

Good afternoon. Thank you for coming. 10 minutes, please: I arrived in Mishawaka Thursday evening. Husband and I drove around Mishawaka a bit. I showed him the path I would walk when I walked home from MHS to Normain Heights — across the bridge on Mishawaka Avenue, on to Cedar, up Cedar hill, west at the car lot, over the railroad tracks and past some small church, north on Division to McKinley, and half-a-mile north into Normain Heights. Back when I was 15 and 16, I could do that in 30 minutes. I pointed out where North Side School used to be, and then the old Battell School, and the old library, and Main Jr. High.

Then I drove past Carolyn Schwartz's one-time family home where, in college, I had a desk in a front room while working for the old Mishawaka Enterprise. There was a wine cellar in the basement of that old house. On the door to the wine cellar was posted a faded piece of paper with a list of chores and the names Kathy, Carolyn, and Connie.

Husband and I then had supper at Doc Pierce's, and I was overwhelmed with sadness.

Returning to a place where you grew up but that you moved away from almost 50 years ago and that you've had no connection to for almost 25 years is jarring. And the return comes with more sadness than I had expected. I have both good and bad memories of Mishawaka. Normain Heights? Almost 100% good memories. Let me tell you about the park, and the woods, and the cow pasture, and the creek, and my Camp Fire group! ... MHS? Not so much. Teen years are tough for most. Mainly, I always felt as if I did not belong.

Some may be aware that in 2008, 2013, and 2018, I arranged potluck days here at Castle Manor for any and all who ever were part of the MHS '68 group. (Please note that in both 2013 and 2018, Terry DeMaegd did **MAJOR** on-the-ground actual work to make the day happen.) ... Last year, some people wrote me asking if I planned to do it again in 2023. ... Initially, I had no interest. Then, I decided to do what I have done.

The USA changed in 2020: BLM & antifa ruled the streets. We were ordered to remain inside our homes. We were ordered to wear face coverings (the better to hide identities of street terrorists). Many who were prohibited from working lost everything they had.

Hidden behind all that chaos was the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in *Bostock v. Clayton Co.*, on June 15, 2020. It is that Supreme Court ruling that has allowed men to invade women's private spaces and women's sports teams.

I try to avoid leftists who support the insanities of recent times. I paid the rent and invited those whom I wanted to see, one last time. ... Back in March 2022, I said, "Only people who know what a woman is, who know that killing babies is wrong, who know that Hunter Biden's laptop is real, and who know that the 'Russia! Russia! Russia!' hoax was a hoax." ... By now, even the New York Times and the Washington Post acknowledge that Hunter's laptop is real and that Hillary was behind the "Russia! Russia! Russia!" hoax. ... But leftists are still pushing for "abortion" up to the moment of full-term birth; that is infanticide. And the Democratic Party continues pushing its extreme anti-woman agenda as it promotes transgender ideology.

For a while, they were calling women "people who menstruate." The new term seems to be "non-man." I'm not a "non-man." I'm a woman. I am a woman. Women come in all shapes and sizes. Some are pleasing to the eye, some are not. Some wear "girly" clothes; some wear jeans and work boots. Some birth children; some do not. Some love men; some love women. **All** are women. None come with penises. I am a woman.

My life: I live two miles from where full-term, viable babies are "aborted" in what is deceptively called a "clinic." ... After the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*, someone broke into the Catholic church a mile from where I've lived for 41 years and set the church on fire. ... In recent years, I was ordered out of the office of an OB/GYN because I refused to answer questions about whether I identified as a woman or a man: I was there for a Pap test, and my records showed that I'd birthed two children, but I was asked if I "identify" as a man or a woman. ... In May 2021, near me in Loudoun Co., Virginia, a high-school girl was raped in a girls' restroom by a boy-pretending-to-be-a-girl, and the school board attempted to bury the story. The dad was tackled and shoved to the floor when he appeared at the school board to complain. ... This fall, in the county where I live, transgender indoctrination will begin in kindergarten. Children will be told that sometimes a girl is born with a penis, and that a boy can become a girl. When that was announced at the school board, Muslim mothers were there to protest, politely. A member of the County Council called those Muslim mothers "white supremacists" and "outright bigots." Muslim mothers, wearing hijabs, saying that they did not want their young children to be taught that boys can be girls, and they were called bigots.

This day happened because I wanted one last day in my childhood hometown and the chance to see some people whom I knew when I was a child, people who still know that killing babies is wrong and that women are real. Thank you for coming. Some traveled many miles to be here, and I sincerely appreciate that, more than you can comprehend. ... Here today is my old and dear friend who, when I came up with the idea in March of 2022 said simply, "Tell me where and when, and I'll be there." And here also is my friend from way back when we were about two years old. In the world of friends from young childhood, I got lucky.

For those interested, there will be Euchre this afternoon. For supper, there will be delivery pizza. After it's dark, there will be fireworks. There is the long Mishawaka Riverwalk that begins outside these doors and goes past Battell Park. There are two Mishawaka City Council members here who deserve some thanks for having the vision to push for the Riverwalk -- Mike Bellovich and Maggie DeMaegd (who is Mrs. Terry DeMaegd). If you want to know more about the Riverwalk, ask them. ... If you want to know more about your genealogy, ask me. ... Make the day work for you. Come and go. Castle Manor will be open for you all day.

Remember to come back for the fireworks tonight. When I came up with this idea, I talked with Spider. Spider liked the idea for the day, and Spider was going to help with the fireworks. Spider died on June 10 of last year. Four months after Spider died, I learned that Spider and I share ancestors. How did I learn that? Spider's daughter and I share DNA, and the DNA tells us that the share is on her dad's side. Of all the MHS '68 people, Spider may be the one whom I am most happy to say that the DNA proves we're cousins. He did enormous good for many, and he never asked for thanks for the good that he did for others. This evening's fireworks will be in Spider's honor.

Alice Marie Beard
July 2, 2023
Castle Manor, Mishawaka, Indiana