

Reflections of the Class of 1981

By Barbara Reist Dillon

In March of 1979, members of the Class of 1981 were sophomores. Most of us lived in the dorms, few of us had cars on campus, none of us had cell phones. CNN and the concept of the 24 hour news cycle did not exist; the internet was still the province of DARPA or some geeks at MIT. We watched WGAL, listened to the radio and read newspapers, and the biggest news

everyone scurried around calling parents, etc. those of us

*I felt kind
of uneasy though the nagging fear of a meltdown left a cold chill in the back of our bravado.*

That night, we watched all the network specials on the situation, went out and got Kentucky Fried Chicken, drank wine and played Scrabble. Saturday dawned, and following an almost solitary brunch, Gail, Sherry and I went out to Park City. Sherry got a dress for the ZBT dance which had been scheduled for that night. I got a new dress at Lord & Taylor over spring break. That night, we got word that school was closing Tuesday as well and the atmosphere grew so oppressive I knew I had to get out.

The situation at TMI was no better and in case a general evacuation was ordered, they would need to use the school as a base. The thing I was finding most annoying and a little scary was the credibility gap. The NRC said one thing, MET ED another if any of them, to rely on. How much of the situation was being kept from us? We waited for the sirens to sound.

with my plastic bag of clothes, a camera, some books and the empty streets. Eerie. President Carter visited the scene that day the situation was stable, still unchanged. I had dinner with Rick, Eric and Marlene at ZBT that night. We all got dressed up and dined in solitary splendor at the house everyone else had left and we were going out in style!