

BERRY CLASS OF '61 NEWSLETTER

April 2012

What's happened since our 50th Reunion?

Reunion and Work Week 2012

Our reunion committee leader, Elaine Harris, has a message for us.

How GREAT it was to visit with so many of you last May at our 50th Reunion!!! We have been gathering for a number of years during Alumni Weekend and want it to continue. This year on Saturday evening (May 19th) we have the following events reserved:

- Reception Krannert Center, Room 250 5:30 PM
- Class Reunion Dinner Krannert Center, Blue Room 6:30 PM

The cost for dinner is \$30.00 each paid in advance by e-mail or mail as a part of registration. At present there are no plans for an informal dinner on Friday night.

Several of us stay over for Sunday Worship and some will be a part of Berry's Choir performance. After lunch we gather to register for Work Week. We stay in the dorms free but bring our own linens and pay for our meals. What a fun working time we have Monday through Friday breakfast. Those of us who attend really like the new friends from other classes we meet and enjoy working with them. Registration for all events begins on Friday the 18th at 10:00 a.m. on the Ford Campus.

It is recommended that we use the Country Inn and Suites as the home base for those needing rooms. It is advised that you reserve a room early since other classes on the five-year reunion rotation will have larger attendance.

Feature Story.....OHOD

Last year at this time the finishing touches were being applied to the Outhouse at the House of Dreams (OHOD). Al Christopher's team had just accomplished an incredible achievement. The gratitude and support by Dr. Briggs and Berry's staff was remarkable allowing this project to go from idea to plan to implementation with remarkable discipline. We thought it appropriate to provide an update on how the OHOD is being incorporated into Berry's wide ranging activities.

Tim Brown, recently named Director of Historic Berry and Oak Hill Museum, recently indicated that the OHOD has filled one of the greatest needs at Berry – how to integrate the House of Dreams into relevant functions, both inside and outside the Berry family. He indicated that official functions/meetings are now being held at the OHOD, e.g., the Board of Trustees met there for the first time last fall. The Winshape group uses it for visitor tours. In addition, there are numerous wilderness hiking tours, plus high school hiking groups. Weekends are now quite busy with the nature and exercise lovers. Tim stated that weddings and other private groups are not encouraged due to the state of the gravel road snaking up the mountain as a result of safety concerns. But, all in all the OHOD has become a mainstay and is deeply appreciated.

GOO Scholarship

As you know our class was very successful in supporting the endowment of the Gate of Opportunity program. To date, we have donated \$206,000 in gifts received (\$156,000) and pledges (\$49,500). In

addition, GOO has been enhanced substantially by a \$10,000,000 anonymous donation to be used as matching funds for alumni donations. Continued support by our class can take advantage of the matching effort. If you are interested in additional participation, please contact the Berry Advancement Office. Dr. Briggs recently indicates that Berry celebrates the new opportunity for 80 students to graduate debt free. The class of 61 can take pride in the fact that we helped make this happen.

In Memoriam

William Wesley Leachman, II

May 28, 1939 - February 11, 2012

William Wesley "Bill" Leachman II age 72 of Dallas, GA passed away February 11, 2012. He was born May 28, 1939 in Cartersville, GA. He is survived by his wife of 47 years, Louise, and son William Wesley (Barbara) III, and four grandchildren.

Bill graduated from Berry School for Boys in 1957 and Berry College in 1961, where he was active in high school and college, football, basketball, and Track. He sang baritone with The Big Chicken Chorus, and was a member of Powder Springs Methodist Church. Bill was a principal and teacher with Paulding County School System and Cassville High School, was a city clerk and a city manager for the City of Powder Springs, and a city clerk for the City of College Park. He retired from Lockheed Martin as a systems analyst after 27 years. Numerous classmates expressed friendship and fond memories of their times with Bill while at Berry. He will be missed by many.

Vickie Jean Tankersley

March 5, 1940 - March 4, 2012

Vickie, wife of classmate Stan Tankersley died this past March. She leaves behind their six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. She was a member of Snow Springs Baptist Church and the Sans Souci Club. She had been an X-ray technician for over forty-five years, working at Floyd Medical Center and later at Harbin Clinic. A former member of the Palomino Horse Breeders of America Association, she had a passion for horses and other animals. Vickie most enjoyed taking care of her family and was known for always putting others before herself.

