



Southeast PTA presents

Southeast PTA

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Southeast School PTA Spirit News



Evergreen Park Residents Tell Their Stories

To continue with our year-long celebration of Southeast School's 50th birthday, we interviewed 3 people who lived in Evergreen Park in 1958-59, during the school year that Southeast School opened. The original goal of the interviews was to find out what life was like during this time in Evergreen Park.

As I'm sure you can imagine, sometimes it's hard to pinpoint what happened in your life to an exact year. All of our interviewees shared interesting stories about their lives in EP. So, I'm sure you'll understand if we're a little off on the exact year of these occurrences. They did their best to recall, and I did my

best to read my handwriting after the interviews!

The first interview was with **Mr. John Stanis** who is 98 years young, Mr. Stanis and his wife moved to their house, located behind EP High School, in 1955. When they moved in, the surrounding area was mostly farmland. There were only 6 houses on his block. Facing north from 99th & Kedzie, where Evergreen Park High School is, he could see clear over to Little Company of Mary Hospital on 95th Street, which was built in 1930.

Question: If you stand at the high school today and face 95th Street (north) – can you still see the hospital? How far can you see?

He remembers going to see movies at the Evergreen Plaza (which opened in 1952), for around 50 cents per movie.

Question: How much do you pay for a movie now?

In 1955 he paid \$24,000 for

his 3-bedroom, 2-bathroom house. Today a 3-bedroom house in EP would sell for well over \$200,000.

He thinks the village of Evergreen Park always had good government and good police and fire departments. He also remembers the annual 4th of July parades down 95th Street.

In the 50s he had a small 21" black & white TV; he watched Ed Sullivan, Lawrence Welk and Milton Berle. (Be sure to ask your grandparents who these famous entertainers were!)

Ms. Kathie Peterson lived east of Kedzie near Little Company of Mary Hospital. She attended EP High School from 1956-1960.

"Evergreen Park was the best place in the world to grow up", said Mrs. Peterson.

In 1958-1959 girls wore poodle skirts. Crinolines (stiff fabric slips) were worn under the skirts to make them stand out, cardigan sweaters buttoned up the back, not the front, and saddle





95th Street In The 50's

95th St., a state highway, was a narrow and unimproved thoroughfare in the 1950's when this picture was taken in the 1950's. The view is from a vantage point near 95th and Lawn-dale. The school caution sign is for Most Holy Redeemer School, 95th and Millard.

shoes worn with HUGE wool socks, sometimes 2 pairs at a time!

Along 95th street, she recalls several businesses: Jerzol Pharmacy (95th & Francisco), Bruno's Pizza Place (95th & Sacramento), Leo's Milk Store (95th & Richmond) and Mitzi's Floral Shop (95th & California).

When she was younger, her mom would send her for groceries. She would walk up to Leo's Milk Store. At the counter, she would hand the clerk her grocery list. The clerk would get the items on the list for her. To pay, she put all the money her Mom gave her on the counter and the clerk would count out what was owed and give her back the change.

Question: How does this differ from grocery shopping today?

She remembers getting their first TV (black & white) around 1955. (No – it wasn't a flat screen!)

After school, instead of calling on a cell

phone or texting, Mrs. Peterson would walk to her friend's house, stand outside and yell "YO-O Suzie" or "YO-O Tommy."

Mr. Joseph Kowalczyk is the proud grandfather of Southeast 5th grader Sarah Dickey. Mr. Kowalczyk is 80 years old. In 1958-59 he lived near 101st Street & Albany.

Mr. Kowalczyk remembers when they moved into their house in 1955, it was all farmland west of Kedzie (where Harris Bank is on Kedzie.) He thinks Southeast School was built on a soybean farm.

He also remembers when 95th Street wasn't paved at all; it was a 2-lane dirt road. The businesses he mentioned include: Stewart Five & Dime (95th & Sawyer), and Rueter's Dairy (99th & Kedzie).

He recalls an EP with no sidewalks or driveways; with door-to-door salesmen, and door-to-door knife sharpening services. Rueter's Dairy delivered milk (in glass bottles) to your front door.

He drove a black & white 2-door Chevy. They got a black & white TV in the 50s and a color TV in the late 60s. Air conditioning came in the 70s.

Mr. Kowalczyk remembers having a "party line" phone service for a short time. A party line was a phone line that was shared with multiple users. Imagine this: if your neighbor who was on your party line was using the phone, you had to wait until s/he was done before you could make a call. (Question: How would you like to have to share your phone line with your neighbor?)

We hope you enjoyed reading these memories as much as we enjoyed hearing them. The PTA would like to thank each of them for taking the time to share their stories with us. A special thanks to Village Clerk Cathy Aparo for her help with the article.

Keep your eyes open for the next issues, where we'll take a look at the 60s, 70s, 80s and 90s!

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