

Greetings Steph Nepple, Glidden Graphic Publisher & Editor; and Morgan Kramer, Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative (RVEC) Representative

My sister, Linda, shared with me the article published in the Glidden Graphic's July 3rd Wildcats section, lifting up the long tradition of local participation in the Rural Electric Cooperative Youth Tour of Washington, DC. I was flooded with fond memories of my selection and attendance in 1960 — 65 years ago!

I have two former Glidden High School teachers, Joe Weed the Ag Instructor and Mrs. Robb the English teacher, to thank for the opportunity to represent our local REC on the Youth Tour of Washington, DC. Mr. Weed made it a class project for us, mostly farm boys in our junior year, to write an essay meeting the REC application criteria. My mother got me started with the first sentence, which I still remember, "What the REC Is Doing For Our Community in 1960." Mrs. Robb met with each student after school to prepare us for communicating our message and to gain confidence in our presentation in front of the REC Board of Directors.

The opportunity to participate in the REC hosted Youth Tour was open to all students our age across the service area, but thanks to our teachers, Glidden students were the majority of those who applied. I was very fortunate to be the one selected.

On the anticipated date my mother drove me to the pick up point in Des Moines, where two buses departed with students from across Iowa sharing the journey to DC. For this farm kid in the early 60's, it was exciting and a privilege to be traveling east to our country's capitol and staying in hotels along the way and while there.

We visited all the historical sites and landmarks we had read and learned about in school: Lincoln Memorial, Smithsonian Institute, Arlington National Cemetery, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier with the Changing of the Guard, Mount Vernon, and of course our US Capitol. We met with our congressman and saw our government in action.

At age 82 I still consider this trip one of my fondest memories and continue to hold dear what our flag stands for. I am grateful for the support I

received from my teachers and parents. I am pleased the RVEC continues to offer this meaningful tradition.

My two sisters and I, and our families, consider the family farm north of Glidden, "home." Our parents, Raymond & Leta, began farming there in 1942. We continue to be Co-op members and have enjoyed the benefit of quality electric service to our rural area for decades. We appreciate "What the RVEC Does for Our Community Every Day!"

(Note: The summer of 1960 I had just bought my first hay baler and attending the REC Youth Tour in DC meant I would miss out on my first baling job, although Dad said he would cover for me. After a few moments of hesitation, I quickly concluded that I could bale hay anytime, but it was a once in a lifetime experience to participate in the REC sponsored trip to DC. Thank you REC/RVEC!)

Gene Kruse,
GRHS Class of 1961
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