Now the Latest from You.....

Charles (Tiger) and Sarah (Class of 62) Gibbs

The word from the Tiger and Sarah is that they are busy with "hobbies." Tiger is playing so much golf that he joined a country club, sold his fishing boat, but is now looking for another one. When turkey season opens soon he will be going after Thanksgiving dinner. Also, the warm weather has accelerated spring planting in his garden and will expedite the cleaning of the Koi pond – always a chore. Tiger and Sarah volunteer at the hospital once a week (fulfills their civic duty), and with 10 grandkids in all type of sports like tennis, softball, track, basketball & soccer they are stretched for time since all the grands expect them to attend their games. Church continues to be a big part of their lives. In addition, as an Internet junkie, Tiger spends at least two hours each day processing all the emails he receives and sends. This year Tiger and Sarah will have been married 50 years – CONGRATULATIONS!!!! To celebrate they are planning a trip to Alaska. Sounds like a lot of fun.

Willa Dean Hinson

Willa Dean Steeley Hinson and her husband live in Montgomery, AL, where he works for AL Baptist Convention. They travel a lot with his position and she loves her involvement as Treasurer of

Montgomery Historical Society. Willa Dean retired from her business management position in '95. They squeezed a stop at Berry into a family graduation event the Friday night of our '50th, but could not locate our class at Krannert that night and headed on down the road. She would like to have contact with Berry classmates – contact her at:

1449 Beaumont Drive
Montgomery, AL 36111-2011
334-590-6281
wdhinson@charter.net

Charles Baldwin

Charles lives in Seneca, SC, and is retired from Duke Energy. He is doing well, but his wife has health issues. They rarely travel, but will consider attending the class gathering at this year's reunion events.

Julia Griffin Burton

Julia is doing well and will be attending our class gathering on Saturday night as well as participating in Work Week. Her grandchildren are her life – some are young, but others are graduating from college already. Three of them are turning 15 years old this year. She has not traveled much this past year, choosing to stay close to home in Vienna, GA. Julia is an avid reader.

Iris Shelton Cole

Iris was delighted to hear from a classmate. She is in good health, but does not drive at night. She presently works in a bakery. She lost her husband about three years ago and considers her eight grand children – ages 5 to 43 – the blessing of her life. She has not been back to campus since graduating, but will consider it this year.

Becky and Al Christopher

Becky is almost recovered from a broken leg, which will be a joyful event for both her and Al. We are sure she will no longer try to take three steps at a time going up/down stairs. But she has progressed to using a cane and in a few days will resume normal walking. Al continues with his wood carving projects. He attends workshops/seminars to improve his skills, which are already at a very high level. They plan to attend Alumni Weekend and Work Week this year.

Cynthia McRae Curlee

Cynthia was originally from Florida, but has lived in Rome a number of years. She enjoys playing cards with her friends and seeing her grandchildren.

Naomi Douglas

Naomi is enjoying retirement life after her teaching career. She still lives near High Springs, Florida, where she directs the choir at her church and keeps a check on her 93 year-old father. Her brothers will not let him drive the tractor anymore, but he still drives his car. Her email address is: matt1128@windstream.net and phone is 386-454-2392. She'd love to hear from you.

Aaron and Katie Ellis

Aaron and Katie have been splitting time between Alabama, Georgia and Florida, especially to see the grands, aged 4 to 16, in Atlanta and Tallahassee. The grands' activities include basketball, soccer, baseball, lacrosse or cross-country as well as the school events among other things. One of these includes the state-level Georgia competition for "Odyssey of the Mind."

In addition, Aaron and Katie are involved in lots of packing and storage to accommodate the selling a home in Santa Rosa Beach. When in Florida, they enjoy seeing Becky and Al Christopher and they get

together for dinner often. Aaron misses working with Al on the Out House of Dreams project. They also stay in close contact with Ron and Bernice Thornton. Plans are to attend this year's reunion to see more familiar faces and renew old friendships.

