



01 JANUARY 2006
NEW YEAR'S DAY

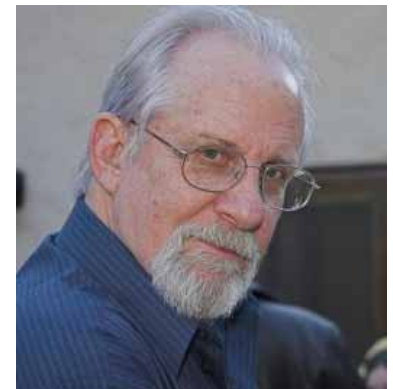


Before and After



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Pieter Breitner is the latest to come forward and admit that he has "Aged" along with the rest of us, only he has done it with grace.



Griff Defends His High School Record



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I noticed in one of the class of 62' newsletters that Chuck Hayes alluded to me not really attending high school. He seemed to exaggerate a little. I recall missing a few days of school, and I'm sure that's why some of you don't remember me. Of course, my absences also influenced what I recall about you and what I gleaned from the final two years of public school. I never set out to miss school; I just didn't typically set out to get there. In many ways, I miss those days at Stamford High. Incidentally, having a well-rounded educational background is highly overrated – when the terrorists come would you rather be smart or know multiple ways to disappear?



Forget school, I remember even less about our senior chorus trip to Europe. I must have been there – I still recall getting the surgery so I could continue to conquer all those high notes. It seems like I was challenged by a drug-sniffing dog in Berlin. I need a little help here – was I on that trip? Would I forget it, if I were? Is it “if I was a carpenter” or “if I were a carpenter”? Did anyone give informed consent for the surgery? Do questions answer questions?

One of my notable memories is being expelled from the National Honor Society. There weren't many in the administration with a sense of humor regarding the combination of unsatisfactory attendance and inferior grades. I was an advocate for different standards, but it wasn't to be. Anyway, when they summoned me for the rather unceremonious relinquishing of the lapel pin I could say only, “when did I become a member”?

I recall downgrading from advanced placement physics to the standard physics class about half way through one marking period, the burden of homework a couple of nights per week putting too much pressure on my other commitments. One of the disquieting revelations in “regular” physics was that, at that level, E only equaled MC. The general rule seemed to be: you'll be given the same topics as the really smart kids but with big print and pictures. It worked quite well, except for the concept of absolute zero. I've never been comfortable with the idea of everything stopping at once.

Similar things were noted when I downgraded from advanced chemistry to regular-paced chemistry. There, I was able to concentrate on mixtures rather than compounds, thus avoiding complex things that take on a whole new composition. And speaking of compositions, I wasn't much of a writer in high school. I still have an anthology of all the “how I spent my summer vacation” essays I concocted, clearly most of them fabricated in order to play to the interests of the English teachers. I never really, for example, spent a summer splicing seeds and growing varieties of legumes trying to disprove Darwin, but they didn't know that.

There were several disadvantages to not being in school on a regular basis:

- Lots of people called me “hey you.”
- People on the school board knew who I was.
- Every day in class felt like a new experience, so I always had those first-day anxieties.
- The New Haven railroad owed me enough in rebates to pay for my first year of college – but I couldn't pry it out of them.
- I never learned “Shakespeare,” just a few paragraphs here and there, and I still can't understand medieval language. I think George Will is a descendent.
- I was able to cite verbatim the loopholes in the compulsory attendance laws of CT – one of those things that haunt you like a bad jingle.
- I had the lunchroom ladies convinced I was terminally ill but that didn't play well at home.
- School was so interesting, yet somehow that eluded me. I'm still dealing with the guilt.
- And the number 1 significant disadvantage to rarely being there: I never got to date any of the teachers.

Moving forward, today I'm married to a great lady, Jean, and have two boys in college. I'm the CEO of a sizeable nonprofit organization that provides multiple services to people with disabilities www.woods.org I'm quite cynical about politics and enamored of few from either major party, though I'm not reluctant to offer them advice. Recently, I submitted a proposal to Pennsylvania's congressional delegation about consolidating some budgets by combining the better points of “No Child Left Behind” with the salient concerns of the war on childhood obesity. The program would be called “No child with a big behind.” I haven't heard back yet. Finally, I'm working on a couple of books for publication: “Ir-regardless: the Art of Saying ‘Whatever’” and “Intelligent Design for Dummies.”

