

WSMR "KIDS"
REUNION

WHITE SANDS MISSILE RANGE
BIRTHPLACE



WSMR Reunion Memory Book
September 3-5, 2004

WSMR'S MISSILE AND SPACE

SEPTEMBER
2004

A word in your ear ...

From Bill Adler

Dear WSPG Kids, WSMR Kids,
husbands, wives, children,
brothers, sisters, and loved ones ...

I want to applaud the Reunion Committee for all the diligent work they've done on this reunion and all the previous ones. They may or may not have known each other 15 years ago; but today, they are to each other ... family.

Besides working together on these reunions, they play together, take trips together; they eat together, have meetings and join in each other's family events. If you have been to one or more of the four reunions, you know what I mean when I say they've done excellent work.

I also want to acknowledge Jim Pulp for his work as our webmaster.

The Base and this group of people – WSPG and WSMR Kids – are very close to me. I know I indicated that this was the last reunion. Well, base Garrison Commander Colonel Don Gentry and his wife joined us for the Hembillo Canyon trip, and again at the Luncheon at the Frontier Club (the old Officers' Club) ... and after seeing this group of "brats", he told us that he himself is a military brat, and very much wished that there was a group like ours in *his* past. He is in full support of this group; so much so that he has mentioned the possibility of having a spot in the WSMR Museum dedicated to the WSMR Kids and that he did not want us to *stop* having this organization.

So if we're asked to supply information and such for the museum, I will let you know.

Okay, okay, okay – I *will* keep "The List". But, I need help from all of you to help locate those WSPG/WSMR Kids who have not yet been found, including some who were found but lost again. Please contact all your WSPG/WSMR friends, and make sure they have updated me with their current information. You folks from the '70s, '80s, '90s and '00s need to get cracking on finding your friends. If all you have is a list of

names and the year they would have graduated from high school, that's fine – it's a place for me to start. If you know the parents' names – send that information along as well. It all helps.

As most of you know, I have poured my heart into this project for 15 years, and I could go on writing forever. (By the time I left WSMR, I had spent almost half my life there.) I really enjoyed my time on the base and have so many great memories – far too many to record: The Teen Club ... dating (especially Officers' daughters) ... scooters ... dodging MPs ... working in the bowling alley ... working in the commissary ... throwing papers ... mowing lawns ... my first accident ... Boy Scouts (even though I never made it past Tenderfoot!) ... being in a base play (*Damn Yankees*) with my entire family including the dog ... and many more.

Thanks again, to all of you.

Bill

This Memory Book would never have been possible without the host of WSMR Kids who cheerfully provided us with so many great photos and fond reminiscences.

Thanks to you all. Authors are acknowledged with their pieces, photographers on the back cover.

We hope you will treasure this book ... for us, it has been a true labor of love.



Early in the proceedings, the Committee gathers round a familiar dining table to plan the events and proceedings of WSPG/WSMR 2004.

And special thanks to...



Bill, Loretta, Butch, Doris, Penny, Mike, Elaine, Leilani, Larry. To all these wonderful people, and more, without whom these reunions could never have happened, our gratitude and thanks go with you forever.

Over the years, we've been able to meet, greet, and eat because of the hard work and diligence of our Committee, and the kindness of Base personnel to let us tramp around, take trips to otherwise restricted areas, and be treated like special visitors.

All of these have gladly given up their free time and money to attend meetings, negotiate hotels, update websites, beg people for information, and keep track of it all.

A couple of gift shirts cannot begin to tell the whole tale.

You have helped us keep in touch with our roots. Because of you, no matter how far away we've gone or how old we get, we'll always be White Sands Kids.



Be advised that it is the hotel, not the Committee, that is AAA Approved. Also included in our thanks are these fine citizens ...



Jim Fulp ... our doughty and reliable webmaster ...



Penny Gearou ... den mother to all WSMR Kids everywhere

A tribute from Jimmy Ball, who speaks for all of us

"Being an Army brat all my life, I have lived in so many different places, and had a lot of friends.

