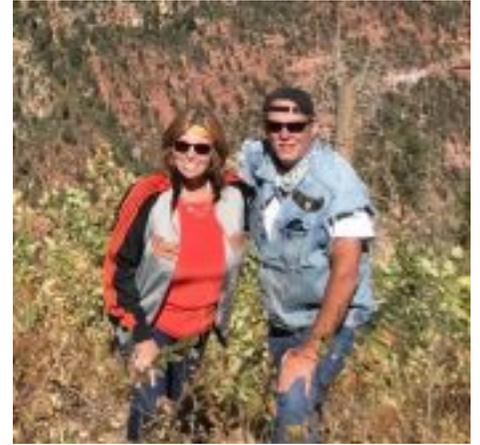




Jill Johnson Maxwell Class of 1982



I just did the math and WOW, it has been 38 years since high school graduation in 1982. So much has changed since then and many things stay the same, like the 35 people I graduated with and many of whom I went to kindergarten with. We have all gone our separate ways yet, most of my classmates are still good, down to earth caring people. Many of whom keep in touch via Facebook or the occasional Newfolden reunions.

I have been a physical therapist for 33 years now and in private practice for 21 years in Flint, Michigan. We also lived in Prior Lake for 7-8 years. I loved being back in Minnesota. We have 3 boys and one 7 year old grandson. Two of my sons live in Florida and work in yachting industry and the third son works in my business, Max Well Therapy.

Currently 50 percent of my patients are pediatric. We also offer occupational, speech and massage therapy. So we treat a wide variety of diagnosis. I had to close my clinics and lay off all of my staff for 6 weeks back in April. It was one of the most challenging things I have ever had to do. After building up a business for 20 years, it was heart breaking. I am sure some of you have been in similar situations. Someone once said at the MCC Hall of Fame awards that "To get me to quit, someone would have to put a stake through my heart." That's what that week felt like. Fortunately some help came along and we are back in business - helping children and families stay Well.

I learned the importance of community and hard work growing up in Viking and Newfolden. Both are great communities where people support each other in time of need. I know several of you helped my niece, Meghan, when she was ill. Thank you!

I can't say that I had any one favorite teacher, but many great ones. I do occasionally have nightmares about incomplete English reports...for Mrs. Peterson. I remember Richard Ness, my kindergarten bus driver and Viking school janitor. And Sue Bjorgaard, the Viking school cook. And Ole Magner, our favorite bus driver. Johnson kids were always late for the bus. We had a long driveway and would come out one at a time - all 6 of us, me lugging my baritone (a huge case). Ole would drive down our driveway and

pick us up versus waiting at the end of the driveway. These are just some of the great people who worked in the schools.

I remember the families that I grew up with, that supported each other. The Blawats, the Knutsons, the Yutrzenkas, the Peters, the Lindemoens, the Andersons, the Halvorsons and many more.

I remember 4H summer softball games and fair entries. Oh, the demolition derby that I earned a "True Grit Award." Thanks to Scott Peters and Rick Bothum for allowing me to drive their car! Scott thought it would be cool to put a girl in the competition. Brother Jeff wished he could be in it. And when the car caught on fire, he was on the sidelines yelling, "Get back in there! You can still drive it after they put the fire out". So I ran back - but no such luck.

Summers were also spent taking swimming lessons at the Warren pool. Sometimes we would ride bike 5 miles to Viking to catch the bus. Then afterwards stop at Myrtle Sacketts' Hartz store for candy.

I always loved sports and Mrs. Waale, our PE teacher in Viking. Rick Van Camp was heavy into competing in the race around the school block. We also had high jump, arm wrestling and leg wrestling competitions. Leg wrestling was my forte'. Ask brother BJ who thought he could take me on his senior year, then was flipped 3 times. High school was filled with great volleyball, basketball and track teams. Mr. Mjelde really set the standard for girls' basketball in Newfolden. Our volleyball team also did well under Ms. Ackermann.

Growing up in a small town gave me the opportunity to do so many things; be a part of teams and musicals, band, etc. as everyone had to participate to have a team. I still can not do just one thing.

The education I received at MCC prepared me to be successful in college. Lowell Lindemoen once told me, "Make good choices and you will have a good life. As life is a result of the choices we make." So true!

Relationships, good neighbors and a community of caring people in Viking and Newfolden have created a good foundation for many.