

THE FOLLOWING IS AN ARTICLE I JUST SUBMITTED TO THE LOCAL PAPER.

Afterwards, my face muscles were sore from laughing and smiling.

When Marcelle and Mary were in the first grade, they wondered how old they would be before their feet touched the bus number 10 floor.

About eight years ago some of the girls, now ladies, who graduated from Camden High in 1965 and who rode bus 10, which picked up the kids in the Charlotte Thompson area, began having an annual "get together" on the 3rd Sat. in July. They later expanded the list to include some of the other '65 pedestrians.

The original cast was made up of Mary Holland Young, Pris McLeod, Marcelle Fortner, Pat Price Gillion, and Renee Howel Christopherson.

This year the group met at Helen and Lawrence Graham's oldest daughter Linda's house and they invited a couple of opposite sex members in Ronny Stroud and myself. Other classmates who attended were Cheryl Scott Colvin, Mary Workman Eddings, Barbara Rabon Shiver, Betty Jane McCallum Fort, Jane Barfield Munn, and Sandra Hammond Hughes, who has the unique distinction of having her wedding on Gilbrater.

It was an event of sharing some good laughs and memories. Since all of us are now over 60 years of age and all have 'scrapbooks and skeletons' the conversation was mostly about old times.

The bus 10 ladies had long ago voted Nettles 'Butch' Myers as their favorite bus driver who everyone had the biggest crush. They also had a list of who were the best and worst drivers.

They also had a picture which was taken in the mid to late 50's of most of the local kids who were attending a bible school at Beulah Methodist Church. There were the original members and their siblings, plus a lot of Smith's, Ive's, and Rush's.

Some other old class pictures produced some good chuckles. The sixth grade chorus picture with 30 girls and 60 bobby sox and Cheryl Colvin's majorette boots in the 2nd grade were classics. Jimmy Ring and Billy Ammons annually posed for their class pictures with their top shirt button always buttoned and Jimmy Clyburn always wore a different cowboy outfit for his class picture. Robin Hough had the best bike because his was a Donald Duck model which had a big Donald Duck attached to the handle bars.

The sixth grade must be that time in which kids start becoming part of the social herd because not only are all the girls in the chorus dressed fashionably similar, but there were lots of Perry Como jackets for the boys, as well as the ample use of Butch Hair Wax to keep the flat tops standing.

There were also some pictures of former reunions and no one could recall everyone. One would notice that as the years progressed the men seemed to have more grey on top than the ladies.

Pris McLeod, an old drinking buddy of the band 'Alabama' [before they were famous] could have her own show on Comedy Central. She entertained the attendees with stories from her 30+ years of preaching.

The conversation moved to former principals and teachers and the consensus was that no one could strike fear in your heart like the sound of Mrs. Duvall walking in her high heels. Also everyone had a Ruby Dobinca Lindler Zimmerman story. It seemed that everyone who had Mrs. Z can recall board credits, no cutting in the hall and her dancing on her desk.

It is interesting to see what most recall. The funny and the unusual seem to be the norm. One mystery that was clarified was what happened to several of our classmates when we were in jr. high. Several of us were in a fraternity called 'Lambda Beta Pi' while we were in the 7th and 8th grades. We met weekly at various member's houses, fired up some pilfered Winstons, talked about girls and just messed around. Some of the members who lived down town and did not play ball got together more often and decided to crank up their thrill meter by breaking into houses. After awhile they got caught. Now these kids were the sons of doctors, businessmen, and some of the most prominent and religious families in Camden.

They were sentenced to leave Camden for a year so some were sent to prep schools, while others were sent to live with relatives in other communities. I often think of this episode when I hear people talk of gangs or hear someone say, 'my kid would never do anything wrong.'

There was also great admiration but not envy for the oldest member of our class, Moultrie Burns who is the father of pre schoolers. We did send word to Moultrie that at our reunions we were no longer giving cash prizes to the class member with the youngest kids.

As we have aged all of us have learned to phrase questions in a manner that we do not get put or place someone in an embarrassing situation. We have learned to ask in generalities such as, 'how is everyone,' rather than 'how are your parents.' So it was nice also to find out about how many of our parents were doing.

As we have entered our 6th decade many of our parents are int their 8th decade and sometimes they are not as polically correct or they once were and they have alsoearned the right to say what is on their mind. The following is an example.

The Friday before this reunion I went by to check on my mother. Now my mother, Willie, truly detest my beard. The picture above is a couple of years old and since that picture was taken I had shaved the beard, but for some whimsical reason I decided to regrow it at the first of the summer.

When I walked into mother's house her initial statement , before hello, was 'When are you going to cut that beard?'

I replied that since she was now 87 years old that it was difficult to find her a Christmas present, I thought that I would shave the beard on Xmas eve and she could have it for a yule present. The response from her was. 'If that is all you are going to do with it, then you can just keep the d... thing.'

The conversation became more civil and after awhile I said my goodbyes and stated to leave. As I closed the door and approached my car I heard her yell something at me. Needing to leave and not wanting to go back inside I told her I could not hear what she was saying. She yelled again and I repeated that I could not understand what she was saying.

She then opened the door and and asked, 'Don't you have a reunion tomorrow with those girls you went to school with.'

I replied, "Yes mam."

She then replied. ' Before you meet with those girls, you need to cut off that chickens... beard.'

She was not backing up when she said it,

Thank you for your attention.