 and 1955. Champion also starred in 26 episodes of his own TV series, "The Adventures of Champion" in 1955 and 1956. Gene Autry used three horses to portray "Champion" over the years.

Wendell Davis said, "Thank you for bringing back the memories. I enjoy your emails, sounds like many others enjoy them as well. Funny about memories- I only remember Edgewood and Murray Hill being 10 cents, didn't remember 9 cents.

The Drive-in's were a special time in history. Another thought— my grandfather worked in the early 50's at 5 Points Theater as an usher for 10 cents an hour—labor was cheap in those days. Thanks again for your efforts and contributions. I don't usually comment, but I thoroughly enjoy reading your "memory " emails.

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Mary Kay Cowart (Montford) said, “Yes, I remember going to the Murray Hill, Edgewood and Five Points theaters for a dime. Wasn't a candy bar 5 cents? Thanks for the memories.

Suzanne McCully (Wallman) said, “How many Saturdays were spent at the Edgewood Theatre growing up. It was home away from home, with several friends. I've enjoyed this trip down memory lane. Thanks!

Elaine Perry (Starling) said, “I checked with my sister, Margaret Ann Perry McMillan, Class of '62, and she stated she believes that "Joyce Smith" may have transferred to Paxon. So, our ticket sharing was prior to her supposed transfer to Paxon. We do not have our yearbooks from Lakeshore Junior High and only our senior years at Lee. Joyce Smith was with us through the junior high years and we think Lee until Paxon.

Your uncle most assuredly served with our father on the Jacksonville Police Department, now the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office. You got Gator tickets! Wow, your uncle had some "pull" young man! Make sure you include this in your continued stories and memories. These men were real cops. They were recognized and respected for the job they did. There is no "perfect", however, they served their community with integrity and dedication.”

NOTE: I found Joyce Smith in the 8th and 9th grade Lake Shore yearbooks, as well as, in the 10th grade Lee yearbook. I emailed pictures to you.

Gena Whitten said, “I remember Saturdays when **Alice Whittle, Cricket Crain, Sandy Sammons, Elaine Hazlehurst**, others?? and I would ride the bus downtown to either the Florida Theatre or the St. Johns for a movie. Usually there was some shopping involved at Furchgott's, Cohen's, or the French Connection. We could ride the bus there and back, have lunch at Krystal Burger, see the movie all for \$1.00! I remember one Saturday we went to see a movie and decided to see two movies in the same day at two different theatres. One of the movies was "Old Yeller". The other was "For Whom the Bell Tolls". I had nightmares about “For Whom the Bell Tolls” because of the scene of the woman going into labor. Still remember that scene.

I was hidden in the trunk by a boyfriend going into the Normandy Drive In. We got caught and had to go to the office upstairs behind the projection room. We got quite a lecture, but they did not call our parents or the police, just made us pay and scared us to death. I didn't try that ever again. Also, I remember my mom and her sister taking us to the Drive Inn when we were young in our pajamas.

Fran Nelson said, “Me too! I lived near Edgewood and would go to the Edgewood Theatre for all day movies, cartoons, newsreels, etc. for 10 cents!”

Bob Basford said, “I remember walking down McDuff Ave. on Friday afternoons from school to Park St. and catch the bus to go downtown. B-rated horror or sci-fi movies was my destination at the Imperial or Empress theaters. By-the way, I didn't mention that my grandfather drove the bus route down Park St. so there was no charge for the bus ride. Also, do any of you remember

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the Fairfax theater in Fairfax, the Lake Shore theater near Blanding and the bridge over Cedar Creek, and the Brentwood theater on the northside between Main St. and Pearl St.”

Sandra Lee (Fowler) said, “Thank you for putting out all this. I also walked to the Edgewood theatre almost every Saturday. Did Ray Van Landingham play accordion there?”

NOTE: Ray replied, “I did take accordion lessons but don’t recall playing on Edgewood’s stage. I do recall singing several times. Unfortunately, I never became proficient in either. Seems they had a talent show on certain days.

Ed Rukab said, “My dad always gave my sister and me 25 cents for the movie, the rest for popcorn and candy. One day at Murray Hill Theatre, the price had increased to 14 cents. We could only buy popcorn or candy. We were so disappointed.

Dancing

Hi, classmates. Our school years were filled with lots of music and dancing.

We started with square dances in elementary school. By junior high, we were going to “sock hops” in the gym with our shoes off to protect the varnished floors. In high school, we had proms and parties, with slow dancing and fast dancing. The last dance was always a slow dance, and with hopefully your date.

Remember the song, “*Save the Last Dance for Me*”?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QFoBreVWa7M>

For the formal dances, I learned to buy a wrist corsage instead of a corsage for my date’s dress. Two reasons: 1) I was too nervous to pin the corsage on the dress with her parents watching, 2) wrist corsages meant we could dance close together without crushing the corsage.

Where did you go for dancing? Was it Friday nights at Riverside Park and Saturday nights at the Good Shepherd Church? Did you go to special dances at the Florida Yacht Club, Riverside Women’s Club, Lake Shore Women’s Club, or Timuquana Country Club? Or, maybe the National Guard Armory or the Beach Pier? There was also dancing at parties and any place with a juke box.

Our rock and roll dances were derived from ballroom swing dances. The Charleston in the 1920s was danced to fast jazz. Its derivative, the Lindy Hop, was danced in the 1930s. The Jitterbug of the 1940s was an offshoot of the Lindy Hop. The East Coast Swing was also derived from the Lindy Hop. The big beats of Rock and Roll music in the 1950s called for different and more creative dances.

- Bunny Hop – A line dance where you held the hips of the person in front of you. In tune with the music, you tapped the floor two times with the left foot, then twice with the

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right foot, then you hopped forward , then hopped backward, and finally hopped forward three times to finish the sequence. The dance repeated itself until the music was over. The song lyrics gave you the instructions.

You can listen to the Bunny Hop at

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b_Z1p6fAMrM

- The Bop – A swing dance with a hip twisting, body swaying style.
- Waltz – A simple box step pattern to a slow tune. Or, you just swayed back and forth as an excuse to hold each other.
- Foxtrot – Similar to the Waltz, but faster. Interestingly, Decca Records first labeled “Rock Around the Clock” as a Foxtrot.
- Stroll – Consisted of two lines of dancers, boys on one side and girls on the other. They faced each other and moved in place to the music. Each paired couple would step out and do a more elaborate dance up and down between the rows of dancers.

The Diamonds had a hit song titled “The Stroll” in 1957. You can see it on American Bandstand at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aEGMm0Dgsbs>

- Shag – Partners danced with mirrored moves to beach music. Considered the swing dance of the South. Originated in the Carolinas. Derived from the Charleston and Jitter-Bug. The Carolina Shag was called Beach Bop in some places.

American Bandstand aired on ABC in 1957 and was hosted by Dick Clark. Top 40 songs were played, and teenagers showed off their dance moves. Do you remember that he would ask their opinions of songs in the “Rate-a-Record” segment. When asked to explain their ratings, most of the teenagers would say, *“It’s got a good beat and you can dance to it.”*

Watch the dancing in this video to “Rip It Up” by Bill Haley and the Comets:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HdlfZ4213zM>.

Most of us weren’t that good. The song was first released by Little Richard in 1956.

NOTE: According to a study, dancing was a way for our prehistoric ancestors to bond and communicate. As a result, scientists believe that early humans that were coordinated and rhythmic had an advantage in attracting a mate. Who knew?

Robotic Dancing

The Boston Dynamics robotics firm has released a three-minute video featuring its Atlas humanoid robot dancing to “Do You Love Me?” It’s eventually joined by another Atlas robot (for search and rescue) and robot dog Spot (for traversing rough terrain). A Handle robot (for moving boxes in a warehouse) emerges later with some moves of its own.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fn3KWM1kuAw&feature=youtu.be>

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It's nice to know that when robots finally vanquish us, they'll know how to celebrate.

COMMENTS:

Beverly Binkley (Simpson) said, "That was great!!!! I danced my entire life. I met my husband to be in my senior year who had been a ballroom dancing instructor. We danced every weekend until he died at age 56. To keep dancing, I influenced the opening of the Asheville Ballroom where many would go 3 times a week and dance for 5 or 6 hours a night. I teamed with a wonderful dancer and we danced not only in and around this area such as demonstrations at the Grove Park Inn, but in a place in Las Vegas and ultimately St. Nazaire France. Everyone should dance ... It keeps you younger and limberer."

In response to Ellen's comments, Beverly said, "I can't tell you how much I miss dancing!!! That is so right as to what it does; not only eliminating mental stress, but for the body. I think it is VERY much the best aerobics to keep you young. Asheville Ballroom has closed for the Pandemic. My exhibition partner is 89 yrs. old and still dancing in Sarasota."

Dona Meserve (Hice) said, "I danced at the Golden Gate with Charles Ahearn. He was a teacher at the time. We won a lot of contests. The most we won was \$500.00 at a place at Roosevelt Mall. Never drank. Just a coke or water. LOVED to dance. Wish this COVID would go away so I could dance again."

Patty Paresi (DeCarli) said, "Love your little info emails! This one brought back my younger years when I use to dance the beach bop. Andy Shaw was one of my dance partners. Andy and I used to dance at the Golden Gate lounge. He played drums with his brother's band, Buddy Shaw, and I used to sing with a band called March Wilson and the Redcoats. Sometimes after we stopped with the band, we used to go to an after-hours club to dance. It was called the Forest Inn. We also used to dance down at the beach on Sunday nights, where they had dance contests. I still dance a version of the beach bop called the West Coast Swing. Before the pandemic I danced 2-3 nights a week with a lesson before each dance. I did not realize there were other classmates that danced at the Golden Gate and Forest Inn. I was at the Forest Inn one night with the drummer from our band and I think Andy was there also. Roy Orbison was singing there that night. I got to go on the stage and sing. He called me up and introduced me, but I did not sing with him."

I have been dancing at a huge venue here called the Grizzly Rose. It is very large, probably on the par with Gilley's in Texas. Anyhow, Saturday night someone took a video of the massive amount of people in the place, on the dance floor, and leaning on the railing surrounding the dance floor. We had to wear a mask on the dance floor, but if you were at a table, they did not enforce the mask rule. Someone took a phone video and sent it to the TV station. Now, the place is closed again. There have been some "protest dances" in some private clubs, so there is some dancing. I was used to dancing 3-4 nights a week at different venues and now feel as though I have lost flexibility in spite of working out. It is just not the same! I hope one day soon

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we will get back to normal. I am waiting to get the COVID vaccine and hope it will be soon. Keep up the fun email information.”

Mitch Hazouri said, “Does anyone remember the dances at Ortega Pier? These dances were Junior High events. I have no idea why I was invited, but they were by invitation. There must have been sponsors. The pier was on the Ortega side of the bridge. I seem to remember that it was an old-style pavilion probably dating back to the teens or twenties, the kind of thing we would really appreciate now.

NOTE: In 1923, band leader and businessman George Boutwell built a 110-foot pier out into the Ortega River supporting a large dance pavilion - a place for his band to perform, especially on Saturday nights. Some people called it Ortega Pier; others called it Boutwell Pier. The pier and pavilion were removed in 1972.

Ray Van Landingham sent me this sketch of the Ortega Pier that he found:



Jack Huddleston said, “Very interesting, and enjoyably nostalgic, Larry. In the sixth grade, along with Beth Ann, Mary Kay, Doug, Richie, Priscilla, and others, I took “ballroom dancing” classes on Friday nights at a building on King Street, near Park Street. We were taught the Waltz, the Foxtrot, and, I believe, the Tango, among others. It was fun and a great prelude to visiting some eatery, such as TAD’s, before being redistributed to our homes. Interestingly, TAD was Thomas A Davis, whose son, TAD, Jr, was a fraternity brother of mine at UF. The Bop, the Bunny Hop, and the many versions of “fast dancing” I lumped into the catch-all “Rock and Roll” were enormously fun. I think I danced 100 miles to Bill Haley’s “Rock Around the Clock.”

As for dancing places, I remember the School Gyms at John Gorrie and Lee, The Friday Musicale in Riverside, The Florida Yacht Club, Timuquana, The National Guard Armory downtown, and, especially, the Ortega Pier, at the foot of the Ortega Bridge. It was old and rickety, but never collapsed, despite wave after wave of wild and glorious dance parties. I remember at one, the

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band included Dick LeGate, Beth Ann's brother, who played the wooden bass. At one point, he lay on the floor, on his back, playing his bass well and loudly singing! Such fun!

