



HSV- Down Memory Lane

Description

Editor's note: ***Hello everyone! Sit down for a spell, grab your sweet tea and be prepared to enjoy a beautiful nostalgic post down HSV memory lane, from Jane Spicer Bailey. Jane utterly blew me away and I can envision her childhood as if it were mine.***

There are others here who enjoyed an idyllic childhood in the Village. If you are one, please comment below. Or comment anyway, even if you weren't raised here. We want to hear what you have to say.

Is someone trying to wrench this utopia away from us? Let's don't let it happen.

This is the email Jane sent to me:

HSV- growing up in utopia

Hi Cheryl,

So weird to title this. lol

I tell people I grew up in Utopia. They don't believe me.

You see, in 1963, my father was John Cooper Sr's personal pilot. Mr. Cooper convinced dad that he could make more money selling lots for him in Cherokee Village than flying him around.

I was born in Cherokee Village and then in 1970, we moved to Dallas because dad was working at the Hot Springs Village 'offsite sales' office. They literally sold lots off a map on the wall. We moved to the village in 1974. Mom wouldn't go until they paved the roads. lol

As children, we had no less than 10 sets of grandparents' living around us to spoil us.

We lived in Castellon Courts in the beginning and we would have sleepovers at the pavilion at the bottom of the hill- all of us kids together.

We fished from the docks and rode our bikes everywhere on the golf cart paths.

Back then the 'center' of the village was on Callella.

There was a grocery store (Foster's), a laundromat, a video game place. There was even a restaurant called Mary Ann's.

There was also a gas station, fire station, police, rentals, and cable tv office.

The grocery store and the gas station ran 'tabs' for us kids. Since we couldn't drive yet, we rode our bikes to the pool every day in the summer.

Best memories were of the first pool

When I was old enough, I became a lifeguard at DeSoto Pool and did that for 5 years.

Some of the best memories kids of my generation have of the village were at that pool. We loved **loved loved** the 4th of July because the pool would have all these games and contests and we would stay all day and then just walk behind to the golf course for the fireworks.

The community was bonded together

It was a true carnival atmosphere- with food trucks, games, golf tournaments, and people visiting with each other. It definitely bonded the community together.

The gates gave us freedom

The main reason I believe we were given so much freedom as kids, was specifically because of the gates. We were 'locked in'. All the police knew us, knew where we lived, and who we belonged to. I'm pretty sure none of us had any fear. Boy have times changed.

Once I was old enough to drive and had a curfew. I would come rolling in just under the clock and stop at the gate to call my mom and tell her I was back inside the village.

This was when the police department ran the gates and there were no cell phones.

Stopping to call, turned into visiting with whoever was on duty, and then learning how to 'wave' folks through using the stoplight there. No sticker, no green light.

Sometimes, mom would call back up there and say 'send her home' because I would get to talking and forget the time.

Once we started to go off to college, we knew we were 'home' when we made it to the fountain at the gate.

Management did not understand what the fountain stood for

The year they cut down the fountain, a bunch of us complained and sent letters and pictures about what that fountain stood for. We were very glad to see it go back up.

I have a picture of the original one lit up at night on the wall in my home office. Somewhere, I also have a plat map and an original HSV map. I'll have to dig for them.

An entire generation (and more) holds the community so dear

There is something to be said for a community that an entire generation of residents holds so dear...we had a group on Facebook and lots of memories start with 'Where I Come From'...

Thank you Ms. Cheryl for fighting the good fight and attempting to effect change. I tell my kids all the time, be the change you want to see, and you are doing that. I appreciate you!

Sincerely,

Jane Spicer Bailey, February 27, 2020

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