



The Great
Class of
1968
Maine West

September 2019

volunteerism [ˌvɒlənˈtɪrɪzəm]

NOUN

NORTH AMERICAN

1. the use or involvement of volunteer labor, especially in community services.



Last Thursday night, August 22, Ronda and I went to a movie theatre that was showing the 50th Anniversary of Woodstock; the Director's Cut version. Neither of us was at the actual event that was held in New York State in August of 1969, but I drove to Evanston in August of 1970 with my striped bell-bottomed pants, my tie-dyed shirt and my love beads around my neck so that I could sit in *that* theatre and watch the movie documentary of Woodstock.

Among all of the fabulous acts that performed at Woodstock, Jefferson Airplane sang one of their well-known hits: "Volunteers of America!" That gave me an idea: why not write an article that emphasizes volunteerism. I think I can safely say, that the vast majority of our Classmates are retired from their chosen fields of work. I am hoping that that same vast majority of Classmates is filling their time slots by volunteering in some capacity that will provide services for those that need or deserve those services for no charge or fee.

So, I want to dedicate space in each of the subsequent *Class Notes* to share with our classmates what types of volunteer work are being done by members of the Class of 1968. I will take the lead in this endeavor and share with you the things that have kept me busy since retiring in 2014. Besides my part-time job with Enterprise Rental Car as a Service Agent (not a volunteer position) and working Hardware Trade Shows 6 to 8 times a year (also not a volunteer position) I volunteer as a Tram Driver at Cantigny Park in Wheaton, IL. Cantigny is the home of Robert R. McCormick, former CEO and Editor-in-Chief of the *Chicago Tribune* and founder of WGN Radio and WGN TV. He died in 1955 leaving his estate to the people of the State of Illinois for their edification and education. He also served in the U. S. Army First Infantry Division (The Big Red One). In addition to the mansion that is on the property, it is also the home of the First Division Museum in honor of those that have served in the Big Red One. There are three professional-level golf courses and numerous beautiful gardens scattered around the property. As I stated, I am the Tram Driver and I mostly move the elderly or infirmed (or the tired) from point to point on the property.

I also have the privilege to serve in a volunteer capacity for those veterans that are participating in *Honor Flight Chicago*. I help with the staging of the Veterans in preparation for their day trip to Washington D. C. to see the War Memorials and visit various sights pertaining to their days in the military. They come home to a hero's welcome at day's end.

Once a year, I volunteer on the Safety Team in Osh Kosh, WI during the Experimental Aircraft Association's Air Venture.

Lastly, the Good Lord has blessed me with good health that allows me to have donated over 130 units of whole blood.

WLS

In keeping with the year 1964, here are the Top Ten from the September 4, 1964 Silver Dollar Survey from WLS:

1. Where Did Our Love Go? – The Supremes
2. Because – The Dave Clark Five
3. The House of the Rising Sun – The Animals
4. Everybody Loves Somebody – Dean Martin
5. Under the Boardwalk – The Drifters
6. A Hard Day's Night – The Beatles
7. Remember – The Shangri-Las
8. Handy Man- Del Shannon
9. Wishin' and Hopin' – Dusty Springfield
10. Car Hop – The Exports



Historical Events that Impacted the Class of 1968, Illinois, the United States and the World:

Do you remember when school always started AFTER Labor Day? Nowadays, most school districts, included our very own Maine Township District 207 have already been toiling in the trenches for two weeks!! I was talking to a friend that is into her 25th year of teaching and she simply stated that the purpose for the early start was so that all of the finals for the first semester would be finished before the Winter Break (we used to call that Christmas Vacation).

In honor of the start of another school year, I have decided to go into the wayback machine and set the dials for our Freshman Year; 1964. See if you remember these things that took place in the month of September, 1964.

