

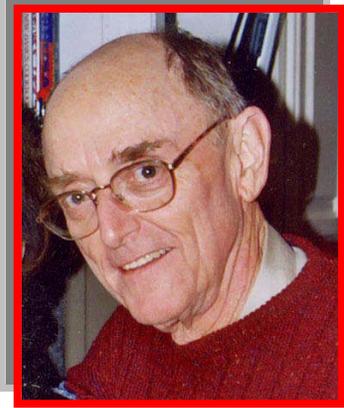


# CHS -Bio

## JIM CALDWELL – WHY DO BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO GOOD PEOPLE?

1955

Current



*In response to a memo to all classmates via email concerning an email from Chris Seger in Houston, TX advising that all was well and there was little damage due to the hurricane. Jim responded advising that he lived in Dallas they received rain etc. I then asked Jim how he got to Dallas, etc. Below is Jim's response which brings a tear to my eye. (Fred Benford)*

Fred - I came to Dallas as the result of a Reunion...the last one I attended in Tulsa, exactly two years, to the day, from a divorce after 27 years of marriage. As I walked into the hotel in Tulsa, I met a classmate walking out of the hotel, from Dallas, 7-years a widow, and she had been my CHS girlfriend, **Betty Bumgardner** (now Vendrachek), for three years. We walked and talked all weekend. Even danced a little. And as I put her on the plane back to Dallas on Sunday, she invited me to come to Dallas the next weekend to look for work in Dallas. I did that every weekend (or 3 out of 4 weekends each month) for the next 18 months until a new administration at the Oklahoma Tax Commission forced me into an early retirement and I moved to Dallas on November 1, 1997. *(Unfortunately the romance did not work out FB).* **Been here ever since, even thru two life-and-death experiences, one of which has left me severely handicapped now.** I went to Toronto the last of June, first of July, and inured the original injury which occurred in '98 ( 3 ruptured discs which have been inoperable over time). I had back surgery ("decompression") this March so am having to wait until next March to deal with the diagnosis:" my entire lumbar spine is collapsing. "

My new surgery will be in March, '06 and I may be a couple of months in recovery...maybe thru June, or even July. I hope not.. I can't drive long distances now, and am planning to fly to OKC to rent a car soon to meet my 9th grandchild in Edmond who was born just before my operation in March. That's likely what I'd have to do for Tulsa, too. That is, if they let me come at all. Who knows. ("...what evil lurks... and all that?").

*With the above info above I asked Jim for details of his life-and-death experience. Below is his reply:*

I call this "my 'Post Office Massacre". In 1998, I was standing in a Post Office, at Mockingbird and Abrams, at the front near the plate glass window when a woman, driving 50 mph came into the building and hit me before I could move. The hood of the car & momentum threw me 17 feet into the air, and I landed, with a broken arm, 6 broken ribs and 3 ruptured discs in my back: T2/3, L1/2 and L4/5. So-located they have been inoperable as I said. I went thru that alone, but with my friends.



Betty Bumgardner 1955

**Down for more**

It has now been 9 years since I came to Dallas. Despite my handicap, in Oct. '99, I became Of Counsel to a Fort Worth law firm. Now I drive about 36,000 miles a year as it is 40 miles to their door from my door in Dallas. And even with the \$3 gas, my life today is full of excitement. I am a member of 3 singles organizations now: Who's Who, International (out of California) Dallas Chapter and I am phasing out of the title of Executive Governor of the Fort Worth Chapter of W W, Int. Also, I am in the Dallas 200 and the Cosmopolitan Club. I have season tickets to Dallas Summer Musicals, Dallas Theater Center, Theater # in Dallas, and Stage West, in Fort Worth. Last year I was gifted to see 21 concert presentations of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra with many of the world's leading artists accompanying them and I've been to the symphony each of the last 3 weeks as a start into this New Year's season. I am busy like this to keep me out of me. I don't think about the chronic pain I have lived with for the last 8 years which I won't let the pain management people numb. I love life too much to be a zombie. And living in the middle of it, though I walk softly and carry my stick, for support, it's still a hell of a life. I have 9 grandkids to boot....the last one was born just before my last surgery in March and I have not even met him yet. Back up in Edmond, Oklahoma, which is too far for me to drive right now.

My life out of CHS was college, finally getting to OU for a BA in 61 and JD in 64 (took a year out between soph & junior). Then Uncle Sam called. Had an experience with the birthplace of the Anthrax in Washington - the Dallas Morning News blew my cover a year ago. Did a big expose on the Anthrax. It all came from the Pine Bluff Arsenal, Pine Bluff, AR where I was stationed for a while. 400 military, and 4000 PhD's. Then came RVN. Got to be part of the group which fought and found the tunnels of Cu Chi, RVN, now the big tourist attraction.

Came out of Vietnam and went into politics in Oklahoma. January 11, 1967. I was installed as the Assistant State Treasurer of the State of Oklahoma, with Leo Winter, State Treasurer. Did that, for a while, then went with Lloyd Rader, @ Oklahoma Dept of Human Services (only had 7 titles working for him), the **George Nigh appointed me Director of State Finance, in 1982.** The media said, "**Caldwell is the 3rd most powerful man in the State of Oklahoma.**" The Governor was number nine. I was behind the Pro Tem of the Senate and the Speaker of the House only. Only did 5 State Budgets in 3 years. Great fun. Left to practice law, be a lobbyist, and finally end back up at the Tax Commission for the last 7 years of my state government service. During those years came the divorce, many moves, and "the rest of the story" you already know.

Now I have definitely told you too much. I have done nothing in the format of vitae. Please feel free to edit extensively and throw most of this away. You can share anything with the "crowd" Sorry I went on so. Take care. Jim.