

EHS Missing Link '56

Spring - 2024
John Carr - Editor

Website
www.ehs56.org

When I heard Harold Olsen had passed away on December 24th, my heart was more softened than saddened. When we moved in to the neighborhood as the war was ending, we were next door neighbors and we fast became friends. We played almost every day; I helped candle eggs for his parents business, went to his church (as well as mine), we played basketball and learned folk dancing at Grand View's gym, played tennis and horseshoes behind the gym, sang Christmas carols at the retirement home, walked to Harding Junior High together, spent time with Don Monson and Arnold Erickson, and started calling each other by our middle names, he would holler: "John Francis" and I would respond "Harold Martin". We even ate lunch together at school and five of us were threatened with expulsion by the vice principal because we had put napkins over filled water glasses and turned them over on the table, which could have left a mess when lifted. During this time I drifted into other circles, Fritz Gould, Paul Spong, the Alsteads, Emory Elings, Reed Betts, Dave Sharr and Jack Hartung from my church, and Harold moved on to his circles. I kept up a little through others, but hadn't seen him until our 60th reunion and as I was leaving in the darkened parking lot, I heard: "John Francis" and without skipping a beat, I replied, "Harold Martin" and I knew my friend was still there. I will miss you but I will always have fond memories.

I'm sure others have stories about Harold; he and Arnold Erickson and Lyle Simpson, and Don Monson went from grade school through East High together and remained life-long friends.

From the last issue, Mevelyn didn't really mind that her great-granddaughter, Milea Rose was published and she's only five. Ironically, Bette Lou won't drive on the freeway or interstate, she sticks strictly to the main roads she knows.

As for the Trotters, Bob is skeptical when I put his name on jokes about his home life, he's concerned people might believe that's the way he is around the house. (I looked at Connie and she just rolls her eyes.)

I told Harvey Thompson I had something with his name on it for the newsletter and after he read it, he said, "They used to call me 'The Rabbit' and high school. His wife, Eddie was sitting there and replied, "It certainly wasn't "The Eveready Bunny". There's a joke there, but I'm not going to touch it.

Learned a few new things about our classmates: Kay Edwards has trepidations about going across town to the West side. Norma Treanor didn't have her picture in our yearbook because she took extra credit and graduated in 1955, Bob Mentzer doesn't have his picture because he was a product of the class of 1957, took extra credit and graduated in September 1956.

There we 14 of us at the last luncheon. We took a small poll and decided to stay on top of the hill for our luncheon gatherings.

Those attending:

Kay (Edwards) Alcantar
Norma (Treanor) Burke
John Carr
Bob Mentzer
Bette Low (Raymond) Neal
Carol Adams & John Jones
Larry & Jackie Soloman
Bob & Connie Trotter
Larry & Karen Watkins
JoAnn (Brady) Wilson

Spring 2024 Luncheon
Hilltop Restaurant
2820 Hubbell Ave.
Monday, May 6
11:30 AM

HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!

TRY IT, YOU MIGHT LIKE IT!

Some of our people had money left over from Christmas and before taxes sent some for us to keep the Link afloat: Carol Adams, Larry Soloman, Kay Alcantar, Norma Burke, Lyle Simpson, Bill Orris, Harvey Thompson, Art Wittern, Carol (Gramey) Dechant, Mevelyn(Wooderson) Richardson, Delores(Baldock) Copeland, Janice (Holman) Green, John Carr

If a tree falls in the forest and no one's there to see it, a Chihuahua 500 miles away will bark at it.

If you lose a sock in the dryer, it returns as a Tupperware lid that doesn't fit any containers

It is a little difficult to put out a newsletter without getting into religion or politics or even social issues. Some people believe GOD wants to send them to hell, even though it's mentioned five times in the bible that's not true. Religious freedom in the New World; in some areas you were put in the stockade if you celebrated Xmas, think I will talk about the Salem Witch Trials. Reapportionment was big in the Colonial Days and you had to own land to be able to vote. When I lived at E. 9th and Hull and voting was nine blocks away at Findley School rather than through Harold Olsen's connecting yard and Wes Carrington's back yard, two blocks away at Lutheran Memorial Church, which was five blocks away (three if I walked). Over the years I voted at Union Park Methodist Church at E. 12th and Guthrie. I now live at E. 11th and Guthrie; four years ago they moved me eight blocks away to Lutheran Memorial, instead of one block that I could walk. (Can you say gerrymander?)

