

## **Welcome to the 50th Reunion of the Class of 1961.**



The turn-out today is phenomenal.....203 reservations were made (119 Classmates attending).

At this time, I'd like to recognize the first foreign exchange student in the history of Watsonville High School.....Karin Koenig Wode and her husband Joaquim who have traveled from Germany to be with us. This is the 3rd reunion Karin has attended. Maybe we had as much influence on Karin as Karin had on us. Please stand, Karen. Let's give her a hand.....We love you, Karin.

Also, it is an honor and privilege to introduce some former teachers from Watsonville High School who are here today...please stand when I call your name....Louise aka Mrs. Bilicich (Physical Education), Norman aka Mr. Haney or Coach, (Biology & Drivers Ed), Katherine aka Miss Ivanovich (Spanish), and Diane aka Mrs. Severin (Home Economics). Thank you so much for your patience and wisdom.

The Reverend Carl Hansen will now offer the invocation

Tomorrow will be the 10th anniversary of a very tragic time in our nation....9/11. Let's observe a moment of silence for the victims who lost their lives in that horrific terrorist attack, and also for the 58 classmates who have left this world in the past 50 years....(Moment of Silence)

When we entered our Freshman year in 1957, the Number 1 hit song on the music charts was "Tammy". I'd like to introduce my sister-in-law, Deborah Hunt, who will sing "Tammy" for you. Feel free to sing along as this popular song brings back lots of memories.

On a more personal note, I'd like to apologize to George Langford who asked me to go to the Winter Ball with him and I refused. There was someone else I had in mind and that is why I said "No". Little did I know that my mother would not let me go to the dance with anyone else after refusing the date. That was a hard lesson to learn.

I'd like you all to stand so we can salute the flag and sing "The Stars Spangled Banner".

For those who don't know me, my name is Tana Bowen Roberts. It's an honor to be able to take you down Memory Lane for a few moments.

Hats off to all of us who were born in the 1940's. We survived being born to mothers who may have smoked or drank while they were pregnant. They took aspirin, ate blue cheese dressing, tuna from a can and didn't get tested for diabetes. They put us to sleep on our tummies in baby cribs covered with bright

colored lead-based paints. We had no childproof lids on medicine bottles, locks on doors or cabinets, and when we rode our bikes, we wore baseball caps, not helmets. We rode in the car with no car seats, no booster seats, no seat belts, and no air bags.

Riding in the back of your Dad's pick-up truck on a warm day was always a special treat. We drank water from the garden hose and we shared one soft drink with four friends, and no one actually died from this. We ate cupcakes, white bread that stuck to the roof of our mouths, real butter and bacon. We drank Kool-Aid made with white sugar.

We didn't have Play Stations, Nintendos and X-boxes, and there were no video games, no cable TV, no video movies or DVD's, no surround-sound or CD's, no cell phones, no personal computers, no Internet and no chat rooms....we had neighborhood buddies and we played outside all day, and sometimes we didn't come home until the sun went down and no one worried about where we were or what we were doing.

We fell out of trees, got cut, broke bones and teeth, and there were no lawsuits. We got spankings with wooden spoons, switches, ping-pong paddles, or just a bare hand and no one called child services to report abuse. We got BB guns for our birthday and made up games with sticks and tennis balls. Little League had try-outs and not everyone made the team. Those who didn't, had to learn to deal with disappointment. We had freedom, failure, success and responsibility, and we learned how to deal with it all. Imagine that. The idea of a parent bailing us out if we broke the law was unheard of....they actually sided with the cops.

We were born before television, penicillin, polio shots, frozen foods, Xerox, contact lenses, Frisbee's and the pill. There were no credit cards, laser beams or ball-point pens. Man had not invented pantyhose, air conditioners, dishwashers, clothes dryers, and the clothes were hung out to dry in the fresh air and man hadn't yet walked on the moon. We never heard of FM radios, tape decks, electric typewriters, yogurt or guys wearing earrings. Pizza Hut, McDonald's and instant coffee were unheard of. We had 5 & 10-cent stores where you could actually buy things for 5 and 10 cents. Ice-cream cones, phone calls, and soda pop were all a nickel. Our generation produced some of the best risk-takers, problem solvers and inventors ever.

