

Jon Carlson (June 2014)

I was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota in 1946 at the beginning of the baby boom. I moved to Loveland midway through the first grade and finished the year at the decrepit old Garfield School which was located where Truscott Elementary School is now. I finished grade school at the then new Garfield Elementary School. If I remember correctly, my second through sixth grade teachers were Mss. Brooks, Gray, Packard, Robison and Josephson. I attended Truscott Junior High. High points included Mr. Garcia's band class and Mr. Peterson's Geography and History classes.

I have many fond memories of our high school years. Mr. Speece's Geometry and Mr. Bruha's Chemistry classes definitely influenced my career choices. Playing in the percussion section of the marching and concert bands along with Ron Smith, Donn Wilson and Gwen Lapp from the class of '64 was great fun. Mr. Yarberry had his hands full, but always managed to whip his bands into shape for concerts and contests. I came out of the band program with a lifelong appreciation of all types of music.

I also remember a very politically incorrect parody of the popular TV show "That Was the Week That Was" that we presented our senior year for Rag Day. Part of it was about the school integration problems in the South and I was made up in "blackface" and was being bullied by armed authorities. I doubt that it would be allowed these days.

I had a part time job at the W&T Pharmacy downtown and many evenings after we closed, I remember cruising around town for a couple of hours with some or all of Marne Jurgemeyer, Bill Ruesch, Bob Thompson, Norm Bechtold, Dave Cooper, Ron Anderson, etc. At least one of us always had a car and 25 cents/gallon gasoline made for cheap entertainment. Our wanderings always passed through the Loveland drive-ins and Santeramo's Pizza so we could see who else were out and about. I have always thought that George Lucas could have easily filmed the movie "American Graffiti" in Loveland.

After high school I went to CSU. I spent the first couple of years commuting from Loveland to Fort Collins. Many thanks to Dennis Steiner and Dwight Glahn who drove me back and forth for 6 months when I lost my driver's license for too many speeding tickets. The last couple of years at CSU I shared a house in Fort Collins with Bill Ruesch and Dave Peterson (Class of '63). I graduated in 1968 with a Bachelor's degree in Chemistry, and went on to graduate school at the University of California in Berkeley. Those were turbulent times but also challenging, interesting and enjoyable. I graduated from Berkeley in 1974 with a Ph.D. in Chemistry and found a postdoctoral position in molecular biology back in Colorado at the CU Health Sciences Center in Denver. It was during those years that I met my wife Linda and we started our family (son Peter and daughter Hannah).

In 1981 I got a job with a small biotechnology company in Fort Collins, and after a few years I joined the CSU faculty in the Department of Microbiology. I did research on several interesting animal viruses and taught Microbial Genetics for the next 25 years. I am now retired although I still enjoy dabbling a bit in science with colleagues at CSU.

Linda and I are enjoying retirement and getting to know our grandchildren (two grandsons so far). I have always felt that I was very lucky to grow up in Loveland in the '50's and '60's, and that the education I received in Loveland schools was great preparation for life in general. I believe that as in Garrison Keillor's town of Lake Wobegone, all of the Class of '64 is well above average.