



1955

Current

CHS BIO

Bob Gorjance – Radio Man

Well, here goes nearly nothing. I was born in Chicago on August 18, 1938. Moved to New York in 1940, and moved again to Tulsa in late April, or early May of 1950 from Yankee territory, specifically, Flushing Long Island, New York. Dad was employed by American Airlines and we were transferred to Tulsa.

We lived in an insignificant hotel (Lincoln Lodge I think) on 15th street right across from a Catholic Church and school for about two weeks until we were able to rent a place in the Osage Hills Apartments. I started part of 6th grade at Osage Elementary School and promptly started learning the local lingo. “Looky yonder” was especially difficult until I caught on to either the shoulder shrug (denoting direction), or the “head bob”. The rest was a piece of cake. After that, “Ya’ll” just came naturally. For awhile after moving to Wisconsin, I was troubled with “ya dere hey, ya sure ya betcha”, and a few other local terms until I added the “ya’ll”. That’s when it all came together.

I spent two weeks at Osage Elementary and they announced, near the end of May, that school was out for summer vacation. I thought I’d heard wrong because up in “Yankee Territory” school didn’t get out until the end of June. I had truly been delivered to paradise. Wow! Three months summer vacation!

Started junior high at Roosevelt in September, somehow got mixed up with the wrong crowd and joined the Civil Air Patrol. Learned to fly, and while I wasn’t able to continue my student license to completion, I frequently got a chance to get stick time with pilot friends over the years. Also had the very notable experience of meeting **Fred Benford**. I find it hard to believe, but Fred actually had some nice things to say about me. He truly is a gentleman, and a scholar!

The square dances we had at Roosevelt were lots of fun, and I even got me a “Western Shirt” so I could fit in with the locals. Anyone remember those dances?

I met a great fellow, **Barry McGowen**. He had a Hallicrafters S-38C communications receiver. We got introduced to ham radio and started studying and got our ham licenses. I am still active in the hobby. (My call letters are W5CFB)

We were gracefully removed from junior high in 1953 and went on to Tulsa Central. I studied hard and got passing grades, got on the track team, ran 180 yard low hurdles and even placed some seconds and thirds, as long as the race was run with the hurdles on the curve. I always got my feet tangled up when the hurdles were on the straight. Cinders have a rather bitter flavor, and they are especially tough on the knees and hands. I think the reason for success on the curves was that in order to avoid getting beat up in fights, I was able to turn sharply and stay on my feet.

(down for more)

I actually graduated high school and started college at T.U. First mistake was going to work at KWGS-FM Radio station there on campus. GET THIS!! The pay was \$0.75 per hour! May of 57, I got a full time gig at KVOO Radio. The pay was so good (\$1.35/hr), I thought they made a mistake) Spent several years there and at KVOO-TV (both were engineering related jobs.

When I learned that the draft board was breathing hard on my heels,(late 1960) I decided to become a draft dodger. I beat them at their own game, I enlisted in the Air Force January 15, 1961! They never figured it out! Went through over a year of electronics tech school and got sent to Kaiserslautern, Germany stationed at Siegelbach Comm. Center as a crypto equipment operator and repairman. We actually got to build the crypto center, which was a very large operation, one of only 10 major centers in the world at that time. The place is now a huge truck stop!

Got out of the AF in January of 65, got engaged to a lovely young lady. Betty and I were married in late Feb. of '65. We have been married for almost 41 years; have a daughter, a son, 6 granddaughters and one great granddaughter.

After getting married at a “real Polish wedding” in Chicago, we traveled to Quincy, IL. where I started working for Gates Radio Co. After 2 ½ years of messing up incoming orders for broadcast equipment, I was summarily thrown out of the office into field sales in Wisconsin. Spent about 20 years with Harris and two other companies selling Radio Broadcast Equipment. Eventually got wrapped up in broadcast engineering and have been running a “contract engineering” business for about 20 years. I have had the pleasure and satisfaction of building a number of broadcast facilities over the years. We have lived in Racine, WI, 4 blocks west of “the big pond” since 1969.

Betty and I officially retired in 2003, but I just can't stop working and grow into the furniture. I still do engineering work at 9 stations, help out on three others, and work with a broadcast engineering firm on numerous types of projects. I did have to get a new T-shirt which reads, “I'm Bob, I'm retired, but I'm still working part time as a pain in the butt”.

And now for the commercials-after all, I am a broadcaster.

Racine is home of Johnson Wax, and the world famous O & H Bakery. Their specialty is a Danish pastry called “KRINGLE”. You can buy it on-line at: ohdanishbakery.com

Why should I be the only one overweight?? They have about 18 different ones available at the store, and at least ten on-line. The cherry cheese is to die for! Pecan is unbelievably rich, and the cranberry has a nice tart flavor. Also before I forget, if you ever come to Wisconsin, the EAA museum in Oshkosh, WI is a “WORLD CLASS AVIATION MUSEUM” worthy of a visit.

Hope to see many of you at the reunion. gorjance@execpc.com - **Bob**