



Classmate Questionnaire – 50 Years

Fifty years!! How can that be? This questionnaire will be used to update our classmates on our journeys through life. Please provide the following information for our 50th reunion website directory. Return electronically by August 1, 2026 to admin@1976sjhsmanassas.com. In an effort to mitigate any risks associated with adding this information to our SJHS Class of 1976 website, we ask that answers be in a generic format. Please note: if there is information you would like to not be included online, please leave blank.

First and Last Name, previous names and nicknames:

Steve Hilker

City and state of current residence (skip specific street address):

Stafford, VA

The quick update – where has life taken you in the last 50 years? (A brief 2-3 sentence summary of your journey):

I spent my senior year thinking that I wanted a career that was “artistic”. My first plan was architecture but I also knew that I didn’t have the money to go straight to any 4-year school to study. So I enrolled at NOVA in an architecture transfer program they had set up with VA Tech. That lasted one quarter when the program got cancelled. I had always liked math, so Plan B was to become an accountant. I made it 3 quarters before finding I really hated accounting. At that point I had to find something where I could use all these wasted courses toward an Associate degree. NOVA’s computer programming degree met the criteria.

I found I loved working with computers. I went from being a programmer, to learning about creating 3rd party software. I started my own software company with a co-worker in 1990. One of our early successes was when our website was one of the first to achieve 1 million visitors. We sold the business in 2001.

Your passions and free time (What hobbies, interests or volunteering activities keep you busy?):

As in high school, I love creating art. I now specialize in oil portraits. If you want to see some of my portfolio, visit <https://stevihilker.com>.

I love to create children's books. I have written 14 but unless you look on sites like Ebay you can't get them anymore. It's a long story. Ask me about it at the reunion.

My wife and I love history. We own a historic farmhouse and also serve on the Board of Directors for the Stafford County Historical Society.

Favorite memories and milestones (A favorite life experience or adventure):

Reaching 40 and beyond. Not to be morbid and I'm not sure why, but I always thought I'd die before 40 ... and I actually technically did. I was 39 and being taken to the hospital and clinically died in the ambulance. They obviously brought me back 😊.

What do you consider your greatest accomplishment in the last 50 years:

50/50 on this one. I'm super proud of my software company that helped thousands of aspiring computer database professionals to advance their careers. Equally proud of my books that may have inspired over 20 thousand kids to learn how to draw.

Travels and Adventures (Share a few of the favorite places you've visited and/or any place still on you bucket list):

Software showed me the world. I've had the privilege to travel to 32 countries. If I had to leave the US, I'd move to Ireland. But if you're looking for a great place to visit, I recommend Prague in the Cech Republic.
Family Joy (If you'd like to share, tell us about your family make up, avoid specific names and ages due to privacy concerns): I've been married for 45 years. We have 3 daughters.
SJHS Flashback (Share a fun, general memory of our high school days): Spent many, many hours just cruising 234 and downtown Manassas.
Then vs. Now (share music/hobby you enjoyed in 1976 vs. what you enjoy now): Painting. Life got in the way of doing it for 40 years, but it's one of my favorite activities now.
Message to our class (share anything else you'd like our classmates to know about you): If you knew me then, I'm thankfully not that same person now. Luckily I met some wonderful people who helped me grow beyond him.
Are you planning to attend our 50th reunion on October 3, 2026? Yes

Attach current photo here:

