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# ***Bowie Alumni Newsletter***

***Vol. VIII No. II, September 6, 2008***



## **From the Editor of the Bowie Alumni Newsletter**

Larry Lagle - Class of 1958



### **REPORT ON 2008 ALUMNI REUNION**

This report is a combination of my memories of the reunion and reports I received from Evelyn (Spikes) Lathram and others. I am asking for your contributions in getting more information about the reunion for the next Newsletter. While attending the reunion, I wasn't thinking as a "reporter", I was just too busy being another alumni. Also, I was still in shock from seeing the town. I'm really saddened by the way it has declined. For those of you with email addresses, part of the following will be an update of the email I sent out in July.

It was reported to me, by several alumni, that the driving force of planning and organizing the reunion this year was the product of a lot of hard work by Evelyn (Spikes) Lathram and Nancy-Jean Welker. Darren Yelton, Vic Boll, Ernie and Bobbie (Scott Welker) Blandin helped Nancy-Jean and Evelyn with setting up the program, making arrangements, and getting things together. Evelyn set up the new Walls of Merit display and the Veterans display. The display was set up in the upstairs hallway and was admired and read by everyone.

Several people helped and worked under the direction of Florina (Tapia) Christiernsson to set up the memorabilia room. Florina worked tirelessly organizing all the memorabilia and spent a lot of time putting together a great exhibit of pictures and yearbooks. Everyone enjoyed looking for familiar faces and remembering classmates. Bobby Montana arranged for the photographer. He works with the company who publishes the memory book. Phil and Marina Tapia donated their time to help with the registration and the dance. The following school staff were especially helpful in the organizing, set up, and clean up of the various locations: David Diaz, Luz (Reza) Newell, Gary Schaefer, Vicki (Reza) Romero, Samantha Diaz, Kim Grant, San Juana Sanchez, and Martha Palacios. An extra big thank you for their help goes to Danny Newell and Arturo Cuevas. The following businesses contributed to the reunion: Big Tex B.B.Q. (Willcox); Safeway (Willcox); Trophies-N-Tees (Safford; pens and t-shirts); Ft. Bowie Vineyards (Bowie); PJ's Corner (Bowie); and the Bowie Unified School District. A special thanks has to be given to the Governing Board - Barth Morin, Ernie Blandin, Kim Klump, John Rios and Nancy-Jean Welker.

Ken Ansley, as always, deserves our thanks for being the driving force behind the Bowie School Reunion Group, even though he was unable to attend the reunion this year.

Again we need to give a huge thank you to Nancy-Jean Welker, the chairperson for the reunion, for an awesome job coordinating everyone and everything. Evelyn (Spikes) Lathram assisted her by doing the computer work on the mail outs and by maintaining and updating the address list.

The problem with thanking people for doing great work is someone always gets left out; any reminders or additions to previously mentioned people would be greatly appreciated. I will note them in the next Newsletter.

A special thanks and remembrance for Superintendent Bruce Brown. Unfortunately, he died in a terrible accident just before school was scheduled to start this year. I exchanged several emails with Bruce concerning the future of the school and the of the sports program at Bowie. I was in Bowie the Friday before the reunion and spent an hour or more talking with him about “his kids”, the school, and the power station. His enthusiastic attitude was very energizing and helped me have a more positive hope for Bowie’s future. It is with deep regret that I will include his obituary in this issue.

### Summary of Events

Registration and visiting started on time. Quite a few people did not come until later or left to attend the funeral services for Coach Keith Creamer in Willcox. (I will include the obituary later in this newsletter.)

The afternoon meeting in the auditorium started with the presentation of colors by the Ft. Huachuca Color Guard. The “Pledge of Allegiance” and the singing of the National Anthem followed the presentation.

Bobbie Blandin gave a detailed and interesting talk concerning the Dedication of the A. R. Spikes Memorial Plaque. Her presentation included details about his service to the school system, the peoples of Arizona, Cochise County, and Bowie. Ernie Blandin donated the marble for the memorial, and was responsible for getting it engraved. Ernie and Bobbie, GBM Graphics, and Mike Ochoa (Deming, NM) are to be thanked for their time and effort on the A.R. Spikes plaque. The plaque was unveiled by AR’s son, Dr. George Spikes, and two of his granddaughters, Susan (Spikes) Bickel and Evelyn (Spikes) Lathram. (Bobbie’s presentation is included in the following pages.)

