



# the HERD

NUMBER TWENTY SIX \* SUNSET HIGH SCHOOL, CLASSES OF '57 AND '58 \* FEBRUARY 1999

## Sunset Today

Erica L. Martinez is a Senior at Sunset High School. She is the editor of the Sundial and is the President of Bo's Best. She was voted Homecoming Queen in the Fall of 1998 and is one proud Bison. She is passionate about Sunset's traditions and has been a good resource for me, since I've only been teaching here for 4 years.

Thanks for the opportunity to showcase a current student's view!

Sincerely,  
Janelle Todd  
Sundial and Stampede Advisor

[EDDIEtor's note: After many years, the Bison has a name - Bo! Bo's Best is a social/spirit club for seniors].

### Dear Classes of 1957 and 1958,

It has been over 40 years since you graduated from Sunset High School. You are the past Bison that gave us a future and for that, the class of 1999 would like to thank you. Thank you for all of the tradition and memories that make our school so great and that keep the Bison spirit alive. As we get ready to enter the next century, I would like to tell you about just a few of the Bison traditions that we still hold true to this day.

Our Spirit of the Bison Assembly for Homecoming is still going strong. Every year the Bison speaks to us and gives us courage, knowledge, and most of all, strength to help us throughout the year and especially at our Homecoming game. This year we had a new rival, Molina

High School. Even they felt the Bison spirit watching over us, as we were victorious against them.

This year I was fortunate to be chosen Homecoming Queen and was very proud to represent Sunset High School. When the court was presented at the game, we proudly formed the traditional half sun as our way to pay tribute to our Alma Mater.

In addition, this year we revived the tradition of presenting a Senior Play. Last month I acted in "The Foreigner" by Larry Shue. It was lots of fun! Now that spring is here, we eagerly await the announcement of the Bison of the Year, the Sunset Senior who embodies Spirit, Knowledge, and Friendship. Those of us who are graduating this year have tried to show how important our traditions are to the underclassmen that will take our places as we move on in life, just as you did in your day. So don't worry about our traditions, because they are still going strong, and the purple blood continues to beat in the hearts of current and past Bison everywhere!

Sincerely,

Erica Martinez  
Class of 1999

## Memories

by Max Maris

Looking back at 1998 reminds me that we are creating memories as we go through life, and I thought, maybe, a look at some of the things going on during 1998 might be worth recalling. There are two things that we must do in life, I've been told, and that is to die and pay taxes. Well, paying taxes is a

poor subject to write about, so let's look at some of the people we lost in 1998, beginning with two of my favorite childhood heroes, Roy Rogers and Gene Autry. The passing of these two was extra sad because of the many memories I have of them. There was nothing more exciting in my life than to go to the Saturday morning matinees at the Rosewin, Kessler, or Vogue Theatres and watch Roy or Gene get those bad guys. Personally, I was a Roy Rogers man, but Gene was not far behind. Roy rode his beautiful palomino horse, Trigger, and wore his twin pistols and white hat. Gene was a little pudgy and his horse, Champion, was not quite as flashy as Trigger. Also, Roy had Dale Evans and I'm not sure if Gene even had a serious relationship with a woman. Roy's theme song was "Happy Trails" and Gene's was "Back in the Saddle Again", two songs I love to hear today. But one thing is certain, these two guys were genuine heroes to many kids of our generation. They both wanted to protect the innocent, never mistreat a woman or horse, and always were straight shooters.

### Trivia Questions

Where were Roy Rogers and Gene Autry born?

Who recorded "Money Honey" in 1953?

Name the 8 two-name cities in Dallas county.

What were the mascots of Greiner Jr. High and Stockard Jr. High?

Some other people who moved on in '98 were Carl Perkins, 65, "Grandpa" Jones, 84, Henny Youngman, 91, Dr. Benjamin Spock, 94, Lloyd Bridges, 85, Frank Sinatra, 82, Robert Young, 91, "Buffalo Bob" Smith, 80, and E. G. Marshall, 84.

Please see Memories on page 8

## Bison News

by Max Maris



Ron Calahan ('57) was born May 14, 1938 and passed away December 14, 1998 from cancer. He is survived by a son and daughter-in-law, Michael and Patricia Callahan; 3 grandsons; father Homer Clyde Callahan; brother Charles (Buddy) Calahan, and 1 nephew. Ron was a cheerleader at Sunset. He worked as a air traffic controller at DFW airport for over 16 years and then with FEMA as a accident investigator until his retirement in 1995. He loved Oak Cliff and purchased a home in Winnetka Heights for restoration. He was a Navy veteran and served as MC for the class of '57's 40 year reunion in 1997.



