



# TIGER RAG

Little Rock Central High School  
Class of 1957  
Little Rock, Arkansas



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## *Editor's Corner*



Joyce Whittecar Brewer



Charles C. Humphrey



Beni Brown Wilson

'Happy New Year, 2011!'

Our very first Tiger Rag was published on the LRCHS class of 57 website back in January 2008.

This month, January 2011, is our 11th issue of the 'Rag' and the three of us have decided we need to 'call it a day and move on' in our retirement years.

It's been a lot of hard work and we've enjoyed the journey but so much in life is about conforming that every now and then you need to remind yourself to be you and follow your instincts.

It's been our pleasure to create the Tiger Rag for you and we hope we've been able to reflect some memories of our high school years together and brought some pleasurable reading to you.

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We know many of us have formed friendships as a result of the 'Rag' and others have made their friendships more solid.....remember, friendships help prolong life so keep those friends close to your heart.

We wish to thank the many wonderful people who supported the effort that went into the Tiger Rag. As someone once said, "Whoever you are, you know who you are."

Since the majority of us have reached the big 71 in years we need to take advantage of the years we have left so that means the three of us will be clearing out our files and making use of the space not only in our desks but in our lives.

Now, it's time to.....

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'From The Three of Us....To All of You.'

I'm just a wanderlust at heart and I don't want to see everything on the Discovery Channel. Nope, not me! I want to see everything in person. Therefore, I need to set aside more time in my life to enjoy doing things with my wonderful husband of 51 years. I might set aside some time with family and friends but I'll probably leave them back home most of the time.

I live in Miami, Florida, and I shop for a Christmas tree and firewood wearing my flip flops, shorts, tank top and a sun visor. When I throw on a pair of earrings I consider myself all dressed up.

Down here a forecast of the 70s during the day and 50s during the night would earn this reaction from those who live above the frost line: Ahhhhhhh, such lovely weather.

But to us South Floridian's when the temperature drops down below 70 degrees we're saying, "Brrr, baby, brrr."

It's time to throw on an old sweater and head out for a new adventure. The suitcases are by the front door waiting for me and that cruise ship is waiting to take me further down south to enjoy the warm waters and swim with the dolphins!

*Joyce Whittecar Brewer*



When I was approached by Ralph Erwin in about July 2006, to do the LRCHS Class of 1957 website, I took on a large project and did not know where it would lead me. As soon as Ralph made the decision to have me do the site, I got involved with the search committee and tried to help them find our lost classmates.

This became a project that I have enjoyed throughout the last 5 years. I have been given the opportunity to meet many of our classmates by way of the computer and have tried to make the website a success.

In January 2008, I designed a newsletter for the class. By April 2008, I asked Joyce Whittecar Brewer and Beni Brown Wilson to help me with the newsletter and it was called "Tiger Rag." We have published it ever since. It was first published quarterly and beginning last year (2010) we went to a semi-annual edition. It has been a fun ride, but it has been hard work. I hope each of our classmates enjoyed these publications.

*Charles C. Humphrey*



YOUR  
WEBMASTER  
CHARLES C HUMPHREY

Often I list what I plan for the next day. Well, let's face it: 1) I'm not really organized enough to do this EVERY evening and 2) When I DO make a list, I rarely complete the ideas! There are never enough hours. I don't think I ever thought about how much time FUN takes! When I was raising children and working outside the home, I had no idea how to spend time on fun. Now, that's what I'm about. If I take up one more great thing to do, I'll be exhausted. Unlike Joyce, I love the change of seasons. It's like switching gears in life. There are cold winters where I can read a book or two or three, knit and thumb through seed catalogues; there's spring when I can dig in the earth and swap around plants and add new ones. Then there's the hot, hot summer. I don't do much else except water plants, read, antique and meet friends for lunches and drink iced tea. Of course, fall is best of all. We travel some, play golf (only in spring/fall) and clean the gardens, rake leaves, chastise the plants that did not perform as expected, have Thanksgiving with loved ones near....and Christmas. Often, in winter, I visit Miami to see Joyce and Gene. When I'm on their last nerve or it gets below 68 degrees, they take a wonderful cruise. I stay behind and dog sit with three of the cutest Yorkies in the world. I do absolutely nothing while there except play and feed the dogs. I don't even clean (the maid comes in) and the freezer is heavily stocked with just about anything I want. Then, there's that Miami sunshine and a pool to share it with. And no, they don't need another sitter. Ever. Life is full. Life is good. I'm tired.