These days we're called senior citizens, old fogies, and geezers. We walk a little slower and our eyes and hearing are not what they once were. We are the "over the hill" gang. We remember the days of telephone party lines, 25 cent gasoline, and milk being delivered to our home.

We were so lucky to be raised in the 50's. The most important things you looked forward to was the Friday afternoon pep rally, the game and the after game dance. We had our own dance band, the Krystal Kings, who played at the Harvest

Moon dance or the Winter Ball. We didn't need limos, tuxedos, or expensive gowns to make those dances special. The guys spent hours washing and cleaning their cars, while the gals washed and set their own hair in brush rollers, and sat under a plastic bonnet connected to a portable hair dryer that had a hose connected to a little machine that put out enough heat to burn your neck. Our special dates included a corsage or boutonniere made of carnations, and most of us didn't even know how or where to pin them. Thank goodness your mom was home to help, and if you were lucky, the family's Brownie camera had film and a flashbulb so she could take your picture which was the only picture you had of that special time.

Most of us didn't have our own car, but somehow we managed to make many trips cruising through Pronto Pup's and turning around at the Regal Gas Station at the other end of Main Street. We got our learner's permit at age 15 1/2 and could hardly wait to finish driver's training so you could get your license at 16. I can't remember my folks talking about their insurance rates going sky-high when I started driving....gosh, I wonder if they even had insurance. We were really lucky to live in the Pajaro Valley. We were guaranteed a summer job either picking berries, or for some of the guy's, working in the lettuce fields. You could make enough money to buy school clothes for the next year. Some of us had after school jobs at the hospital, or the corner gas station, or local coffee shop.

Somehow we managed school, work, sports, and extra-curricular activities. Some of us still rode the school bus in high school. We saw nothing wrong with that form of transportation, unless your boyfriend had a car or could borrow one. We went to the library to study after school and research special reports using the Encyclopedia Britannica. Life was simple, but so much fun.

School lunch was 35 cents or you could eat in the a la carte line where you could get a big scoop of mashed potatoes with hamburger gravy, a lettuce salad with thousand island dressing, and a fresh bakery dinner roll from Bake-Rite Bakery. For dessert, there was raised glazed donuts and maple bars or an orange or lemonade juice. And of course, you could cross the street in front of the high school and buy a burger at Cat's Pause, if you were brave enough to eat there. My only purchases there was a coke and a Payday candy bar that I sneaked into 6th period Manzanita class.

Do you remember Sputnik bubble gum? They sold it at Cat's Pause and it was a bright blue gumball rolled in sparkling sugar. I guess we thought we were chewing something special from outer space. Those who could walk fast, and eat even faster, could go to the old bowling alley, Taylor's Hot Dog Stand, Jay's Fountain, Woolworth's or Ford's lunch counter. We had one day out of the whole year where the girls could wear pants....it was called "Pedal Pusher Day"; other than that, we wore dresses, or skirts and blouses and the guy's had to wear shirts, no t-shirts. We actually looked decent and would never have considered wearing anything that was cut low or too short (until mini-skirts appeared in our

Senior year).

The best thing all year was getting out of a final of your choice, if you had perfect attendance. I can't tell you how often I dragged myself to school, sick as a dog, so I could have perfect attendance. One less final was worth it. We all knew the words to the "Stars Spangled Banner", "America" and "America the Beautiful" by heart, and my English teacher, Mr. Yarnes, even had us write the Stars Spangled Banner with the proper punctuation and told us we could not sing it.....it's was hard to sing that song silently in your head. No one got that assignment correct. Watsonville High School was a school we were proud of. We had great teachers and mentors. Mr. Rhinehart was our Class Advisor and he did a great job steering us in the right direction. Bud Decker was Principal and Ken McCombs was Vice Principal. Don Sauer was Dean of Boys and Barbara Hedlund was Dean of Girls. We were in good hands at Watsonville High School and our life successes began there.

At this time, we're going to play game called "Stand Up And Be Counted". This will require some thought and attention to when you are asked to stand, and when you should sit down. Exercise is good before dinner.

Here we go.....

