

DUST IN THE WIND

A Class of '76 Newsletter

Volume 2

Issue 2

2006

ABRACADABRA- Clif joins the Boys in Blue! Part One

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Hi to All, It is just about Game Day! Only a few days, a few hours and a few minutes away- really. You can almost feel it in the air and if you watch any kind of sports they broadcast starting dates all of the time. But just the same, I cannot wait. Football is B.....A.....C.....K!!!!!!!!!!!!!! College football, pro football, I have missed it all. During the summer I was even watching college football classics, sorry I was just so longing for the pigskin. I hope you have your schedules all circled for your big game days and ready to pull out all the football gear to go with your favorite team. I hate to admit but I have been mischievous in the last couple of weeks. Also, I hate to say but I do have this side to me and Clif agrees it can be a bit of my dark side. Well there was the time I was so mad at him for something (that I cannot remember why) but I closed up the windows on his car and took some very, very strong perfume and let it blow. Oh, a wicked trick for someone living in very hot LV and has bad allergies. But this time I tried to use my skill in a positive way.

Clif's birthday is just around the corner.....what can I get this guy for his birthday. Really, not much since he has what he needs, when he needs it and the rest I cannot find, afford, or don't care if he ever has it. So what to do, what to do! He has been wanting me to go to the computer and pull up the Notre Dame schedule for football, so I did and what do we find. We find that ESPN, Kirk Herbstreit, says his ranking of the Golden Knothead is for national champs this year. Oh brother, on top of which the star QB Golden Knothead, Brady Quinn, will be a Heisman candidate. Remember Notre Dame QB, Joe Theisman, they ran around the campus saying Heisman Theisman, didn't turn out so well did it. I tell you this is too much to live with in my house! Where is former ESPN analyst, Trev Albert, when I need him most! I love the "BIG 12" teams, Colorado, Oklahoma, Nebraska, Texas etc.- a conference you can pull for no matter what.

This independent gig that Notre Dame has is just crazy, with their own NBC network carrying every game, every weekend, what a monopoly not to mention all the money that pulls in for soley Notre Dame. Who thought this up, Clif is just grinning.

Anyway, I do pull up the Notre Dame official site and they do come to the west

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[http://
www.
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long/
LVHS/](http://www.mers.byu.edu/long/LVHS/)



Jim McKusick's Son

Tyler McKusick Performs In You're A Good Man Charlie Brown

(Information for this story was obtained from Jim McKusick and The Tramlines MySpace web site.)

Tyler McKusick, the son of Jim McKusick, recently performed in the Broadway musical "You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown".

Tyler, who also performs in the band The Tramlines, played Snoopy.

The musical was presented by The Las Vegas International Performing Arts Exchange at the Community Lutheran Church with the final performance on July 21st.

The Tramlines were developed in 2004 by Chad Felix and Tyler McKusick as a means to step outside the box the local music scene had built around everyone.

They wrote and recorded their first songs as a duo. Knowing they would never be satisfied without playing live they then acquired the talents of bassist Cory Van Cleef and drummer Michael Catalano.

This lineup held strong throughout the writing of the I Have a Vision EP which was released in 2005. For their second phase of songwriting they enlisted the intelligent and creative musical skills of Dillon Shines.

With this addition, The Tramlines was brought to its current state of being as a blend of Indie/Rock/Pop and the more listenable aspects of Experimental.

Their influences vary greatly with emphasis on artists such as : Radiohead, The Beatles, Beck, The Arcade Fire, Sonic Youth, The Flaming Lips, Wilco, and plenty more. Over the course of these two years The Tramlines has become much more than just a band.

It's a bond between the five individuals that can not be reciprocated by anyone. It's a genuine passion for all aspects of it. It's a vision only they can see, but willingly let everyone else experience.



