

NORMA JEAN REDHAGE CRELLIN

I'm almost a native of Tucumcari, having come here with my parents in 1938. I was born on June 3, 1930 in Kansas City, MO. My father came to Tucumcari to be the Service Manager of Tucumcari Motor Co, the Chevrolet dealership. I entered the third grade at Four Points School (later called Zia School), then moved to the Third Street School (The Castle) for the fourth, fifth and sixth grades. Junior High was in the building connected to the Third Street School but on Fourth Street. The Castle burned in the spring of 1952.

The High School on Fourth Street (which also burned) was where I went for the ninth thru twelfth grades, graduating in 1948. I played first-chair trombone in the band and was active in other organizations. After graduation I lived with some friends in Kansas City Mo and attended Kansas City Business College. Returning to Tucumcari, I worked as a legal secretary for the law firm of Rowley, Breen & Bowen for about four years. I decided I needed to get a college education and enrolled in New Mexico College of A & MA, from which I received a Bachelor's degree with honors in Business Administration in 1955. I also played trombone in the Aggie Band and was elected to Mortar Board.

Returning again to Tucumcari I was hired by the Tucumcari Municipal Schools to teach business subjects in the High School. I taught Shorthand, Secretarial Training, Business Math, and Bookkeeping. The Principal was Mr. R. G. Stephenson, who had been my band director in high school. I was also the sponsor for the Cheerleaders. In my spare time, I kept books for my father's business. During this time I went many summers to earn an MBA from West Texas State University.

In 1960 I married Jim Crellin, a pharmacist and owner of D & S Drug at First & Main Streets.. We later purchased 66 Drive-in Drug on Gaynell (Rte 66). In 1968 we combined these two stores and opened a new store, Zia Drug, on First near Rte 66. I quit teaching in 1962 and our daughter Kristy was born in 1963. I continued helping my father and also gradually doing bookkeeping, etc. for the drug store until that turned into a full-time job. My husband became ill and we closed out Zia Drug in 1998 and he died in 2000.

Some of my friends thought I needed to keep busy and got me involved in Rattler Reunion and that involvement is still going on. I enjoy keeping in touch with my classmates and also getting to know other groups and ages. This has almost turned into a full-time job as I maintain names and addresses, etc. on my computer and currently have over 3700 listed. I also coordinate the Reunion activities with the Host Class and the various other decade classes. Probably 700 to 800 attend some of the functions of the three-day event.

Organizations in which I was active—President of American Association of University Women and Delta Kappa Gamma. U.S. Senator Schmitt appointed me to two years on a board to recommend his nominations to the military academies. I was also asked to serve on the Governor's Forum on Education. I served on the local School Board for ten years and served as President. While serving on that Board we established Tucumcari Area Vocational School (now Mesalands Community College) and I served for eight years and also as President. I worked very hard to get the new THS Auditorium built and am proud of that accomplishment. I was

pleased to be able to present my daughter with her diploma from THS in 1981. She was also a band member at THS and college and is a business graduate of New Mexico State University in 1985. She began working for the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation as a Bank Examiner and is now in Jackson MS as a Supervisory Examiner.

The newest member of my household is Barney, a miniature Schnauzer, who was six months old when I got him and will be a year old in time for the Reunion.