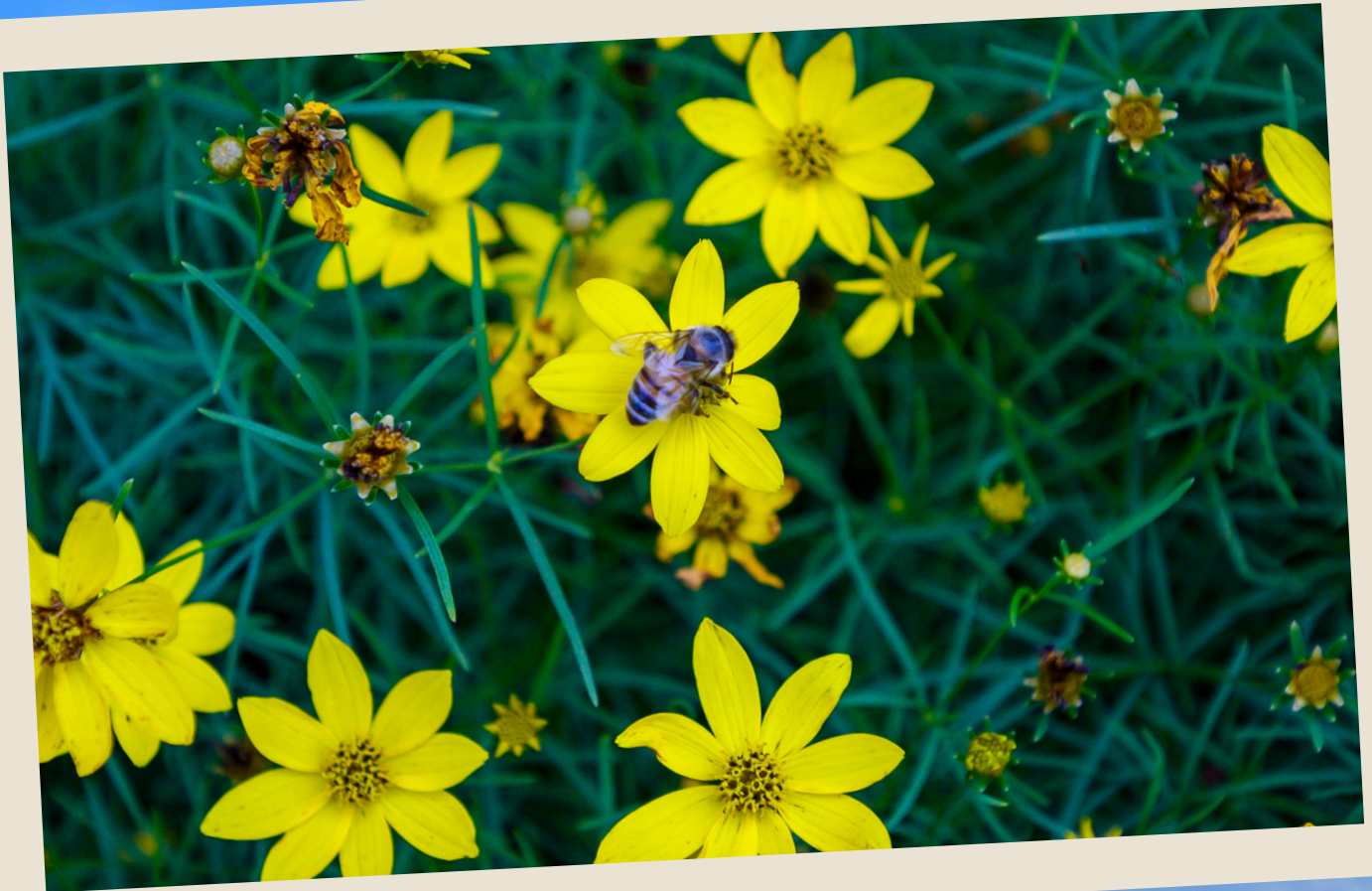


DREAM JOB:

Memories of Waubensee Community
College's Early Years (1968-1971)



BY DIANA VICKERY

Class of 1970

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“Stories have to be told or they die, and when they die, we can’t remember who we are or why we’re here.” Sue Monk Kidd in *The Secret Life of Bees*.

Introduction

When I started writing this story, I envisioned a mini-memoir of the 2+ years I spent as an employee and student at Waubonsee Community College (WCC), 1968-1971. But it soon became apparent that my memories alone could not do justice to the story. The more research I did, the more I spoke to people from those good old days, the more I realized that pieces of WCC’s story exist in the memories of the pioneers (students and staff), people who laid the foundation for what WCC is today. There are still holes in this story, but I have decided to heed the journalistic adage: “Go with what you’ve got.”

Although I am a retired journalist, I have chosen to not follow some of the conventions of my trade. I make no claim of objectivity. I will not follow the *Associated Press Stylebook* in reference to people. I will call people what I have always called them. Mr. Paul G. Bosse will forever be “Mr. B.” Dr. Lawrence N Dukes will be “Larry.” Mrs. Jean B Divine will be “Mrs. Divine.”

I have tried to make this story as accurate as possible ... and I apologize in advance for any mistakes that have made their way into the narrative. Consider this my love letter to Waubonsee – I hope you enjoy reading it.

Diana Vickery
April 2022

Beginnings

By the time my adventure at Waubonsee began, WCC was well on its way to become the fine college it is today. District 516 was organized in 1966 after many years of work by school superintendents and other education-minded individuals. The board of trustees hired WCC’s first president, Dr. James Horace Nelson, who landed in Aurora during a once-in-a-century blizzard in late January 1967.

By the fall of 1967, everything was in place for classes to begin in several rented locations, including New England Congregational Church on Aurora’s west side, both East and West Aurora High Schools, and area businesses.

Founding faculty member Patricia Jane Shifferd, who taught social science, remembers that the teaching experience was rather disjointed, with no opportunities for camaraderie among faculty members; she doesn’t recall a single faculty meeting during the year she worked at WCC.

A former student with vivid memories of that first year of WCC's operation is Janet Sprague-Williams who transferred from Illinois State University for her sophomore year in the fall of 1967. Jan has the distinction of being the first person to have a transcript (with a 4.0 grade point average) sent to Northern Illinois University, according to Paul G Bosse, who was registrar that first academic year.¹

After her experience at ISU, with large lecture classes taught mostly by teaching assistants, Jan found WCC's smaller classes more challenging. Another challenge – faced by all WCC students of that era, was getting from class to class. There was no strolling from class to class on an idyllic wooded campus. It was hopping into a car and trying to find a parking place once you got to your destination. Jan had classes at New England Congregational Church, the Aurora YMCA, and East and West Aurora High Schools (evening classes). Jan also acted in a play, *Our Town*, at Benjamin Franklin Junior High School. It was directed by Sister Judine Brennan, SSSF (1911-2001) and members of Jan's Oral Interpretation of Literature class made up the cast.

During 1967, administrators were working hard to pass a building-bond referendum to ensure future students didn't have to continue their classes in rented facilities all over the district. After one failed referendum in May 1967, in December of 1967, voters approved a tax referendum to fund a new campus, site and building. It was a close vote, won by just 294 votes out of a total 12,292 votes.²

Lawrence L. Lebiecki, director of institutional services starting in July 1967, remembers a team of administrators inspecting various sites for a possible campus. He recalls an extensive walk-through of the Huntoon stable site and driving by several other locations in Aurora. (Larry had earlier helped find space for administrative offices in a re-purposed Jewel-Tea grocery store.)

By February 1968, the district had purchased the former Huntoon riding stable in Sugar Grove and had begun planning a campus, where classes would begin in September 1969.

But for Fall 1968, classes would again be held in rented space, with classes in a former high school building in Yorkville, and evening classes in several other locations.

I didn't appreciate the speed at which all this was accomplished until a few years later when I began working at McHenry County College (MCC), where a fractious board of trustees dawdled for years over the location of its campus. MCC was formed in 1967

¹ I'm not revealing any secrets here. Jan's GPA is part of WCC's historical record. When Dave Robinson (1946-2007) wrote *Waubensee Community College: A History, Volume I, 1966 to 1974*, he included that highlight on page 28.

² Having two referendums within one calendar year is something that wouldn't happen today. In 1967, taxing bodies could call for a referendum at any time they chose. After Illinois went to a "consolidated election" system in the 1970s, referendums were held only during regularly scheduled elections.

but did not fully move to a permanent campus until 1975. The interim campus was a converted oil research laboratory, which had bad air and even worse accommodations for classes – much worse than a rickety old high-school building. I recall MCC’s theater instructor, Jim Kenna, complaining that he had to roll up wrestling mats before he could begin his class – held in a room shared with the wrestling team.

The president at the time I was at MCC was Dr. Jim Davis, and I recall sitting in on an interview he had with a local newspaper reporter. When asked about issues with the various factions on the board of trustees, he said, “It was as if they had chosen up sides and refused to play with each other.” I predicted that would be the lede of the story, and it was.

That delay had repercussions. Over the years, the state legislature got more and more tight-fisted with construction funds and MCC was forever behind the curve when it came to building a campus. Not so Waubensee, where things moved along at a brisk pace thanks to the leadership and vision of the original board and administrators.

