Throwback Thursday Tidbits – the 60’s

- “Twirp week” was observed during the Christmas season. All “favors were reversed” during this week – the girls asked boys for dates, opened car doors for them, picked up and carried their books for them and other courtesies.

- Intramurals in the 1960’s consisted of volleyball, softball/baseball, ping pong, basketball and football.

- Ladies Auxiliary was an important financial aid to the school in the 1960’s and the previous decades. They held monthly meetings and worked to raise money for the school by serving at banquets. In 1960, their contributions included donating a phonograph player, a graphing board, a percolator for the faculty room, drapes for the Bible and Chemistry rooms and additional money for the library. By 1961, their total contributions to the school had reached the $20,000.00 mark.

- The 1961-62 school year welcomed the addition of Junior Choir for Freshman and sophomores to “train for more advanced singing”.

- In 1962, Mr. Paul De Jong became principal and the gym expansion project was completed. This increased the seating capacity in the gym to 830 and added new shower rooms, a coach’s office, storerooms and a ticket office.

- The school newspaper had many names over the years. The Echo, Christian School News and Pella Chatter were among the early names. By the fall of 1962, it had become known as the Eagle’s Cry.

- Shortly after school had been dismissed on January 15, 1964, fire broke out in the attic above the kitchen area. The fire spread rapidly – smoke filled the entire building and the basketball team and a few teachers were forced to flee. Soon the structure was engulfed in flames. The original frame structure was completely destroyed, but the 1958 addition remained standing with smoke and water damage.

- Mr. Ray Geerdes was appointed principal in 1961.

- The 1961-62 concert band met three times a week with the remaining two days spent on ensemble work, sectionals, and practicing for one of the new additions – the pep band.
- Due to the fire in 1964, the Pella Christian Grade School shifted some of its classes to the Calvary Christian Reformed Church and the high school moved into the north wing of the grade school. By January 27, teachers and students were trying to adjust to the crowded conditions that would be theirs for a semester. With the classrooms and facilities opened by local churches and Central College, everyone survived the unforgettable "Spring of Sixty-Four."

- By March 9, 1964, architects had completed the preliminary sketches for a new building. The Society met and unanimously approved the plans to construct a new building at a cost of $360,000. The new building was designed by Grant Voorhees of Architects Associated in Des Moines and the new facility included six classrooms, a study hall, chemistry, physics and biology laboratories, a homemaking room and a teachers’ lounge.

- By September of 1964, enough rooms had been completed to allow school to begin in the new building. The gym was completed the following February and the 25th Anniversary and Dedication celebration was held on March 25, 1965.

- March, 1966 – “HMS Pinafore” was presented. Lowell Ver Heul was Sir Joseph Porter; Carl Nunnikhoven was Ralph Rackstraf; and Mary Vermeer was Josephine.

- The first Senior Class Trip to Chicago to be pictured was in the 1966 yearbook.

- 1968-69 school year saw the start of cross country and track at Pella Christian:
  - 20 boys reported for the first Cross Country team (yes, only boys – no girls yet).
  - 48 boys participated in boys track that first year. Their Sprint Medley team brought home the first ever track trophy during one of their competitions.
  - 36 girls participated in 6 meets of girls track and their hard work paid off when some qualified for and participated in the State Meet at the "new Drake Tartan Track.”
- What does a political dream team & the ‘Lads from Liverpool’ have in common with lawlessness & ‘Love’; why the 1960’s of course. The dream team was outgoing President Dwight David Eisenhower or Ike, the 5 Star General who led the Allies to victory in WW II and the incoming President-Elect John Fitzgerald Kennedy or JFK, the hero of PT 109. The old guard was passing on the leadership to a new & vibrant generation. In JFK’s inaugural speech he electrified the country by asking “Ask not what your country can do for you, rather ask what you can do for your country!” JFK was only in his early 40’s and America was on fire with a can do attitude. Almost 3 years later Kennedy was buried in Arlington Cemetery, the victim of an assassin’s bullet; triumph turned to tragedy.

