

MOOSMATES AND NEIGHBORHOOD KIDS

AN OCCASIONAL NEWSLETTER FOR AND ABOUT THE KIDS OF MOOS SCHOOL DURING THE '50S

JULY 2003

4TH EDITION

My Column

Lots of new names have graced my emails in the past several months so I felt it was time for another edition. The fun of all of this is renewing old acquaintances and connecting with long lost friends. We started out with a handful of names and now my database numbers over 60. We recently found Nancy Gilbertsen of the Moos class of January 1951. My bio is on page 3. I never mentioned it but my cousins **Larry and Carol Janowiak** also lived at 1718 N. Washtenaw and my other cousins **Dennis, Diane and Casimer (Butchie) Jabczynski** also lived on Washtenaw Ave. but in the 1600 block.

Tommy Crook

Tommy still lives in Chicago and has Saturday morning breakfast with **Kenny Rae**. He sees **Gibby Fleischhaker** and his wife occasionally. Tommy reports that he has seen Rich Stopka within the last 5 years but not Marlene Becker or any other classmates. Tommy lived in the 1600 block of Washtenaw and recalls Ron Witt, Fred Voltmer and Jerry Knobloch. He still keeps in contact with **Harol Justice, Corny O'Donnell** and **Ron Gilbertsen** which is how I have found **Nancy Gilbertsen**.

Vivian Wirkus

She was a 1st and 2nd grade teacher at Moos since 1948 and has just retired on June 24th, 2003. Her name is just barely familiar. She taught at Moos school for 55 years. Bless her, I'm sure she taught every one of us. Do you recall her? Thanks to **Tommy Crook** for forwarding this to me it was written in the Sun-Tims on June 2nd, 2003 when she was at the age of 76.

Joanie (Vass) Hinchman

Her sisters Jean & Mary went to Moos. She went to Tuley. They lived at 1832 N. Talman Ave. She remembers her best friend Alice Murdock, Margie White, Ron Thornton and Donny Rae. Alice and Donny married in 1957. Her sister, Jean has passed away. Mary still lives in Illinois.

Larry Janowiak

Remembers the names **Zavadil, Knobloch, Adorgean and Fleischhacker**. He also went to Moos with **Pete and George Markowitz as well as Audina Kessler**. (I thought Audina graduated with us in January 1951). Larry also mentions Selma the (Swedish) bakery lady. Do you remember her? I certainly do. She baked out of a storefront in the 1700 block of Washtenaw and I can remember picking up a loaf of piping hot white bread on a Saturday morning and savoring a slice with butter that melted as it was spread out. Yummy stuff, eh? Her apple slices were to die for. She walked the neighborhood selling her wares to the local Mom and Pop variety stores. (by the way, Larry, Nick Samar has never acknowledged my newsletters or correspondence).



Sharon (Ross) & Joe Porebski

Sharon went to Logan grammar school for 3 years and then Pulaski until she graduated. She hung out at Holstein Park, which was on Leavitt St., went to Tuley, and graduated, with Charlene Southwell, Donna Badovinac, Brigette Barton & Pat Leverenz. Her dad took her to Marigold Arena on Wednesday nights to see Don Eagle. When they lived on Berteau and Milwaukee, her husband tended bar next door and Rudy Kaye would come in and she got to meet him. Sharon was married in Sept. of 1955 & has two children, a boy and girl, two granddaughters and two great-grandkids. She enjoyed going to North Avenue beach. They lived in Chicago for a few years, moved to Wheeling and then settled in McHenry. Sharon likes to garden and do craft work while her husband likes to work on old cars. They enjoy going to car shows.

The Fleischhaker Kids of Fairfield Avenue

Michael and Marie Fleischhaker lived at 1642 N. Fairfield Avenue with their nine kids: **Dorothy, Audrey, Gilbert, Donald, Karen James, Michael, Paula and John**. All 9 children attended Moos school. 6 graduated from Moos. After 4th grade Donald transferred to St. Sylvester grade school, where he graduated in 1952. Paula and John graduated from Yates Upper Grade school. All 5 boys graduated from Lane Tech High School. Dorothy graduated from Josephinum academy, Audrey attended Tuley High School for 2 years, finishing her next 2 years at Jones Commercial High School. Karen and Paula graduated from Tuley High School.