About WCC’s founding administrators: they were a young group. When I calculate their average age, it comes to about 34 years, with a range from 25 (Kenneth W Allen, director of the learning resource center) to 47 (Stanley R Groh, dean of student services).³ Ken recalls the can-do attitude of the pioneering administrative staff and faculty and that, whenever someone needed help, everybody pitched in.

Waubensee, Here I Come!

I was a job-hopping college dropout, single and living with my parents in Spring 1968; I was 22 years old. Every day, I looked at the classified ads in the *Aurora Beacon-News* for a new job. At the time, my job was everybody else’s dream: a union job with great pay and full benefits with a clearly defined career path. It wasn’t, however, MY dream job.

One job ad caught my eye: for a key-punch operator position at Waubensee Community College. Most people would look at the job and say ... “booooooring.” But I wasn’t looking at the work itself, I was looking at the location: a brand spanking new institution of higher education. In the back of my mind, I always knew I needed to finish the degree I’d started in 1964 and quit after two years. Being in an educational environment, I thought, would start me down that path. Free tuition, one of the benefits, would be a plus.

I didn’t know anything about WCC except what I’d read in the *Beacon-News*. But I did have one contact on the inside: Mrs. Jean B. Divine (1920-2018), WCC’s first employee and, at the time, secretary to President Nelson. Mrs. Divine had for many

³ Today, the age of the average college administrator is more than 40 years.

years lived down the street from our house on Aurora's south east side. Her daughter Pam and two of my younger sisters were – and still are – close friends.

Mrs. Divine was something special in the neighborhood: a mom raising three children alone -- and she had a prestigious job. An honor graduate of East Aurora High School, she later served many years as secretary to the principal at East before being recruited by the WCC Board in 1966. I had been most impressed when I'd seen her at East Aurora basketball games. She'd sit in the bleachers with her trusty typewriter, typing the play-by-play for the coaches. No videos in those days.

My sister Carol remembers Mrs. Divine gathering all the neighborhood kids into her car and taking them out for a treat – ice cream, a movie. In later years Carol and Pam would accompany Mrs. Divine when she visited her good friend Sister Judine in a Milwaukee nursing home.

Before deciding to apply for the key-punch position, I phoned Mrs. Divine to pick her brain about the job and whether she thought it would be a good fit for me. I wanted to know about the boss, John Lawrence “Jack” Maton (1935-2009), director of data processing.

Mrs. Divine told me Jack was relatively new in the job but that he'd really impressed the powers that be with his ability to wring the most out of the college's IBM-1401 computer. She said Jack had come to WCC after doing work for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). Mrs. Divine encouraged me to apply for the job and I did. She must have put in a good word for me because I soon got a call for an interview with Jack.

He was a mountain of a man – tall, with a military bearing and a crew cut to go with the look. Jack was so tall that, as I found out later, he would have to fold himself into all but the largest cars and would almost always ride with the top of his head touching the car's roof.

Jack was called “Sonny” in his hometown of Pana, Illinois – probably to differentiate him from his dad, also named John. (Later in life, he would write several books under the pen name Sonny Maton.) In high school, Jack played on the football, basketball and track teams; was art editor of the yearbook, co-art editor of the student newspaper and a member of the Conservation Club: a real Renaissance man.

In the interview, Jack didn't ask many questions, but he invited me to demonstrate that I could find my way around a key-punch machine. I tried to dazzle him with my skill. The key-punch I had learned on was an older version of the IBM-29, a real clunker compared to the newer machine at WCC. But the basics were the same and I was able to demonstrate that I was up to the task.

I had learned key-punch operation on the job in the service department at Commonwealth Edison. I typed about 100 words per minute – and so I usually finished my daily allotment of work with time to spare. To kill time until I could clock out, I read through the key-punch machine’s user’s manual and figured out how to program the “drum card,” which could amp up productivity even more. I think that ability impressed Jack ... I hoped it had.

Soon I got the phone call with a job offer; the pay was considerably less than I was making at ComEd, but I really wanted that job. After giving my two-week notice, I happily joined the staff at WCC.

The data storage method of the time was punched cards –Hollerith cards. An IBM-1401 didn’t have much memory, so data needed to be fed into it each time a program was run; punched cards accomplished the job. Each card had 12 rows and 80 columns to store one number, one letter, a blank, or a symbol per column.

When WCC received an application form and transcripts from a prospective student, that information had to be translated into punched cards. The information included the student’s ID number (at that time a Social Security Number), name, home address, phone number, high-school, class rank, intended curriculum, transfer credits, veteran/draft and new/continuing status.

It was the main job of the key-punch operator to create those cards – three for “regular” students (those who were going to enroll full-time or aim for a degree) and one card for “special” students who were taking less than a full-time load or not seeking a degree. (Today, those distinctions are no longer made.) Most of the projects I worked on involved student registration and records: grades cards, class lists, transcripts, etc. I remember one project that involved computerizing all the Learning Resources Center (LRC) holdings.

In 1968, WCC’s administrative offices, including the data processing department, were in a converted Jewel-Tea supermarket on 15 S. Lake Street in downtown Aurora. We joked that our Data Processing department was in frozen foods.

The Learning Resources Center/Library

For the 1967-1968 academic year, the Learning Resources Center was in a converted liquor store adjacent to the administrative offices on South Lake Street. Director Ken Allen was the lone professional staff member and Jan Sprague remembers seeing him shelving books, a task usually reserved for clerks. The library’s core collection consisted of a little less than 5,000 volumes – books recommended for new libraries in community colleges plus others requested by faculty members.

In the 1968-69 academic year, day classes were held at the former Yorkville High School building, so 5,000 volumes needed to be moved from the old liquor store. Ken recalls asking for volunteers. Eight or ten signed up⁴ and they spent a long day packing up books, loading them into a flat-bed truck at the Lake Street location, driving them to Yorkville and trekking up the outside fire escape to the second-story library space.

Nine months later, the same volumes were packed for the trip to Sugar Grove. The library was housed in Building A for two years before the library facility (WCC's second permanent structure) was finished. The move from Building A to the new library building was accomplished with volunteers, too, including students.

By the time the library had moved to Sugar Grove, Ken had hired Adah Neubauer, who had been head librarian at East Aurora High School for eight years, as head librarian. Miss Neubauer stayed at WCC for eleven years before returning to her hometown in Nebraska to care for her ailing mother.

The LRC has grown considerably since those early days. Today the library has locations in Sugar Grove, downtown Aurora and Aurora/Fox Valley. Combined, they contain a total of 65,201 books "on the shelf," and more than 400,000 other items, including e-books, digital periodicals, and digital audio-visual materials.

Coffee Confrontation

In the Jewel-Tea location, we had a communal coffee urn for all the coffee drinkers. One Friday, a few weeks into the job, a co-worker told me that the coming week would be my turn for making coffee. Until then, I had never noticed the rotation list near the coffee urn because my beverage of choice was Tab, not coffee.⁵ When I explained my non-coffee-drinking status to the co-worker, she said "Everyone takes a turn."

But when I looked at the list, it wasn't *everyone* who took a turn, it was *women* who took a turn. I objected but she wasn't having any of it. She gave me a quick lesson in coffee-making and that was that ... or so she thought.

All weekend, I was seething. I had worked in several offices and this was never an issue. Everyone who drank coffee took a turn making it. This was the 1960s, and a proposed Equal Rights Amendment was being talked about. I decided I needed to take a stand ... but how? I really loved my job and had a terrific boss, so I needed to be subtle. Then it came to me.

Monday, I made coffee as instructed. No one complained.

⁴ Ken recalls that Deans Dave Pierce and Howard Sims; Administrators Paul Bosse, Keith Klein and Lee Thompson; and art instructor Stuart Sewell schlepped books that day.

⁵ Tab® was the first diet soda created by the Coca Cola company. It was introduced in 1963 and discontinued in 2020.

Tuesday, I made coffee, but didn't rinse out the pot and didn't empty the basket of used coffee grounds, just topped off the basket with fresh beans, added water and plugged it in. The complaints came almost immediately. I heard gagging sounds. It was working.

A co-worker visited me to ask how I made the coffee. I explained my methodology. She stood awaiting my apology and a pledge to reform.

Instead, I politely said, "I don't really care how it tastes because I don't drink the stuff. The rotation needs to include anyone who drinks coffee – and not just women." Then I went back to my punch cards.

I don't know what discussions took place, but suddenly, I was off coffee duty and so was every other non-coffee-drinker. And the new rotation included both men and women. It was a small victory, but a victory nonetheless.

(Looking back, it wasn't my finest moment. Rather than a sneaky, passive-aggressive approach, I could have simply refused to make coffee. But I was a newbie and fearful of standing up so overtly.)

DP Department Learning Curve

At the time Jack Maton hired me, there were just three staff members: Jack, programmer Lynn Brandys, and work-study student Margie Keele from Leland, Illinois. Margie could do anything – she was a top programming student of Jack's – and was always willing to pitch in. She would go on to earn a bachelor's degree in computer science at Northern Illinois University and combined marriage, motherhood and a career in information technology.

Two regulars in the department were David Eck and John Ketcham, also Jack's students. Although they didn't officially work for WCC, they were there so much that, when I was first in the department, I thought they did. (Later, when Lynn left WCC, Jack offered the programming job to David Eck – who in 1970 had graduated with his associate degree in data processing.)

