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WestWord

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Niles West celebrates 50 years

In honor of Niles West's 50th anniversary, the Niles West school board, along with the administration staff, has compiled a series of events this weekend. Today's event features the homecoming game against the Glenbrook South Titans at 7:30 p.m. at Basrak Stadium. Tomorrow, Saturday, Oct. 4, West will host the main event, a concert by The Buckingham's, at the Holiday Inn on Touhy for alumni and staff members. Sunday, Oct. 5, West will hold an open house with student-led tours and performances by current Niles West students. In honor of the celebration, *West Word* has put together a retrospective of events from the past 49 years.

w Zoe Ljubic
Editor in Chief

1958-59
Niles West High School opened.

w Rexly Penaflorida
Managing Editor

1961-62
On Sept. 29, 1961, the first issue of *West Word* was published as a bimonthly student newspaper. Additionally, the first yearbook staff, under the direction of Lois Fisher and Deborah Gould, published *Spectrum*, volume one. Also that year, the first senior class graduated.

1964-65
The first ever boys' basketball season finished off with a total of 19 games, which was more wins than any other Niles Township school has won. Senior captains Lloyd Gussis and Rick Kneiter led the team, and both players held basketball records at West.

1965-66
The science department published *Atoms*, a science publication to keep the staff abreast of current discoveries. Also that year, academic teams premiered on Channel Five for an area competition and placed second. Team members included seniors Lauren Silberman and Paul Gaynon.



1966-67
The Thunderbird, the giant red-cedar totem pole, was presented to the school by the Niles West Indian Booster club. The pole symbolizes Big Red and serves as a reminder of school pride and spirit.

1967-68
A new mathematical course, Computers, opened for all students as basic training tool for Algebra and Geometry courses.

1968-69
For the first time ever, a boys' varsity soccer team was introduced to the student body by head coach Fernando Valesco.



1970-71
The new student activities group organized the first school dance, the Frosh-Soph Mixer. This gave freshman a first glimpse of Niles West social life. Additionally, the drama department presented the first fall play, *The Glass Menagerie*.

1971-72
For the first time in 12 years, the boys' varsity basketball team advanced past the Regional Tourney. All-conference senior Brad Cartwright led the team to victory.

1972-73
On Sept. 15, the first pep assembly sparked enthusiasm with the introduction of all fall sports teams. Fall coaches encouraged team spirit by inviting all students to upcoming games.

