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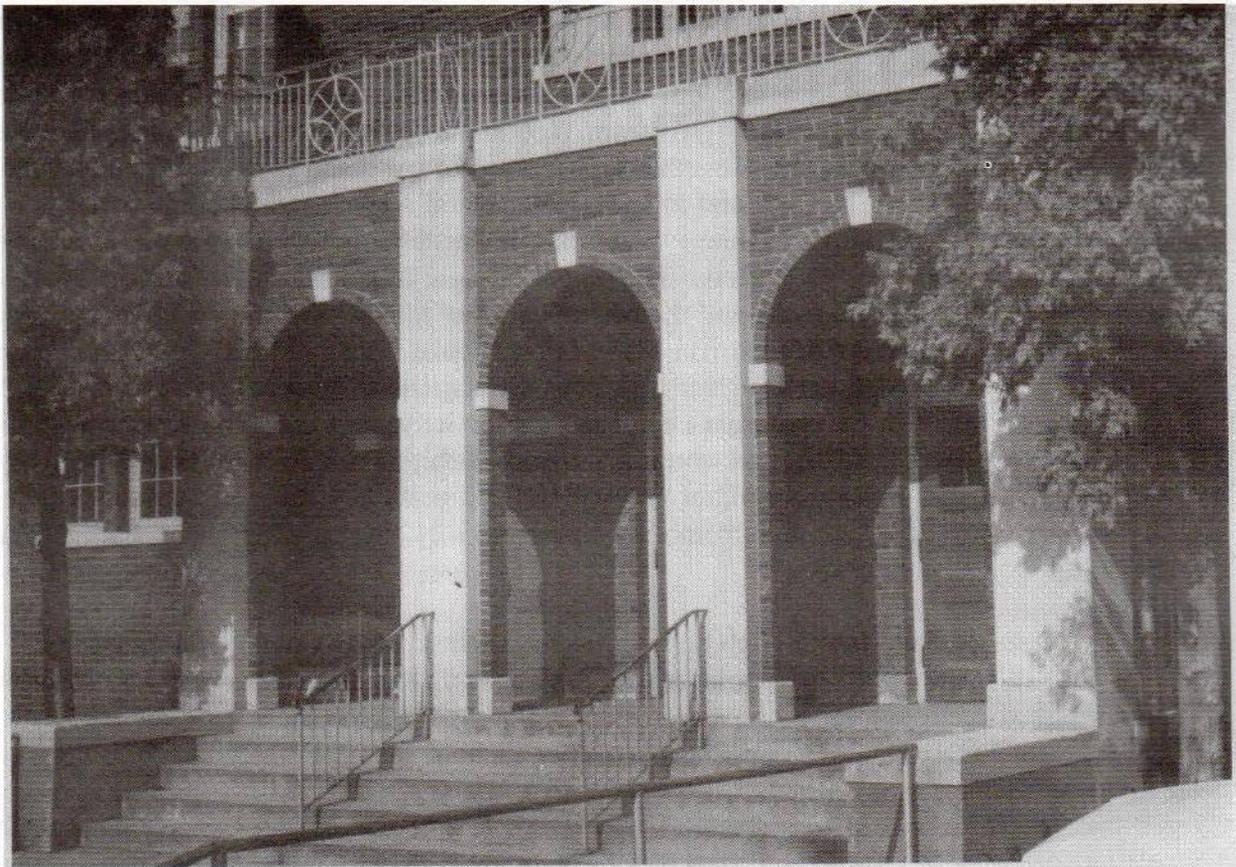
YEA LELAND! By William Offutt

Once upon a time, only a generation or three ago, there was a big brick school in Chevy Chase that almost everybody went to, a melting pot and mixing bowl that produced scholars and athletes without equal. It was the place where Bethesda and Chevy Chase actually melded. Rednecks from Cabin John mingled with well-mannered youngsters from Edgemoor; sub-debs from Kenwood competed with "fast" girls from Woodmont for the attention of ducktailed jocks and cool guys with motorscooters. Together they learned to write and to factor, to smoke and to kiss, to play and to study, to fight and to lead. The school's teachers and administrators were willing to try almost anything to achieve their goals, understanding that early adolescence is not easy on parents, teachers or youngsters. The school brought in politicians, actors, scientists and musicians; the National Symphony and the Navy School of Music band played in its auditorium and Eleanor Roosevelt and Congressman Mac Mathias spoke from its stage. One young woman and then, a generation later, her daughter both played Buttercup in student productions of "HMS Pinafore." Students went on overnight camping trips to Gettysburg and Assateague; their band marched in every parade; their teams won every championship. Their PTA was involved in every effort, every struggle, right to the bitter end and several years beyond. The school buildings, both of them, are gone but the memories linger, mostly sweet, often loud but generally stimulating.