Ellen Brett (Heimbold) said, "I was a "Navy Brat". When my family moved to Jacksonville, I went to Lee High for only the second semester of my Senior year. That's why I didn't know anyone, all the boys already had girlfriends, and nobody was interested in the new kid.

So, since my family was military, I went to the dances and other events downtown at the USO. It was there that I met some really nice sailors and they took me to the Enlisted Men's Club at NAS Jax for all of the dances and parties. I went dancing every weekend and to special events like the annual Blue Angels Air Show on base, the Marine Corps Ball, etc. It was great fun and I'm still dancing every weekend as well as teaching Swing dancing. Been teaching for many years and sharing the fun.

Back then, I married a sailor and had 9 children. Twenty years ago, I remarried, got 7 more children, and have had a very busy life. Now you know why we decided that we'd better dance all night! Enjoying getting to know people that I graduated with. Thanks for all you do."

NOTE: When I mentioned to Ellen that she, Beverly, Dona, and Patty were our Dancing Queens, she replied:

"My husband and I are dancing every weekend at the Ortega River Club in Jacksonville and also at the Moose Club. They were shut down for a while but are open for dancing now. Years ago, I was probably at the same dances as Dona and Patty as I danced at the Golden Gate and the Forest Inn, too.

I've won many dance contests, money, cruises, trips to the Bahamas, etc. Also, my husband and I have done Exhibition Dancing at the World Golf Village, the Prime Osborn Center, and the St. Augustine Ballroom Dance Association. We founded "Let's Dance St. Augustine" and hosted 250 people at every dance for six years at the Elk's Club in St. Augustine.

Beverly is right, dancing does keep you younger and more limber, but it also makes you smarter. A 21-year study of senior citizens, 75 and older, led by the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York, and published in the New England Journal, found that there are greater benefits to dancing compared to other activities:

Reduced Risk of Dementia

- 35% in Reading
- 47% in doing Crossword Puzzles
- 76% in Dancing frequently

Other Benefits of Dancing according to the North Florida Dance Association:

- Reduces Stress

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- Creates New Neural Pathways
- Increases Energy and Serotonin Levels
- Increases Mental Capacity by Exercising Cognitive Process

And personally, dancers are the nicest, friendliest, most fun loving, most loving people you could ever meet. When you get on the dance floor, the whole world of bad stuff goes away and the warm family of dancers are there. And you're never too old to start dancing. Our oldest dance student was 104 years old and she loved it."



Ellen and David on the dance floor

Digital Jukebox

Hi, Classmates. I sent you an earlier email about the top songs of 1959 and 1960.

Thanks to Carl Cochran, Lee High Class of 1958, I want to let you know about a digital jukebox called "The Nostalgia Machine": <http://thenostalgiamachine.com/>

You simply select a year (1951 to 2015), click on the "Hit Me" button, and you're presented with a list of the top songs for that year. Click on the desired song to play it and click on the (+) of other images to add those songs to your play queue. You can add songs from multiple years to your play queue ... I'm listening to songs this afternoon from 1956-1959.

I hope listening to your favorite songs will bring back good memories.

Bikes, Buses, and Cars

Hi, classmates. How did you travel around during our school days? You may have walked to school, neighborhood theatres, and friend's houses. You may have also spent time riding your bicycle, taking a bus, or driving a car.

Riding a Bike

We were tough. We learned to ride our bicycle without training wheels. You just got a push and went weaving down the street. No helmets, knee pads, or elbow pads. There were very few sidewalks and no bike lanes. Watch out for cars.

When we rode our bikes to school, they had racks to park your bike. If you didn't lock your bike to the rack, you risked it being stolen, which happened to me.

If you were a bike rider, you probably had the chain come off at least once. We learned how to slowly move the pedal by hand and shift the chain back on the spokes. Sometimes, you had to remove a link in the chain to have it fit tighter.

You also learned to roll up your right pants leg to avoid the cloth getting caught in the chain. If you were lucky, your bike had a cover over the chain to reduce the chance of it catching your pants and flipping you off the bike.

Did you ever use a clothes pin to attach a card to your bike so that the tire spokes would hit it and cause that cool clicking sound? We thought it made our bikes sound like a motorcycle. We may have ruined some valuable baseball cards.

I recall towing people on my bike, either on the rear fender (if you had one), or on the handlebars. Passengers were much safer on the rear fender (they could jump off) than sitting on the handlebars.

Taking a Bus

I don't recall having yellow school buses in my neighborhood. If you lived too far from school to walk or ride your bike, you went by car or caught the city bus.

I recall dropping tokens in the coin collector at the front of the bus. I think you could give coins to the driver and he would drop a token in the collector for you. You pulled the overhead cord to alert the driver that you wanted to get off at the next stop.

Many of us took the bus downtown to shop, eat, or go to a movie. Our neighborhood buses all went downtown. We had to be careful catching a return bus to make sure it went to our neighborhood. I think route 22 was for Lake Shore. Not sure.

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Mathematician Blaise Pascal conceived the world's first bus service in 1661. He proposed that a number of coaches should circulate along predetermined routes in Paris at regular intervals, regardless of the number of people, and pick up passengers for a small fixed fare.

Driving a Car

I remember looking forward to getting my learner's permit when I was 14. Most cars in those days had manual transmissions, which meant you probably learned to drive a stick shift and use the clutch. You had to carefully depress the clutch and smoothly shift gears to avoid grinding the gears. Otherwise, the terrible gnashing sound gave you away as a novice driver.

The gear stick, or shift stick, was mounted on the steering column. It was also called "three on the tree" because of the three gears (not counting neutral and reverse). Having the gear shifter on the column allowed for a full width bench-type front seat, which meant your date could slide over close to you. Cars later began to include center consoles and moved the shifter into that space within reach of the driver.

You were required to use hand signals to indicate turns and stopping. For a left turn, you put your left arm straight out the window and parallel to the ground. For a right turn, you rested your left elbow on the window and raised your forearm up. And, if you wanted to stop, you signaled that intention by putting your left arm out parallel to the road and angling it down. These signals were required whether it was sunny and fair, or pouring buckets.

Cars did not have seat belts, and most cars still had hand-cranked windows. Electric power windows were viewed as a luxury item.

Did you ever run out of gas? I did at the top of the Matthews bridge. It was a long walk to find a "filling station" and borrow a gas can. I remember that some drivers would siphon gas from another car. You had to be careful not to swallow the gas.

Who taught you to drive? Did you participate in the Driver's Education program at Lee? Marvin Crawford and Paul Drake were listed as the Driver Education instructors in our 1960 yearbook.

I remember my first driving lesson with my father. I turned right and forgot to apply the brakes to slow down. The car went up over the curb and across two yards before returning to the street. A man was cutting his grass, thought I might hit him, and ran away from his lawn mower. It was a nerve-wracking experience. My father told me to pull the car over and stop. I thought he was going yell at me and take the wheel. Instead, he said, "So, *what did you learn?*" I wish I had been that calm when teaching my kids to drive. Maybe being a firefighter trained him to remain calm in difficult situations.

I went the first week after turning 16 to get my driver's license. I failed my first road test. During the drive, I stopped at a Stop sign, but couldn't see around the bushes at the intersection. So, rolled up a few feet for better view. The examiner told me to head back, that I had failed the test. You could take the road test again in one week. When I returned the next week, I was

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assigned the same examiner, and we went on same route. This time I stopped at the stop sign, but didn't roll forward. I just prayed a car wasn't coming and continued on the route. He passed me with flying colors.

Do you remember the metal wires that could be added to a car as curb finders. They acted like "whiskers" to alert the driver when the car was the right distance from the curb. Some drivers added a steering wheel knob to help make steering easier and faster with one-hand. Use of the knob with your left hand meant that your right arm was free to place around your girlfriend's shoulder.

Bridges

Did you worry about driving over one of our four Jacksonville bridges? Remember how the metal bridge grating would cause your tires to shift side to side?

- Acosta Bridge opened 1921.
- Main Street Bridge opened in 1941.
- Matthews Bridge opened in 1953.
- Warren Bridge opened in 1954.

COMMENTS:

Beth Ann LeGate (Pickels) said, "I rode my bike all over Riverside and Avondale. Many times, I had my faithful dog in the front basket. Sometimes I would ride the bus to Park and Stockton and walk 3 blocks to Gorrie, but mostly I walked to Gorrie or my mom would take me. I was only 2 blocks from Lee, so I always walked.

I learned to drive in our station wagon which was automatic, so I didn't learn the stick shift until later. I took driving lessons with a friend of my brother Milton and passed the test the first time. After dropping him off at his house, I hurriedly went to Mary Kay's so we could go for a ride. The car had other thoughts ... the battery died in her driveway.

Bob Weldon said, "Had my bike stolen at Lake Shore. I remember the cards in spokes, rolling up my pants leg, and towing on the front handlebars. I rode the 30 Park bus to school and downtown. I lived between St Johns and San Juan. The 22 Lake Shore bus could be caught at San Juan and Hamilton.

I had to install a heater in my first car, a 1952 Ford stick shift with moon disks. Wouldn't trade these memories for anything.

My dad worked at the Normandy Drive-In as a second job. He wore the white coveralls and directed traffic when the movie was over. He was also the one who checked the cars that had fogged up windows. Any of you with fogged up windows know what I'm talking about. Maybe you weren't paying too much attention to the movie. LOL

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Remember the Burro cart rides at the Normandy Drive-In? They had live burros that pulled a wooden cart filled with hay almost like a mini hayride. Probably held about 8 kids. The burros were stabled between the screens when not in use.

Remember the people with spotlights who made a game of shining lights on the screen before the movie and other cars with spotlights would try to catch them on the screen?"

Gena Whitten said, "I lived in "Old" Ortega. There was a yellow school bus which came around for us. The cool kids did not ride the yellow school bus. It was an extra expense to ride the city bus which was a social experience with our friends. I had to pay from my \$3 per week allowance. We had to take one bus from McDuff Ave. and make a transfer at (maybe I'm not sure) Hershel and San Juan, where there was a restaurant. Lots of flirting on the bus. Many of the boys would carry or hold the books for the girls which was a sign that they "liked" that girl or were going steady with her. Us girls felt really special when a boy held our books for us.

We rode our bicycles all over Ortega to Doc's to friends' houses etc. I remember riding in the cold winter in Bermuda shorts.

I took Driver's Ed at school. I took the test there at school and I remember I had to parallel park just as the bell rang at 3:15 and a bunch of kids were watching me do it. So embarrassing, but I passed. I remember failing to shift gears properly and the car zoomed through the toll both on the Warren Bridge with my mom supervising my driving. I also remember the car stalling on the ramp into a parking garage downtown. I ultimately learned to control the clutch, a valuable skill when I drove on the hills in Seattle! I had a job as driver for my dad one summer as he drove around town checking on his construction projects. I think it was then that I became inspired to be an architect inspecting all those buildings with him, although girls did not major in math or architecture in those days. That is another story.

After we could drive, we girls had carpools. We each got our mom's car once per week and drove the others to school. There was an accident with my carpool. I won't rat on who was driving and Meta Bond, and Beth Walker's carpool on one of the quiet Ortega intersections. Police and Insurance agents showed up at the scene. No one was hurt, but we were all thoroughly traumatized. Being girls, there were lots of tears.

I also remember crazy driving through dirt roads in what really was a forest in those days at Ortega with **Sid Linton** driving and the music Raunching blaring on his mom's car radio. It was a yellow car, maybe a Dodge?

NOTE: I believe Gena is referring to the rock and roll instrumental, [Raunchy](#), which was released in 1957. Click on the title to listen.

Margie Beatty said, "I remember seeing the school buses lined up in front of the school and wondering where on earth they must have lived to ride one. In Murray Hill, we rode the city bus with tokens we bought at the school store. The real treat was riding home. Our bus (number 5

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Murray Hill, I think) going home would be so crowded you had to stand up and hold onto a strap or rail if you were lucky and if you were luckier someone one sitting down would hold your pile of books (remember how many heavy books we had to tote around?). Sometimes at Gorrie we used to walk down several blocks to get on before the crowd to get a seat.