Mr. Schaefer (teacher) presented the Bowie Unified School District children who are attending a gun safety and shooting class. He talked about the details of the program and the accomplishments of the students.

Florina (Tapia) Christiernsson, Larren Yelton, and Bill Allen kept things moving with presentations. Florina and Larren did introductions and acted as MC’s.

Several people talked about the Bowie School as a great system for the preparation for college and life. I was so interested (and not doing my job) I didn’t take any notes on who said what.

I was encouraged by the Power Plant Presentation given by Martin Bailey (SWPG) and Nancy-Jean. If Power Plant happens and the jobs come as planned, Bowie has a chance to come back. It may not be the town we knew as kids growing up in those great surroundings but it will be a lot better than it is now. The school and the town will continue and thrive. SouthWestern Power Group donated \$500.00 to the Bowie School Reunion Group. **Please Note:** The latest news is that in July, Southwestern Power Group got the first two of many different building permits for the construction of the Bowie Power Station. The first two permits are for a temporary office building and for clearing and grubbing.

Later in the evening we had a very nice dinner and dance. Everyone visited and then left with a lot of mixed feelings. My estimate is that we a little over a 150 people attendance.

I would like the people who attended to write and fill in the blanks, of all that happened, for the next Newsletter. Also, think about why you made the effort to attend and share that with us so that the next reunion will be better attended. After driving around town I can understand why someone might not want to come back and see what has happened to the place where we grew up.

**What was done right to make you want to come; how can we improve on it?**

For the people who couldn't attend we need to know how we can get you to come next time. I know that health issues are getting to be a big thing in our lives, as we get a little older. We need your experience in encouraging the younger people to get interested; we need some new ideas. If you didn't come and it wasn't for health, family, job, etc., **what could we have done to make this something you want to come to next time?** The whole point of coming to a reunion is to visit and see people you haven't seen in along time, the bigger the turnout the better.

I sent this request for input to 94 people on my email list in July; I received 4 responses. Evelyn mailed out 1,050 invitations to the Reunion and we had only about 10% of the alumni attend. Attending this year were: Alumni from the 1930's - 2, 1940's - 14, 1950's - 12, 1960's - 10, 1970's - 15, 1980's - 3, 1990's - 1, former and current staff, faculty, school board members - 5, guests - 30.

**We need your input to make the next reunion even bigger and better!**

**Please send your responses to either Evelyn or myself. The addresses are on the top of page 1.**

**Thank You, Larry Lagle, Class of 1958**

## IVITATION

**You and your guests are invited to a Bowie School Alumni Luncheon**

**At the Café Ramey, 1661 N. Swan, Tucson, AZ (phone 520 319-2600)**

**October 11, 2008 at 11:30 a.m.**

Café Ramey is located within an office complex on the southwest corner of Swan and Pima in Tucson, Arizona. A sign is not visible from the street. Pima is halfway between Grant on the north and Speedway on the south. There is a traffic light on the corner of Swan and Pima.

Please contact Evelyn (Spikes) Lathram by September 29 if you will be attending: 1920 W. Mountain Laurel Drive, Oro Valley, AZ 85737, or Email: [elathram@juno.com](mailto:elathram@juno.com) or Phone: 520 219-7930

You are still welcome to attend even if you don't notify Evelyn, but we need to give Café Ramey an approximate head count by October 6 so they can be properly prepared.

## **Those we will miss:**

### **Bowie School Superintendent Bruce E. Brown**

On Saturday, July 26, 2008 Bowie School Superintendent Bruce E. Brown died in a single vehicle accident on Interstate 10 near Willcox.

Supt. Brown, 58, had been with the Bowie school for about 11 years, leaving for a while and then coming back, said School Board President Barth Morin. (Please note that quotas are from the Arizona Range News.)

"Words just seem useless at this time to describe how he will be missed in this community;" "He had time for everybody, said Morin. "He was on the way to help the Elfrida superintendent when this happened. To Bruce, the kids came first, education came first."

Bruce was an advocate for the Bowie Power Plant.

Ian Calkins, public relations contact for SouthWestern Power Group, said that Supt. Brown "worked directly with us to shepherd the project in Bowie." "He was the local, on the ground advocate who worked tirelessly to get that project going." "He saw this project as a tremendous benefit to the community."

"The project will get built, but we're saddened to know that Bruce won't see it come to fruition."

"Our hearts go out to Bowie as he was part of the foundation of that community. His shoes will be hard to fill," Calkins said.