Barbara McCoy

Barbara is very excited about a new student enterprise "Viking Creations" that has been formed to re-introduce hand weaving to Berry. A Berry alumna, Joy Padgett Johnson, is doing yeoman's duty working with the students. Class of '61 Work Week attendees can sign up to help with getting the studio in shape.

Barbara's own weaving is one of the great joys of her life – see adjacent photo of her recently completed project on one of the small looms in her studio. She learned about weaving from peering into the windows of the Handicrafts Dept at the Ford Campus.



Lorna Marchman Dewberry

Lorna lives in Atlanta area (Hoschton) with husband Will, and both enjoy good health. She is retired from teaching and career counseling, and spends free time volunteering locally in various organizations including their local library. They have four grandchildren. A few weeks ago she was looking forward to a mini-reunion (actually lunch) with Mary Ann Rutland Adams (Dayton), Mary Ann (Busha) and Tank Hutcheson, John and Ann (Fite) Whitaker.

Recently they had the excitement of Clint Eastwood and Justin Timberlake filming for a week outside their driveway – the movie is 'Trouble with the Curves' expected to be released in fall 2012.

Jo Koon Nicholson

Jo still lives in South Carolina and really enjoyed getting reacquainted with classmates at the 50th reunion. When we contacted her she was ill with pneumonia. Please pray for her recovery.

Jack Tysor

Jack is doing well, but has no news for classmates.

Marcus Holley

Marcus Holly taught school and coached football for 32 years. After retirement from the school system, he worked for a number of years with Wayne Peacock until his death. He enjoys playing golf several times each week and also enjoys visiting his three children and five grandchildren.

Burl Branscomb

We understand that Burl and his wife have moved from Georgia to someplace in Florida, but have not learned their new location. If any of you have information please contact your class team or Berry's Alumni Affairs Office. Burl has health issues.

William (Bill) L. Dozier

Bill was a real estate property manager for 40 years. He and his wife enjoy their three children, five grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Robert (Bob) Hill

Bob was in the military for several years and then in sales until retirement. Bob and his wife have two children and one grandchild.

Thompson Holloman

Both Thompson and his wife are having serious health issues. Please keep them in your prayers. They have one daughter and no grandchildren.

Elaine Overman Harris

Elaine tells us that the past several months have been very “trying” to say the least and she is looking forward to a better future. On her way home from our 50th Reunion last May she had a wreck and totaled her car about 10 miles from her home in High Point, NC. Her injuries included a broken right arm, internal problems and many bruises! She complained that she was most upset about getting her new sneakers muddy.

She spent all last fall taking care of her 94 year old mother who passed away the week of Christmas. After concluding her mother’s estate work, she had dental bone surgery – no talking for a while – a relief for some, but pain for Elaine. Now she learns there’s a pinched nerve in her back. But after all this, she plans to attend our class gathering on May 19th as well as stay for Work Week.

Jean Blevins

Jean lives in Middleburg, FL, is and happy and healthy and enjoying retirement from academia with lots of travel and golf. She taught in both the public schools and at the University of North Florida in Jacksonville. Last year she traveled to South America and this year Italy is on the travel agenda. She fondly recalled some of her Clara Hall escapades where she miraculously escaped being sent home to Virginia for a semester. She is remembered hauling the mail sacks into the Girls' School Office from the Berry van. Her email address is ablevinsj@aol.com.

Virginia Elrod Collins

Virginia lives in Hampton, GA and told us that she had fond memories of her Berry experiences.

Vivian Slappy Carney

Vivian and Cecil have recently spent a week with family at New Smyrna Beach, FL where they especially enjoyed the grandkids. They will not be at the reunion this year since Vivian’s 55th high school reunion occurs the same weekend. It has been five years since she has seen any of these friends – there are only about 20 classmates left. She will miss seeing all of us.

Peggy Stone Hall

Peggy graduated from Georgia College/Milledgeville and spent her career in mental health/social services in South Carolina. Lives near Charlotte and these are good years for her - retirement with lots of travel, grandchildren (her eldest will begin college this fall at Presbyterian College/SC), and caring for her home & gardens and helping in senior programs there in her community. She reminded us that she roomed with Lillian Coombs first year and Martha Van Landingham the next, and she still loves Berry though the 500 mile drive prohibits visiting often.

