

William "Bill" L. Brooks  
Bio



The idea of a 50<sup>th</sup> Class Reunion has awakened a lot of memories for me, mostly fond. I like to recount our graduation night. Many of you were hugging and crying and I was thinkin' "YES, I am outta here!"

In reality, I was just tickled to have graduated and survived Alice White (whom I later discovered taught me a lot of good stuff I needed to know...in spite of me).

The key to my Burges years was the Mustang Band and Joe Booth. The man had a huge impact on me.

One of the highlights was our Senior Follies. We formed a little band to play in the follies (Lynn Herrera, Mike Murguia, the late Raymond Allen, the late Barry Thornhill and Ronnie Miller). After we graduated, we kept the band going with the help of Mr. Booth and John Vana, earned a little money and had a lot of fun. We played private parties and the military bases.

Most of us headed to Texas Western, music scholarships in hand. Those scholarships were almost a sure thing for Burges grads. I was majoring in music and minoring in Radio and Television. Big mistake. I took a job at KELP as a news man and later as a disc jockey and that was the end of my college career. I left KELP for KINT and then went to KDAV in Lubbock.

One day my mom called (Betty Brooks. She taught at Burges after we left...thank goodness) and said I had a letter she needed to open and read. She did. "Greetings it was." I took all the tests and did well. (Ramon, I did what you did. I fooled 'em and enlisted). I was recruited into Army Intelligence (oxymoron anyone) as a Counterintelligence agent and off I went to Fort Polk, La. Then to the intel school in Baltimore followed by Chinese Cantonese at Monterey, California. Then to Germany where Mrs. White's teachings proved of value. I was there less than a year when off I went to Vietnam. It has amazed me how many of us served in 'Nam. I did run into Vicente Hernandez (Burges, 62) in the mess hall when I was with the 2/7 Cavalry, 1<sup>st</sup> Cav.

While home on leave from Vietnam, I went on a blind date with the beautiful Margie Rogers (Austin, 67). I went back to Vietnam for another seven months and then on to Washington D.C. I came back to El Paso in September, 1969, to marry Margie. We lived in DC and then were at Raven Mountain in Maryland before we decided to hang it up and move back to El Paso. Our oldest daughter was born while we were still in the Army. After we got out, we had two more daughters.

I went into a family printing business in El Paso but after three years we struck out on our own. We moved to Alpine, Texas, (home of Johnny Smith's brother Jimmy), opened a print shop, bought a newspaper and we're still here.

Along the way, we have had other businesses including computers, computer networking, internet service providers and others I may not remember.

About eleven years ago, we sold them all and I went back to work for the government as a Public Affairs Officer. Currently I am the Southwest Border Branch Chief, for U.S. Customs and Border

Protection's Office of Public Affairs. I supervise the PA effort for the entire Southwest Border. That includes the Border Patrol and the ports of entry.

Margie and I have picked up two sons-in-law along the way and now have four grandsons.

I have continued to play a little trombone and about 25 years ago, I got hooked on theatre, particularly musical comedy, and have appeared in a number of plays at our local university and our community theatre group. I even appeared in a movie a few years back. If you get a chance please rent "Dancer, Texas, Population 81." I still get royalties for my small role.

I am an avid Amateur Radio Operator, KE5OG, and am trying to learn to play golf again. I'm still a New York Yankee fan as well.

We are both active in our church and travel around this part of the Big Bend in our callings.

Margie retired at the end of last year as the District Court Administrator and I have retirement in my sights. We're looking forward to even more travel than we already do and watching those grandsons grow up.

See you in September...and looking forward to it.