Remember riding your bike and hitting some sand and crashing, your roller skates coming off and flying around your ankle tripping you. Once I was being towed on the back of a bike and my ankle got caught in the spokes and I had to go to the hospital to have stitches in my ankle.

Speaking of driving tests, I went with a friend to get her test and the trooper looked so terrifying that I said, "next week when I go let's go to the other one to avoid getting him" and wouldn't you know guess who came out and called my name. I was so scared I don't know how I ever passed.

A funny story about that was the week before I actually took the test, a friend and I went to the beach in my "new" car (a crummy '58 ford that threw a rod every time I got in it). While driving, we spotted some boys we knew walking down the sidewalk and turned to wave at them and I sideswiped a parked car. Well, I thought I'd probably go to jail. We stopped and a man that owned the car came out of a bar and I thought he would probably want to kill us. Instead, he says to us "How much money ya'll got on you?" We dug up about ten dollars between us and he said, "That'll do", grabbed the money and went back in the bar. Guess it bought him another round. Right now, looking back, I can't believe I would have the nerve to go driving without a license.

NOTE: Margie, he wasn't the car owner. The owner arrived later and wondered what happened to his car.

My first driving lesson was with my older brother. Everything was going great for exactly one block when I stripped the gears. He turned purple and ordered me out of his car. I looked back in the window and asked when our next lesson was going to be. If looks could kill!

I remember my brother had a steering wheel knob, along with pin stripes, fender skirts ,and those pipes that ran down the side called something that sounded like Lake Pipes. I was never sure what he was saying. Remember the running boards on all the cars back then? This reminded me of all those things on older cars people wouldn't know today like starter buttons on the dash or the one on the floor, the choke, and your bright lights button on the floor."

NOTE: Some say "lake pipes" were made by Lake Manufacturing. Others think it was because hot rods with these pipes raced on lake beds.

John Runton said, "If my memory is correct, you had to live outside the city limits to ride a yellow school bus to school. Otherwise, you rode a bike, a city bus, walked to school, or if you were lucky, your parents drove you to school. I rode my bike to John Gorrie and walked to Lee for sophomore year and half of my junior year, because we lived on Forbes Street, a half block

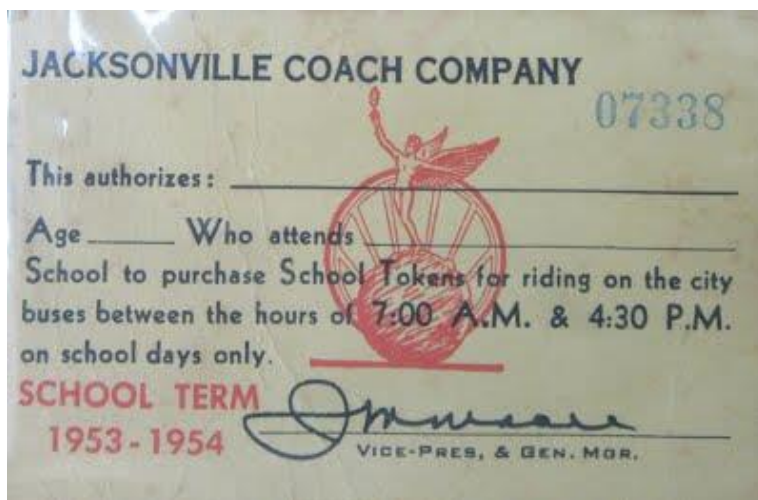
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off McDuff. We moved to Lawnview Street in Murray Hill during Christmas break (because the Expressway was taking our house) so I started riding the 4 Murray Hill city bus to school after that.

I got my learners permit when I was 14, but failed the eye test the first time I took it, so I had to get glasses, which I never wore. My father and my brother taught me to drive. Dad used the car to go to work, so it wasn't available for me to drive it to school."

Linda Burch (Hall) said, "Very interesting and took me back a few years. I WOULD NOT drive over a bridge period! Would stop before the bridge, get out, move whomever to drive over, and then took it back at the other side. Took years to conquer this fear. My Dad teased us throughout my childhood by finding a wooden bridge and telling us to hide our eyes because it might fall in! Oh well, Knoxville has sturdy bridges!

Fran Nelson said, "Yes, bikes. I rode my bike to my elementary school - Ruth N. Upson. We rode the city buses to John Gorrie and Lee. We bought monthly bus tokens. Buses were not air conditioned back then. So hot! Also, people could smoke on city buses. Ugh! Also took the city buses to downtown to shop or go to movies.



I got my learner's permit at 14. Supposed to have an adult in the car with you until you got your regular license at 16. I flunked my license on the first try - couldn't parallel park! I never had Drivers Ed. My mother taught me to drive."

Sandra Lee (Fowler) said, "I lived at the corner of McDuff and Remington. My cousin and I rode our bikes all over, sometimes down to the St. Johns River. I remember riding downhill on Park; shouldn't have gotten a head start. I ended up stuck in the bushes at the bottom."

Elvin Farris said, "I enjoyed reading about the bicycle and automobile experiences. My Dad was advanced in age when I entered my teenage years. Our automobile was "totaled" in an accident my Dad had not long after we moved to Jacksonville in the fall of 1956.

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So, all my travels as a teenager in Jacksonville were by bike, bus, or walking. While we lived in Riverside area, our family attended Murray Hill Baptist Church. I regularly walked the 2+ miles each way to church. To this day I think my exercise in walking then helped me later in life. Until a few years ago I routinely walked about five miles each day at a fast pace (almost 4 mph). I could walk at that pace with my mouth closed and breathing only through my nose.

I used the bus for trips downtown or later to work in the Springfield area (transferring to another bus to get to my Market Street destination.) I worked at W. H. Curtin for two summers after high school graduation while attending Stetson University, and later was in the co-op program with the Florida D.O.T. every other trimester.

I did not get a car until I transferred to University of Florida. I bought a used Plymouth station wagon at a junk yard for \$300 in 1965. The gas gauge never worked, so I carried a wooden yard stick in the back to check the fuel level. I drove it to Gainesville and it "usually" worked. There were a lot of repair costs associated with the car. I worked the summer and still had to borrow from bank to go back to college.

My most vivid memory with the car was being at the Broad Street Viaduct / Acosta Bridge intersection at a red light and the car stopped running (out of gas). Luckily for me, I ran back Riverside Avenue toward Five Points and found a gas station not too far away. I borrowed a container, bought the gas, ran back to the car, and got it started. As I pulled away from intersection a police car came by. Almost got a ticket for blocking the intersection. A few years ago, my wife and I visited Jacksonville. I drove down Riverside Avenue from the Acosta Bridge intersection ... there is no gas station nearby anymore."

Virginia Mobbs (Goodrum) said, "I have been thinking about riding bicycles in my school days, and girls couldn't ride bikes to school because of dress code for school. Shorts or long pants were not allowed for school. After school ,with a change of clothes, my friends and I rode our bikes all over to each other's house or to store. I still ride a bike, but it is now an adult trike. Today, with all clothing codes changed, females have a lot more freedom. Thanks for all the updates about our school years. You have done quite a bit of work and it is really appreciated."

Bill Leslie said, "I drove to school. Had a black Jaguar XK 120. Wish I still had it, but I had to sell it when I went to University (freshmen and sophomores weren't allowed to have cars there)."

Do You Remember These

Hi, classmates. **Margie Beatty** reminded me of the 1972 Statler Brothers song, "*Do You Remember These*". Its lyrics recalled the 1950s popular culture and good times. You can listen to the song at [this link](#). Its pictures help understand the lyrics, which I've added below. Margaret, thanks!

*Saturday morning serials
Chapters one through fifteen*

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*Fly paper, penny loafers, and lucky strike green
Flat tops, sock hops, Studebaker, "Pepsi, please"*

Ah, do you remember these?

*Cigar bands on your hands
Your daddy's socks rolled down
Sticks, no plugs and aviator caps, with flaps that button down
Movie stars on Dixie cup tops and knickers to your knees*

Ah, do you remember these?

*The hit parade, grape truaide, the Sadie Hawkins dance
Peddle pushers, duck tail hair, and peggin' your pants
Howdy doody
Tootie fruitie
The seam up the back of her hose*

Ah, do you remember those?

*James Dean, he was "keen", Sunday movies were taboo
The senior prom, Judy's mom, rock 'n roll was new
Cracker Jack prize
Stars in your eyes
"Ask daddy for the keys"*

Ah, do you remember these?

*The boogie man, lemonade stand and taking your tonsils out
Indian burn and wait your turn and four foul balls
You're out!
Cigarette loads and secret codes and saving lucky stars*

Can you remember back that far?

*To boat neck shirts and fender skirts and crinoline petticoats
Mums the word and dirty bird and double root beer float
Moon hubcaps and loud heel taps and "he's a real gone cat"*

Ah, do you remember that?

*Dancing close, little moron jokes and "cooties" in her hair
Captain Midnight, Ovaltine, and the whip at the county fair
Charles Atlas course, Roy Rogers horse, and "Only the Shadow
Knows"*

Ah, do you remember those?

*Gables charms, "froggin" your arm, loud mufflers, pitching woo
Going steady, Veronica and Betty, white bucks and blue suede shoes
Knock, knock jokes
Who's there?
Dewey*

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*Dewey who?
Dewey
Remember these
Yes we do!*

*Oh do we?
Do we remember these!*

Telephones

Hi, classmates. I sent an earlier email that talked about our old Evergreen exchange (EV) phone numbers and provided a link to an online 1959 Jacksonville phone directory. Many of you remembered your old home phone numbers. Impressive.

If you'd like to find your family street address or phone number in earlier years, view these online Jacksonville Phone Directories:

1938: <https://www.loc.gov/resource/usteledirec.usteledirec07026/?sp=25>
1941: <https://www.loc.gov/resource/usteledirec.usteledirec07027/?sp=26>
1944: <https://www.loc.gov/resource/usteledirec.usteledirec07016/?sp=22>
1950: <https://www.loc.gov/resource/usteledirec.usteledirec07018/?sp=21>
1952: <https://www.loc.gov/resource/usteledirec.usteledirec07019/?sp=22>
1954: <https://www.loc.gov/resource/usteledirec.usteledirec07020/?sp=22>
1955: <https://www.loc.gov/resource/usteledirec.usteledirec07003/?sp=22>
1957: <https://www.loc.gov/resource/usteledirec.usteledirec07004/?sp=22>
1959: <https://www.loc.gov/resource/usteledirec.usteledirec07005/?sp=24>

The old Jacksonville phone numbers began with a single digit prefix (2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, or 9) followed by four numbers. The switch to three-digit prefixes started with the 1955 phone directory. For example, Lee High School's 2-6828 became EV 9-6828.

Do you remember the old black rotary phone? The dial had numbers and related letters. The letters were to help us recall phone numbers, e.g., EV 9-6828 instead of 389-6828.



Remember the clicking sound of the wheel returning to its resting position?

If you tried to dial too quickly, and your finger slipped off the dial, you had to hang up and start over again. With mobile phones, if you press the wrong number, you just hit the backup key to erase it. And, there was no redial function with the old phones.

To look up a phone number, or place a long-distance call, you dialed (0) for the operator. Remember Ernestine (Lily Tomlin) on the TV show, *Laugh-In*, and her "*one ringy dingy ... two ringy dingy*" skit? Go to [this YouTube link](#) to view her phone call with Cher.

When touch-tone dialing was introduced in 1963, you could dial long distance without operator assistance. It wasn't until the 1980s that push button phones were in the majority.

Did you ever have a shared party line? Jacksonville had 2-party and 4-party connections. Each party had its own ring. You were to be courteous, not stay long on a call, hang up if another party needed to place an emergency call, and not listen to other calls. I have a friend that lived in New Hampshire as a child and they had a "12" party line. Can you imagine?

Do you remember that our junior and senior high school newspapers had a gossip column? They might have reported that Alice Whittle and Gena Whitten in my 12th grade homeroom had their own personal phone numbers 😊.

Did you ever call a radio station to request a song? You'd often be able to talk to other teenagers on hold, like a current day chat room. It was fun talking with strangers from other schools.

If you wanted to make a call when you were away from your home, you had to search for a pay phone, and have a dime available. Now, we never leave home without our mobile phones ... we are so attached to them.