My apparent disregard for education was relatively short lived. When I left GHS, I went with the other 10% of the class to Michigan State but left in early 1964. I did graduate from UConn in 1967 with a BA in

psychology. Began working professionally and, in 1971, earned a master's degree from Fairfield U in special education. Went full-time to Syracuse U in January 1973 and graduated at the end of 1975 with a doctorate in educational/special education administration. So I've been a "doctor" for 30 years but have the mental age of a 40 year old. My sons are 19 and 21 and, for most of their lives, i was able to keep under wraps my school attendance records. Much of that changed about two years ago coincidental to separate visits to Doylestown by Chuck Hayes and Don Newhouse.

A Bridge over Mianus (That's One Word)



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In response to the recent story on the Railroad Bridge over the Mianus River, Jane picked up a little something from eBay. I mean "How Appropriate is This?" If anyone wants to learn the fine art of "computer research", Jane has mastered in it.



School's Alumni Seek Mementos for Anniversary Fete

By Keach Hagey Staff Writer
The Greenwich Time

Published 31 December 2005

Car Westbrook still remembers the excitement of the summer of 1955, when she was poised to become part of the first graduating class of Eastern Junior High School, the town's first school grouping seventh-, eighth- and ninth-graders together in their own separate building. But as September approached, school officials began to worry the new, modern building on Hendrie Avenue -- built to accommodate rising enrollment while also reflecting shifting educational attitudes of the day -- would not be ready in time.

"They didn't expect the junior high school to open in the fall; they thought it would open in the middle of the year," she said. "We thought we were going to the high school." As it turned out, the building, designed by architect J. Gordon Clark to be "tops without gilding the lily," as he told the school board the previous year, was finished on time, and Westbrook and her classmates got the unusual chance to be part of the oldest class in school two years in a row.



"I graduated (in eighth-grade) from North Mianus, which was, like the other schools on the eastern end of town, an older school," Westbrook said. "So it was really exciting to be in a modern school. I still remember the front part of it. The entrance is glass for two stories. I thought the staircase leading to the second floor was just gorgeous. For fall of '55, it was very futuristic, and it is still a modern building 50 years later."

Alumni from the school, reorganized to include grades six through eight and renamed Eastern Middle School in 1989, are planning to mark its half-century milestone on April 7 with a 50th anniversary program for students during the day and a dinner for adults at Luca's restaurant from 6:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m., according to Joanne Zammit, a longtime teacher at the school who serves on the 50th anniversary committee.

Activities may include dressing up in '50s attire, an assembly with speeches from former teachers and students, a poetry or essay writing contest, bulletin board displays, and musical performances and a slide show looking at the early history of Eastern, she said. The planning committee is looking for former students and teachers willing to share memories and memorabilia for the celebration. Ben Davenport, who served as principal at the school for 35 years, said he expects to see many teachers, alumni and even some former superintendents at the event, because the EMS community has always been tightknit.

"I don't think we ever had more than two or three teachers at any time who wanted to transfer anyplace, which meant that they felt their teaching was challenging, they found the working with parents was positive and they enjoyed working with the other faculty members there," he said. "It added up to a good educational experience for all concerned." Occasionally, it was even more than that. Davenport said one of his favorite memories of the school was the day that the future fiancé of a teacher asked if he could propose to her in front of her class.

"I said, 'Gee, this is a first,' " Davenport said. "I walked upstairs and he got down on one knee and proposed. Then she invited the class to her wedding." It wouldn't be the first match made at Eastern. In fact, the first one may have been in that first graduating class, even if the future couple didn't recognize each other as such just yet. Joan and Richard Fossum, now married for 41 years and living in Atlanta, were "just friends" when they entered ninth grade together in 1955, having met when they were 9 years old in Sunday school.