Verlena Jensen Bush ('57) died from cancer in June, 1998. She was a planner for the City of Dallas. Although she lived in Ft Worth, Verlina was in contact with her roots as her mother still lives in Oak Cliff on Montclair. She fought a long courageous battle with her disease and was optimistic to the end.



Jim Roy Ockels ('57) of Duncanville passed away December 5, 1998 from a sudden heart attack. Jim was a mechanical engineer for 37 years and had worked for several local engineering companies. He was a member of the Texas Society of Professional Engineers and was a avid tennis player. He is survived by his wife Martha Wray Ockels, sons Stephen and Jason, daughter Francis Ockels, parents Roy and Evelyn Ockels, brother Mark, sister and brother-in-law Jacki and Tom Gulick, plus many nieces and nephews.



Bobby Ellis ('58) of Granite Shoals, Texas passed away on November 14, 1998. He attended the '58 40 year reunion held in Dallas in June of this year. Bobby was proud of his years at Sunset and participated in the annual "All Star" football games until they ended in 1995. Several members from the all star squad served as pall-bearers at the funeral in Marble Falls, Texas. Bobby was a successful businessman who rose to President of Austron Electronics. He is survived by his wife and 1 son.



Margaret Wanja Leach ('58) of San Antonio passed away December 14, 1998. As of now, we have no further information on her death.

Good news! Martha Ferguson is back home and doing better. Her address is 1005 N. Clement, Gainesville, Tx 76240 or call her at 940-668-7364. I'm sure she would love to hear from you.

The original Batgirl, Yvonne Craig ('55) and her sister Maridel Craig Carson ('59) were in Dallas in March '98 to promote sci-fi toys. Yvonne, who left Dallas at 16 to join the Ballet de Monte Carlo, and Meridel both now live in California. You can reach Yvonne at her webb site, <http://www.yvonnecraig.com> and ask her about her role as Marta, green Orion slave girl who tempts Capt. Kirk in Star Trek, or some of her movies, including "It Happened at the World's Fair" and "Kissin' Cousins" with Elvis.

Kudos to class of '58. Our 40 year reunion in June '98 was such a financial success that we were able to give something back to Sunset, the school that gave us so much. Because of cost underuns, we were able to not only add to the money specifically raised for the HERD from the golf tourney and raffle, but also add to the money earmarked for the Scholarship Fund. We were also able to give some money directly to Sunset to help pay for some of their scholastic and athletic needs. And on top of all this, we set aside \$1000 "front money" to be used for Class of '58's next (45 year) reunion.

Sunset Class of '50 is planning it's 50 year reunion in the year 2000. It will include the classes of '51 and '52. Call Bette "Peanut" Welch Boring at 214-341-1819 for details.

Yea Purple, Yea White!! Sunset's football team had 3 wins, 7 losses, but 2 of those wins were against arch rivals Adamson (21-0) and North Dallas ( 13-6). Sunset star running back Ricky Palmer racked up over 250 yards against the Leopards of Adamson.

Guess what? It's Tupi Time!! Al will be in town from Durango to see brother Michael's ('64) production at the Dallas Theatre Center, so let's get together again. Thursday, April 8th. Time: 6:30ish. Place: Tupinambas Restaurant, 10770 Inwood Rd., Dallas. Mark your calendars now and SEE YA' THERE!!

## Oak Cliff Today and Yesterday

by Max Maris

Dallas developer JPI plans to build a 300 unit luxury apartment complex in Oak Cliff. The 27 acre complex will be bounded by Zang Blvd., Beckley, and Greenbriar directly across from Methodist Hospital on Beckley. As you may remember, this is the property where Wee St. Andrews miniature golf course was originally located and has a beautiful view of downtown Dallas.

The Dallas Public Schools has recommended six new elementary schools and two new middle schools be built in Oak Cliff. New Oak Cliff middle schools include one known as the Rosemont Area Middle School in the Sunset cluster. The proposal calls for replacement of the Arcadia Park Elementary School and a new Clarendon/Oak Cliff Boulevard elementary school. On line for new classrooms are Cowart and Rosemont Elementary Schools while Sunset High is supposed to get 30 additional classrooms.