Tyler McKusick

The Tramlines are:

Michael Catalano: Drums
Vocals

Chad Felix: Vocals Piano
Synth Guitar

Tyler Mckusick: Vocals
Guitar Synth

Dillon Shines: Guitar
Vocals Piano Percussion

Cory VanCleef: Bass



RAMBLINGS FROM THE EDITOR

I hope everyone enjoyed this article from the LA Times. I thought it was interesting how their class connected on line and we made an effort with the newsletter. I wanted to get this issue out to share the article because the next few issues will be related to our reunion and the photos that were posted to the web site. The article continues on the next few pages. Hopefully by then, someone else will share their memories of the reunion. Judy and I are meeting soon to identify the photos placed on the web site from our fantastic web master David Long. I would also like to ask if anyone would be adverse to me using their bio's from the memory book in future issues of the newsletter. If you don't want me to use your bio, please let me know. In the last issue of the newsletter I ran a LVHS alumni e-mail. Our high school is trying to keep track of alumni and they had this address on the school web site. Don't forget, this newsletter is for you to spread the news about members of our class. Share stories about weddings, meetings between class members, births etc. We had a great class and it would be great to hear what you, your kids, and partners have been up to. Don't forget to visit the LVHS web site: <http://www.mers.byu.edu/long/LVHS/> A lot of new photos have been added. You can also print copies of the photos and news letters. See you next issue.

Dennis

COLUMN ONE

Class of '76 Got Chatty

Before their 30-year reunion, the author and scores of Claremont High classmates went online to really get to know one another.

By Terril Yue Jones, Times Staff Writer

July 8, 2006

We became a notorious crook, a movie star, a cartoonist. We broke gender barriers, designed nuclear weapons and cleared the skies after Sept. 11.

And across time and distance, we became friends.

As Claremont High School's class of 1976 geared up for its 30-year reunion today, the teenagers who went on to become teachers, cops, car salesmen, lawyers, architects and pilots reconnected over the last couple of months with technology none of us could have imagined then — and all of us take for granted today.

A couple hundred of us are in touch on the Internet. We reflect on coming of age in the mid-70s in eastern Los Angeles County — in the post-Watergate, post-Vietnam War era of civil rights and equal rights, when Gerald Ford was president and disco ruled the airwaves.

This online "preunion" allowed us to recount our successes and failures, showcase our families, lament our expanding waistlines and receding hairlines. As we

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Class of '76 Got Chatty

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swapped ancient memories, we got to know again — or for the first time — classmates with whom we shared our youth.

I missed out on knowing many of them the first time around. I spent my senior year in Japan with my family while my professor father took a sabbatical. To make up for it, I started a chat group on Yahoo that now includes almost half of our class of 500.

E-mail exchanges have blossomed on the subjects of teachers we despised and loved — sometimes going back to kindergarten — teenage crushes and first kisses, life's embarrassing moments, disabled children, politics, freedom of speech, corporate greed and global warming.

The semi-anonymity of our cyber-conversations has encouraged people to open up. One pal recalled his reddest-faced moment in high school, when someone stole his jockstrap and hung it up in English class, its owner's name emblazoned in big block letters. Others spoke of brushes with life-threatening illness.

So when we get together today at Claremont's Cahuilla Park, we'll be able to dispense with many of the usual pleasantries. We'll know what so-and-so has been doing all these years. With luck, we'll be able to do what is rarely possible at high school reunions: form new bonds. Thirty years ago, we felt immortal and

unique. Now, as we close in on 50, we feel our mortality — at least 18 classmates have died — and recognize that, for all the things that make each of us special, we are more alike than different.

"I've learned so much more about the people I spent my childhood with, and who they've turned into, than I ever could have at an ordinary reunion party," said Eric Daniels, whose lifelong fascination with movies and art led to a career as an animator. He won a technical achievement award from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in 2003. "People who wouldn't spend two minutes with me in a roomful of people with drinks in their hands are opening up about deep, personal things.

"I find it much more fascinating than the inevitable who-looks-more-like-hell-than-whom comparisons or struggling to put that I-recognize-you expression on your face when, in fact, you don't. I think this virtual reunion has gone a long way toward breaking down the social walls that we, perhaps unwittingly, erected 30 years ago.

"I mean, hey, I've actually had conversations with our cheerleaders."

Hundreds of high school graduating classes mark their 30-year anniversaries every year in Southern California. But this class in the unassuming, leafy college town of Claremont always felt it was different.

We were situated among the Claremont Colleges, which many saw as bestowing a lively intellectual cachet on our cultural oasis amid L.A.'s suburban sprawl.

Plus, we were the class of 1976, graduating on the bicentennial. It was a presidential election year, an Olympic year, the year "Disco Duck" by Rick Dees & His Cast of Idiots and "Disco Lady" by Johnnie Taylor hit No. 1 on the Billboard magazine charts — though so did the syrupy "Afternoon Delight" by the Starland Vocal Band and "I Write the Songs" by Barry Manilow.

