

WELCOME SPEECH *Linda Ruther Hagan*

October 4, 2014

Welcome, everyone, to the **50 Year Reunion** of Allentown High School's **Class of 1964**.

I would like to especially welcome Mr Ted Fish, our much respected and talented music and band instructor at AHS.

I also want to welcome all those classmates who have traveled quite a distance and gone to great expense to be with us tonight. Please stand up when your name is called.

Pat Levine from San Francisco, CA; Larry Eisenberg from Los Angeles, CA; Mitch Cooper and his wife Lynn from Leander, TX; Bob Warwick and his wife Gloria from Aurora, CO; Hilda Freiburger and her husband David Carter from Seminole, FL; Paul Jordan and his wife Angela from Winchester, TN; Susan Tantum Porteous from Steuben, Maine and Vero Beach, Florida; Sharon Carr and her husband Ralph Gutbrodt from Green Bay, VA.; Richard Poinsett and his wife Linda from Hampton, VA; Susan Hozdala and her husband Tony Trombino from Berlin, MD And Elaine Joy Willman from Red Lion, PA.

These 11 classmates are among more than 37 of our classmates who now reside in states other than NJ. Thank you, travelers! We certainly are enjoying your company tonight!

As for the rest of us here tonight, who remain rooted in Central New Jersey, thank you as well! **Many of you worked hard to make this reunion possible.**

I know that some of you were excited about attending this 50 year reunion; you responded immediately to the invitation. I received replies that exclaimed, "What Fun." "How can I help?" "Do you need some start up money?" I know that most all of you were a bit hesitant about attending. Your first responses to the idea of a 50th Reunion may have been, "What do I talk about with people I have not seen in at least 30 years?" "I look nothing like the teenager I was in 1964. Heck, I don't look anything like the person I saw in the mirror just last year." Some thought, "I have gained too much weight." "I have grey hair." "I have no hair."

A very common response may have been to have looked back over those 50 years since high school and thought, "I have not accomplished what I wanted to have accomplished in my life at age 68."

But despite those first reactions, all of you, took action and are here tonight.

After requesting, reading, typing and publishing your bio paragraphs, (And the album has Bio Paragraphs for 79 of your classmates), I think I know why.

You are all amazing individuals!

For the most part you are more than satisfied with the life you made for yourself. You have found love in family, delight in good friendships, a successful work ethic in employment, satisfaction in church and volunteering, and passion in your hobbies. You came tonight to this 50 Year Reunion to give thanks to your roots and early relationships that, I believe, have influenced who you are today.

So, raise your glasses in a toast to yourselves and a Life Well Lived! TOAST

I WOULD NOW LIKE TO INTRODUCE OUR TWO MASTERS OF CEREMONY. Before I have them come to the microphone I would like to read a bit of their bios to you.

Mitch Cooper— seems to be rarely home in Texas. He is usually traveling several days a month as an adjunct Weapons of Mass Destruction instructor for Texas A+M. Be warned, his 22 year career in the US Air Force will have us snapping into attention. In his spare time, Mitch can be found serving as Editor-in-Chief of WWW.prohockeynews.com.

"Hugh" Pat Levine- back home in California, Pat is living life to the fullest. When he is not defending criminals, he is living life to the fullest: authoring three books, piloting sailplanes, cooking gourmet meals, and traveling the world. Be warned! His wit is sharp, and he may put you into one of his novels. Mitch and Pat come forward to say a few words before introducing **Linda Riephoff** who will give the Memorial for our deceased classmates and the Invocation.