*Beni Brown Wilson*





## ARTICLE OF INTEREST

### What I Learned About Food in France

*By: Carol Reavis Pillet-Will*

If I had to sum up what I learned about food after living almost twenty years in France, it would be that basically eating in France is still a cultural experience and by contrast eating in the United States has generally become an industrial activity. Before this article is finished I know that it will turn into a sermon, but I am absolutely convinced that living in France saved me from having weight problems. It is a paradox that a civilization which puts so much emphasis on food escaped from over-indulgence. That said, I put “escaped” in the past tense because unfortunately the same American habits: fast food, sandwiches for lunch, mounting childhood obesity are appearing in France and other European countries. (And before I sound too prissy by half, just remember that on my recent trip to the U.S. I couldn’t wait to get a Whopper with Cheese!)

One more qualification before launching into the *mousse* – I know much is going on in the U.S. that resembles the best of France – Alice Waters’ Chez Panisse and comparable chefs in every region, so please don’t take offense.

Although we all were raised in an era when our meals were in some degree still “cultural” i.e. local products – remember the strawberry season, the fresh peaches made into luscious ice cream in the hand – cranked ice cream maker, the sweet farm tomatoes which could be eaten like apples and the fresh corn. There was also the British heritage of lots of heavy pastry and “Southern fried” everything coupled with large portions. I remember sirloin steaks covering a nine inch plate.

When I arrived in France in the 70’s the good half of the above equation was available in abundance, but the bad half was not. So what were the cultural traditions that made French eating so healthy? I think they could be summed up by three points: 1) quality and diversity of the products 2) moderation as a national trait 3) food preparation as an art form.

After living in Paris quite a few years the thrill finally wore off. I still appreciated the chestnut-lined boulevards, the Seine, the museums, the Eiffel Tower alight at night, but the initial excitement had dimmed. The one intuition that still stimulated my enthusiasm – perhaps because it was always renewing – was the open air food market. This integral part of French society appears at least two days a week in each *arrondissement* or district of Paris and of course, across the country in every city and town. The one nearest my home ran down the Avenue Woodrow Wilson from the Place d’Iena almost to the Place d’Alma where a small copy of the Statue of Liberty’s golden flame has become a de facto memorial to Princess Diana. For two very long blocks in the median strip of the avenue was a double row of stands offering just about anything one could wish. The seasons are respected less now everywhere, but even in winter I discovered the delights of pureed celery root, braised fennel, endive salad with Roquefort and walnuts. In fact, I discovered that all the foods I had detested as a child I really liked. What I had disliked was the canned version or the lower quality fresh version. In short order I began to relish fresh pineapple, melons, carrots, cucumbers, yogurt, real fresh fruit salad, and real mayonnaise. The taste and variety of the fruit and vegetables, the fresh fish trucked overnight from the coast including lobster, shrimp, scallops, sole, sea bass,

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salmon, sea trout, monkfish, tuna, mussels; the hundreds of cheeses from creamy Normandy Camembert to the firm Tomme de Savoie or Brebis des Pyrénées: the meats and numerous sausages like *quenelles* or little sausages of fish or veal, in winter the guinea fowl, pheasants, quail and geese. The choice seemed infinite.

