

## Jim Howes



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### **Name, address and e-mail:**

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### **Family names & ages:**

Pat and I were married in 1976. She grew up outside Manchester, going to St. Mary's for grade school and graduating from West Delaware High School in 1965. As with many other kids who grew up in Eastern Iowa during the 50's and 60's, the Road to Cedar Rapids was the 4th "R" in their education. That's where the jobs were. While we were beginning our time at LaSalle, Pat was starting her work career at Collins Radio Company.

My first real job after college was a process control chemist in the circuit board shop at Collins. I literally met Pat over a tank of hydrofluoric acid. Some have said that explains the personality my co-workers and managers came to enjoy. My plan was to work at Collins for two years then leave Cedar Rapids and go to graduate school in Arizona. My heart had other plans, I fell in love with Pat and the kids and never left town. I believed then, and still do today, that there is no place better to raise a family. There was nothing I was ever going to do or achieve that would be as significant as that.

Together we raised,  
Scott Bensley, age 39. Wife Michelle and grandchildren Sylvia, Quinten, Spencer, Elliot and Amelia.

Traci Bingaman, age 37. Husband Jim

Brian Bensley, age 36. Wife Joanna and grandchildren Max, Elliana Rose, Sam

James Howes, age 31. Wife Audrey and granddaughter Becca Lyn

Charles Howes, age 28.

### **What's happening in our family?**

Mom died in 2003 and dad followed in 2006. They were my best friends and strongest advocates. I have never forgotten mom giving hell to Brother Henry because he wasn't going to let me speak at the Baccalaureate Dinner. Since we just lived across town I saw them often and was able to help out a little when their health began to fail.

As for our kids,

Scott is a Systems Analyst ( I always had computers in the house from the time the kids were small.) He and his wife are busy raising their family in Brandon, Iowa.

Traci is a Customer Service Manager for Bank of The West in Des Moines. She and her husband are hard-core Cyclone fans who never miss a game. In summer months they're either at the race track in Knoxville or Newton or else sitting in their boat waiting for gas prices to go down.

Brian has been in the US Navy for 12 years and is presently a Damage Controlman, assigned to the Germantown, based in San Diego. He's been on numerous deployments to the Persian Gulf, first on the Constitution and later on the Germantown. He and his family live in Lake Elsinore, California.

Jimmy is a Service Technician for Rexco, Inc. a construction equipment dealer in Cedar Rapids. Jimmy and his family live outside Springville in a 100 year old farmhouse that we gutted and restored three years ago. My granddaughter has four acres to play, along with four dogs and two horses, an ATV and a skid loader. Mom always said I was a challenge to raise but that Jimmy was worse. Becca follows the same path and I'm lucky enough to be walking alongside.

Charles is a branch manger for Bank of The West in Denver. He received a degree in Political Science from the University of Iowa in 2005 and has lived in Denver since then. Yes, I had to swallow hard - twice. Being an engineer/scientist, it was difficult to keep my opinion on major to myself. Compound that with the idea of my son going to Iowa U...?

### **Fond memories of high school:**

Working on the newspaper and going to football and basketball games, sex education in Mr. Kaminski's geometry class and asking Father Heles annoying questions. I was so fortunate as to have several teachers to whom I related. They made an impact on me that continues to this day. Chief among them are Sister Charmaine who inspired me to discover the wonders of the scientific method and Sister Ann Christine who helped me appreciate the satisfaction of successfully doing things I wasn't terribly good at. I realize that was not the case for everyone. I was lucky.

### **Career status:**

My entire career has been dominated by heavy metals. I was wise enough to stake my future on a dying profession - electroplating. Cedar Rapids once had eleven, now there is one. I began at Collins then went to Nissen's, worked for a short time as the Environmental Manager

for the City of Cedar Rapids, joined a Korean startup brass mill on the SW side then ended my career back to Collins. Along the way came the realization I was becoming a corporate dinosaur, losing patience with young, non-technical managers making technical decisions they had no business making.

I retired from Rockwell-Collins in early 2006, shortly after dad died. I finally realized I didn't need to put up with it anymore and have never looked back. My career was defining who I was and life is way too short for that. Patty retired in May 2007. I am now a self-employed manufacturing consultant, specializing in metal finishing, data collection and the related regulatory issues.

### **How I spend my time:**

We've become dog people!! We have two Labrador Retrievers, a black and a yellow, and a West Highland White Terrier named Buster. His name is forever tied to my early retirement. You have to come to the reunion if you want to know more!

We bicycle, garden and walk the dogs for exercise and spend a lot of time with Becca. Over the years, I managed to become a pretty good mechanic, electrician, plumber and cabinetmaker so I do a lot of that kind of stuff helping out family and friends. I've tried to stay current with what's going on with science and technology. The consulting gig keeps me involved just enough and the Internet is a great resource for the curious. Setting up and administering this site has been another learning opportunity.

A few years back Tom Hess and I got together in his mom's garage and he showed me how to brew beer. Mary Kopecky came all the way back from Spain just to be a witness. I've been doing that ever since, have expanded to meadmaking and am growing my own hops. The chemical engineer in me is clamoring to build a still but the BATF says otherwise.

### **Comments for Classmates:**

We really had it made. If kids today do the things we got away with, they're called criminals.

### **Lessons learned since 1969:**

We're all Bozoes on this Bus and don't take things personally.

### **When you see me please don't ask:**

Why I'm still in Cedar Rapids.