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Class of 66 50th Reunion – “An Event of a Lifetime”

By Kathy Svec, Reunion Committee Co-Chair

Mixers and ice breakers, a DJ dance featuring our favorite high school-era songs, an Ames bus tour that included the site of the infamous “skip day” and an ingenious Creativity Expo - among other events - made the 50th Reunion of the Class of 1966 a very memorable occasion – or as one classmate termed it, “an event of a lifetime”!

From September 15-18, 134 classmates, and 62 spouses/friends gathered and the schedule provided many opportunities to visit and catch up with old friends and get to know classmates we did not know well in high school. After 50 years, there wasn't anyone that lacked interesting stories!

Classmates Wanted “Face Time”

The Reunion Committee learned from past gatherings that what classmates most wanted was “face time” – uninterrupted opportunities to mingle in a variety of settings. With this in mind, a golf outing and bike excursion was planned, two restaurants were designated as the drop-in place for a cocktail hour and three lunches, and Bill Ripp lead a tour of the high school. The “formal” reunion events were a gathering at Gateway Hotel Friday night and a dinner/dance at the Memorial Union on Saturday.

All together, if classmates had dropped in on every informal and formal event, there would have been 11 times and places to mingle during the course of the reunion.

Creativity Expo

Undoubtedly the most unique event was the Creativity Expo that took place at the Public Library Saturday afternoon. The talents and passions of our classmates who are artists, writers, musicians, collectors and skilled hobbyists were showcased. One classmate termed the Expo “inspiring” – which it truly was! There were visual displays and a narrated slide show of artworks followed by readings and musical and vocal performances.

At the Expo, one classmate, a professional flutist, invented a unique tune, blending *Auld Lang Syne* and the *Ames High Loyalty Song* into one composition. It has been recorded and will be available for listening at www.ahs66.org.

Booklet Preserves Life Stories

The committee assembled a booklet featuring the life stories of classmates, memorials for classmates who have passed, and reminiscences of our high school days and noteworthy teachers. An additional section collected the responses to two fill-in-the-blank statements, “I've learned that...” and “I didn't know when I graduate from high school that...” The answers were both wise and witty! Copies of the booklet are available by sending \$5 to Class of 1966, 1919 Polk, Ames, IA 50010.

Class Gift: Ripp Scholarship

The 50th Reunion Class Gift is a collaboration with one of our most memorable teachers, Bill Ripp. The class is seeking donations for the newly established Bill Ripp & Ripp Family Scholarship. When a sufficient amount is raised, a scholarship will be awarded annually to a second generation Ames High student who intends to pursue studies in health care or education in Iowa.

Donations in Bill Ripp's honor will happily be accepted from 1966 classmates and anyone who would like to contribute. The goal is \$28,000, which will be added to Bill's own contribution. Information and a donation form may be found on the Class of 1966 website, www.ahs66.org.

Questions and comments about the Class of 66 50th Reunion may directed to class@ahs66.org.