My work at WCC, in addition to key-punching, involved operating "unit record" equipment. That included a card sorter, reproducer, interpreter and accounting machine. We also used a decollator (to separate continuous multi-part forms and remove carbon paper) and burster (to tear apart perforated forms).

I used the sorter every day and it was the bane of my existence, and Margie's, too. In order to get punched cards containing student information ready to feed into the computer, they needed to be in order by students' nine-digit ID numbers. That meant the cards needed to be run through the sorter nine times. Card decks could contain

thousands of cards. After each sort, I collected the cards in the proper order and placed in the card feeder for the next sort. If I dropped a stack of cards or took them out in the wrong order, I was back at square one.

At some point, Lynn thought the next step in my professional development would be to learn coding, as in writing computer programs. She had in mind a program that could be used to check that cards about to be fed into the computer did not contain errors that would cause the program to abort mid-run. I was all for that, as I had seen it happen numerous times.

My being motivated was not enough, however, and Lynn wound up doing most of the work. It was about that time I decided I did not have a glorious future in data processing. Fortunately, an opportunity was about to open at WCC that had my name written all over it – or so I thought.

An Opportunity Comes My Way

I knew my future was not going to involve programming computers, but I was not ready to leave WCC. By that time, I had started taking one class per semester, starting with a night class in psychology. The free tuition was a great incentive to stay.

Then came an internal posting for a job in another department, for head admissions and records clerk. It was the word “head” that caught my interest. I could be “head” of something. I’d move up a rung or two on the ladder. I applied.

As I looked down the list of job duties, and with an overconfidence that is found only in the young and clueless, I kept saying to myself, “I could do that; I could do that” until I got to one that stymied me. The job called for a person who was 35 years of age or older and I was more than a decade away from that milestone birthday.

Today’s human resources managers would be shocked that an employer would make a specific age a *bona fide occupational qualification*, but in that era, it was common for employers to state in classified ads or job postings that they wanted candidates of a certain gender, age or marital status. So, I wasn’t surprised at the age requirement.

If I got the job, my boss would be Paul G. Bosse, director of admissions and records/registrar. Because the data processing department worked closely with his office, I knew him. I liked him. He was very competent and had excellent rapport with students and staff, always professional, always kind, a calming presence, and with a great sense of humor.

At the time, Mr. Bosse was a commissioned officer in the U.S. Air Force Reserves and so had that military bearing and crewcut that set him apart, along with the bow-tie he always sported.

After I applied, Mr. B (as I came to call him) told me that Stanley Groh (1920-2014), dean of students, wanted to talk to me about the job. Mr. Groh, who had retired from the U.S. Air Force as a Lieutenant Colonel, was of my parents' generation and had a formidable, rather curmudgeonly presence.

Mollie (Closson) Mellien, who was WCC's first admissions clerk, remembers Mr. Groh as "crusty," known to bark out orders from inside his office in the Lake Street administrative offices. The admissions and records office was a real fishbowl, an open area with no privacy. Mr. Groh's outbursts had everyone within earshot stopping what they were doing and glaring at Mollie and Jeanne Dooley (1928-1985), head admissions and records clerk.

So, Mollie and Jeanne decided to confront Mr. Groh to let him know he was bringing unwanted attention to himself and to the admissions and records office. They suggested – very politely – that it would be a good idea for him to tone it down a bit. Mollie recalls that he was as nice as could be and he did, indeed, follow their advice.

Jan Sprague had a memorable encounter with Mr. Groh, too. She carried a slide rule in an outside pocket of her purse and a few inches of it was visible. Mr. Groh asked her whether she could really use a slide rule. After Jan explained that she had used it for high school chemistry and physics calculations, he asked her if she wanted a job in Student Services. She took the job -- one of her responsibilities was to calculate applicants' high school percentile rank.

At the time of my interview, I didn't know Mr. Groh well, but was more than a little intimidated as I walked into his office. Mr. Groh turned out to be soft-spoken and very kind. His main concern was my age. He reminded me that if I were to get the job, I would be enforcing rules and regulations that students might not agree with or like. At my young age, could I be authoritative enough to deal with my peers and older students in that context?

Knowing my age would be a concern, I had thought about how I would answer such a question. I remember telling him that I thought my two years of experience as a college student and familiarity with WCC's computer systems would more than make up for any deficit of age. Plus, I told him I thought students – who were considered adults, after all – didn't need mothering in college. Yes, I told him, I could do it.

I got the job. I was head admissions and records clerk. And I had really lucked out in the boss department; Mr. B could have been the poster child for Great Bosses. He viewed the admissions and records staff as a team and he was the coach. He never raised his voice and seldom issued a direct order. He listened to his staff and was willing to try out any ideas we came up with to improve processes or make our work easier.

Mr. B would regularly, usually on Friday afternoon, come out of his office and ask, “Is there any work you’d like me to do for you?”

In a department that thrived on paper, there was always filing to do and invariably that’s what he wound up doing – filing student admission folders. He would jump in without a question and work until it was time for us all to go home.

By the spring semester of 1969, we were anticipating a move to the new Sugar Grove campus in the fall of that year, but for now, we were still in the renovated Jewel-Tea building. The admissions office was front and center as people entered the main entrance, and administrative offices lined the perimeter with secretaries outside them like seated sentries.

We didn’t have much foot traffic. Students who needed to drop a class, or request a transcript, or inquire about their admissions application had to make a special trip. The only students we saw on a regular basis were those in Jack Maton’s programming class. Their classroom was in the rear of the building, adjacent to the data processing department, which was closed off to keep the machine noise from disturbing the quiet of nearby offices.

Mr. B was a patient teacher and I soon picked up the basics of my new job. He suggested that I spend time studying the college catalog. It wasn’t the most scintillating reading, but it did outline the policies and procedures that I needed to know to respond to students’ questions, a big part of the job. I got to know that catalog almost by heart.

Another part of my job was to generate reports. Today that work would be done quickly and easily using Excel spreadsheets or custom software. By 1968 there was software, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), that allowed non-programmers to access the power of a mainframe computer to create detailed statistical reports. But at WCC in 1969, we used paper and pencil, making hashmarks, tallying them up and putting them all into final form using a trusty IBM Selectric typewriter. There were no terminals on anyone’s desk to automatically generate anything.

Mr. Groh was often the person requesting reports. He was a stickler for dates. Statistics, he said, are worthless if they’re not attached to a specific date.

“We live in a dateless society,” was his constant lament. I learned to put a date on every report -- until recently, I dated my grocery list.

For the admissions and records office, registration was a huge deal, and it was “all hands on deck.” Once the list of courses and sections was received from the academic departments, the data processing department would generate one card for each seat in each section. If there were 30 seats in a classroom, there would be 30 cards. The cards would be sorted by course number and placed in drawers.

Students would write out, on a multi-part form, the courses they wished to register for. Then they would stand in line to hand the form to a clerk who would pull the cards for each of the selected courses. If a course was full, the student would have to pick another section or, sometimes, another class. More desperate students would try to cajole the instructor to add a seat just for them and sometimes that worked. At the end, the registration clerk would keep the class cards and the original of their handwritten form and give the student one carbon copy to take to class on the first day.

Combining student information cards with the packet of cards accumulated at registration, the data processing department generated class lists to give instructors and, later in the semester, cards on which instructors would submit grades. Those returned cards would be used to generate grade cards, update transcripts of continuing students, and create transcripts for new students. Then the process would begin again for the next semester.

The Draft – and Veterans

One of the tasks that fell to Mr. B was dealing with the Selective Service System. Draft-eligible men at WCC could obtain an exemption if they carried 15 semester hours and maintained a C average. If a student's course load dropped below 15 hours or their grade point average went below 2.0, they would lose the exemption and, most likely, be drafted. Mr. B, as registrar, was in charge of notifying the local draft board of any changes in status. This was serious business.

At the end of each semester, as soon as grades were reported, Mr. B and I spent an evening after the office had closed going through students' updated records to see if any of them had slipped below a 2.0 average. Students who did were put on academic probation. Students who were already on probation would face academic dismissal. The next day they would be sent a letter of notification.

When we came to the record of a man who had a draft exemption and who had dropped below a C average, Mr. B, an Air Force Reserve officer at the time, would stay silent and shake his head. This was not a part of the job he enjoyed and I could see it in his face. He would make a list of the students who would be losing their draft exemption so he could inform the draft board the very next day as he was required to do. It was a solemn exercise.

Mr. B always had a soft spot for veterans – and they came to Waubensee in huge numbers. The biggest years for the draft were between 1965 and 1968, and those men had a two-year commitment. After draftees' two-year hitch was up, many of them took advantage of the GI Bill, which paid a monthly stipend to full-time students, and the Illinois Veterans' Scholarship, which covered tuition at state universities and community colleges for veterans who entered service from Illinois.

In the first days of each semester, the records office would see a lot of students who wanted to drop out of one section and move into another section of the same class. "Too many veterans," they would say, "and they wreck the curve."

I don't know how many instructors actually graded on a curve, but those students were right: veterans took college seriously and would set a high standard in any class they took. In the student lounge, it was common to see veterans tutoring their buddies who were struggling.

It's interesting to note how many administrators and faculty members in the pioneering years were military veterans. A few served in World War II -- and every branch was represented: Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard. Waubonsee has a long history of being veteran-friendly.

Goodbye, Aurora; Hello, Sugar Grove

During the summer of 1969, students and staff alike were looking forward to moving to our permanent campus in Sugar Grove for the fall semester.

