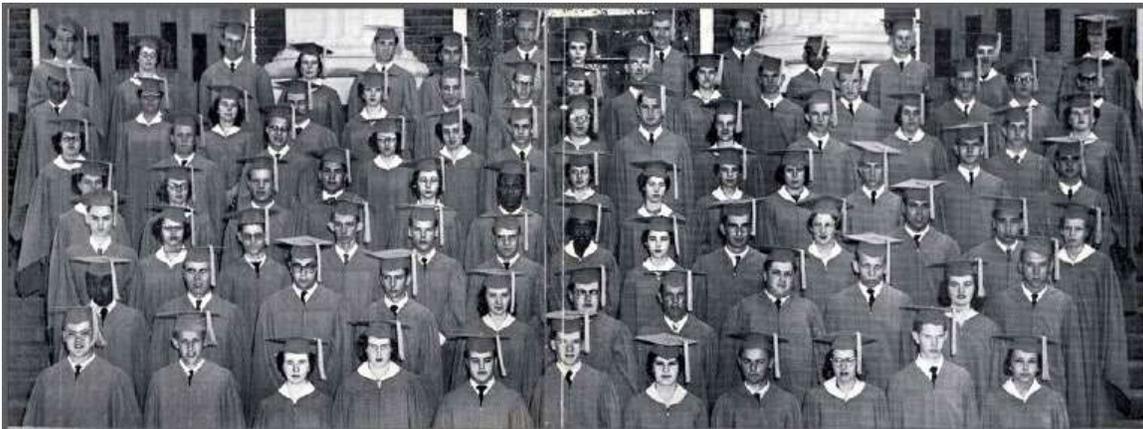


# THE '59 LINE:

*The Voice of "Iola High School's Greatest Generation"*

April 2015



## **SOMETHING BORROWED, SOMETHING NEW**

By: Bill Lee



When I volunteered to coordinate the publishing of the “’59 Line” I didn’t know it was going to be so much fun. Just getting your feedback on the newsletter brought back many good memories.

Most things will not change – we still encourage your personal items of interest, news of classmate events and related pictures. We will also continue the practice of staying away from political issues.

So what will be new? Please notice the tag line under the newsletter title. Some of you may still want to go with “The Class With No Class” but when you look at the times in which we grew up in Iola and the challenges we all faced it seems amazing that we

collectively have accomplished so much. So, I am issuing an executive order that we are now “Iola High School’s Greatest Generation”! Hope you approve.

We are encouraging some new categories of items of interest to include “Hobbies”, “Calendar of Events”, “Resumes” and “Classmate News”. We will add categories as suggested.

The format of the newsletter will change a bit since I don’t have publishing software. Hope you approve of the pictures that I chose

### **Note of Thanks**



**Ellen Claiborne has coordinated and published the '59 Line since its beginning and I know you will all join me in thanking her for the many hours and dedication to the wonderful work she has done. Ellen, we are all wishing you a speedy recovery from some difficult health issues you are dealing with.**

### **Calendar of Events**

You may not have seen the following invitation to Iola High School’s “58<sup>th</sup> Annual Reunion” on May 24, 2015. For those interested in attending, the sign up details are listed in the invitation.

### **Iola High School 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Reunion**

The alumni Reunion committee would like to invite you to attend the 58th annual reunion of the graduating classes of IHS. This is an annual event for classmates to get together that is open to anyone (or almost graduated) at least 40 years ago (1975) and want to reconnect with the community and their former classmates. The reunion and dinner will be held on May 24, 2015 in the commons area of the high school. Please use the entrance on the east side of the building.

The honored classes will be 1955, 1965, and 1975. They will have special tables reserved for them and a spouse or friend and will be recognized during the program.

Registration and visiting will begin at 10:30 a.m. A catered dinner will be served at 12:30. The fee for the dinner is \$17.50 per person. We must have firm reservations by May 15.

Reservations, with a check made out to "Iola High School" should be sent to:

Marsha Burris  
P.O. Box 345  
Iola, KS66749

Please put the year you graduated on your check.

