
ON THE STARTING LINE
FROM CHICAGO, SKOKIE, AND DES PLAINES, ILLINOIS ...

THE VANGUARD!

THE VOICE OF **THE VANGUARD**

www.DesPlainesVanguard.com

January, 2005

Happy New Year to You and Yours!

Reminder of upcoming events---

**Vanguard Drummer Leads Lake Park
High School Lancer Band**

Congratulations to Mike Chiodo ('73-'76), who was selected this year to head up Roselle's Lake Park High School Marching Band. According to an article published in *Press Publications/Northwest DuPage* entitled "Lake Park band receives high notes at competition," the 160-member band traveled to the Bands of America Grand Nationals Contest in Indianapolis November 4th - 6th. Lake Park took fourteenth place in the country, and was 1.5 points away from advancing to the finals. The band has a reputation of being among the best high school marching bands in Illinois.

The Lake Park band is truly a Chiodo family affair in that Mike, his wife, Connie, and their kids live in Roselle. In fact, son, Jim, plays snare, and daughter, Nikki, is in the color guard of the Lancer Band. Be sure to take a look at what Mike has accomplished since his Vanguard days by logging onto the Lake Park band website: www.LakeParkBand.com.

Congratulations, Mike, on your great success in your music career!

The Vanguard music library is nearing completion with the CD recently received from Julie May-Melia. Julie's dad, Charles "Bud" May, Jr., made a recording of '75 Prelims at DCI in Philadelphia. Julie painstakingly cleaned it up, burned it on a CD, and sent it to me. Thanks, Julie! Upon receipt of a '73 recording (and we know someone has a copy because some of us have heard it!), we will burn both years on a CD and make copies available to anyone who wants one. **If you have a copy of '73, please contact me by replying to this email, and we can get the ball rolling!**

Sunday 1-16-05: Adam Szlagowski (of Royal Airs and Norwood Park Imperials fame) **is The Man Who Came To Dinner.** Join **Mike Deane, Cathy O'Connell Letourneau**, and others when they see the play, *The Man Who Came to Dinner*, which is billed as a 1930s screwball comedy. Curtain is at 2:00 PM at the Gunder Mansion of the North Lakeside Cultural Center, 6219 North Sheridan Road, Chicago. Tickets are \$12 each and can be reserved by calling 773-764-0353. Parking is available for \$5 in the Sacred Heart lot across the street from the theatre. Anyone planning on attending is encouraged to contact **Mike Deane** at deaneonpratt@aol.com. Mike is setting up a dinner at a local restaurant after the play, and will be having us all over to his place after dinner. (Party at Mike's!)

Sunday, 1-30-05: After a two month hiatus, Bill O'Connell's Chicago Skyliners Big Band returns to Fitzgerald's at 6:00PM. If you are planning on coming out to see Bill and his band, please contact me (Cathy) by replying to this email, so we can all sit together. We already have a list started, so let's add your name to it! Fitzgerald's info can be found at www.FitzgeraldsNightClub.com. Also scope Bill's website at www.ChicagoSkylinersBigBand.com.

Saturday 2-19-05: St. Patrick's Day comes early this year at Molly Malone's Irish Pub, 7652 W. Madison St., Forest Park, IL (708-366-8073), when **Jim and Mary Grosso** and their band, *Thursdays Child*, perform at 9:00PM. Information about the club can be found at www.TheMollyMalones.com. You can also learn more about the band at www.ThursdaysChildOnline.com. Anyone interested in going should contact **Jim** in advance at grossojim@msn.com so he can set us up (in VIP seating, of course!).

