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January 2006

Staples '55 Newsletter
"All the news that's fit to dish..."

Springtime greetings from New Hampshire. I think...
The unusually warm winter has left NH skiers p_____d off and the rest of us confused.
It is not that uncommon to find patches of snow and ice in early May up here, and
yet, here we are: The sun is shining, grass is greening, buds are budding, and it's
not even September yet...!

In this Issue...

Muriel Burke Sutton, RIP More sad news (see below). New email addresses.
staples55.com update. Newsletter update. Reunion ideas. Must-click links.

Cliff Clifford, Editor & Publisher

Muriel Burke Sutton, RIP
Long-time resident of Fairfield

Word of Muriel's passing came from her long-time friend, Lynn Harding Huck who
passed it to Gail Armitage Heath who passed it to me. According to Lynn, she learned
from Muriel's sister (Muriel and Lynn's husband were cousins) that Muriel had
succumbed to pneumonia after having suffered one or more strokes. A long-time
resident of Fairfield, Muriel taught in both Westport and Fairfield school systems,
as we read in the Connecticut Post obit of 3-12-06:
Muriel Burke Sutton, age 68, longtime Fairfield resident, died Friday, March 10,
2006. She was a graduate of Marymount College and received a masters degree from
Fairfield University. Muriel was a teacher for several years in Westport and Our
Lady of the Assumption School in Fairfield. Predeceased by her husband, Charles
"Ted" Sutton, she is survived by a son, Kevin Sutton and wife, Ellen, of Fairfield;
a sister, Carol Hull and her husband, Donald, of Milford; a niece, Kathy Elson of
Milford; and a nephew, Jim Hull of Virginia.

The obituary is posted in its entirety on the Deceased page (www.staples55.com).

Staples '55 Photo Blog
Spring Update

Mailed website announcement. Following up on Chuck Banks' suggestion about a
mailing to classmates without any known email address,
The mailing was a simple announcement of our class blog www.staples55.com ,
requesting folks to share photos, clippings, reminiscences of growing up in
Westport/Weston/Wilton.

Thanks to Deanna--who volunteered to address and mail some 80 individual envelopes to
classmates, the mailing was completed in March. Deanna recently asked me about the
response: "How was the response from the mailing? I have left over supplies
including \$5?? in stamps. Do you want me to send everything back to you or hold for

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my next assignment? (How's that for class spirit...?)

In reply to the mailing we received email or snail mail responses from the following classmates:

Georgianna Maurer Mills
Craig Cooper
Lynn Harding Huck
Cynthia Whitehead Nord
Martha Ruggles Updike

Not an overwhelming response, by any means. Nevertheless, every one of our classmates beyond email reach who can still read should now know about our class photo blog and has been encouraged to share. Sort of confirms what we all sort of know intuitively: some of the class want to reconnect (to wit the great attendance at our 50th reunion), and some flat out don't at this point, or can't. Nothing we can do about it. I'm sure it's the same for any class.

Since the last newsletter, we've posted the following new or updated email addresses to the blog (see Contacts page):

Russ Mumma
Shirley Dexter Barnett
Dave Ruckert
Heather Merryman Moz (update)
Jacee McCluckie Fournier (update)
Carol Hesse Marsland
John Leopold
Nancy Needham
Mary Ann Dennert Alley
Mike Hyman

We've passed a milestone of sorts: the blog has now had over 1,000 hits (visits) to date. That's very encouraging even recognizing that a small percentage of these hits are my own as I update the site. Of course, "visits" do not mean unique visitors; just the simple total number of visits to staples55.com. (Who knows, maybe some of them visited accidentally while trying to buy office supplies...).

Web content. As a reminder of what we're looking for in website content, here's a repeat of the items requested in the previous newsletter:

Recollections we need childhood recollections from as many of you who can still remember who you are and what you remember from childhood/adolescence. They needn't be Pulitzer Prize-worthy. Louise Higgins--God rest her soul--won't be grading them. Just a paragraph or two about a strange or wonderful or funny or tragic moment growing up in Westport, Weston or Wilton. Or embarrassing.