When you check in you will be given a nametag and your buffet ticket. Your cancelled check will be your receipt. There will be a short program for you to enjoy and, of course, seeing former classmates is always fun.

Officers for the 58th Annual Alumni Reunion;  
Chairman: Pauline (Baughner) Hawk

Vice chairman: Sandy (Hawk) Frizell

Secretary: Susan (McCrate) Raines

Treasurer/Registrar: Marsha Burris

### Senior Thoughts:

*Middle age is when broadness of the mind and narrowness of the waist change places.* Anonymous.

## In Memory Eternal: Jim Weeks



We are sad to learn that Jim Weeks passed away March 6, 2015. Dea Valentine Mewhinney, Barb Sinclair Letsinger and Nancy McBride attended the funeral

services, representing the Class of '59. Dea made a donation on behalf of our class in memory of Jim. Below is the on-line obituary:

*Jim was born September 12, 1939, in Iola, the son of James Frederick "Fred" and Bertha Madlyn (Dunton) Weeks. The family made their home in California, Oregon and Idaho before returning to Iola. Jim graduated from Iola High School in 1959.*

*On June 7, 1959, Jim married Joyce E. Baker at the Humboldt Methodist Church. They made their home in Humboldt until 1985 when they moved to their home in the country north of Humboldt.*

*Jim retired after working 32 years for the water plant in Humboldt.*

**SURVIVORS:**

*His wife: Joyce Weeks of the home*

*2 Sons: Mike Weeks & wife, Sharon and Steven Weeks all of Iola, Kansas*

*Sisters: Laura Turner of Chanute, KS and Jean Byrum of Sheldon, MO*

*His dog, Molly and cat, Lucky*

*He was preceded in death by his parents and sisters Patsy McGowan and Catherine Simmons.*

## **Resumes:**

*Most of us had part time jobs while growing up in Iola and Bob Taylor thought it would be entertaining to revisit and share what classmates did to earn a few extra bucks. Bob initiated an inquiry to classmates and got a positive response with several classmates sending in their work histories. We will be publishing a couple of these work histories in each publication, so, please forward your work bios to me ([billglee78@gmail.com](mailto:billglee78@gmail.com)) and we will get you in the "Line". With that, "Resumes" has been created with Don Darling and Phyllis Shapel being our first featured bios. Here they are in their own words. Hope you enjoy these as much as I have.*

**Donald Darling (submitted 02.15.15)**



I began working part-time at Howard and Dorothy Robinson's Grocery on East Street (near IJHS) during my 9<sup>th</sup> Grade year ('56 – '57). I stocked shelves, cleaned up and did whatever needed to be done.

At that time, my father was the local manager of the Meadow Gold (Dairy Products) Distribution Center in Iola.... next door to Robinson's Grocery. Later, while I was still in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade.....

Meadow Gold had an opening for a part-time worker to unload refrigerated trailers of product. I was chosen for the job. As I recall, we received 3-4 trailers of milk products and another of Ice cream each week..... sent to us from Meadow Gold's Topeka Plant.

Also, during the 10<sup>th</sup> thru 12<sup>th</sup> Grades .... each morning (before school ) I loaded out the two refrigerated home delivery trucks with milk, ice cream and other dairy products for local Iola delivery by our drivers during the day.

Meadow Gold operated a 'Cream Buying Station' at the Iola facility; where local producers (dairymen) would bring their cream to be tested for butterfat content and then sold to Meadow Gold. I became a licensed cream buyer and assisted in this activity as needed.

Upon graduation, I enlisted in the Kansas Army National Guard.... my next meaningful adventure.

**Bob Taylor Editor's note:** Don's part-time high school job at Meadow Gold paid him handsomely..... he actually earned \$ 1.25/hr. Pretty good for a youngster back in the '50's. As a point of interest, Mr. Darling (his father), was the adult leader of the Boy Scout Troop sponsored by the Baptist Church located on the north side of the square .... several of us were members of that Troop while we were in IJHS. He was ably assisted by Grant Alexander's father. Ret.