Services for Supt. Bruce Brown were held in Tucson, AZ, August 1, 2008 at St. Elizabeth Ann Seaton Church in Tucson, Arizona.

A Memorial Service and Dedication of Bowie School Gymnasium for Bruce E. Brown were held in Bowie, AZ, on August 8, 2008. A Luncheon followed the service.

Bruce Brown is survived by his ex-wife Myra Brown and his sons Adam, Brian, and Carl.

### **Keith Creamer – Coach /Teacher Bowie High School**

1926-2008 On June 9, 2008, we lost a treasured family member, a true friend and an inspirational teacher and mentor to many young people. Coach Creamer leaves us to mourn and to miss him, but also to celebrate the life that he lived and the joy, dignity and high moral standards with which he lived it. We will always remember him with smiles and laughter as we picture

him telling a story and getting so tickled he could barely finish it.

Stanley Keith Creamer was born Feb. 6, 1926 in Dora, N.M. to Joseph Wesley and Winnie Battle Creamer. He attended the Dora schools where he excelled in sports, particularly baseball. Immediately after graduation from Dora High School he joined the Navy, which was quite a challenge for a farm boy who had never seen a body of water larger than a stock pond. For the next two years until the end of World War II, he served honorably aboard several different Liberty ships, which were hastily built and were known as "death traps".

After his discharge, Keith attended Eastern New Mexico University on his veteran's benefits and a basketball scholarship. There "Hoot", as he was called, met and married his lifelong love, Evelyn Joyce Christmas, and they started their family while living in the veteran's housing provided by the university. He was offered a contract to play professional baseball, but chose the more lucrative job of delivering bread in order to support his family. Keith taught school and worked various jobs in and around Portales and Dora, New Mexico, for several years before moving to Bowie, Ariz., where he taught and coached basketball. He was responsible for starting a baseball program in the school and also for Little League and later on he started a six-man football program for the school. The remainder of his teaching career was spent in Willcox, Ariz., where he was named the head baseball coach and he taught there until his retirement.

Buying and selling used farm equipment was another of Keith's interests, but a tractor accident in 1980 caused him to lose his arm. He then became an auctioneer and worked for several years at the county fairs and other venues selling the small animal and other projects for the members of the FFA and 4-H. During his later years, "Coach" established a small business selling cast iron pots and he enjoyed going on his "potting" trips where he made many more friends.

Keith was a man of many interests and talents. First and foremost, he loved his family, but he also loved his church and his friends. He had a life-long love of sports, and he also loved all aspects of the Western or "cowboy" life, having participated in roping and other rodeo events. He also liked to attend the Cowboy Camp meetings and particularly enjoyed the story telling and the singing. His greatest legacy is as a teacher.

many former students live by even now. As one of his good friends noted, "Keith walked the walk."

His parents, his sisters Edith Hayter and Doris Porter and his brother Ross Creamer, preceded Keith in death. His wife, best friend, partner, and soul mate of almost 59 years, Joyce, survives him. Immediate family members surviving Keith are Jerri Flaming, Donna (Fred) Schmelzla, Joe, Bill, and Tom Creamer.

### **Thelma Inez Wood - Bowie School Alumni – Class 1956**

Thelma Inez (Harmon) Wood died, following a lengthy battle with cancer, in the early morning hours of Sunday, May 4, 2008 at her home with her loving family gathered around her. She was 69. Thelma was born on July 5, 1938 in Tucson, Arizona to Ernest Everett and Mary Euline (Allen) Harmon. Thelma did live a few years in Alabama, however, since 1974 she has made Arizona her permanent home. She worked many years as a secretary in the drywall construction industry and was a joy to work with.

She is survived by: her husband, Perry Clarus Wood of Show Low, Arizona; son, Theodore Cameron Mullins of Union City, Indiana; daughter, Cynthia Lea Jordan of Mobile, Alabama; step-son, Perry L. Wood of Tucson, Arizona; 3 brothers: Charles Harmon (Bonnie) of Dudleyville, Arizona, Joe Harmon (Pat) of Tucson, Arizona and Robert Chavez of Queen Creek, Arizona; 4 sisters: Marcia Peddie (Mickey) of Wagon Wheel, Arizona, Ernestine Crews (Ed) of Show Low, Arizona, Dora Atherton of Lakeside, Arizona and Gloria Griffin (Odell) of Oracle, Arizona; 5 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren.

Per Thelma's wishes, private family services will be held a later date.

