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1- Opening Remarks: Mary Berens

Welcome! It's really great to see all of you here tonight.

I'm Mary Berens, co-chair of our 50ish Reunion Planning Committee.

YOU have exceeded all our expectations! We have 80 classmates back for our reunion and most of them are here tonight to celebrate @CCR.

You have travelled from across the U.S., from Maine to Florida to California, Oregon, Nevada, Colorado, Wyoming and many places in between.

We are honored to have 7 teachers here tonight. I hope you've had a chance to say hello to Pete Crooker, Elaine Lauffer, Dick Lenio, Kathy Miles, Jim Miles, Dave Snyder and Rod Taylor.

Of particular note we have 32 guests of classmates and teachers who are truly the brave, good sports to join us for our multi-day reunion trip down memory lane. Thank you all for making the effort to be here tonight!

This evening and entire weekend would not have been possible without the work of our planning committee, who met 23 times over two years, together with the classmates who provided financial support that allowed us the flexibility to continue our planning during uncertain times and to do much more.

Our committee leadership decided we were not going to list all the names nor single out any volunteer in our remarks this evening, but then we quickly agreed that we needed to make one exception. Randy Roth, who provided terrific website support for our 40th reunion once again stepped up to provide the reunion web site model 2.0 for our Class of 1970. It's been the foundation of our efforts to connect and inform all our classmates over the past 2 years. Also, once again, Randy's been responsible for the production of our wonderful name tags for this weekend. I'd like to ask Randy and all of our committee members and donors to please stand and be recognized.

At this time, I'd like to invite Bob Kennedy to join me at the microphone to share some words of Remembrance and Gratitude before dinner. Thank you.

2- Remembrance and Reflections: Bob Kennedy

Thank you, Mary, for that warm welcome!

I'd like to suggest that before the evening gets into full swing that we pause for a minute, glance around the room and think about our classmates who we might have hoped to see, but who couldn't be with us tonight...

Yes, let's think of those who found themselves with conflicting plans, separated by distances too great, or restricted due to health issues or concerns. Many of them expressed sincere regret and asked us to extend their best wishes to all... Please join me in wishing them well...

Then, there are those who aren't with us – who had no choice...

When we began planning this celebratory weekend, we were stunned as we reviewed the list of departed classmates... Tragically, several more names have been added to that list over our 24 months of preparation... During the course of the evening, I encourage you to spend a few minutes at our memorial table in the lobby. Perhaps the best way to honor our departed classmates is to pause for a moment – recall a special memory or two – and smile...

And, finally, I'd like to salute all of you who are here tonight... It says a lot about our time together that we have taken the time and made the effort to be here... I think that our very presence speaks to our recognition of the special time that we shared – over fifty years ago...

What a remarkable period of time... A time of rich learning....

Yes, there was a lot of learning going on in the classrooms, but the learning was by no means limited to our classroom instruction. Valuable lessons were being learned as we interacted with each other in any number of ways...

That learning occurred on the bus, on the athletic fields, though other extracurricular activities and by just hanging out... In some cases, we learned through help purposefully provided. Other times we learned simply by observing a classmate as he or she met a shared challenge more effectively – or demonstrated greater grace... We learned so much – with and through others about a lot of things... Perhaps most importantly, we helped each other learn a lot about ourselves...

This weekend finds us reunited and able to get reacquainted. It is such a blessing! It also provides an opportunity to reflect on and perhaps develop an even deeper appreciation for the wonderful community that Pittsford was, and is, and how profoundly it influenced all of our lives...

As we celebrate our time together – both that of the distant past and of this very moment – let's do so knowing that in ways big and small – we helped each other become the remarkable members of the PCS Class of 1970!

To close, I'd like to propose that we raise a toast to all!

Let's make it a special evening – and yet another great PCS memory!

3- My Pittsford: Peter Spalding

If there is a theme to this reunion it is about making connections. Throughout these months of reunion planning it has been my immense pleasure to reconnect with so many of our class. For me, the reunion has been a two-year event, culminating with this weekend.

Out of ~375 in our class, about 1/3 were "lost". Largely through the efforts of Terry Stilson and Mary Gray (MaryBeth Ferris), there are now just 18 "lost", and we have email addresses for over ¾ of the class.

It has given me the chance to think back on MY Pittsford:

Kindergarten at the Lutheran church basement.

My first crush- Dana Sibley in 2nd grade at Jefferson Rd school

Pulling TV's out in 4th grade classrooms at Lincoln Ave School to watch NASA space launches

5th grade assignment to write a biography of a famous person, so leave it to Jim Donnelly to pick Chester A. Arthur. How many people here know that he was our 21st president of the US?

6th grade at the new Mendon Jr High School, when Andy Rothfield broke the news of Kennedy being shot

The school dances through Jr High and High school- how cool when we got some live bands instead of spinning records. Remember getting the Brass Buttons? That was a real coup! 68ish, I think.

Viet Nam, Kent State, Bob Tanner going to Woodstock. Some really fast growing up at that time.

Debbie Smith Green was remembering Chuck Thompson fighting for her mom's homemade cookies. She says she came to the reunion to see if Chuck had grown up yet. Chuck acknowledges he has only grown old, not up.

