

# **A REVIEW OF THE 50<sup>th</sup> CLASS REUNION OF THE OHS CLASS OF '63**

September 21, 2013 at The Residence Inn by Marriott, Oxnard, CA

## *IN THE BEGINNING...*

For the first time in 30+ years, Lori Renshaw (Colby), who passed away suddenly in September 2010, was not in charge of planning our class reunion. To carry on the task, the "Oxnard High School Class of 1963 Reunion Planning Committee" met in Camarillo on December 15, 2012 for its first organizational meeting.

Four active committee members subsequently met once or twice a month, and spent many hours discussing and deciding the myriad things that go into planning a successful reunion. Throughout the months prior to the Reunion, the committee made a concerted group effort to plan a very special 50<sup>th</sup> Class Reunion.

Fred Clay, who lives in Alta Loma, was chosen "Chairman" of the committee. Fred spent four hours commuting, to and from his home in Alta Loma, to come to Camarillo or Oxnard for each meeting. In addition to conducting the committee meetings, his responsibilities included opening and maintaining a checking account, keeping track of income and expenses, signing contracts, and acting as the Master of Ceremonies at the Reunion.

Believing most class members had internet access and email addresses, and that it was time to bring our promotional and communication efforts into the digital age, Phil Corpus took over the communication and database update responsibilities. Phil designed a Class Reunion website to give the OHS Class of '63 a unique online presence, as well as a place where he could post up-to-date information about the Reunion. He then conducted a postal mail and email campaign to update the class database. The campaign's primary objective was to collect email addresses so reunion registration materials and other information could be sent by email rather than postal mail, thus saving stationery and postage costs. Recently, Phil set-up the "OHS Class of '63 Facebook Page" to increase the class' online presence. It is hoped some of our "missing" classmates will find the website or the Facebook Page and reconnect.

The other committee members are Rita Hernandez (Herzstein) and Tomasa "Tommie" Borroel. Both provided and helped brainstorm many ideas for the Reunion. Rita recommended and contracted with the DJ who provided the music. Together, Rita and Tommie designed, and hand-assembled, the fifteen beautiful centerpieces that enhanced the dining and display tables. They supervised the sign-in process at the Reunion and kept the attendees moving smoothly.

## *THE RESULT...*

The culmination of the Committee's efforts occurred on September 21, 2013, when a total of 130 class members, spouses, and guests gathered for a fun-filled evening that included a happy hour with hors d'oeuvres, a delicious buffet dinner that included three entrees, a Power Point presentation of 1960's history, regular and 'special' door prize drawings, special recognition awards, brief Open-Mic statements from Reunion attendees, dancing to 50's and 60's music, plenty of hugs, and the rekindling of many old friendships.

The evening began with a sign-in rush that began early and threatened to get out of control. After making a few adjustments, the sign-in process progressed smoothly as attendees collected their name badges, door prize tickets, and had their photos taken. Then it was into the dining room lobby area for happy hour and hors d'ouerves. After happy hour and a final head count, everyone enjoyed an excellent buffet dinner and conversation with old friends.

After dinner, Fred Clay did a PowerPoint presentation of Oxnard history and highlights of the Sixties (a copy of his presentation will be included on the "50<sup>th</sup> Reunion Photo Memory Disc"). Then it was on to door prize awards, Open-Mic, special recognition awards, the "mystery" person award, and the

centerpiece giveaway. Afterwards, the dance floor was cleared and those who wanted to kick up their heels did so while others stepped into the lobby to continue conversing and reconnecting with old friends.

Continuing the 50th Reunion celebration the next day, a no-host "Day After Picnic" was held at Oxnard's Eastwood Park. Some 40 attendees brought their own picnic lunches and beverages and enjoyed a pleasant afternoon of additional conversation and reminiscing with fellow class members.

*"I just wanted to thank you for all of your hard work putting the reunion together. It was the best one I have attended and I have made almost all of them. You put together a wonderful buffet, a wonderful program, and a wonderful evening. It was great fun seeing all of those faces, some I recognized, and some I didn't. I'm sorry some of our dear classmates could not be there. They would have enjoyed it also.*

*The centerpieces were beautiful!! My best to all of you!"*

*Pam Colquitt*

### *THERE WERE MANY WHO CONTRIBUTED...*

Several volunteers and cash donors contributed to the overall success of the Reunion.

