



## AMAZING CAREER - STEVE LOVELADY JFK 1967

My family and I moved to Taylor in my Sophomore year with me attending Kennedy at Taylor Center High School in the afternoons, as Kennedy students prepared to enter JFK upon completion. My heart had been set upon graduation in Lincoln Park, Mi. where I had grown up. So, I began skipping school to return and hang out with my friends, as the transition was difficult for me. However, I soon settled in, by God's grace. And now, looking back, I was able to develop profound friendships with Bill Baskin, Chuck Bonner, Darwin Daniels and Clarke Huff and several others. I have even maintained contact with each of them till today. They have become dear friends to me. Darwin, Clarke, and I formed a singing group which we called "Huff, Puff and the Magic Dragons". We'd walk the halls between classes and try to harmonize singing songs. You, Mr. Pantalone, got wind of it and had us sing some of the day's announcements over the PA. Can you remember? Maybe I should ask "Can you Imagine?" You almost launched a career there for us"!

After graduation, since I had set my goal in life to fight in Vietnam, I kept to the plan. My father shot a plane down in the Pacific during World War 2, and I knew every one of his war stories. Without him ever realizing it, I began to internalize the notion that to be a man, one had to go off and fight in a war and return just as his own father before him had done. I would spend every free period each day in the library, reading every article about the Vietnam war in "Look" and "Life" magazines to enable me to picture myself there already. In fact, I was afraid the war would be over before I could get there.

And so, upon graduation, Bill and I were off to the US Marine Corps together. We both completed Boot Camp in the same platoon in San Diego, California before we were separated for a long time. Eventually, in February of 1969 I landed and there I was, just as I had imagined all along. I was placed in a squadron that enabled me to serve as a 50 caliber Door Gunner aboard a CH-46 Sea knight and fly Recon and Medevac missions throughout my deployment. In all, I flew 142 combat missions collecting 7 Air Medals and two Single Mission Air Medals. I was shot down (forced landings- not crashes) on 3 different occasions before getting severely wounded by a Rocket Propelled Grenade in August that year. As a result, I was medevaced to Manilla before I was off to Japan where I spent several months in the hospital at Yokosuka, Japan with a second debridement surgery and eventually closure of my wounds. My worst wounds were in my legs and my lower back where I had 3 pieces embedded in my spinal cord. Eventually, I was sent back to the states with 75 others fastened in a cargo plane like sardines all the way to Bethesda Hospital and then to the Great Lakes Medical Hospital in Illinois.

My wife and I were married in January of 70, and I spent my last year and ½ in USMC New River Helicopter base in Jacksonville, NC where I continued to recover from my wounds. Upon discharge, we moved back to Michigan, where I worked for 1 1/2 years as a foreman at Roadway Express, before resigning to go off to Grand Rapids Baptist College, in GR, Michigan to prepare for the ministry. I had been converted to Christ before coming to Kennedy. And I always felt God's love for me despite my many shenanigans

notwithstanding, both in Taylor and while in the Marines. Upon completion of my B.A. I began the Seminary there before transferring to Trinity Seminary in Deerfield, Il where I moved my family of 4. Graduating there with a M.A. in Old Testament Semitic and Near Eastern Languages, I began my Doctorate at Marquette Graduate School in Milwaukee. While attending Marquette, I was also called to pastor a small church there in Deerfield. While juggling all three, working on my Doctorate, Pastoring church, School and working, it began to drain the life out of me.

At that time a much larger church called to have me interview in the Quad Cities, Silvis, Illinois. We were called to minister there. And so, we all moved in October 1987, and I began a ministry with God's blessing which has lasted 27 years. Along the way I had 3 assistants, the last being my second son Benjamin. Together we served twelve of those years, side by side until 2014, when our church donned me with the title of Pastor Emeritus and called Ben to become our new Senior Pastor. As such I am still serving in a teaching capacity under his lead. I retired early because of the back pain, as they were never able to remove the 3 pieces of shrapnel from my spinal column. And the pain had become too difficult to deal with. In fact, I had to endure a multi hour grueling surgery in order to mount a titanium cage around my spine in the wounded area. I had also contracted Agent Orange Prostate Cancer and endured another painful surgery. During that I contracted Agent Orange Arterial Disease, with 2 resultant heart attacks, now some 12 stents. Then, in 2010 I came down with CML Leukemia. And finally, -in 2019 I added another serious disease to the list. I came down with Myasthenia Gravis -General as well as Ocular. So needless to say, without God's care and provision, even teaching now, is a reach for me. But I love it. And so long as I can, -I will.

