

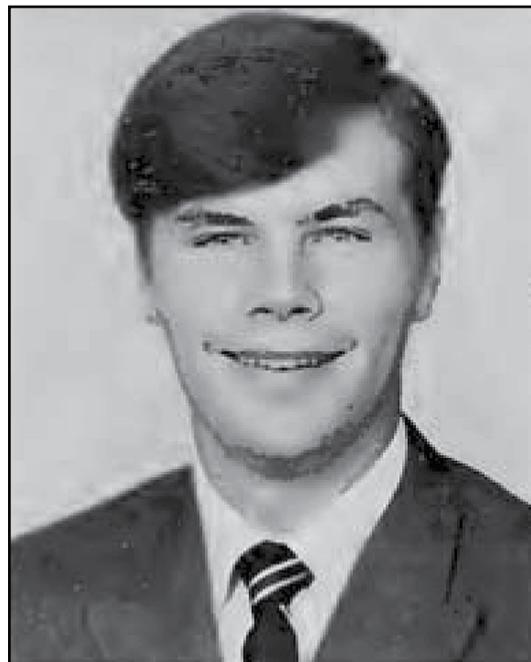
“Hello fellow classmates this announcement is presented by John Zimmer...”

After reading the memories of Joe Vidmar, James Meil, and Jerry Stevens I feel the need to keep the St. Mary’s Mentor, momentum going. At that time, as a small city in Lake County, Mentor had a rather large contingent of students attend St. Joe’s. I’m sure that changed when Lake Catholic was started. I never led a nomadic life so Mentor is still my home where I’ve shared my life with my wife of 45 years, Chris.

I’ll start with freshman orientation in the school gymnasium. I felt overwhelmed walking into a school that was 50X larger than St. Mary’s. I immediately walked up the bleachers and sat down near the top. After a few minutes another freshman came up and sat down a row lower and to my side. We exchanged a hello when he said he was from Painesville. Ah, something in common, so I quickly mentioned I was from Mentor. I felt like I was making a friend. And we did become friends, not close, but someone I would call a friend. Over the four years we ended up on the same Lakefront Lines bus many times, heading home from after school activities. That friend was Pat Lyons. Not a bad first new friend.

One thing that really sticks with me is I never heard Pat say a bad thing about anyone. Wish I was that respectful. The other thing about Pat was that he had a great jump shot. I can picture that gentle wrist snap with his hand pointing to the basket with the result being a “swish” as the basketball hit the net. I hope you can remember like I can the night he broke the single game scoring record at that time. He couldn’t miss a shot, and at the final buzzer the students rushed the court celebrating Pat’s achievement. People often die way earlier than they should, and Pat was one of them. Like all of you, I was shocked when I heard of his passing. He was one of the good guys.

In my senior year I shared the daily P.A. school announcements. Ever since my freshman year I had wanted to read the announcements. Maybe because I had a face made for radio. Anyhow, I





remember having problems with some of the names, and would struggle. To those students whose names I hacked, I apologize. Better late than never I suppose.

One day stands out more than any other. Occasionally one of the team captains would come to the communications room by the office and say a few words about an upcoming game. This particular day, Kevin Flynt was to pump up the student body. Well, it just so happens that as I was reading the announcements I started to laugh. I can't remember why but within seconds it was uncontrollable, to the point tears were running down my face. Trying to compose myself was useless. As Kevin walked in to the room he saw me laughing, and had that "deer in the headlights" look. It got so bad I had to hand the announcements to Kevin, and he started to read them. After he was done, and I had somewhat composed myself he gave the microphone back to me. Now I had to introduce Kevin even though he had been speaking for a minute or two. I said "now here's Kevin Flynt to say a few words about the upcoming football game". At that point I can hear roars coming from the classrooms. About the same time Brother Aaron walked in. He didn't say anything. He just shot me a look. The man could take the fun out of a room quickly.

If I may, there are a few other memories that I would like to share.

Freshman year, my very first gym class on Monday morning, we had to run one mile. Seeing how I didn't study for it, I think on finished on Thursday. I laugh about this now as I ended up being a runner for 43 years.

Mr. Gillespie was a teacher and also coached the baseball team with Mr. Thomas. "Diz", to be kind, was always spinning a yarn. Google it, it's a thing. Funny thing is, he had a tell. Every time he used his middle finger to push his glasses up the bridge of his nose you knew he was spinning a yarn. If I remember, he did that a lot.

Jerry Stevens used the word "keyboarding" to describe the typing class. I'm going to use the word "waterboarding" to describe English Lit. To this day I still don't know Keats from Teats.

My freshman homeroom was 1N. I guess it was standard practice to name homerooms. Ours was Nocturnal Nightcrawlers. It's a unique name that I believe Ed Zivkovich came up with it. Don't worms eat where they poop?

Taking French as a language was a mistake. I didn't use it much. Had I known how the world was to evolve I would have taken Spanish. As it is, I'm trying to rectify that mistake by learning Spanish online.

Adiós amigos!