

Reunion Newsletter

St. Louis Park Class of '63

July, 2023

Lynn Bolnick, Editor

NOTE: All of this year's newsletters focus on differences between the experiences of the St. Louis Park High School graduating class of 2023 and our experiences 60 years earlier. This issue is focusing on Homecoming (which is also the theme of this year's reunion). AND, there is also up-to-date information about the reunion's festivities. AND, there's a short "editorial comment" this time as well.

1962 Homecoming for Class of 1963

Homecoming season is particularly special for graduating seniors and that doesn't change whether it's 2023, 1963, or 1935 (the first recorded at the St. Louis Park Historical Society). Do you remember ours?

Festivities began with the announcement of Homecoming Queen candidates at the traditional opening pep fest. The coronation of Queen Sharla and her court (the "glitterati" of the class of 1963) reigned over a series of activities that included a varsity show, an alumni tea, parade and the big game, bringing the day to a festive if not triumphant end at the Homecoming dance.

It was a typical fall day - high of 63, low of 46. No precipitation. A bit of wind, 13 mph. At game time, it was a cool and somewhat balmy 58 degrees. Perfect for fall's kick-off of a senior year like none other (to us, anyway).

Homecoming buttons proclaimed, "Orioles Fly, Robins Die." A-squad cheerleaders, including seniors Jane Thorbeck and Joan Mackey, took their places on the field. Fans were already cheering enthusiastically. The football team arrived next and valiantly attempted to live up to the homecoming theme. Alas, it was not to be; victory on the field was elusive and the Orioles lost to the Robins. They went on to see only three wins that season in a highly competitive Lake Conference. The *Echowan* later cited seniors John Cheleen, Doug Norell, Jim Conn and Leonard Jackson for outstanding performance during the football season.

2022 Homecoming for the Class of 2023:

New and Improved - OR -

Some Things Never Seem to Change

Homecoming Week for the Class of 2023 started with ways for all students to participate in different aspects of Homecoming - from silly to meaningful. It began with a dress code for each day:

Monday	Pajama Day
Tuesday	Anything But a Backpack Day
Wednesday	"Pink Out" in honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month
Thursday	Class Colors Day (each class, freshmen through seniors, had a different designated color to wear)
Friday	The "Big Day" - students were encouraged to wear black to the game and they were given orange towels to wave when cheering

Activities included a movie night on the football field, a student-staff basketball game, "Action Wednesday" and more. On Friday, everyone gathered in the gym for a morning pep fest. After classes, there was the Homecoming Parade, followed by a tailgate party - and the game at 7 p.m.

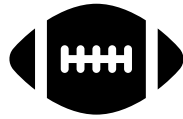
The Park Orioles hosted the Holy Angels Stars. There was lots of enthusiasm in the stands, according to *Echo* accounts. Not only were there the usual student attendees but a significant number of community members as well. The excitement seemed to reflect the sense that the dark cloud of Covid-19 restrictions was over and the St. Louis Park Orioles were back in full force. ("Full force," as it turned out, may have been a bit of an overstatement.)

The Stars grabbed an early - and enduring - lead. The Orioles managed to score only once, in the last two minutes of the game. The touchdown plus two-point conversion gave St. Louis Park eight points. The Stars won 34-8. The Orioles ended the football season with a familiar 3-7 record.

The Homecoming Dance was held on Saturday in the field house. The previous year it was held outdoors, on the football field - in an apparent nod to still-troublesome Covid 19. There's mixed opinions about which is better - though weather certainly can play a role.

There have been changes in MN State High School League conferences. There is a listing on the next page of the make-up of the Metro West Conference (which now includes St. Louis Park) and the new Lake Conference (which does not).

(For those of you not interested, feel free to go directly to the next item on the following page.)



Metro West Conference

Benilde-St. Margaret	Chaska
Bloomington Jefferson	Richfield
Bloomington Kennedy	Robbinsdale Cooper
Chanhassan	St. Louis Park

Lake Conference

Buffalo	Minnetonka
Eden Prairie	St. Michael-Albertville
Edina	Wayzata
Hopkins	

(You may notice the inclusion of non-public schools within the State League's purview. That was not the case when we were in school but changed in 1974. It has not been without controversy; in fact, some schools originally assigned to the Metro West conference withdrew in protest.)



For the Class of 1963: Homecoming Reunion

September 22-23, 2023

Here we are again. Quickly approaching our 60th high school reunion. Coming home. Seeing old friends, sharing memories, answering the question, "how have you been these past 60 years??" (My advice, skip the last one. We've lived the past. Every new day is part of our future - the better question is "what's next?")

What's next for us is a great opportunity to have some fun in the company of people with whom we've shared a significant part of our lives. If you haven't made plans to come home this fall, do so now. Here are some of the highlights of our homecoming celebration:

Friday, September 22

- Casual gathering at Park Tavern in St. Louis Park, 1-4 p.m. Reconnect with fellow alums. Have a drink or two; order a nosh, if you're so inclined. Tell stories. Do some laughing; maybe even shed a tear. A good time.
- If you'd like to join others on the golf course, you can TEXT Phil Payne (612-201-9119). Phil will communicate the when and where details directly with you.

Saturday, September 23

- Meet with others at the new Westwood Hills Nature Center Building at 10 a.m. for a 90-minute naturalist-led tour of the site.
- If you'd like to see how St. Louis Park High School has changed, come for a tour. (More details to follow.)
- And, the big finish: The Homecoming Dinner and Dance at the Braemar Golf Course Clubhouse. (Don't let the

recommendation of casual attire suggest anything less than a fun-filled night.)

- Social hour, 5 - 6 p.m. Mingle with friends. Partake of adult beverages (or other); have a bite.
- A gala dinner buffet follows at 6 p.m.
- From 7- 9 p.m., enjoy the musical talents of 50s - 60s group, Jam Band. If you'd like to dance - have at it. If not, sit back and enjoy the once familiar tunes. In either case, the music will take you back to when your transistor radio was your second most valuable possession (after the car, which also had a radio). Remember when the music was a backdrop to your own "Happy Days."
- While the music ends at 9 p.m., there's still time for a bit more mingling, enjoying another beverage, sharing some final special moments. . . . We have the room until 11 p.m.

Reservations for this Homecoming celebration are due by August 15. And, if you're wanting accommodations for your visit home, the reunion committee has made arrangements for a special rate of \$104/night at Spring Hill Suites Minneapolis/West in St. Louis Park. The special rate is available for stays September 21-24. You can use the link with the 60th reunion information on our website: <https://www.slp63.com/60th-Reunion.htm>. Bookings at this rate must be made by August 21.



A Little Editorial Liberty . . .

I have a suggestion. Have fun at this reunion. I suspect that life may be a bit different at the time of what could be a 70th reunion. While many of us will be as high-kicking as ever, we will be 88 years old! I'm going into this reunion uncertain if I'll have the opportunity to see some old friends again. Will people want to travel home then? (With AI piloting the plane??) Will the reunion committee want to put the same terrific effort into planning yet another event? Is this the last reunion? I don't know the answers. But I'm not taking any chances. I'm personally looking forward to this reunion and to truly enjoying the people I can see and have a good time with right now. I hope I'll see you there too and, if so, please stop and say "hi" (maybe more). I'm looking forward to it. . . .

Lynn

One more newsletter. Watch for it online in August.