Senior prank night when we pitched tents on school property and some us discovered alcohol. By the way, all of you except Lee fisher missed the opportunity to replay that event of 51 years ago, as we pitched our tents last night at Dave Beinetti's. Dave and Joan joined us for breakfast around the campfire. Y'all missed a treat!

We had a great walking history tour of Pittsford today. It made me realize how hard some people have worked to retain the village as we knew it. My Pittsford of the 60's was a community. Different store fronts perhaps, but still a village and a community. Hicks and McCarthey, Burdett's bakery and butcher counter. George Waterhouse's Pittsford Hdwr with the old wooden floors, the Town hall, Pittsford Pharmacy, Pittsford Dept Store. The coal twr and lumber yard of Schoen Alley, Pittsford Dairy, McConnells, and Tom Crumb's little store. Lou Schwartz and Sons Amoco, Smelling Foreman's pickle factory ...Small town feel. You could read the Brighton Pittsford Post and pretty well know everyone who had their name or picture contained in that week's publication.

But, not everyone lived next door to Beaver and Wally Cleaver.

Many of us wore rose-colored glasses, and only now are realizing that some of our classmates have very different memories.

Your emails through these months of reunion planning, and Facebook posts brought some of this to light:

“It was not always easy for me to find my "place" during our high school years, but the work the committee has done to make connections for everyone has meant a great deal to me.

Classmates now have spoken of the difficult family situations they had growing up in Pittsford

I was not part of the “in” group has been a common comment.

Well it is my hope that those wounds have healed enough for you all to feel a part of the group tonight. I want to acknowledge that we all had, at the least, some level of awkwardness and loneliness that no one else saw. And 50 years later, it still is not easy for some of us to go to a reunion or get up on stage.

But for all our different experiences, here we all are, having lived through the same 50 years, and having come from all corners of lower 48- quite literally. We are all connected!

I want to recognize Bill Bader and Brenda. Bill moved to Oregon this month, got married, and is spending his honeymoon with us!

On behalf of the committee *I thank you* for making the effort to join your fellow classmates. You have made this night; this weekend so very special. Thank you.

4- Thank You to Our Teachers, And Messages from Afar: Mary Berens

A highlight for us this evening is to have 7 of our teachers here with us; and last night we enjoyed spending time with Coach Joe Borrosh at our gathering in Honeoye Falls at Dave Beinetti's barn.

During our years at Pittsford, you, our teachers, were the adults in the room and we were a diverse collection of adolescent girls and boys, maturing both physically and mentally at various rates. Some of you were also coaches, Club advisors and mentors to some of us. Your patience and persistence contributed immensely to our success in taking on knowledge—both from text books and from discussions in class. Thank you to you and to all of your colleagues who believed in us and were committed to seeing us succeed even at times when we were uncertain what the final outcome—or grade—would be.

I heard from several teachers who were unable attend our reunion and I'd like to share messages from a couple of them:

Beth Vinal who taught English and coached the Debate Club wrote from Wilmington, NC,:

Thank you for the invitation to join the 50ish reunion of the wonderful Class of 1970. Unfortunately, I will be in North Carolina and unable to attend. I know how much fun you'll have. My own 50th class reunion was 10ish years ago and I loved it. It reminds me of how very young I was- just 25, when I first met you all. I will think of you fondly and will raise a glass for you all.

John Denison, who taught English wrote:

Please convey my sincere regrets to your classmates, and tell everyone that I send my very best wishes for a fun, safe reunion. I would love to hear about the activities and especially, the people in attendance. I would love to see how students have fared over the last half century. Anyone who wishes to contact me to reminisce, inform or complain may feel free to do so. Feel free to share my email address. Thanks for thinking of me. Have a most enjoyable reunion. Be healthy, be happy, stay safe. All my best, John Denison, Wilmington, NC

We sent out invitations to 32 teachers and heard back from more than 2/3 of them.

When we sent out the Reunion registration email to our classmates in early August, we heard from scores of classmates, including dozens who were unable to attend our Reunion, several of whom wanted to send along messages to the class. Time doesn't permit sharing all of the messages, so I've chosen three—

Mark Semmelmayr, our senior class president, from Saint Simons Island, Georgia sent this message:

Regrettably, must confirm I will not be attending the reunion. COVID issues in local hospital have pushed my knee replacement back to (at least now scheduled for) the second week in September. So sorry. Give my best to all and have a really good time!

Ann Balmer, from Ontario, Canada, wrote:

I was looking forward to being at the reunion and visiting with everyone. However, with current Covid events and patterns and the possible extension of the US/Canada border closure, I have opted not to attend. I hope everyone who attends has an enjoyable and rewarding time visiting and sharing stories with old classmates. I look forward to the 60th reunion!

Albrecht "Al" Bolza-Schunemann, our exchange student from Wurzburg, Germany wrote:

I was hoping restrictions for Europeans traveling to the United State would be loosened before the reunion, but this will now happen after November 1st. Too late to join you this weekend! I wish you all a wonderful reunion and will be with you with my thoughts.

It's wonderful to imagine classmates and teachers across the country and overseas all thinking of us and joining us in a toast to our Class of 1970 and our years together at Pittsford high school.

Let's raise our glasses and toast the years we spent together at Pittsford, and to the lessons learned and friendships made that have lasted a lifetime. **To Us, the Class of 1970!**