Especially embarrassing.

Photos and Clippings If you come across any old photos or newspaper clippings your mom saved for you, please share them with the class by emailing (or mailing) them to me. I'll be very careful with them and get them back to you safely. Emailed digital photos are preferred, of course (no scanning).

Lifestyles Any good photos of you and/or spouse hunting grizz up in the Rockies? Deep-sea diving? Hanging from an airplane? Or maybe just gardening or belly up snoozing in your hammock? The class would love to get a handful of photos of you and family from recent years--as a kind of photo essay of the lifestyle you've chosen.

Since last newsletter I've posted the following to our website:

Red Barn Photos "Wilton Contingent" group photo submitted by Terry Meguire Valliant.

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Reunion Reflections Suggesting a "bygone era" tour of Westport for out-of-town classmates at our next reunion. Great idea from Gail Armitage Heath.

Deceased Shirley Rice Hyman obituary.

Lifestyles Dave and Suzanne Ruckert retirement photo. Also "Healing through Creativity" art exhibition. Photo shows Carol Hesse Marsland's "unique work of art [reflecting] one woman's personal experience with breast cancer."

News & Gossip "Cavorting with Sandra, Diane, Nancy and Susie" by Sandra Salembier Eskey.

Contacts Many new authorized listings, now totaling about 40% of known classmate email addresses.

Staples '55 Blog Announcement

Staples 55 Blog: Future Directions
What's next for staples55.com?

In recent years there has been an acceleration in the technological development of so-called Content Management Systems (CMS). As defined by Wikipedia (see link below), "(CMS) is a computer software system for organizing and facilitating collaborative creation of documents and other content. A content management system is frequently a web application used for managing websites and web content..." I have recently come across just such a software package that, I think, will better serve our needs than the software currently in use. That is:

It better allows the juxtaposition of text and images. The current software provides this feature but it is awkward to use. In no cases that I have seen, however, including the new software I am talking about, can you enter a caption under a photo. Hence any photo that needs a comment needs to be done in Photoshop or other photo-editing software, a somewhat more time-consuming process.

It provides a search capability. It will allow users to search for content "categories" which are user-definable. For instance if you are only interested in classmate obituaries, the site will arrange itself to display relevant pages first. It better implements the "comment" function. The current software also provides comments from site visitors, but I was not wild about its implementation, so I haven't enabled it. The new software has a nice, user-friendly interface and will hopefully encourage anyone with a mind to do so, to comment!

And so, over the summer I plan to migrate staples55.com from its current platform to the new. The domain name (staples55.com) should not change--it should all work precisely the same, except that its appearance will be new. And hopefully better.

Although the software is "open source", meaning free, we may have to pay a bit more for the hosting. But don't worry, I should be able to get us a good deal. We will continue to have to pay for the domain name and--depending on the hosting deal--the domain name forwarding service.

Brenda Colley Darien High School - Class of '56

A Civics Lesson
Further evidence of the dumbing down of America

If you were an alien (and you know who you are...), could you pass this test to become a U.S. citizen?

Jacee forwarded me the following link to a 30-question civics test. According to her email, 96% of all high school seniors fail this test (24 - 30 is a passing grade). Worse yet, 50% of all seniors taking the test also fail.

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God help us!

On the other hand, thanks to the good souls what learnt us back in the westport school system, three of us who took the test did somewhat better:

John Ottinger - 28. Scholarly!

Jacee - 25. Way to go, Jacee!

Cliff - 24. Just eeking by, as usual...

So give it your best shot and let me know how you did (we're on the honor system here). I'll publish the results in the next newsletter. While you're at it, check the answers to the ones you missed.

Civics Test

email: geocliff@adelphia.net (The email address shown at left is dead and the software won't let me update it. The correct address is geocliff@adelphia.net.)

This email was sent to geocliff@adelphia.net, by geocliff@adelphia.net
Update Profile/Email Address | Instant removal with SafeUnsubscribe™ | Privacy Policy. Powered by

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