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Looking at our class directory, 26% only list a landline, 37% only list a cell number, and 37% list both a landline and cell phone. The trend continues to discontinue your landline and rely on just your cell phone.

Use our class directory to call someone today.

COMMENTS:

Jack Huddleston said, “Thanks very much for the old phone-book records. I have and will continue to enjoy using them. To continue my previous listing, it seems that the exchanges that I left out were POplar-5 (now 765), in the Northside, like Ribault; Raymond-4 and Raymond-5 (now 724 and 725) in the Southside; and SPring-1 (now 771) in the Westside, like Cedar Hills. Less prevalent were Colony-4 (now 264) in the Orange Park/Dr’s Lake Area and AMhears 8 (now 268) in the Mandarin Area.

We certainly had one of those clunky, black, rotary-dial phones, centrally placed for no privacy in the living room! I also remember having to wait for the party-line neighbor to hang up before making calls, having to make long-distance calls through an operator, and long lines at pay phones. In addition, in high school, I had a 5-minute limit on social calls, which was especially a drag when talking to my girlfriend(s)!

Dona Meserve (Hice) said, “Larry, there were five girls in my family in 7-1/2 years and oh my goodness those party lines. We were allowed 5 minutes on the phone. I was so little that I would hide with the phone in a cabinet in our kitchen. How funny. Like my Dad couldn't follow the cord. Lol. The funny things we did.”

John Runton said, “I really enjoy your emails like this one. We still have a land line along with our cell phones, but we are thinking of getting rid of our land line because we pay almost as much for it as we do two cells. It's ridiculous how much AT&T charges for a land line.”

Carol Ulery (Graham) said, “Here’s an unusual fact regarding old telephone numbers. My family moved to Jacksonville in 1955 and we received our Evergreen phone number for our address. After my Dad died in 1957, the phone name (my Dad, Roger Ulery), and number remained in the phone book for the next 30 years at my mother’s choice. When she died in 1987, my brother, who is Roger Jr., purchased the home and the phone was never turned off, just transferred so it remained same name and number in the phone book. Today, my brother’s son, Roger III, owns the home and the name and number remain the same in the phone book. So, I really can easily remember the 65-year-old number.”

Mary Kay Cowart (Montford) said, “Many memories of our two-party telephone line. We were on the line with Carol Posey (Duguid) and her two sisters who lived just up the street from us on Challen Avenue.”

Penny Gilberstadt (Smith) said, “The technology differences of generations were never so forcefully brought to our attention than when my husband took our son who was about 6 or 7 at the time to his office on a Saturday morning to get some work done. The office was in the original train depot station in Salem, Virginia, complete with old black rotary phones. Ross told our son to sit at a desk and just call Mom. Well, in just a few minutes, our son asked, “Dad, how do you use this phone?”

This was the same child who asked me a couple of years prior to this incident, if the world was black and white when I was a little girl. This question came to his mind because we referred to our small first TV as the “old black and white” and our living room TV as the “new color” TV. How the world changes.”

Childhood Games

Hi, classmates. When we were young, we had a variety of games to entertain us. Our mothers would often say, “You kids go outside and play.” Do you remember these games?

- Hopscotch – Draw court in dirt or with chalk on driveway. Hop in the squares to retrieve the tossed object and return.
- Marbles – Use your shooter marble to knock opponent’s marbles outside the circle. Did you play “friendlies” or “keepsies”?
- Mumply Peg – Flip a pocketknife off your knee, arm, etc. to stick the blade in the ground. Opponent had to match your toss.
- Jacks – Bounce the rubber ball in the air and pick up the metal jacks. Remember calling out “onesies”, “twosies”, etc.?
- Pick-up Sticks – Drop the sticks into a jumbled pile. Attempt to remove the sticks without disturbing the others in the pile.
- Jump rope – Skip rope alone or in teams. In teams, move in, complete the jump, then move out without touching the rope.
- Darts – Throw sharp pointed darts to stick in a numbered wood or cork dartboard. Not a kid’s game for today.
- Musical Chairs – Take a seat when music stops. The person without a chair is eliminated. A chair is then removed, and the music starts again.
- Charades – Use gestures, no words, as hints for your team to guess the selected phrase.
- Tag – Chase other players to tag them with your hand and make them out-of-play. Last one tagged is “it” for the next round.
- Hide-and-Seek – Close eyes and count to a predetermined number while other players hide. “*Ready or Not Here I Come.*”
- Leapfrog – Leap over the back of first stooped person and take own stooped position. Last in line leaps over all the others.
- King of the Hill – Maintain your position of top of a hill (sand in our case) while others are trying to push you off.
- Red Rover – Two teams line up opposite each other. A player is called from the other team to see if that person can break your arm chain.

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- Kick the Can – One player guards a can while the rest try to kick it over before being tagged.
- Mother May I – Must say “Mother may I” before taking action, otherwise you must return to the starting line.
- Ring Around the Rosie – Do you recall “*Ring around the rosy, A pocketful of posies. Ashes, ashes. We all fall down!*”
- Simon Says - If Simon says to do something or not, you had to quickly and correctly do it or not, or you’re out.

Remember playing “Cops and Robbers” and “Cowboys and Indians”? And, before long, playing “Spin the Bottle”?

Card Games

I played Canasta with one of my grandmothers. My other grandmother called cards the “*tools of the devil*”.

- Poker – Wager on best hand according to the rules of the game. Poker is now played in million-dollar tournaments.
- Rook – Replaced the regular cards used for gambling with a special deck of cards. Was viewed as a Christian form of poker.
- Gin Rummy – Uses a standard card deck. Objective is to score a set number of points before your opponent.
- Canasta – Card game in the Rummy family. Played with two decks of cards.
- Pinochle – Played with 48 cards. Phases are bidding, melds, and tricks. I played with firemen when visiting their station.
- Bridge – Trick taking game using a standard deck of cards. My Uncle and Aunt in Jacksonville were Grand Masters.
- Old Maid – Discard pairs face up. Offer person on left a card from your hand. Person with last unmatched card is Old Maid.

Board Games

I didn’t really care for board games. I preferred playing outside. But, if it was raining, and I had nothing better to do ...

- Monopoly – Roll dice to move around game board, buying and trading properties, and developing with houses and hotels.
- Sorry – Draw cards to move pawns to Home before other players. When you negate the progress of others, say “*Sorry!*”
- Clue – Use dice and cards to determine who murdered the victim, where crime took place, and which weapon was used.
- Scrabble – Place tiles in crossword-like fashion to form words and score points. Be sure to have a dictionary nearby.
- Yahtzee – Roll dice up to three times in each round. Record your dice combinations on the scorecard and total your points.

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- Tiddlywinks – Use a "squidger" to propel the winks (small disks) to cover opponent's winks and to flip your winks into pot.
- Checkers – Move your pieces diagonally to the unoccupied spaces. Jump over an opponent's piece to capture it.
- Chess – Use king, queen, rooks, bishops, and pawns to capture opponent's pieces. Different pieces make different moves.

Did you dare use a Ouija (Wejee) board? Participants placed their fingers on a movable wood piece supposedly guided by spirits to spell out words (by pointing to letters on the board). It would also point to Yes or No for questions. Some parents didn't allow the game in their homes.

Puzzles

Solving a puzzle is supposed to improve your memory, concentration, and motivation. Unfortunately, I didn't have the patience for puzzles when I was young. However, I now enjoy trying to track down our missing classmates, which is a bit like a puzzle. Let me know if you want to help. I'll give you the names of several missing classmates and make you aware of some online search tools.

- Riddle – Solve a statement or question intentionally phrased to require ingenuity to find its hidden meaning or answer.
- Jigsaw Puzzle – Assemble the oddly shaped interlocking pieces into a complete picture.
- Crossword Puzzles – A word puzzle that uses clues to fill white squares with letters to form words or phrases as the answers.

Sports

We played a lot of neighborhood sports, as well as, organized sports in our schools. In addition to baseball, football, and basketball, we played kickball, dodgeball, and corkball. Remember the savage dodgeball games we had in the gym on rainy days?

Some of you probably played tennis or golf, or went to neighborhood pools for swim lessons or to just splash around. Too bad that soccer wasn't popular in our childhood.

I especially liked "corkball". It was a mini-baseball game played with a taped wine cork or fishing cork. We used an old broom stick as our bat. White tape was used on the cylindrical cork so we could still see it when playing at dusk. There was an art in how you properly taped the cork. And, we'd put a coin at one or both ends to give it more weight. You pitched the cork by flicking it between your thumb and middle fingers to give it a dipsy-doodle spin. It was hard to hit that dang zig-zagging cork with the slender broom stick, but fun. You only needed two kids to have a game. You marked off distances in the yard that were for a 1B, 2B, 3B, and HR.

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COMMENTS:

Paul Genho said, “My older brother was the master at cork ball which we played in the streets. I was the champion of stilts. Long gangly me couldn’t roller skate, but I could run, walk backwards, and go up steps on stilts. Monopoly was the board game. The St Johns was blocks away for fishing and crabbing. And, of course, hide and go seek.”

Margie Beatty said, “Larry, the only game I can think of that you didn't mention is Red Light. Once when I was in Europe while riding down the street, I happened to glance over to the sidewalk and some neighborhood kids were playing Red Light and I thought "Small World".

Even though us girls played house with our tea sets and dolls dressing them and feeding them (and our unsuspecting cat who went lame when you put all the garb on him for a stroll in the stroller), we also played cowboys with the cap guns. My little sister used to lasso the dog with her jump rope and ride him like a horse around the back yard firing the cap gun at everything that moved.

One thing we did back then that is a lost art now days is using our imagination. We used to climb the Mimosa tree and get out as far as you could on a limb to make the limb go up and down, pretending we were riding elephants with Gunga, the boy in the series on the Buster Brown Show. Imagination turned our old black telephone dial into my car steering wheel when we played house inside on rainy days and turned leaves, Mimosa beans, and mud pies into food when we were outside. It also turned our lawn chairs into sleighs when turned upside down when we pretended to be riding with the Snow Queen up in the air.

We played lots of card games. We learned Bridge from my Grandmother. I loved Gin Rummy. Jacks was my favorite game with a couple of friends. Remember telling ghost stories? I'M ON THE FIRST STEP seemed to always be put in every story. You sure can't say we 50s kids never found anything to do.”

Beverly Binkley (Simpson) said, “The kids in my neighborhood (my sister Gail, Billy Barwick, Roger Eaton, Dawn Fisher, Gene Cartee, and Marsha Gibson) not only played these same games, but we would do a few things for "fun" that looking back were "inane". Among these were to cut through the woods to the railroad tracks, wait for the train, and place a penny on the tracks as close to the train going by as we were brave enough to do. The train rolling over the penny would smash it into a large round shape and I guess we thought that was really funny. I quit the “train game” after I dreamed that I got a neck scarf caught in the tracks and the train came and whizzed by me laying on the ground leaning back with my scarf still attached. Scared the patooey out of me.

Another "inane" game was to hammer rebar stakes into a tree that had a vine hanging down on it. We'd climb way up the tree on the rebar and swing out over a large ditch that many times had snakes in it, this would swing us back where we had to grab the tree and try not to hit the protruding rebar. One of the guys (I think Billy Barwick), didn't make it back to the tree and fell

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into the ditch that had raw sewage in it. We played this swing game until Janice Hayes (if you remember her, (she just celebrated her 80th B-day), hit the rebar, slid down the tree and split her hand wide open. This is how our parents learned this game we were playing.

We decided a more fun challenge would be to go to the corner of Sunderland and Bayview Road, roller skate down a slanted driveway and out onto Bayview hoping there were no cars on the road when we came flying down the driveway. We tried to do this when we knew the owner of the house was not there. One day we thought she was gone, she was home. This (of course) was stopped by the owner of the house who told us after several weeks to "stop" roller skating on her driveway. (we were soooo disappointed, but of course, she was afraid we were going to get hit by a car even after we tried to convince her we looked for cars. (Yeah, right!!!). I remember us all walking away grumbling and saying how mean and unfair she was. How did we EVER grow up safely?"

Stan Cooper said, "Larry, thanks again for sending these emails; they bring back memories that had been relegated to seldom recalled parts of my brain. It's fascinating how memory works.

