

Friday, October 7 2022



Day One starts with us peering up at the sky over the "Sun City". A recent Mexican hurricane sent lashings of rain yesterday and it is quite overcast this morning. Expect umbrella bumping on the bus this morning.

We are a distinctive crew in our orange shirts grabbing a lite bite in the cafe and greeting each other under the beautiful chandeliers. This is our first opportunity to gather en masse.







Jerry's chartered bus is a god-send. Hard to imagine all of us scurrying around in our cars and ending up in the right place in a timely manner. It's still overcast but so far no rain. While the school has grown and changed the stadium vista is still majestic.





We are headed to the EPHS Alumni Museum, a tiny building off the southwest corner of the campus. Plans are in the offing for an expansion but what the museum lacks in size it makes up in content.

Not a square inch is wasted. Every wall and display case is filled to the brim photos, mementos, spirit ribbons and uniforms.











Even the tiny bathroom is thoroughly "tigerized".



Lots of interesting photos and even a long lost relative from 1918.



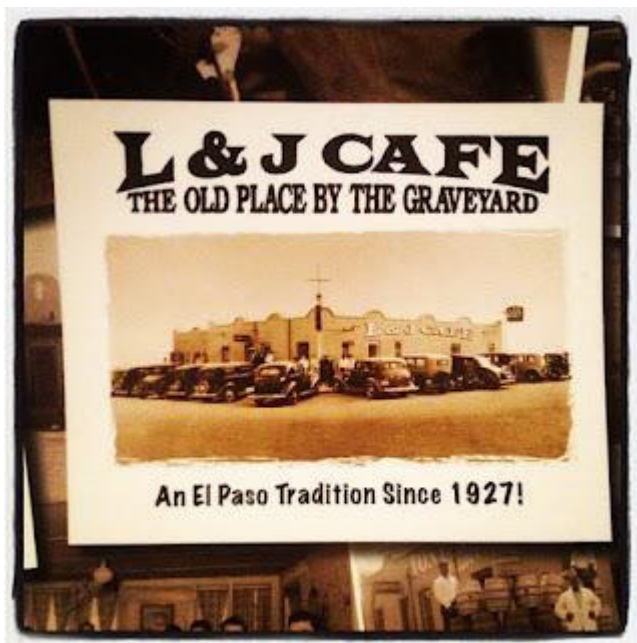
There was free time to browse the centennial plaques that line the press box. It was such a popular fund raiser that once the press box was covered the memorials extend out over the plaza.

Of course, what would a EPHS reunion be without a mention of our greatly missed and loved class president, Richie Ford.

It's tradition to gather on the school steps for our class picture.



We're back on the bus and headed to a stop all have been really looking for to, the L&J cafe for a lunch hosted by Jerry Rubin.





Everyone is so happy to be here. Those who scattered from El Paso forever bemoan the lack of great, authentic Mexican food in their new cities. I know Skip won't even go out to search anymore which keeps me busy roasting chiles all year.

L&J is deceptively large and is already busy. We have taken over the whole back room and no sooner than we are seated that the parade of food begins.













It was one savory taste after another, washed down with beer, margaritas and iced tea. Just when we thought it couldn't get any better out came dessert! Tres Leches Cake!

Back on the bus with very full stomachs for a short ride to The St. Rogers Depot, the iconic way station nestled between I-10 and the rail yards.