New construction in Oak Cliff includes a new Albertson's at the NW corner, and a new medical clinic at the SW corner, of Hampton and Jefferson.

Anyone remember Bonner Appliance Co. on the south side of Jefferson between Bishop and Madison? Well, guess what, it's still there and the same "mom and pop" business as it always has been since it opened in 1946. The store, originally opened by G. W. Bonner, is now a one-man operation run by Steve Bonner, Sunset class of '61. Steve still gives personalized service to his customers and will deliver and set up any appliance that he sells, if needed. The store displays lot's of '50's memorabilia and Steve still loves to reminisce about those "good ol' days".

40 years ago, JoAnn's Ladies Shop opened in Wynnewood Village and The Dallas City Council voted to close the swimming pool at Lake Cliff and build a new one at Kidd Springs. 50 years ago, The Torch Restaurant was opened by the Semos family on Davis across from Sivils Drive-In. The Torch was the first non-Mexican ethnic restaurant in Oak Cliff.



A memorial service for Waller Carl Boedecker was held at Hillcrest Mausoleum on Wednesday, September 23, 1998. Mr. Boedecker, 95, died of congestive heart failure. Among the many businesses he owned were Boedecker-Verner Chrysler at Davis and Zang, and Modern Oldsmobile on Lancaster. His business interests ranged from the first bowling alley in Oak Cliff to Oak Cliff Bank and Trust, where he served on the board of directors for over 50 years. His construction company, Ben Sira, built the Oak Cliff Bank Building along with a firm owned by another bank director, Avery Mays. He is survived by a daughter, 5 grandchildren, and 8 great-grandchildren.



Virginia Young, 74, recently retired from Sonny Bryan's Barbecue after 60 years of employment. Ms. Young started "hoppin' cars" after school for Sonny's daddy, Red, at his Oak Cliff barbecue restaurant back in 1938. Twenty years later, she moved over to Sonny's place in what was then Dallas' northern edge on Inwood Rd. near Harry Hines. Ms. Young, nicknamed "Big Jerrico", started at 20 cents an hour plus tips back in '38. Co-workers threw her a posh retirement party at The Mansion and her boss at Sonny's made the same pledge as Red Bryan did many years ago: "Your job's still here when you want it". She also received a guarantee of free barbecue for life as a goodbye gift.

## Letters to the EDDIEtor

**Frank Nance** ('57), 4233 Via Larga,  
Cypress CA 90630

I have never received and read a copy of The HERD without many fond and happy memories of our days in Dallas. Thanks for all the work and effort put forth to publish The HERD, and for the additional effort to prepare editorials and tours of Oak Cliff and Sunset to remind us all of what were some of the wonderful and exciting times of our lives.

**Kay R. Murphree** ('58), 901 S Cherry  
Creek, Canton, TX 75103-9747

It is wonderful that you originated and maintain such an interesting and informative document, The HERD. My favorite teachers were Ruth Morris (biology) and Vera Brown (business). I've used their lessons my whole life.

Some classmates I best remember ('58) are Alice Coats, Ruth Bridges, Jimmy Joyce Whitsett and ('59) Pat Summerall, Rosemary Benson, Tommy Blanton, Donald Armstrong, Wesley Simmonds and Frank Hembree.

I'll bring you up to date on myself. After graduating from Sunset ( I was in that mid-cycle class and caught up with y'all by going to summer school), I went to Fort Worth and graduated from John Peter Smith School of Nursing in 1961. Then back to Dallas where I worked at Methodist Hospital and Texas Children's Hospital until I joined the Air Force Nurse Corps in 1964. I retired as a major in 1985.

I settled at Fort Worth and enjoyed catching up with my family activities and hobbies I never had time for when I was on active duty. In 1991, I moved to Canton to be closer to my 85 year old step-father - J. W. Germany - who needs help intermittently, but immediately. Besides dad, my mail activities and interests are Roughy and Toughy (my dogs), gardening and genealogy.

I just got a computer and I am teaching myself to use it. Yes, my first web site visit was to TheHERD.net and I have e-mailed friends twice successfully, so maybe I'll make it.

My check is long overdue. I hope it helps to continue your fine work. I especially like the EDDIEtorial - "If I Had It To Do Over Again". It really hit home with me and how true. I would appreciate any information you have on the death of Lois Richter Hardin. We were at Lida Hooe, Greiner and Sunset together. There were many days we walked home together.

Friends can call me at 903 567-6678, write me or e-mail me at [kmurph@vzinet.com](mailto:kmurph@vzinet.com).