When Dad got his orders for WSMR, I had no idea what was ahead of me and what was in store. The friends I made on base, I have remembered. This is the *only* place I have lived that I didn't want to leave when it was time to go. WSMR left a lasting impression on me; it's home for me. The base, the friends I was lucky to have, are in my heart and in my memory forever – a lifetime. The short time I lived there (1962-63) were the best years of my growing-up time.

Now, in 2004, I find it hard to leave again! After spending a weekend out here with some dear friends, again it's time to leave and go back to my other life. This is not easy, folks.

Thank you to all those who worked very hard to put this together and make it happen. God Bless you all!

A friend forever ..."

— Jimmy Ball



Garrison Commander Col. Don Gentry ... self-styled "IC Roads and Commodes ..."



Jim Eckles ... WSMR historian and raconteur extraordinaire ...

Portraits from the Reunion



Lorella and **BILL ADLER**
Texas



BILL



WALTER and Malou **ADLER**
Kuwait



KAY ANTLEY
Pennsylvania



DIANE ANTLEY Salley
Tennessee



DIANE



Rhonda and **FREDDY AZEVEDO**
New Mexico



FREDDY



ALFRED BALLIET
Washington



Wendy and **RACHEL BARNETT**
Texas



Rev. **LEONARD** and Carol **BLETCHER**
Pennsylvania



ANN BOLAND Garner
Alabama

Not everyone attended the Saturday night dance, and – though most did – not everyone who attended had their portrait captured there. If you don't see yourself here, hunt around in the pages of candid. And if you don't see yourself there either, just make dam sure you stand in front of a camera at the next reunion!



CHARLIE and Joy BOLAND
Colorado



JOY BRILL
New Mexico



MICHAEL and Linda BRILLANTE
New Mexico



Joe and ANNETTE CASNER George
New Mexico



JIM CROUCH and Alicia
New Mexico



John Seeliger and STEPHENIE CROWLEY
Arizona



STEPHENIE
(Remember hand-linked photos?)



ANNETTE



"BUTCH" and DORIS BALLIETT
DAVIS
New Mexico



LAINIE DIORIO Del Pazzo
New Jersey



PAM FATZINGER Williamson and
LLOYD FATZINGER
California and Texas



LARRY FIEDLER
New Mexico

Portraits from the Reunion



JAMES and Judy FINGER
New Jersey



JAMES



Gary and EILEEN FINLEY Laabs
Pennsylvania



RITA FROST Rouch and PHYLLIS
FROST Caban — Arizona



JIM and Mary Floyd FULP
Texas



PENNY GEAROU
New Mexico



DAVE GOTZH
Washington



Ed and DONNA GRISWOLD Morrison
California



ANDREA HERRICK Lombardo
Connecticut



LEILANI HORTON
New Mexico



LEILANI



ROBERT and Jean KAHN
New Jersey

Our photographer, who did such a fine job of capturing these likenesses, is Jack Diven. If you would like beautiful, professional enlargements of your Reunion photo for yourself, or to send to far-flung relatives, please contact him at 505-524-0092, or www.jackdivenphotography.com. Special rates for WSMR Kids.



HELEN and MACY LAFFERTY
Texas/Minnois



MACY



BOB MALSON
Washington, DC



GARY MEADOR
Texas



STEVE MEADOR
Texas



VAN and Sharon NICHOLS
Georgia



"DUTCH" NIESS Malkin
New Mexico



MARSHA PERKINS Humphrey
Indiana



JOHN and Michelle PERKINS
Arizona



BOB PETTIGREW
Ohio



BOB



JAN RAINWATER and Charles Nilsen
Texas

Portraits from the Reunion



DENNIS ROWLAND
Texas



GAY SHOBERG Coburn
New Mexico



Elaine and MIKE SHOBERG
New Mexico



KIM SHUMAN Hurst (NM)
and LYNN SHUMAN Burton (CO)