Michael Sr., Marie, Dorothy and Karen have passed away. Karen died on February 15th, 1979. Mother Marie died on May 10th, 1980. Dad, Michael Sr., died on April 17th, 1981. Dorothy died on April 7th, 1992. After our Dad passed away, we sold the house, which was our home for over 50 years. In June of 1956 Donald graduated from Lane Tech. On October 24th of that year he entered the Brothers of Holy Cross candidate program at Sacred Heart College, Watertown, Wisconsin. The following August he became a novice at St. Joseph Novitiate, Rollin Prairie, Indiana. The following August 16th, 1957 he took his 1st vows as a religious Brother of Holy Cross. Donald then was assigned to begin college studies down at St. Edward's University in Austin, Texas. He began his studies in 1958 but, after only one year and a summer session, he was assigned to one of his Congregation's grade schools and had taken evening classes and summer sessions and, finally, had an academic year off to study at St. Ed's University. Don graduated in 1972 with a BA in English. Later on he graduated (1976) from the University of Notre Dame with an MA in communication

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arts and then, in 1980, with an MA in theology also from the University of Notre Dame. During most of Don's years with the congregation, he taught in its High Schools. 20 years of teaching at Holy Cross in River Grove, Illinois. One year at Holy Trinity High School in Chicago. Leaving teaching he worked in the inner city of Chicago around North and Ashland for the poor and homeless at the Franciscan Outreach Association. In August 2002 he retired to Notre Dame.



Don Fleischhacker

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Contributions to future issues of this newsletter are greatly appreciated

STILL MISSING

Moos January '51

Ralph Eckardt...???
Marilyn Jacobson...???
Audena Ann Kessler...???
Eleanor Meissner...???
Eva Lou Refsnes...???
Gloria Scott...???
Marilyn Skoblin...???

THIS & THAT

Ron Cowley sees **Joe and Sharon (Ross) Porebski** at their local health club. Sharon mentioned Moos and it turns out that Ron also went there.

and graduated in June of '61. Ron's brother graduated Lane in '59 as class president, playing football for 4 years, Ron played for 3 years. His 1st wife was Kathy Dolas who also went to Moos and lived above the day care center on the SW corner of California and Wabansia. He remembers the **Focht family of George, Tom, Gary, Kathy, Jimmy, Nancy and Tony** as well as the Fleischhaker kids and both **Jimmy and Ronnie Spilman**. His brother married **Dolly Wolf** (now living in Colorado) from the Wolf family of **Chuck, Dolly, Carol and Jackie**.

Jim Curtis...My Bio

Once upon a time, in the city of the big wind, there lived a chubby, dishwater blond child with twinkly eyes and a thirst for knowledge named Jimmy. This young boy lived his youth at 1718 N. Washtenaw Ave. Humboldt park was his jungle playground. The indian trail led to a secret burial ground (the burned down remnants of the bicycle velodrome). The boat house actually had boats for rent. The rose garden with it's bronze buffalo's guarding the entrance. We all have a picture atop one of them. The rec. house with table tennis, billiards, and craft classes. Bunker and baby bunker hills were the Alps of winter to be conquered by sleds. This was high adventure for young Jimmy. Saturday mornings meant a stop at Mid-City Dairy to purchase a 10 cent ice cream cone to be savored somewhere in the park. He went to the Crystal and Queen theaters. The Queen would be so packed on Saturdays that the late comers sat on the floor just below the screen. 5 cartoons, 2 serials, trailers and 2 features (mostly western shoot-em ups) featuring Lash Larue, Red Ryder, The Lone Ranger and many others. The Crystal theater is where Jimmy took his very first kiss from someone who was not a relative but a GIRL. It was very, very exciting, by the way. During grammar school at Bernard Moos Jimmy was awkward at sports

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awkward at sports and athletics but by the time he graduated he, magically, started to grow taller and the plumpness seemed to melt away. He attended Lane Tech high school taking the 4 year architecture course which would later be the basis for his working career as a draftsman and designer. During this time Jimmy discovered the Humboldt Park Methodist Church and it's young pastor, Auggie Aamodt. He also discovered that there was a mutual attraction between himself and GIRLS...well, some girls, anyway. The high school years were the best of times and Jimmy became Jim. Life centered about the church, especially the youth group known as the MYF (Methodist Youth Fellowship). The many friends from that time have left lasting memories and there were many adventures. Hay rides, square dancing, basketball games on Friday, or was it Saturday? Night followed by slow belly rubbing dancing in the dark recesses of the gym. Pot luck suppers, good fellowship, church outings, swimming in frigid Lake Michigan were all times to be remembered and cherished. Jim and his friends usually swam at the rocks just south of Oak Street Beach. Work consisted of night time cleanup at the Hawthorn-Melody ice cream plant located at Grand near Laramie. His 1st car was a 1937 Pontiac 4 door which he named the Blue Goose. Jim's 2nd car was a 1953 fire-engine red Dodge convertible. One fine summer evening Jim saw a new girl in the neighborhood. He saw her walking to the Washtenaw Variety Store and, when she came out, he, bravely, asked if he could walk her home. She somehow agreed and that was the beginning of the couple we now know as Jim and Sandy (nee Husted) Curtis. Sandy attended Jim's senior prom at Lane Tech and they were married in November 1956.

