

## Northwestern 50<sup>th</sup> reunion: Class of 1971

We like to attend 50<sup>th</sup> reunions of previous school classes to see what facilities are like and what people have been doing, so we attended the 50<sup>th</sup> reunion of the class of 1971. Chris was an undergraduate from that year and Louis was a graduate student from that year. In general, grad students are mostly non-existent at such reunions. The reunions for all classes this year were held at Ravinia, which is the outdoor music festival location in Highland Park, Illinois. There were several locations at the facility that hosted reunions, and attendees were supposed to have vaccine. They gave out three types of wristbands: red – keep your distance, yellow – fist and elbow bumps only, green – handshakes and hugs. There were giveaways of Northwestern purple gloves and socks.

We met Chris' friend from the Chapin dorm, Marj, and we stayed at the local Marriott Courtyard, two blocks down Lake Cook Road from her residence. Her daughter, Megan, lived across the grass in a house in Highland Park. We carpooled together to the reunion event where free valet parking was provided. Marj was a committee member for the 1970 reunion. We were hoping to find someone that we knew from the combined ~250 attendees from the two classes of 1970 and 1971, but there was only one person from Chapin that we knew. The buffet dinner at the dining room at Ravinia was very nice and there was the apparently obligatory open bar for such events. Many of us remembered Professor Bergen Evans for English, and Professor Richard Leopold for History. There did not seem to be any recognized Biology, Chemistry or Physics majors. Chris had never been to Ravinia before and wanted me to take her there, but that did not happen while we were students at Northwestern.

The next day we carpooled and parked free at the Metra North Braeside station and took the train to Central Street in Evanston to attend the Homecoming Football Game at Dyche Stadium-Ryan Field against Rutgers (since when is that a Big 10 school?). There was an organized phony tailgate party on a concrete platform at the North side of the stadium, but the hamburger and hot dog fare was not as interesting or as delicious as the variety of items served up (mostly free) in the adjacent parking lots. Louis objected to the beverages available, such as alcohol, bottled water, and carbonated everything. Fortunately, one of the servers was able to provide a bottle of orange Gatorade. The noisy platform was exposed to the sun and wind, so we fled to the assigned reunion seats.

Our mostly purple section was way at the northwest lower corner of the stadium on the goal line. The Northwestern band and students were diagonally opposite at the southeast corner. The Rutgers cheer squad was at the northeast corner, far away from most of the red crowd near us. Their band did not show up. The announcements from the concrete platform loudspeakers were way too loud and repetitive. Since this was the homecoming event, the Northwestern University Marching Band Alumni (NUMBalums) participated in some of the band events. They seemed to have more enthusiasm than the relatively indifferent band performance. Fifty years ago, the band always took the field afterwards for some fancy practice marching and patterns. Now the band just dissipated.

We got on the campus shuttle buses afterwards and stopped at Cahn Auditorium, walked through sorority row, and got to Chapin Hall. Chris and Marj found the dorm to be familiar but different and that the all-girl co-operative dorm was now coed. Afterwards, we had pizza along with many red-clad people at the restaurant diagonally across the street. It used to be "The Key" 50 years ago but has been "Lou Malnati's Pizzeria" since then. We then walked to the Davis Street station to take the Metra North train back to the Braeside station in Highland Park. The next morning, Marj served us a deluxe homemade breakfast and then we saw Megan and her two children at her house nearby.