RAINELDA SOLES and Donny Crone
North Carolina



LINDA STOUT and Frank Haney
Texas



RAY SWEISFORD
Texas



RAY



Clara and KEITH THOMAS
California



PATTY WETZEL Sturtz
New Mexico



PATTY



MIKE and Mickey WETZEL
Georgia

Special thanks to the WSMR kids who sent us their original yearbook pictures for inclusion here ... and thanks to The Crosses '64 for many of these "the way we were" pictures. Looks like the years have been pretty kind to us, all things considered....



RICK WETZEL
Arizona



RICHARD and Judy WOODS
California

Being with the WSMR kids is like a "family" reunion — our years together will always be special. — Annette Casner

Special thanks to TED PARKER, who could not attend the entire reunion — but who sent us this handsome graduation picture and the reminiscence below ...



TED

WSMR Kids remember...

My family moved to WSPG in 1953. The base was much smaller then, with only a small housing area. I remember watching test firings of Nike missiles during recess (many were exploded due to problems). Our eighth grade class — of eight students! — was held in the principal's outer office because no regular rooms were available. I can remember walking back to the housing area from the post theatre at night and seeing coyotes. I remember how much I hated getting up very early in the morning to catch the school bus to go into Las Cruces. At that time (1955), ninth grade and up had to go to Las Cruces for classes. We all prayed for snow in the winter so the pass would be closed and we wouldn't have to go to school.

— Dale Garrett

... walking home up 4th Avenue (later Picatinny) to Hawk Street with the wind and sand whipping my face. I'd scrunch up my eyes against the sand, but that made my mouth open, and I could taste the sand. On really windy days, the windows in the school facing the playground in the grade 1-2-3 classrooms would moan and groan all day long.

— Jim O'Donnell

Memories... like riding our bikes all over base; walking to school and coming home for lunch; Girl Scouts; trick-or-treating at every house on base; swimming at the NCO Club pool every day during summer vacation; paying 15 cents to see a movie; having to wear coats and jackets during the summer at Cloudcroft; missing half a day of school when an inch of snow closed the mountain pass from Las Cruces; shooting off fireworks at the school grounds; hearing sonic booms; looking out our front door and seeing mountains; playing hide-and-seek with all the neighborhood kids in summer; building those 6-ft. redwood fences on Savanna Avenue; seeing everyone's Dad wearing starched green fatigues to work; "gray ladies" at the post Dispensary; family Christmas parties at the NCO Club; getting physical check-ups in the school gym; Saturday shopping trips to the mall in El Paso - were everywhere.

It was such a wonderful, moving experience for me to come home to White Sands. WSMR will always be a very special place for me. Thanks for the opportunity to revisit the happiest place of my childhood.

— Marsha Perkins Hushphey

Coming across the San Augustine Pass

from Las Cruces, quite early one morning. Just barely daybreak in the east. An errant ray of sunshine, breaking through somewhere around Cloudcroft, all the way across the basin below.

A few lights out on the range. If you know where to look, you can trace the whole of Nike Avenue, all the way out to Oro Grande. Probably run over there for breakfast at the Oro Chico Café. Al does really, really good biscuits and sausage gravy.

Working at Launch Complex 38. Patriot missile system testing. Science class with Mr. T. Fay Bell finally paid off.

KOMA, Oklahoma City, 1520 on the AM dial. The "Night Creature Feature" and the KOMA "Kissing Tone" are no more, but they still play the same music. The Four Tops and the Four Seasons. Lou Christy and Gene Pitney. Roy Orbison — "Blue Bayou" this morning, and you damned near cry for what might have been. Part of which is coming up now, just down the road.