**Julia Vaughn Ahlfinger** ('57), 927  
Thistle Glen, Duncanville, TX 75137

I would like to thank you for the work you do on The HERD. I enjoy reading it. Jack Does, too. I was Julia Vaughn, twin to James Vaughn in the class of '57. We had five older brothers who were graduated from Sunset. In fact, three of my brothers were elected "Most Handsome" at Sunset.

Jack and I have three daughters and three grandchildren. We are enjoying them. They are wonderful.

**Judy Barnette Thompson** ('58).

I have a new address. P. O. Box 163, Olney, TX 76374. I will be moving to Sacramento, California soon and remarrying, but I will keep a post office box in Olney as we will be back and forth due to business and family.

A note about the last reunion. After about 35 years I became reacquainted with Carole Christie and we decided to attend the reunion. We had a great time. It was my first and I was able to visit with school friends I had not seen in 40 years. A special congratulations to the reunion committee for a great job. Also a note on the EDDIEtorial on page 8 of the October '98 newsletter. Very good - brought a tear to my eye. Thanks again for the HERD. I enjoy every issue.

[EDDIEtor's note: I got a lot of comments about that article. My mother was right. When I was 10 years old she said that some day, I'd make all the girls cry.

I must have had a bad alzheimer's month a year ago. I found some mail I had misfiled that includes the following three letters. My sincere apologies to all.]

**Marilyn McWhirter Gurney** ('58),  
300 Estainville, Lafayette, LA 70508

My mother, my brother and I enjoy reminiscing every time a new edition of The HERD comes in the mail. My brother, Rick McWhirter (Class of '60), has played on the All Stars football team at the reunions for years and does a much better job of keeping tabs on old friends than I do. I saw Connie Mitchell Brown this past summer while in Dallas for my mother's knee surgery.

Strangely enough. Both Rick and I ended up in Lafayette through some quirk of fate. I have lived here so long we are almost Cajuns. Rick is a psychology professor at the University of Southwestern Louisiana and I have been administrative assistant to the president of an oil field service for the past twenty years. My pleasures are my daughter, son, two teenage grandsons and way too many thoroughbred racehorses.

When you compare the education we received at Sunset to that offered today - especially in Louisiana - it makes you appreciate the past and fear for the future. Mrs. Juanita Presson was the single most influential teacher I had the privilege of having. She always had that sweet smile on her face, but you knew she was all business. The secretarial skills I learned from her have served me well. No excuse for 55 wpm in her classroom.

**Bob Hatley** ('58), 12680 Mengibar  
San Diego, CA 92129-3053

After a couple of years' struggle with management to get paid for the class of work we were actually doing, our union got more than 70 people promoted at once. I was in the thick of that battle and

show the wear for it. In May of '97 I graduated with distinction from the Navy War College's post graduate study program. I had graduated with distinction from Sunset, too! 412<sup>th</sup> in our class of 485.

After kicking around for several months, doing nothing about the Naval Reserve, I decided that 28 years of the Naval Reserve was enough, especially since the last six years were without pay. So, I retired in January of 1998.

I have always enjoyed each issue of the HERD. I can appreciate how much work you put into it as I did a newsletter for seven years.

**Perry Hermon Parks** ('58), 724 River Oak Way, Lake Dallas, TX 75065

Thank you for keeping us up to date on acquaintances. I just wanted to take this opportunity to write. I thoroughly enjoy reading about my schoolmates. Following is a brief update of my last 30+ years.

I retired in 1989 after 30 years service from AT&T. My wife and I have a total of 5 children and 5 grandchildren. After retiring I went to work for Super Conducting Super Collider and now work for the Federal Emergency Management Agency in Denton.

As for the tornado of 1957, I was working in downtown Dallas at the corner of Pacific and Ervay. As I looked North I saw the tornado when it was on Harry Hines. Looking past the Mercantile Bank, it looked like a monster or Godzilla the way it was moving.

## *E-Mail to the EDDIEtor*

**Eddie Cullum** ('58) <cullum@swbell.net>

On October 15th Gerri & B. C. Cooley, Max Maris and I went to Sunset to judge the hall decorations for homecoming. We stayed for the Pep Rally. Some things never change. We heard the "voice of the Bison". While it sounded a bit older, it was definitely the same voice we heard in 1957.

We are not sure but we suspect that the Bison did not really speak. For after the assembly Max and I ran into Dr. H. H. Johns in the hall. He was very alert but had to have some assistance walking.

