

Karen Sweigert, M.D.
 Physician and Surgeon
 Obstetrics and
 Gynecology

Health First
 1130 N.W. 22nd Avenue
 Suite 320
 Portland, OR 97210
 229-7538

WE'RE BACK



**ENCHANTED BLUE WAVE
 BED & BREAKFAST**
 THE NORTHWEST'S ORIGINAL LUXURY
 OCEANFRONT B&B FOR WOMEN HAS
 REOPENED!

OCEANVIEW ROOMS-GRAND PIANO-PRIVATE
 OUTDOOR SPA-VCR & MOVIES-BIG SCREEN TV-
 FITNESS ROOM-TOYS-MARBLE FIREPLACE-
 CHAMPAGNE-POOL ROOM-CONT. BREAKFAST

CALL (360) 642-3471
 On the Longbeach Peninsula

2 NIGHT MINIMUM WEEKENDS, 3 NIGHTS HOLIDAYS
 \$10 OFF ANY ROOM \$15 OFF 2 NIGHTS
 WITH THIS AD ONLY!! VALID MONTH OF AUGUST
 WHOLE HOUSE RENTAL AVAILABLE

BE THE BEST YOU CAN BE

**HEALTH
 BASICS®**

Committed to providing high-
 quality products that really do work!!

KICK

MAXIMUM ENERGY

START

A safe and effective energy boost
 without Ma Haung or Ephedra

WOMEN'S

DAILY VITAMIN SYSTEM

COMPLETE

Keep hormones level all month, and
 get the vitamins and minerals lacking in diets

FAT

ULTIMATE METABOLIC REGULATOR

BURNERS

Liver and kidney cleanser assists in
 breaking down excessive body fat

Health Basics

4326 SE Woodstock Blvd., Suite #465
 Portland, OR 97206

(503) 771-0990 • (888) 771-0990

Fax: (503) 771-1771

E-mail: i_m_fit@healthbasics.com

Call for FREE sample and product info

Discounts on multiple orders

Wholesale prices available on request



STONEWALL BABY

Clearwater revisited

*Titillating curiosity motivated this writer to conquer the fear
 of attending a high school reunion*

by Will O'Bryan

When I walk down the Memory Lane of my high school history, the landmarks that guide me are the loss of virginity (both sexes), Morrissey, Camel cigarettes and being outed. In late August, a few dozen ghosts and I reunited in the Palm Room of an unnamed hotel in Clearwater, Fla., to celebrate 10 years of not keeping in touch.

To the best of my memory, I hadn't been to Clearwater Beach since the night of my senior prom. As a measure of time, the hotel everyone went to after the prom was the site of Jessica Hahn's infamous deflowering about a year earlier. If you remember who she is, you'll agree that it's been a long time.

While Jim and Jessica were speaking in tongues, I was being outed. Two high-school chums who'd arrived to take me to the mall, or to some dead-end road to drink beer, or some other adolescent diversion, rifled through my journals when they had a few spare moments to themselves in my room. Perhaps in a food court, perhaps in the avocado green Maverick—it's blurry—I heard the words: "We read your journal." Simple, straight forward, and worth a palpitation at the time.

Of the high school friends I'm still in touch with, I'm the only one who went to the reunion. My friends assumed I must have a masochistic streak. I'll grant them that I might have such a streak, but, as yet, it's only manifested itself as a good spanking and some hand-cuffery.

My sole motivation to revisit the past was titillating curiosity. Like wanting to see what's under someone's Band-Aid, I had to know what had become of these people. Florida may not have a monopoly on the freakish, but it's nearly cornered the market. Accordingly, I was hoping for a twisted occasion.

The superior, spectator attitude I hoped to bring to Clearwater evaporated as does everything under Florida's melanoma-spawning sun. I asked my mother for some Tums and a hit off her Maalox before saying goodbye and heading off. I'd not expected to feel so anxious.

The reunion began as soon as I checked into the hotel. At the front desk I stood in line behind a man I'd known as a boy. I hadn't heard his name in more than ten years and I was sure I didn't remember it. I stayed behind him and he didn't see me. The first potential awkward mine was avoided. Speaking of "behind," he'd blossomed wonderfully.

Once in my room, I ordered a bottle of wine and broke out the year book. It was time to cram. The first photo I looked for was Mr. Front Desk with the blossomed behind.

Relative to his senior class photo, "Jeff G." seemed like some sort of Frog Prince. As I studied more photos, I realized that either the school hired an awful photographer or we were actually a very homely graduating class. My own photo looked like a cross between Frankenstein and the lead singer of The Thompson Twins. My fear was that time had been as kind to everyone as it had been to Jeff G., leaving me to win the venerable title of

reunion attendee voted Most Likely To Have Entered Middle Age.

With my bottle of wine, in-room iron and an image of Jeff G.'s 1997 butt, I readied myself for the lion's den. While primping, I wondered if any of the boys and girls I suspected of belonging to The Tribe would show their faces and prove me right or wrong.

After checking myself in the mirror for about half an hour, I returned to the yearbook. This time I ignored the photos and studied the messages people had written: "Stay sweet." "K.I.T." "I've enjoyed knowing you." Some seemingly heartfelt messages were signed with names I didn't recognize. I feared I wouldn't recognize third period's best friend or some kid I ate lunch with for four years.

By 9 pm, an hour after the "casual cocktail hour"—which I paid \$42 to attend—had begun, I decided it was time to show my face. Besides, the

wine was gone.

I'd only made a few steps into the Palm Room when the hellos began. People came at me from all angles. My apprehension lessened in the onslaught of hugging. The most peculiar thing was that, Jeff G. aside, everyone looked remarkably the same. All the familiar faces pricked the part of my brain that stored all their names and I remembered every one. I surprised myself.

Even more remarkable was that I didn't have to further out myself at this soirée. My queerness was a forgone conclusion as far as everyone was concerned. Even people who weren't privy to my forced high school outing, people I'd never discussed anything of the sort with in high school, simply knew and accepted that I am a fag. They were just happy to see me and I was happy to see them.

As though we shared a collective consciousness, all conversation remained on the surface. Chitchat masked what was really going on: Everyone wanted to recognize each other and use the experience as a way to mark the parabola of the past 10 years. Pleasant conversation rolled around while we studied each other's faces and spent most of our intellect thinking about our memories of one another.

By 2 am, it was all over. The evening had passed rapidly. We'd moved from the Palm Room to the hotel bar and closed it down. I went back to my room in a daze and checked the "memory book" for information on the suspected queer no-shows. They'd all moved to either New York or Atlanta. That was all the confirmation I needed.

I also went back to my room with a request from an old friend, now married and a mother, to send her copies of *Just Out*. She and I had worked on the school paper together and she seemed proud that I was still working for a paper.

After returning to Portland, though, the magic wore off. Her husband told her to cancel the request, arguing that gay papers being sent to their home on a military base would put their housing status in jeopardy. Whatever.

For a few hours, it was the best of what once was. I imagine even a reunion of Titanic survivors would be as pleasant, though. All disasters—high school included—seem less frightening in retrospect.



Montavilla Means Mouldings



PHOTO BY LINDA ALEWEN

PLUS

- Redwood
- Cedar
- Fencing
- Decking
- Windows
- Doors
- Custom Milling
- Custom Cutting

Montavilla Lumber Company

"Montavilla Means Mouldings"

Just Out on 102nd & NE Glisan

254-5571

10301 NE Glisan • Portland OR • 97220