

Dear Goshen Friends Families:

I traveled to Boston this past weekend to visit with my best friend from college. Doug and I have known each other for since college and we have stayed in touch over the past thirty five years. On Saturday night as he, his spouse, three children and I sat at the dinner table, his daughter asked us why we had become friends and why we still were. It was a great question from a fifteen year old, and one I had not thought about these past three decades. When we first met in 1975, we were of different political persuasions, had divergent thinking parents and followed contrasting paths of study, yet we were bound together by the like- minded values, by a similar sense of humor, by a comfort level which has always remained with us. Doug was the friend with whom I spoke about girlfriends or lack thereof, life after college, social pressures, my mother and father and my hopes for the future. And he did the same with me.

As we have grown older, we do not see one another often. Separated by geography, children's needs and schedules, work expectations and the time's speedy journey, we get together maybe once every twenty four months. Yet, when we are together, there is a natural "easing" into our relationship, an intangible understanding of who we both are even though we are not the young men of many years ago. Obviously, our topics of discussion are vastly different from those we had in college. Sprinkled throughout our dialog are references to those days gone by, but mostly our conversations are about children and getting older and how tired we feel. We talk politics but do so with a respect of each other, and we spar over whether the Phillies or Red Sox will win the World Series. Yet, we still have a connection which, in my view, will never be severed no matter where our journeys take us. In many ways, our relationship is richer than ever, as life has become more complicated for the both of us.

Our Goshen students are surrounded by many friends here at school. May those friendships be as wonderful as the friendship I have with Doug.

Bless him and his family.

Tom