We felt the class had a spirit of '76 running through it. Claremont High's class of 1975 didn't even have a 30th reunion.

Until three months ago, not having a reunion would have been fine with Ben Waldman, who said he in effect flunked as a junior and left Claremont High a year early, earning credits at Citrus Community College before getting a GED.

He hardly looked back and didn't count any high school contemporaries among his close friends. But like me, he has made fast friends online with people whom he never had spoken to in high school.

"Music, art, travel, science, politics are all discussed with passion and knowledge," said Waldman, who

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Class of '76

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went on to work in Ronald Reagan's White House and served as televangelist and presidential candidate Pat Robertson's press deputy. "It is said that small people talk about people, average people talk about things and big people talk about ideas. This is a group of big people."

Martin Hewitt dreamed of making it big in Hollywood, and it happened much quicker than he expected. He had envisioned a Shakespearean career, but suddenly he was starring opposite Brooke Shields in Franco Zeffirelli's "Endless Love," a steamy 1981 tale of forbidden teen romance.

Hewitt got into acting after high school, studying at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts, at the time in Pasadena. His only previous experience was an eighth-grade role in "The King and I." But he answered an open casting call and beat out 5,000 men for his first screen part.

Another aspiring actor also made his debut in the movie: Tom Cruise, whose Hollywood trajectory gathered a bit more upward momentum than Hewitt's.

"I started at the top. My first professional acting role was in a starring role in a Universal Studios film," he said. "I didn't even get the chance to get my feet wet. So after that film, it was sort of a downward path."

The movies got smaller, with titles such as "Carnal Crimes" and "Night Rhythms." He eventually left show business. The father of two now owns a home inspection service in San Luis Obispo.

"Now, I do theater locally, which is fun and I love it," he said. "And I'm making better money now with my business than I was acting. Being an actor is a full-time job looking for work."

If Hewitt became our most famous alumnus, Rick Cunningham was our most infamous. For a guy no one has seen or heard from in more than 25 years, Cunningham is a hot topic among the class of 1976.

In 1980, Cunningham allegedly pulled off what at the time was the biggest insider heist in the history of Brink's, the security and armored car company. Cunningham was one of five guards at the Brink's gold vault in Los Angeles. One day in July 1980, he didn't show up for work, and a hurried inventory found \$1.55 million in South African gold Krugerrand coins missing.

The FBI determined that Cunningham had probably removed the coins a few at a time. He apparently made a clean getaway. Police found his car abandoned at Ontario International Airport that August. They've been looking for him ever since.

I didn't know Cunningham in high school. He was no stranger to the wrong side of the law, according to classmates. Stories abound of his pocketing the contents of the cash register at the Taco Bell where he worked; claiming to have been robbed; getting hold of a master key to campus by being football team manager and stealing math and history tests along with money from the coffee fund; erasing his late fees from logbooks; and swiping football jerseys from the gym.

Cunningham's story has been the subject of much speculation among us.

"I am so fascinated by that story to this day," said Tawnni Lockhart, a classmate who remembers standing lookout while Cunningham swiped a math test. She was not in Cunningham's math class and didn't benefit from the pre-knowledge, she was quick to add. By now, she mused, "he could have had plastic surgery, show up at our reunion, and no one would be the wiser."

Tom St. Clair is another classmate who's had a brush with history. After being introduced to airplanes by a Claremont High math teacher, he became a supervisor at the Federal Aviation Administration's Air Traffic Control System Command Center, the office that grounded all civilian and commercial planes after the Sept. 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

St. Clair was painting furniture in the sunroom of his suburban Maryland home that morning, when his wife called him to watch the awful news on TV. He headed into work and manned the phones with FAA offices all over the country.

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Class of '76 Got Chatty

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His work schedule will prevent St. Clair from attending today's reunion the way he did the 10th and 20th. He's disappointed. At a typical reunion, he said, "you don't even talk to everybody. You kind of walk up and say, "Who the heck are you?""

After reading some of the nearly 10,000 e-mails that were exchanged within three months, St. Clair became "excited and impressed about what people are doing with their lives. It's fun to reconnect, especially with the people I didn't know. I regret our cliques kept us from knowing each other in high school."

Carrie Gronewald, formerly Banwell, shared St. Clair's fascination with planes and broke barriers even in high school. A straight-A student, she was the first female president of our Science Club and the first woman to join the men's varsity swim team.