These two poor kids started with nothing but 2 jobs and lots of love. Because of Jim's architecture courses at Lane he soon found a job

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as a draftsman with Western Electric working out of the Butler Bros. Building located at Lake and Canal St. on the edge of the loop. Jim moved on to work a ITT Kellogg at 500 N. Pulaski for a time. It was then that Vic Schessler had the Washtenaw Variety Store up for sale. A family friend of Sandy's bought it and worked it, with Sandy's grandma, for several years. Eventually it got to be too difficult and it was for sale again. Of course, Jim and Sandy had no money to buy it but, the kind friend agreed to take monthly payments with nothing down. The store was bought by the 2 kids and Sandy's parents in order to be able to work it every other day. The hours were long (7:00 to 11:00 seven days a week with a short respite on Sundays between 1:00 and 5:00. Jim was also working a full time job at the same time. The saddest part was that these two kids had little time for a social life and lost touch with many close friends. The best part was that after working the store for about 4 years they were able to sell it and have enough money for a down payment on a house of their own. They had been living in a 4 room bungalow in back of a house next to the Methodist parsonage on Fairfield Avenue for 10 years. By this time the kids had become parents. Brian was born in 1959 and Lisa was born in 1962. In 1965 the family moved to Carpentersville and lived the good life of suburbia raising kids, making new friends, having parties for any old excuse and enjoying themselves. It was 1968 when Daddy Jim joined Motorola doing design and layout work. Mama Sandy also got a job at Motorola, working in their employee gift store, to help pay for Christmas of 1968. One day, Jim's manager invited the kids to dinner and proposed sending them off to a brand new plant in Plantation, Florida. They eventually accepted and were off on a house hunting trip and eventual relocation to the Ft. Lauderdale area. This was the biggest adventure of their young

(Column 2)

lives and they have been here ever since. Sandy started and maintained an employee gift store down here while Jim pursued his designer's career. Mama Sandy retired from Motorola in 1996 and Daddy Jim retired in 2002. Brian eventually married and had two kids named Rory and Shawna. Both are out of high school and pursuing a college education. Lisa has been married and since divorced and also lives close by. Jim and Sandy are now known as Grandma and Grumps.

A few Answers

The Kuklapolitan Players? I can only name Kukla, Ollie, Beulah Witch, Madame Oglepuss, Fran and not much more. How did you do? There were several more players. Fletcher Rabbit, Cecil Bill, Colonel Richard Hooper Crackie (commonly known as Colonel Crackie), Mercedes, Dolores Dragon and the lovely Fran Allison. For a load of nostalgia go to <http://lion.ultinet.net/~kfo/> or just do a search for Kuklapolitan Players. The Cinnamon Bear's name was Paddy O'Cinnamon and Jim Touhy has submitted his Paddy all dressed out for winter. He still has his very own piece of those wonderful radio adventures sponsored by Wieboldts department Store.

If you have changed email or address recently, please let me know.

Next Issue



Humboldt Park Methodist Church and the recollections of Larry Janowiak. Stores and shops up and down North Avenue, California, Western Avenue and all the others. Which ones do **YOU** remember?

The Breakfast Club



From left to right: **Jim and Donna (Badovinac) Tohu, Sharon (Ross) Porebski, Charlene (Southwell) Schwingback, Brigette (Barton) Halloran, Joe Porebski and Tom Schwingback.** They all get together every so often for old times and a hearty breakfast. Anyone wishing to join the festivities can contact Donna at email: ParanoidMr@aol.com or me and I will pass your request along.

Tidbits and Such

Don Kauts is retired in Florida after being a Motorola employee for many years. Don was a buddy of Ron Husted and a group that hung around the Fairfield at Wabansia area. His brother, **Harold (Hal) Kauts**, graduated from Moos in 1955 and Tuley in 1960. Hal joined the air force the day after graduation and made it a 26 year career. He lives in the San Antonio, Texas area and is trying to retire completely and soon.

From **Pat (Leverenz) Sikorski**

Do you remember Novack's Butcher Shop? They gave stamps when you bought meat, you put them in books, when you filled the book up you took it back to Novack's and you got a pound of hamburger. They also had sawdust on the floor and you paid for your purchase at a cashier's cage where Mrs. Novack took your money. Well, we have a small certified grocery store near us in Oak Park. I found out the last name of the owner and it is Mr Novack's son. Small world!!!



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Moos School 6B class. These kids are pretty darn happy, eh?



Jim Tuohy's Paddy O'Cinnamon



Brigette Barton & Bill Halloran
at the Breakfast Club



Just ME



Moos Grads of January 1946



Me in 1954 or '55

Pix are always welcome and will be
returned intact.