Coming down off the mountain now. The big curve, the last one before the road runs straight as a razor all the way to Alamogordo. Off to the right, snuggled at the very base of the Organ Mountains, is the main post complex at White Sands. Still dark down there. A few streetlights through the trees (a lot more trees there than used to be). Can't quite make out Atlas Street, where I used to live. Can't make out Hawk Street, either. Where the girl with the long red hair lived ... but that is another story, is it not?

— Ted Parker

As You Were ...

Missile Ranger — the WSMR newspaper — wrote this great story about the WSMR Kids' reunions, and the tradition they have started which WSMR hopes will echo down the generations. Here's a reprint of the text page for you to enjoy.

5

Missile Ranger

Thursday, Sept. 9, 2004

Welcome Back

WSMR Kids return to visit the old homesteads

By Kevin Casey

Staff writer

It was always spring in Elaine Wilson's yard at the corner of Jupiter Drive and Mercury Avenue. When winter came and grass throughout the WSMR housing area turned brown, Wilson's father, a wiseguy Navy Commander named Bill McBurney, would take a garden sprayer and dye the entire lawn bright green. It was his humorous protest at being stationed at an Army post in the desert from 1965 to 1968.

Only five years old at the time, Wilson was as baffled by the lawn as the gawkers who drove past in a steady stream. "It looked like I could go play in the grass," she remembers, "but it would be brittle and break when I rolled around on it."

Wilson and her sister adjusted to the desert and before long caught and adopted a horned lizard. Being kids of the '60s, the girls named the horny toad "Love." After a fight with her sister one night, Wilson liberated the toad from its shoebox in the garage. She feigned ignorance as the babysitter and her sister searched the lawn in vain. "They were crunching around the grass in the dark with a flashlight," Wilson remembers with a wicked smile, "but they were looking for Love in all the wrong places."

Memories like these came alive again for more than one hundred people who returned to post for the fourth WSMR Kids Reunion Friday through Sunday. Proud of their heritage as "military brats," the group enjoyed field trips, social events and a luncheon where guest speaker Public Affairs Specialist Jim Eckles assured them the Roswell alien incident really was just a weather balloon.

Keith Thomas lived at WSMR with his Navy father from 1962 to 1964 and again from 1969 to 1972. Thomas brought his wife, three sons and daughter to the reunion from Anaheim, Calif. "I want them to see where I grew up and where I spent a lot of my time," he said. His kids most enjoyed Saturday's tour of the Hembriello Canyon battlefield where Apache warriors fought the U.S. Cavalry in 1880.



WSMR Kids Wesley "Butch" Davis and Doris Balliet Davis were married in 1972 at the post's Sierra Chapel. Thirty-two years later, their love still blooms in the shadow of a Nike Hercules missile.

Thomas' only regret is that he couldn't show his children either of the houses he lived in as a boy. As he stopped at a grassy corner to point out the locations, a few blocks away two women were also looking sadly on an empty field where their childhood houses had been.

Lifelong best friends Andrea Herrick and Laine Diorio met while they were children stationed here from the mid-50s to the mid-60s. Though Herrick now lives in Connecticut and Diorio lives in New Jersey, they are still close and drove over together from Las Cruces. "We started crying when we hit the pass," Herrick said.

"There's nothing that can compare," Diorio said, trying to describe seeing WSMR again from the top of the hill. "There's a spiritual feeling here."

The weekend offered most participants an opportunity to relive early years in a remote location that brought many young people close together — some more than others.

Doris Balliet was at the commis-

sary shopping with her mom one afternoon when Wesley "Butch" Davis drove up in a new 1970 American Motors Hornet. He'd bought it with money he'd earned working around base as a janitor, mess hall helper, assistant manager at the PX service station and server at the Queen Bee ice cream stand. Balliet was friends with Davis' sister and asked him where she was. "She's back in Harrisburg," Davis told her, "but can I come up to your house and see you?"

"She was wearing this short skirt," Davis recalled fondly, "and her dad wasn't there to protect her." It was 1970. Balliet's father was serving in Vietnam. When her father returned, Davis asked for Balliet's hand in marriage. They were wed in 1972 at the Sierra Chapel on post and have been married for 32 years.

