Caltech 50th Reunion for Class of 1966

Louis Newman went to the Caltech 50th reunion for the class of 1966 on May 19-22, 2016. There were 15 former Page House students that were able to attend at least some reunion activities: Jim & Annette Aires(WA), Buzz & Linda Bernstein(CA), Jim Brooks(SC), Dave & Judy Close(CA), Bill & Cathy Colglazier(VA), Leonard & Judith Gordy(NJ), John Mowery(WA), Louis Newman & Chris Geosling(CA), Jay & Francoise Pearlman(WA), Dave Posner(MD), Tom & Joni Fields Resney(GA), Carl & Carole Scandella(WA), Richard Silver(CA), John & Andy Trijonis(NV), Joe Tymczyszyn(WA).

**Athenaeum Formal Dinner on Thursday night** *(52 of 135 Bachelor Degrees present)*

I missed the President’s reception before this, so I still have never been to the Caltech President’s House or even any part of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory. I had a quandary on what to wear to a labeled formal wear event. My last suit was purchased for Caltech graduation in 1966. I ended up with a long sleeve blue shirt and a turquoise bolo tie. Chris wore her blue formal dress. It turned out that we both seemed overdressed for the event. The food was excellent, but the only conversation was with the people at your table, and the noise level made it difficult to even hear what was said across the large round tables. Afterwards, I saw a few people only briefly; they were all civilized. Some people said they retired to have more free time. I did not do that, since in my career, I always seemed to have five weeks of paid vacation each year and I also took four weeks of leave without pay many years. That time-off amount seemed adequate to do what I wanted. Some people said they could not take time-off on their job, but maybe they did not try to make it happen.

**Buffet at Alumni House on Friday night**

Friday afternoon was spent going to the poster sessions at the Watson, Moore, and Annenberg engineering laboratories. These activities and labs seemed difficult to understand for a chemist; the research seemed somewhat esoteric. Each of these labs had trays of great food for the students and the visitors, which was fortunate, since the buffet at the Alumni House was almost inedible Mexican food since I am intolerant of spicy cuisine. The tables on the back lawn were in dark areas, and I could not even see who was present very easily. Someone was extolling the virtues of sending humans to Mars; my view is that robots can do the job better, cheaper, and last longer.

**Page House Dinner on Saturday night**

At the Page House dinner on Saturday night, I was talking with the current house president. I pointed out that 40% of the students had not had an alcoholic drink in the last 30 days and they should not be contributing to the beer availability fund. The hot tub at the courtyard back end had been non-serviceable for the last two years. At least the lights above the courtyard were still used. He did not even realize that there was another pole for the volleyball net and the badminton net. The lines that had been painted on the courtyard for basketball, volleyball, and badminton had disappeared. I said that the lines should be replaced. There was a lot of area used for storage of wood for the Interhouse dance floor that only has limited use once a year. I was even at the Interhouse dance last year in the old houses without realizing that Page was participating.

The announcements after dinner were interesting. Joe commented on the big change: there were now women in the house. He said he was horny the entire time as a student; in my opinion, he was also the best dancer then. His hobby is taking exotic pictures of women. He has many such pictures on the Internet from his 10-20 years in China improving their Air Traffic Control system. He even found a “Miss Personality” for pictures at Page! David Holtz (Page, 1964) commented on the food service when he was here, the mystery meat, and the fish that was present every Friday night. He actually got them to serve matzos for Passover. He should have also been present for the meat loaf, mashed potato, and gravy food fight that led to replacement of very stained curtains. This expense then resulted in the abolishment of future flying food. Jonathan Romney (Page, 1967) pointed out that Mr. Page had shown up the first year in 1960, given all the members house jackets, and was never seen after that. During the 60’s, all residents were required to wear coat and tie to dinner. The dining room tables, chairs, pitchers and glasses looked like the originals from 56 years ago. The student rooms now had air-conditioners, many had sky beds, and the wall and door paint jobs varied from artistic to atrocious.