Such an abundance of good ingredients could lead to abuse, but it generally does not because the French tendency to moderations means that they generally know “how” to eat. Although, French restaurants in the 1970’s still offered four course meals of rich dishes with cream or butter sauces the fashion of *nouvelle cuisine* soon took over, lightening the fare and reducing portion sizes until sometime the most expensive main course even today consists of a huge white square plate with tiny cubes of meat and little dollops of sauce and vegetables. Even before this change in the great chefs’ style, what I was offered in French homes was invariably delicious, but simple and natural. A typical meal would start with a soup, usually vegetable and homemade, or perhaps soft – boiled eggs. This is followed by grilled meat or fish and often no more than one vegetable, followed by salad and cheese. Except for weekends and special occasions there is fresh fruit for dessert or a fruit salad or cooked fruit.

As the last point, food preparation as an art form, I discovered that when we do take the time to prepare a beautiful plate, the satisfaction in the act of producing it reduces the need to find all our satisfaction in consuming it. Tasting is enough. And tasting is even enough when others do the work.

To give an example of the highest degree of this art, I would like to describe a meal which my husband and I had at the Paris restaurant of one of the best chefs today, Joel Robuchon. Shortly before he closed his Michelin 3 starred restaurant, we had dinner there, after making the reservation six months in advance. I saved the bill because it was one of the best meals I have ever had, yet stunningly simple. Our first course was called *Salade de mache, pommes aux truffles*. It was a 4 inch round confection of thin slivers of potato and tiny leaves of lamb lettuce garnished with truffles, parmesan and pickled tomato. Except for the truffles, straightforward food, but it was historic! Delicate, tasty and satisfying. Then to see what happens when simplicity becomes perfection I had *Blanc de bar grillé aux aubergines et salade amer*. Nothing could have been healthier: a filet of sea bass cooked as I have never had fish – flaky, airy, moist, tender and flavorful – just where it should have been, surrounded by a simple puree of eggplant and stewed salad leaves, each perfectly seasoned. The desserts ended the meal on a high note, sustaining the level of excellence. My husband had roasted pears with orange sauce and I chose *Cristalline a la pomme verte, crème croustillante au thé*. This was a refreshing, crunchy apple sorbet with a flattering compliment of tea ice cream.

Running a restaurant of this level of perfection is so punishing that soon after Robuchon closed his 3 star establishments when it was still unchallenged. He now operates two more modest operations which show an international influence and the pervasive modern habit of wishing to eat more quickly. Borrowing ideas from the Japanese, he opened L’Atelier a three sided bar restaurant which takes no reservations and serves simple, but first class original dishes.

Despite all the above, the average Frenchman is now buying at the supermarket and not eating as his ancestors, but how could he? I found an 18<sup>th</sup> century magazine in the Versailles public library (in fact it was a remnant of Marie Antoinette’s library) in which a Parisian merchant placed an advertisement listing at least fifty flavors of vinegars and as many different flavors of mustard! That’s what I mean by food as culture.

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## Oh Christmas Tree (O Tannenbaum)

O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree,  
How lovely are your branches.  
In summer sun and winter snow,  
A dress of green you always show.

There was this Christmas Tree contest and it was world wide. Below are just a few of them:



## THANATOPSIS

By William Cullen Bryant  
(Excerpt)

So live, that when thy summons comes to join  
The innumerable caravan which moves  
To that mysterious realm where each shall take  
His chamber in the silent halls of death,  
Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night,  
Scourged by his dungeon; but, sustain'd and soothed  
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave  
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch  
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.



Tiger Rag Obits – January, 2011

We are saddened to have lost two wonderful ladies recently.



Eleanor Armistead Reasoner  
December 8, 1939  
September 23, 2010



Bobbye Fendley Frederick  
May 23, 1939  
October 16, 2010





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## On Agate Hill

*By Lee Smith*

Here's one novel readers will enjoy! 'On Agate Hill' is a narrative by a 13 year old girl living just after the War Between the States. She lives through and painstakingly restores her observations (misspellings and all) of those around her. With this in mind, she weaves several wonderful stories of the American south in the 1870s forward. The girl is primarily the main character (of course, what 13 year old wouldn't put herself at the forefront?) and gave us more than a chuckle or two in her stories. Some of the strains of the book investigate the deepest, darkest of the south (a lynching aftermath unexpectedly discovered) and some on a serious but lighter vein. We found this read to be of great interest. Thanks to Julia Morris Brooks for the recommendation.