In August 1969, the admissions and records office moved from Jewel-Tea to Sugar Grove, although not to its permanent home (Building A), which was not yet complete. We found ourselves operating in an old horse barn, which Mr. B recalls cleaning out before we moved in. We moved to Building A on September 16, 1969. There was one issue: the heating system was not yet operative and cool weather hit early that year.

This was not a problem for male administrators, one of whom made the decision that there would be no space heaters to warm the offices. Men could wear trousers and most were not using freezing fingers to type. But, at that time, women were expected to wear skirts or dresses, with hose and dress shoes, not the warmest of outfits, especially with the mini-skirts that were fashionable at the time. And most of the women typed as a big part of their jobs.

This happened in an era when protests were a way of life. So, I spoke to a few of my peers among the clerical staff and suggested we all wear gloves, scarves and coats in the office to silently protest the anti-space-heater decision. We got some stink-eye at first, but pretty soon, space heaters arrived.

By the way, skirts and dresses for women were not part of any official dress code, just a tradition in most offices of the time. But pants suits were coming into vogue and it was just a matter of time before things changed. I talked to Mr. B privately about whether or not he would object to my wearing a pants suit to work. He said he thought that was fine, so the next day, I tested the waters by wearing a new beige number. People noticed but most didn't say anything. But in the coming weeks, women started wearing pants suits and soon the anti-pants taboo was forever forgotten.

For a few weeks in September 1969, admissions and records was housed in what would become the counseling center in Building A. The advantage of that space was that it had a window to the outside ... and my desk was situated so that I could see out of that window. The view was quite spectacular ... the woods in autumn. I knew I'd not get much done when the trees started to change color, so I was happy to move into our windowless permanent space, where there were fewer distractions.

The office had a counter that faced the outside hallway, and every desk was oriented toward that. My desk was close to the counter. Behind my desk was that of Marianna Becket (1914-1994), Mr. Groh's secretary; her space was adjacent to Mr. B's small office. Next to my desk were the Kardex filing cabinets, where we kept paper records of current students handy. Toward the back wall were the desk and filing cabinets of the admissions clerk. There was a small writing desk near mine that our student worker, Judy Vargas (1949-2020), used.

Judy was really smart, attending WCC on a prestigious Ford Foundation Scholarship, and she had a great sense of humor. For high school, she had attended a convent school in Kansas – a school so small that her graduating class had just four students. All four girls received A grades in every class. But when it came to class rank, Judy came in fourth. She thought it was hilarious that she was in the bottom of her class.

About the time we made the move to Sugar Grove, Mary Loague (1924-2015) joined the staff as admissions clerk, replacing Mollie Closson, who had left to get married. Mary was a real character and very proficient at keeping the files ship-shape. When registration rolled around, Mary was often the person who was relied on to hold down the fort in the admissions office while everyone else was in the student lounge for registration. When students had issues with their registration status, we'd send them to Mary to identify and fix the problem. She could get very busy doing that and answering the phones.

I remember returning to the office during registration and finding Mary with her head on her desk, holding an open umbrella over herself, creating a little tent. A long line of students stood by silently and patiently. When I looked questioningly at the first student in line, he whispered, "She said she needed a break." That was Mary! Once she had her little breather she was back in top form.

Our office in Building A had a lot of foot traffic, something we weren't accustomed to in the Jewel-Tea office. Since the building contained a student lounge, multiple administrative offices, bookstore and learning resource center, students and staff were in and out of the building all the time and the route they took went right by our counter. Since my desk was closest to the counter, my work was often interrupted, but the place had an energy that had been lacking in the old place.

Encounters at the Counter

I remember a few specific encounters at the counter. One involved the mother of a student who came in to inquire why her son hadn't received his grade report from the previous semester.

Students were pretty shrewd when it came to finding ways to game the system. This particular student wasn't doing well in his classes and didn't want his parents – who were, presumably, footing the tuition bill – to know. If he didn't want his grade report sent home, he knew that if he incurred a financial obligation to WCC, the grade report would be held until the bill was settled. That could be as simple as owing library fine for an overdue book – which this student did.

When the student's mother came to the office, I looked him up and told her about his library fine. She asked for directions to the library -- and a few minutes later, she was back with a receipt, asking for his transcript. This was a no-no. The grade report belonged to the student and only the student could obtain it. I took the receipt, and told her I would put the grade report into the mail. All mom had to do was get to the mail before her son did. She didn't like it, but she acquiesced after I brought in Mr. B to confirm the policy.

In addition to students (and their parents), we frequently had inquiries from faculty members. I remember Herb Spyke, fresh out of Ohio State, who had been hired as WCC's wrestling coach. Herb had a hot prospect he was trying to get registered full time (at least 12 semester hours for athletic eligibility) so he would be eligible to wrestle for WCC. Unfortunately, registration was over.

I remembered, however, that WCC had just started a very flexible program in secretarial science in which students could start a class at any time they wanted and take as much time as they wished to finish.⁶ I explained to Herb that the student could probably come up with 12 hours of credits in secretarial science. I don't remember if the wrestler ever registered for those classes or wrestled for WCC, but at that moment Herb was a happy camper.

We didn't get too many disgruntled students in the office, but I do remember one summer school student who was ticked off upon arrival.

When students signed up for classes and knew they were going to transfer those credits to another college, they'd often fill in the transcript request form at the time of registration. That way the transcript was sent out automatically at the end of the semester.

⁶ Mr. B wasn't a happy camper about allowing students to sign up for classes after "regular" registration was over, regretting the coming of what he called "perpetual registration." Of course, he adapted and that's now the norm.

One young woman who was a full-time student at one of the Illinois state universities had done just that when she signed up for a summer speech class at WCC. Unfortunately, she had earned a “D” in the class and once her university received the transcript, she was put on academic probation. She was livid. How dare she be given a “D” in a class at a community college? She had believed the false notion that WCC classes weren’t as rigorous as university classes and learned the hard way that she was wrong.

Love is in the Air

One day in December 1969, the president of the Veteran’s Club, Ray Vickery, went from office to office inviting single women to come to the club’s upcoming Christmas party. I had heard about those parties and wanted no part of one. So, I declined in a not-so-nice way, telling him I didn’t care for drunken brawls. A few minutes later, the Vets’ Club treasurer, J.C. Ray, stormed into the office and gave me what-for.

“Ray’s trying to make something of the club and you insult him,” he said, then added almost in a whisper, “I think he likes you.”

So, I called Ray and apologized and told him I’d love to come to the party but needed a ride. He agreed to pick me up. The night of December 20, Ray pulled up to my house in his red 1966 Chevy Impala convertible, which leaked snow into my lap. The party was at J.C.’s Sugar Grove home. Things were going along swimmingly, if loudly, when Ray came up to me and said, “I’m leaving right now. If you want to leave, come with me.”

As we ran out the back door, the police were moving in through the front door. We escaped to Ray’s car and soon found ourselves at Pat’s Pub, a local watering hole. After that night, we were a couple and (**spoiler alert**) married a year later. BTW: The police “raid” was more a friendly visit – they were letting J.C. know that neighbors were complaining about the noise.

With hundreds of young people and the freedom that came with college life, it’s not surprising that students (and staff) fell in love at Waubonsee.

My cousin Ed Retterer met his future wife Joan Sibenaller at WCC. I remember the two of them walking hand-in-hand on campus so obviously in love it made everyone smile. They married in 1972 and remain very much in love. They raised a son and daughter and have two grandchildren.

A Registration Reminiscence

During the fall of 1969 and winter of 1970, the hottest theatre ticket in Chicago was for the rock musical *Hair*. The Chicago Tribune review was headlined: “*Hair* Scores

Roaring, Raunchy Triumph.” In it, William Leonard wrote, “In ‘Hair,’ a rolling, roaring, free-form musical which took over the Shubert last night, the under-30 group finally gets its story told. If the over-30 group wants to listen, the answer to the rhetorical question is there. All the old folks this reviewer knows hate ‘Hair’; all the young folks we know love it. Maybe there’s a message there.”

I wondered why Dean Groh and Mr. B – both in the over-30 age category by at least a few years -- had purchased tickets for ‘Hair’ at all. They were military veterans, presumably patriotic – and “Hair” was definitely anti-Vietnam War. And why buy tickets with show time coinciding with registration for spring classes?

This was good news for me, however. It meant someone else had to be in charge at that evening’s registration and – TADA – I was chosen. Mr. Groh gave me a pep talk, telling me he was confident I could handle any questions or problems that would come up. And, he told me solemnly, even if you get something wrong, we’ll back you 100%.

With the hubris of youth, I couldn’t imagine a scenario I wouldn’t be able to handle. What would that be? A registration clerk getting a paper cut from a punched card?

Mr. Groh and Mr. B enjoyed “Hair” and I got a gold star for my performance. I learned a valuable lesson: being a college administrator couldn’t be all that difficult. I’d test that theory a few years later.

A New President

In May of 1970, Dr. James H Nelson resigned as WCC’s president to take a position on the faculty of Michigan State University’s college of education. In an effort to include the entire WCC community in the process of selecting a new president, a selection committee was formed, and I was honored to be one of the employees chosen to represent the classified (non-professional) staff.

The interviews were endurance tests for the candidates and their wives: a full day of interviews, capped off by a public reception in the student lounge in Building A, where they were expected to be on their best behavior.