She went on to the Air Force Academy as part of the first class of women to attend the previously all-male military academies. She put up with the sometimes-ferocious hazing that causes many cadets to break down and drop out.

After earning degrees in biology and electrical engineering, Gronewald spent her Air Force career as a missile project officer and manager on avionics, weapons and NASA space station projects. Currently she's a software project manager for a wireless communications company.

A fascination with math and physics led Blake Wood to design nuclear weapons at Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico, specifically B-61 gravity bombs carried by B-52 and B-2 bombers and F-15 fighters and W-78 warheads attached to Minuteman intercontinental ballistic missiles.

"The reason I'm so excited about the 30th is that there are all these people I didn't know in high school, and these people are now my friends. Robbie Haerr — before, I'd look across the room, maybe nod hello," Wood said, referring to an ex-football player and drummer for the band the Ravelers who is one of the most prolific posters to the list. "For the last couple of months, we've been hearing the intimate details of everyone's life. Now, we're truly friends."

High school threw us together. But its cliques kept many of us apart. Thirty years later, as we muddle through middle age the way we muddled through adolescence, we are discovering what our own high schoolers find on websites like MySpace: The Internet can create a social glue that transcends cliques and time and distance.

"All these years have gone by, and I deprived myself of the pleasure of getting to know all of these great people," Waldman said. "My addiction to this list is fueled by the shared history, but also by the current struggles and interests we now share."

Hewitt hopes that tonight, he can continue the conversations begun online.

"We've had this forum for looking at each other without seeing each other directly," he said. "I'm getting to know individuals whom I never even met in high school. For the few hours we're going to spend, it's going to be worth the drive."

<http://www.mers.byu.edu/long/LVHS/>

ABRACADABRA-

Clif joins the Boys in Blue! Part One



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coast to play Pac 10 teams. I tell Clif -that if you so yearn for tickets for this prestigious team that by the way has no defense-just check with Ohio St. Clif, you will need to be a HUGE donor, part of the alumni or a student. Oh and did I mention there is a lottery system at Notre Dame and not just for this year but for the next two years. So what is it Clif? I can however, get you the University of Wyoming Cowboys schedule and see about tickets when they play BYU. Lucky you, you are a donor! He grumbles that the coach, Charlie Weiss, has not personally offered a few tickets and that basically Ashley should

of attended Notre Dame. I again mention that she is a proud graduate of the Univ. of Wyo. and that he has on occasion spoke with the head coach, Joe Glenn. Remember that time Clif you offered to help him find the QB solution for Cowboys, how did that turn out? Well later I do scroll through the schedule of Notre Dame and I do even pick up the phone and call Notre Dame about tickets for anywhere but as I have said, it is a no go! Ahh, that is a shame, hey I did my best. But I see a flaw in the system, that I am certain someone with no brains at all, goofed up. I see on the schedule for Nov. 11, the Boys in Blue, the cadets. Isn't America great, the Golden Knotheads go play Air Force at the Air Force Academy. Some things the University of Notre Dame ticket office does not have control over and that is the tickets at the Air Force Academy. So off I go to a new refreshing website! And there it is- tickets for games, hey even mini packages for several games. No lotteries, no alumni, not even a golden dome hanging around. Just click and buy tickets. Of course there is always a glitch isn't there? Displayed on the website are mini packages. So just pick a few games and you get tickets for all the games and what a deal you have. Well that is where I headed, a mini plan of games. Here you have Air Force against, Univ. of Utah, Univ. of New Mexico, and Notre Dame. Tickets for all three games will cost 81.00. I think that is very good deal, but I hold back and make the call to our resident, "Head of the Four Horsemen"



and he says no! This I cannot believe, NO, did you say NO! Yes he said NO. I say-No tickets for the Notre Dame Game, that is what you are saying or are you talking to some poor little train crew who has derailed the train somewhere out in nowhere. He tells me he does not want to buy tickets for two games he is not planning on going to. But who cares, YOU will have your tickets to see Notre Dame, give the other tickets to someone else. We live in UTAH for heavens sake. No, he says again. I have 4 minutes and 43 seconds on the clock before these tickets are gone! I cannot believe he has just told me NO! So I call him again, which by the way he has no voice mail on his cell phone because it costs too much money to answer the voice mails. I give him one more chance, a last chance in my book. Two minutes and counting.....
Yes, part two coming soon.....



Love to all,
Leslie Mallett