



Dick Nelson: Graduated from Whitmer in 1958. I was born in March 1940. The loves of my life have been my life.

After Whitmer, I attended the University of Toledo until my Junior year when, surprise, surprise, I contracted mononucleosis. No big deal, you might say, but there were complications and the doctor put me on six months bed rest. I survived my Junior year but, upon failing to register for Senior year, Uncle Sam came knocking – You are my man! I served three years (actually two years, eleven months and twenty nine days) in the Army

Security Agency. (If I told you what I did, you'd have to be terminated.)

I worked for the Defense Department as an instructor at Fort Devens, Massachusetts, for six months and then went to work for a defense contractor, Sanders Associates, in Nashua, New Hampshire. Worked there for nine years and then signed on with the Navy Department in 1975 at the Pinecastle Electronic Warfare Range in Florida. Having some ethical disagreements with management, I accepted an opportunity with Marion County, Florida, in 1987 as the 9-1-1 Director from which I retired in February 2007. Along with my 9-1-1 duties in Marion, I served for seven years as Chairman of the Florida Statewide 9-1-1 Coordinator Group, and six years on the Board of Officers for the Florida Chapter of The Association of Public Safety Communications Officials International, Inc. (APCO), serving as President during 2000-2001. In 1994, I received my Certified Public Manager designation from the Florida Center for Public Management at Florida State University and in 2004 I was awarded the designation of Florida APCO Life-Member.

Along the way I experienced a training marriage, which lasted six years, and my present marriage to Maxine, who has put up with me since 1974 (I think that's right). Max and I raised six children (hers, mine, ours and theirs). We have 13 grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

My Favorite Memory of Whitmer High: My life's had its ups and downs (like most people's) but most of it has been a hoot and I have loved every minute, especially the memories from Whitmer – the Red Lantern Boys, the Drive Ins, you guys, the plays (I'm still doing theater - I was in "The Music Man", as one of the Barbershop Quartet, in May of this year. The show ran four weeks and played to over 9,000 patrons.), the band, classes, assemblies, Mr. Foster, Mrs. Fontaine (she was tough, thank God), the ladies I dated, and too many other memories to chronicle here. I'm so thankful I grew up with you, all of you! I didn't know it at the time, but I was living Happy Days without the Fonze.

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