

I recently attended a retirement reception for our friend, Jim Gandy, who has been the president of Frisco's Economic Development Corporation (EDC) for the last 22 years. I must say, he and his team have done a terrific job.

At the reception, we were treated to a review of many of the positive changes Frisco has seen during Mr. Gandy's 22 years of service. By the way, Mr. Gandy would be the first to tell you the changes have been a team effort involving not only the EDC, but many other entities such as the City of Frisco, the Community Development Corporation, the Frisco ISD, Collin and Denton counties, the North Texas Tollway Authority, various sports groups, developers, landowners, etc.

As I watched and listened, I realized how much Frisco has changed in just the last few years. One of my friends asked me, "What would some of Frisco's old-timers think if they could come back from the grave and see our city now?"

To my knowledge, no one has managed to come back from the grave in the last 2,000 years, but let's stretch our imagination and guess what some who have gone on before us would think "if they could see us now."

First, here are a few statistics to illustrate Frisco's recent growth. Our current population is about 171,000 people. There were only 6,139 people here in 1990, resulting in an increase of more than 164,862 citizens in 27 years. It is no wonder we have been named "the nation's fastest-

growing city" several times. The Fisd now has 40 elementary schools, 16 middle schools and nine high schools serving about 58,500 students, whereas in 1990, we had two elementary schools and only one high school and middle school. Today, we can also count at least 160 eating places in Frisco, but there were only three I remember in 1990.

Now, back to that imaginary group that managed to "come back from the grave." I opened my eyes and there were people I had known years ago. One of the first I saw was Miss Alice Cantrell, my first-grade teacher. I greeted her with a big hug and told her I forgave her for that spanking she gave me in 1927. She smiled and asked to see "the school." I had to break the news that the old three-story brick school building where she taught was long gone and had been replaced with several sparkling new schools.

Miss Cantrell asked to see one of those new schools, so I took her to a classroom that was in session at Curtsinger Elementary. She was taken aback with the differences from "her day," and when seeing the students with their tablets, something she did not recognize, asked, "What are those things?" I told her they were tablets. "No way" she said. "Tablets are red with a picture of an Indian on them." I had to explain that these devices

were not something to write on, and, with that, we were magically whisked back to the group.

Then, I saw an old friend, Dr. W.L. Saye, waving at me. He is the doctor who delivered me at home in 1921, and 22 years later, delivered our first child, also at home. Dr. Saye was Frisco's only physician for many years and was more than a doc-

tor. He was also a leader and planner who worked to get a highway built from McKinney to Fort Worth -- the highway we now know as Sam Rayburn Tollway. We chatted about old times, and he was glad to hear Frisco now has a good number of physicians, health care facilities and three hospitals (with two more in the works).

Next, I spied Ruth Borchardt, another former teacher and the namesake of Borchardt Elementary School. I remember her as a very caring person, one who was always supportive of efforts to make Frisco bigger and better. When she saw me, she gave me a hug and asked, "Does Frisco have any shopping places yet?" I told her we have a great mall where she can shop to her heart's content and that I would be glad to take her there. Her question requires a little explanation.

Before Frisco had an EDC, the Chamber of Commerce, in an effort to get more sales tax revenue in the city's coffers, passed out bumper stickers that said "Shop Frisco First." Ms. Borchardt gladly put the sticker on her car and, in fact, kept it there proudly for years after the campaign was over. However, there was a problem with "shopping Frisco first." At that time, places to shop in Frisco were limited to Martin's Dry Goods and a couple of grocery stores. When Ms. Borchardt saw the mall, her eyes got big, and she said, "Let's go in!" After a fast look around she said, "This is great! Now,



If They Could See Us Now

BY BOB WARREN

Bob Warren fondly remembers Dr. Erwin Pink, Dr. W.L. Saye and Ruth Borchardt.



Don Helms (far right, back row), was Bob Warren's football coach from the 1930s. Provided by Bob Warren.

you who remain can really shop Frisco first!"

Back at "the group," I found my old friend, Dr. Erwin Pink. He was glad to be back and, although he had not been gone as long as most of the group, he wanted to look around and see what had happened since he left. We first went to Heritage Village to see the changes at the museum, which was one of his first priorities when he helped found the Heritage Association. He liked what he saw and was especially pleased to see we finally got a replica of the old calaboose built, another of his wishes. Then, we made a fast trip down to Frisco's \$5 Billion Mile. He could hardly believe what has already been built, especially The Star -- the Dallas Cowboy's rapidly-expanding facility. With that, he asked to go back to the group so he could tell his friends what he saw.

I WAS LEFT WITH WONDERFUL MEMORIES OF VISITING WITH THOSE WHO HAD GONE ON AND, EVEN IF ONLY IN MY IMAGINATION, TO SEE HOW THEY MIGHT REACT IF THEY COULD SEE US NOW.

As soon as we got back, I spotted Don Helms, my old football coach from the 1930s. He saw me and came running, full of questions about Frisco High School's current football team. I was happy to tell him Frisco now has nine high schools and some very successful teams. He asked to see some of the schools, so I took him to one of the newest, Reedy High School. As we got to the campus, he asked why there were so many cars in the parking lot. He remembered when our one school had a hitching rail out front for the students' horses and no more than one or two Model T Fords parked there. I explained that most of the cars belonged to students and that many of the students were given a car when they reached the "magic age" of 16.

We went in the school and "Coach" could hardly believe how big and nice the facility was. About that time, students started streaming by and Coach was amazed at how polite and nicely-dressed most of them were, but he saw some with holes in their jeans

and asked me if they were from poor families. I hastily explained that "holey jeans" were the style and that they came that way from the store. At that, he just shook his head and asked to see the football stadium. I showed him the three stadiums where Frisco teams play today, and he was impressed, especially with the indoor stadium at The Star.

I hoped to show Coach our other new sports facilities, such as Dr Pepper Arena and Toyota Stadium, but it was time to get back to the group. There were so many others I wanted to see — my parents, my childhood friends and my Scout Master, Mr. Talley, but just as we got back, the crowd vanished as quickly as they first appeared in my imagination.

Back to reality, I was left with wonderful memories of visiting with those who had gone on and, even if only in my imagination, to see how they might react if they could see us now.



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