Dr. Forest Etheredge was at the top of my list to become the next president. He was a charming man, soft-spoken, with impeccable credentials; his wife was lovely. (At this time, the unspoken rule was that when a man became President, his wife would automatically become First Lady – a package deal, buy one/get one.)

I don’t remember much about the other candidates, but I do remember one of the candidate’s wives walking around campus, constantly puffing on a cigarette. In 1970, smoking was still allowed on campus and smokers were not yet the pariahs they would

become. Everybody, however, was commenting on the spouse's behavior and, I believe, his candidacy was doomed from the start.

Dr. Etheredge had been the founding president of two community colleges in Illinois: Rock Valley in Rockford and McHenry County in Crystal Lake. He must have breathed a sigh of relief when he assumed the presidency at Waubensee, leaving behind the MCC board of trustees that was still dithering about where to locate their permanent campus.

Jan Sprague, who became a professor at WCC in 1971, remembers teaching Dr. Etheredge's children in her speech classes – and thinking he was “walking the walk” in regards to the quality of a community college education.

Planning My Academic Future

After we'd arrived in Sugar Grove, I had continued taking classes part-time. I had completed 63 semester hours at St. Dominic College (St. Charles, Illinois) before dropping out, but had not taken enough social sciences classes and no speech class. In order to qualify for an associate degree from WCC, I'd need those credits.

In Fall 1969, I took one day class – speech with Carol Viola. As Carol Ahrens, she had been one of my English teachers sophomore year at East Aurora High School and I told her I was shocked when she remembered me.

“I always remember my A students,” she said drolly.

Mrs. Viola was a demanding teacher and I was more than happy with a B in her speech class. Despite the fact that she was a tough grader, Mrs. Viola was quite popular with students. Veterans on campus took her class because they thought she was “easy on the eyes.” But they liked her because she took the time after class to talk with them and find out how their lives were going.

In Spring 1970, I planned to take social psychology, with Mr. Sullivan, a part-timer. While I was figuring out which other class to take, economics instructor Charlie Knapp stopped by the office to tell me he was teaching a night class in macroeconomics. He was concerned he wouldn't have enough students to fill the class and encouraged me to take his class. So, I signed up for macroeconomics, which would give me the 12 credits I needed to graduate from WCC.

Although I never would have thought to take economics without Charlie's urging, I still remember a few things: the backward-bending supply curve, the word “utils” and “opportunity costing” – which saved me from many traps when I was working as a consultant. I think Charlie would be proud of this C student.

One social psych class with Mr. Sullivan was particularly memorable. He was returning a test from the previous week and he told us that he had taken the liberty of having the handwriting of a few students examined by an expert graphologist. He handed out envelopes to a handful of students; I received one of them.

He asked us to open our envelopes and read the contents to ourselves. Then he asked us to raise our hands if we thought the analysis was accurate. I was the only who did not raise my hand. When Mr. Sullivan asked why I didn't find it accurate, I told him I had previously had my handwriting analyzed by Rev. Anthony Becker, a Catholic priest, college professor, academic counselor and expert graphologist at St. Dominic College. Father Becker's analysis was much more detailed and he was able to pinpoint very specific things about my personality. The analysis by Mr. Sullivan's expert was very general.

Then Mr. Sullivan asked for a student volunteer to read his analysis. When a student read his analysis, we realized that every one's analysis was exactly the same. It was so general it could have applied to any young adult. Lesson learned.

I loved that class and my grade of A balanced off the C in Charlie Knapp's class. At that point in my academic career, I was perfectly happy to maintain a B average.

In June 1970, Ray and I graduated from WCC together. We weren't planning on attending the ceremony, but J.C. Ray – who was also graduating -- convinced us. His logic was impeccable: "They're trying to get traditions started here at Waubensee and you're snubbing your nose at them." J.C. was right – we owed WCC that.

With the associate degree completed, I was restless. I felt "down" for the first time ever. I decided to talk to Larry Dukes, who had joined the counseling staff the previous semester. Ray and I had gotten to know Larry and his wonderful wife Gale when we babysat for their four children, Mike, Jimmy, Tommy and Allison, an infant at the time. Babysitting was a cheap date, and lots of fun because the kids were so smart and so well behaved that we really enjoyed being with them.

When I told Larry I was "down," his response was immediate: "I'd be down, too, if I were you. You're in a dead-end job. You could do any job in this college but you'll never be allowed to because you don't have a degree. You need to get that degree," he said kindly but firmly. I think the phrase "Get off your ass" may have passed his lips.

Later that day, I told Ray what Larry had said.

"Well, if we have any future together, you'll never be happy if I have a degree and you don't," said Ray. He really knew me and I had to agree with him.

That was the day I decided I'd go to Northern Illinois University, where Ray planned to transfer. I didn't think I could save up enough to join him for Fall 1970 classes, but I thought Spring 1971 was do-able.

Part of the reason I dropped out St. Dominic College was that I couldn't pick a major. I had tried math, then English, then Spanish. None of them felt right. It was at Waubensee that I came to a decision: I wanted to be a community college public relations person (or "public information" as it was called at the time). My inspiration was Mary Jane Coffell, who was hired first as an administrative assistant for public information, then as a director of public information in mid-1968.

If you look at a list of faculty and staff on page 54 of the first WCC catalog (1967-68), one thing pops out. There are no female administrators; and there were just four women listed as full-time faculty members, all with the courtesy title "Mrs." So, when Mary Jane was hired, it should have been front-page news.

Mary Jane and I are contemporaries. The main difference in qualifications was that Mary Jane had a bachelor's degree (in journalism) and I did not. So, as Larry Dukes had told me, I would never be considered for a director's level job if I didn't have a degree. It was a light-bulb moment.

In order that Ray and I complete our coursework at the same time, I had just three semesters and one summer school to finish my courses at NIU. That left out any bachelor of arts curriculums, which required proficiency in a foreign language that would take at least two years to demonstrate.

So, a bachelor of science it was. I thumbed through the NIU catalog and saw my choices: home economics, industrial arts, library science and journalism. Although I had been on the staff of the newspaper and yearbook senior year at Madonna High School, I had not considered journalism as a major. Judy Vargas was by then a journalism major at NIU, and I talked with her about her classes, getting a feel for their degree of difficulty.

I looked closely at the journalism requirements and noticed the variety of courses I could take: photography, photo editing, writing, reporting, copy editing, magazine editing, public relations, journalism history, corporate publications, press law, advertising. The department capped the number of journalism credits at 30 semester hours ... the rest would be totally my choice. I could either add a minor or pick and choose what interested me. Choosing journalism was like not choosing at all.

Even though I'd completed my degree at WCC, in the fall of 1970 I decided to take two more classes: sociology with Jim Vojtisek and newswriting with Shirley Borel. Newswriting students were required to work on the school newspaper (*Insight*) that

Shirley advised and that's how I became copy editor for that semester. Newswriting and sociology would be my final classes at WCC.

Off to DeKalb

As it turned out, Ray knew a high-school friend's brother, Gail Tennant, who was in a civil-service job in the photojournalism department at NIU, so we connected with him. Gail was able to help by getting me onto a waiting list for a required course in press photography that was the key to my finishing on time. I had not yet sent in my application. Gail mentioned a work-study job in the photo lab that I could apply for. The puzzle pieces were coming together.

In the fall of 1970, Ray found an inexpensive, seedy apartment with two other WCC grads, Jim Feuerborn and Bob Johnson, and headed to DeKalb. During that semester I spent a lot of weekends in DeKalb; and we decided to get an apartment together when I arrived in January 1971 for NIU's spring semester.

In November, 1970, we found the perfect one-bedroom apartment within easy driving distance of the NIU campus -- and it had one amenity that I had never seen before: a built-in blender. I had never even used a blender, but it seemed like a cool idea, and that was enough for us to decide this was the place for us. One catch: the landlord didn't rent to unmarried couples. So, I told him we were getting married.

On the way back to Ray's apartment, I said, "I hate to lie to the guy."

Ray's response was, "Well, we could always get married." To this day, he swears it was **not** a proposal. But we got married anyway, about a month later: December 19, 1970 – almost exactly one year after that ill-fated vets' club party.

Our wedding was a small church ceremony followed by a reception in my folks' unfinished basement. We spent a total of \$300. I counted the total attendees in the Guest Book recently and it came to 53, with eleven of them being WCC friends including: Ardeane and Paul Bosse, Lynn Brandys, Gale and Larry Dukes, Jim Feurborn and his fiancée (later wife) Helen Jensen, Mary and Walter Loague, Judy Vargas and her plus-one.

I remember the gift we received from Larry and Gale. It was a beautiful cut glass relish dish trimmed in silver and with tiny, silver utensils to go with it. (I still have all the pieces!) Knowing that we were headed into married life as poor college students, most of our gifts were quite practical; one of Ray's high-school friends gave us a case of toilet paper.

When I looked at Gale after unwrapping her and Larry's gift, she said, "I know it's not very practical, but I know you'll always remember the person who gave it to you." Of course, she was right.

I resigned from Waubensee in December 1970, but Mr. B asked me back in January of 1971 to work on a data cleanup project in anticipation of a change of computer platform. It was between semesters and we needed the money – we were planning to live on Ray's G.I. Bill, a second stipend he was given to encourage men to teach in special education, and my work-study job in the photojournalism lab, where I checked out equipment to students, mixed chemicals, rolled film, etc.