- 3rd – U. S. Attorney General Robert Kennedy resigns
- 14th – Walt Disney is awarded the Medal of Freedom at the White House
- 16th – “Shindig” premieres on ABC-TV
- 17th – The Beatles are paid \$150,000 for a concert in Kansas
- 17th – Mickey Mantle gets career hits #1,999, 2,000, 2,001 and hits his “
- 17th – The Supremes release “Baby Love”
- 21st – The Philadelphia Phillies start a 10-game losing streak which gives the Cardinals the pennant
- 22nd – “The Fiddler on the Roof” opens at the Imperial Theater in New York City for 3,242 performances
- 22nd – “The Man from U.N.C.L.E. premieres on NBC-TV
- 24th – “The Munsters” premiere on TV
- 27th – The Warren Commission Report released, finds that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone

Please keep in touch! We'd love to hear from you.

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Susan's Musans

... Thoughts and Memories from Susan Calabrese DeMerit



Four years ago I volunteered at the local elementary to be a Reading Buddy. I had the pleasure of coaching Ashley, a very vivacious 5th grader. We hit it off immediately and shared very similar interests (drawing) and little quirks like peeling grapes before eating. Every week she would bring me a drawing and I'd draw one for her.

We both looked forward to our once a week after school program. It not only helped her develop her reading skills but also gave her confidence in social skills.

In the fall Ashley was going to start middle school and was very apprehensive. I shared stories about going into junior high and all the exciting things she had to look forward to.

Now four years later, Ashley is starting her freshman year of high school. I've lost contact with her, but I am sure she has a bit of the jitters, as I did.

I do recall the first day and heading to homeroom. I was not only nervous about starting high school but had another issue. My homeroom was in the D-wing auto shop! I freaked! All those cords and equipment that I had to navigate stepping over to get to a desk. I was terrified! It didn't help either that a couple of the boys teased me about getting shocked by the cords! This happened every morning. I could not wait for the bell to ring to move on to my first class.

I love all the memories of high school and the new memories of the once a week Reading Buddy, Ashley. I hope my time with Ashley will be a memory she cherishes as I do.

Cheers!

SusanD



Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/MaineWest1968>

Website:

<http://mainewest1968.weebly.com/>

Alumni Site:

<http://mainewestalumni.org/>

Our Special Edition, "Once a Warrior, Always a Warrior," previously released, follows.



ONCE A WARRIOR; ALWAYS A WARRIOR!!

For those of you who were able to attend our 50th Reunion a year ago September, you remember we had three events that made up the Reunion: The Friday Night Ice Breaker that was held at Gino's East in Rosemont; The Tour of the School on Saturday Morning; and finally the Maine Event on Saturday Night at the Club Casa.

For the tour of the school, the group was large enough to break into two smaller groups. One of the groups was walked around by none other than our favorite tour guide, Former Assistant Principal, Eldon Burk. A question came up about whether or not there was a movement afoot to drop the Warrior as the school mascot. At that time, he simply stated that even though the Warrior was going to continue to be the mascot, the presence of the Native American images throughout the school building will be slowly but surely diminished.

There was a beautifully painted Chief in the Bus Concourse. It was suggested that that image may not be on that wall much longer. As of the writing of this edition, there is no knowledge as to whether or not that image was removed or painted over. However, it has been brought to my attention that the Warrior Spirit Statue which was placed high atop the main entrance to the building, has been taken down.

One of our classmates, Pete Whitson has started a letter-writing campaign addressed to the Maine West Administration and is encouraging not just the Class of '68 but also other Alums who were able to view the Warrior Spirit Statue all through their years as a Maine West Warrior to participate.

Below is the letter Pete wrote personally and if you feel so moved by this letter, use the same verbiage or create your own letter highlighting the thoughts that Pete shared:

"Dear Madam or Sir:

Recently it was decided to exile the Warrior Spirit Statue that for years greeted students, guests and alumni to Maine West. This action was an insult and an affront to many school alums and community members. I am writing to inquire if there can be negotiations started between Maine West and the Des Plaines History Center regarding the Center taking possession of the statue for display and care?

*Respectfully,
Peter Whitson '68"*

NOTE: Pete's original post on Facebook was taken down. He has made a second attempt and has gotten the Secretary of the Maine West Alumni Association, Fred Suevel, Class of '72 involved. Fred, in turn, has forwarded the letter to the District Superintendent, Dr. Ken Wallace, the new Maine West Principal, Dr. Eileen McMahan, and Mr. Eldon Burk.