In the late forties and early fifties, our whole family - Mom, Dad, me and my three siblings - always went to my Dad's aunt and uncle's house on Dogwood Place in Fairfax for dinner on Sunday nights. After dinner, we'd all migrate to their sun room and play a board game named "Parcheesi" while listening to Jack Benny and The Shadow. I've never seen Parcheesi before or after those Sunday evening gatherings."

NOTE: Yes, I remember "Parcheesi". I played it with the three girls that lived next door to me. Players rolled dice to move their four pieces from their starting nest onto the game track, then around the board, and hopefully, into the central home position to win.

Linda Burch (Hall) said, "We had a Ouija Board, but Mom kept it "hidden" in Lucille's and my closet and we knew where it was. We'd get it out and giggle trying to get it to show us a Ghost! Never got any results! Thank you for all your interesting and fun posts.

Liz Clark (Davis) said, "When I was in the 4th, 5th, and 6th grade the girls mostly played Jacks, but in our neighborhood the dads always had baseball games in the backyards. They would always be the pitchers and we were the outfield!! I learned how to judge the ball and how to be part of a team. I could never hit a tennis ball, but I could really send a baseball flying!! All the yards (about 10) backed up to each other, so we had a big area (at least it seemed that way to us) to play and run!"

Dee Hargett said, "You didn't mention electric football. I have enjoyed all the things you have brought into focus. 2020 was the perfect year to do this."

NOTE: Dee, how could I overlook the many times you and I played electric football. I remember the buzzing sound as the field vibrated and put the players into motion. It seems archaic now compared to the Madden video football game, but it was certainly fun at the time.

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We also played another football game where each of us picked a play from two sets of large paper sheets, one for the defense and one for the offense. The sheets had cutouts for the player movements. You placed the selected plays on top of each other on the light source. A top cover would be slowly pulled off to see how well the offensive play matched against the defensive play.

Dona Meserve (Hice) said, “Larry, in my family of five girls we were always creative with activities. Lots of talent shows and puppet shows that cost pennies to attend. Sweetest memories of our Miss Appleton Contest. Wildflower bouquets and ribbon banners worn with your street number on them. Oh yes, well decorated wagons. And of course, judges. Wish kids were like this today. Can’t forget MYF at Lake Shore Methodist Church. Fun times.”

Doug Moore said, “Larry, not a single mention of *Pine Sapling* riding. Of course, as a farm child for 16 years, I don’t recognize many of the listed games. We would select a young pine tree, climb up as far as possible, and begin moving back and forth. The goal was to create so much movement that one could touch the ground. Fun, but terrifying.”

Toys and Hobbies

Hi, classmates. I sent you an earlier email about Childhood Games. This email is a reminder of our Toys and Hobbies.

Toys

Did you play with any of these toys as a youngster?

- Lincoln Logs – Square-notched miniature logs used to build small forts and buildings.
- Tinkertoy – Construction kit consisting of wooden rods and spools.
- Yo-Yo – String was wrapped on an axle, between two disks, with a loop on your finger. The Yo-Yo was thrown down and would wind back into your hand.
- Cap Guns – Pulling trigger exploded a percussion cap on paper roll like a gunshot with a puff of smoke. Remember the smell?
- Frisbee – Disk for throwing and catching. The name came from Yale students tossing empty “Frisbee Pie” tins.
- Play-Doh – Reusable, pliable, putty-like substance that could be formed into shapes for arts and crafts.
- Silly Putty – Bouncing putty sold in plastic egg-shaped containers.
- Paper Dolls – Paper figures with separate paper clothes held onto the dolls by folding tabs.
- Paddle Ball - One-person game played with a paddle and small rubber ball attached at the center with an elastic string.
- Slinky – Helical spring that traveled down steps end-over-end as it stretched and reformed through gravity and its momentum.

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- Magic 8-Ball – You asked a yes-no question and then turned the ball over to reveal an answer in the window.
- Kites – Paper kite was assembled onto the two crossing pieces of wood. You added a cloth tail for stability.

Hobbies

Some of us had individual interests and activities that we engaged in as hobbies.

- Stamps – Collected postage stamps of different types and from different countries.
- Coins – Collected coins of different denomination from different countries and mint years.
- Baseball Cards – Trading cards sold with gum. Cards had baseball player images and career statistics.
- Model Airplanes – Built scaled down model aircraft from kits by gluing the wood or plastic parts.
- Dolls – Girls collected dolls given to them. Some continued to add to their doll collection beyond their school years.
- Model Trains – Bought model locomotives and railcars to run on model track. Did you have a Lionel set with smoke pellets?
- Wood Burning – Kits provided electric pen with brass tip to burn designs into the supplied wood boards.
- Chemistry Sets – Included lab equipment and a wide range of chemicals and experiments.
- Painting by Numbers – Kits with numbered areas to paint with the corresponding numbered paint.

And, of course, hunting, fishing, and other sports. I hope the mention of these toys and hobbies stirred up some pleasant memories.

COMMENTS:

Bob Forster said, “Yes, all of the toys except Lincoln logs appeared in our home for the three of us. Some years ago, I found a magic 8 ball. Still have all my Lionel trains. My son sets one up at Christmas around the tree for his kids to enjoy. Growing up my boys also had a train around our tree. I also had a Gilbert erector set with motor.”

Paul Genho said, “I was jealous of a neighbor kid that had Lincoln logs and bought them for my kids. They seldom played with them. Seashells were also collected and mounted. My brother had a fabulous butterfly collection and weird me hybridized plants (and still do).”

Jack Huddleston said, “Again, interesting and enjoyable nostalgia. I played with all of the above...except for dolls and paper dolls!! I particularly had fun with Lincoln logs and my

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chemistry set, also my Erector Set and a set of plastic, interlocking bricks with both of which, as then a budding engineer, I built all manner of things!!”

Beth Ann LeGate (Pickels) said, “We were very creative at our age in entertaining ourselves. I remember cutting out the Sunday comic strips and making a "movie" of them by cutting slits in a shoebox and running the strips through the holes. Enjoyed many hours of playing jacks and molding clay. Crayons were our staple for coloring and creating art. Also, many hours skating and playing pickup sticks.”

Vaden Bessent said, “Yep – Played with many of the toys and also enjoyed several of the hobbies listed. However, my favorites were fishing, hunting, and camping.”

Suzanne McCully (Wallman) said, “Oh such wonderful memories of every one of those toys! My #1 favorite was cap guns!! Maybe having two older brothers had something to do with that. Thanks, Larry, for stirring up happy memories that bring a smile.”

Kaye Johnson (Williams) said, “I like getting all your reminders of our past. I spent long hours playing the card game War. I also had a Dale Evans cowgirl outfit complete with hat, holster, cap gun, and boots. For a while, I was the only girl in my neighborhood, so I played football, cops and robbers, and cowboys and Indians. I also loved to climb trees. You might say I was a Tomboy to my mothers' chagrin.”

Elvin Farris said, “You mentioned hobbies when we were growing up. My aunt gave me a Marx model train set when I was in third grade. It was not as nice as a Lionel train, but I greatly appreciated it. My cousins had outgrown the train and I was glad to get it. When we moved to Orlando, I had visions of making a big train layout, but was never able to accomplish it.

In 1992, I built the train layout (see attachments) that was constructed on three 4x8 plywood boards in our Florida room. I remember the date because SEC was preparing to have its first football conference championship (unfortunately U of Florida lost to U of Alabama). The train layout remained there until early 2013 when we decided to sell our home in Panama City and move to Orlando to be near my son and family. My brother-in-law bought the layout from me and moved it to Alabama, where it still is in use. So, the train layout has been in operation for 29 years. All this to say that I finally was able to realize my boyhood dream.”

Randy Wilcox said, “Larry, I just wanted to thank you for all the work you do on RELee email. Very entertaining with lots of nostalgia. The games and toys are seemly unbelievable to the grandkids of today for the most part. I like it very, very much.

Neighborhoods and Schools

Hi, classmates. Do you remember the different neighborhoods that sent students to Lee High School? Is your neighborhood listed?

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- Avondale
- Cedar Hills
- Hyde Park
- Lackawanna
- Lake Shore
- Murray Hill
- Orange Park
- Ortega
- Riverside
- Venetia
- Wesconnett
- Woodstock

If you grew up in Jacksonville, you probably went to one of these public elementary schools. Is your school listed?

1. *Annie Lytle, Gilmore Street (closed)*
2. Bayview, 3257 Lake Shore Blvd.
3. Central Riverside, 2555 Gilmore Street
4. Fishweir, 3977 Herschel Street
5. Hyde Park, 5300 Park Street
6. *Lackawanna, 3108 Lenox Avenue (closed)*
7. Lake Shore, 2519 Bayview Blvd. (now Middle School)
8. Ortega, 4010 Baltic Street
9. Ramona, 5540 Ramona Blvd.
10. Ruth N. Upson, 1090 Dancy Street (opened 1916 as Murray Hill))
11. Venetia, 4300 Timuquana Road
12. *Wesconnett, 5710 Wesconnett Blvd. (closed)*
13. West Riverside, 2810 Herschel Street

Or, some of you may have attended a Catholic elementary school, for example:

- St. Matthew's, 1767 Blanding Blvd.
- St. Paul's, 2609 Park Street

I went to Ruth N. Upson in the first grade and for part of the second grade. I remember this cafeteria line chant from the older kids, "*first graders, rotten potatoes*". Have you noticed that no one calls it Upson, or Ruth Upson. It has to be fully expressed as Ruth N. Upson. I went to Lake Shore for remainder of the second grade and all of the third grade, and then to the newly opened Hyde Park Elementary for the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades.

Do you remember this playground song, "*I see London, I see France, I see someone's underpants*"? Having your underwear exposed at that age was embarrassing, but if they really

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wanted to humiliate you, the “somebody” was replaced with “your” name. And, why wasn’t it, “I see England, I see France, ...”?

Our elementary school report cards included teacher comments for each of the six grading periods. The most frequent comment on my report cards was “talks too much.” Did any of you have similar comments? My sixth-grade teacher wrote, “He plays vigorously during the Physical Education period.” She would run water over my wrists after recess to cool me off.

Remember the report card format used in Duval County and its report card sleeve?

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS
 Duval County Public School System
 Jacksonville, Florida
 IVA T. SPRINKLE, Superintendent


INDIVIDUAL PROGRESS REPORT
 Grades One through Six

Pupil Larry Whittington
 Grade 6 School Hyde Park
 Teacher Mrs. Louise Capton Dy:
 Principal Mrs. Helen Garrard
 Term Beginning 9/2/53 Term Ending 5/5/54
 Assignment for Next Term Seventh Grade
 Teacher's Signature Louise Capton

ATTENDANCE	1st Period	2nd Period	3rd Period	4th Period	5th Period	6th Period
Days Present	30	30	30	30	30	30
Days Absent	0	0	0	0	0	0
Times Tardy	0	0	0	0	0	0

Duval County Public Schools
 JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA

Name Larry Whittington
 School Hyde Park Grade 6


 This Report Card Cover Furnished by
THE ATLANTIC NATIONAL BANK OF JACKSONVILLE
 JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA
 ESTABLISHED 1903
 "It's a pleasure to bank at The Atlantic"

I went to Lake Shore Junior High for the seventh through ninth grades. A new Bayview Elementary School had been built behind the Lake Shore building. It seems strange that Lake Shore was on Bayview and Bayview was on Lake Shore.

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The two Junior High Schools feeding Robert E. Lee High School at the time were:

- John Gorrie, 2525 College Street
Opened 1927; closed 1997; Repurposed 2011 into The John Gorrie Condominiums
- Lake Shore, 2519 Bayview Blvd.
Now Lake Shore Middle School

COMMENTS:

Mary Kay Cowart (Montford) said, “How interesting!! I went to Ruth N. Upson for the first grade through fourth grade. Maybe you were in my first client class. I remember fingernail checks. Do you remember that? I think the teacher’s name was Mrs. Crews. I can see that classroom right now in the main building. Seems like it was the first room on the left when you entered the building up those tall steps.

And second grade we were in a portable with Mrs. Merle. Robbie Stedeford was in my class and I remember racing with him when we did our timed addition and subtraction drills.

In third grade we were moved to a church on Post Street. We sat in little chairs and I remember our teacher used to tie the legs of some of the boys to the chairs so they wouldn’t continually hop up and down.