Later, as I was getting into my car, I heard a horn honk. When I looked up, Mr. Johns was waving to me as he drove off.

**Peggy (Starling) West** ('57)  
<peggywest@peggywest.com>

Thanks for sharing this special moment with all of us. It had to be a moving experience for you, too. On a rainy Monday morning before the phones got too hectic, I wrote an epilog for your story.

In the background I could hear the muffled sound of hoofs slowly moving away. The sky was a teaming tempest of boiling dark purple clouds. In the distance I could hear a low rumble.

As I topped the hill, there it was. A vast sea of bison. A mighty heard that spread across the land as far as the eye could see. The old bison had rejoined the herd.

And as the rain fell, the sun broke through the clouds and cast an incredible brilliant light. The land was fresh and green and with each step of the bison, flowers sprang up. As I rubbed my eyes for a better view, there before me was an ocean of white buffaloes. The Legend Lives

**Mike Schnieder** ('58)  
<MMSTUCSON@aol.com>

Things Hattie Lee forgot to teach

- ◆ Avoid alliteration. Always.
- ◆ Eschew the use a long word when a diminutive one would suffice.
- ◆ Employ the vernacular.
- ◆ Avoid ampersands & abbreviations, etc.
- ◆ Parenthetical remarks (however relevant) are unnecessary.
- ◆ Remember to never split an infinitive.
- ◆ Contractions aren't necessary.
- ◆ Foreign words and phrases are not apropos.
- ◆ One should never generalize.

- ◆ Eliminate quotations. As Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "I hate quotations. Tell me what you know."
- ◆ Comparisons are as bad as cliches.
- ◆ Don't be redundant; don't use more words than necessary; it's highly superfluous.
- ◆ Be more or less specific.
- ◆ One-word sentences? Eliminate.
- ◆ Analogies in writing are like feathers on a snake.
- ◆ Go around the barn at high noon to avoid colloquialisms.
- ◆ Even if a mixed metaphor sings, it should be derailed.
- ◆ Who needs rhetorical questions?
- ◆ Exaggeration is a billion times worse than understatement.
- ◆ Don't never use double negatives.
- ◆ capitalize every sentence remember always end it with period
- ◆ Do not put statements in the negative form.
- ◆ Verbs has to agree with their subjects.

**RONALD HARRIS** ('59)  
<grumpy1@flash.net>

I sent three possible missing "58ers" yesterday after looking through the Female Texas Voter Registration index. Here are a few more possibilities for your missing

[1] Betty Jean Lewis Beecham, Born 4-1-39, 8451 Bottoms East Road, Troy, Texas 76579-3104 or Betty Jean Lewis Hobbs, Born: 1-21-39, 9019 Nyssa St., Houston, Texas 77078-2441; [2] Eddie Sue Lewis Davis, Born: 3-27-40, 1901 Mission Circle, Friendswood, Texas 77546; [3] Sandra Jean McMillan Beesley, Born: 10-31-39, 600 Arbor Creek Drive, DeSoto, Texas 75115.; and [4] Carol Diane Monk Collins, Born: 12-22-38, 2063 RR 2, Naples, Texas 75568-9826.

**Jim Lawrence** ('58) <jlawrence@csu.com>

The web site is great. You have a long way to go to fill all of the links, that is pretty impressive and it looks very good. I especially like the list of attendees for the reunion.

The list of missing folks is good also. Some of them may not know they are missing until they check the list. You never know when someone somewhere might just find the home of the herd and make that long awaited contact.

I understand from Dick Webb that there is a pretty long list of deceased bisons. Would you consider

that list on the web. I know that most of us are unaware of many deaths among our friends.

I want to second Peabody's comment about the use of the web to cut costs. There are many of us that really don't need to have paper copies sent to us. We could just as easily get a copy of the Herd direct from the web and say some snail mail cost. That might not be the majority at first but the cost could help.

I was a participant in the Spring drive-through of Oak Cliff. It was a fun trip. So many of the Bisons of '58 never come close to the area and I believe they would get a big kick out of a pass through the neighborhood. Yes, it has changed a lot but it is very safe and interesting especially on a Saturday morning. The businesses have changed names and some are worn down but it is a neat place. My mother and brother still live in the house I grew up in, so I get through there frequently. I live in DeSoto now and work in downtown. Knowing every street gives me an advantage when the freeways are packed up.