For half a century Leland Junior High School was the Bethesda area's premier middle school; until well after WWII it was the only public school for grades 7, 8 and 9. It became widely known in the Washington metropolitan area for academic and athletic achievements and for scholastic and organizational innovation. At one time the largest school in the Montgomery County system, Leland was doomed and closed some twenty-five years ago mainly because it stood on an inadequate site of less than four acres. Today the offices of the Town of Chevy Chase and the recreation department's tennis and basketball courts and Leland Community Center occupy the land bounded by 44th and Oak Streets, Willow and Oakridge Lanes. Leland is gone but the memories and ghosts of two large school buildings and of thousands of bright youngsters remain.

The first school on the big block was the original Bethesda-Chevy Chase Junior-Senior High School that opened in 1928 with grades 7 through 10 plus some 6th graders from overcrowded Chevy Chase Elementary, young students who would be required to do the seventh grade twice. The down-county secondary school program had gotten started under principal Thomas W. Pyle at the Bethesda School on Wilson Lane two years previously where upper grade students had organized athletic teams, started a dramatics club and published the first copies of *The Tattler*, now Montgomery County's oldest school paper. They staged their first junior high graduation in June of 1927 for 18 boys and 23 girls. That was the same month that the school board gave Kensington's Alfred Warthen \$52,475 to construct an eight-classroom building on sloping 44th Street between Willow and Elm in the Warren brothers' popular Leland subdivision.

The rectangular, two-story, dark red-brick school was not ready until well into the spring of 1928. The first students were welcomed by tall arches, a large front hall, a big cafeteria in the basement and many first-floor classrooms with high windows and doors that opened directly to the outside, a feature that made fire drills almost a pleasure. There was a big dirt and grass playground in the back and a number of tall pine trees on the lot; the trees were adopted as the symbols of both the high school and the junior high. One of the original teachers recalled that the workmen were still there and that "they literally built the building around us."¹



After a period of adjustment the student body settled down under Tom Pyle's leadership and school kept that first year while Warthen and Sons built six more classrooms, a parquet-floored

gym and a huge auditorium. The auditorium had a raked floor, theater seats, wood panels on the sides that could be opened for ventilation, a proscenium arch and a broad balcony. It was a much bigger hall than the nearby State (later Hiser) Theater and, until the Naval Hospital opened, was the biggest stage around and the home of the Montgomery Players' popular performances. Two second-floor rooms were combined to make a library, and the first fourteen seniors held their prom there a year later. The high school grew rapidly and its teams, the Demons, soon dominated school athletics for both boys and girls in Montgomery County with teams led by Lillian Lee and Bill Guckeyson.

The class of '32 produced the first printed yearbook under Neal Potter's leadership with photographs by Kensington's Malcolm Walters. The next year with Haylett Shaw as editor they had a full-sized yearbook with five pages of ads. Suburban school enrollments on both sides of Rock Creek kept growing, and in 1934 the school board sought bids on new high schools for both Silver Spring and Bethesda under the New Deal's Public Works Administration program.

When the Morrison brothers started clearing land on East-West Highway for the new school to be named Western Suburban High, a group of students went to Mr. Pyle and begged that the Bethesda name be retained. It was and the school left behind became Leland, taking its title from the growing neighborhood of brick colonials and sturdy bungalows.

Helen Price Bready was the first principal of the new junior high when Montgomery County moved from the old 7-4 grade structure to a 6-3-3 organization. Mrs. Bready built a reputation as a no-nonsense administrator and an educational innovator who followed the lead of Tom Pyle and superintendent Edwin Broome, a John Dewey disciple. In 1936 both B-CC HS and Leland JHS triumphed at the County's annual field day, a result that became quite familiar. For several years Leland's teams were known as "Pirates," a name that did not sit well with some of the female gym teachers, so after brown and gold were selected as the school's colors, the teams became "Yellowjackets." The first graduating class had 228 students.

