

April 30, 2018

The Way I See It

The weather has been gorgeous for the last few days, at least for Cheryl and me. We went to Bartow for the 55th Class Reunion of Summerlin Institute, from which we both graduated: just not in the same year. She is quick to remind me that I'm older. I graduated in 1963 and she is in the Class of 1965, the same year as my sister, Helen.

We had a fantastic time and it was special for me to see so many classmates that I haven't seen since we graduated from high school. Cheryl, on the other hand, has been to my reunions since they started with her husband, Sam, who passed into glory about eleven years ago. So, when I didn't know someone, which was most of the time, she would prod me and explain as she frittered from one to another doing what she does best – talking. I don't call her a chatter box for nothing.

Thank goodness we all had name tags with pictures of what we used to look like and in some cases, there wasn't too much change, but in others, I was kind of shocked. Speechless would be a more appropriate word and I kind of wanted to say, "what happened?", which would have been rude and would have opened the door for them to say the same to me.

We had a small class by some standards – 166 – which I think was just right. This past weekend was chuck full of nostalgia and leaving to come back home was bittersweet. I imagine it was the same for the rest of the class who lives in other parts of the country.

I can honestly say that the break from the news was a welcome reminder that there are other things in this world which do not revolve around politics. I did not see a television set the entire weekend, didn't listen to one word on talk radio, or pick up a newspaper. I wasn't even tempted to find out what the latest intriguing event was, and frankly, I'm thinking of just tuning out most of the garbage – but I know that I won't.

Cheryl and I both are interested in politics because of the effect it has on all of us. We do have responsibilities as citizens to be informed and to vote in the elections. I used the word "informed", and I hope and pray that when you do go

to vote, that you will be informed and not just cast a vote for someone because they look good, or because they say the right things, but primarily judge what you believe their effectiveness in that office will be. Of course, honesty and integrity are supremely important. Everyone is honest, at least from time to time, or in some cases, occasionally. Integrity is another story though. Integrity is defined as total honesty and sincerity. That to me, means doing the right thing when no one else is looking, or will ever know – except God and you. Integrity is doing what is correct and proper and morally responsible, regardless of the impact on yourself. Others may find fault, laugh, and figure you for a “do-gooder”, but that’s ok.

We are having early voting now for the primary elections. Please do not consider these elections as trivial. Voting in every election is important and it’s your responsibility as a citizen of this great nation to participate fully in our government. I sincerely hope that you will do your duty.

We, in my high school class, held an election for Class President, in my Senior year. Steve Early was elected as our President, and of course, we had other officers too, and I marvel at the wisdom our class demonstrated at our young age. Steve has represented our class throughout all these years, and thankfully, he is in good health and still going strong. As well as the rest of our officers, but Steve has worked hard to keep us together. My point is that through these years I am sure there has been times he may have wished he didn’t bear the responsibility, but he has persevered, making each reunion or get-together memorable.

We have a fantastic class though. Through the years they have stuck together with grace and humor and remembering how good we had life, during a wonderful period of our lives, living in a great town and attending a great school.

Oh, by the way! Summerlin Institute was not an institution for wayward kids. It started out as a military school, turned into a public school, but retained the discipline young minds full of mush required to become responsible citizens.

God bless all of you. Please pray for our country. God bless Charlton County, Georgia, and the USA.