**Phyllis Shapel Bullard (submitted 02.21.15)**

My first job interview was on my 16<sup>th</sup> birthday with the manager of the Iola Theater. I recall driving to the theater, parking the automobile, getting money out for the parking meter and that I was extremely nervous. Now, I can't remember the manager's name. But, the interview went well and I got the job as cashier, working in the ticket booth. When I returned to the car, I realized I still had the money for the meter in my hand.

Phyllis Shapel Bullard: cont.

My duties there were to sell tickets and then balance ticket sales each night. I also had to complete a two or three page report each night before I could leave. I don't remember my hourly wage.... It couldn't have been much, but it meant a lot to me. As I recall, I worked two nights a week and Sunday afternoons there. My good friend, Ramona Lantz, also went to work at the Lola Theater..... she ran the concessions. She and I had many good times there and often walked over to Hart's Restaurant after work for hot tea.

On the same day (16<sup>th</sup> birthday), I applied at Scott's Dime Store. I got that job as well..... working behind the counter and putting the advertisements up in the windows. I worked at Scott's for a year or so.

When I left Scott's, I began working the same hours (3:30 to 5:30) after school at Kress' Five and Dime. I also worked there on Saturdays from 9:00 am until 9:00 pm. They were closed on Sundays. Through the week, when I got off at Kress' in the evenings, I'd go to work at the Theater on my scheduled days from 6:00 until 10:00. The manager let me do my homework after ticket sales slowed down. I generally closed the ticket booth around 9:00 or 9:30 and went to the upstairs office to do the reports.



Editor's favorite photo:

One of the things I remember most was the movie "The Ten Commandments".... on opening night, when I opened the ticket booth, there were people lined up all the way up the street to the stoplight on the square. A night to remember.

I always enjoyed my work at the theater. Not so much at the 'dime stores'. However, they provided spending money and helped me build a good work ethic for later years.

**Bob Taylor Editor's note:** Phyllis was greatly influenced by her father, a chemist for an oil refinery out of KC, who worked the oil fields/leases north of Lola. A man, she says, who never took a vacation. Phyllis left IHS during our Sr. year and moved to Topeka to be with her husband who was stationed in the Air Force there. She received her High School Diploma in South Carolina, where her three children were born.

[Phyllis Shapel Bullard: cont.](#)

She would go on to pursue a career in accounting, where she became the Finance Director for the Marion County School System .... retiring with 35 years of service in '05.

Phyllis and husband Bill have been married 57 years (as of 10/15) and continue to live in the home they built in 1966.

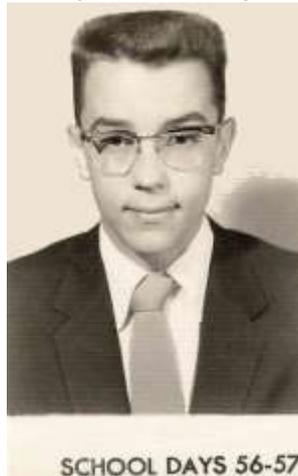
Best of all.... she reminded me (at our Classes 50<sup>th</sup> Year gathering) that she and I attended the '58 Prom together (as Juniors) and that we had a very nice evening. Ret.

## Lessons Learned in School

*In the last issue we featured the topic "Lessons Learned" growing up in Iola. The following item submitted by Dick Cooksey carried this theme a bit further and was saved for the next issue. Hope you enjoy it as much the editors did.*

### My Belated Education

By Dick Cooksey



The basic skills of primary school education programs are often described by citing the "three R's" phrase referring to reading, writing, and arithmetic. Its origin in the U.S. dates back to the early 1800's according to Wikipedia. It is used since each word in the phrase has a strong R sound at the beginning. But it can be somewhat confusing to the uneducated since two of the words do not actually begin with an R. Also, the third R might be more appropriately referred to as Reckoning and not 'Rithmetic, since Reckoning was a Victorian term for mental arithmetic in use since the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Also, it is worth noting that

during the 17<sup>th</sup> century, elementary schools in the New England colonies utilized the “four R’s” phrase in their curriculum: Reading, ‘Riting, ‘Rithmetic, and Religion.

