

***The Balding Eagle* – Newsletter of the ESHS CLASS OF 1944**
Vol. I, Issue 1 – January 2006

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL: This year will mark the 62nd anniversary of our graduation, and the first year of our efforts to re-establish contact, in some sort of a continuing manner, with the good friends of our youth. There have been re-unions, and informal get-togethers, like last years Homecoming Event, but the two class clowns decided to take matters a step further and see if we couldn't promote a more open venue of information exchange among those interested in sharing their lives with the rest of us.

This is not an original idea of either of your co-editors. We are actually parroting what Wilton Kanode of the class of 1947 has been doing for years.

Howard Rainey is going to write something he will title "Rainey Daze" and Bob Widen will put together a column he titles "Widen's World." How successful all of this is going to be will be dependent more on contributions of news items from our readership than what we do. People are going to get sick of hearing about the two of us after about two issues, if that is all there is. So, Hello! Out There! Send in your cards, letters, and e-mails and tell us what you are doing, did do, or wish you had done.

RAINEY DAZE – It is all Widen's fault. One morning, in the twelfth year of my retirement, I was doing what retired gentlemen should be doing, reading my newspaper. With no concern for peace and quiet, "Prescott Bob" calls all hot and bothered about the reorganization of the El Segundo High School Alumni Association. On any day, of any week, in any year, this piece of information, to me, is not a grabber. In fact, under no circumstances, threat, or attempt to persuade, will I become involved in such an enterprise. No, no, and forever, no!

My mentor, and yours truly, are members of the reorganized Alumni Association Board of Directors; but be assured, my position is only temporary. In addition, we have agreed to serve as co-reps for the Class of 1944. In this capacity, we have no idea what we are doing, so what is new. However, over time, something surely will happen that makes sense. For example, our first contact with you people resulted in a fair response. Hopefully, we will be able to establish a means to contact, keep in touch, and up date old friends. To make this work, we will need your input regarding personal, past, and present activities. Keep in mind, if we don't hear from you, all you will get is news about Rainey and Widen, which can be tolerated just so long.

Our class roster is included herewith. If you find an error, or know an address of a lost classmate, please pass it on so I can update our records. Also, your telephone number and/or email address would be helpful to us. Be assured, if such info is sent, we will not include it in the roster unless authorized to do so. If you don't want us to have it, don't send it. Believe me, it's scary when the Arizona Kid makes phone calls.

OK, that takes care of the house cleaning chores, so where do we go from here. For starters, I think, the next issue of *The Balding Eagle* should begin with an article along the lines of "whatever happened to....," might work. I'll think about that unless a better idea comes up. The more I think about it, the better I like it, since it gives me a forum to write my bio: "How I turned the World around in 79 years." That is so scary, maybe Bob will kick me off his team.

Before wrapping this up, I would be remiss not to mention a few of our old friends. We were finally able to track Bill Dally down, now living in Oregon, after moving from Anaheim, CA; likewise, Harold Dally is now living in Bullhead City, AZ.----Bob Widen had lunch with

Milton Goodhart at the latter's ranch in Hemet in early October. Unfortunately, Milt is fighting some 'bad guys,' but tells me by telephone he is optimistic about the outcome. ---Paul Sheldon, up Bakersfield way, is also fighting some health problems but is equally optimistic re: his progress.---Dick Griffin tells me he is playing bass fiddle with the San Luis Obispo Symphony. I seem to recall he also played the trombone at ESHS, is that right Dick?---Dale Hozboog, up in Oak Harbor on Whidbey Island, WA., doubts he will ever make it this way again, but does think about us, and wants to keep in touch. Stan Lyman echos a similar interest. Bill Foley and Stan Jeppesen sent in e-mail memos relating their interest in keeping in the mix.---Bill Haley and wife, Beni, checked in from nearby Manhattan Beach---Pat Fleming is still active in the travel business, as well as traveling herself. Her last trip, before Christmas, was to Tuscany, Italy. Hard to realize, her family, and mine, socialized long before kindergarten days---Joyce Heusser wrote a nice note from the same city from which Marylyn Manly sent a season's greeting. (Maiden names are used so as not to confuse me.) If I were a brighter fellow, it wouldn't be necessary. Hope no one is offended.

WIDEN'S WORLD – El Segundo, January, 2006 – This article is put together with apologies to those of you who have visited the fair city of our youth recently and made these observations for yourself. My sister, Shirley, class of '52 still lives in El Segundo, and I am a frequent visitor there. These observations are based upon those visits.

The greatest change in the past seven years is the completion of the renovation of the High School. For the first time since 1998, there are no construction fences, trucks and other evidence of tearing down or building up. The parking lot between the auditorium and the Manual Arts building has become a very attractive inner quadrangle. The tennis courts on Mariposa St. are gone and the parking lot is in their place. There are still tennis courts on the Oak St. side of the campus next to the boy's gym. Of course, the entire campus facility stretches from Main St. to Sheldon St. where the school district administrative offices are now located.

The recreation park, between Eucalyptus on the west, Pine Ave. on the North, Sheldon St. on the east and the old Pacific Electric railroad tracks on the south is a gem of a facility. It houses three baseball fields, six tennis courts, bowling green, shuffleboard courts, a roller skating rink, and a Senior Citizens center as well as plenty of picnic tables and bar-b-que stoves. This inventory is not complete. There is a community club house on the Pine St. side. It has a stage, among other things, and is used for meetings, exercise classes, and children's programs. Citizens are entitled to be proud of their small, postage stamp size community in comparison to the larger ones surrounding it.

The High School still radiates the image of a private prep school. It has a student body of about 1000, 250 approximately in each of the four classes. About 25-30% of the students are "permit kids." That is, they attend El Segundo High School from outside the school district on permits. Some are from Westchester, and a few from as far away as Palos Verdes. People with whom I've talked in town, tell me that it is a good place to go to school if you are in the top half of the class, but if you are in the lower half, it would be a disappointment. The focus appears to be on college preparation, something that was the exception in our school days. Even so, about a dozen of our class graduated from college and maybe half of those obtained M.A. degrees.

The population of El Segundo in 1944 was probably no more than five or six thousand. Today it is about 16,000. What I found most striking as I have walked and driven around town is that there are no vacant lots. Well, yes, there is one on east Mariposa between California and Kansas St. Last summer the owner tore down the existing house and hauled it off. The vacant lot

is listed with the Ruane Real Estate agency for \$800,000. The median home price is just under that figure. A large portion of the population lives in apartments scattered throughout the community.

The downtown area has managed to develop some village-like charm. It reminds me, in some ways, of New York's upper-east side neighborhood around 94th and 3rd ave. where my younger son lives. El Segundo would be even more "senior friendly" than selected areas of New York if it were not for the horrendous cost of real estate. A senior can buy a photo I.D pass for the Los Angeles Metropolitan transit system for \$4 per month and ride any of the areas light rail system trains or buses that pass through the town for no extra charge. For those no longer driving their own cars that is a god send. Also, of course, you can walk nearly anywhere in town in twenty minutes or less.

Medical services are a little shaky. There are dentists and doctors, but the nearest hospital is either Torrance Memorial or Centinela Memorial in Inglewood across from the cemetery. To my knowledge there are no medical specialists in town. They are spread out between El Segundo and Torrance. I prefer Torrance Memorial, about 8 miles distant. Using a hospital across from a cemetery makes me nervous. Most of my diseased relatives are buried there and I'm in no hurry to join them.

There are many more interesting facts about our little town. That is enough for now. If no one asks any questions or offers comments, this could be the first and last edition of this novice publication. Let us hear from you. Cheers!!