Class of 1959

Today we remember the 50th anniversary of the graduation of the class of 1959.

It was a great year! The Los Angeles Dodgers and the Chicago White Sox were in the World Series, the first Grammy Awards Ceremony was taking place, and Dwight D. Eisenhower, as the 34th President of the United States, signed orders making Alaska and Hawaii the 49th and 50th states.

A first-class stamp was 4 cents in 1959, while a gallon of gas cost 25 cents. The average cost of a new car was $2,200, but Ford Motor Co. announced the discontinuation of the unpopular Edsel. Popularity was not a problem for the Barbie doll, launched by Mattel in 1959.

Xerox launched the first commercial copier, while the U.S. government launched the first weather station in space, and NASA selected its first seven Mercury astronauts, including John H. Glenn Jr. and Alan Shepard Jr.

On Broadway, the last musical from Rodgers and Hammerstein—The Sound of Music—opened to rave reviews. In New Orleans, moviegoers enjoyed Ben-Hur, Some Like It Hot, Anatomy of a Murder and North by Northwest, while Walt Disney released Sleeping Beauty.

“The Huckleberry Hound Show” was a television favorite, but viewers flocked to the small screen to see “Bonanza” when it premiered as the first regularly scheduled TV program to appear in color. Those were the days!