



WEST HIGH OWL

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On the threshold of a dream



Photo by Jim Samorian

...that started 34 years ago

This Friday, almost 400 students will step up to receive a document that certifies that each has completed four years of education at Rockford West High School.

It's the 34th time that a student could make that claim, and each year's memories seem the same.

From 1970 to 1974, memories of governmental scandal, tests, war, report cards, poverty, dates, prejudice and teachers will always seem familiar to these students.

The names change every year, but each West graduate has these same memories all the way back to the first graduating class.

But the Class of 1974 has one thing that the Class of 1940 and each of their successors can't claim.

What does one call success? At West, is it Brad Collins, editor of the OWL? Or Karen Johnson, class treasurer? Or in the second row, is it Sue Harris? or Jennifer Gridley, "No. 1" in her class and class secretary? Andy French, Student Council Pres, and theatrical star? Could it be Yearbook editor Steve Nethery? or how about Gary Haselton, class v.p. or are all these to be topped off by Class Pres, Steve Burchett?

Is success a question of who is better than the next guy, or is it a matter of excelling in yourself?

This Friday, 400 documents of success will indiscriminately be given to those who have earned the honor.

Of course, all this potential peace and progress is of benefit to those who continue it.

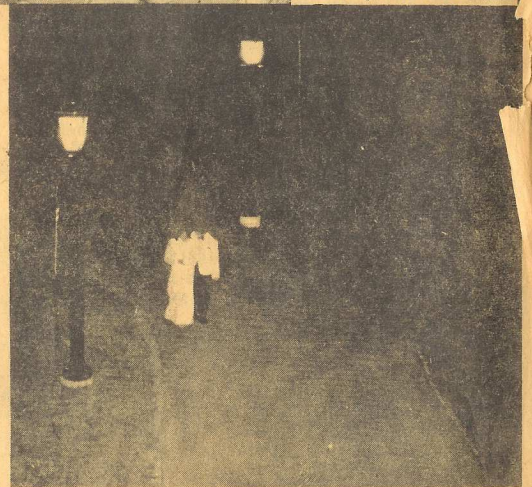
As the poet Emerson says, "There is a time in every man's education when he arrives at the conviction that envy is ignorance; that imitation is suicide; that he must take himself for better, for worse, as his portion.

The power which resides in him is new in nature, and none but he knows what that is which he can do, nor does he know until he has tried."

In searching out this school's "leaders" the OWL hoped to find the "most likely to succeed." But this is not an easy problem.

We found that we would almost have to nominate all 400 graduates because life is just as successful to each of them as they allow it. No one graduate can be the most likely to succeed because it's also a one for all and all for one proposition.

Ideas and conceptions can become obsolete as these clothes and car. But some human problems remain the same...it's just a matter of each individual solving them for himself. It may be finding yourself, your next job, your husband or wife, or just someone who cares, but these are the same problems which our parents faced, and which our children will meet...but it's important that each face it in his own way.



The road to success is always under construction.