**Toby Burgin ('58)** <toby@toby.com>

I eagerly read each and every edition of The Herd. Thanks for all your work in putting it together. Last summer we fulfilled a long time dream and moved to the mountains of Colorado. We've decided this is certainly paradise. I will be unable to attend the reunion and will certainly miss seeing all of you and reminiscing about the good old days. My new address is 3910 Mossy Rock Lane, Evergreen, CO 80439 - 303-670-4971.

**Jean Conger ('58)** <jeanconger@yahoo.com>

I bought a home today—no grass grows under my feet! Actually it is a Townhouse in a lovely development north end of town which is close to the Park and Theatres — have a pool, exercise room, etc. Lovely landscaping—only 48 units total. Mine has three bedrooms, two full bathrooms (one bedroom and bath downstairs, a big kitchen, fireplace, garage with a garage opener, southerly view of the Mountains. Seems to have good neighbors and in an upscale neighborhood. Found it yesterday by talking to another owner who directed me to the managers who told me of one that would be available as the renter was moving out due to a loss of job. I called the owner who now lives in Novato and we are amanging between us—no realtor involved so I got a lower price and he found a cash buyer.

I will move in end of January—as the holidays are too hectic and I want time to paint one room, etc. I love it here at Cedar House but it will be more fun to decorate my own home.. My new address is 370 Glenn St., Ashland, Oregon 97520. I cannot tell you how easy it is to meet people in Ashland and to get things done—no traffic is such a blessing!! Am leaving for Portland tomorrow and will return Monday afternoon.

## Our Friend

by Duane Fisher

Many of you may not have known him, because he was shy in many circumstances. Yet if you did know him, he was anything but that. He grew up in a hard-working, but unpretentious neighborhood. He began working for his dad, a plumber, at age 13. I often wondered if it was the digging ditches, or genetics, or both that made him so physically strong! He was powerfully built, both as a young man and as an adult. He proved his physical strength often on the football field, in a few fist-fights, in the U.S. Army and later as a dedicated bike rider. He was the guy you wanted watching your back if any kind of trouble came along. He tackled everything he did as though he were driven. And he was.

He went to Rosemont, where they wanted to hold him back after the first grade. Then his parents moved to the Elmwood Boulevard neighborhood, where he repeated the first grade at Winnetka. From there, he went on to Greiner, and then to Sunset, where we were all 2B's together in 1955. Along the way he did the normal growing up stuff—making some really good friends, learning about girls, playing sports, falling in love with cars (who didn't?), and, yes, getting into minor mischief from time to time. All along, he struggled with the "readin' and writin'" part of school, but did well in "arithmetic."

At Sunset his "normalness" began to crumble. He breezed through math and mechanical drawing, but he struggled mightily with English and history. At the end of his junior year, everything came apart for him: he flunked too many courses and became scholastically ineligible for football. He was ashamed, embarrassed and—without football as an incentive to stay in school—lost all desire to try to graduate. Long-term feelings of being a second class citizen overwhelmed him. There didn't seem to be much of a future ahead for a kid who today, would almost certainly be diagnosed as having dyslexia. Sufferers at that time were just thought to be "slow."

All along he had held jobs that were beyond his years and experience. He virtually ran the service station where he worked often and always had a job waiting for him wherever he had been employed. After leaving school, he worked for a year, enlisted in the Army and was sent to Europe, spending most of his time in Germany. He chose radio communications as his field of training. And, as he often had done with anything having to do with the physical and mechanical sciences, he excelled.

After the Army, he came back to Dallas and went to work as a repair technician for an office machine company. While he worked, he earned his GED. Immediately after rising to that challenge, he began taking courses at TIT, the old Texas Institute of Technology. One of his instructors recognized his genius in radio and related areas, but was also aware of his reading and writing deficiency, and suggested that he enroll in a speed-reading course. Incredibly, he learned to speed-read (and comprehend!) on technical manuals, but continued to have trouble with the newspapers, and the like. Recognizing his exceptional talent and diligence, TIT recommended him to General Radio.

At General Radio he scaled the ladder quickly, from repair technician to branch manager, to regional manager. As part of that process he was moved a number of times in the U.S. and Canada, finally settling in New Braunfels, Texas. After 5 or 6 years there, they called to transfer him again. He declined to move and parted company with General Radio. He then went to work for Austron, a company in Roundrock (just north of Austin) that specialized in precision timing devices. Virtually every space shot has some of their equipment on it.

