



### **Judy Kay Myers Bellemere – Class of 1958**

“Mr. Barisas was the wood-working teacher who lived around the corner from us. It is he who designed and created, I believe with the help of students, the unique round table which stood in our front hall. I attached, and still attach a great deal of significance to the meaning of a “round” table and the words carved around it. It is a good bit of philosophy to apply in all situations at all times of life.”

### **High School Memories**

I lived at 2811 E 63rd Street. My brother Louis Leigh Myers also attended Southeast.

In the beginning, since we went to SE as 8th graders, it was a “Common Learning” teacher that comes to mind: Mildred Campbell. She also taught my brother, so the name and person seemed very important to me as my brother was seven years older. She seemed formidable, in a way, as she was strict, but also very sweet and kind.

As I progressed in age, my art teachers, Martha Abbott and Betty Denny were very special to me. Martha Abbott could whistle with a warble, beautifully, and would do so occasionally while we worked; a real treat. She was an interesting and talented woman and you felt her focus on you, personally. She helped an area artist, McDaniel, I believe to be his name, paint some of the murals on the ceiling of Rozzelle Court at the Nelson Art Gallery. (I hope I am correct about that information; it is just pulled from a memory.) Her expectations for her students were high, and she combined them with patient encouragement. She helped foster understanding of other teachers who might not have had such an easy communication with students.

Mrs. Wilson was my Senior English teacher. She was an exemplary teacher who made reading Chaucer and Shakespeare rewarding. She

awakened some quiet places in the mind and I enjoyed the stimulus and challenge.

I can't forget the librarians: Mrs. Deatherage and Frances Helff. At that time, the SE library provided a weekly "outing", particularly in the summer. Neighborhood friends and I would walk happily there and home again, arms piled with fresh books to be opened and enjoyed on someone's screened in porch. They were helpful and friendly, and in the silence of "check out", their sharpened pencils and sticky inked stamps made great sound impressions on my mind. In general, it was a pretty magnificent group, and Mr. McMillan and Mr. Powell were a dignified and special presence.

What a great school and wonderful administrators, teachers and friends!...And what a meaningful tradition: "Truth, honor, freedom, and fair courtesy." It served us well as students, it serves us well as adults, and I hope, that somehow, the new school concept can incorporate some of this philosophy in some way or another. It is meaningful across all of life. We can only hope that the students currently enrolled in our beautiful old building can be inspired in good ways and be an inspiration to others.

I loved my high school and participated as often as possible in activities. I was active in cheerleading (at a time when you were actually quiet and respectful when the other team was shooting free throws; what a contrast!). I can't find my '58 yearbook at the moment, so I am trying to remember! All-City Student Council representative, which I loved, as you met with students from all of the other schools in KC; I think I was Vice Pres. of the student body, a Sr. Class officer, art-editor of the Yearbook, and a member of Beta, the academic honorary.

One good memory blends quickly into others as I think back...Fun at the prom with good friends, being included in laughter and relationships, growing and learning in a safe and stimulating environment.

The threat of communism, power of the Soviet Union, and the civil rights incidents opened our eyes to the fact that we needed to be SURE all of us are created equally and continue to be vigilant in that pursuit of human rights and respect.

Away from school my dad had a lot and membership at Lake Quivira. He loved being there, so as a family, every Saturday and Sunday of my life, until I went away to college, was spent there. I don't ever remember not playing golf, swimming, hiking in the woods, fishing, or rowing the boat. I played golf while in high school in a Junior Golf Association formed by Marian Gault, and participated in KC Junior Golf tournaments. I also spent years doing ballet and other dance forms. Art was enjoyed at home as well as for special activities.

### **After High School**

I attended the University of Missouri in Columbia, Mo. where I pledged and was active in Kappa Alpha Theta. After graduation from MU, I was a Shawnee Mission teacher. I taught second grade for two and one-half years, then was an art supervisor for six schools in the Shawnee Mission area. I married Fred Bellemere and we have three children. When my children were grown, I returned on a part time basis to the Shawnee Mission Schools as an art teacher.

My focus has been on family. Professionally, I have been a teacher though not continuously. I have used my art to help in charitable endeavors, and have spent many years helping at Operation Breakthrough and doing charity work with the KC Missouri Junior League.

My contact with former classmates is sporadic, usually through email. I always love hearing from them and about them. Most of my close friends from high school, those I spent the most time with, are either deceased or live far away from KC.