- All those who attended Freedom Elementary School, stand up and then sit down.
- All those who attended Edward A. Hall Elementary School, stand up, be counted and sit down.
- All those who attended Salsipuedes Elementary, stand up, sit down.
- Those who went to Corralitos Elementary School, stand up, and sit down.
- Those who went to Pajaro Elementary School, stand up, sit down.
- Those who went to Hall District School, stand up, sit down.
- Those who attended Aromas Elementary, stand up, sit down.
- And those who attended Aptos Elementary, stand up, sit down.
- Anyone who was on the high school football, basketball or baseball teams, stand up.
- Anyone still playing any of the above sports, stand up.
- How about the track team, swim team and golf team, stand up
- Now, the Homecoming Queen and Princesses, stand up.
- Will the Yell leaders and pom-pom girls, stand up
- Those who served in the US Military, please stand.

Let's give them a hand

- All Cancer survivors, stand up
- Anyone who dodged the draft in the 60's, stand up.
- Anyone with a tattoo, stand up.

Now is there anyone who wants to show us their tattoo?

- Anyone who has all their natural teeth, stand up.
- Anyone who weighs the same as you did in high school, stand up.
- Anyone who lied on your income tax last year, stand up.

- Anyone who cheated on a high school exam, stand up.
  
- Anyone from Arkansas, stand up.
- From Arizona
- From Georgia
- From Idaho
- From Massachusetts
- From Montana
- From North Carolina
- From Nevada
- From Oregon
- From Tennessee
- From Texas
- From Washington State
- You can all be seated.
- Anyone attending a class reunion for the first time, stand up.
- Anyone who has a parent still living, please stand
- Anyone whose mother or father attended Watsonville High, stand up.
- Anyone who married their high school sweetheart, stand up
- Anyone who should have married their high school sweetheart, never mind.
- Anyone married more than 4 times, stand up.
- Anyone bringing a hot rod car today, stand up
- Pass out dice
- All those on Medicare, stand up.

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Now, while we're all standing....look under your chair to see if you sat in the lucky spot today....claim your prize with Sharon Stevinson after the program.

"Back to the 50's for our 50th" was a fun theme for reunion planning. The committee worked really hard to bring you back to a happier time through the recreated soda fountain and decorations, 50's vintage clothes display, memory boards and table decorations, right down to the kind of candy we ate. The Committee has been working on this event since last November.

I'd like to extend a special thanks to Bill George, who was unable to attend, for the wonderful class web site he created several years ago. Go to <http://www.wuhs1961.com> and enjoy all the postings. Secondly, thanks to David Leippe, also unable to attend, who set up the Class Google Site and created the Master Roster, Missing Classmates Roster, Deceased Roster, and Attendance Roster. Thank goodness we have some computer "nerds" who make us look so great.

Next, I'd like to thank Edith Fagundes, Juhree Fort, Barbara and Wayne Holt, and Tannis Welch for manning the sign-in table. And the hot dog and popcorn

makers, Charlie & Joanie Johnston. Gary Lohr, Jim Stevinson, and Rick Roberts. Also, thanks to Roland Hedgpeth for the tour of the high school facilities earlier today. Thanks to Darrell Davis, Dennis & Francie Freeman, Pat Gulermovich & Ben Davis, Charlie & Joanie Johnston, Paul Miller, Dennis Morris, Jack & Caroline Reeves, Frank Seman, and Gino Silva, for showing up to help the committee set up and decorate from 9-4 on Friday and again at 8 am today.

Special thanks and kudos go to Jim Reilly (Sharon Stevinson's son-in-law) for building our soda fountain bar, Robert Carmichael for finishing the top of the bar and for letting us use his coke machine & hot dog machine and getting all the ice, Rick Roberts for painting and putting the tile on the bar and for the rope lighting on the jukebox, thanks to all the husbands who have given their help and support to the committee, to Fosters Freeze for lending us their fake soda fountain treats, and to Ann Dobler, Richard Kidd, and Roland Hedgpeth for the 50's era clothing, the Pajaro Valley Historical Society for loaning us the dress forms for our display, and Family Faith Center for lending us the popcorn & hot dog machines.

Now, I'd like the reunion committee to stand..... Sharon Wilson Carmichael, Priscilla Baclig Hedgpeth, Henry, Gong, Joan Terry Lohr, Sharon Kusanovich Stevinson, and Marsha Tsuda Wada. Everyone on the committee pitched in and made this event a success. We should give them all a big "thank you" applause.

Now, Debbie Hunt will sing a song from 1961, "Where the Boys Are

One by one, each class member stood and was introduced.