Over a period of a few years he moved up the ladder and sometime in the early to mid eighties, became president of the company. He had become an international authority in his field. The last few years, he traveled the world lecturing on the latest technology. Scientists and engineers with advanced degrees sat listening to someone they thought was one of them. Here he was, a guy with a GED and a diploma from TIT, lecturing to some of the leading minds in his field.

After leading the company successfully for several years, he retired in 1997. Of course he could not stay idle, so he bought a lube and oil franchise for him and his son to operate. Late in the summer of 1998, he found himself tiring easily and not feeling well in general. As always, he ignored it and continued to drive himself, until finally he had to take a few sick days. Shortly afterward, he passed out at

work and was taken to the hospital, where he was diagnosed with leukemia. Fortunately, it was a type with a high cure rate, and the doctors began an aggressive treatment program. On the phone in the hospital he said he felt better than he had for some time and was optimistic. Unfortunately, he had waited too long to seek help. (It's hard to reconcile how healthy he appeared at the 20/20 reunion a just few months earlier.)

And so, about two weeks after his admission to the hospital, a friend and hero passed from this life. He was a victim of a deadly disease but also, perhaps, of his own driven nature. The doctors could not reverse the direction of the disease, I suspect, partly because of a stubborn streak that would not allow him to give in to anything.

We buried the physical part of this man November 18th, but his memory will long be cherished by all those who would call him father, boss, mentor, teammate—or friend. He served as an inspiration, motivation and role model in so many ways. Always there for those who needed him. Willing to do whatever it took to help, whether it required time, money or sweat.

A certain group of Sunset Bisons will miss him especially, a bunch of guys who are incredibly blessed to have known Robert F. "Bobby" Ellis and called him our friend.

## No Time Like The Old Time

By Richard Webb

The phone rang on December 27, 1998, at about 1 p.m. I was sitting in my favorite chair in front of the fireplace, half-heartedly watching the Cowboys game with Charlie, my wife's one-eyed yellow tabby purring contentedly in my lap. The call was from my old friend, Nathan Bayne Dodge, Ph.D. In a voice filled with pride and genuine emotion Nathan invited me to the wedding and thanked me for my involvement in getting the two of them together. I had a grin from ear to ear. I congratulated Nathan and told him I wouldn't miss the wedding for the world. I did, however, respectively decline to take credit for their romance. Both Nathan and I knew that fate and a higher power was responsible.

Nathan Dodge is a easy man to like. We were acquainted at Sunset and shared a memorable English class taught by Dorothy Brock. I secretly admired Nathan. I simply could not understand how a 17 year-old boy with testosterone coursing through his veins could be so devoted to the pursuit of scholastic achievement. My own interests leaned toward the

pursuit of long-legged girls and hunting and fishing with my three buddies, Dave Phillips, George Eitt, and Jimmy Wagner. As an adult, Nathan is generous to a fault. He is one of the kindest men I've had the pleasure of knowing. His intellect is such that he makes me feel like a third world rice farmer.

The dog-eared page in my Funk and Wagnall describes fate as "that which inevitably happens as though predetermined." It was fate that I served on the '98 reunion committee. Having served twice before and knowing the work involved, when the call came, I respectively declined. Max Maris, who knows all and sees all, shamed me into going back to work. It was fate when I walked into the first meeting and noticed the beautiful lady sitting in the corner all alone who I didn't recognize. I walked over and stuck out my hand and introduced myself. Her name was Faye Lynn King. As we talked, we were both astounded that we were raised four blocks apart. Our two school districts were separated by Clarendon Dr. and somehow we had never met. I do not recall having a class or ever spoken with Faye Lynn. It is my loss. Besides being a beautiful lady with gorgeous eyes, Faye Lynn King, Ph.D., is one of the most intelligent ladies I've ever met. She was liberated long before it was the fashionable thing to do. She has a quick wit and a caring person. It is impossible not to like her.

As the weeks and months passed, the committee's work progressed and we became close friends. We worked together well and a cross word was never spoken between us. I did, however, overstep my bounds at one meeting when I casually asked her who she was going to the reunion with. The look in her eyes told me I had treaded on forbidden turf and I quickly dropped the subject. Later, Faye Lynn leaned over and whispered in my ear, "I had a big crush on that guy across the table from us in Sunset, but I was too shy to ask him out." The big guy across the table was none other than Nathan Dodge. I knew he was divorced so the rusted cogs and gears in my cranium slowly started to turn.