Gary Osumi, Jim Reiser, and Romy Ramos sent cash contributions that gave the committee additional options in making our 50<sup>th</sup> Reunion very special. The extra funds enabled Phil to send additional mailings to promote the reunion, and help collect more email addresses; Fred used some of the funds to purchase a class banner that was displayed on the backdrop; and some of the extra funds were used for a "special" door prize drawing.

Carole Moss, Kathy Kaplan, and Sandra Luckey all helped Rita and Tommie at the sign-in table and helped keep arriving attendees moving quickly through the line. Romy Ramos served as the "photographer's helper" and kept track of attendees as they had their pictures taken upon arrival.

Mike Reppy, Bob Hanger, Ruby Gaston, Jim Bland, Christina Corpus and Fred Clay all volunteered to bring their cameras and, using memory cards supplied by Phil, photographed the evening's activities. Additional thanks goes to Robert Hanger for posing and photographing attendees as they arrived. Christina Corpus video recorded some of the attendees as they signed in. At the end of the evening, the memory cards were returned to Phil. The photos and videos will be included on the "50<sup>th</sup> Reunion Photo Memory Disc."

*"I just wanted to say how much I enjoyed the reunion. The committee did an outstanding job with the entire reunion from soup to nuts. The venue was great, the food was great, the company was better than I know the words to describe. Having working on similar volunteer things in the past, I can say with confidence this was done with the utmost in class (no pun intended) and in the Navy, the best that can be said for a job well done is bravo zulu.*

*I give the committee a huge BRAVO ZULU on the success of the reunion.*

*Thanks to you and the entire committee,"*

*Jim Bland*

For door prizes, Julie Cox, Stacey (Sandy) Wimer, Sharon Dawson, Carole Moss, and Romy Ramos contributed a variety of items. Julie, who is an accomplished artist, contributed one of her pastels. Stacey, who lives in Mexico, brought an "international flavor" with her door prize -- a basket containing genuine handmade articles from Mexico.

Harold "Pete" Schwieder contributed a \$25.00 gift certificate that was awarded to the first person identifying the "mystery" class member in a photo he provided. The "mystery" person was Harold, and Gary Osumi was the only person who made the correct identification. Harold also provided the

projection equipment that Fred used to show his PowerPoint presentation about Oxnard history and notable happenings during the Sixties.

The Planning Committee provided \$10.00 gift cards as “special recognition” awards in various categories, i.e., furthest traveled to the Reunion, most children, most grandchildren, most/least hair, and several others. Curtis Barber ran away with the most children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren categories, while Jack Oilar topped the most marriages category with seven.

The Committee also used the donated funds for a “special” door prize drawing that awarded individual \$59.00 checks to three lucky class members – John Garcia, Jerry Gaston, and Barbara Giles – that in effect, refunded their registration fees. The original plan was to award only two checks, but a small communication error resulted in a bonus check being awarded.

*“Celeste and I really enjoyed the 50<sup>th</sup> Reunion and being able to meet up with ole acquaintances as well as meeting new ones. I thank the Reunion Committee for all their hard work to make this a successful event...”*  
*Gary Osumi*

*“Jerry and I both enjoyed the class reunion, seeing old friends, the power point history presentation and the music and food was great also. This is my fourth time attending a class reunion with Jerry, 35,40, 45 and the 50th. The class of 63 always have a good turn out and everyone seems to have a great time.”*  
*Ruby Gaston*

#### **THERE ARE SOME WHO ARE NO LONGER WITH US...**

Rose Marie Cheveres designed a memorial display with pictures and names of class members who have passed away. She also designed an 8"x10" memorial for Lori Renshaw. Phil Corpus designed a memorial board for Maria Cecilia Fiuza, who was our Foreign Exchange Student during our senior year.

Before she passed away in 2012, Cecilia informed Kathy Kaplan that she was planning to attend our 50<sup>th</sup> Reunion. Sadly, we missed the honor of her presence.

