

Greg White's Reflections on a "Journey of a Lifetime"

by Connie (Woods) Weir ('66)

In a recent phone conversation with Greg, he talked a little more about his experiences as community coach and head of the basketball program at Kathleen Senior High School in Lakeland. KSHS is a tough, inner city school and most of the girls he has coached there over the past six years have come from a background where nothing has come easy. While his job has had its challenges, the rewards have been tremendous. He has been much more than just a coach. He has been a role model, an unofficial "social worker" of sorts, who uses their participation in basketball to teach them, not only to value education, but also to value themselves. He takes tremendous pride watching his "girls" mature and gain a greater sense of self-worth. Last year of the ten seniors on his team, seven went on to college.

While he knows that it won't be possible to bring his team to London every year, he's hoping that this year's trip will have a lasting legacy. He certainly knows that neither he nor his team will ever forget it. It was a wonderful experience to see the reactions of his girls, none of whom had ever been on a plane or seen snow. When they arrived in Canada to find snow on the ground, they were like excited children, making snowmen and snow angels. The one small problem involved a couple of girls who arrived wearing "flip-flops" over their socks... not realizing snow was not only cold but WET!

Wanting to give them a very special experience, Greg had booked a "fancy" hotel in Niagara Falls for the first night. When they woke up the next day, they were thrilled with the view of the falls from their hotel windows. Made every penny spent worth it!

On the subject of expenses, Greg said that his team had done a lot of fundraising to help pay their way. That being said, they owe South and everyone involved a big debt of gratitude for hosting them. Everyone and everything was great – from the opening reception to the goodbye luncheon. And he was amazed at the almost "instant rapport" that developed between the two teams. As different as their backgrounds might be, it was like they were "sisters," he said.

It seems very clear to me that this trip was an educational trip "par excellence", and I think it would be wonderful if Greg could bring another team to London someday. Our thanks to Sam Ward and those involved at South, and our congratulations to Greg for organizing such a successful trip.





PHOTO NOTES: Greg is standing, far left in the first photo above and top left in the second photo. South coach, Sam Ward is standing third from the left in the first photo. The third photo is of the '64-65 South Senior Basketball Team. Back row: Serge Delannoy, Wayne Potts, Ed Daniliunas, Dave Noble, Ron Potts & coach, Macdonald; Front row: Richie Ashworth, Gary Carsen, Greg & Ross Scott