



Bonnie Clausing Waterer -Can it be 55 years ago? In the fall of 1958, I enrolled at The Ohio State University. I met my husband-to-be Lou there and also got a B.S. degree In Home Economics Education. Lou and I got married and moved to San Jose, California, where we continued to live until the year 2000. There I got my master's degree at San Jose State with an emphasis on child development and family relations, and Lou got his master's degree in physics there plus a MBA from the University of Santa Clara. He worked at Lockheed in satellite design and I became a high school teacher.

In 1967 I took a break from teaching to become a mother, and worked only part-time for several years teaching adult education classes. Lou and I have two sons – Ryan who lived here in Prescott and Reid who lives in Los Angeles. Ryan has a degree in

Political Science from San Jose State and Reid has a degree in Cinema Television Production from the University of Southern California. Ryan worked for Wal-Mart and Reid edits movie trailers in Hollywood.

When the boys were school age, I returned to teaching full-time, got an administrative services credential, and after a while became the district coordinator for the home economics programs for the ten high schools in our school district. This was a half-day job, so I continued to teach in the mornings. My teaching specialty was child development. I taught in an occupational program that prepared high school students and adults to work in day care, and I also taught a class for teen parents. One year I taught a community college class in child development as well.

After a total of 30 years in education, I took early retirement in 1999, and my husband also retired at that time from Lockheed. We looked for a new place to live that would get us out of the busy city traffic and high prices of San Jose, and found a great place to retire in Prescott, AZ. We have lived here for thirteen years now, so it really feels like home.

Just as I was in high school, I have continued to be a joiner. When I was teaching, I served a term as president of the Home Economics Teachers' Association of California. I also belonged to other education organizations and was named one year as the California Home Economics Teacher of the Year and then as a top 10 finalist for National Home Economics Teacher of the Year.

Now that I am retired, I am enjoying the opportunities I have to join many other groups. Presently I am serving on the Board of Directors for both the West Yavapai Guidance Clinic and our local NAMI organization. My work for children continues with membership on the advisory council for the Family Resource Center at our local hospital. I am also active in AAUW here in Prescott.

Now what do we do for fun? My husband and I and both of our sons love to travel. We pay all of our bills with our American Airlines card so we can get frequent flyer miles, and we keep our eyes open for travel bargains. As a result, I have been able to visit all 50 states plus 100 other countries in the world. Some of the places to which I have traveled are Egypt, China, Japan, Russia, Australia and New Zealand, Norway and Sweden, Western and Eastern Europe, plus Central and South America. The most exotic place was probably Tibet.

In the 5 years since our 50 year reunion, I have experienced some changes in my life. The biggest change was the death of our older son, Ryan, in 2011. He died in our local hospital after suffering from a dental infection that got much worse when he was given a lot of antibiotics for it and then drank more water than necessary. Since then, I have read a number of articles indicating increasing problems with antibiotics. I learned a great deal from Ryan's challenges in life as he had a lifelong battle with paranoid schizophrenia, and that is why I still do volunteer work in mental health.

The other big change in the last 5 years has been a substantial increase in the number of countries my husband and I have visited. We have been traveling a lot because we want to see the world before we are too old to do so. By the end of June '13 we will have met our goal of visiting 100 countries. That doesn't mean we will stop traveling, but we will then be likely to revisit countries we haven't seen for a long time or different parts of countries that we missed before. We know that we have been blessed with some wonderful travel opportunities.

Favorite Memory of Whitmer High: How can I choose a favorite? I loved high school. I remember the fun of going to the football games and then celebrating our victories at the sock hops after the games. I enjoyed being part of the organizations I joined, especially student council. I can still remember so much from Mr. Foster's English class. He was an important influence. Then there was the series of parties at different homes after the prom ending up with breakfast at my house. After teaching high school for many years, I know that times have changed and it isn't always so good for today's students. I was lucky!

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