Along the way in my journey, I was invited to teach College extension courses in theology for Moody Bible Institute and had the honor of serving as a Holland America Cruise Chaplain for 2-week periods for several years. During that time, I was also serving overseas 2-weeks a year for several years during that time as a visiting professor in Moscow, Myanmar, Jamaica, Benin, Niger, Togo, Cameroon, and Mali ...so that in all, from cruise duty, teaching seminars and my Marine Corps my travels, God had opened doors for me in some 42 different countries.

Mrs. Marshall and Mr. Clemens who both took a personal interest in me while at Kennedy, and I know that God used that personal element from them, to embolden me on to an academic career after the service. And so, as much as I resented the move and being forced to attend and graduate from any school other than the one, I had pictured myself graduating from, I wouldn't have had it any other way. The friends I made there have tended to me throughout these 56 years since I graduated there at JFK. Thank you, sir, for the privilege of writing these "two or three paragraphs." And as you may have already gathered, my congregation put up with some long sermons.

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## WE HEARD FROM ALUMNI

**CAN WE OBTAIN OUR HIGH SCHOOL TRANSCRIPT?** The answer is **YES** - you will need to call Pupil Accounting at 313-295-5742.

Let them know your name, school, year of graduation and be ready to provide proof of identification.

## GOOD THINGS HAPPENING IN THE CITY

[Taylor Recreation's annual Mother Son Date Nights](#) were Out of this World with music by DJ Gabriel Pilon... Dancing! Pizza! More Dancing! Dessert! More Dancing! Crafts! More Dancing!

A night of memory making fun... Here are some photos from the 7:00 pm event! Characters and Face Painting by Carey Ann's Clown Caravan - Kudos to painters Tisha Hunter and Hailey Bormann! Gabriel Pilon - Audial Entertainment



## UPCOMING EVENTS

**April 22 – REUNION -JFK Class of 73**

**April 14 – Night Golf Tournament**

**April 27 – CELEBRATE TAYLOR**

**April 30 – Taylor Community Chorus Spring Concert**

## TIME FOR A LITTLE HUMOR



*Did you ever wonder- Why does round pizza come in a square box?*



*I changed my car horn to gunshot sounds. People get out of the way much faster now.*

## 50 YEARS AGO

A new high school was to be built and named Charles Brake High. School Board member Richard Trolley moved to name the new high school John F Kennedy and the board passed the change on a 6-1 vote. Fact: Your Alumni Association board searched to see if it was the 1st high school in the country to be named John F Kennedy and found we were a close 2nd to a school in Texas.



## THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

*You may not be able to control what someone says or does or some of the situations that life throws at you, but you sure can control the way you react.*



## **OBITUARIES**

*The Alumni Association members would like to extend their deepest sympathy to the family and friends of the former classmates mentioned below. You will forever be in our thoughts and prayers. Please Note: If you know of a deceased graduate that is not listed in the Memoriam section of our website, please let us know the name, school, graduating class and date of passing.*

### **TAYLOR HIGH SCHOOL**

- Kyle Fisher, Class of 2021 (passed February 20, 2023)

### **TAYLOR CENTER HIGH SCHOOL**

- Joyce Marquette Klimek, Class of 1959 (passed in 2021)
- Barbara Belcher Garner, Class of 1960 (passed February 25, 2023)
- Murlyn Nieman, Class of 1960 (passed March 17, 2023)
- Garry Browning, Class of 1968 (passed September 23, 2021)
- Roxanne Kay Styer, Class of 1969 (passed February 23, 2023)
- Rick Merrihew, Class of 1969 (passed December 6, 2002)
- Donald Neal, Class of 1972 (passed September 15, 2018)
- Garry Shopshear, Class of 1972 (passed November 2022)

### **HARRY S TRUMAN HIGH SCHOOL**

- Robert James LaVoisne, Class of 1976 (passed January 31, 2023)

### **JOHN F KENNEDY**

- Tim McClain, Class of 1968 (passed November 19, 2022)
- Kim Maddox, Class of 1972 (passed March 5, 2023)
- Shawn Pawlak, Class of 1998 (passed March 6, 2023)

### **STAFF**

- Nancy Ann Gray, Retired English Teacher, Taylor Center HS & Harry S Truman HS, (passed February 25, 2023)
- Barbara Erickson, Retire Music Teacher (passed March 6, 2023)

***For more information about the deceased and their families, please visit [tayloralumni.org](http://tayloralumni.org) and click on "In Memoriam".***