The population of the Bethesda area more than doubled between 1930 and 1940, and it did not take long for Leland's wide, wood-floored corridors to fill again. By the 1940-41 school year 859 were enrolled and the school was soon graduating some 300 9th graders every June, about two-thirds of whom went on to the B-CC HS. One of the early innovations was the adoption of an activity period in place of the mid-day recess. The school tried team teaching, the trendy core curriculum, social adjustment programs, a multiplicity of elective courses and a variety of bell schedules. There was a uniformed marching band, a choral music program and, when the new rooms opened, many art, home arts and shop electives. Students manned a school store and a safety patrol; and they produced a newspaper, a literary magazine and a yearbook. They learned to operate the audio-visual and stage equipment and work as library and office aides. Most Lelanders bought budget or activity cards to pay for publications, interscholastic games and school dances. Additional rooms, including a real library with a glass brick wall, were added later. The Leland library was open both before and after school, and hundreds used it.

When Bethesda's public library got organized in the basement of the new high school, classes from Leland made regular visits. The junior high students also formed bowling teams at Hiser's alleys or went skating at the Ice Palace during their activity period. Intramural sports involved

many students on scores of grade-level teams. And even though the senior high students had moved on to their new school, they returned to Leland to stage their plays, hold their concerts and have their graduation. In 1937, breaking with the tradition of having only students speak, Eleanor Roosevelt addressed the graduates from Leland's stage, urging them to help their communities and telling them that "To be afraid is to be beaten."²

Shop teacher Al Bender, who worked at both schools for a while, married Leland teacher Helen Mullinix and she remained the junior high's smiling librarian for more than thirty years. Mrs. Bender is often the first person named by reminiscing students. Miss Weld, Mrs. Parkinson and coach "Zip" Lehr were also early favorites.³ Most recall the pageants and performances staged by English teacher Ina Parkinson.

There were a few problems. For example, spectators at basketball games had to stand, backs to the wall toes almost inbounds, or peer down from a tiny balcony. There was a folding wall between the gym and the back of the stage, but opening that and letting spectators sit on the stage or in the auditorium was abandoned as being too hard to control. Other problems included sunlight on the screen when movies were shown, the always-crowded halls and locker bays, the new fence around the resurfaced playground and the fact that few boys participated when there was dancing in the gym on rainy days. In June 1940 the 9th graders had a class day and a dance in the decorated gym, which became traditional. When they crossed the stage to get their diplomas boys wore white trousers and blue coats and girls, white dresses. Then came the war.

On Monday, December 8, 1941, all Leland students sat quietly in the big auditorium to hear President Roosevelt call Sunday a "day of infamy" and to say we were at war. After a panicky false alarm on the afternoon of the next day, Leland, like most other schools, had practice air-raided drills and then developed and tested a dispersal program. The PTA and local wardens identified about a hundred local homes where a responsible adult was willing to shelter ten students; Helen Bready prepared and distributed rules, and then invited in the press and staged a rehearsal on January 20, 1942. Reporters were impressed with the silence as the children left the building in an orderly manner and within minutes "simply melted into adjacent homes."⁴

National Defense activities soon involved everyone at Leland. Teachers enrolled in a first-aid course and two Red Cross clubs were organized. The art classes filled the halls with patriotic posters, and every morning defense savings stamps were sold in the front hall where students piled up more than a thousand pounds of newspapers each week. The student council soon assigned each homeroom a specific area of salvage or projects for Walter Reed and the Naval Hospital. It was not long before most of the male teachers disappeared into various military services and by September 1942 only four were left. Teacher turnover was a severe problem at Leland throughout the war.

Enrollment for school year 1942-43 was well over a thousand and three lunch shifts were needed. The girls' basketball team got off to a slow start, but the boys' team, led by George Van Wagner and Hardy Sorrell, swept through its twelve-game schedule and then beat Sherwood and Kensington for the County title. The faculty included fourteen new teachers and the curriculum added a work-experience program for 9th graders. In shop classes students produced wooden spotter-models from Air Corps plans and painted them flat black. Each homeroom took care of its

own janitorial services and a "voluntary" squad policed the halls and grounds after school. Although Our Lady of Lourdes, a new parochial school on Pearl Street, had a 7th and 8th grade, Leland was soon scheduling classes in the cafeteria and on the stage.

