



Grant Nelson, Class of 1984

I am Grant Nelson, graduate of Marshall County Central-class of 1984. You might know me better as Captain Nordic.

Since graduation I have spent most of my work-life at the Pennington County Sheriff's Office in Thief River Falls, Minnesota where I am the Dispatch Supervisor. I have also written a column titled "Rural Reflections" which began in the Grand Forks Herald in November of 2000 and continues today in the Northern Watch newspaper. This column is also a radio program featured on TRF Radio, where I also work, and Pioneer 90.1 FM-where I volunteer. I am an elected Supervisor at the Pennington Soil and Water Conservation District and also farm part-time. Lisa and I married in 2002 and enjoy our lives together at our farm in rural Thief River Falls, Lisa works at Dig-Key.

I had so many experiences at MCC that were not only memorable but profoundly shaped my life. Sam Gebhart was a teacher and football coach who helped me become involved in physical fitness. I was physically active as a young person but Mr Gebhart really helped me prioritize exercise in my life. He was also a good model for self-discipline and allowing your actions to speak for your depth of character.

Carol Peterson was a teacher I greatly admired. She taught the subject I enjoyed the most-English. I enjoyed the poetry and her insight as to what Shakespeare actually meant but she was also a very disciplined person. Part of her course was to structure sentences and to identify all parts of a sentence which was basically learning the rules of how to write. She also made us memorize the ALL of the prepositions in order to prevent us from writing sentences with dangling participles. Mrs Peterson was my speech teacher and opened a whole new world to me that would teach me how to create humor in subtle, less obvious ways that create thought in the mind of the reader. Mrs Peterson gave me a set of tools I use every day.

Ron Ueland prepared me for the highly-political world that didn't even exist back in the eighties. At that time, politics existed in the background of our lives-unlike today. Mr Ueland taught me the liberty-security balance and how our government was structured. He spoke to his classes in a personal, unguarded way that was so genuine and memorable. I think Mr Ueland is iconic in the MCC school district but my admiration of him is much more personal.

My experience in the MCC school system began at the Viking School. Viking gave me the kind of education that would have allowed me to enter the deep end of youth which is being a teenager. I think the greatest thing I learned in Viking was real compassion for the thoughts and lives of others. Ardelle Anderson and Doug Safar were teachers that helped me negotiate some naturally challenging portions of my life. Also, cook Sue Bjorgaard fed us so well at Viking-she was such a nice lady.

I actually grew up just outside of Viking and that was an experience that had a great influence on my life; I had so many good examples of how to act and live. The adults were typically kind to me and spoke to me like an adult. I still talk to kids like I would to

any adults so I guess some of Viking still lives on in me. Viking was a town that taught me to play piano at Mrs Hofrenning's home and trombone with Mrs Klopp. It was so nice to spend Christmas in Viking. I loved Holidays in Viking-especially Christmas and Halloween. Everyone gave treats during Halloween and Christmas at our church was a memory that is so strong that it seems like more than just a memory.

I stay in contact with those who shared my MCC experience mostly on the internet. I made fun of Facebook when it first surfaced on the internet however have found it an excellent tool to keep in touch and to spread the reach of my newspaper column and radio program. I've always said my words are like my children. I always hope my words either support something good, oppose something bad or just lighten someone's load. Some of my best connections at this stage in my life occur at funerals, however. I have visited quite a few friends while I attend the funeral for their parents. My friend's parents were like my occasional parents so I want to be there to honor and remember them. I also catch up with friends at Walmart, the grocery store or Hardware Hank.

I want Captain Nordic to say a few words; Captain Nordic loved Marshall County Central. I created Captain Nordic as a separate entity but we shared a heart. Captain Nordic was my way of expressing how I felt about the school. He was also my ideal of how a person should approach life-expressing every possible emotion as a way to approach the challenges in life. He could be aggressive and intense one moment, wildly free-wheeling another and quiet at others. I wanted him to be a leader and wanted him to be a way to focus our collective strength as a school. After I left MCC, I never wanted anyone to "wear my costume" as I felt Captain Nordic had said all he wanted to say. I guess his words were like his children too. I hope Captain Nordic was able to give back some of what Grant Nelson received from his time at Marshall County Central.

I would like to thank the Spotlight 2.0 and MCC Education Foundation for allowing me to share my thoughts. I hope the Freeze have a great year in sports but even more importantly, I hope the current students are able to one day look at what a great life they began at Marshall County Central.

Grant Nelson