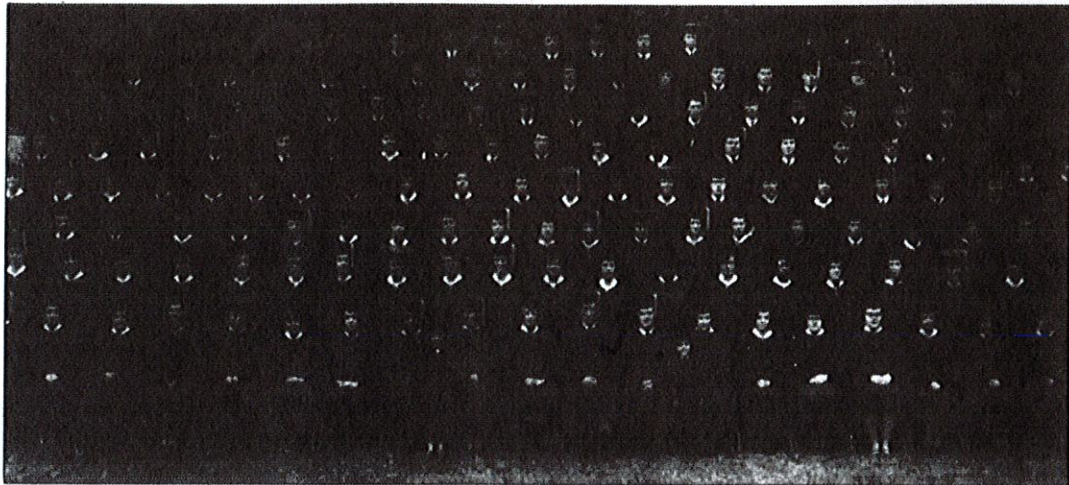


CELEBRATIONS: Anniversaries, engagements and weddings. **D2** | **DEAR ABBY:** Affair causes marriage to become lukewarm. **D4**



The Morganton High School class of 1966 poses for a graduation photo. The school was integrated with Olive Hill High School in 1964.

Remembering a time past

Social Security: Is it reform or revolution?

Perhaps you've heard too much already about the need for Social Security reform. I hate to disappoint you, but get prepared to hear and see a lot more. There is a critical need to change our system of social insurance for workers — and the younger you are the more carefully you should follow this debate.

However, let's keep this issue in some perspective. I actually believe there are problems out there much more serious than the Social Security question: let's say health care, public education, jobs and those wars.

Since Social Security began, retirement benefits have been paid to millions of U.S. workers and provided disability and survivor's insurance to millions more. Designed to be self-supporting from a modest payroll tax, Social Security is no longer able to support itself.

This has happened in part from demographic shifts in populations (more older workers) but primarily because of a profit-gate Congress that annually spends more than it earns. Read my lips: "no new taxes."

Over the years I've come to believe that the one thing our Washington politicians hate to hear is "the government has no money for your pet project." So, what do our esteemed leaders do? They simply raise the national debt limit and borrow enough money to cover everyone's pet project. This is why the Congressional Budget Office projects our national debt to top a new high at \$1 trillion in a few years.

This shameful borrowing occurs in many ways. Ever hear the expression "robbing Peter to pay Paul"? It is now common practice for Congress to borrow funds from Social Security to satisfy a part of the national budget. It's kind of like a piggy bank.

What? There's a surplus in Social Security? Well, yes — and no. At some point, there is excess cash in the fund, but then it's gone. The money has been replaced with U.S. Treasury bonds or IOUs. This, my friend, is the "real crisis" in Social Security.

Our national leaders have backed the store to pay current bills and know they must cough up billions in a few years to cover their IOUs. Perhaps the crisis could be averted with some strategic planning: 1) cut spending; 2) balance the budget (for more than one or two years); and fully fund Social Security. Would I pay a slightly higher tax to protect Social Security? Yes. Now I really don't have a lot of faith in Congress having the ability to work this out — be they Republican, Democrat, Green or Libertarian. What we currently hear from politicians about the Social Security crisis is mostly smoke and mirrors.

Changing the rules to let workers invest half of their 12 percent payroll tax in "personal investments" will not correct the problem. In fact, conservative estimates place the cost for such a switch over at

BY LORETTA WHITESIDE
 THE NEWS HERALD

I believe if you have been a part of history making events, it is your duty to protect the truth and make sure it is never forgotten. While attending the Olive Hill High School Grand Reunion and the All Morganton High School Reunion, a lot of memories of being a part of both systems surfaced and I would like to share my thoughts of the early '60s and how the school changes evolved in Burke County. Change is often desirable, frequently necessary and always inevitable. I'm not sure who said those words, but for me, leaving the segregated school system and entering the integrated system was happy, sad and fearful. It was happy as we were expecting new and better opportunities for life. It was sad to be separating from people we had known since kindergarten and leaving wonder

'We are not ready for our recreation center to be integrated.'

RESPONSE THAT YOUNG AFRICAN AMERICANS WERE GIVEN AT REC CENTER

ful teachers who put their heart and soul into helping mold lives. It was fearful because of the unknown and hoping that we would make a positive impact that would be viewed as acceptable.

The transitional phase was very individual because you had to jump in full force to create your own place of recognition, especially transferring as a senior.

Let's start from the early '60s to get a better understanding of events prior to full integration. Mildred Largent was the first



Kidd

woman president of the NAACP, a young activist working to help overcome racial and social injustice. During that time, memberships for the youth were paid by some of our African American churches.

Our youth leader was Margaret Connelly Carson. Little did we know of the life-changing events that were about to shape how we viewed life. Of course, as we all know, sometimes along with change comes sacrifices so that in justness, can discontinue and equality can rise. You give a little of yourself in exchange for progress. Carson prepared the youth members for the NAACP by teaching us about non-violent actions and presenting ourselves in a respectful manner.

