

 Olney Memories # 119

 January 8, 2016

HI Olney Memory readers and welcome to the New Year of 2016. Hope everyone had a nice Christmas and are having a good beginning to the New Year. Send in your memories and encourage others to do so too. Happy New Year!

Ann Weesner King

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Class of 1960

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**Happy New Year, OM Subscribers!**

In this issue, you will find two articles from Richard Williams, one, his review of how scholarships changed his life and, next, his announcement of the 2016 RCHS (ERHS) fifth scholarship drive.

**February’s Scholarship “OM”**

I got to thinking that many of you benefitted from receiving scholarships helping you to get your post-high school education and have some pretty inspiring life stories you can share.   With that thought, I want to invite you to submit your story to be shared with others which I will send out in early February.

Think of your situation at ERHS your senior year.  When did you first think of continuing your education?  Where you going to need a scholarship?  What scholarship(s) did you receive?  Did using your scholarship result in any life-changing surprises? How did it affect your education? Your career?

Well, you’ve got the idea.   I’m looking for inspiring stories about how getting a scholarship changed your life.   You can read below Richard’s story for how his scholarships changed his life.

**Before Richard’s story, remember, send me your story by the end of January 22nd.**



I don’t think I’d have been able to attend college right after high school, if I had not received help.   Most likely, I’d have joined the U.S. military and later used the benefits of having served to enable me to attend college.  With help at Vincennes University, I learned I could apply for Federal government’s program “National Defense Student Loan-Scholarship” after my first semester and I did so.   And got my A.S. degree from VU.   My second scholarship came at the beginning of my senior year at Indiana State College and I dearly needed it as I explain below.

 I first attended Vincennes University where in two years I graduated with an A.S. degree.  To save money my freshmen year, I commuted.  To save money my sophomore year I roomed in a house with kitchen privileges. I shared the house with young men, fellow students, some of whom are still friends. On Saturdays, I worked at the Olney Kroger; I dated Barb after work.  I had life under control and was happy.

Fall, 1962, both Barb and I were students in Terre Haute, she as a new nursing student and I as a transfer junior at Indiana State University.  I continued to use the Feb loan-scholarship program to pay my tuition while living off campus in a very affordable (read “cheap”) room (again with a kitchen) near where I worked part-time.  I needed to be able to buy groceries and cook and eat in my room.  The student nurses with Barb were the source of a break from my own cooking.  As a serious student who needed top grades, I lived in my head during the week, going from classes to work to home to eat and study.  Often on the week-ends I’d join Barb and her friends and eat at the cafeteria at their school:  I’d sit with them, and, as planned and with their permission, eat off their plates, mostly Barb’s.  I am talking about two to four young ladies and their boyfriends.  The meal was a fun social event which often continued in a ‘dayroom’ where we'd share stories and dream of the future.  I enjoyed the evenings. One of those nurses is still a dear friend of Barb and me and we visit each other at least annually.

The next summer, a letter from the college arrived reporting I was assigned to a seniors dorm my senior year.  My fear was the expense, not only for the room but also for dinning as for three years I stretched my money by having a kitchen.

I was upset and shared my dilemma with Barb and her family.  I was working at AMF and saving my salary to pay my expenses not covered by the scholarship-loans.  Someone suggested that I contact social organizations like the Elks Club or Odd Fellows to see if I could get a scholarship.   Weeks passed with no success.   In time, Barb’s father, Harry Olson, suggested that I contact his clubs.  I did that week.  Then I got lucky.   An officer of one called me and interviewed me over the phone.   Then days later, he called me again and reported that the club was awarding me a scholarship in the amount of the dorm fees, including a meal plan.  Over the past 40 years, I've forgotten much, but I do remember being happy the rest of that summer.

Remember I was on the edge of adulthood, more kid than adult.  I was not used to solving life-changing problems.  But with help, I had solved the biggest threat to my success in my young life.  Barb and I had been dating for about three years at that point, and I would have been terribly upset to have had to drop out with the result that I’d be in Olney while she was at her Nursing School in Terre Haute.  I remember being invited that fall to join a men’s honor society at ISU; but I had no money for such a promising star for my college resume. I had no extra money at all. But I was happy to be a senior at ISU.  I was happy to attend classes daily, work part-time as a clerk at a local lumber company, and see Barb and our friends at her hospital on the week-ends.

I think that being so alone during the week must have contributed to my asking questions in class.  The professor was a type of alter ego; at least most of them invited questions.  Oh, I had to answer his/hers in return.   I think that academic process of give and take in the classroom stayed in my mind and was a process that I loved to use during my teaching, challenging students with one question after the other.  A fellow professor, a dear friend of mine, once said that a great gift that parents can give their adolescents is one of being able to ask questions of adults.  It transfers to their learning environment and success in college – in life.