Fourth grade was a great year. Our teacher took us to Murray Hill Park every day for recess where we played dodgeball every single day. Inside the classroom, she would put us in a circle and throw the ball to us saying 5×6 . You would have to catch the ball and tell her the answer before you threw the ball back to her. What a way to make learning our times tables fun.

We moved from Murray Hill to Avondale at the end of fourth grade and I attended West Riverside for fifth and six grades. That is where I met my good friends Beth Ann and MC, Patsy Rhodes, Nelson, Diane Riley, and many others. What wonderful memories.”

NOTE: Mary Kay, I had to look back at my report cards to see my first-grade teacher’s name: Mrs. Stinson. While I didn’t recall her name, she was memorable for one thing ... she yanked me out my desk one day by my hair. Now for the story. The girl next to me kept hitting me, pinching me, and scratching me. I guess she liked me. When my grandmother, who lived with us, saw my injuries, she asked me if I had hit her back. I said, “no, that my mother said you never hit a lady.” To which my grandmother replied, “if she’s doing all that to you, she’s no lady.” So, the next day, when the girl started pummeling me, I hit her so hard that she fell out of her desk. That was what the teacher saw, yanked me up by my hair, and sent me to the principal’s office.

Jane Miller (Arnett) said, “Mary Kay, you and I must have been in the same first and second grade classes. My mother taught second grade there also. “

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NOTE: Jane, I did have your mother in the second grade! She was my teacher for the first six weeks before we moved to Lake Shore. I didn't realize it until I looked back at my old report cards. I had Ms. Stinson for first grade.

Your mother printed her name (Pearl Miller). I wasn't absent any days that first six weeks and she gave me all Very Goods. In the comments, she said I was "A good worker. Very neat with work." Thanks for pointing out the connection.

John McDaniel said, "My friend, you are really pulling on my memories! My Dad (US Marine) was transferred to Jacksonville NAS the first time when I was in the 4th grade. We lived in a duplex on either Park Street or Post Street near where the old Borden dairy plant was. I went to the closest Elementary School which I think was Hyde Park but cannot be sure now. I do remember that we used to play at Willow Branch Park in the afternoons.

At the end of the 4th grade, we moved to what was then a former Navy housing project that is now the campus of Florida State University between Roosevelt and Park and I transferred to Fishweir where I spent the 5th and 6th grades. And yes, I was a school boy patrol and took it very seriously. I remember the school boy patrol year-end dance. We only lived in there for a few months and then moved to a house on Parrish Place even closer to Fishweir. I have a picture of our 5th grade class and most of those I have seen at reunions remain recognizable.

My parents were always focused on providing my brother and I with opportunities they did not have. When we moved to a new duty station where we went to school determined where we lived and not the other way around. Dad and Mom would take what we could to get us into the right school and then move a couple of times to find the perfect house. That's how we got from a duplex on Park or Post to Parrish Place. We repeated that pattern at every duty station. I was blessed with wonderful parents. The blessing of wonderful parents was the beginning of many more blessings in my life.

We left Jacksonville when Dad went to Korea and returned when in the summer when I started my junior year. We moved to a house at the corner of Plymouth and Hamilton where we lived when I started Lee. In my junior summer we moved to Cedar Hills. I continued to go to Lee where I graduated. Lots of great memories and good friends from High School.

I have enjoyed the reunions immensely. I have enjoyed seeing how our lives have turned out and meeting the people we have become. Thanks for what you are doing to resurrect some of those memories.

And yes - I nearly always had some recognition of my tendency to over participate noted on my report card - sometimes kindly phrased with some variation of " shows great enthusiasm by speaking out" or "vigorous participant", but mostly "talks too much in class"."

Bob Forster said, "Our neighborhood was referred to as Hyde Park. The golf course by that name was just a few blocks away from where we lived. My sisters went to Hyde Grove

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elementary school on S Lane Ave. I attended Stonewall Jackson elementary through near the end of the 5th grade in Arlington, VA. The last 8 weeks, and the 6th and 7th grades were in the Panama Canal Zone government operated schools.”

John Runton said, “When I started school, we still lived in the 5 Points area, so I went to Annie Lytle Elementary for 1st Grade. When we moved to Forbes St in the summer of 1949, I went to West Riverside through 6th Grade, then John Gorrie for 7-9th, and then finished up at Lee.”

Fran Nelson said, “Good memories! I went to Ruth N. Upson 1st through 6th, John Gorrie 7th through 9th, and of course Lee 10th through 12th, as well as my brother and both of my sisters. None of us in my family went to kindergarten. And of course, Gorrie is now condominiums!

I must have been in the same fourth grade class as Mary Kay. I remember our teacher (Miss Matthews) teaching us our times tables by throwing a ball to us and calling out numbers that you had to answer if the ball was thrown to you. I also remember her disciplining boys that talked too much by hitting the palm of their hands with a ruler. Ouch! I seem to remember **Gary Rosenberger** being her most frequent target!”

Larry Dixon said, “I was raised in Murray Hill on Attleboro Street, attended Ruth N. Upson Elementary and John Gorrie Junior High. My this is fun. Thanks for putting this all together.

In reading Mary Kay’s description of first grade at Ruth N. Upson Elementary, she mentioned her first grade teacher Mrs. Crews ... that was also my first grade teacher. Since we are the same age, maybe we were actually in same class. Her memory of that classroom is vivid ... much better than mine. I went to Ruth N. Upson all 6 grades. Crews for first grade, Mrs. DeLong, the knuckle struck by a ruler teacher... maybe 4th grade, and wonder if Mrs. Beauchamp for 6th. All four Dixon boys had her for 6th grade. I believe she eventually became principal of the school.”

Paul Genho said, “I went to Annie Lytle for five grades, but was transferred to Central Riverside because the new Freeway system caused the school to shut down.”

Walt Abstein said, “I attended the Lake Shore School from First to Sixth Grade and during the 6th Grade, Bayview Elementary was completed. We were the first “graduating” class. You mentioned Ruth N. Upson School. They brought her out of retirement and Ruth N. Upson was the interim principal as they finished out that first partial year at Bayview. Many of the kids who went to Good Shepherd remember “Miss Ruth” who always sat near the front on Sundays and kept her eyes on the Boys Choir for their behavior. She was the Choir Mother to the Boys Choir and many Lee High students passed through her scrutiny and watchful eyes over the years.”

Al Lyons said, “Very interesting. I went to both Lake Shores, as I lived in Cedar Hills. Big yellow bus. Same bus ride to Lee.”

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Tom Miller said, “There were four of us from Orange Park: Beverly Bryson, Jim Brady, Kingsley McCallum and me.”

NOTE: Cinda Courtney and Judi Ralph also lived in Orange Park.

Norma Tate (Rowland) said, “I grew up in Riverside on Post Street and walked to West Riverside, then to John Gorrie, and then to Robert E. Lee (except in bad weather and I had a ride). Love to hear everyone’s adventures.”

NOTE: When I was in the early grades, I liked walking to school in the rain so I could wear my raincoat and boots, and splash through puddles. Then I got older and wiser. But I still had to ride my bike through the remainder of grade school and junior high, regardless of the weather. When I got to Lee, I either took the city bus or got a ride to school.

Norma replied, “Of course, being a girl I didn’t like the rain because it messed up my hair.”

Kaye Johnson (Williams) said “You can add Venetia to the different neighborhoods. I grew up in Avondale and went to West Riverside then my parents moved to Venetia and I went to Lake Shore for 7th, 8th, and 9th grades.

Patsy Rhodes (Johnson) said, “I attended John Gorrie and toured the John Gorrie condos and they were awesome. They left so much of the original part of the school, the court yard and even the doors to the class rooms, and door knobs and columns of the huge auditorium. Bobby toured with me even though he went to Lake Shore. M. C. Elmore was also touring that day.”

Mitch Hazouri said, “Larry, how about Woodstock?”

Penny Gilberstadt (Smith) said, “I went to Central Riverside for 1-6th and lived on Dellwood Avenue which was almost catty-corner from Gorrie. But in the summer, my brothers and I went to Annie Lytle, which was officially closed, but had a summer "play" school. There was arts and crafts, outside play, and music stuff. It lasted half a day and we could walk there and back. I loved it.”

Beverly Binkley (Simpson) said, “I went to Mrs. Scott's Kindergarten in Lake Shore and chased the boys around the play yard, then to Bayview Elementary thru 6th grade, Lake Shore thru 9th and Lee High thru 11th. This was when they split us up in districts and I was in the first graduating class at Nathan Bedford Forrest. Many who were there might remember that the School had not been named permanently when first there, so the students had a huge "name the school contest". The vote was unanimous as "Valhalla High". The next day the Principal (Mr. Parker, I think) came over the loudspeaker and announced that even though the school voted for Valhalla High, since Valhalla was the burial grounds for the Viking Gods, the school name would be changed to Nathan Bedford Forrest High School. You could hear the "boo's" probably all the way to Lee High. It took forever to calm the kids back down. We wanted our football team to be the "Vikings".”

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“Does anyone remember Miss Oldag, a red headed 6th grade teacher at Bayview, who when you'd do something like talk in class she would make you turn your hands face up where she would bend it way down and slap it with a wooden ruler? I had this one time and thought it was going to "kill me". Whatever I did to deserve this, I promise I NEVER did it again.”

Dona Meserve (Hice) said, “Larry did you have Mrs. Eining in 5th grade at Hyde Park. She would pull and twist the boys’ ears. Mean as a snake. She couldn't do that today.”

NOTE: I had a very pretty, sweet Miss Bryan. Most of the boys in her class had a crush on her.

Harriett Brown (Strickland) said, “I attended Central Riverside first thru sixth grade. Miss McLendon was the principal and had a passion for skunks. She always wore one of her many skunk pins and had a variety of skunk gifts in her office. My first grade teacher was Miss Barrett who was newly engaged and had my entire first grade class seated in the front two rows at her wedding. There were several who started school at Central Riverside and went on to Gorrie and Lee together.”

Ed Brand said, “I didn’t realize you went to Hyde Park Elementary. I went to three elementary schools: 1. Ruth N. Upson, grades 1-4. We lived on Astral Avenue, across from the Normandy Drive-In Theater, also adjacent to Brownie’s Drive-in restaurant. My sister Connie and I walked to school. 2. Ramona Elementary was a new school, grade 5. 3. Hyde Park, grade. 6. We had moved from Astral Avenue to St. Johns Avenue. Mrs. McCubbin was my sixth grade teacher.

Lake Shore Junior High grades 7-9, then on to Lee High School. BTW, when Lee burned, my brother Richard was stationed at number 10 and his unit was the first to respond to the fire.”

Terry Ward said, “I attended Ruth N. Upson Elementary for the first through the fifth grades. Sixth grade was at Fishweir. School districts were changed then so we had to car pool. I grew up on Wolfe Street, so my friends and I could walk to Ruth N. Upson. This included Robbie Stedeford, Margaret Cuppet, and several others. We had to cross Roosevelt Blvd (US 17) and railroad tracks to get to school, sometimes putting a penny on the track to see if it would be there in the afternoon on the way home. Had to ride the city bus using bus tokens for John Gorrie and Lee.

At Ruth N. Upson, my fourth-grade teacher, Ms. Hilton, is very memorable for me. She taught our class how to play the harmonica, my introduction to music and a lifetime of the joy of music. We played Stephen Foster songs (always Key of C with no sharps or flats). This was also my introduction to performing with our class at school assemblies, very scary at first but habit-forming later. This went from harmonica to self-taught guitar (Sears Silvertone) when I attended John Gorrie, then glee club singing in college. From there to decades of choral singing and, when I moved to Asheville, a trio called The Three Wise Dudes. Great fun. So, thank you Ms. Hilton for setting the stage for the love of music for me.

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And thank you, Larry, for your ongoing efforts in keeping us connected in these times of the world-turned-upside-down. “

Wendell Davis said, “I was born at St. Luke’s when it was near 8th & Main, before moving to the South Side. The location became University Hospital alongside Methodist Hospital. UF Shands was built nearby and the whole complex became known as UF Shands with Trauma Center.

We had a 4-party line and lived two blocks from Annie Lytle Elementary near 5 Points, 1st and 2nd grade. Moved to Wesconnett for 3rd thru 6th. Lake Shore for 7th thru 9th, then Lee.