"He did give me a bracelet that year, but it was just a friendship bracelet," said Joan Fossum, 64, who was Joan Bireley at the time. Her husband confirmed the story. "I always thought she was cute, but we were

just very good friends. It was not until the college years that we really started dating," he said. Suddenly finding themselves in a bigger school, but without the trials facing their peers who were freshmen at Greenwich High School at the time, was exciting, Joan Fossum said. "You had to meet a lot of new people, but it was great fun," she said. She has her fondest memories of her Latin teacher, Rosanna Bright, she said. "She was a fine teacher," Fossum said. "She didn't take any guff from anybody. She was serious. I was so glad I took Latin because -- after that I studied some Spanish and now I teach Bible classes -- learning Latin just helps you track down so many words in so many languages."

Offering advanced courses like Latin was part of the philosophy of junior high schools, which were driven by the need to prepare students for the high school's curriculum, Davenport said. Later, when the school became a middle school, it eliminated the practice of grouping students by academic level and introduced more collaboration between teachers, becoming more centered on the students' learning experience, rather than on just the curriculum, he said. Richard Fossum, 64, who played clarinet with the school orchestra, particularly remembers music teacher Raymond Malone. His wife remembers singing in the music program, though the material was much different than what is sung in schools today.

"In those days, we could sing religious music," she said. "We could sing the Christmas Mass, for example. Times have changed." Westbrook, 64, who also studied Latin -- a privilege set aside just for the ninth-graders, in addition to two modern foreign languages -- said her favorite teacher was probably Warren Harvey, who taught algebra. The only disappointing thing about the new school, in her opinion, was the lack of organized sports for girls, which put the ninth-grade girls who went to Eastern at a disadvantage in comparison to the freshmen at the high school. "We couldn't earn points toward our letters," said Westbrook, who is 6 feet tall and went on to play basketball in high school. "I remember being so disappointed."

All three said the chance to change classes, high-school-style, for the first time made them feel more grown up, while the opportunity to skip the freshman experience had more advantages than drawbacks. All also had strong memories of the school's first principal, George Markscheffel. "He was very tall, and had a commanding presence, which led to an authoritative figure, in a nice sense of the word," said Westbrook, who went on to teach for more than 40 years in the Greenwich Public Schools. "I don't remember being afraid of Mr. Markscheffel. But then, I don't remember discipline being a difficult thing at the school at that time."

If you have memories to share of the early days of Eastern Middle School, contact Susan Lambert at 637-1744.

Bob S pelled B ackward is boB



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I have purposely held back on mentioning my progress in Chemo Therapy during the past six months of this publication. I have also not mentioned the progress of The McMillan Group Ltd which runs parallel to the Cancer treatment in the "snatching" of the most valuable asset... BILLABLE TIME... thus both will be reported as



a way of highlighting the 2½ years of W3W2; as we now enter 2006

Happy New Year!

¡Prospero Año Nuevo!

¡Feliz Año Nuevo!

-Spanish-

When **THE McMILLAN GROUP LTD** was officially founded on 05.05.05 or Cinco de Mayo de Cinco, it was perhaps one of my "scariest" decisions in the 61 years of my life. I am happy to report that, over the last 6 months, we have experienced a marvelous growth. 17 projects have come across the threshold. 3 are under construction, 5 are in Bid Stages, being readied for construction, 1 died with the resale of the building, 4 are in production and 4 are waiting to start. We have work in Mill Valley California, Bequia St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Greenwich Connecticut, Manhattan, Brooklyn, Mendham New Jersey and Aspen Colorado. If the 4 projects take off, there will be work in Chicago Illinois and Seoul Korea. Needless to say, we are having a good year. Come visit our Website:

WWW.THEMcMILLANGROUPLTD.COM

Back on 27 May 2005, because I was too stubborn to respond to the loss of a lot of my blood, I was taken to the emergency room of a local hospital for a 3:00am surgery, evicting a section of my colon which was having a party with a cancerous tumor named "Ralph". After a week of probes, pricks, and prognoses; the decision was T.K.O. for Stage 3 Colon Cancer in the first round. The schedule was arranged; I entered a program of Chemo Therapy, a Pet and a CAT scan, a Second Opinion, and the installation of a Porta-Cath.

Happy New Year!