One wartime student recalled that Leland adopted a track system based on ability testing for 8th and 9th graders and that occasionally they were allowed to roller-skate in the gym. She also remembered "the fast crowd at Leland not only smoked, they French kissed too."⁵ After school some Lelanders favored Pop Tate's pool hall while others gobbled the Little Tavern's nickel deathburgers. They set pins for each other at Hiser's alleys or sucked up the ten-cent store's cherry Cokes on their way home, but Doc Whittlesey's soda fountain became the number one hangout soon after the shopping center at Leland and Wisconsin opened. He eventually had to institute what he called a "curfew" to clear his store.

For school year 1943-44 Leland had a new principal, Esthelene Morgan, a new assistant principal, Elwood Mason, and its own well-organized Victory Corps with 172 members. They did all sorts of school chores from running mimeograph machines to sweeping the floors. The boy's basketball team won the County title again, and the girl's team did well and even beat the faculty in its final, well-attended game. That year the classrooms got fluorescent lights and the cafeteria, new equipment. All-school assemblies took place almost every Wednesday with various speakers and programs, often war related.

The late Jane Bradley Lowe was part of Leland's war-time "in" group, twenty or thirty kids thought of as leaders and style setters, girls in saddle shoes and boys with peroxided hair. She remembered buying her first lipstick at the dime store and using it only at school. "We grew up too fast," she said. "I think it was the war. We were a lot more sophisticated than kids twenty years later. We were pretty much on our own."⁶

In 1944 Leland became one of the centers for Victory Garden canning programs and also that year two Leland classes were featured on Pathe's newsreel which showed boys darning socks, frying eggs and making spaghetti in their home arts class. Home arts girls made their own dresses and put on a fashion show. The manpower demands of the war were so great that one 8th grade section went through so many different teachers it was finally disbanded while another's numerous faculty changes led to a "near riot." It did not take long for section 8Z to figure out they were the smartest or for other eighth graders to know where they stood. Art teacher Ruth Weld's 9th grade homeroom, known as "Weld's Willing Workers," contributed to every wartime salvage drive while Mrs. Parkinson's 7B homeroom "purchased" five jeeps in a War Bond drive.⁷

In school year 1944-45 Leland adjusted to its third wartime principal; Elwood P. Mason took the reigns with Alice Rawson as his assistant. Willard Shoemaker took over the boy's PE department and there was a new cafeteria manager as well. One of the best-remembered wartime teachers was "Mr. Mac," math teacher Milton McCullough who took part in almost every school activity and was renowned for his sense of humor and the ridiculous. His classes even celebrated his birthday. On VE Day, the faculty and student body assembled to hear President Truman announce the end of the war in Europe. There were short student speeches and the assembly ended, as some recalled half-century later, with teacher Tom Conlon singing the "Ballad of Rodger Young." And at the end everybody joined, loudly:

*Shines the name – Rodger Young.
Fought and died for the men he marched among.
To the everlasting glory of the Infantry
Lives the story of Private Rodger Young.*⁸

Leland was back in the news again in January 1946 when the 8th graders staged a strike in an era of many nationwide job actions. At 2:10 one afternoon, after several days of clandestine lunchtime conversations, almost all of them walked out of their classes, ignored their teachers' stern warnings, mingled in the halls and then ended up in the auditorium where Principal Mason listened to their complaints about their 30-minute lunch. The superintendent was sympathetic, and the school got not only a 45-minute lunch period but a new activity period as well.

Almost as soon as the war was over, Superintendent Broome urged the school board to acquire property for another junior high in Bethesda. Leland's capacity was 800 but all through this period almost a thousand students were enrolled. And so two large lots, one on Massachusetts Avenue extended and the other just off Greentree Road, were purchased. Meanwhile other voices in the Bethesda and Chevy Chase area began a "back to basics" cry with suggestions of socialism being taught in the schools and the use of "red tinged" textbooks. Just as Leland was on the verge of having double sessions and many of its 1300 students were eating their lunches in the halls, Western Junior High opened, in September 1951, with Henry Gregory as principal. It only took Leland a couple of years to get right back to crowded conditions and then North Bethesda JHS got started in the mid-Fifties.

In the spring of 1953 Dr. Edwin Broome, superintendent of schools since 1918, announced his retirement. The non-partisan school board, which was now an elected body for the first time, choose Forbes Norris as their new superintendent. Dr. Norris quickly moved to modernize some aspects of the fast-growing school system; he standardized the report card and instituted remedial work for failing students. After the Supreme Court decided the Brown case, Norris developed and the BOE adopted a three-year integration plan. In the first step, he closed all black elementary schools. Older down-county African-American students were allowed to go to their local secondary school if they wished. Only one black 7th grader decided to attend Leland, and in September, he failed to register and appear. Until the boundaries were changed twenty years later, Leland was almost always all-white.