My approach to education during my school years always tended to focus more on the areas of science and arithmetic, not only in junior high and high school, but also in both my undergraduate and graduate college courses. Reading and writing was not my forte which was readily apparent looking at my grades in English class. (Note: I was lucky to get “C’s” from both teachers Hackney & Falin in Iola.) I also did a lot of fudging for book reports by opting to read Classic Comics in high school to pull out the main ideas and then consulting CliffsNotes in college to get the jest of the material. And since both of my college degrees required no thesis, all I had to do to graduate was attend class and pass tests and I was home free. No writing or presentations required. Unfortunately, while that took a large burden off my shoulders during my school years, it showed up later as a major weakness in my chosen profession.

In 1974, I was given the opportunity to relocate with my family to New York to work as a Financial Analyst at the corporate headquarters of PepsiCo, Inc. At that time, I was working at Frito-Lay, a subsidiary of PepsiCo in Dallas, as their Manager of Financial Planning. I looked forward to the move to New York since it would be beneficial to my career advancement from exposure to other subsidiaries and to higher level executives within the organization.

Our move to New York was uneventful and we settled into our new home and community in nearby Connecticut fairly quickly. But the biggest obstacle I soon discovered was my inability to express myself with writing in a clear and concise way. However, I quickly found out I was not alone. In my new financial group, I was one of six financial analysts, all men, responsible for tracking and reporting the plans and results of PepsiCo’s subsidiaries. My assignment was following Wilson Sporting Goods headquartered in Chicago with plants throughout the U.S. manufacturing golf equipment, tennis equipment, and team sports equipment and apparel. As analysts, our job involved preparing &

presenting written reports to PepsiCo upper management about each subsidiary on a periodic basis. However, our manager, an ex-McKinsey high-powered consultant, apparently felt that none of us possessed adequate writing and presentation skills for such high-level management briefings. (For some strange reason, this reminded me of what the prison warden said to Paul Newman, the defiant inmate in the 1967 classic movie Cool Hand Luke. The memorable line was: “what we got here is a failure to communicate.”)

So, long story short, an expert in writing and presentations was brought in to teach all of us how to effectively put together a concise written report presenting the summarized facts in an organized and interesting way that excluded all the superfluous detail. As it turned out, that was no doubt the best course I have ever taken. It not only helped me better organize my thoughts for that particular assignment, but it also has been a big benefit for me throughout the rest of my career and personal life outside of the office.

To me, the lesson learned here is that useful education doesn't stop with graduations. It's a lifetime of learning throughout one's time on this planet and you've got to be ready and available to acquire it when opportunity comes knocking.

FYI: Barbara Minto was the expert utilized to improve our writing and presentation skills and I believe she is still in business. She also was an ex-McKinsey consultant that our manager previously knew so he was knowledgeable of her book and course called the Pyramid Principle. An updated version of the book is still available through Amazon.com. The pyramid structure is used to visualize how to organize your thoughts in a hierarchical way by always putting the main subject or objective at the very top of the pyramid with all of the supporting detail (facts, data, analysis, and benchmarks) in layers placed below. While the course is usually taught to consultants charged with selling proposals to their clients, it nevertheless is very beneficial for anyone interested in improving their writing and presentation skills.

A couple of key “take home points” from the class are worth mentioning. First of all, never put the supporting detail first. While this

might be acceptable in a high school term paper or an Op Ed piece, where the reader is “spoon-fed” information but somewhat held in suspense until the conclusion is revealed at the end, it is not acceptable in the business and government environment. Upper management and high level politicians are extremely busy people and will easily get easily bored waiting to find out the end result, possibly thwarting all your communication efforts. Secondly, no one wants to wade through extraneous detail. So, for example, when someone asks you for the time of day, do not start telling them how a Swiss watch is made. Thirdly, never add ideas, facts, or data that do not support the overall subject. They are extremely distracting and are a sure-fire way to lose your reader or audience.

*Send your special interest stories and work bios to me today – your classmates are interested in what is happening in your life!*

*That's all folks.*