- Politics in America started to get into trouble with the ‘Bay of Pigs’ invasion, trying to help anti-communist forces overthrow the communist dictator Fidel Castro in Cuba. Then Kennedy kept on increasing military ‘advisors’ in a small country in South-East Asia called Viet Nam.

- Lyndon Johnson succeeded JFK as President and by 1965, there were hundreds of thousands of troops in South Viet Nam, fighting the communist forces from North Viet Nam & the local Viet Cong militia. By 1968, LBJ was in deep political trouble. Riots broke out in the streets. University & college students protested the war in violent displays of anger shouting “Hey, Hey, LBJ – how many kids have you killed today”? Many of our soldiers had just graduated high school & college. JFK (63), Robert F Kennedy (68) & MLK (68) were all assassinated.

- The 60’s started out with Rock ‘n Roll left overs from the 50’s and then came the Lads from Liverpool. The Beatles hit the scene and music was never the same; they wanted to “Hold Your Hand”, saw “Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds” and took a voyage in “the Yellow Submarine” after going “Back to the U.S.S.R”. This was the ‘British Rock’ invasion. Folk Music, Hard Rock, Acid Rock all followed with notables such as Woody
Guthrie; Blood, Sweat & Tears; Neil Diamond; Peter, Paul & Mary; The Fifth Dimension; the Rolling Stones & Credence Clearwater Revival “Looking out Their Back Door”. Drug overdoses claimed the lives of acid rockers Janis Joplin & Jimmy Hendrix.

- 1965 saw the Earth as a member of the “Federation of Planets” with a space ship captain who was born in Iowa and his first officer from the planet Vulcan that had pointy ears (Star Trek). There was “The Man from U.N.C.L.E.”; a “Mission Impossible”; a next door neighbor that was “Dennis the Menace” and the family across the street had “My 3 Sons”. Any lawbreakers were quickly captured in a “Dragnet” by “Adam 12” & the “Mod Squad”. These were some of your choices on TV that by the end of the 60’s broadcasted entirely in color.

- Most movies were made in color from the middle to the end of the 1960’s. Such notable films were, “The Sound of Music”, “Mary Poppins”, “To Kill a Mocking Bird”, “The Bridge over the River Kwai” (starring Obi-Wan Kenobi actor Sir Alec Guiness) and oodles of John Wayne films including “The Longest Day” & his only Oscar winning role in “True Grit”.

- JFK’s lasting legacy was in a speech to all Americans, calling on the country & the government to put a man on the moon before the decade was out. First came Mercury, with John Glenn; then Gemini – 2 men in a space capsule & finally Apollo, which put the first man on the Moon. In preparation for the Lunar landing, Apollo 8 was the first manned space flight to leave earth’s orbit & fly to the moon. Thankfully, there were no Political police to voice objection over what Astronauts Bill Anders, Jim Lovell & Frank Borman did next on Christmas Eve 1968. They bore witness to God’s creation by reading Genesis 1 from Scripture. Too bad that would be banned today.

- In July, 1969, Neil Armstrong said from the moon in a televised live landing, “That’s one small step for a man – one giant leap for mankind”. Buzz Aldren was with Armstrong on the surface of the moon in the Lunar Lander, while fellow astronaut Michael Collins was orbiting in the mother ship “Columbia”. The world had stopped, glued to their TV sets watching this once in a lifetime event ‘live’! This young student was only 6 stories high above Wacker Drive when the 3 Heroes of the Moon drove past in a ticker-tape parade below him in Chicago.

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<th>Cost comparisons:</th>
<th>1960 price</th>
<th>2014 price</th>
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<tr>
<td>McD’s burger, fry &amp; shake</td>
<td>.15 + .10 + .20= .35¢</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annual Wage</td>
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