

Greenwich High School Wreadin Writin n Wreminiscin

Weekly Wreader

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Bowling with the Devol



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I remember the bowling alleys that were in the old Ekman Center (now the Civic Center in Old Greenwich). My dad worked for Electrolux and that building was for the employees and their families. The alleys were full size and, originally at least, had boys to reset the pins. There were also table shuffle board games upstairs.

The Devol Himself



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The Snack Foods of Our Youth

No matter which part of Greenwich you lived while growing up, there were always some nearby places you frequented for a "snack." A snack that was more likely to be an ice cream, cake, or candy, rather than the steady diet of today's youth on pizza, burritos, potato chips, and super-sized meals. I don't recall that we "gorged" on candy or ice cream; rather it was something special and something that we had in moderation. Franchised hamburger chains, pizza parlors, and convenience stores loaded with snack items, simply did not exist when we grew up in Greenwich. My recollection of places to find that "snack" centered on the Post Road, where we lived and Greenwich Avenue which was within walking distance.

When very young (remember most of us started kindergarten in 1949!) it was a Sunday ritual going to Marks Bros. Stationary to get the paper on Sunday with my father. Marks Bros always had a nice selection of candy (everything was 5 cents), my favorites were Bonimo's Turkish Taffy and those large Charms pops - both lasted a long time. There were a couple of places near where I lived on Brookside Drive that I would walk to, both were steps back in time. Those who lived in Greenwich from the late 40's to early 50s were fortunate enough to still be able to see and experience some of the "old time" establishments that still remained. These places still existed because "progress" hadn't yet taken hold; the area was still recovering from WWII and the Depression.

Just "over the hill" from where I lived, on the Post Road across from today's VW/Audi dealership was a bakery and small soda fountain. It was run by a foreign family (not sure where they were from) and they lived in a house that was separate and in the back (many years later when Pray wanted to tear it down to expand parking, someone realized it was one of the oldest houses in Greenwich and fortunately it was saved at the last minute). This place had great bakery items and was a good place to get a cold Coke. It later became the "Oasis", but more on that later. Just past Edgewood Drive and across the Post Road, almost next to today's McDonald's was a small store in an old house that sold grocery items, baked goods, and best of all had a great selection of penny candy that actually cost a penny! It too was a throw back to a different era.

Greenwich Avenue had the most places to find "youth" foods. I recall the following, starting at the top of the Avenue and working down. One of the very first stores at the top on the left was Nielsen's Ice Cream (the building torn down when the Pickwick Arms was torn down). Unlike the Nielsen's, we hung out at near the high school, this was strictly a place to get ice cream and buy candies such as chocolates. It was a real ice cream parlor which had great and gooey sundaes, cones, banana splits, and the always hard to finish "belly buster". A little ways down on the right was Mark's Brothers for the candy and for comics. Still further down was Vaudry's Drug which had a lunch counter and a few stores away was Greenwich Drug which had a luncheon/soda fountain. It was a place of employment later on for me, Clark Sorensen, George Lamonica, Rey Redington, and many others. Across the street during my younger years was Whelan's Drug Store (I think it later became the Sport Shop). It too had a lunch counter, but the best part was the Root Beer Floats, the Root Beer coming out of a big Hire's Root Beer barrel - one of my all-time favorites. Back across the street near Greenwich Drug in later high school years was a place called Garden Poultry, a 60s version of Boston Chicken, but much better! After that there were no "snack" places until you got just past Mead's Stationary. It was a local pre-Nielsen's hangout for earlier GHS classes called the Green Witch. It wasn't fancy but served the usual hamburgers, sodas, ice cream etc. Further down on the left hand side at the corner across from Town Hall was Finch's Drug which also had a lunch/soda counter. About half way down on the same side and right near or in front of the "Big Clock" was perhaps the oldest "step-back-in-time" I don't recall the name but it was a real old-time ice cream soda fountain, complete with the marble counter, fountain equipment, etc. It must have gone out of business by around 1950 or 1951 as I only remember going there once or twice. On the other side of the Avenue across the corner from the Greenwich Theater was the Star Restaurant. It was owned and run by 61' classmate Ed Nicosia's family. Not fancy, but a local favorite that had good food.

Along Putnam Ave there were not many places, the exception being another Finch's Drug Store, and, of course, The White Diner, the only place I recall that was open 24 hours in Greenwich.

Dining out at restaurants with the family was infrequent, but when we did, the choice was usually The Clam Box, Manero's and (I think it was called) The Homestead in Byram for Pizza - one of the very few places in the early years that you could buy a pizza in Greenwich.