Ray and I went on to finish our bachelor's degrees – Ray's in special education and elementary education and mine in journalism – in 1972. I earned the Master of Arts in Journalism from NIU in 1976.

The early part of my career was spent in three community colleges: McHenry County College, Eastfield College (part of the Dallas community college system), and College of Lake County. I spent the rest of my working life as a public relations consultant for hospitals, medical practices, agricultural organizations and banks. In 1995, I semi-retired, working three days a week on the staff of a local Manpower franchise, and later as a contractor editing one regional and one national newsletter for Manpower.

Ray taught special education for two years in Crystal Lake, Illinois. After that, he worked in the business office at Eastfield College – that's where he first came into contact with computers and became interested in the Information Technology field. He also took a typing class at Eastfield, which came in handy when he later changed careers.

The year I was in graduate school at NIU, Ray worked for Waubensee, teaching GED Preparation on a federal CETA contract. He also took a computer class at Kishwaukee College – which he aced -- and his instructor, a fellow veteran, told Ray had a real aptitude for computer languages. That got Ray thinking more about changing careers.

When I took the job as PR director at College of Lake County (CLC) in 1976, Ray taught GED preparation to soldiers at Fort Sheridan for the college. Dan Petrosko, a colleague who headed CLC's data processing department, told Ray it would be possible for him to finish a second associate's degree in data processing in just one year. Ray took on the challenge and graduated from CLC in 1980.

Dan introduced Ray to a recruiter from American Hospital Supply (AHS) and Ray was subsequently chosen for that company's training program. Ray was one of the trainees tapped for a permanent position and he went on to a 28-year career as a programmer,

systems analyst and project manager at Baxter Healthcare, which purchased AHS in 1985. Ray retired from Baxter in 2007. I retired in 2005.

When we look back at our years at Waubensee, Ray and I agree that our time there was pivotal to our success in later life and into retirement. We have many happy moments to remember and WCC and its people often turn up in our conversations.

In Memoriam

*=Founding Faculty/Staff

Flag = Military Veteran

Beam, David Robert* (26 Aug 1942-15 Aug 2012), Instructor, Political Science

Becket, Marianna (8 Jul 1914-4 Mar 1994), Secretary, Student Services

Borel, Shirley (16 May 1936-5 Apr 2006), Instructor, Journalism, Student Newspaper Adviser

Shirley was a smiling presence on campus, where she taught for more than 30 years before she retired. She was survived by her widower Richard, three children and three grandchildren.

Brennan, Sister Judine, SSSF (20 Oct 1911-22 Dec 2001), Instructor, Drama

Although she was a drama instructor at WCC, Sister Judine taught anatomy and physiology at Madonna High School, Aurora, my *alma mater*. I was presenting a report in Sister Judine's class when the announcement came that President Kennedy had been shot. After Sister Judine left WCC in 1976, she moved to Florida, where she held various teaching positions. In 1980, she and two other sisters from her religious order (School Sisters of Saint Francis), were on the founding faculty of St. John Neumann High School in Naples, Florida. In 2000, she returned to her order's Mother House in Milwaukee and spent the rest of her life there.

Brightman, Richard Wharry* (12 Nov 1933-18 Sep 2020), Chair, Business Division



A US Navy veteran, "Rich" attended Orange Coast College in Costa Mesa, California on the GI Bill – and spent most of his career, both before and after WCC at Orange Coast. He received the bachelor's and master's degrees at Stanford University. His obituary stated that his favorite job at OCC was Dean of Instruction. He was an accomplished musician and woodworker and wrote several books about computers.

Divine, Jean B* (13 Sep 1920-5 Aug 2018), Administrative Assistant to President

Mrs. Divine became WCC's first employee in 1966 and served as administrative assistant to three of WCC's presidents: James Nelson, Forest Etheredge and John Swalec. Jean was a deacon at Westminster Presbyterian Church, vice president of District 6 of the Rebecca Lodge, and president of the Illinois Educational Secretary's Association. According to a reliable source, Mrs. Divine's 1986 retirement party was a huge event at WCC.

Dooley, Jeanne M* (29 Feb 1928-24 Aug 1985), first head admissions and records clerk

Etheredge, Forest D (21 Oct 1929 – 26 Jun 2004)

Dr. Etheredge was president of Waubensee Community College from 1970 to 1981. He was elected to the Illinois State Senate, serving from 1981 to 1993. Dr. Etheredge was dean of Dunham School of Business and Professional Studies at Aurora University from 1994 to 1999. He was professor of business from 1999 to 2001 at Aurora University and Dunham School of Business and Professional Studies where he was dean emeritus from 1999 until his death.

Ford, David F* (6 Aug 1934-15 Jul 2009), Administrative Assistant for Public Information



Dave Ford was a 1956 graduate of Northern Illinois University; in his senior year, he served as editor in chief of the *Northern Star*, a job that went only to the best and brightest. Following graduation, he served in the US Army Reserves for six years. After he left WCC in 1968, he worked in journalism and public relations. Always active in the community, he was a member of Church of the Good Shepherd in Oswego, serving on many committees and boards and teaching Sunday School. He was active with the Oswego Lions Club and was president of the NIU Alumni Association in 1972-1973. He served 20+ years on the Oswego Zoning Board of appeals and later on the Plan Commission.

Gage, Robert Lynn* (13 Aug 1935-14 Jan 2019), Instructor and Administrator

Dr. Bob Gage began teaching physics at WCC in 1967. When he retired in 1993, he was dean of instruction. He and his wife Annette traveled much of the world and spent his final days living at Edgewater by Del Webb in Elgin, where Bob no longer had to mow lawns, shovel snow or do anything but enjoy life and spend winters in Florida. He studied hard, worked hard and lived a full life. According to his obituary, his favorite hobbies were volleyball and bocce ball.

Groh, Stanley Robert* (15 Jul 1920-28 Mar 2014), Dean, Student Services



Halfvarson, Lucille* (17 May 1919-8 Nov 2010), Instructor, Vocal Music

Mrs. Halfvarson was known for starting and directing the Waubensee District Chorus's "Do-It-Yourself Messiah," from 1968 to 1992, when she retired from WCC. In 2000, she and her husband Sten, long-time choral director at West Aurora High School, were awarded honorary doctoral degrees from Aurora University. The couple instilled a love

of music in their four children. Their son Eric is an accomplished bass opera singer and has performed in opera houses around the world. Upon her death, both the *Chicago Tribune* and *Chicago Sun-Times* carried staff-written obituaries, which recognized her contributions to the Arts in Aurora.



Hoban, John William (13 Mar 1920-15 Nov 2003), administrative and teaching positions

Bill was a World War II veteran, a naval aviator who flew PV-1 Ventura bombers in the Pacific theater. He completed 20 missions and earned the Distinguished Flying Cross. According to his obituary, he liked to point out that he'd spent 31 years in night school: twelve years for the bachelor's degree, twelve for the M.B.A., and seven for the doctorate. In 1968, Bill joined the WCC staff as assistant dean of adult education. After a decade as an administrator, he joined the faculty, teaching economics and business until he retired in 1989. In retirement, Bill remained active in community service, volunteering for the Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE), Aurora's PADS program and the Holy Angels Food Pantry. Bill was also an enthusiastic golfer, card player and fisherman. He and his wife Arline traveled extensively, and he enjoyed the company and accomplishments of his six children and eleven grandchildren.

Juister, Charles H* (22 Jun 1922-21 Mar 2015), Instructor, Fine Arts



A resident of Elgin for 40+ years, Charles Juister was born in Chicago and passed away in Manteno, Illinois. Charles was a World War II veteran, of both the U.S. Navy, where he was an aviation cadet, and U.S. Army Air Corps, where he was a flight officer. Interment with military funeral honors was at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood, Illinois. According to his obituary, Mr. Juister was survived by his stepson, Robert M. Gibson; son, Charles E. Juister; and daughter, Leslie E. Bysterbusch.



Klein, Lorin Keith* (30 May 1932-8 Dec 2004), counselor, director of counseling and personnel

Lorin Keith Klein served in the Air Force during the Korean war, from 1951-1955. Mr. Klein worked at WCC 25 years, starting in 1967.

Loague, Mary (Banghart) (10 Apr 1924-19 May 2015), Second Admissions Clerk

Mary was taken care of for the last 2½ years of her life by her husband of 70 years, Walter. He spent 12 hours a day, 7 days a week at Countryside Care Center with her. According to her obituary in the *Aurora Beacon News*, "She loved to bake pies, sew, cook and try new recipes, traveling far and wide to visit new grocery stores and farmers markets. She was a cat lover all her life and these pets enjoyed long and

pampered lives under her care. She adored her grandchildren, babysitting whenever asked, taking them to lunch, even to Chicago on the train, and chauffeured them to many activities.