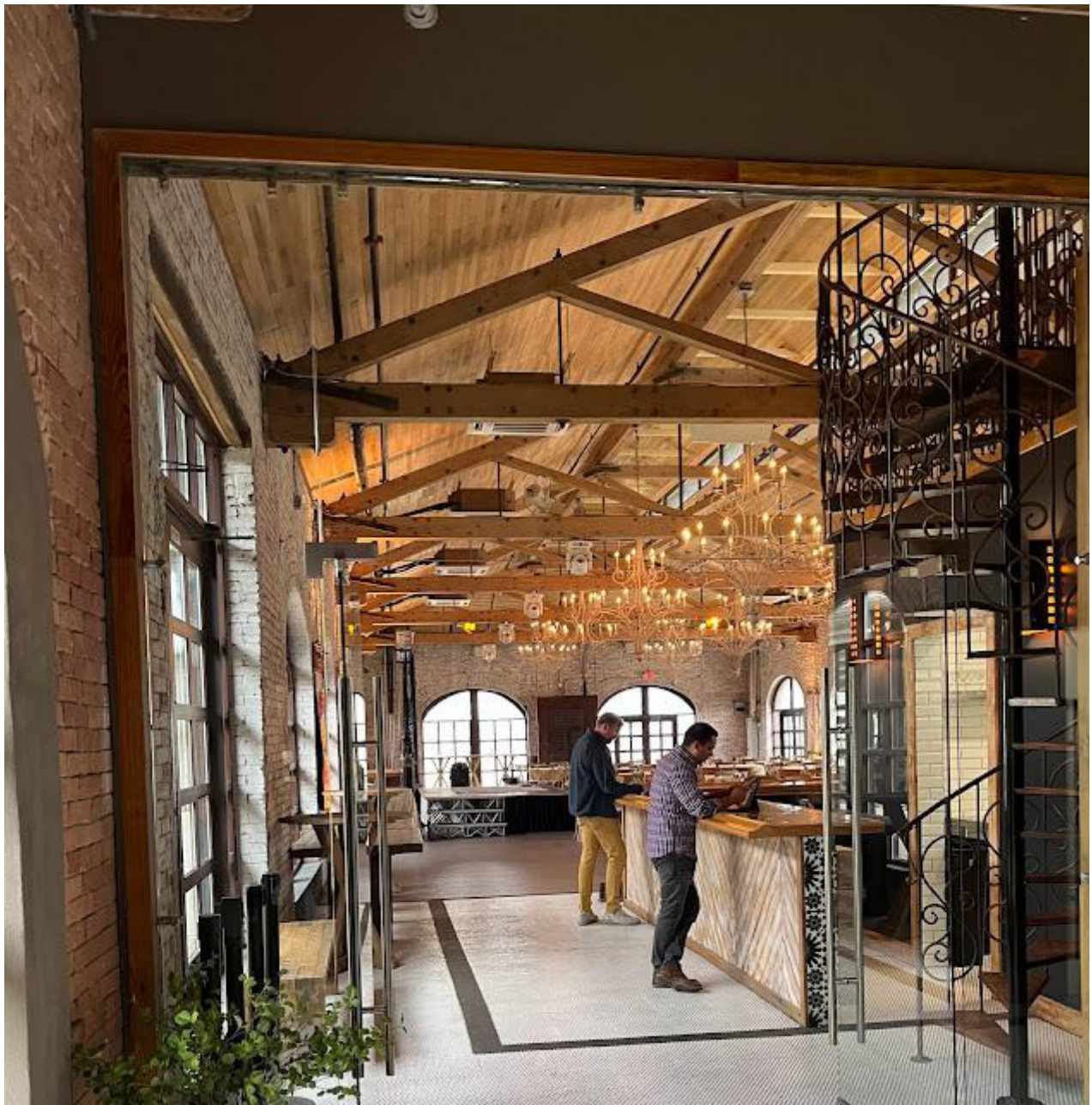


The inside has been refurbished into event space with two long wings off a central bar area.



You may recognize the signage from the exterior of the El Paso Times building.

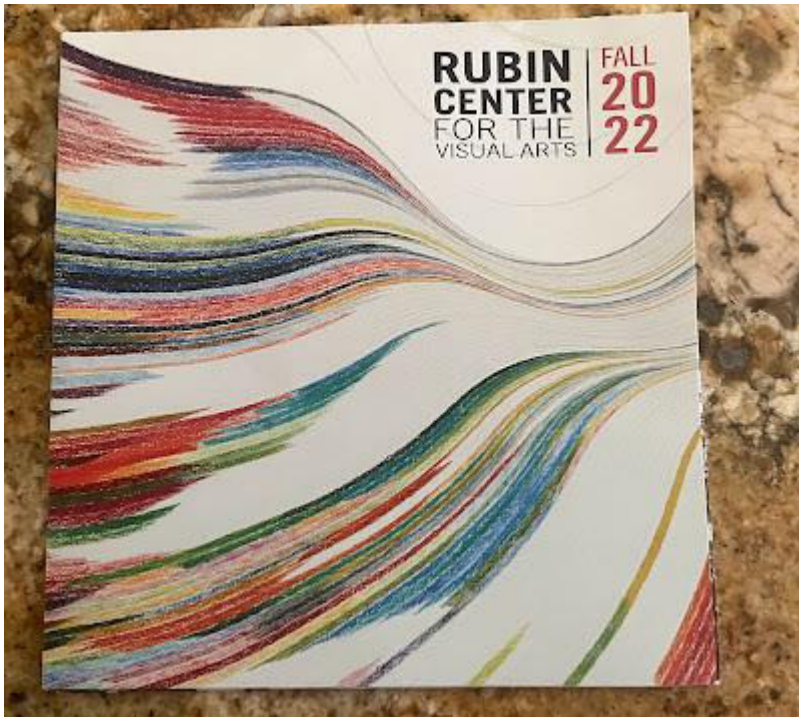




Bob "Daddy-O" Wade's last work graces the entry hall. In the mixed media style he pioneered a train engine bears down on the guests. Unfortunately, the reflexion of the bar sign mars this shot.