As to voting, after the Civil War Congress voted itself a raise retroactive to before the start of the war.

I was happy my March AARP Bulletin Brief listed turnout ages for the 2020 presidential election; I was unhappy I had to go all the way to page 32 to read about Lynda Carter.

Canadian actress Lois Maxwell, Miss Money Penny in the first 14 James Bond films, required fewer than 200 words and less than 60 minutes on screen over 23 years

Connie Fulk graduated from East High in 1969. Connie (Fulk) Bosen became the first woman Mayor of Des Moines in 2024.

Lyle Simpson wrote to us: "My personal view undoubtedly differs from that of many. I think that one form of immortality that we are certain does exist is the extent to which we leave the world a better place because we have been here. I have written my second book, which is on that subject entitled *Fully Human/Fully Alive* now with a national publisher and just released in Amazon Kindle and Barnes and Nobel Nook. Many of us fulfill that goal through our children and their children. Others through organizations they support. Some of us write something because we have nothing else to contribute."

What I did was contrast two of my best friends from East High: Jack Hartung and Harold Olsen. Jack became a space scientist who worked for NASA. He was responsible for the trajectory of the space ship from the Earth to the Moon, and what the astronauts did after they got there. Jack got a doctorate in lunar geology but they discontinued using scientists as astronauts but got as close as he could to fulfilling that dream. Harold never left East High and served as a student counselor at East. In my personal opinion he contributed more to the service of humanity than any of us, with the thousands of students whose lives he made better because he had been here (Lyle is in the EHS Hall of Fame.)

Dear Bob and John:

Thank you both for all the work you do to keep our class of '56 informed of our former classmates and their endeavors. I know I speak for many of us and for those still left to appreciate it.

John, I never realized how talented you are with words; it is always a pleasure to read 'The Missing Link' and enjoy your bits of "wisdom" inside.

Sincerely,

Barbara (Evans) Priest

All Coked Up

Whether you call it soda or pop is really no concern of mine. But when it comes to Coca-Cola vs. Coke? Actually, really don't care about that either, but I do remember enjoying an ice-cold Coke from the fountain with those little pieces of ice.

It's one of the most recognizable and profitable brands in the world. The last time they counted, nearly 2 billion Coke products were being served *per day* – and that was a while ago. Today there are about a billion different variations on the original recipe. Who came up with that recipe and sparked a worldwide behemoth?

John S. Pemberton was a pharmacist and Civil War veteran best known for inventing the drink that would come to be known as Coca-Cola in 1886. He never got to see how wildly successful it became—he died in 1888 and had sold his patent for the drink for \$300. And yes, an early version of the recipe contained cocaine; another used alcohol.

Ever wonder what could have been if your favorite actor had landed different roles? Here are 10 instances where actors narrowly missed out on starring in iconic films, altering cinematic history forever.

Will Smith turned down the part of Neo in *The Matrix*.

Gwyneth Paltrow the part of Rose in *Titanic*.

Tom Selleck as Indiana Jones.

Sean Connery as Gandalf in *The Lord of the Rings*.

John Travolta as Forrest Gump.

Henry Cavill as Edward Cullen in *Twilight*.

Michelle Pfeiffer as Clarice Starling in *The Silence of the Lambs*.

Burt Reynolds as James Bond.

Angelina Jolie as Ryan Stone in *Gravity*.

Eric Stoltz as Marty McFly in *Back to the Future*.