A group of three or four young African Americans would go to the Collet Street Recreation Center every day after school (from Olive Hill School) with tennis shoes (Converses) strapped over our shoulders to play basketball. We would be greeted at the front entrance politely. "We are not ready for our recreation center to be integrated."

These words hurt, because we felt we were entitled to use this facility and enjoy it just like everyone else. Societal fear of the unknown made us afraid on both sides.

We often asked our youth leader, Carson, if our parents paid taxes worked in the community and were a part of Burke County, why couldn't we enjoy a little leisure time at this building? Her insight to what we were trying to achieve was direct and her purpose was to make us realize our self-worth and



The Morganton High School girls' basketball team is shown in 1966. Students from Olive Hill High School were integrated with MHS students in 1964.

entitlement to enjoy ourselves. She had a lot of passion for the goals we were to achieve. Lessons unknown to us were being taught about life experiences that were not in our vision, but soon became clear.

SEEKING ACCEPTANCE

Therefore, a group would go back day after day and the same statement was repeated: "We are not ready for our recreation center to be integrated." The next step, along with trips to the recreation center, was to sit at the counter at the Woolworth's 5&10 store, where Kimbrell's Furniture is today on the corner of West Union and King streets. We were again greeted with indifference. We were not acknowledged with a hello, eye contact nor "may I help you?" Our leader reminded us not to be discouraged or disheartened and to be positive about our goal. As time passed, court ruling of integration hastened the development of goals to come into practice.

INTEGRATION

M.S. Parham, superintendent of Morganton City School, made

trips to Olive Hill School during the 1963 school year, explaining the curriculum of Morganton High School.

I remember we were surprised at the different programs, such as more college prep courses and the DE ICT program. The following school year of 1964, five students from Olive Hill School (Eugene Thomas, Patricia Thoms and Lorraine Johnson as seniors, and Richard Johnson and Charles Foreney as freshmen) attended Morganton High School to serve as a test for calmness and acceptance before full integration took place.

I began Morganton High School as a senior from Olive Hill High School. I never expected to go to Morganton High School; my plan was to graduate from Olive Hill High School. Class officers, clubs and organizations already established at Morganton High School made it impossible for us to be a part of extra-curricular activities.

Senior African American students did try to encourage lower classmen to join clubs as a start to establish self-recognition. Chorus



Above left, Loretta Thomas Whiteside was a member of chorus her senior year, 1966, after Olive Hill High School students were integrated with Morganton High School students. She is the third from the right on the second row. At right is Whiteside and her escort, Robert Bandy, taken when she represented the chorus for Miss Homecoming.



Whiteside, Loretta. "Remembering a Time Past." The News Herald, 6 March 2005. p. D1.

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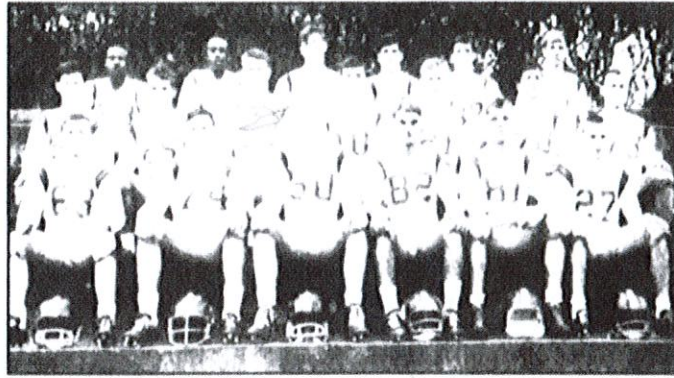
REMEMBERING: Olive Hill High integrated with Morganton High

FROM PAGE D1

and sports were a big part of our enjoyment. Teachers such as Louise Kidd, Fred Putnam and Patricia Tallent did a great job of making sure we felt welcome and comfortable.

I will never forget the first day of school at Morganton High School. As I approached the building, I saw students looking out windows, standing on the second floor balcony and sitting on the steps outside, looking at the new students coming to school with just as much curiosity about us as we had for them.

Soon, the unfamiliar became familiar; strangers became acquaintances and fear turned into calmness. We adjusted to the change with ease and found our own way to make a contribution to feel a part of school. With love, concern and understanding from parents and former teachers, we altered some personal goals and



The Morganton High School football players pose for their 1966 team photo.

faced new undertakings.

As we met new students, we were able to put faces with the names of students who appeared in the textbooks we used at Olive Hill School from years past. We had to use old uniforms in band, football and basketball from Morganton High, or Olive Hill parents had fundraisers to help purchase new uniforms for different organizations at Olive Hill School.

I represented the chorus

for Miss Homecoming in 1966 and even though I didn't win, I enjoyed the chance to be a part of the group within the school. As seniors, we made small contributions to leave as a legacy. The year was very complex — feeling like a freshman in senior shoes. However, we had already been taught not only by our former teachers, but also by parents to do our very best.

Through it all, we graduated with mixed feelings of

happiness, confusion and sadness. The one year at Morganton High School taught us a lot about life, people and facing challenges. Some of the wonderful teachers, such as Doris Ann Luck-Fullwood, W.F. McIntosh, Effie Williams and many more cared enough to not only teach academically, but also to provide character building.

Our background from Olive Hill School was solid and we had no other choice but to do our very best. We were taught to reach for the stars and shine bright. Upon graduating, some students entered college, the armed forces, the work force of Burke County, or other areas of interest. I feel blessed and lucky to have been a part of two great systems of education.

Teachers are wonderful people and I say with a lot of love, "thank you," to all the teachers at Olive Hill High School and Morganton High School.