50TH HIGH SCHOOL REUNION SPEECH

FOR

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Hello everyone!!! It’s so great to be here to celebrate this milestone event with all of you. We hear of stories of reconnecting after years have gone by, and some of us have attended other high school reunions in the past, but to be here with all of you and your spouses and friends to celebrate the 50th reunion of the graduating class of 1962 of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ High School is truly a “once in a lifetime” opportunity and gift. Let’s take some time to reconnect and share those great memories and moments that helped to build our foundations and contribute to who we are today.

I would like to invite all of you to look over your shoulders –just a little bit, to that time when life was somewhat less complicated, and allow me, as your class president, to welcome all of you here tonight. In a sort of “Back to the Future way,” let’s time travel just a little, and reminisce about our lives as we poised ourselves at the starting line of our future.

We all came of age in a pivotal era that left its footprint on society. As we began our high school careers in 1959, we witnessed the birth of the Barbie doll, movie tickets were $1.00, and “Bonanza” began on TV. 1962 was the year we graduated and it was also the year that the Cold War heated up and we learned about the Cuban missile crisis, the first Wal-Mart store opened, and … not that I want to stir up too much frustration, but gasoline cost 28 cents a gallon! We were on the brink of adulthood and if anyone wanted to attend Harvard University, the tuition was a little over $1500.00! Of course we also had to consider that an average annual salary at the time was less than $6,000.00 a year, so we still had to consider our budgets and our career choices wisely, no matter where we chose to lead our lives.

The Beatles began their ascent into pop culture in that year-actually, they experienced their early growing pains in 1962 as they tried to get a record label to back them, and Elvis, Del Shannon and Sinatra all hit and maintained their strides. In July of that year, AT+T launched the first commercial communications satellite into orbit, and in a way, it coordinated with our launch into adult life. That was the beginning of a whole new world, and the world was just beginning for us.

It seems like only yesterday that we were all doing our homework, participating in classroom debates and honing the tools and skills that would take us to where we are today. Sometimes it’s hard to believe that we’ve seen and done so much with our lives. We’ve taken the lessons learned at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ High School and we’ve worked to mold the realities of adulthood, our families and our children and grandchildren. We made friendships that we thought might last a lifetime, and guess what? They did! (**Point to the audience**). As students, we learned about social responsibility and we took those lessons to our communities and jobs as we all worked in our own ways to create and maintain a worthwhile world for our children and their children, and here we are, together again. It’s a gift to have the opportunity to get together, remember, share and take a collective look at our mutual foundation and where it’s taken us. We have all made significant achievements, and the proof of that is that we are here to tell about it. For those of you who entered the professional world, thank you for taking the time to learn and teach and contribute to the community around you. For those of you who have spent the last 50 years building families, thank you for giving us our country’s future. For those of you who think that “nothing much” has happened since you graduated, look again and remember what a gift this evening is!! We made it! And you’re part of the history of this great school and this community!

Although I mentioned earlier that Frank Sinatra maintained his popularity through our high school careers, one of the songs he is probably most well known for was a big hit a few years after we graduated. In 1969, he sang about doing things “My Way,” and I think we can all have a clearer appreciation of some of those lyrics as we look back on our life experiences so far. In the song, he tells us, “I’ve lived a life that’s full, I traveled each and every highway,” and “”There were times…when I bit off more than I could chew …I faced it all and I stood tall and did it my way.” We did the same, and we did it our way as well, and looking back with all of you has shown me that no matter how much we think we may have grown or drifted, you can take the man or woman out of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ High School, but you can’t take the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ High School out of us!!! Here’s to having a wonderful reunion and may we all meet again in happiness, health and success at our 60th!

Thank you all!