Another issue and the same old issue, what to write about. If I had worked this hard at East, I would have graduated two years earlier and wouldn't have this problem. It's a leap year so we have an extra day to do something extraordinary this year. There was once a February 30th. In 1712, Sweden extended the month all the way to February 30. This calendrical anomaly occurred as the country awkwardly shifted between the Julian and Gregorian calendars, which had about a 10-day gap between them. Pope Gregory XIII had introduced the latter calendar in 1582 to fix large discrepancies between the solar year and calendar date that the Julian calendar had incurred. Nations around the world slowly adopted the new calendar, and Sweden finally opted to do so in 1700. The year 1700 happened to be a leap year in the Julian calendar, but not the Gregorian version, widening the gap even further; March 1 in the Julian calendar corresponded to the Gregorian March 12. Sweden planned to gradually switch the Gregorian calendar by omitting 11 leap days over the course of 40 years, but that plan was derailed when leap years were still mistakenly observed in 1704 and 1708. By 1712, Sweden's timekeeping was such a mess, the country planned to shift back to the Julian calendar starting on March 1. (It also wanted to ensure the Easter would be celebrated on a Sunday.) To accomplish this Sweden added February 29—as 1712 was already a leap year to begin with—plus an extra day, February 30, to make up for the leap day it had omitted back in 1700. The country finally made the permanent shift to the Gregorian calendar in 1753, bridging the 11-day difference by jumping from February 17 to March 1. (You may not have cared for this article, but I'm sure Jay Severs would have been proud.)

The extra day in February gave me time to make up extra jokes. These all came from a demented mind that was lying around doing nothing:

What do you call a chicken that doesn't like her children?
A scornish hen.

He is so Italian that when he cut himself, he bled spaghetti sauce.

Living on the edge for me is waiting five minutes before I go somewhere to see if I have clean underwear.

Botext...when your phone messaging system temporarily freezes up.

If a bear shits in the woods next to where a tree has fallen and you step in it, do you make a sound?

How do you invite a cow to stay with you in Spanish?
“Me casa, moo casa.”

If it looks like a duck, walks like a duck, and sounds like a duck, kill it and have it for dinner; the damn things are around \$9.00 a pound and average about 5 pounds each.

Sometimes authors first attempts at writing are unsuccessful, for instance the French author, Alexandre Dumas. He first attempted to write a by-the-number cookbook using lard as cooking oil: “Count of Monte Crisco.” Then he attempted a comedy about a man and his son joining his brother in Paris as King's Royal Guardsmen: “Two and a Half Musketeers.” Probably his least acceptable was a tale of twin monarchs, one of whom had dry skin: The Man in the Iron Facial Mask.”

Or the time I penned, “In to each reign some life must fall.”

This germinated before I got out of bed on March 1.

The American classic “A Tree Grows in Brooklyn” is about a young girl's coming-of-age at the turn of the century. The story of a young biologist's struggle to find a cure for covid virus is called “A Petri Grows in Brooklyn.”

Do you know what they call Bounty, ‘the quicker, picker-upper’ paper towel in Greece?
Absorba the Greek.

(You're moaning, I'm the one that has to live with the brain that created all that.)

If you want to comment or contribute articles, reach me at:

John Carr
2317 E. 11th St.

Des Moines, IA 50316

If you wish to complain send a check along with complaint to:

Robert Trotter
5625 Lakepoint Circle
Johnston IA 50131

(He'll listen to anyone who sends money.)

As for Tom Lettington, his information is on the masthead. He really doesn't care, but he keeps good records.

Bill Orris dropped a note from Sacramento “thanking us” and said he doesn't expect to make it back to Iowa, but if he did he would try to make it for lunch. (That's a reservation for one.)

A little further south (Visalia, CA) brought New Year's greetings to Bob and appreciation for all he does for “our great class of '56” and a whole page of Puns from Mary Lou Goodman. “I tried to catch some fog, I mist.” Energizer Bunny arrested: Charged with battery. Broken pencils are pointless. A dyslexic man walks into a bra.