Lumpp, Raymond Donald (4 Feb 1930-14 May 2019), Instructor, PE/Basketball Coach

Ray joined the National Guard in 1950 and while attending Eastern Illinois University, his unit was activated. He served in the 235th Field Artillery Observation Battalion in Korea until 1953. Ray was a coach and teacher all his life. "In 1999, Mr. Lumpp was inducted in to the Illinois Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame. He later moved to [Tellico Village], Tennessee where he lived for more than a decade. [During those years, Ray and Paul Bosse got together frequently.] In 2007, he was one of eight individuals in Waubonsee's inaugural Athletic Hall of Fame class in conjunction with the school's 40th anniversary. He eventually moved back to the Chicagoland area to be near his family and made one last visit to Waubonsee in January 2016. Coach Lumpp, along with 10 other members of the 1970-71 Skyway Conference title team, presented the college with a signed team portrait at halftime of a Chiefs' game which is proudly displayed in the school's trophy case." Quotation, with light editing, from Go Chiefs website and website of WSPY-FM. Used with permission.

Maton, John L (16 Apr 1935-10 Sep 2009), Director, Data Processing



John "Jack" Lawrence Maton, also known as "Sonny," was born in Pana, Illinois, and died in Arcadia, Florida. He served in the Naval Reserves while in high school and U.S. Air Force in Korea and Okinawa. Before coming to WCC, he worked for NASA at the Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, Alabama. After he left WCC, he worked at a school in Washington state then moved to Florida in 1987 to work at St. Leo College. He was the author of five fictional works: *A Leaf Falls but Once*; *The Black Knights of the Embarrass*; *Tea Leaves*; *Love is Not Enough* and *A Sleeping Giant*. Some of his books are available through Amazon or other online booksellers.

McAnelly, James R* (16 Mar 1932-6 Jan 2004), Instructor, Business

Dr. McAnelly was born in Bloomington and educated at Mooseheart. He was on Mooseheart's undefeated team in 1950 and earned membership in the school's Hall of Fame at Mooseheart. He taught business for 30 years at WCC and wrote two college textbooks, *Business Mathematics for College* and *Fundamentals of Retailing*. For 37 years, he was an IHSA certified swimming official, doing most of his officiating at Marmion Military Academy. He played the euphonium horn for the American Legion for many years. After retiring from teaching, he taught discus for three years at Holy Angels School, Aurora, for the track team.

Merkel, Lormor J (30 Jul 1925-12 Jul 2009), Maintenance

After retirement, Mr. Merkel liked to spend time with his many friends at the local coffee shops. He was a talented wood worker and in "Grandpa's Shop," he made wooden toys, fixed treasures, and created memories for generations of the Merkel family. He also enjoyed doing crossword puzzles.

Neubauer, Adah D (18 Jan 1925-9 Jan 2012), Head Librarian, 1969-1980

Miss Neubauer spent eleven years at WCC, after which she returned to her family ranch in Purdum, Nebraska to care for her ailing mother. In 1982, Adah was hired by the Elsmere Country School, where she attended school as a girl. She taught there until she retired in 1988. According to her obituary, "Adah enjoyed the outdoors, had a large garden every summer and the entire surrounding areas of Purdum and Elsmere enjoyed her delicious vegetables all summer long. She loved her many chickens and ducks, her dogs and cats and the cattle and horses on the ranch. She loved to read, do crossword puzzles, write children's stories (publishing one of them), and wrote her family history and her book of memories."⁷

Pierce, David Randall* (27 Mar 1935-16 Jan 2014), Dean, Instruction



Dr. Pierce was raised in Oklahoma and, after graduation from high school, served in the U.S. Marine Corps., including one year in the 7th Marines in Korea. Before and after WCC, his career was primarily in community college administration. After leaving WCC in 1970, he served as president of North Iowa Area Community College, and was later chancellor of the Virginia Community College System. He also played a leadership role in the founding of Golden West College in California and held executive positions in several educational organizations, including president and CEO of the American Association of Community Colleges.



Pilcher, James Gordon* (17 Dec 1936-7 Feb 2018) Chairman, Social Sciences

After graduating from Elgin High School and Beloit College, Jim served in the U.S. Army in military intelligence and was stationed in Stuttgart, Germany from 1961 to 1965. He later earned the master's degree and doctorate. After he left Waubensee, he was an administrator at post-secondary career schools in California and Arizona. Jim was a life-long Chicago Cubs baseball fan who attended many games and watched the Cubs win the World Series in 2016. He was also an avid Chicago Bears fan and held season tickets for 25 years. According to his obituary, he loved fishing, humor, and telling stories.

⁷ Custer County Chief (Broken Bow, NE) - Friday, January 20, 2012

Prince, William R (2 Sep 1935-4 Jul 2019), Coach, PE Instructor and Administrator

During Mr. Prince's 27 years at Waubonsee, he was at the forefront of overall fitness, helping develop Waubonsee's fitness center. In 2003, he was inducted into the Illinois Skyway Collegiate Conference Hall of Fame. In 2007 he was part of the inaugural class of inductees into Waubonsee's Athletic Hall of Fame and in 2013 was inducted into the NJCAA Region IV Hall of Fame. Bill taught golf to thousands of students from 1975 to 2000 at Valley Green Golf Course, North Aurora. Upon retirement from Waubonsee he earned his real estate license and worked as a Realtor for Weis Real Estate in Oswego and Real Estate Executives in Aurora. Bill was a member of Oswego Presbyterian Church for many years, serving for a time as elder among other positions.

Robinson, David W (29 Sep 1946-25 Oct 2007), Director of Public Information

Dave graduated from the journalism department at Northern Illinois University, with both bachelor's and master's degrees. He became director of public information at WCC in the early 1970s, succeeding Mary Jane Coffel. At the time of his death, he resided in Boulder, Colorado, where he had owned The Village Printer for 20 years. He also owned David Robinson Advertising. Dave supported many of the nonprofits in Boulder.


Roe, Stanley Charles (11 Aug 1915-14 Feb 1989), 2nd Dean of Business Services

Stan Roe died shortly after retiring from WCC. He was buried in his home state of Minnesota; his widow Lois, who died in 2013, is buried with him in Lakeview Cemetery in Grey Eagle. His parents and three siblings are also interred at the same cemetery.

Scranton, Larry Francis (15 Mar 1942-6 Jan 1975), Director of Business Services

Larry came to WCC after working for a large high-school district in Cook County. He was from a small town, known at WCC as a man who would open his wallet for students who need a little financial help for books or gas money. It's fitting that an endowed scholarship is offered in his name every year at WCC.

Sewell, Stuart James* (26 Dec 1926-25 Apr 2010), Chairman, Fine Arts

 Mr. Sewell was a Veteran of the Second World War, serving in Italy. He received a Bachelor of Arts degree and a Masters of Arts degree from Millikin University and a master of fine arts degree from NIU. He taught school in Aurora at Bardwell Elementary School, East Aurora High School, Aurora College and Waubonsee.



Shibata, Kenneth (21 Sep 1927-30 Oct 2016), Dean, Instruction, Executive Vice President

Ken Shibata was raised in Nebraska and, after graduating from Ord High School in 1945, served for two years in the U.S. Coast Guard. His career spanned 42 years and he served at every level from elementary through university. After Ken left WCC in 1983, he was executive vice president with the Des Moines Area Community College district, and in 1986 became president of Southeast Community College in Beatrice, Nebraska. He retired from SCC in 1992 and returned to Carroll, Iowa where he had worked earlier. In retirement, Ken was a very active volunteer for his church, and several other organizations. In 2007, Ken's photo accompanied an article in the *Des Moines Sunday Register* about hybrid vehicles. In the profile, Ken extolled the virtues of his 2005 Toyota Prius. When he died, his survivors included his widow Maria, four sons, three grandchildren and four great grandchildren. **PERSONAL NOTE:** When he first came to WCC, Ken showed up at a Veterans' Club party – an event that was open to all WCC veterans. He was dressed casually and introduced himself to everyone there as “Ken,” not Dr. Shibata. The vets were a bit surprised to see him there, but he fit in very well.



Sims, Howard Dwain* (22 Feb 1934-8 Oct 2006), Dean, Business Services

Dr. Sims was a 1952 graduate of Somonauk High School, an enlisted man in the U.S Marines and a lieutenant commander in the U.S. Navy. He left WCC to accept a position as president of Highland Community College in Freeport; later he was president of Rogue Community College in Grants Pass, Oregon.



Tilton, Theodore “Ted” * (26 Dec 1933-17 Dec 2019), Chair, Math and Natural Sciences

Mr. Tilton served his country proudly as a member of the United States Navy during the Korean War. He began his teaching career as a founding faculty member at WCC. After he left WCC, he worked for 26 years as a teacher and administrator at College of DuPage. “Ted” was a member of the Sandwich V.F.W. and the Yorkville American Legion. He was a former City of Yorkville alderman, past WCC board member and past Morrison School Board of Education member in Morrison, IL.

Vargas, Judy (21 Jul 1949-1 Jan 2020), Student Worker in Admissions and Records; 1970 Graduate; Counselor.

Judy left WCC after graduation to attend Northern Illinois University, where she completed bachelor's, master's and doctorate degrees. She battled Type 1 diabetes for 30 years before receiving a kidney/pancreas transplant in 1996. In 2013, her transplanted kidney failed; her brother Terry gave her one of his kidneys. Even though she was in pain almost every day of her adult life, she loved to quote Maya Angelou:

"Just because you are in pain doesn't mean you have to be a pain." Judy worked at Copley Hospital in public relations, and was later a counselor at Waubonsee, Aurora University, Oakton Community College, and Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy. She was a certified Addictions Counselor and maintained a private practice. **PERSONAL NOTE:** Judy and I stayed in touch over the years. Ray and I attended WCC's 50th Anniversary party in 2017 with Judy and her husband Jim Bondi – they met at WCC when Judy was a counselor there and Jim worked in security. Ray and I also helped celebrate her 70th birthday at a bash in Batavia in 2019. Judy was one of the first people we called when we decided to get married.

