

"Crusaders Forever"

BY LOUANN CATANOSO

This past May I was inspired by Joe Russo's "World Record" story in the Sun. I really enjoyed it. I could totally imagine the six boys riding on the bike. What fun that must have been. It started me thinking about some of the funny things I experienced during my high school years at Wildwood Catholic. The, 'you had to be there', stories.

I have my own bicycle story to tell. One sunny spring day, during my junior year, a couple of friends and I decided to ride 'one' bike down to the end of Wildwood Crest. I guess we only had one bike between us; who knows. Since I was the 'athletic one' (lucky me), I was elected to pedal and steer the bike. **Patty Mullen** sat on the handlebars, and **Jackie Bernstein** sat on the back fender. I am sure we made a few pitt stops on our long trek from North Wildwood to Wildwood Crest. But, right around Rosemary Road a dog started chasing us. It ran alongside of us for about a mile, barking and snarling, and snapping at my (pedaling) feet. There is no doubt in my mind that the shrill screams of three teenage girls were heard throughout the entire Crest. Fortunately my three years of daily basketball practices paid off, and I was able to eventually leave the 'mad dog' in the dust. Funny now; not so funny then.

We had goofy rules in our school cafeteria during my freshman year, 'way back in 1969-1970'. During lunch, girls and guys were allowed to mingle; but when the bell rang, girls were to go sit on one side of the room, and boys on the other. One day I decided to stay at the boys table after the bell rang. During the prayer to end lunch, all eyes were on me. Most of the students had fear on their faces, wondering 'what was to become of me'. One of my favorite teachers, **Mr. Breslin**, was in charge that day. He looked at me with evil in his eyes, and a smile on his lips. After the prayer he walked over to me and handed me a detention slip. The reason for the detention read, "inciting a riot". My mother still gets a kick out of that (reason) to this day.

There was some mild hazing that went on during my freshman year. But I think it proved to be very frustrating for the senior girls because most of us thought it was fun. For example, they thought we would be embarrassed when they had us girls dress up like babies, pacifiers in mouth and all. We were taken to Wildwood High School at their dismissal time, and told to sing "we love you seniors", while the students exited the front doors. We weren't embarrassed. We were giddy, immature freshman girls, and we thought we were "cute".

My sophomore year **Rudy Budnick** took 'free dress day' (which actually cost 50 cents) to the limit. As we were permitted to come to school that day in casual dress, Rudy decided to come barefoot. But was really funny was

when the French teacher looked down at his naked toes wiggling under the desk, and calmly told Rudy (in French) to "leave the classroom, and report to the office". 'Ah Rudy; gotta love him'.

My senior year I was 'lucky enough' to be placed in track three with 'all' the guys, and just two other girls. Needless to say I spent Monday thru Friday laughing my head off; but especially during Monday's history class. It was like comedy hour, even the teacher seemed to enjoy it. **Greg Haffert**, **Jimmy O'Neil**, and **Rich Palombo** would do their impressions of political figures in front of the class, while **Fitzy**, **Tom Bada** and **John Steiger** would give us blow by blow 'details' of what they did over the weekend. **Sil Mazzella**, **Paul Kelly** and I would laugh until we cried. Like I said at the beginning, these were 'you had to be there stories'. But, aren't they usually the stories that make some of our best memories? Everyone has these stories; and if they are special to you, that is all that matters.



Dedication: This story is dedicated to my favorite Crusader; my dad. A Catholic education was very important for all six of his children; and he made many sacrifices to make this happen.



Alice & LouAnn, Summer 2010



Annual Alumni get together at LouAnn's house. 2002 L-R: Eilleen Davis, Kathy Oster, Alice Read, Charlene Graiff, Geri Miller (LCM Grad), LouAnn Catanoso. Sitting on floor: Angela Gloria



Alumni buddies at LouAnn's 1996. L-R: John Steiger, Fitz, Jim O'Neill



Alumni Reunion at Lighthouse Pointe 2008. L-R: Jackie Bernstein, Loretta Dole, LouAnn Catanoso



Graduation Day, June 5th, 1973. LouAnn. The braids stayed in for the graduation ceremony that evening.



Annual Alumni get together at LouAnn's Dec. 1978. L-R: Joanne Green, LouAnn Catanoso, Jackie Bernstein. Kneeling: Karen Renemo



10 Year Reunion 1983. L-R: Paul Kelly, John Steiger, Bill Gerace, Ed Aarvig



25th Year Reunion at Moore's Inlet. L-R: Tom 'Oatsie' O'Neill, Rich Palumbo, Rudy Budnick