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## South of Broad

*By Pat Conroy*

Woe is me. That's what we thought as we struggled (at times) through the reading of this, Mr. Conroy's latest novel. We feel he couldn't decide whether he wanted to write another 'Big Chill', 'Philadelphia', or 'Ordinary People' along with paying homage to the City of Charleston. He really didn't succeed in any of them and we found ourselves skimming many descriptive pages while reading up on an ensemble of people who were all entirely too unbelievable in their wisdom and/or maturity for the age the story portrayed. All this and a hurricane, too! If you want to enjoy a Pat Conroy novel, we'd recommend 'The Prince of Tides' but not this one.

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## House At Riverton

*By Kate Morton*

This novel was a pleasure to read back in July of this year. Kate Morton is a master at spinning yarns as well as descriptive sentences enabling the reader to feel at home in the British environment of the 1920's. Most of the book takes place at this time and earlier, briefly touching on the experiences of some of the many characters during WWI. The story follows the Hartford family through many, many years on their estate (Riverton) in England as well as townhouses in London through the 1930's and 40's. If you have enjoyed the likes of 'Gosford Park' or perhaps 'Remains of the Day,' you will surely be delighted to read about the upstairs and the downstairs of this group of people while they cope with day to day duties, underlying secrets of some of them and all the while, you are in the cat bird's seat!

## THIS THING CALLED "GROWING UP"

*By Carolyn Timm*

Reprinted from Writers' Rendezvous - 1957

Growing up is difficult, but of all the different stages, the "terrible teens" is the worst. So much has been written and discussed on this subject that I have been moved to add my views for posterity.

A teen-ager is that peculiar creature who is neither child nor adult. There are many phases in this period of life known as the teens. It begins when the twelve year old wakes up one morning to the realization he is thirteen, with a whole new world before him. What a feeling of power he has! The result is the desire to assert himself and to try his wings a little. The parents, on the other hand, refuse to acknowledge the fact that their precious baby has become a man, and all his feeble attempts at self-expression are promptly squelched.

This then is the situation which sends the young man into the self-pitying, "nobody understands me" phase, very common to the fourteen and fifteen year old. It is at this point that the parents awaken to the fact that they have a problem on their hands, and after several noisy attempts to cope with it, they too slump into the self-pitying, "nobody understands me" phase. It is a sad period for all concerned.

At the age of fifteen, our hero changes his strategy. He becomes defiant and rebellious at times and catches his weary parents off guard. His theme song is, "Everybody else is doing it," which proves to be an effective weapon. The father and mother may often be heard to mutter, "When I was your age..." Needless to say, this is not an effective weapon.

Having reached the ripe old age of seventeen, our teenager makes an amazing discovery; he is smarter than his parents! The poor parents, however, have known this for quite some time. As his manner becomes more patronizing and more tolerant, the parents find themselves adopting an almost apologetic air toward their suddenly brilliant offspring.

So this painful process known as maturing passes into the final stages. As the last remnants of childhood are shed, the teen-ager emerges a happy, normal, well-adjusted adult, leaving behind his battle-scarred parents, who are re-arming themselves for the next bout with their younger offspring.

## A MEDIEVAL MASTERPIECE

*By Carol Reavis*

Reprinted from Writers' Rendezvous - 1957

Light shining in the darkness, order in the midst of chaos, enlightenment surrounded by ignorance, so Dante Alighieri stood as a beacon of hope at one of the lowest ebbs mankind has reached, the dark ages. Dante's thirteenth century Italy was probably torn by strife, confusion, corruption, disease and ignorance more than

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any other region in Europe. There was not one institution including the Church untouched by the taint of avarice and immorality. For such a literary masterpiece as the Divine Comedy to have been produced from this period is truly remarkable. "Inferno", "Purgatorio", and "Paradiso" are the three canticles of the poem. I shall discuss his "Inferno", the first canticle and the most vivid and shocking.