Today, Doris Balliet Davis is a Range Scheduler at WSMR, and Davis is Veterans Services Officer with the Department of Labor in Las Cruces and Committee Chairman of the WSMR Kids Reunion.

Bill Adler founded the reunion group and maintains its Website www.wsmrkids.com. He expanded its mailing list from six names to 2,500 by using 40-year-old WSMR lists.

For example, he got his hands on an old school roster, but only for last names A through J. Using free weekend cell-phone minutes, he cold called dozens of people with those names across the country to ask: Were you ever stationed at White Sands Missile Range?

Sometimes he had to tell stories to convince people he was legitimate. He asked one skeptical woman, whom he suspected was the mother of a childhood friend, "Whose idea was it for Tuck to come to school with a Mohawk haircut?"

The woman laughed. "You're from White Sands all right," she said.

Adler explains the effort he's made to shepherd the group through reunions in 1991, 1995, 1999 and 2004 by saying, "WSMR was the peak of my childhood, ages 10 to 17." He remembers heading out for the mountains too late one afternoon and picking his way home through the desert in the dark. He remembers hiding behind boulders up at the Cox Ranch eating stolen watermelons. He remembers shooting BB guns at ranchers' cattle.

At Sunday's luncheon, Garrison Commander Col. Don Gentry urged the WSMR kids to write down some of those great adventures. "The statute of limitations is probably passed on most of them," he said. "As the Garrison Commander, I promise we will not prosecute. We might send you a bill, though."

Gentry expressed his hope that the group would flourish so his own son might return years from now to visit the home of his youth.

WSMR Kids Reunion Committee Member Penny Gearos, who is also an award-winning Senior Olympian, addressed the group before turning them loose to tour the base Sunday afternoon. She summed up the sentiments of many participants when she said, "I'd like to commend all of you who came back. You turned out to be real good kids."

The Halls of Our Friendships ...



1953: Here's the first publicity photo taken of the new school on its opening day. Two unidentified boys, and Pam Taylor (now Brosius) wait to enter the school for the first time, while six-year-old Stephenie Crowley stands hesitantly on the step.



By 1991 (above), the exterior of the old WSMR Elementary and Middle School had not changed much. A concrete pathway, laid earlier, had reduced the number of steps from two to one, and landscaping was somewhat different ... but in essence it looked very much like the school we'd attended since the beginning.

1991: The first of the great WSMR Kids' reunions. On the school steps, Stevie Crowley re-creates her publicity pose from almost 40 years before.



WSMR Reunion Kids stroll the school halls in 2004, remembering ... what? These corridors are imprinted on our memories: from here we ran to recess and home ... slouched to the principal's office ... walked (not ran) to class ... talked with friends if we hadn't finished our chats outside before the school bell rang, and if we could grab a moment or two ...

1995: Once again, a familiar pose in a familiar place. Mr. Hoover would have sent us all home for dressing like this. Mike Brillante (far left), Brenda Bivin (center) and Stevie, all laughing, don't care.



You either loved her or loathed her – no half measures – but no WSMR Kid who spent any time in Mrs. Hoover's class will ever forget her ... Flanked here at the 1991 Reunion by Stevie and Butch.

2004: It's now more than 50 years since that first publicity shot. Visible changes have been made to the exterior of the school ... and, truth to tell, to the exteriors of all of us as well. But not inside. Because inside, as WSMR Kids together, we're as young as the day we first set foot on that one small step ...



By 2004 the school showed dramatic change. New construction had extended the front wall outward to create new office space ... the step had all but disappeared to allow for handicapped access ... the old wooden sign still stood, but a new sign now showed bold in metal against the brick wall ... and there were major remodels to offices and classrooms too. One thing, though, remains unchanged and eternal: the Organ Mountains, so much a part of our lives ...

As You Were ...

