

The History Corner  
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### Old Box of PTA Minutes

I have a four-drawer filing cabinet at home filled with nothing but old maps. On second thought, that's not exactly true. It isn't just maps crammed into the files. The cabinet is also stuffed with travel guides, old resort brochures, out of date AAA books, as well as such gems as the hand scribbled (and now nearly illegible note) describing the exact location of the "best hidden hot spring in western Montana". Why I keep all of it, and worse yet keep adding to it, is something of a mystery even to me. On occasion I have tried to sort through it all, reducing its bulk to a reasonable size, maybe two drawers instead of four, but instead of tossing something out I more than likely will start refiling what I come across. After all, finding a torn and faded map of Idaho filed under "Halifax and the Maritimes" is frustrating. But then, instead of simply discarding it as I should, I more than likely will tape it together, refold it, and place it back where it belongs, under "Idaho--winter trip '72".

I tell you this since it might help better explain my reaction and my interest to the discovery of a box marked "old PTA minutes" uncovered by staff at North Shore Community School a few months ago. It's not that the box had been lost, more likely it had been stored away years ago and then ignored and overlooked, being moved to various storage rooms and closets within the school as the need for classrooms and space changed. Eventually, however, after being "rediscovered" this spring the box came to the attention of Heidi Horoshak, administrative assistant at the school, and she, knowing me and my interest in local history, gave a call, curious if I might want to look through it.

Within a few days I was able to get up to school and along with Heidi looked into what the box held. In it we found stacks of old notebooks, newspaper clippings about the school, records of awards, information on past carnivals and school events, as well as lists of former PTA "volunteers". As we dug through it there was one booklet more than the others that caught my eye. It was simply headed "Council By-Laws and Minutes". The spiral notebook was thick and when I opened it, it was clear the pages were filled from cover to cover with hand written minutes. Adding significantly to the booklets bulk, stuffed in folders and sandwiched between the pages were many articles, letters, and clippings cut from newspapers or school publications. I turned to the page where the minutes first began and reflected on the opening sentence at the top. It read "The organizational meeting of the Clover Valley Community Council (is) called to order, Sept. 11th, 1959." My curiosity was heightened and I turned to Heidi and asked if I could take the notebook home and spend time reading through it. She nodded somewhat quizzically as if to say "Sure, if you want".

I had heard of the Council in conversations over the years but really knew nothing about their mission or purpose. Having some time to go over the notes in greater detail strengthened my assumption that though the Council was tied closely to school issues, it was not exclusively involved only in educational matters. It did indeed have a committee simply entitled "schools" but had also formed subgroups in a number of other areas. Those areas included roads, community recreation, legislation, and social/welfare issues. The minutes I read covered a period of eight years from 1959 to 1967 and it was interesting to note how some of the concerns that surfaced for discussion forty or more years ago are still relevant today. For instance: to what extent should sex education be taught in the schools, the problem of low attendance at committee meetings, ongoing fundraising needs, township zoning and

planning issues, as well as the ever present concern about taxes were all discussed at length in the notes.

On the other hand some issues that were important to the time, such as determining appropriate civil defense evacuation routes (the Bomarc missile base was just then under construction) and whether tree rows planted along township roads should replace snow fences as winter windbreaks, seem dated. I found some of the most interesting information contained in the notebook to be the historical data that was tucked away here and there amongst the recorded minutes. Such things as to how the building, destined to replace the then aging Bloomingdale School, came to be called North Shore Elementary, as well as notes detailing the lengthy and often heated discussion surrounding the closing of Clover Valley High School and the eventual consolidation of it's students with Two Harbors provided some enlightening and insightful reading. In upcoming issues of the Township News, further information on those topics and other historical details found in the minutes will be discussed. But for now I still have quite a bit more reading to do.