Viola, Carol Jean (Ahrens)* (4 Mar 1938-24 Aug 2017), Instructor, Speech and English

Mrs. Viola earned the BA, MA, CAS, and Ed. D from Northern Illinois University. She spent most of her professional life as a teacher and administrator at the secondary, community college, and university levels. According to her obituary in the *Daily Herald*, one of her most satisfying professional experiences was being on the founding faculty of Waubonsee Community College; she later served as Academic Dean and Vice President at WCC and went on to serve as Chancellor at College of DuPage.

Wayne, John Arthur (5 Jul 1923-3 Apr 2001), Head, Buildings and Grounds



Mr. Wayne was born in Aurora, but spent his life on his family farm in Yorkville. Mr. Wayne was in the Navy during World War II aboard the aircraft carrier U.S.S. Franklin D. Roosevelt. He enjoyed several hobbies, such as restoring antique tractors for his grandchildren and reading about history, particularly of World War II.

Wickiser, Duane A* (22 Nov 1933-3 Nov 2008), Instructor, Music



Mr. Wickiser was born in Mattoon and he was involved in music his entire life. A professional musician, he started his career playing with big bands at age 16. He served in the U.S. Army as a member of the Fourth Army Band in San Antonio, Texas. He then finished his schooling with emphasis on music education and started his career teaching. He spent the next 31 years in this field and retired in 1992 from Georgia Southern University in Statesboro. After retirement, he continued to perform with jazz and big bands throughout Georgia and was a model train enthusiast. In 2006, he returned to Illinois to be near family.

Witt, (Shirley) Lee* (13 May 1923-21 Oct 1995), Chairman, Division of PE and Recreation and first men's basketball coach



S Lee Witt was born in Golden, Illinois. He graduated from Carthage College and received the master's degree from Western Illinois University. He taught science and coached varsity high school basketball for 34 years at several schools in Illinois. He was division chairman of

physical education, athletic director and varsity basketball coach at WCC for one year. He served three years in the Army Air Corps during World War II. He was a life member of Masonic Lodge and National Education Association. Former member of Elks, Moose and Eagles, and many other organizations.

Zemek, James E* (4 May 1924-7 Aug 2012), Chair, Communications



James Edward Zemek was born in Berwyn. He was a graduate of University of Illinois and The University of Chicago and was an extremely gifted classical pianist. He taught thousands of students in the Fox Valley area, at Aurora College, St. Charles High School, as a founding faculty member of Waubensee Community College, East Aurora High School and as an academic exchange instructor at the College of DuPage. Mr. Zemek served two enlistments in World War II, and earned numerous military honors, including the Distinguished Flying Cross, for 37 successful missions over Germany as a tail gunner. After the War, he attended the Sorbonne in Paris, where he met his wife, Theodora. They travelled the world and in retirement spent two decades wintering in Puerto de Andraitx, Mallorca, Spain. According to his obituary in the *Beacon-News*, Mr. Zemek was “an animal lover, a voracious reader and the grand master of trivia and general knowledge. He had an offbeat sense of humor and loved sharing Don Martin cartoons and Glencannon stories with anyone that would listen.”⁸

⁸ *Beacon News*, (Aurora, IL) - Sunday, August 12, 2012

Administration and Faculty ⁹ “The Pioneers”

OFFICERS OF ADMINISTRATION

James H. Nelson	President
David R. Pierce	Dean of Instruction
Stanley R. Groh	Dean of Student Services
Howard D. Sims	Dean of Business Services
David F. Ford	Administrative Assistant (Public Information)
Lawrence L. Lebiecki	Director of Institutional Services
Kenneth W. Allen	Director of Learning Resources

FACULTY

Kenneth W. Allen, Director of Learning Resources

B.S. (1963), M.S. (1964), Southern Illinois University; Additional Work at Indiana U.

David Beam, Instructor in Political Science

B.A. (1965). Lawrence University; M.A. (1967), Northern Illinois University.

Mrs. Dorothy R. Becker, Counselor

BSA. (1939), Carnegie Institute of Technology; M.S. (1963), Northern Illinois University; Additional Work at Syracuse University and Northern Illinois University.

Paul G. Bosse, Counselor

B.S. (1954), M.S. (1961), Bradley University.

Richard Brightman, Chairman, Business Division

A.A. (1955), Orange Coast College; A.B. (1961), M.B.A. (1963), Stanford University.

Jon J. Duerr, Instructor in Biology and Botany

B.A. (1965), Coe College; M.S. (1967), Northern Illinois University.

David F. Ford, Administrative Assistant (Public Information)

B.S. (1956), Northern Illinois University.

Robert L Gage, Instructor, Physics and Mathematics

B.S. (1957), Ball State university; M.Ed. (1963), Harvard University; M.S. (1964), Purdue University.

Robert H. Gregory, Instructor in Reading and English

B.S. (1950), Middle Tennessee State College; M.Ed. (1966), Northern Illinois Univ.

Stanley R. Groh, Dean of Student Services

B.A. (1957), University of Pittsburgh; M.Ed. (1963), Pennsylvania State University,

⁹ From 1967-68 Waubensee Community College Catalog, pages 53-55, with light editing

Mrs. Lucille R. Halfvarson, Instructor in Vocal Music

A.B. (1941), Knox College; M. Ed. (1943), Northwestern University.

Robert A. Harris, Instructor in Social Science

A.B. (1953), Boston University; S.T.B. (1955) & S.T.M. (1961), Boston University.

Charles H. Juister, Instructor in Fine Arts

B.S. (1951); M.F.A. (1953); University of Illinois.

Lorin Keith Klein, Counselor

B.S. (1961), M.S. (1963), Illinois State University.

Lawrence L. Lebiecki, Director of Institutional Services

B.S. (1962), Wisconsin State University; Additional Work at Northern Illinois University.

Clayton B. Loudon, Instructor in Earth Sciences

B.S. (1965), Illinois State University.

James McAnally, Instructor in Business

B.S. (1955), University of Colorado; M.S. (1963), Northern Illinois University.

James H. Nelson, President

A.A. (1948), Mesa College; B.A. (1952), University of Colorado; Ed.D. (1961), University of California (Los Angeles).

David R. Pierce, Dean of Instruction

B.A. (1960), M.A. (1961), California State College; M.S. (1965), Purdue University.

James Pilcher, Chairman, Division of Social Science.

B.S. (1958), M.S. (1962), Northern Illinois University.

Harold C. Sheidt, Instructor in Physical Education and Baseball Coach

B.S. (1959), M.S. (1960), Illinois State University.

Stuart J. Sewell, Chairman, Division of Fine Arts

B.S. (1951), M.S.Ed. (1953), Millikin university; M.F.A. (1965), Northern Illinois University.

Mrs. Patricia Jane Shifferd, Instructor in Social Science

B.A. (1963), University of Dubuque & Northern Illinois Univ; M.A. (1967), Northern Illinois University.

Howard D. Sims, Dean of Business Services

B.S. (1958), M.Ed. (1962), University of Missouri; Additional Work at Northern Illinois University.

Leland Thompson, Chairman, Division of Technology

B.S. (1958), M.S. (1962), Northern Illinois University.

Theodore Tilton, Chairman, Division of Mathematics and Natural Sciences

A.A. (1956), Compton Junior College; B.A. (1959), California State College; M.A. (1966), Rutgers University.

Mrs. Carol Jean Viola, Instructor in Speech and English

B.A. (1966), M.A. (1965), Northern Illinois University.

Duane A. Wickiser, Instructor in Music

B.A. (1960), Eastern Illinois University; M.M.E. (1965), Millikin University.

S. Lee Witt, Chairman, Division of Physical Education and Recreation

A.B. (1947), Carthage College; M.S. (1960), Western Illinois University.

James E. Zemek, Chairman, Division of Communications

B.A. (1948), University of Illinois; M.A. (1949), University of Chicago; Additional Work at the University of Toronto and at the University of Paris.

Sources and Acknowledgements

- Phone conversations and interviews with: Ken Allen; Paul Bosse; Mollie (Closson) Mellien; Mary Jane Coffel-Bauer; Jon Duerr; Larry Dukes; Dave Eck; Margie Keele Nolan Schuett; Charlie Knapp; Larry Lebiecki; James Nelson, Patricia Shifferd; Janet Sprague-Williams.
- Newspaper articles sourced through these databases: Newspaper.com; genealogybank.com; newspaperarchive.com and America's Newspapers.
- Ancestry.com, Fold3.com (military database) and FindAGrave.com
- *Waubonsee Community College: A History, Volume I, 1966-1974*; by David W Robinson.
- Waubonsee's official website: Waubonsee.edu

A big "Thank You" to Dr. Christine Sobek, WCC president; Christina Goings, WCC archivist; Rhea Hunter and Kendall Vance, also of WCC's LRC; Christopher Biersdorf, adult services librarian at the Santori Library in Aurora. Special thanks to my first reader, Ray Vickery, my second reader, Paul Bosse, retired WCC dean, and Jan Sprague.

Word count: 16,318 - Friday, September 16, 2022