I wonder if anyone else hitchhiked from Lee to home after football practice? Forrest High School was built going into our Senior year and was one of very few new high schools to open with a 12th grade; most opened with an 11th grade. Seems to me 200 to 300 seniors to be, left Lee because they canceled buses. Very few of us at the time had cars, not like today. I stayed at Lee for the sports, thus hitched rides.

Radio and Television

Hi, classmates. During our school days, the four major radio stations were WJAX (930), WMBR (1460), WPDQ (1270), and WAPE (690). We listened mostly to WPDQ and WAPE since they played the Top 40 songs.

Radio Stations

In 1925, Jacksonville residents tuned in to the NBC radio network on its first radio station, WJAX on AM 930. Two years later, WMBR joined the airwaves with CBS programming on AM 1460.

In 1942, WJDC, went on the air in Jacksonville at AM 1270. In a few years, the call letters were changed to WPDQ as an ABC affiliate.

In 1958, WAPE, called *The Big Ape*, set fire to the coastline from Florida to the Carolinas with a 50-thousand watt signal and a music format called the Top 40. Do you remember that every station break was punctuated with the scream of an ape?

Radio Shows

Do you remember crowding around the radio at home and listening to it as a family? Some of the early shows I recall are:

- **Gang Busters** – Real crime stories. Sirens and machine gun sounds opened up the broadcast.

You can listen to a 1953 episode at:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XDDEjH_6eOw

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- **The Shadow** – *"What evil lurks in the hearts of men? The Shadow knows!"*
You can listen a 1947 episode at:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hiJZOZQN9NM>
- **Amos 'n' Andy** – First radio comedy show. White actors gave voice to black characters.
You can listen to a 1952 episode at:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TGIC8sryTUU>
- **Fibber Magee & Molly** – Situational comedy with an actual married couple, Jim and Marian Jordan.
You can listen to a 1951 episode at:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R3DUmaRVcG0&list=PLPuoJYDB2zqGNrLkl46A5KOaDr-AhnNrm&index=406>
- **Inner Sanctum Mysteries** – A squeaky door opened up the broadcast.
You can listen to a 1952 episode at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F0Ta-m7f9gQ&list=PLvu2oOrWFI_P_cytYyuhfOwK8iELqaKXa&index=5
- **The Fat Man** – *"He's stepping on the scales. Weight: 237 pounds. Fortune: Danger. Who is it? THE FAT MAN"*
You can listen to a 1952 episode at:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n04MpeH48go>

TV Stations

When we were school in the 1950s, Jacksonville only had two television stations: WMBR and WFGA, and for a few years, WJHP.

WMBR, a Jacksonville radio station, added WMBR-TV (CBS Channel 4) in 1949 as the first TV station in Jacksonville. It became WJXT in 1958.

The second Jacksonville TV station, WJHP-TV, followed in 1953 as UHF channel 36 with NBC and ABC affiliations. It was owned by the Jacksonville Journal, the city's afternoon newspaper. The station went dark four years later because it was unable to overcome the difficulties of UHF technology.

WFGA-TV (Channel 12) was launched in 1957 as an NBC network affiliate. The WFGA call letters stood for **W**e're Florida and **G**eorgi**A**". I didn't know that. It was the first TV station in the U.S. built from the ground-up as a color broadcasting station. In 1974, the new owners changed the call letters to WTLV-TV.

Do you remember adjusting the rabbit ears antenna on the TV set? You'd get it just right, let go, and the picture would go fuzzy again. Sometimes, you even had to go outside to adjust the roof antenna.

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Do you recall that the TV stations went off the air at midnight? I think they displayed a test pattern and played the national anthem before going to a screen full of static. If so inclined, we can now watch a vast array of channels and streaming services all day long.

Television Shows

The ten most popular TV shows in 1959 were:

1. Gunsmoke (CBS)
2. Wagon Train (NBC)
3. Have Gun Will Travel (CBS)
4. The Danny Thomas Show (CBS)
5. The Red Skelton Show (CBS)
6. Father Knows Best (CBS)
7. 77 Sunset Strip (ABC)
8. The Price is Right (NBC)
9. Wanted: Dead or Alive (CBS)
10. Perry Mason (CBS)

Due to the popularity of Gunsmoke, Wagon Train, and Have Gun Will Travel, additional western shows began broadcasting when we were in high school: Bonanza, Maverick, Rawhide, and The Rifleman.

Other popular TV shows were: I Love Lucy, The Honeymooners, Lassie, Dragnet, The Twilight Zone, Leave it to Beaver, Alfred Hitchcock Presents, The Ed Sullivan Show, The Donna Reed Show, Our Miss Brooks, George Burns and Gracie, and Adventures of Ozzie and Harriett.

Some families bought televisions to watch sporting events such as baseball and football. Boxing, bowling, wrestling, and roller derby were also favorites because they were filmed indoors and the action was easier to view.

Do you remember that married couples on TV shows always slept in twin beds and wore pajamas?

Go to this link to view a collection of short video clips of these shows for children: Sky King (1951-1959), Lone Ranger (1949-1957), Andy's Gang (1955-1960) ... it began as The Buster Brown show (1951-1955), Captain Midnight (1954-1956), Ramar of the Jungle (1952-1954), Rocky Jones – Space Ranger (1954), Space Cadet (1950-1955), and the Cisco Kid (1950-1956): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I8V3Qq3HUL0>

Other TV shows geared for children were: Fury (1955-1960), My Friend Flicka (1956-1957), The Adventures of Rin Tin Tin (1954-1959), Sgt. Preston of the Yukon (1955-1958), Howdy Doody Time (1947-1960), Kukla, Fran, and Ollie (1947-1957), Mickey Mouse Club (1955-1959; revived in later years), and Mr. Wizard (1951-1965).

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TV Brands

You probably watched TV shows on one of these brands: Admiral, Capehart, Dumont, Emerson, Magnavox, Motorola, Philco, RCA, Silvertone, Sylvania, Westinghouse, or Zenith. All these brands were mentioned in the yellow pages of the 1959-1960 Jacksonville phone book.

If your TV set stopped working, you'd look at the vacuum tubes in the back of the set to spot the one that was burned out. I remember taking bad tubes to the nearby 7-11 store to check them out on a testing device. New replacement tubes were stored in the back of the box.

What are your early radio and television memories?

COMMENTS:

Moiralynn Shedd (Mefein) said, "For what it's worth, I STILL listen to the old radio shows and enjoy them a great deal. There are legitimate vendors selling MP3s and CDs of the old shows. I would almost be embarrassed to tell you how many hours of those shows I have. No one mentioned The Saint, one of my favorites that also eventually went to TV. And let's not forget the science fiction! I got hooked on SF on the radio and have enjoyed it ever since ... not to mention real science! Thanks to all for sharing the memories."

Jack Chancellor said, "Larry, does anyone remember the Wednesday Night Boxing matches sponsored by Gillette Razors? And what about that radio show featuring Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy ... nothing more entertaining than a ventriloquist on the radio ... Ha!"

NOTE: Jack, I remember Friday night fights from Madison Square Garden. Boxing was very popular and probably had fights on multiple nights. It was Gillette's "Cavalcade of Sports". Remember the Gillette ad "Look Sharp. Feel Sharp. Be Sharp!"

Bob Forster said, "Larry, thanks for sharing comments about our TV and radio programs. Captain Kangaroo and the Mickey Mouse Club were popular with my younger sisters. We watched every weekly western from Gunsmoke through Have Gun. The various variety shows were also popular.

Years later, Richard Boone from Have Gun, spoke at our church. He was directing the Cross and Sword play at St. Augustine.

Did you know Chicago and New York were broadcasting TV programs in the 1930's?

The first show I watched after my return to the U.S. was Gunsmoke. The first shows watched as a child were a short-lived puppet show called Pinhead and Houdini, Kukla, Fran, and Ollie, and Howdy Doody. Captain Kangaroo was Clarabelle for three years on the Howdy Doody Show.

Roy Rogers came to Jacksonville I think during our Junior year to buy Trigger, Jr. There was a brief interview with him and the owner of the horse on the news program.

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Our first TV was a kit that dad brought home to fix. All TV makers sold TVs in kit form. We were the only ones in our neighborhood that had a TV and Saturday mornings our porch was popular until the set was relocated preventing viewing.

Stan Cooper had made a battery powered tv entry in the science fair. It was lacking a screen. I do not know if he was able to finish it.

For a few years, FCC regulations prevented broadcasts before 1:00. This was to prevent possible interference with radio broadcast signals. It was due to some technical issues according to my Dad. I hope this was of some interest.”

M. C. Elmore (Harrell) said, “I still listen to a bunch of the old radio shows on Radio Classics on Sirius. At least when Doug isn't in the car. They have Fibber McGee and Molly, The Great Gildersleeve, My Friend Irma, Jack Benny, The Green Hornet, Dragnet, and lots more. Really fun to hear them. Thanks, Larry, for all you are doing. Your e-mails are great.”

Beverly Binkley (Simpson) said, “Other memories added by my husband Dennis, is Dennis Day on Jack Benny show; Dick Tracy on radio; Elvis on Ed Sullivan show in early 50's; Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy. On Sunday morning they would act out the comic strips of the newspaper. Dennis also said that the best thing about radio was that after my parents went to bed, he could sneak out into the hallway and listen to the radio (until he fell asleep and got caught). The funniest "I Love Lucy" show to me was "The Chocolate Factory". I laughed so hard my sides hurt. We rented it not long ago and it was still as funny as it was the first time.

School Boy Patrol

Hi, classmates. For some of us, being in the School Boy Patrol as sixth graders was a special experience. Were you a patrol boy? Were any girls involved as crossing guards?

John McDaniel said, “I was a School Boy Patrol at Fishweir and took it very seriously. I remember the School Boy Patrol year-end dance. I think it was a coat and tie function (not uniforms).

I cannot remember how we got from Jacksonville to Washington DC, but I believe it was by train. It was a thrill being in a high-rise hotel in a room without adults. We were told not to be rowdy or have water fights, and under no circumstances throw anything from the window. I remember the trip to the Smithsonian and the Capitol. Somewhere in my old files I have a photo of the entire School Boy Patrol in front of the capital. Lots of kids. I assume it was a state convention of school boy patrols. My dad was a Marine and I took everything about the flag ceremony very seriously.”

Jim McDaniel said, “My most memorable elementary experience was being selected by my classmates to be a Lieutenant on the School Boy Patrol at Lackawanna. My job was to go around checking on the Patrol Boys who were stationed on crosswalks to assist classmates

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across the street by stopping cars. This also afforded me a opportunity once a month to attend a School Boy Patrol Drill across the street at Lackawanna Park, where when completed, we were given tokens to ride the bus downtown ... unsupervised, which was a big deal, and movie tickets to either the St. Johns, Arcade or Imperial Theatre.”

NOTE: Jim’s story got me thinking ... I was Captain of the School Boy Patrol at Hyde Park Elementary in 1953-1954. They had a special room for us that stored our raincoats, boots, and flags. We were all very proud to wear our patrol belt and badge. Our primary job was to stop cars with our flags to let students cross the roads leading to the school. When it was raining, we wore our raincoats and big rubber boots (with clamps on the front) and redeployed to the school to open car doors and get students out in a hurry to avoid a traffic jam. We felt like we were part of an elite group.

One Saturday a month, we would meet at Springfield Park to practice and march under the supervision of our assigned Sheriff’s Deputy. We took a city bus to get there. Afterwards, we were treated to a movie at the Capital Theatre, which was about 8 blocks away. I can’t imagine 6th graders being allowed to have such an adventure today. That era was a great time to be a kid.

Another special treat for us was when our Sheriff’s Deputy would come to our school and get us out of class to play softball. I’m surprised the teachers allowed us to miss class. I know that our classmates didn’t think it was fair. **Patsy Rhodes (Johnson)** kindly sent me the picture below (which I had not seen). **Bobby Johnson** was on the left and I’m on the right. Who was in the middle?



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Ed Rukab said, “I was a patrol boy at Lackawanna. One day I left my post to play marbles with a friend. Principal Conclin found out and took away my badge.”

Jerry Hightower said, “My first 3 years were at Lake Shore, and I must have been a dunce, because my parents sent me to St. Matthews for the 4th grade. Sister Helen Thomas whipped me into shape so my parents decided to keep me enrolled through the 8th grade. I became a patrol boy at St. Matthews ... crossing guard and playground (crowd control). Got my butt whipped a couple of times during crowd control. LOL. 9th grade was back to Lake Shore Junior High School. This is where I found football and track. I made it in track, but not football when I went to Lee. Good times all around. Louis Andre and Kendall Dingman were my classmates at St. Matthews.”