Welcome To The ORGAN MOUNTAIN LODGE RESTAURANT

ORGAN LODGE CHICKEN

Order No. 1	Order No. 5
Regular Order 1.15 French Fried Potatoes Pickle Slice Hot Bread and Honey	One Half Regular Order All Duck .55 French Fried Potatoes Pickle Slice Hot Bread and Honey
Order No. 2	Order No. 6
All White Order 1.40 French Fried Potatoes Pickle Slice Hot Bread and Honey	All Thigh Order (2) 1.35 French Fried Potatoes Pickle Slice Hot Bread and Honey
Order No. 3	Order No. 7
Half Chicken 1.90 French Fried Potatoes Pickle Slice Hot Bread and Honey	All Leg Order (4) 1.35 French Fried Potatoes Pickle Slice Hot Bread and Honey
Order No. 4	Order No. 8
One Half—All White .85 French Fried Potatoes Pickle Slice Hot Bread and Honey	Half Order (2 Legs) .75 French Fried Potatoes Pickle Slice Hot Bread and Honey

CHARCOAL BROILED STEAKS

We Serve Only Top U.S. Choice Beef

Filet Mignon 2.75	Extra Cut T-Bone 3.00
K.C. Sirloin 3.00	Large T-Bone 2.75
New York Cut 3.00	Small T-Bone 2.25
Club Steak 2.25	

With Hot Baked Potatoes or Crisp French Fries—Hot Bread and Honey—Chef's Salad
(Not Responsible for Medium-Well or Well-Done Steaks)

GOLDEN FRIED JUMBO SHRIMP	\$1.50
Crisp French Fries — Hot Bread and Honey	\$1.50
HAM STEAK	\$2.00
Slice of Pineapple, Baked Potato or French Fries	
JUMBO LOBSTER TAILS	\$1.50
Hot Lemon Butter, French Fries	
CHOPPED BEEF STEAK	\$1.50
Wrapped in Bacon, French Fries or Baked Potatoes	
ONE-HALF BROILED CHICKEN	75c
ALL THESE ORDERS WITH CHEF'S SALAD	
SHRIMP COCKTAIL EXTRA	

SALADS

Shrimp Salad	95c
Peas and Cottage Cheese	25c
Lettuce and Tomato	35c
Pineapple and Cottage Cheese	35c

Your
Favorite
BEER

ORGAN LODGE SALAD BOWL

Crisp Lettuce, Diced Tomato, Green Pepper,
Topped with Chopped Ham, Cheese,
Hard Cooked Egg
Served with Organ Mountain Lodge Dressing

95c

The Organ Mountain Lodge Restaurant, operated by George and Betty Chandler, lay 15 miles northwest of Las Cruces on Highway 70 to Alamogordo. These were their menu prices in the early 1950s. Lobster and fries, two bucks!! Extra cut T-Bone, only three!! Wow!

Anyone recognize these gals from the early 60s, and their "unsafe at any speed" Ford Falcon? The old Teen Club where we used to hang out is gone, replaced by the brand new and very handsome Youth Center, seen here on the inside under inspection by some nostalgic WSMR "kids" and their own offspring. Other hot hang-out spots included the Theater, and the old PX Desert Fountain snack bar right next to the old Navy Pool, which we show you in use on page 12.



Getting Re-Acquainted ...



Here was our hotel, the *Best Western Mission Inn El Camino Real*. That's, like, three names, dude. It wasn't at all bad outside, pretty nice inside.



Lelani Horton peeks into her room – oops, sorry – but soon locates the right one. Next, some trusty Committee members test the waters (and possibly other beverages) in the Lounge.



We couldn't afford the band at left, so Larry Fiedler turned deejay for the evening's Dinner-Dance, while Butch set out to break the World Squeeze-a-girl record at the reunion. See his first squeeze on Page 10. Here's his second: Macy Lafferty.



Some day, we may learn the whole story of why Macy kept Freddy's LCHS ID Card all these years! A torch?