After the meeting, we were all standing around socializing as was our custom. Nathan and I were enjoying a cup of coffee together when suddenly he blurted out as Faye Lynn passed by, waved, and headed toward the parking lot, "Isn't that Faye Lynn King lovely! I had such a crush on her at Sunset but was too bashful to ask her out." The dye was cast, the keel was laid, and Hannibal had just crossed the Alps. With total disregard for the libel suit that

might follow, I put my hand on Nathan's shoulder, looked him squarely in the eye, and spoke in my best military command voice, "Nathan, I know Faye Lynn would like to go to the reunion with you. Why don't you go ask her right now?" Before Nathan had a chance to respond, I turned him around, pointed him in the right direction, and gave him a gentle nudge. To my surprise, he immediately took off in a trot and caught Faye Lynn before she got to her car. He was back shortly with a wide grin on his face. And the rest, as they say, is history. From that time on, Nathan and Faye Lynn were inseparable. It was the distinct pleasure of the reunion committee to watch the romance between the two develop. Encouragement came from all sides, in particular from Max Maris and yours truly. It was almost magical. We all felt ten years younger and twenty pounds lighter. The announcement of their upcoming nuptials came as no surprise. I have always believed that from the cradle there are those people who are destined to be together in life. The lucky ones find each other early on, and those not so lucky later in life.

I realize that it is not proper journalistic etiquette to address your subjects in the first part. What the heck. I have always marched to my own beat of the drum anyway. Faye Lynn and Nathan, the problem now arises as to what to give you for your wedding present. I know you've told me that you have outgrown materialistic things and that causes somewhat of a problem. I want to give you a gift that is both endearing and will play your heart strings. It's a heavy responsibility for me, but, with the help of my wife Margaret, we found the solution. Margaret inherited a library of antique books and one evening tossed one in my lap and said, "You might enjoy this." The yellowed pages in the old book seemed to turn by themselves and came to a stop on page 385. On that page was a poem published in 1841 entitled "No Time Like the Old Time." A passage from that poem seems to have been written for you two. That passage is my gift. It goes:

*There is no love like the old love that we  
courted in our pride  
Though our leaves are falling, falling and we're  
fading side by side  
There are blossoms all around us with the colors  
of our dawn  
And we live in borrowed sunshine when the day  
star is withdrawn.*

Oliver Wendell Holmes

Live long and prosper.

### Memories

(Continued from Page 1)

Of course, many, many good things were also happening in '98. Grandkids were born, marriages occurred, early retirements were taken, class of '58 had it's 40 year reunion, Tupinamba's get-togethers took place, and a lot of us stayed on the right side of the grass, thank the Lord. You know, we all have so much to be thankful for, and most importantly, we have those wonderful memories of growing up in the best time and best place ever.

Help! Anyone remember the old "Haunted House" on Plymouth Rd. between Colorado and Ft. Worth Ave. behind the church? There were three sisters named Middlebrooks who lived in the old dilapidated house that had no running water or electricity.

If you know any stories, please write the HERD or email [maxmaris@wans.net](mailto:maxmaris@wans.net)

### Trivia Answers

1. Roy Rogers was born in Duck Run, Ohio and Gene Autry was born in Tioga, Texas.
2. Clyde McPhatter and The Drifters
3. Cockrell Hill, Cedar Hill, Glen Heights, Grand Prairie, Balch Springs, Farmers Branch, University Park, and Highland Park.
4. The Greiner Yellowjackets and the Stockard Panthers

### Another EDDIEtorial

by Eddie Cullum

We are always interested in new ideas for the HERD. The letter from Erica Martinez is an attempt to give you some insight into Sunset of 1999. If this is something you would like to see us continue, it may become a regular feature of the HERD. I would appreciate your comments.

I am also seeking a member of the class of 1957 to write a short article (one or two columns) for each newsletter targeting your class. Articles submitted by e-mail are preferred. Glen Brown has agreed to serve as treasurer for The HERD, so your checks will be handled properly in the future. Other volunteers will soon be sought. The pay is not much but the rewards are great.

If you haven't been there lately be sure to visit <http://theherd.net/>. Max is still working on placing back issues of the newsletter on the web sight.

The HERD is published by Eddie Cullum and Max Maris for Sunset High School classes of 1957 and 1958. It is supported by your generous donations.

My thanks to Janell Todd at Sunset for her assistance in recruiting Erica for our feature article.

## the HERD #26

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