Suzanne McCully (Wallman) said, “Thanks, Larry! This was a great way to start my day!! Lots of happy smiles.”

Barbara Rulkiewicz (Kirkman) said, “I did go to Lee in High School, but attended elementary school in another state where we had Patrol Boys and Girls. I was a Patrol Girl and honored to be the one chosen to ring the bell to start school each morning. I couldn't wait to get to school every day.”

Steve Hall said, “I was a patrol boy in the 6th grade at Ortega Grammar School. It was an honor to serve and help our school mates, and their parents coming and leaving school. Some of us got to go to Washington DC for a huge group of patrol boys from all over. A very positive experience.”

Dona Meserve (Hice) said, I remember going to that School Patrol Dance with **Jim Brady**. He lived 2 doors down from me. I was told he was going to invite me so I walked by his house with a girl friend everyday for a week so he would see me and extend his invitation. He was very shy. Lol. Crazy young girl memories.”

Elaine Hazlehurst (Rae) said, “Irv Rae was on the school boy patrol when he lived in Atlanta and went with his patrol group to Washington DC to see all the government buildings. He even went to the Smithsonian.”

Jack Chancellor said, “I was a School Boy Patrol member at Ruth N. Upson Elementary School in 6th grade. I remember taking **Jane Miller** to the end of year Patrol Dance. Her mom was a teacher at the school. **Jim Yarbrough** was one of the Captains. My most common assignment was the intersection of Wolf, Kerle, and Hamilton Streets. Took two of us there.”

Audrey Jones (Williams) said, “West Riverside’s sixth graders did not get to be patrols because Gorrie opened for seventh graders. Two groups of students went that year. My classmates were denied the privilege is serving as patrols —of course, that was only boys!!! West Riverside went through 7th grade at that time.”

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Fred Kirchhoff said, “My class at West Riverside missed out on the School Boy Patrol. When we entered the school, it included the 7th grade and the patrol was drawn from that level, but when we were in the 6th grade it was decided that students would now go to John Gorrie for the 7th. As a result, we were never in the highest-level class at West Riverside and missed out on the trip to Washington D.D. the patrol boys were traditionally treated to. (Money for the trip was raised by the school's annual Hallowe'en carnival.) For this reason, the School Boy Patrol has always been a sore point with me. One of those opportunities that never knocked on my door.”

Beverly Binkley (Simpson) said, “Love it! Larry, were you ever a kid? In every photo you look just like when you grew older. I remember Bobby Johnson well. This is fun!!!

Gary Conklin said, “I transferred from St Paul’s to Ruth N. Upson in the sixth grade They needed two more school patrol boys so I volunteered, got picked, and Gary Diezman took me under his wing to get me familiarized. I found it a great way to meet my new classmates on their way to school and become a part of my new school. Met my first girlfriend, Nancy Locke, and represented the school on TV with Bill Barfield against my former school (we won). I especially enjoyed the trip to Washington DC that summer. My dad gave me \$5 to spend but told me to bring him the change. I came back with 5 cents.”

Bob Cowles said, “Larry, I was on the school boy patrol at Ortega Elementary. Mike Saunders and I were Lieutenants. The next two years after that I was helping train them. I made 3 trips to DC with the patrol boys. Good memories.”

Larry Dixon said, “Larry, I also served as School Patrol in the 6th grade at Ruth N. Upson Elementary ... very serious even in rain and very very cold weather ... at those times did I hesitate as to why am I doing this. YES! But never quit!!! Great experience!”

Bob Weldon said, “I was school boy patrol at Fishweir. Kinda like an elementary school ROTC. I remember going to Washington DC and climbing to the top and down the Washington Monument. Remember school boy patrol dance; **Diane Railey** was my date. Don't know who thought the solid white uniforms would stay clean on sixth graders. Remember putting the flag up and taking it down each day. Still remember how to fold the flag properly.”

NOTE: I remember that I was allowed to run out of the classroom if I saw it was beginning to rain, so I could take down the flag and keep it from getting wet. I thought I was a lucky guy!

Walt Abstein said, “I was on the School Boy Patrol for Lake Shore/Bayview. Our Captain was **John Frost** and his Lieutenant was Richard Williams. We did the Springfield Park Drill on Saturday mornings; I think once per month or so. We got free bus rides with our badge and belt. The #9 Walnut Bus to Seminole Hotel; then the #8 Fairfield bus to Springfield Park. The #22 Lakeshore back home. Our End of the Year Trip for County Patrol Boys was a week at Camp Immokalee near Keystone Heights on Lake Brooklyn. The Duval County Patrol sponsor I believe was someone we called Captain Tucker. I am not sure he really was a Captain or not.”

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Penny Gilberstadt (Smith) said, “I went to Central Riverside Elementary school and my brother George (LHS 1962) was a patrol boy, but I got to go to the school boy patrol dance. It was at the National Guard Armory downtown and my date was David Madsen, who moved away before we got to Lee. I remember that George regaled us with his tales of his trip to Washington. Somewhere, in some album, there is a picture of the boys on their trip. I love your stories.”

George Martin said, “Larry, if you can tolerate one more School Boy Patrol story, I’ve got one. That trip to Washington remains a highlight of a very fortunate childhood. I remember the train departing Union Station in the late afternoon, playing grab-ass and singing “100 Bottles of Beer On the Wall” ‘til we all collapsed with exhaustion sometime in the night. But when the train began to slow, I awoke and rose up to look out the window. And there it was in the ‘dawn’s early light’....the Washington Monument. I still have other good memories of our trip, but that glimpse into the grey mist remains a best boyhood memory. Like many of us, I’ve been in DC numerous times since June 1954, and a first sighting of that iconic Monument from a plane window still stirs my patriotic old soul.’

Gena Whitten said, “I went to elementary school out of state. My fond memories of elementary school were from Charlotte, NC. I was chosen to be a Patrol Girl, which was such an honor. I could wear my white belt and badge all day which demanded respect from all. I fondly remember the trip to Washington, DC and the tours of the White House, Washington Monument, the Capitol, and the Smithsonian Museums. These were wonderful childhood days of learning and discovery. Thanks for doing this Larry. This is such fun to hear the memories of others and to share our own.”

Bill Leslie said, “I was on school boy patrol at Central Riverside in 6th grade. Wylene Montgomery was my date to the ball. Remember that part where we all went up and around in the ballroom, first two by two, then four by four, then eight by eight and so on until we were all in one line?”

Dating Venues

Hi, classmates. Another memory question. Where did you go on dates during our junior and senior high school years? Maybe you picked a place that was cheap and fun.

- Movie Theatres – A very popular date choice. See my earlier email on theatres.
- Dancing – Another favorite dating option. See my earlier email on dancing.
- Miniature Golf – I liked going to the Putt-Putt course on the Expressway and Beach Blvd.
- Bowling – Some of you may have gone bowling on a date, unless you were a poor bowler.
(Bowlomatic Lanes on Blanding; Palm Lanes on Cassatt; Riverside Bowling Lanes on St. Johns)

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- Roller Skating – Did any of you go to the Skateland Roller Rink on Kings Avenue in Southside?
- Record Shops – Did you go to Hoyt’s High Fidelity Center on St. Johns to listen to and buy records?
- Drive-Inns – Maybe you went to a drive-inn to eat food and listen to music. See my earlier email on hangouts.
- Sporting Events – You may gone on dates to school sporting events such as football and basketball games.
- School Activities – You could also go on dates to school plays and concerts.
- Hayrides – Another date option was the Hi-Y hayrides to the sand dunes at the beach.
- Picnics – Did you ever go on a picnic date to the beach or a lake?
- Church Activities – These events were safe, parentally accepted date venues.

Or, if you’d been dating awhile, maybe you just watched television at your date’s home.

Did the girl’s parents ever ask where you were going and what time you’d have her home? I dated my Sunday School teacher’s daughter once and we had a flat tire on the way home. We missed his curfew, but fortunately he believed me.

Some boys (me included) were shy about asking girls for the first date. Unfortunately, girls didn’t usually ask boys out during those times. Girls often had to drop hints to encourage the boy to ask them out. And, proper etiquette was for the boy to make the phone call, even if they were dating, because girls weren’t supposed to call boys unless they were returning a call.

When boys weren’t old enough to drive, they had to rely on their parents to chauffeur them on dates. When the boys finally got their license, they’d often double date to ease the conversation and reduce the anxiety of their date’s parents. They’d also try to get the other boy to help pay for gas.

Proper manners was for the boy to walk to the house door to pick up the girl and meet the parents. Just honking the horn was frowned upon. Boys were expected to open the car door for the girl, as well as, pay for the dates. Seldom was it “Dutch Treat” to share the expenses. Well, the girls did have more clothing expenses than the boys.

While some boys may have been nervous about asking a girl out for the first time, they may have been more worried about working up the courage for the first good night kiss. Awkward young moments.

COMMENTS:

Dona Meserve (Hice) said, “Larry, guys DIDN’T have a lot of money for dinner and a movie, so it was mostly movie dates and the Penny Burger. I do remember a date that took me to the Krystal Burger on Main Street and thought he’d taken me to Georgia. My mother would have

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killed me if she knew I was in Georgia. LOL. I still laugh a lot about how scared I was. Lakeshore was pretty much my world. Very little innocence with youth today.”

Patsy Avinger said, “I remember dancing on the basketball court at Willowbranch Park.”

Margie Beatty said, “I saw where Patsy Avinger was talking about dancing on the basketball court at Willowbranch Park and I was there right with her. That was on Friday nights. We had an off-duty policeman we called Bengy who chaperoned us who was really “COOL”.

Like everyone else I really appreciate the time you put in to give all of us laughs as well as fond memories. So just know you're keeping us all young.”

Linda Burch (Hall) said, “I believe my dates were more theatre, especially drive ins. Almost always with another couple. Myra Tyler (Kramer) and I were nearly joined at the hip. Asked my husband out in Grants and went to Penney’s with them. Bill didn’t have but 50 cents to get back to the base, so I said “Don’t worry. I just got paid today.” Brazen, huh? Went home from our first date and told Mom I’d met the man I was going to marry and I did. He is in Heaven but had a wonderful 60 years with him. Great memories. Thanks again.”

Helen Jones said, “I had a boy’s mother arrange for me to be his date through my mother. It was a formal dance, he did give me a pretty corsage but his father drove us to the dance. He and I were both shy but he could dance (the box step we learned in the gym at John Gorrie). I think it was a Boy Scouting event. Long time ago!

NOTE: Your story confirms that we boys were shy about asking girls out. I once asked a girl out for a friend of mine ... he was more bashful than me. Actually, asking for someone else was easier than asking for myself.

Pat Sullivan (Rice) said, “Wow, have times changed! Definitely not for the better.”

Millicent Carver (Spillars) said, “Haven't times changed!!! Those rules were the ones I was required to follow. The boy had better NOT drive up and HONK the horn. You might see the Dad come out to the car instead of the pretty little blonde you expected to see. What would happen if those rules were tried today? Let me say, I'm glad my daughter is 52 yrs. old and I don't have to face those days. Ha Ha. One more to add when we drove up at the house we had to get out and your date walked you to the door (no sitting in the car) looking at each other. Ha Ha again. Thanks for the post.”

Moiralynn Sheddan (Mefein) said, “I've enjoyed the memories of dates, and have an oddball one to contribute. Our last year of high school, I was dating the sailor I later married. He was from the Texas Panhandle, and had never seen an ocean till he joined the Navy. Naturally, many of our dates involved visits to Jax Beach. At the time, I had a pet rabbit who was trained to harness and leash. For reasons I will never understand, that rabbit loved the beach, especially splashing about in the shallows. So, we were on a date at the beach to see the Blue

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Angels fly, and the rabbit was with us. Somewhere, scattered around the country, are a whole lot of people whose pictures from that day include dramatic shots of the Blue Angels, intermingled with pictures of a bunny enjoying an ocean swim!"

NOTE: Although it is fun to remember our high school years and reconnect with our classmates, please consider that *"no amount of regret changes the past; no amount of anxiety changes the future; any amount of gratitude changes the present."*

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