Blast from the Past: How to Care For and Respect the Bus Drivers By Bill O'Connell

In this get-it-done-yesterday, information-overload world, it seems that I never get caught up on my reading. I did, however, find time to peruse the Reunion Memory Book. When my sister Cathy first brought the memory book idea to the table, I thought, wow, what a major undertaking. She essentially typed the whole book and with **Chip** and company's amazing publishing efforts, turned it into quite a professional document. What amazed me most was that though we were musicians, flag bearers, rifle tossers and sabre swingers, most memories had nothing to do with that. Instead they dealt with camaraderie, bus trips, drinking, etc. If your memory book is in that pile of to-be-read-later, make later today.

Glenn Purtell, our sole link to the Logan Square days, had a memorable moment about sneaking beer into the gym with **Don Pesceone**. I have been emailing old photos that we received from the heirs of **Edwin Reimer**, perhaps the most influential future Vanguard and cousin of Glenn Purtell. In one photo, I asked Glenn who an adult was who was standing in front of one of our corps buses. Glenn replied that it was a bus driver, and given the importance of getting to the gig safely and on time, they always treated the bus drivers with the ultimate respect. Well I didn't have the gall to tell Glenn that things in the '60s and '70s were much different from those of the '40s and '50s when it came to bus driver respect.

This may be one of those "had to be there" moments but here goes:

Remember **No-Neck**? It seemed that on every bus trip in the late '60s and early '70s, we saw a bus driver named No-Neck and two new guys. No-Neck could take our grief and give it right back. The drivers usually were so abused that they chose not to drive for us again. Of course the girls' bus was fairly tame. But there was the boys' bus and then there was, in **Jim Unrath's** words, "The Dirty Words Bus."

It got to a point where, given the shortage of drivers willing to work for us, Central West Bus Company started sending some real freaks. Generally the trip would begin something like this. Someone would shout, "What's the bus driver's name?" And the overwhelming response was, "J-g-ff!" On one particular trip, not only did the driver refuse to give his name, he also would not slip his nameplate into the bracket below the no smoking sign painted above. **Mark Kadlec** took "No Smoking" and twisted it into "**Nosmo King**." Well, for miles, the driver would be known as "Nosmo King," getting verbal abuse from all directions. **John McClellan**, the voice of reason, recognizing that Nosmo King had this huge nose, reminded us how in grade school they used to place a light next to your head and cast your shadow on the wall. The teacher would trace your silhouette onto a piece of paper for you to cut out. John bet that given the size of Nosmo King's nose, his teacher probably had to put two pieces together. Once the laughter subsided, for the next hundred miles or so, he would be known as "**Silhouette**." By now, much of the membership was packed into the front of the bus giving this guy the business. Silhouette also had this recessed jaw with some huge buck teeth. Recognizing this, **Barry Lewis** stated that Silhouette could probably eat an apple through a picket fence. He would now be known as "**Picket Fence**."

While this was going on, the girls bus driver could have been a stroke victim because his right arm and leg didn't seem to work that well. The girls dubbed him "**Quasimodo**." He had difficulty negotiating sharp turns so when we finally got to our destination, Nosmo King a.k.a. Silhouette, a.k.a. Picket Fence would make the turn in the boys' bus, drive a half block, pull the bus over, walk back the half block to make the turn in the girls' bus and pull up behind us. I guess the way we treated these guys, maybe we deserved what we got but we sure had fun making the miles go by.

Just one of many memorable moments.

Share yours with Cathy in writing for a future newsletter feature.

[*Editor's note:* Thanks, Bill. I do indeed remember these characters and, in spite of their appearance and how we treated them, we did cherish their contribution to our success. I hope life has been good to Nosmo, No-Neck, Quasimodo, and the other Central West drivers! *Cathy O'*]

As always, please continue to check the Vanguard website and encourage your Vanguard friends to sign the guestbook. I have updated the newsletter address book with email addresses for folks not posted to the website guestbook, but who provided their email addresses to the reunion memory book. If you are one of those people and did not receive the November and December newsletters, please reply to this email and let me know so I can send them to you if you'd like. Have a great month and a prosperous and healthy New Year!
Cathy O'Connell Letourneau ('69-'76)