George Washington slept here; King Louis XIV of France slept everywhere. His majesty reportedly owned no fewer than 413 beds, which were considered status symbols at the time. Few people had the wealth, let alone the space, to afford and display such a vast collection of luxurious furniture, but the French monarch was a uniquely ostentatious individual. The beds – 155 of which were characterize as boasting greater importance than the others – were dispersed throughout France’s various royal palaces for the personal use of Louis and his family. The beds weren’t just meager cots, but rather ornately adorned furnishing with features such a fabrics from the far reaches of Persia (modern Iran) and China, as well as gold plating, high pillars, and intricate embroidery. Some were so luxurious; he even held court while he lay in them. If you got it, flaunt it, “Let ‘em eat cake.”, as for me, I’m going to find a place to rest on my 20-year-old mattress.

You’ll no longer find if on a map, but the town of Angus used to be located directly on the county line between Boone and Greene counties. In the late 1800’s, it had nearly 7000 residents and 16 saloons. Some of the saloons were built on the county line, which became convenient: Rowdy people simply moved from one side of the barroom to the other to avoid being arrested by officers of the first county. The coal mines played out and the entire town eventually got up and moved, with most folks relocating to Fraser, Ogden and Boone (All that remains is a stone marker erected in 1976.)

Mark Twain invented the word *squish*. (My ex-wife didn’t invent any words, but she embellished a whole bunch of them.)

The organization, Parents Without Partners, was for single people with children. There was a requirement that each chapter put out a newsletter, and I volunteered. This article was meant to appeal for parents with younger children.

The Stackables

Some of the children were sitting around after the family roller skating party. There were watching the other skaters and talking. The clean-up man from the rink was straightening up the little tots area and stacking chairs with animal faces on top of each other. Jenny looked at the top chair, which had a elephant face and said, “Gee, I wonder how hard it would be to stack real elephants?” “A lot easier than stacking bee-bee in the wind”, replied Billy. “I’ll bet it’s harder than stacking candy boxes”, said seven-year-old Theresa, the youngest in the group.

“A very interesting problem,” cited Encyclopedia Eric. He was named “Encyclopedia” because his sister used to help him with his studies and every time he missed a question, she would hit him over the head with one. “Let’s see what we can come up with.”

The children thought and thought. They thought about stacking them little on top, big on top, sideways, upside down...”How about stacking them on their trunks?”, asked Theresa. “Naw”, said Tom, “their trunks aren’t strong enough and they might squash them.” “What about getting mice to train them to stack themselves?” asked Phyliss, “I mean, elephants aren’t really afraid of mice, remember the movie “Dumbo?” “Yes, but I think the circumstance were different”, said Tom. “How about packing them in their own trunks?” asked Theresa. “Oh, that’s silly,” said Jenny.

“Look,” said Billy, “there’s Paul W. Person,” (cont. next page)

All the children went over to Paul W. Person, also known as “The Problem Solver” because he answered so many questions for people and gave them advice. They explained their problem and told Paul W. Person their ideas. Paul listened and thought for a few moments and then he asked, “Are the elephants asleep or awake?” “They’re awake!” “In that case,” mused Paul W. Person, “I would stack the elephants very carefully.” Once again, another solution from our very own PWP problem solver. (I wrote that over 50 years ago and a few years back, a woman said she remembered it from hearing it as a child.)

What’s large and gray, and doesn’t matter? An irrelephant.

They say you can’t teach old dog new tricks. Did you stop to think he may have seen them on TV while you were out and they’re not new to him or maybe he’s just like Tom Lettington’s dog and just doesn’t give a damn.

Mickey Mouse’s first words in films were: “Hot Dog, Hot Dog.”

And when a fox is in the bottle where the tweetle beetles battle with their paddles in a puddle on a noodle-eating poodle, this is what they call...a tweetle beetle noodle poodle bottled paddles muddled duddled fuddled wuddled fox in socks, sir!

To remove ballpoint pen ink stains, pour denatured alcohol over stain, rub in petroleum jelly, sponge with non-flammable dry cleaning solvent, soak in detergent solution, wash with detergent and bleach safe for fabric, or do like Bill Foster does and sew a pocket over it.

The best way to forget all your troubles is to wear tight shoes.

Dear Bob,

I really appreciate all your efforts to keep me abreast of what is happening with our classmates. I am still going strong in Tucson.

Thank you all very much,
Delores "Dee" (Baldock) Copeland

And a "Rosie note" with a smiley face.