We are back on the bus for a stop at the Jerry and Stanlee Rubin Center for the Visual Arts.





Nestled at the south end of Miner Stadium it is two floors of gallery and conference space. A full time director maintains the the exhibit and performance schedule. A docent led us around the modern and airy center commenting on the current varied and provocative exhibits.



We are again on the bus for our return the Paso del Norte and a short rest.

Last but not least for today is our dinner at State Line restaurant.



I think we were originally scheduled for the patio but the threat of rain persisted.







I think everyone was happy to sit down and relax over generous plates of State Line's iconic offerings, an end to a full and perfect day.





Saturday, October 8

We are off on the bus again this morning and it is a beautiful day. The skies are back to El Paso blue and there is a brisk fall feel to the air. The border highway is our route to El Globo Rojo, the Red Balloon, tucked into a corner of Sunland Park. Its adobe colored walls blend seamlessly into the surrounding sand.



It's not easy to find a photo of this car museum and no photography is allowed inside but I lifted this shot from a Facebook page. When we last visited it was cars, cars and more cars. After a recent expansion it is now more cars, more cars, an unbelievable number of cars! All the auto enthusiasts began their trek around rows upon rows of beautifully restored and maintained vehicles while everyone else congregated in their diner style restaurant.

Jerry invited El Paso Mayor, Oscar Leeser, to address our group on the state of the city and the migrant crisis that has been in the news nationally for a while. It was a very informative talk. We learned a lot about how the busing of migrants is done and how until very recently private sector charitable organizations had cared for the migrants.

Tasty box lunches from Jersey Mike's were ferried in and enjoyed by all.

It's time to hurry back to the Paso del Norte and get ready for High Tea, another Jerry treat. We were told to come prepared to shine in the best British tradition, wearing fascinators. Fascinators are those little space

ship hats donned by ladies as they are served tea and goodies by white gloved waiters. Of course, spares were supplied for those who may have missed the memo.











High Tea

THE DOME BAR



Tea Service

Scones

Jam, Butter & Clotted Cream

Tea Sandwiches

Cucumber & Cream Cheese
Smoked Salmon & Dill Capers Butter
Ham & Cheddar
Egg & Spring Onion Mayonnaise

Sweet Slices

Bakewell Tart
Victorian Sponge Cake
Chocolate Swiss roll

Ala Carte Delights

Woughman's Pie

An English dish created by British farmers that consists of pork pie, cheddar, pickled onions, apple and Branston pickle.

\$10

Cocktail Menu

Igla

Hanson Organic Lemon Vodka, Cointreau, fresh squeezed lemon juice, simple syrup and muddled blueberries

\$14

Aperol Spritz

\$12

Rosé

Mediterranee, La Jolie Fleur

Bottle \$40

Glass \$12

J Vineyards, Brut Rose

Nectar Imperial Rose

Bottle \$49

Prosecco

La Gioiosa, Rose Millesimato

Glass \$12

Avissi, Prosecco

Bottle \$38













Everyone looked wonderful, some in EPHS colors, some in vintage hats and many in toppers embellished with feathers and veils. Our own Mad Hatter and soon-to-be EPHS Outstanding Ex, Colbert Coldwell, came suitably outfitted in his tall black top hat.



Savory sandwiches and tiny sweets arrived on three-tiered servers and tea was selected and poured to be enjoyed by all in this lovely two story room. Soothing guitar music played in the back ground. Giant windows pour light onto the the marble walls and chandeliers. The High Tea experience was certainly unique and memorable. Plus, who knows when you might need to have a fascinator handy!



Our two-plus days together have surely flown by and everyone is feeling a little bittersweet getting ready for the gala evening that will close our reunion weekend. Our private banquet hall is decorated by Irene and Suzie in the traditional black and orange and Skip's slide show of previous EPHS '61 gatherings plays front and center. Julie Ford gives the invocation over a background recording of Richie's singing. Few knew what a rich and wonderful voice he had. So the class president was leading us still.













We enjoyed a delicious dinner followed by a program of amusing jokes and asides taken from the critiques we filled out after our State Line dinner. There is no reunion dinner without Mike Wieland's remarks and this time he was joined by Charlie Villa. His deadpan delivery added much to the program. Irene gave an update on the scholarship project whose first recipients will be announced this year.

A sixty-first high school reunion is hardly a common occurrence. The attrition of time certainly makes gatherings held later in life more difficult. But EPHS class of '61 who famously, or infamously, liked sex, booze and fun have hung together over the years. So very many classmates strategized and planned to make this a memorable and fun occasion. The loss of each classmate was acutely felt and memorialized. If there is a giant yearbook in heaven we hope that those missing

classmates are taking a peak at our exploits over these past few days and know that they were certainly among us once again.