

WAHS Class of 1976 Questionnaire

Please provide your responses to the following questions and return to the address below no later than **June 1, 2026**. Our intention is to share some of the responses to these questions at the reunion dinner. This is intended to be FUN!

Gina Williams Loebell

1. What have you been up to for the past 50 years?

College was an easy choice. Mom worked in the President's Office at Westminster, which meant tuition was completely covered. That selection also answered my parents' prayers for me to stay local, and when I say "stay," that is what they thought I would do. However, just like Sleeping Beauty's parents hiding all the spinning wheels to control her destiny, my own were dismayed when I married a Jersey Boy and moved to the East Coast, where we remained for 24 years, living first outside Asbury Park and then building our house outside of Princeton. We now have lived in Butler for the last 21 years, moving here so we could be close to my aging parents, a decision that proved to be a very good one, as my father passed away in 2015 after a struggle with multiple myeloma. My mom is still going, though slowly, at 92 and needing my sister and me more and more.

Some of my best work years were at Princeton University, where I was employed as an administrative assistant until we adopted our son in 1990. In 1993 we adopted our daughter. As my husband, Dave, had started his own advertising specialty business in 1986, which we ran from our home, I remained an at-home mom, volunteering in multiple places, and working for our company. I spent the years leading up to retirement as a Realtor, working for several different local and national companies over a 50-mile radius. Currently I volunteer as an ESL tutor for a woman from Belarus and a couple from Taiwan, the former working on obtaining citizenship in the fall and the latter having both become citizens two years ago.

We were and are very active in our church communities, which have served as our primary social circles. Because we are Presbyterians, not the Methodist of my upbringing, one of our favorite activities, as Dave has studied wine extensively, is hosting dinner groups with themes like wine countries of origin with food pairings. Cooking has been my life-long learning process, and preparing ethnic foods is so much fun with once-exotic ingredients now an Amazon click away. We love to host friends, especially out-of-town ones, in our home, offering up a good "bed and breakfast" (and/or dinner) experience.

I have continued my sewing hobby since elementary school, and am currently working on an 18th century kit for volunteering at the Depreciation Lands Museum in Hampton Township where I work in the library. Over the years I have collected vintage 50s patterns and made myself clothes from them. Gardening has always been my passion, inherited from my father, and one of the reasons why in the next few years or so we will be finding a place in the South, as I need a better growing zone than Western PA. I read obsessively and write occasionally, and should strive to do the latter much more.

2. What was your favorite thing about high school?

High school was mostly a tolerated necessity until I got involved in the school plays, thanks to the encouragement of Eileen Lager. She was able to look beneath the veneer of a shy, insecure young woman and coax out the person she helped me to become. No one who ever meets me now considers me an introvert, though that person still remains. The best part of not being on the top of any heaps in high school meant that I had to work harder to become the best of me, and why as a 68-year-old adult,

I try to see myself with humility, knowing that we are all works-in-progress who deserve respect and understanding.

3. What was your least favorite thing about high school?

Well, I could write a book about phys-ed, but this is only supposed to be a short answer. So much pettiness and rivalry exist in teen-hood, and while one tries to remain immune to such things, it is difficult to figure out where one exists in the pecking order from day to day. My preferred method of dealing with that was to stay out of the fray, keep my head down and spit-ball free, and try to accept everyone including myself with grace. Those lessons have served me well through life.

4. Who were your favorite teachers at WAHS and why?

One of the things I have discovered over my life is what a great education we received at WAHS. The classes were challenging and gave me an excellent basis for future education. Mrs. Lager was my absolute favorite, but I am grateful to all my other English teachers who taught me to write, a crucial skill in college and beyond. Mr. Taylor, who so many considered boring, was my favorite history teacher, because I loved the subject, and obviously so did he. Mr. Grunenwald made biology fun and challenged us to think about social issues and how to frame an argument. Yes, I know it was supposed to be biology, but maybe we were part of his experiments. Mrs. Christy wanted us to love math, and even though the class was often a reliable report card "C" (and she insisted on calling me "Ginna" through two years) she was a good teacher, and along with Miss Dore, cared about our future success.

5. What was your favorite class at WAHS?

See above.

6. What is your favorite vacation destination and why?

The answer to this question is that I don't "vacation;" I travel, as I don't have the ability to relax enough to vacation. My husband and I do truly love to travel and always have with ski trips to New England, incentive award trips to Alaska and Sweden, sailing trips to the BVIs and Saint Lucia, multiple cruises with family, and trips to Europe, with hopefully many more, and frequent trips throughout the Eastern US to visit family and friends. My husband is a road-warrior, which is fortunate, because I only fly when necessary. We are anxious for self-driving cars to become a reality when we are no longer able to do so ourselves. When we travel both domestically and abroad, while we have done things like Viking long-boat trips, I prefer to plan and implement our own itineraries so we can immerse ourselves in our destinations rather than do photo-ops. Shaking off groups allows us to meet people in their own places and appreciate the cultures outside of the lens of a packaged product. The "Translate" app is our best friend.

Other than cruises, which are not my preferred mode of travel, the closest thing to vacationing has been trips to Florida. There my in-laws lived on the West Coast for most of my married life, and so we visited them often, enjoying them and the beauty of the area and our favorite activity, fishing off the

coastal and inner-coastal waters, always watching for dolphins. Now, both of our children live in Florida. (When did the generational roles reverse?) So, we still find ourselves making the 18-hour journey often.

7. Who is the most famous person that you have met? How did you meet this person?

Fame does not impress me, so while I have been in the company of people who may be considered “famous,” they usually are no more interesting to me than many who have never been or may ever be regarded as such. Everyone has a story, and it is a good addition to one’s life to hear many of them, such as what we are doing with this questionnaire.

While I admit that reunions specifically and large gatherings in general are simply not my thing, I hope you all enjoy what Bill and his committee have put together. They deserve our thanks for their hard work and persistence in making this a success, with special kudos to Bill for his constant contact. Best wishes to the Class of '76.

Editor’s Note: Thanks for the kind words Gina. It’s important to note, however, that I joined the reunion committee late after the groundwork had already been laid. Our committee is actually leaderless. Everyone is doing their part to provide what we hope will be an enjoyable and memorable experience. Bill

Please return by June 1, 2026 to:

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