

# THE CLASS OF 1960 REUNITES

## Dulles High School's First Graduating Class Celebrates 50 Years

Written by Lesley Clinton Select Photography by Jen Petty

The sounds of laughter and lively conversation recently filled the Swinging Door's private room, in addition to the usual aroma of delicious barbecue. Attendance and spirits were high as Dulles Vikings from the class of 1960 greeted one another – some seeing each other for the first time in half a century.

### A History-Making Class

This wasn't just any gathering of alumni, though. This was the 50-year reunion of the first graduating class of John Foster Dulles High School. The members of this class came from Sugar Land High and Missouri City High, two rival schools that merged in 1959. "What we as seniors in high school were asked to do was a huge sacrifice," says Janet Buettner, one of the reunion coordinators. "I really didn't realize it so much then, since it was kind of an exciting adventure." She recalls that the Sugar Land students had to ride to Missouri City in friends' cars, because the school there had more room.

"I've been a Cy-Fair teacher for 30 years, and I cannot imagine kids these days feeling okay about leaving their school for the last year to go be with kids from a rival school," says Buettner, adding, "We made it work!" It's a good thing they did make it work, since the uniting of these two schools marked the beginning of Fort Bend ISD and its legacy of excellence.

### A Sweet Homecoming

Buettner and classmate, Pam Clark decided to organize the reunion after losing three close friends in Sugar Land to cancer.

"We were determined to find as many graduates as we could after this many years," Buettner says. "We had such fun putting this together, with the help of Joe Scanlin and Robert Johnson from Missouri City and Charlie Kamp from Sugar Land." Many present expressed delight over meeting their classmates again after so long. "There are people we haven't seen since graduating night," Clark explains.

### Remembering the Good Old Days

"Our remembrances of funny antics and mischief, such as skipping school and playing tricks on teachers, still seem to amuse us all," laughs reunion attendee, Dorothy Fenn. Buettner says they all tried hard to remember the class song and fight song. "The band members remembered, but even we cheerleaders had forgotten," she admits.

Clark relates one of the favorite class stories - the adventure of the unofficial Senior Skip Day. A group of about 16 mischievous seniors chose a meeting point in Freeport and played hooky one day before graduation. The officials went to Galveston to look for them. Upon the return of the truants, the superintendent doled out the necessary punishments and informed the students - albeit a little too late - that their request for a Senior Skip Day had been voted down.

Tim Husbands, who emceed the event, shared laughs with fellow alumni over another amusing class anecdote. He still remembers a group of the guys deciding to wear Bermuda shorts one day and ending up embarrassed by the unanticipated exposure of their long, dark socks.

Those present at the event were thrilled to share in one another's successes. "Everyone seemed upbeat and happy, despite life's usual woes," says Fenn. "To me, that is a great accomplishment." Buettner adds, "There were members who'd survived cancer and other illnesses and were there with positive, hopeful attitudes. Jannice Head Jones had just returned from her annual mission trip to China... Even two grads were great grandparents - very young, since we're only 68!"

### Keeping the Viking Spirit Alive

As the attendees reminisced and caught up, they spoke of the times and the community they enjoyed during their high school years. Clark recalls the crew cuts and pony tails they wore, the band trips, and the closeness of the class. "We knew everybody [in our graduating class]," she explains. Fenn also expresses appreciation for the chance to relive the fabulous 1950s. "It was such a 'special time' which can never be duplicated," she explains, adding, "It is truly a privilege and honor to be a member of the first graduating class of Dulles High School and the [then] newly formed Fort Bend school district." The smiles lighting up the faces of the reunion-goers suggest that her classmates feel the same way. SLM

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## 10 FAVORITE FORT BEND HANGOUTS IN 1960

- 1 Dances held in students' garages after football games
- 2 Palms Theater in Sugar Land
- 3 Playland Park on S. Main
- 4 Prince's Hamburger Drive-In on S. Main
- 5 South Main Drive-In Theatre
- 6 Stewart's Drive-In on S. Main
- 7 Swim parties at the Shamrock Hilton Pool
- 8 Teen Club in Sugar Land
- 9 Walian's on S. Main for pizza
- 10 Viking Den in Stafford

– According to classmates, Janet Buettner, Pam Clark, and Dorothy Fenn



Pam Helmcamp Clark and Barb Couvillon



Pam Helmcamp, Daryll Couvillon, Sandra Krause, Charlie Camp, and Hal Husbands

Alumni in the class of 1960 were the first to graduate from Dulles High School



Hal Husbands, Charlie Kamp, and Tim Husbands



Viking alumni gathered at the Swinging Door for a day of barbecue and catching up with old friends



Margie Rychlik David



Classmates had the chance to browse through photos and yearbooks from their high school days



Dulles High School cheerleaders and pep squad