Now in retirement, I enjoy helping to raise scholarship money for current graduating seniors.  I know each of them is very pleased to get help.  I believe it!  Been there; done that!



**Hello Ann’s “OM” Subscribers!**

With much joy, today I have the privilege of inviting you to participate in the 5th annual scholarship drive!  If you are a member of the Tiger Alumni Center (TAC), you know we started this year’s drive in mid-December.  You OM readers who are not members are welcome to participate.  The drive will continue until early December.

Our goal this year is to grant $1,000 scholarships to 10 graduating seniors.  We’d love to add one more -- 11 scholarships of $1,000!   With your help, we can do it! Currently, we've got a great start with a drive total of $1,787!

 Goal: 11 Scholarships of $1,000

This 5th RCHS scholarship drive begins with my having the highest trust and joy in partnering with the high school's Senior Awards Committee.

Last year, when I founded the Tiger Pride Alumni Association (TPAA), I expected to begin transferring some of the activities of my website, Tiger Alumni Center (TAC), to TPAA, when it was ready.  This fall the directors and I began such steps.   Working directly with administrators of Richland County school district, we (1) adjusted the leadership of our RCHS 2016 drive to include both TPAA and TAC; and, (2) voted to request that the school selection committee use three criteria, written for us by Mr. Simpson, and on December 5th, approved by the TPAA directors.  They are not new but a clarification.

For the past four years many of you “OM” readers have joined our scholarship drive.  You’ve joined me as I directed the drive.  This year you will not only see my name on our campaign messages, but you will, from time to time, see those of various TPAA directors.   To read about how this shift to a combined TPAA / TAC led drive also resulted in the TPAA directors electing to continue to work with the school, click [here](http://www.erhsalumni.net/class_custom.cfm?page_id=519530).

I have also posted on TAC the TPAA statements of purpose, goals and policy of funds.  Click [here](http://www.erhsalumni.net/Information-About-TPAA.htm) to read those.

I welcome a fifth year of working with RCHS.  I welcome you to do so too by donating.

**Send your check to**

**Janet Everette, Treasurer, TPAA**

**906 East Cherry Street**

**Olney, IL. 62450**

**Please make your check out to *Tiger Pride Alumni Association*!**

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Mary Jane Hughes

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Amy Fletcher was my kindergarten teacher and I always loved her. Her mother used to bake wonderful cookies for all of us. When we had to get school shots, Miss Fletcher would hold us so we wouldn't be frightened. She turned shot day into something special.

Mary Jane Hughes

Class of 1960

Janice Bagwell Ma

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Yes, I receive Olney memories.  Always happy to read other peoples' memories of the past.  I have a few of my own--such as an old house that used to stand just outside of town that my friends and I thought was haunted.  It was fun exploring that house.  It was big with two floors.  It was abandoned.  Funny that a house that big stood abandoned like that.

Janice Bagwell

Class of 1961

Ann Weesner King

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I'm wondering if that is the House on West North Avenue west of 130 that intrigued me so much too,   Which would have been just east of my own house somewhat.  I lived at the complete end of West North Avenue on the South side of the road.

Anyway, I always wondered too what was with that old house.  I'm thinking if I put in OM what you wrote and if I write below it, (if anyone knows who owned that place) maybe we can get some or an answer to what was going on with that house?  I don't even know the name of the people who owned it at one time.  I do know that one particular time mother and dad had a party there for me and they made ghosts and goblins in the house and had red cake coloring on old sheets, and some other scary things and at the time I was scared to death along with my friends, I can't even remember who came to the party....but it was a scary fun time!  I know I was in grade school at Central School when that happened. Is there anyone out that that remembers coming to that Haunted House Party?

Ann W. King

Class of 1960

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Charles Fregeau

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I started my own stamp collection in Olney in 1971, with a little help from Jimmy Duke.    I remember going to the Olney post office and plunking down my 8 cents and buying my first mint stamp (Peace Corps, still have it, too). Now my collection spans 6 volumes.  I have one volume for envelopes and post cards.  One volume for Canada, one volume for the rest of the world and 3 volumes for the United States.

But as far as I know, Jimmy Duke and I were the only two people I ever knew in Olney that ever collected stamps.

Quite frankly I hope to be proven wrong on this one!  After all, I bought my first stamp catalog (Harris, cost all of $1 (5 months allowance), still have it, too) at Beal’s.  Don’t think they would have carried it if it didn’t sell.  Now the only place you can buy the Harris catalog (now cost 26 and a half!) is at Hobby Lobby, but you can buy it from Whitman’s online now.