Norris brought with him to Montgomery County a vigorous administrator and former coach named Edward Bartlett and made him principal of Leland JHS. Ted Bartlett shook the old school until the windows rattled, urged some teachers to transfer to other schools or retire and hired a number of young males fresh out of college or the armed services including the author. Bartlett roamed the halls and did some of his work at a small table in the bare teachers' lounge, an ashtray at his elbow. After two years at Leland, Bartlett was given the job of opening Northwood High School and his assistant, James Wriley Jacobs, a one-time Leland core curriculum teacher, became principal with Anne Dryden as his assistant. You could almost feel the sighs of relief.

Meanwhile the school board, the County Manager and the new superintendent had a series of squabbles over budget and other problems so the BOE decided not to rehire Dr. Norris when his contract ran out in 1957. The board began a search for a new superintendent and offered a starting

salary of \$18,000, the highest in the area. They hired Dr. C. Taylor Whittier from a Florida school system and found themselves with a tougher administrator and more imaginative innovator than the man they had let go.

Leland was in the news again when the PTA offered parents \$2 tickets to "absolutely nothing", raising funds for the library and allowing folks to stay home and watch TV. In April 1955 the school staged its first "Student Teach Day" with 9th graders taking over all the classes as well as administrative positions. It went so well that Ted Bartlett and Jim Jacobs left early for a meeting while the student assistant principal sent only three of his peers to after-school detention. The "Day" became a popular tradition. Every spring the school held an exhibition of student work called "Peeks at Progress" with displays in the gym and music performances in the big auditorium.

In general Leland parents had high aspirations for their children and many 7th graders talked about which colleges they planned to attend. In 1956 seven parents spent three days following student schedules and then, according to the two-page picture story in the April 16, 1956, *Life* magazine, reported back to 700 other parents at a PTA meeting that "school was just fine for the kids and generally doing a far better job than they had imagined." These were the days of "duck and cover" air raid drills, and when the writer's classes hit the floor in the room just above the office, light fixtures shook, the principals' door popped open and dust filtered down. They made me stop.

Then in the summer of 1959 after some plumbing and heating problems, engineers were called in to study the condition of the 30-year-old building. They looked at what plans they could find, laid tons of sandbags in the halls, and studied their stress-meter results. In October an architect and the engineers reported to the school board that there were serious ventilation, heating and fire safety problems, that the classrooms were below standard in size, that the auditorium balcony was a hazard (they said they could not figure out what was holding it up), and that a new door to the outside should be cut from the overcrowded cafeteria. The experts estimated that nearly a million dollars in renovations were needed, and Leland's PTA urged that funds be included in the next budget. New principal John M. King, already in hot water for failure to report two small fires, closed the balcony at once.

With a new outside door in the cafeteria and a sprinkler system in the halls, Leland went back to work while the school board and the local community crossed swords on the question of whether to build a new school or repair the sprawling old building. Edwin Hege, president of Leland's PTA, called a new building "a necessity" despite the fact that a larger site could not be found in the area. Buying up a block of homes just to the west, as one board member suggested, would be very expensive. A new school, the BOE was told, would cost \$500,000 more than renovation of the old Leland. At the end of October the superintendent recommended a brand new \$1.8 million school on the old site. The board endorsed the plan by a narrow vote.

Work began on the new, compact, four-story building on the Oakridge side of the lot in 1962. At the end of the '62-'63 school year under new principal Don Reddick, a one-time Leland teacher, and after a final party with some teary eyes, the staff, led by Helen Bender with her 30 years of service, bade their old school goodbye. Demolition work began at once and many old students took home bricks and pieces of the gym floor as souvenirs. Right to the end Marion Loar was still conducting her Latin classes.

The tall, lean new school took some getting used to. On the ground floor were the cafeteria and locker rooms; on the main floor were the office, teacher's lounge (a major improvement over the old one which had been in a former coal bin), music rooms and the big gym with its deep stage and fold-away seats. One floor up were the library and rows of classrooms on the outside walls and on the top floor more classrooms, including three windowless units in the middle of the building. Many of the classrooms except for the science labs had folding walls which allowed two or more rooms to be easily joined. There were two broad staircases and an elevator on the south end of the building. Teachers plus students with ambulatory problems were given a key.