Hi from the tip of Texas, it is great to return "home" after weeks visiting my previous home in Colorado and to be greeted by the Clever and Informative: Fall 2023 edition of the Link. It was a delight to receive it. A BIG THANK YOU to ALL involved. It is a TREASURE!

With gratitude for a job well done,
Mevelyn W. Richardson

I happened to notice the post marks on the correspondence and how far they were from the origin: Mevelyn: Los Fresnos to McAllen Texas: 67 miles.

Delores: Tucson to Phoenix

Arizona: 111.8 miles

Barbara: North Reading to Boston Massachutes: 18.6 miles.

Mary: Visalia to Santa Clarita

California: 159.9 miles

That's a long ways to go just to mail a letter. Better noted, in 1913, people were able to send parcels that weighed more than 4 pounds via the post service. The service was used primarily by rural farm families to ship their goods, and around 300 million parcels were mailed during the first six months of operations. Some resourceful customers took advantage by "mailing" their children, because the cost of postage to have a child chaperoned to their destination by a postal worker was cheaper than a train ticket. The postmaster soon 'nixied' that idea.

It is impossible to tickle yourself.

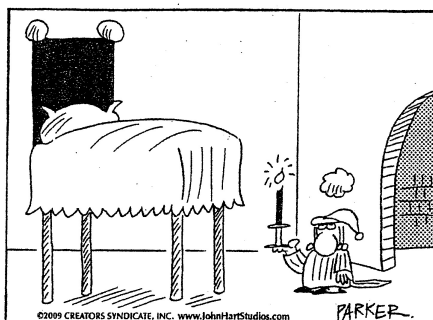
By the year 2050, the world's elderly will outnumber the young for the first time.

Received a text about Richard Simmons, didn't open it, but it reminded me of his "Sweating to the Oldies"; except now I'm just one of the 'oldies' sweating.

"I spy somewhere by the park bench..."

The CIA spent millions of dollars in the 60s on a program to make cats spies: Operation Acoustic Kitty. A microphone was placed in the animal's ear, a radio transmitter at the base of the skull, and an antenna in its fur and the animals were to wander and listen to conversations. It was essentially a disaster with only one subject making it into the field...it got hit by a taxi.

I believe I mentioned before that Harold Cassidy, who taught at Harding Junior High, was in the O.S.S in World War II, as well as Dick Lozier, the florist, but can't remember if I mentioned, the 6'2", Pasadena, CA born, Julia Child (The French Chef), was also in the O.S.S.



Here's one for you English majors: What do you call a verb that fly fishes? An angling participle.

And for all you sesquipedalian Lexicographers; when we were growing up the 28-letter word, antidisestablishmentarianism was thought to be the longest word, well, not that it means that much, "flocinaucinihilipilification", which if you count has 29 letters.

SPAM, don't knock it until you've fried it.

My daughter in Florida uncovered this older story worth repeating.

High school reunion

Have you ever been guilty of looking at someone your own age and thinking, "Surely I can't look that old?" You'll love this one.

My name is Alice Smith and I was sitting in the waiting room for my first appointment with a new dentist, I noticed his DDS diploma which showed his full name.

Suddenly, I remembered a tall, handsome, dark-haired boy with the same name who had been in my high school class some 40-odd years ago. Could this be the same guy that I had a secret crush on, way back then?

Upon seeing him, however, I quickly discarded any such thought. This balding, gray-haired man with the deeply lined face was way too old to have been my classmate.

After he examined my teeth, I asked him if he had attended Morgan Park High School.

"Yes. Yes, I did. I'm a Mustang." He beamed with pride.

"When did you graduate?"

He answered, "In 1959, why do you ask?"

"You were in my class!" I exclaimed.

He looked at me closely. Then, that ugly, old, bald, wrinkled, fat, gray, decrepit son-of-a-gun asked, "What did you teach?"

Around the Trotter household, Easter egg hunting was a big deal. Even though the nest was empty, Connie T thought it would be fun to hide Easter eggs for Bob to find and a subtle way to get him to do chores. She would hide eggs in the laundry hamper, in the dryer, in the dishwasher, tied to the lawn mower, near the snow shovel; even on top of the grocery list...Bob hasn't found an Easter egg in 15 years.

