

My fellow classmates of **Salina High School SOUTH 1980**. First, to steal a quote from a great Texan, LBJ, *"I shall not seek, nor will I accept another term as your President"*. Being your Junior and Senior Year Class President has been an honor, but term limits require my position to cease after the 40th year.

In my head I've been planning this reunion for several years. You can ask my wife or sons... I do love to throw a good party! As with any party I try to empathize...

What would my guests enjoy? What do the invited guest of my guests want to do rather than smiling thru the 14th re-telling of a story that happen 40 years ago? How would the parent, sister, brother, daughter or son feel if they hear or read about our reunion? Would it stir up the anguish of losing their loved one that won't be there to see his/her friends ever again?

What is our purpose in life now that we have used up more than half?. Our children don't need us so much any more. Maybe I can help raise the grandchildren?. Maybe I should have had kids? Who will watch me when I'm wetting the bed and drooling out the side of my mouth like I did for my parents. We all have shared the same thoughts because we were raised with the same values. And so let's rekindle those old stories and have a little fun and enjoy the life we have...we have damn well earned it!

I have four goals that I would like to accomplish with our 40th Reunion Celebration. Like all goals - They are in written so they can be reviewed- They are attainable. They are time measurable. They are goals I hope we can share.

First: To ensure that all classmates are invited/aware of the reunion and hopefully feel an excitement that they can share this reunion with or without a significant other and join this celebration! That cost nor disability are a factor in not being able to attend (I'm wheeling Diana Smithee out in a hospital bed if I must). Call me privately if financially this weekend creates a burden. I guarantee after we talk.... it will not.

Second: To reach out to the families of Fallen Cougars that have passed and let them know that their loved one has not been forgotten and will be remembered at some point during the weekend. (*I need your ideas of how best to do this and help reaching out to the families*)

Third: To recognize those that call Salina, Kansas home. So often the focus is who went the farthest away when those that have remained have made Salina a place that a new generation can grow and enjoy life as we all did many years ago. It is my hope that choosing locations outside the city limits allows you that call Salina home a weekend Vay-Cay. Book a hotel room with us out-of-towners, leave the car keys on the night stand. I'll have buses to take you Friday (*Mandated) from the hotels to **Sand Stone Saloon** in Brookville and again Saturday to the **Rolling Hills Zoo**. Hell, we're not that old ...try walking to the Smokey Hill River Festival and back! *911 is still a good number in Salina!*

Forth: To work together to achieve a common goal that will leave our mark permanently not only in Salina, Kansas but on the world we share. I'd like the Goal to be something that impacts the planet in a positive way. Recycling, clean water, air? I haven't picked the cause I'm asking you to come up with the cause. Debbie Cardinal & Richard Diehl (Skip wants to quit already) are the Co-chairs of the **Let's make it GREEN and gold**" committee and they need your help and ideas. There are vendors that will pay us for advertising space on T-shirts, cups, etc. for advertising on this website. Maybe there is a company that will give us money from purchases we make from their catalogue.

If you are a business owner or work with a company that sponsors good causes, we want to be that cause! Just as you sold candy bars for band or sporting events, you may be asked to do so again. I found "Save the River" as an environmentally friendly cause in Salina. They have talked about it for years trying to utilize the Smokey Hill River for recreational boating like it was in the 30's and 40's. This would be a great cause, if chosen. **THIS IS NOT A SPECTATOR SPORT!** ** You Will Need to Help with a committee or share your ideas with someone on a committee. Maybe you can help set up or clean up one night. I would like our cause/charity decided by July 4th.

.... our **goal is to raise \$10,000 towards that cause.**

Now before you start bitch'n and moan'n about having to get off your behind and do something good for the planet, divide that number by 200+ graduates and tell me it's not possible. I can still hear the moans and groans of

making you cough up a lousy ten bucks in dues Junior year for decent programs Senior year. (And for those of you that didn't pay up.... I hope you were absolutely miserable sitting in the classroom while we enjoyed the programs! Lol)

We have always been a unique group. Sharing a unique experience of being educated in a Pod! Sharing unique music. The late 70's saw Disco turn into 80's grudge rock. Many sources claim that the 80's have the best written and performed music of any generation. (*identifiable with the guitar solo that goes on for 15 minutes.*) We share a unique outlook on life. We shared going through puberty together. We had gym classes together. How many parties have you been to where you have seen almost half the guests without any clothes on? I have always felt that our class stood out above others whether in a sit-down strike for A/C, trying to get marijuana legal at Model Government, or seeking to change the government of China at Model UN. We wore white graduations gowns (not because we were all virgins...hmm) but to commemorate the 10th class to graduate from "The Pods", a building that stood for 48 years.

We will be sending out a **Save The Date** around November. You will want to bring this to Salina as it will give Free entry to the Zoo for 2 on Saturday. I also realize the importance of the RSVP (which millennials have no clue the meaning of!) in the planning. It is very important to have a head count as much in advance as we can. Hotel rooms are being negotiated by Shelly Carter-Donaldson and her Girl Friday, Donna Moulton as I type this letter. **PLEASE BOOK HOTEL ROOMS ASAP** when the name and locations are posted on this website. If we need more rooms now is the time to reserve more. Smokey Hill River Festival is the same weekend.

I had read that high school is the most important and final stage of adolescences. Twelve years of grading molding us to strive for the best in each subject. Medals and awards teach success and how to win in life. All with the of the goal of sending us out into the world alone. And we were ready. We were ready to conquer the world. We had big plans. We set high goals. We knew anything was possible. Let's share those feelings again. Let's make our families and friends proud that we can continue to achieve great goals and effect great change in this world. In this life we share.

If we succeed with the fund raising, the cost for our weekend will be nominal and we can leave a plaque, statue or sculpture with our names that states:

We, the class of SHSS 1980,
were here June 12-14, 2020... and We Cared!

With warmest regards, Your Class President John Vincent Chlebak

*The Kent Shea rule applies. If you have a utility bill or a notarized statement with a medallion stamp that can prove your home address is closer to Brookville, Kansas than Salina, Kansas you can be considered exempt from the bus transportation Friday night **IF** waivers are in triplicate and received by the CFO (Diana Feil-Looney) 23 days prior to the event in question. Kent gets a onetime freebie of any supporting documentation; I'm taking his word. But as the nuns taught me in grade school, "*a lie is a sin and a sin is one more link on the chain around your waist that will drag you down to hell!*"