**From: Kenneth Fousel**

**Sent: Saturday, June 28, 2008 6:40 PM**

**Subject: SAD NEWS -- LIZ FOUSEL DIED TODAY**

### **LOST AT SEA**

After 19 long years of plowing through the stormy, heavy seas of Alzheimer's, today, at 1:34 PM, the good ship ELIZABETH WORDEN FOUSEL finally slipped from her anchor chains that held her on this earth for 77+ years, and quietly and quickly slipped away down wind, to cross that unknowable yet fateful horizon. After 59 years as my co-captain, she turned the helm over to me alone.

It was a peaceful goodbye today, with no pain or distress, and an easy death to be witness to; if only everyone could slip away so painlessly.

Liz will be cremated and her ashes eventually placed in a niche in the wall at Ft. Rosecrans, but the next section of the wall will not be completed until this November, so there will be no services at Ft. Rosecrans.

A memorial service was to be held in mid-July, with the exact date and un-determined.

### **Remarks by Bobbie (Scott)(Welker) Blandin at the 2008 Bowie School Reunion.**

Bowie Alumni: this is a proud day in the history of Bowie Schools!! Today we dedicate our Bowie High School building to the memory of Senator A. R. Spikes, veteran educator, teacher, and rancher.

Albert Roswell Spikes was born in Guthrie, Oklahoma, September 7, 1892. He went to grade school in Kingman and Pearce, Arizona, and high school in Douglas until 1910. He attended Tempe State Normal School until 1914 and received a lifetime teacher and administrator's certificate. In 1926 Mr. Spikes received a B.S. degree at the University of Arizona.

A.R. was always interested in education. He taught in Gleeson, Arizona, from 1915 to 1916. He then came to Bowie as a teacher principal of Bowie's four-teacher school from 1916 to 1917. He was in the Army from 1917 to 1919 and was discharged as a 1st Lieutenant.

He returned to Bowie as a teacher and principal in 1919, where lo and behold, was this charming young "schoolmarm" who caught his eye; Miss Nellie Decherd from Austin, Texas. They were married May 26, 1920, and had 2 sons, George and Jack.

Three years later in 1923, A.R. was made the superintendent of Bowie Schools. He held that position until his retirement in 1941.

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During Mr. Spikes' tenure, the Bowie campus was expanded and the high school building, the gymnasium, the swimming pool, and the tennis court were built.

A.R. Spikes was elected to the Arizona House of Representatives in 1942, serving until 1948. In 1952 he was elected to the Arizona State Senate where he served until 1968. He was chairman of various committees in the House and Senate, but he was most proud of his chairmanship of the Committee on Education. As chairman of that committee he sponsored the bill creating the Arizona State Junior College System and

worked hard to promote kindergartens, free textbooks, and the teachers' retirement system.

All this just goes to show what a great man A.R. Spikes was. I always found him to be such a gracious man. In my day, girls didn't always get to do as much as boys did. At least that's what we girls believed. Many times I would head for his office, at the top of the stairs. He'd be sitting in his large office chair, lean back and invite me in.

He always listened carefully. "Mr. Spikes, we girls want to play basketball." He then explained how it had been ruled that it wasn't good for girls to run up and down the court like that – but that volleyball was ruled OK. And then he would graciously see me out of his office. What a wonderful gentleman he was and I always felt my cause had been heard.

We are so privileged to have his son, Dr. George A. Spikes and his wife Lucia, from Douglas, Arizona, here with us today, and his daughter, Susan Bickel from Nashville, Arkansas. It makes us sad that Jack went to meet his maker 2 years ago, but his lovely daughter, Evelyn Lathram, who is on the Bowie School Reunion Group board of directors, is here with us today.

Senator A.R. Spikes died December 25, 1968. He is buried in Bowie's Desert Rest Cemetery, but his legacy lives on!!

## News Letters and Messages

Evelyn Lathram - Request for back issues:

I haven't finished typing up the first wall of merit honorees, and I need to do a little research on who nominated them and what was the source of the information.

I need old issues of the newsletter (1999 to 2002) for this, and I'm having trouble finding them. Ken Ansley has had several computers and experienced several disk crashes since then, so he doesn't have all the issues. If any of the alumni have copies of those years, please contact her at [elathram@juno.com](mailto:elathram@juno.com), or 520-219-7930, or 1920 W Mountain Laurel Drive, Oro Valley, AZ 85737.