A llen E in Frohes Neues Jahr!

Glueckliches und E in Guten Rutsch!

-German-

The Pet and Cat (Versus Dog and Pony) Scans turned up negative, no sign of Cancer, the decision to continue with the Chemo Therapy as a maintenance program lasting 6 months, occurring on a bi-weekly basis, consisting of 3 sessions (Day 1-5 hours, Day 2 -2 hours, Day 3 – Disconnect); and lasting a grand total of 52 hours on a pump and receiving chemicals. Sounds Bad, is Bad, but it's supposed to be "Good". If you do the math, I started this approximately 5½ months ago and this past Wednesday 28 December 2005 marks the 12th Session of three days... and Friday 30 December 2005 was the Disconnect and it's all -

Over – Finished – E nded – Yahoo!

Happy New Year!

E en Gelukkig Nieuwjaar Voor Iedereen!

-Dutch-

The side effects have been minor, but then I consider myself lucky in this aspect. Since the overall size of my body, and the sheer volume that 300+ pounds can overpower any chemical coming in. Not to mention that the chemicals actually increase your weight, partially by there own compositions, but they increase you appetite for food that you can't distinguish the taste of. So you eat more in hoping that eventually you will be able to determine what it was that your ate. The most "devastating" of the side effects is the damage to your ego. Wearing the pump makes for very awkward social encounters. If you ever had a Sex Life, you don't improve that with these chemicals on board. Although the doctors and your friends tell you that they can not smell the AROMA that you exude, you know that they do and they are only being socially graceful in saying what they do. The real truth can be gotten from going for a drive with your kid in a car. If there are any of you that have not discovered this yet; "Kids, talk to you only in cars". They say things that they can't say anywhere else. And they ask "Did you cut the cheese?" instead of "Sh*t, dad you stink!"

Happy New Year!

Bonne A nnée! Merveilleus Por T ous!

-French-

Cancer as it turns out is getting its place among the widespread diseases. No sooner after my announcement of having Cancer, I was inundated with stories of others that have the "Big C" or have close friends or relatives with Cancer. If there is any truer barometer then the mass media advertising that focuses on Drugs and Insurance Programs, then Cancer is Numero Uno. With ads aimed at cancer itself, or drugs to take to ease the side effects of Chemo- and Radiation Therapies. The clothing Industry is now advertising shirts and clothing with special "flaps" so that you can access your ports, without stripping for the nurses. But most telling is the turnover in the Chemo Salons. The experience is one that highlights the complexity and severity of the disease. The room is outfitted with Lazy-Boy loungers, with trays and a rolling pole and pump for the chemical dump. Pillows and Blankets abound and there are televisions, laptop computers and everything but the kitchen sink. Foods and candies abound, especially during the Holiday Season. The objective is to make the environment conducive to "getting well". It works for some and is deleterious for others. Cliques form in the "positive vibe" areas and the "downers" get relegated to the end of the room, where the "nodders" spend most of their time coming and going out of slumber. The most important thing is to keep your mind busy. Bring reading, knitting, crossword puzzle books, soduko books, anything to keep you thinking, so that "Chemo-Brain" does not take you over. "Sh*t Happens" in the room, there are some that are not doing well, and others that are not ready for treatment, as there blood counts are bad, their veins are not accessible or they are battling with the staff over personal issues and have been relegated to sit idly waiting for service. These people bring a whole new dimension to the room. This microcosm of American Society includes all sectors of society and education, some with entourages and others with paid assistants. Male and female with the percentages in favor of female, but they are all there for the same reason, to advance the practice of Chemo Therapy for the new Generation, who file in on a daily basis. On Wednesday, we had an overload, so bad that they ran out of seats and ended up with two shifts in the room, with patients receiving care in the lobby waiting area, as well as all the examining rooms. But all this is behind me now and I can say only One Thing:

Happy New Year!

Boldog U jebet!

-Hungarian-

S un Nin Fai Lok!

-Cantonese-

Nayee Saal Kee Badhi Hoo!

-Hindi-

Nayya Saal Mubarak!

-Urdu-

Chronia Pola!

-Greek-

But then it's all Greek to Me!