

The Author's ADVOCATE



Special Newsletter

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Have Fun at Your High School Reunion With Your Book as Table Prizes

On Saturday, November 4th, 2006, I had the good fortune to attend the 45th reunion of my '61 graduating class from **J.P. McCaskey High School**. I missed my 40th class reunion because I was away representing Infinity Publishing at a conference. Actually, there was a scheduling conflict with a publishing event that was being held in NYC the same weekend. But **Tom Gregory**, my boss and president of Infinity Publishing, told me we could pass on that publishing event and that I should go my reunion in Lancaster, PA.

Jane M. Martin, co-director of our annual Authors' Conferences, suggested I put copies of my "fun" books, *Enjoy Often!!!* and *Blue Moon Over Miami*, on each table as prizes for my classmates – perhaps one book for the person at each table with the birthday closest to the 4th, and the other to the class member who traveled the greatest distance to attend the reunion. This was much better than my original idea of just displaying copies of my Infinity-published books on a table with other books authored by my class members.

I called the reunion organizers to ask if this would be possible. She liked the idea of giving my books away as prizes, but first she needed committee approval. There were over 500 in my graduating class, and I figured about 120 would be attending – based on the attendance at the 40th reunion. That would mean 12 round tables with 10 class members and spouses at each table.

Being spouseless and not really wanting to attend this predominantly couples-event alone, I invited Jane to accompany me. After all, putting my books on each table was her idea. We also saw this as a real treat for us because we weren't involved in planning this event, we weren't making a presentation on behalf of Infinity, and we didn't have to be responsible for the schedule,

the sound system, or the catering staff!!! We would be there to just relax and simply enjoy the event.

The organizer called several days before the event to let me know there would be 180 attending, seated at 18 round tables. Thusly, just before the start of the banquet, I placed books on each of the tables. When the emcees were doing the raffle drawing, they also announced that my books were table prizes and that I'd be available to sign them throughout the evening. Alas, I forgot the one essential item absolutely necessary for every book signing – a good pen!!!

My expectations of not having to do anything quickly vanished because every time I turned around, there was someone with my book in hand saying, *you don't remember me, do you???* "You're right, I don't," was usually my response. Then they'd tell me I was in such-and-such class with them and, of course, it helped when they told me their first name for the personalization! I'm sure I signed every copy because even as we were leaving, people were lined up to get my autograph.

For a few brief, magical hours, I felt like a Rock Star, and I didn't even have to sing – I just had to sign my books. It was way cool being the only author there with books to give out and sign. This clearly wasn't a selling books situation – like crass salespersons pitching and passing out their cards at purely social events. This was all about bringing a smile to my classmates by giving books as gifts, and yes, with hopes for some word-of-mouth benefits. But most of all, it was just a lot of fun!

Dan Poynter, who is a few years older than me and lots smarter, told me he was at his 50th high school reunion a few weeks before mine. He set up a display of some of his many books and a lady added her book to the display!!! Dan also remarked, and I found the same,

that so many classmates were relieved that at last they had retired from jobs they didn't like. Their mouths dropped open when I told them that I love my job and I have no desire whatsoever to retire for a long time.

Consider attending your next high school and/or college reunion. Contact the organizers well ahead of time to get their okay for your special table prizes, and be prepared to wait until the committee has a chance to discuss your generous offer. If you can't attend, perhaps you can make arrangements with the organizer to give copies of your book out as door prizes as a gift to the class with your regrets that you can't be there – assuring them you'll be there in spirit.

Keep in mind that some books are more acceptable to a general audience – this was not a group that would have been thrilled to receive a copy of my *Everything About POD Publishing!!!* You don't have to put a book on each table – you could tape your author business cards randomly under a half-dozen chair seats and the lucky people sitting in those chairs wins a copy of your book. Order your books in time to receive them a week before the event – and order a few extra to have on hand just in case someone wants to buy an extra copy to give to a friend. If you're traveling to another city for your reunion, your books can be sent directly to the hotel, but make sure to have the correct address for UPS deliveries and include your check-in arrival date.

Once all this busy work is done, go ahead and enjoy your evening. Dress up in some sharp duds, put on your dancing shoes, and wear a proud smile!!! After all, you're a bit of a celebrity now – you're a published author. And oh, don't forget to bring your pen!!!

Books for Our Troops Spearheaded by Richard O. Snelson

Regardless of your personal position on the Iraq War, I'm sure you'll agree that it's vital to support our troops. As authors, we can join the lead of Infinity author **Richard O. Snelson** and donate our books to be sent to our brave troops serving overseas. Rich attended our Valley Forge Authors' Conference and many attending authors gave him autographed books to be sent to the Middle East. Information about his project is available at: www.lunkerabrantsontale.com. Be sure to include your email address so you can receive notes of thanks.

If you'd like to express your thanks to our troops, here's a link www.letssaythanks.com that was brought to my attention by Infinity poet **Nancy Jean Brockman**. The *Let's Say Thanks* website is sponsored by **Xerox**.

Book on Iraq Generates Congressional Invitation for Author

Infinity Publishing received a fax on November 13th from the **Congress of the United States** to be sent to **Magetta Chantiloupe**, author of *Iraq – The War That Shouldn't Be – You Decide*. **Congresswoman Maxine Waters (D-CA)** explained in the fax that she had recently reviewed **Ms. Chantiloupe's** book and found it to be an impressive work that deserved the attention of the public and our nation's lawmakers. As the founder of the "Out of Iraq" Congressional Caucus, she invited Magetta to attend a meeting of the Caucus on December 7, 2006, to discuss her book. To date, more than 70 Members of Congress have joined the Caucus with the mission to provide a platform to debate the war in Iraq and to urge its conclusion as soon as possible.

The Congresswoman went on to explain that in order to fully understand the many issues surrounding the war in Iraq, the Caucus invites individuals to meet with them so that they may share their own views on the war. Rep. Waters acknowledged that the information Magetta compiled in her insightful book would be very helpful to Members of Congress as they work to formulate policy which will lead to the conclusion of the war.

In a recent interview, Magetta said, "I wrote the book because of my deep concerns with the way things have been going in Congress, most especially that there are no checks and balances and the constant rhetoric permeating fear in the minds of the American people on future terrorist attacks." She added that attending our Authors' Day in San Diego last January helped her to create her successful book pitch for Congress.

Bible Book Wins Top Award

How the Bible became the Bible, by Infinity author **Donald L. O'Dell**, earned the prestigious **2006 Royal Palm Literary Award** for non-fiction. The Florida Writers Association (FWA) sponsors the award, which was announced recently at the FWA's annual convention in Orlando, FL. The Royal Palm Literary Award provides Florida authors recognition from the state's writers. FWA is composed of professional and aspiring writers representing non-fiction and all fiction genres.

Seasonal Special: order 10 copies of your book by 12/31/06 and receive **free shipping** and a **free copy!!!**
San Diego Wine & Cheese Party -- Authors' Day, January 25 – 26, info at www.authorsconference.com.

Your publishing family at Infinity wishes you a holiday season of light, love and peace. Enjoy often...John