

On Aging Gracefully, and The 60th EHS Birthday Party

The delinquency in my dutifully filing a report on the collective 60th birthday party of Everett High School's Class of 1967 could be blamed on a number of things. I could claim that following the event I fell into a deep state of melancholia as a result of seeing all the bald headed men, among whom I was most prominent. Possibly I could state that upon seeing the woman for whom I deeply cared (unbeknownst to her and the rest of our class), I was conflicted because of the great unrequited love I still felt. Or perhaps I could blame it on a band of roving gypsies who kidnapped me and held me hostage for the last two years. Instead I will admit to suffering a combination of writer's block combined with a bad case of cerebral-orifice inversion.

The party was a great success, as can be seen in the photographs posted on the website. What was also evident was that as we enter our seventh decade the friendships and affections we formed for one another in high school have deepened. Any perceived slights suffered those 40 plus years ago have long ago been forgotten. It was a rewarding experience to catch up on what we had done and what we felt the future still held for each of us.

I saw pairs and or groups I had known to be good friends in our years together at EHS reminiscing about the times they shared as they obviously continued to care for one another to this day.

In the days leading up to the party I had lost a close friend and had to attend his funeral in San Diego on the day everyone was to be together at Legion Park. I arrived after a late plane flight and fortunately was given the chance to share a lot of laughs, which I needed badly.

I ran into the woman I mentioned in my first paragraph of this meandering missive. We actually had some attempts at dating during high school, all without much success or enchantment for each of us, but remained friends and stayed in sporadic contact for a few years after graduation, eventually going our separate ways. I had gone through the "what ifs" and the "had I only" after I had seen her once at an earlier reunion during a period when I was single. Fortunately for both of us she was married at the time and I later married the girl I met right after graduation from EHS eleven years earlier. We talked of our children and the life we had both lived and realized that what we had done was the best for both of us and that we were most fortunate for the way things turned out.

The real benefit to attending reunions is that we get to reunite with those who have meant enough to us to be a formative part of our lives. At this point, now decades later, there is no pain, no feeling of regrets, only the joy that comes from time well-spent with close friends.

I was fortunate to have a great night with so many of you who have meant so much to making my life worthwhile.

Don Carter
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