Bob Cotti

Bob reports good news from Texas. Last fall his wife Felie underwent another MRI to ascertain the status of the brain tumor that has plagued her for several years. The results were negative, allowing Felie to be placed on an annual review cycle. The Cotti’s still live in Rockwall near Dallas and love it there. Their youngest son and his family live nearby, which provides ample opportunity to share in the lives of two granddaughters (12 and 6 years of age). Their other two boys live in Northern Virginia: one a confirmed bachelor and the other married with one son, whom they get to see occasionally.

Both Bob and Felie are active in their church – music programs, Monday Morning Work Group, Finance Committee, etc. – and enjoy the growth they have experienced since the arrival of their new Pastor in

August 2009. Bob continues to be active in Rockwall politics, having served most recently on the Long Range Planning Committee and the Capital Improvements Committee, but there are no immediate plans for another run at elected office ... the longer he is away from it the more he enjoys it, but one should "Never Say Never."

The Cotti's will unlikely attend the reunion this year in part because the early date for it conflicts with their scheduling.

Ardeth Hodges West

Ardeth provides us with a wonderful update on life in the West home. She and husband, Jack, have been married for 52 years, live in Rossville, Georgia, and have three children and nine grandchildren. They are very active in the Presbyterian Church (PCA). She worked for Tennessee Valley Power over 22 years. She has fond memories of Berry, especially all the dorm friends she made. Send her an email: pa7mawest@bellsouth.net, she would love to hear from you.

Ron and Bernice Thornton

This is a busy time in the Thornton household with special concern for Bernice's back problems that have gotten progressively worse over the past several months. The neurosurgeon indicates he can do no more to help her, which puts the onus on the University of Florida Pain Management Center for treatment. She will be undergoing a series of procedures over the next few months in an attempt to get the severe pain under control. It is unlikely that they will be able to attend the reunion this year unless she sees considerable improvement.

In addition, Ron is busy with consulting, politics and music. This election year finds him working in several local and congressional political races with the objective being to put some "new blood" in office that will help fix the messes in which we find ourselves. He is also very active as an Internet junkie, especially with his email buddies throughout the country.

Special Project Request

Mack Gay and Walter Maine (both from the class of '59) have for several years been working on a children's need program in Fort Walton Beach, Florida, that has resulted in the development of a not-for-profit organization – Children in Crisis, Inc. (www.childrenincrisisfl.org). Today the program is a success and is expanding. Please check the website for details regarding how children are helped, and for ways you can participate if called to do so. Over the past several months Mack and Walt have had extensive discussions with Berry officials to pursue the placement of Berry students in the home as interns working directly with the children. Dr. Briggs and other relevant staff members are working to solidify the agreement so that students can be placed by this summer or fall. This is just one of the numerous outreach efforts being pursued by Berry and her alumni.

Sign of the Times

Forgetter Be Forgotten

My forgetter's getting better, but my rememberer is broke
To you that may seem funny but, to me, that is no joke
for when I'm 'here' I'm wondering if I really should be 'there'
And, when I try to think it through, I haven't got a prayer!

Offt times I walk into a room, say 'what am I here for?'



I wrack my brain, but all in vain! A zero, is my score.

At times I put something away where it is safe, but, Gee!
The person it is safest from is generally just... me!

When shopping I may see someone, say 'Hi' and have a chat, then, when the person walks away I ask myself, 'who the hell was that? Yes, my forgetter's getting better while my rememberer is broke, and it's driving me plumb crazy and that isn't any joke.

CAN YOU RELATE???

Request and Disclaimer

Your reunion and newsletter committee requests that you provide us with updates about yourself, family, etc., in order for us to do another of these newsletters within a few months. See our contact information below.

Vivian Carney 706-777-9666 beerbelly@wans.net	Becky & Al Christopher 850-837-7299 beckyc@gnt.net	Aaron Ellis 850-267-0207 aaronellis@knology.net	Elaine Harris 336-889-6995 eharris@triad.rr.com	Barbara McCoy 310-471-0524 Topangatrails@aol.com	Ron Thornton 352-472-6026 ronthornton@cox.net
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We apologize in advance if we have presented erroneous information about your status. If so, send us a correction and we will include it in the next newsletter.