The building opened with workmen still in the halls and the smell of wet paint. The hall patrols worked hard to help students find their way around, to locate the lavatories and to get used to staying right on the stairways. Just about the only early controversy was about whether or not girls had to take showers in the PE classes. In 1965 big Don Reddick moved to Walter Johnson HS and former Leland teacher Ray Patton became the principal, a job he was to hold for six years with several assistant principals. Later that year the PTA, led by Rowena Hoover, staged a day of guest teachers including a U.S. Senator, Joseph Tydings, Congressman "Mac" Mathias, columnist Drew Pearson and numerous scientists, writers, actors, cooks and experts on various topics. Most of the regular teachers attended a conference with education expert Benjamin Fine while their students learned to make crepes and saw a real crocodile in action.



It was also parental involvement and agitation that produced a school-within-a-school program at Leland. Parents Mimi Slavin and Scott Rutherford along with four teachers created what came to be called the Team 5 program for half of the 9th grade. It involved numerous inter-disciplinary activities, flexible scheduling, team teaching and a lot of meetings and extra work, but it produced a positive atmosphere that engendered excitement. It was “different,” and that, many thought, was good.

Wayne Busbice, part of the country-western Busby family and well known for his version of “Going Back to Dixie”, was Leland’s assistant principal for two years before becoming principal of Gaithersburg JHS. He later wrote that he was quite impressed with the student body. “I had the privilege of working with embassy kids, senators’ and congressmen’s children. There were only four students in the school with IQs below one hundred.” But he also recalled that, “Many of the affluent parents in Chevy Chase treated teachers as if they were their servants. And some of the teachers seemed intimidated by having to discipline children of famous parents.”⁹

Despite a good deal of turmoil in the County over control of the County Council and the school board, with growing opposition to the war in Viet Nam and the spread of the drug culture, Leland’s teachers continued to do their job, although the new building was often more difficult to work in. Gym teachers Powell Wrightson and Joe Rostkowski became long-time favorites and music director Harold Frace and Virginia Lankford staged numerous well-attended programs for the community. The week-long teachers’ strike in February of 1968 thoroughly divided the faculty with twenty of the 43 faculty members walking the picket line. Parents volunteered and school kept, after a fashion.

In 1971 Jack Ramsey took over as Leland’s final principal. John Freeman became his assistant and served for five years. By then most of the academic faculty had been divided into grade-level teams, and in 1973, built on the experience of the “Team 5,” all students were given a choice of a “traditional” or “flexible” program. Central office studies had concluded that the alternative organization was no better than the traditional bell schedule as far as academic performance was concerned, but students liked the idea of having a choice. Meanwhile the school board was planning to create “middle” schools.

One of the more exciting days of that period took place when scenes for the film version of “All the President’s Men” were being shot in the neighborhood. Leland’s gym was used to feed the cast and crew, and Dustin Hoffman ran through the cafeteria with his shoes in his hand. There was a lot of screaming.

Under the leadership of geography teacher Ed Mullaney Leland’s “teen club” began small in the early 1970’s but soon became a very popular aspect of school life at Leland and was eventually recognized as the best in the County. The recreation department sponsored dances, including always-popular 50’s days, numerous parties and trips during school holidays and on weekends for skiing or swimming, sight seeing or enjoying amusement parks. The line between in-school and after-school activities was not always firmly drawn. Slides of some teen club events may be seen on the Internet at www.jdland.com/bccslides.

Leland student Glynn Garder, featured in a *Washington Post* story on teenagers, explained how the teen club dances worked: "At 7:30 you get checked in by Mr. Mullaney. Once you're in you're in (This is to guard against the entry of pot.) It's all dark inside. Chairs are lined up against the walls. Some kids go up to the top of the bleachers and make out." Once, she says, Mr. Mullaney took a picture of some make-out artists and put it in the yearbook. "That gassed everybody. If you're lucky your boyfriend lives near you and you can make out going home. Sometimes after a basketball game, kids go to McDonalds. They sit in booths and throw ice at each other. I don't know anybody who goes out on dates. Okay, like maybe sometimes you'll meet somebody at the mall. Kids our age go to the malls a lot."¹⁰

In 1976 after attendance boundaries were redrawn the number of minority students greatly increased. Leland raked fourth statewide on "survival skills" test of 7th graders at 239 schools with 92.6% passing. That was the same year that Team 5 history teacher Mike Carroll began his three-day and two night tent-camping trips to Gettysburg, adventures long remembered by both adults and adolescents. Then in 1979 B-CC HS acquired Leland's 9th grade and took some fine Leland teachers including Ed Mullaney and Mike Carroll, who brought both the teen club and camping trips with them. Mullaney became "Mr. B-CC" and had the gym named in his honor.