The "Inferno", as the rest of the "Comedy", has a double meaning in every instance. On the surface it is the tale of Dante's visionary journey through hell, seeing the varying degrees of sin and their punishment. He is guided by Vergil, the Roman poet, whom he had long studied and admired. Probing beneath this interesting situation, one can see the allegorical meaning of the tale. Dante represents man journeying through life and Vergil is his human reason which guides and protects him. Since Dante loved and idolized Beatrice, a Florentine woman, as the highest good on earth from the time of his youth it is only natural that it is she who from Heaven asks Vergil to guide Dante on his terrifying journey. Beatrice exemplifies the higher spiritual wisdom and grace revealed to man only by God. Dante's philosophy was based on the precept that man has freedom of choice between good and evil. He thought that man, guided by his reason, and aided by the graciousness of divine grace, could follow the right path to salvation. By showing the remorse of those who had made the wrong choice in life and the hopeless plight of those who did not regret their misdeeds, he warned his contemporaries of the reward for their folly. He was a virtuous man and tried to follow his highest sense of right as he believed others should.

While seeing the unhealthy atmosphere surrounding him, Dante remained untouched by its filth. He saw from an objective viewpoint what the men of his time were doing to themselves, and compassionately he sought to awaken man to his higher purpose.

To accomplish this, he sought to portray the miseries of hell and the joys of Heaven by writing this serious, profound epic.

Embodying his philosophy and meaning in superb literary craftsmanship, Dante created a work unsurpassed in Italian literature. Although many of the ignorant beliefs in mythology and mysticism and the old theology of the medieval period are no longer accepted, the basic premises in this allegory of life are the same today. If this poem is studied, these fundamental truths are seen and appreciated. When the underlying theme is recognized beneath the beautiful intricacy and artful form of this classic, the reader will truly see why Dante will continue to be praised for the spiritual insight and enlightenment which he cast upon the dark waters of medieval Europe.

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*'Most folks are about as happy as they make up their minds to be.'*  
*Abraham Lincoln*

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## TIGER RAG CARTOONS



# **The End Is Here**

*And now, the end is near,  
And so we face the final issue.  
My friends and classmates, we'll say it clear;  
We'll state our case of which we're certain.*

*The Tiger Rag has lived a life that's full-  
And travelled many roads and highways.  
And more, much more than this,  
We did it anyway.*

*Regrets? We've had a few,  
But then again, too few to mention.  
We did what we had to do  
And saw it through without exemption.*

*We planned each issue-  
Taking careful steps along the way,  
And more, much more than this,  
We did it anyway.*

*Yes, there were times, we hid from you,  
When we bit off more than we could chew,  
But through it all, when there was doubt  
We ate it up and fought it out.  
We faced it all and we stood tall  
And we did it anyway.*

*We've loved, we've laughed and we've been to blows,  
At times we had our fill – our share of losing.  
But now, as the tears subside,  
We find it all so amusing.*

*To think we did all that,  
And may we say, not in a shy way –  
Oh no. Oh no, not us.  
We did it anyway.*

*For who are we? What have we got?  
To write the things we have naught.  
To say the things we truly feel  
And not the words of one who kneels.  
The 'Rag' shows we took some blows  
And we did it anyway.*



*Yes, we've had eleven great issues and we are so very grateful to all of you who have worked so closely with us and just want to say, "It's been a BLAST!"*

*We hope to see many of you at the 55<sup>th</sup> Reunion!*

*We bid our farewell and "Thanks for the memories".*

*'Joyce, Charles and Beni'*

# TIGER RAG



Little Rock Central High School