Mevelyn Rose included me in the latest Jacquie Lawson ecard. A frog hops on a tree, birds land on a tree limb,, rabbits gathering, deer gathering, butterflies and a dove and all go to a shining light where the SAVIOR is rising. It was simple, peaceful, and inspiring as a Easter message.

Costco has a senior benefit program that is free. It is also opening stores where you purchase larger items like furniture and big appliances rather than guessing what you getting by buying on line. The first store will be in Anchorage, Alaska...MUSH! (It will be closer to Santa's workshop and ice cube franchise.)

The past year I have been breathing problems. My heart doctor at Lutheran wasn't helping, so I went to Iowa Methodist and this doctor suggested a biopsy, which has to be done at Mercy and sent to Mayo for the results. I was going to tell you about it lyrically choosing between the music from Janis Joplin's "Piece of My Heart" or the catchy tune from "Green Acres", I'm partial to "Arnold 'the Pig' Ziffel, so "Green Acres" it is:

Biopsy

Biopsy is the thing for me,
They'll make a little cut
and take a piece of me.
Not too much strife,
an incision with a knife,
To see what they can see.

In the 40s, on the north side of Hull Ave. were a doctor's office, Hull Ave. Tavern, Hull Ave. Variety, the alley, Smith's Grocery, Oliphant's Drug Store, Marvin's Food Market, Macri's Shoe Repair, Reed's Ice Cream stand, a phone booth, barber shop, and the Avalon Theater. The doctor's office became The North Side Library. The Avalon Theater rebuilt across the street on East 9th, old Avalon became a hardware store, library moved to E. 9th back of hardware. Marvin bought Smith's grocery; Don Johnson took over the drug store. By the 70s the only things original were the tavern and the barber shop. In March, Hull Ave. Tavern knocked out the west wall and expanded; buildings east of the alley were torn down, leaving the barber shop and two stores on E. 9th on the Avalon side.

The origins of "cup of joe" are unknown so it "perked" my interest. It started appearing in print in the 1930s, with the first occurrence of it in a book coming in 1936. Martinson Coffee founded in 1898 by Joe Martinson and locally was called "Joe's coffee" or a "cup of joe." Josephus "Joe" Daniels banned all alcohol from all U.S. Navy ships before WWI referred to coffee as a "cup of joe" to voice dissent without criticizing the Secretary of the Navy. Since joe refers to an average man, "the average joe," "cup of joe" could simply be a reference to an ordinary person's drink. Following WWII as diners popped up in the 40s and 50s, working men who ate their breakfast at these restaurants might have been served "cups of joe." (I have three Keurig coffee makers and I don't drink coffee. Just goes to joe ya.)

According to Ann Landers, the two things you should never do in bed are point and laugh!

"It's quarter to three, there's no one in the place except you and me... so, STICK 'EM UP, JOE!"

Einstein's theory of general relativity was proven during the total solar eclipse on May 29, 1919. The path of totality of the April 8th eclipse was about 9,200 miles long and 115 miles wide. I wonder how many of the 333.3 million people in the U.S. were in the dark for 4 and a half minutes during the eclipse as opposed to being in a fog for most of their lives?

Gene Davis had a stroke last month but is back home and on his way to recovery...get well fast; Bette Lou needs dancers on Tuesdays at Prairie Meadows.

The 2024 All-Alumni Scarlet Celebration is June 8, at the Meadows. Des Moines East High School has one of the oldest and largest public high school alumni associations in the world. On Saturday, June 8, EHS alumni and friends of all ages will come together to celebrate the accomplishments of fellow alumni and the EHS Alumni volunteer groups. We've been doing it for 146 years. Check it out.



"Well, Mr. President, let's see...carry the one, take away three, carry the two...that would be fourscore and seven years ago."

It won't be 87 years before the next issue of *the link* but I will be, so until then, be kind to each other and locals...get your "Orris'es" to lunch.