*“ What a blessing to be with you all at our 50th on Saturday, September 21, 2013. We had a wonderful time being there with all that were able to make it. Natalie and I truly felt that the Reunion was a Celebration of our lives, and those of our Classmates who have passed away. We wish we could have attended the picnic on Sunday, but will make the next!*  
*Best Regards, Duane Rogers (San Diego) & Natalie Barringer (Ojai) ”*

#### **AND WHO HAVE BEEN MISSING AND WELCOMED BACK...**

*“Thank you, Class of '63 for inviting me to this reunion. I have no words to describe how honored and humbled I am for being remembered by y'all. Lots of wonderful friends and memories were relived.*  
*Phil did a fabulous job keeping everyone informed and updated on the progress of the reunion. I congratulate you, Phil, for a job well done. The entire committee did an outstanding job.*  
*I am looking forward to next reunion. “*  
*Marilyn Mock*

*“This was my first reunion and I had a wonderful time. So glad I decided to attend. Thanks to all the members of the committee for planning such a memorable event.*  
*Being able to reconnect with old friends was great. I'm looking forward to retirement and our 55th Class Reunion.”*  
*Sandra Luckey*

### *THERE WAS SOMETHING NEW...*

The Planning Committee looked for ways to bring Reunion attendees a little closer. New this year was the opportunity for attendees to reserve a three-minute Open-Mic segment to address fellow classmates and their guests. Thanks to the nine people who took the opportunity to speak. This was a successful experiment and it will be back at our next Reunion.

### *THERE WAS MUSIC...*

Thanks to Javier Ambriz of "Make U Dance Entertainment" for his excellent job of providing background and dance music.

*"The OHS Class of '63 50th class reunion was really fun and I am looking forward to the next reunion!"*

*Susan (Pierce) Morrison*

### *THERE WAS THE BACKGROUND SUPPORT...*

A special thanks to Shaye Hays, Event Manager for The Residence Inn by Marriott at River Ridge, and to her entire banquet staff. Shaye provided great suggestions during the planning process leading up to the Reunion evening. The ambiance of the entire venue -- cash bar, buffet, dining tables, dance floor, and overall room set up -- was very attractive and added to the atmosphere and success of the evening. As the evening kicked off, she and her staff responded to our last minute requests quickly and efficiently, helping keep things running smoothly.

*"God bless all of you that took part in setting up THESE GREAT REUNION.  
My wife (muncha) and I had a great time.  
For me, after about an hour into the reunion, I felt like I was back in 1963, when talking to everyone (who) was there.  
Once again, thank you all for making it a GREAT REUNION."*

*With warmest regards,*

*Sal Chacon*

*"It was fun talking with our former classmates and reminiscing about our days at Oxnard. A big "Thank You" to all the reunion committee members for putting on a great evening. The committee did an outstanding job but the biggest "thank you" belongs to you, Phil, for your leadership and commitment to the evening."*

*Herlinda (Perez) Murguia*

### **AND, OF COURSE, THERE ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT PEOPLE OF ALL...**

No gathering can be successful without the support of those invited to attend. So, a huge "THANK YOU" goes to all the class members, and their spouses and guests, who attended this special milestone 50<sup>th</sup> Class Reunion. This Reunion was *for and about* the ENTIRE OHS Class of '63. Without your support, the Committee's efforts would have been unrewarded, so all of you should look in a mirror and thank the person you see for helping make our 50<sup>th</sup> Class Reunion a huge success.

**Sal Chacon's statement says it all; "after about an hour into the reunion, I felt like I was back in 1963 when talking to everyone (who) was there..."**

*Phil,*

*Kudos to you, Fred and all of the others who put together our reunion. The venue was great and I think it went well. Only down side that I can think of was that so many of our class didn't attend... I am thankful that so many of our classmates look in remarkably good shape. I hope that continues and everyone is blessed with good health and peace and happiness will be with them always.*

*Bob Hanger*

*What a WONDERFUL time I had at our 50th reunion. Although my sisters knew a few of the attendees, they also had a great time. Thank you.*

*Everything was perfect. You and your committee did a really good job. You gave everyone plenty of time to prepare to attend, the food was great, the music was full of memories of fifty years ago, there were plenty of gifts and it was nice to have people give their comments. Thank you for my 'farthest traveled' gift. I do enjoy Starbucks.*

*I saw classmates I had not seen since graduation day! I'm so looking forward to 2018 and our 55th!!*

*Thank you and your committee for all of your hard work, time and dedication so were able to be together again.*

*Evelyn Newton*

#### *IN CLOSING...*

The Reunion Planning Committee is planning to stay on the job and is looking forward to planning our 55<sup>th</sup> Reunion. We hope to build upon the success of our 50<sup>th</sup> and make our next Reunion just as successful, fun, and memorable.

It is our sincere hope that we'll see all of you at our 55<sup>th</sup> Reunion. It is also our sincere hope that those who didn't make it this time will make special plans to attend the next Reunion.