In 1972 the MCPS enrollment topped out at 126,000 and began a slow but steady decline that led to a series of painful school closings. In 1979 Kensington JHS was closed after 42 years, and two years later the school board decided to close Leland, Broome and Argyle junior highs. Under questioning, the superintendent stated that Leland required extensive renovation costing perhaps \$2 or \$3 million. Under parental pressure the BOE added Lee and Western to the list as alternatives to Argyle and Leland, and the fight for survival was on.

More than 600 Leland advocates crowded a May 1981 BOE meeting, cheered their supporters and shouted, "Leland, Leland, Leland" at the meeting's end. Superintendent J. Edward Andrews said Leland needed major renovation but parents disagreed. One said, "Talking about \$3.5 million in renovation for a 17-year-old school is downright ridiculous and absurd. Fix the plaster, fix the lights, fix the roof and knock off the nonsense."¹¹ But the decision was made to close Leland and transfer its students to Western Junior High, changing that school's name to "Westland." In June 1981 Leland closed its doors for the last time, and its teachers and administrators packed up their books and equipment and were, for the most part, put out on their own to find jobs elsewhere in the school system.

Leland parents appealed the decision to the State Board of Education. In May of 1982, examiner Elizabeth L. Nilson reported that closing Leland violated the criteria established by the Montgomery County school board and should be reversed. Her report stated that the county acted arbitrarily, overlooked evidence that Leland was superior to Western in four of eight categories and met criteria for the other four. She also noted that the 185 minority students, who had been bused four miles, were now being transported 6.5 miles from Silver Spring. The local board, said the examiner's report, relied too much on the cost of renovation or repair, ignored the fact Leland was less expensive to operate, was in walking distance of more students and had fewer alternative uses than Western JHS.¹²

The County's BOE said Western's larger site made the decision obvious. In July the State board overturned three Montgomery actions as "arbitrary and unreasonable." County Board president Marion Greenblatt, was quoted as being "appalled." It was not until the end of July that the State board upheld the closing of Leland, despite the hearing examiner's suggestion to close Western instead.

Then with appeals still being heard, the debate began over what to do with the deteriorating building which was being water damaged and vandalized behind its chainlink fence. One suggestion was to build about 25 single-family homes on the 3.7-acre site. Another plan was to use the building as housing for the elderly. There were two commercial plans, another to use it as a convention and catering operation or as a medical research facility. A local group wanted to reopen it as a nonprofit community center with day care, sports and arts programs. The YMCA and the Writers Center seemed interested. Then in 1985 the 80-year-old Immaculata School, which had sold its Tenley Circle property to AU, tried to rent the building. The BOE rejected Immaculata's bid to lease Leland saying that the school might upset racial balance in the area. The Town of Chevy Chase also opposed that idea, as did the recreation department and planning authorities.¹³

In the fall of 1987 Ed Mullaney and about 125 old Lelanders, both teachers and students, staged a farewell party on the playground beside the vandalized building. In the spring of 1989 the County held a ground breaking for the recreation center as the school was being torn down. Soon a pile of bricks by the curb was all that was left. And then that was gone.

About the author: William Offutt, the author of "*Bethesda, a Social History*", is a retired public school history and English teacher.

¹ Geneve Bourdeaux quoted in *Bethesda A Social History*, Innovation Game, Bethesda, MD, 1995, p.352.

² *Bethesda*, p. 404.

³ Franklin Lehr was the first male Pyle hired while still on Wilson Lane.

⁴ Evening Star, Jan. 21, 1942.

⁵ Elizabeth Gaither Lynch, quoted in *Bethesda*, p.436.

⁶ Interview at her home in 1993.

⁷ *Bethesda*, p.669.

⁸ By Frank Loesser

⁹ Wayne E. Busbice with Patricia Busbice, *Uncovering the Secrets of a Southern Family: A Memoir*, Authorhouse, 2007, p.158-9.

¹⁰ Washington Post, May 13, 1979.

¹¹ Kathryn Tolbert, "Painful Partings," Post, May 14, 1981.

¹² Post, May 15, 1982.

¹³ Post, Jan. 30, 1985.

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