

9-9-1969

From/To: Bettye Nichols (Chalk's reply filed first)

Bettye Nichols

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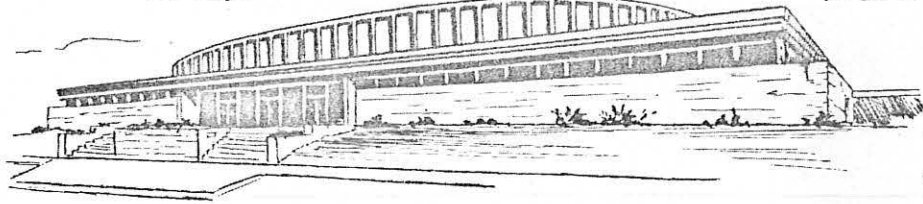
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September 9, 1969

Mrs. James Walter Nichols
916 Westwood
Abilene, Texas

Dear Bettye:

Thank you so much for your "Dear John" letter. I appreciated the sensitivity it reflected. I am sure that Mary Bannister is not an isolated case. This only means that the involvement of you and James is crucial for our college program. It also means that everyone of us involved in this program must, through persistence, prayer, and preparation, look at the long haul rather than crisis solutions.

I do believe we can appeal to sensitive young people like Mary but I don't think it's going to happen overnight. You must continue to feel free to make suggestions and pass them on to me.

I am thrilled by the interest that Ron Phillips and Bob Anderson are showing in the program. Already I see signs of their leadership which I know you will be thrilled to hear. I shared your letter with Ron, Bob and Randy Becton. I thought they needed to hear what you had to say.

Your brother,

John Allen Chalk

JAC:hm

August 30, 1969

Dear John,

This is my first "Dear John" letter and I'm a bit nervous...

No, really this is a "Hello John" letter and we think things are going great...

This morning I visited with Mrs. Harold Banister from Houston (Southwest congregation). She mentioned that her daughter Mary had said she might not be going to Highland even though she planned to continue her work with the State School.

Her mother wasn't pushing her to go to Highland but she did tell her that she thought she should support the church that was in charge of the work she was doing. One thing that bothered Mary was that the bus was usually late in getting them to Highland for the worship service.

Mary didn't mention anything specifically about Highland but she really wasn't interested in going -- at least this summer she wasn't.

When I saw Mary after visiting with her mother I invited her to come tomorrow and hear James. I told her she didn't have to come all the time just because we were friends but I hoped she would visit us! I also told her that we were thrilled with our new minister -- that we all needed what he is giving us -- and that we were coming out of "our slump". Just to let her know we knew we needed new direction and now we have great hopes!

Also, her mother mentioned to me in private that Mary really enjoys being in a group where there can be an exchange of ideas. I thought of what was discussed at your house by Ron -- the buzz sessions that might be done later on.

I wanted to pass this on to you while it is fresh on my mind.

We will continue to pray for you and Sue in your wonderful ministry -- a ministry that we all are joining in and feeling an active part.

We are thankful for the "going and coming" party which proves that even church "happenings" can be up-to-date and instant as other Jet Age events.

Our Best Wishes and Constant Prayers,



P. S.

I don't believe we will fall into this category, but I hope Highland doesn't act like we're in a contest to attract the most college students. You have said this is not what we want our image to be so we know how you feel. But it can happen.

I heard of one congregation in town that encourages (or assigns members to college students, I don't know) the membership to ask students home for lunch every Sunday. That's great but I hope college students come to Highland because it's where they can worship God and not just because of a free meal.

Maybe I'm too sensitive and should not have mentioned this...

I do believe we should get better acquainted with our "college men and college women" (that sounds better than college kids, doesn't it!) and I have no ideas as to how to accomplish this. When they enroll in a class we could get their birth dates and let those interested of the resident members know about them and they could entertain them not only for their birthday but whenever they wish. But not make an issue out of it. Or does this have overtones of the "too much ado"? I hope we don't have "too little ado" as we have had.

So you see, I have no answers.

Goodnight.

Copy/Ron, Bob A., Randy