I just never met any other stamp collectors in Olney.   Right now, I’m staring at something that both reminds me of Olney and stamp collecting.  Tis an envelope bearing a 3 cent stamp addressed to Miss Mary Joan Leaf and postmarked May 20th, 1951 at 3 PM. The contents of the envelope were lost long before I got it,  but I suspect it had something to do with the graduation Mom would have been at in that month.

The first example of that same stamp was given to me by my Mom in 1972 off one of her old love letters from Dad (My sister, who had them, burned them after Mom died.)  It’s the 3 cent stamp from the US Presidential series of 1938.

Charles Fregeau

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 Ann Weesner King

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I collected stamps when I was in grade school. I still have my stamp albums like Charles, only I have just two thick albums! But I have continued saving stamps to this day and have thought when I get “old” I will return to my stamp collecting, then I will have time again. Seems like the “old” part has returned but not the time part. Never enough time…. I remember buying the “stamp hinges” at a hobby store on the south side of Main Street in the main block in a small narrow store, pretty well next to Blowers Drug Store. Does anyone happen to remember the name of that store? I think maybe people by the name of Clyde Nelson had the store. Does that sound familiar to anyone?

Ann Weesner King

Class of 1960

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 Janice Bagwell Ma

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It may have been that house.  Do you remember where we first lived?  We lived on W. Elm, not far from the skating rink.  It was someplace out that way.  I don't remember the streets very well now though.  I have a funny story with that house.  It seems to me I might have told you about it but if not, well, here goes....

One summer afternoon me, Kenna Hayes and Barbara Mitchell (there may have been a fourth girl, I can't remember for sure) rode on our bikes and decided to explore that house.  We were probably about 14 or 15 at the time.  We parked our bikes in back of the house--thank goodness!  We slowly went in, looking around.  In what looked like a front room there was a bath tub and what looked like blood on the wall.  Well, this spooked us.  We walked into another room where there were French doors (pocket doors?)--the kind of double doors that slide back.  Then we decided to go upstairs.  At the top of the stairs there was a door that opened to the second floor.  We opened in and walked in.  We looked around.  We found a brick and threw it down a chimney or a fireplace--something like that--and never heard it land!  Well, that spooked us.  Then we heard someone whistling--but there was no one around!  Right then we decided that we MUST get out of that house so we rushed to the door that had led to the second floor--and it wouldn't open!  We were locked in!  We thought.  We were panicking!  Well, fortunately one of the bottom panels on the door was broken so I climbed through--and then pushed the door open easily.  We had been pushing when we should have been pulling!  We felt like such idiots!  Then when we reached the bottom floor we suddenly saw a police car coming by.  We dropped to the floor as fast as we could--and stayed perfectly still and held our breaths hoping he wouldn't get TOO curious about the house and come looking and find us.  Finally he drove away.  Whew!  Were we ever relieved!  That was the last time we ever went to that house!

You had a party at that house?!?!  What fun!!!!!  I always wondered who had lived there and what happened that it was abandoned--providing, of course, that it was the same house.  It probably was though.  Not many abandoned 2 story houses in such good shape.

Janice Bagwell Ma

Class of 1961

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Mary Jane Hughes

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 Amy Fletcher was my kindergarten teacher and I always loved her. Her mother used to bake wonderful cookies for all of us. When we had to get school shots, Miss Fletcher would hold us so we wouldn't be frightened. She turned shot day into something special. I've told so many people about that through the years. Being held by someone as wonderful as Miss Fletcher made everything good.

Yes, I remember those rugs that we had for our naps. They were handmade braided rag rugs, all soft from years of use. I wonder who made them.

Mary Jane Hughes

Class of 1960

Charles Fregeau

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John Helm mentioned that he worked in Continuity at WVLN.   Dad also worked in Continuity along with Sam Kieffer.   Dad was in Continuity from 1968-1972.    I used to have some of the blank paper they used to use for it, it was oversized and yellow and said WVLN-WSEI at the top and CONTINUITY along the side, and had 3 holes in it so it could be put in a binder.

Charles Fregeau

Class of ‘75

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Ann Weesner King

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With the passing of Jerry Whitaker my daughter and I were talking about Pizza Villa, of  which Jerry and Judy Whitaker owned, then we were wondering if anybody remembers the name of the very first pizza place in Olney and where it was? My very first piece of pizza was in Charleston, Illinois back in the early ‘60’

Ann Weesner King

Class of ‘60

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