Some of us rediscovered our younger selves growing a few years older, in this montage of Grades Two (1958-59), Four (1960-61) and Five (1961-62), the 5th Grade Scout Troop 114, and Missile Valley Girl Scouts of 1962. Others found ourselves growing seriously older, right there in the mirror.

At far right are Butch and Doris (Balliet) Davis with the Rev. Len and Carol Bleicher; and Freddy and Rhonda Azevedo.



If you don't want to go to de limbo, mon, no worry, de limbo she come from Jamaica all de way to your table!



Amid all the hoopla, there were some folks whose pictures we missed ... some whose names we didn't catch ... and regrettably, a handful of pictures didn't reach the quality needed for print. If you're missing from these pages, we apologize.

At left with Judy Woods, the Committee seems confused. Nothing new there. Did anyone else notice that Mary Floyd always wore pink? Pink Floyd – d'you think it's on purpose? Loretta Adler and Stevie Crowley are long-lost soulmates, here busy challenging Butch's Squeeze-a-Ithon ...



There was much more to do than just eat. Loretta admires the beautiful sand painting Leilani won as a door prize, while pool sharks play in an adjacent room.

Slow dancing is still in fashion ... and wasn't it wonderful to dance as close as you liked, with no teachers there to break it up?



Above, Lanie Dionio Del Pazzo and Andrea Herrick Lombardo wait for Rainelde Soles to get the joke ... Also among these faces you'll find Mike Wetzel ... Alfred Balliet ... Macy Lafferty ... while Bob Malson and Diane Antley offer a challenge to Butch in the Squeeze-a-Ithon stakes ...



... and Picnic on the Dunes



So there it was. A cookout on the sands – with something exciting going on at top left! – and then we said our goodbyes. Pictured were: Rainelde Soles and Lainie Diorio ... John Perkins and Donna Griswold ... Ted Parker, Van Nichols and Jimmy Ball ... the littlest guest ... Donna again, with Penny – and who but Butch in the background with Squeeze #6, the clear and absolute winner of the WSMR World Squeeze-a-girl record for 2004! These moments together become more precious to all of us WSMR Kids as time so quickly passes: we could not know that for Penny Gearou, this would be our last goodbye.



Ah, yes ... the question was, who has the coolest ride? Well, that was then and this is now, and there's no doubt that the good Reverend Len Blecher and his wife, motorcycle mama Carol, blow away the competition with their smooth and ultra-hip Honda GoldWing. Motorbikes being the chick magnets they are, the Antley sisters showed up in tank tops with "Free Shop" across the front. Hmm.



The old landscape changes...



WSMR is redeveloping much of its housing, and many old homes of our memories are disappearing in the process.

Some lucky folks, like those at the corner of Mercury and Jupiter, found their homes intact ... others were less fortunate, like Keith Thomas' family up there at Talos and Aerobee.

Several streets remain much as we remember them, though the landscape may have changed a little and the trees grown shadier. Soon – perhaps even in time for the next reunion – new homes will appear in the now-empty tracts; guarded, as always, by our beloved mountains.



In Memoriam ...

Penny Gearou

This "memory book" was just about to go to press when we heard the shocking, unthinkable news.

So we pulled it off press immediately, and rearranged it to include this page.

If we gave it a thought at all, I think we all honestly believed that Penny would go on forever. After all, she always *had* been there, at whatever age she was. And what age was that, anyway? – Penny was ageless, and timeless, and a lot more energetic than most of us supposedly younger folks.

She was a driving force behind all the reunions. Not

just murmuring encouragement from the sidelines but, like everything she did in life, totally involved. The fun you had here through the years was – in very large part – thanks to her untiring efforts.

The newspaper wrote her a nice obituary (reprinted below in case you missed it). Still, nothing they could write can recapture her infectious enthusiasm, her inexhaustible energy, her lightness of heart and caring spirit.