Thanks,  
Evelyn

Joan Lagle - concerning the book and movie "Rambo":

Joan requested, from the author, how did he choose Bowie, Arizona as the birthplace of Rambo?

**From:** [davidbmorrell@msn.com](mailto:davidbmorrell@msn.com)

Hi, Joan. Thanks for your question. Actually I didn't choose Bowie, AZ. The film's production company did. In my novel FIRST BLOOD, I think I have Rambo coming from Colorado. He doesn't have a first name either. The production company improvised some things. Since they own the movie rights, they're free to do so, although sometimes their choices are bizarre, as when they made Rambo half-German and half-Native American (in RAMBO II). If you're interested, my FAQ page at [www.davidmorrell.net](http://www.davidmorrell.net) has my review of the recent movie. Also, each month, I update the WHAT'S NEW page. Lots of fun things are happening. David

Kay Mahan - [kaymahan@vtc.net](mailto:kaymahan@vtc.net)

Hi Larry,  
Sorry I am so long with this but I've been to Florida and to sleep since then. LOL

The name of our lake is Burger's Lake; I noticed it was misspelled in the last Newsletter. That may have well been because of my typo error. Above is my correct address for Email and just to fill in any incorrect info for you my full name is Edrie Kay Thomas Mahan and I was in the class of 1963 (or what ever class Phyllis Cohorn was in).

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I did not graduate from Bowie High School, I got married instead and been married to the same guy for 48 years this last February (and they said it wouldn't last - Ha Ha). Someone asked me at our last anniversary if I ever considered divorce I said "No, but murder has entered my mind from time to time" JUST KIDDING; any way thanks for keeping up the Newsletters. Hi to Carl and Ruth.

Regards Kay Mahan

S. Warren Davis - Bowie Reunion Thank You:

To: Bowie School Reunion Group

Hello,

I just wanted all of you to know how much I enjoyed the reunion. It took a lot of time and effort to put it all together so well. My wife, Alice, and our nephew, Kyle Jackson, also send their thanks for a great time. Nancy-Jean, a big thanks for your part.

Sincerely,

S. Warren Davis

**Delbert Fousel** – June 14 Reunion at Bowie:

Hi Larry. My name is Delbert Fousel, Class of 1939; I attended Bowie school grades two thru twelve. For several years before I retired from Tucson Electric Power Co., on Feb. 1st, 1984, I was working six days a week on a Generation construction job in Springerville, AZ.

For the first 10 years of retirement we were "on the road" by May 1st and visited every one of the 49 states and most of the Provinces of Canada, and didn't return to Tucson until mid October. Then we established residence in the little town of Clark Fork Idaho. We still spend our winters in Tucson, but leave by mid April and return about mid October. One of these days we'll be too old to do that and will stay in Tucson full time.

I attended the Bowie Luncheon in Tucson last October.

**Larry Lagle Class of 1958** – After the Reunion

Joan and I left the reunion and continued on our vacation through New Mexico, Northern Arizona, Utah, Nevada, and then home.

We went to Carlsbad Caverns and enjoyed the trip through the cave. It was awesome and inspiring. We watched the bats fly out of the cave in the evening and stayed at Carlsbad for the night. The next morning we drove north through thunderstorms to Tucumcari to visit with Barbara (Bauman) Guest, Class of 1959. We had a great visit with her and her daughters. We talked about Bowie, her brother Bobbie, Class of 1958 (deceased), and about old times. The next morning we went on to Santa Fe to visit with a classmate of Joan's.

Continuing across New Mexico we visited Chaco Canyon Indian ruins, took lots of pictures, then stopped to shop in Farmington to buy gifts for the kids and grandchildren.

A side trip to Monument Valley in Utah proved to be a bit more exciting than planned. I hit a rock in a sand wash, on a side trip to get pictures, and broke a wheel and blew out the tire. I had to dig out the car, put on one of those "fake spare tires", got stuck (no cell phone service), dug myself out – long story short; I broke an old break in my ankle and pulled a muscle completely loose in my side. Joan had to drive the rest of the way home. We should have skipped the side trip. I'm still not completely healed up. Other than that we had a great

trip.

**Note from Joan**

*I was very happy to see all of you again and to see my High School friend in Santa Fe. We had a great trip, right up to when I decided that I wanted some better pictures. Let me tell you Larry is a great husband but a terrible patient. Since this is sort of my fault (a long stretch) he is getting all the mileage he can out of it, not really but it makes a good story. Again it was great seeing and meeting the people I have heard about all these years.*