

Arlene Nepstad Betts



Can it really be 50 years since we graduated from Southfield High School? Just thinking about this reunion has made me feel seventeen again! We were children of the fifties - a wonderful, mellow time.

After graduating from Southfield High School, I spent one year at Bethel College in St. Paul, Minnesota and then one year at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan. While still a teenager, I married my high school sweetheart. (Larry Betts, Redford High School Class of 1956) We spent the next three years at Michigan State University where we both majored in social work.

During the seven years my husband worked at the Child Guidance Clinic in Warren, Michigan and in Kalamazoo, Michigan, I was a full time mother to our four children. Tim is now 45, Colleen is 43, Dan is 41, and Julie is 38. We are the proud grandparents of five boys and one girl.

We moved to Richmond, Virginia in 1970 where I received my Masters in Social Work from Virginia Commonwealth University. After graduation, I became Director of Social Services at the United Methodist Children's Home in Richmond. This was an exciting time to be in the South because of the implications of crosstown bussing.

In 1976, we returned to the Midwest and spent the next 25 years as directors of Sunny Ridge Family Center in Wheaton, Illinois. We worked with delinquent boys from the inner city of Chicago, began a domestic and international adoption program, provided services to pregnant women, and established a program called Healing the Children. As part of HTC, we sent medical teams around the world and brought very sick children to the United States for surgery that was unavailable in their own country. Our greatest joy was to visit orphanages and hospitals in other parts of the world for both our adoption and Healing the Children programs.

For the past five years, we have been enjoying retirement in the beautiful mountains of Southwestern Virginia. From our back deck we can look 50 miles into North Carolina. We are surrounded by Mother Nature but have very few neighbors.

I really couldn't leave the world of adoption completely behind so I do contract work for an adoption agency in Roanoke, Virginia. I also serve as board President for the Pregnancy Resource Center in Galax, Virginia. (Home of the famous Fiddler's Convention). My husband serves as National President of Healing the Children.

God has blessed me and my family in so many ways. To all of you who experienced Southfield High School with me, I want to express my sincere gratitude. I will always carry a very special place in my heart for the wonderful friends who shared my life from 1953 until 1957.

From Arlene Nepstad Betts - Class of 1957