She was our den mother. She was supposed to be there always. But now she's gone.

And we miss her.



Memories of Penny: at the 1991 reunion ... then in 2005, dancing with Butch ... in charge at the podium ... and with Jim and Alicia.



Gearou

Annie "Penny" Gearou, 79, passed away on Wednesday March 23, 2005. She was born in Wahiawa, HI on December 24, 1925 to Hark and Myung Han. She was a member of the First Presbyterian Church of Las Cruces. Penny was retired from Federal Civil Service after 30+ years where she worked in the Civilian Personnel Office as a Staffing Specialist. She was an active member of Senior Olympics of New Mexico as an athlete and as a volunteer. She was the 2003 Dee Harris Award winner as the Outstanding Female Athlete of the Year in the Dona Ana County Senior Olympics. She was selected the 2003 Female Golden Athlete of the Year for the state of New Mexico.

She was an avid bowler



throughout her adult life and was a fixture in the Wednesday Night Latecomers League and multiple bowling events in Senior Olympics. She was a member of the 70 year old and over team in 2002 that set the state women's team record in Sr.

Olympics. She had attended the National Senior Olympics with her late husband in the Mixed Doubles competition. She was also active in and had won numerous awards for shuffleboard and billiards. Her other love in her life, after Senior Olympics, was the White Sands Missile Range "Kids" Reunion Committee – she and her "children," Butch and Doris Davis, Elaine and Mike Shoberg, Tommy and "Dutch" Matkin, Leilani Horton and Larry Fiedler.

She is survived by her daughter Mary Jane Lundy and son-in-law George W. Lundy, son James W. Crouch and daughter-in-law Susie Crouch, daughter Catherine Ann Crouch-Bay and son-in-law Steven Bay, son Russell James Gearou, Jr. and daughter-in-law Joyce Craig, son Michael V. Gearou and daughter-in-law Shirley Scafuri-Gearou and 5 grandchildren, Brain M. Kurlak, George "Troy" Lundy, Maile A.

Bay, Susan L. Gearou and Alicia A. Crouch, her brother Daniel Loo of California, sister Marie Malesic of Honolulu, HI, nieces Yvonne Semis and Diane "DeeDee" Israel, Wendy Malesic and nephews J.R. Malesic and Troy Malesic.

She is preceded in death by her husband Russell James Gearou and son Robert Charles Gearou and sister Mildred Semis.

Pallbearers are three of her "sons": Tom Kita, Butch Davis and Mike Shoberg.

Visitation will be held Tuesday March 29, 2005 from 5-7p.m. at Getz Funeral Home. Funeral services will be Wednesday March 30, 2005 at 11a.m. also at the Getz Funeral Home Chapel. Interment will follow at Hillcrest Memorial Gardens.

Arrangements by Getz Funeral Home, corner of Bowman and Solano, Las Cruces. 526-2419. For personal condolences log on to www.GetzFuneralHome.com

As You Were ...



This undated map shows the WSMR layout some time in the 1960s. Use it for reference to check the Army picture of WSPG at right, dated 1954 – one year after the school opened; and (at far right) the tremendous changes that had been made only about 10 or 12 years later. Both views are looking west. Note the aircraft (is that a B-1?) and its shadow.

Looking Back on Ourselves, Our Base, Our Mountain ...



So ... who had the grooviest transportation? Van Nichols's old Ford, Bill Adler's Cushman Eagle, or Stevie's horse? (Answer on p23.) The Navy, though, seems to prefer aquatic – or airborne – mobility. While we're at it, can anyone name those three cool cats leaning on the stable fence at left? Wouldn't be Peggy Doka, Van and Butch ... now, would it?



More than one WSMR Kid had to brush away a tear this year, when the Organs came into view ... seeing once again the constant, dramatic backdrop to our childhood years. A surprising number of people told us they still dream at night about these mountains.

Special thanks to Van and Bill for most of the photos on this page.