Later on other places to eat became popular. Nielsen's, was of course a favorite of many GHS students before and after high school, but because I and other friends lived near it we made it a regular hang out for all times. I think it was built around 1957 and lasted until about the mid 70s until it was torn down to make a parking lot (pave paradise and put up a parking lot, as the song goes). Once we discovered "wheels" our range expanded (no, Port Chester is a later story). There was the Cos Cobber in Cos Cob, our first taste of fast food in Greenwich, and of course, Dirty Lou's in Cos Cob (pave paradise and put up a car dealership). Lou's always got a knock as being a greasy-spoon, but that award really had to go to the Oasis. It was run by a couple of Greek Brothers. It lasted for many years as did the grease on the walls, windows, and everywhere! At Dirty Lou's, Lou was no dapper-Dan and the waitress (I forget her name) always seemed annoyed at taking your order, but this mattered little as the burgers and wedges were great. In fact, Lou purchased all the hamburger meat at Manero's, not from some no-name supplier. I know many of us miss "Dirty Lou's"

A lot has changed over the years. All of the places are no longer around having been replaced by the fancy frou-frou restaurants, or one of the chains such as McDonald's, Pizza Hut, etc. We maybe didn't have the variety kids have today, but the food and atmosphere were much better!

Phoenix, the City not the Bird



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Someone sent me this...I thought it was a great read for our class...

To the kids who survived 50's 60's and 70's (this is so true)

First, we survived being born to mothers who smoked and/or drank while they carried us. They took aspirin, ate blue cheese dressing and didn't get tested for diabetes. Then after that trauma, our baby cribs were covered with bright colored lead-based paints. We had no childproof lids on medicine bottles, doors or cabinets and when we rode our bikes, we had no helmets, not to mention, the risks we

took hitchhiking.

As children, we would ride in cars with no seat belts or air bags. Riding in the back of a pick up on a warm day was always a special treat. We drank water from the garden hose and NOT from a bottle. We shared one soft drink with four friends, from one bottle and NO ONE actually died from this. We ate cupcakes, bread and butter and drank soda pop with sugar in it, but we weren't overweight because WE WERE ALWAYS OUTSIDE PLAYING!

We would leave home in the morning and play all day, as long as we were back when the streetlights came on. No one was able to reach us all day. And we were O.K. We would spend hours building our go-carts out of scraps and then ride down the hill, only to find out we forgot the brakes. After running into the bushes a few times, we learned to solve the problem.

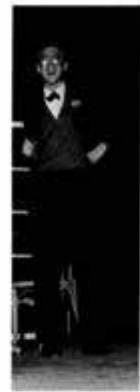
We did not have Playstations, Nintendo's, X-boxes, no video games at all, no 99 channels on cable, no video tape movies, no surround sound, no cell phones, no personal computers, no internet or internet chat rooms.....WE HAD FRIENDS and we went outside and found them!

We fell out of trees, got cut, broke bones and teeth and there were no lawsuits from these accidents. We made up games with sticks and tennis balls and ate worms and although we were told it would happen, we did not put out very many eyes, nor did the worms live in us forever. We rode bikes or walked to a friend's house and knocked on the door or rang the bell, or just walked in and talked to them!

Little league had tryouts and not everyone made the team. Those who didn't had to learn to deal with disappointment. Imagine that! The idea of a parent bailing us out if we broke the law was unheard of. They actually sided with the law! This generation has produced some of the best risk-takers, problem solvers and inventors ever!

The past 50 years have been an explosion of innovation and new ideas. We had freedom, failure, success and responsibility, and we learned HOW TO DEAL WITH IT ALL! Kind of makes you want to run through the house with scissors, doesn't it?!

Pages From Our Past



SENIOR VANDEVILLE



*Bob -
Good luck
always it's been
nice knowing you
- Sue Spillman*



Our Vandeville was initiated last May with the election of our committee chairman.





The direction of our acts was put under the capable management of Sherry Holland. Our other chairmen were: Pete Merrill, business; Rob McEnany, music; Sue Dennis, choreography; Maureen Brouil, scenery; and Dana Farris, props, costumes, and make-up.



The objectives of the Vaudeville are to draw our class together and to give as many people as possible a chance to contribute their talents. If we as chairmen have accomplished these purposes, then our show will have been a success.

*Big Mac,
No matter what way
body says, you're the real
unforgettable in '62
Mike Trumble*



MIKE TRUMBIE
General Chairman
Senior Vaudeville, Class of '62