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#### *AND, FINALLY, PERSONAL NOTES FROM PHIL & FRED...*

In writing this review of our 50<sup>th</sup> Class Reunion, I've attempted to thank everyone who volunteered their time, gave donations, or otherwise contributed to the success of our 50<sup>th</sup> Reunion. If I missed anyone, I apologize.

A nice thing about today's electronic methods of communication is it's easy to quickly send updated information to others. So, if I missed someone's contribution, please send me an email to remind me and I'll give due recognition.

Thanks to all attendees who gave kudos to the Reunion Planning Committee. We do appreciate it. *I think the other committee members would agree with me when I turn it around and thank all of you for your support.* I've been involved in organizing several gatherings such as our Reunion and I have a saying, "It's no fun if you plan a party, send out invitations, and no one shows up."

As I noted at the beginning of this review, I believed it was time to bring our communication efforts into the digital age. In the months prior to our Reunion, I emphasized communicating the committee's efforts to all class members. I believe it gave all class members a sense of "being included" in the planning process, and therefore, increased the support we had for our Reunion. At the Reunion, confirmation of this belief came as many of you expressed your appreciation for being "kept in the loop."

Email, the Reunion website, and the "OHS Class of '63 Facebook Page" will continue to provide outreach, and a variety of ways for class members to remain current on future class reunions and other activities.

The committee plans to remain intact and is winding down its post-reunion business. It will then turn its attention towards our 55<sup>th</sup> Reunion. Although there won't be much news from the committee in the very near future, you'll

continue to hear from me regarding the "50<sup>th</sup> Reunion Memory Book" and the "50<sup>th</sup> Reunion Photo Memory Disc." I'm starting production of both items and will keep you informed about my progress.

On a side note, we are considering adding one or two committee members. Ideally, it should be someone who lives in the Ventura County area, and who can commit to attending committee meetings once or twice a month beginning approximately 10-12 months prior to our next reunion. If you'd be interested, please email me.

Efforts will continue to locate 'missing' classmates and we ask all of you to help. If you reconnect with a "missing" classmate, or hear about a classmate who passes away, please let me know. If you change your email or other contact information, please let me know so the class database can be kept up-to-date.

Thanks again for your continued support. When it's time to register for our 55<sup>th</sup> Reunion, I hope that every class member who receives a registration packet will attend.

"Talk" to you all later,

Phil

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It was a very enjoyable privilege to serve on the Planning Committee with Rita, Tommie & Phil. From the beginning, our goal was to facilitate the best reunion ever and, judging by the initial responses, we were successful. I want to add my kudos to all the people Phil so eloquently thanked who contributed to this effort. Just as our class performed at OHS 1959-1963 (i.e., four 1<sup>st</sup> place homecoming floats), it was a team effort.

While we are now in the process of wrapping up the 50<sup>th</sup> reunion, we are also setting our sights on five years from now. And, for this, we need your help now, while everything is still fresh in your memories. Please take a few minutes to email Phil or me and give us your suggestions as to how we can make the 55<sup>th</sup> even better. What did you like most about this reunion and we should keep? What didn't you like and would like to see go away next time? What can we do to make the 55<sup>th</sup> even better? Was the \$59.00 fee too high and we should cut out some of the extras (be specific here)? Would you spend more (how much) to add something else (what)? Would you spend more to move up a notch in the hotel accommodations? Right now, everything is on the table for discussion.

Personally, the thing I would like to see next time is...More classmates attending! And, perhaps, the best thing we can do in this regard is to find more of our missing classmates. Please take a few minutes to go to the class website ([www.ohsclassof63.info](http://www.ohsclassof63.info)) and click on the Missing Classmates tab. Then, if you have ANY information about these people, send Phil or me an email. Are they still in Oxnard somewhere? Did they move? To what city? What kind of work did they do? Especially for the women, did they marry? What is/was the husband's last name? No matter how old the info is, no matter how insignificant you think it might be, please send us whatever you have. We need leads!

Lastly, as I said at the reunion, when my dad was transferred to Oxnard Air Force Base and I came to OHS in my sophomore year, it was my ninth school. I was able to finish high school and complete my A.A. degree at Ventura College, all in one place! As such, I consider Oxnard to be my adoptive hometown.

Thank you, again, for accepting me.

Fred

<http://www.ohsclassof63.info>

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