

GHM-Oral History Project- Interview Answers

John M. Stortecky

ID:8/27/2021

DOB: 2/11/1949

Birth Location: Gloversville, New York

1. Are you a **Gardner native** (born here or in the metro area)? No
2. What brought you and/or your family to Gardner?
“Father U.S. Navy stationed at N.A.S. Olathe.”
3. When did you move here? September 1962
4. What was your family’s trade/business? Navy
5. Tell us about this experience...
“My father was transferred from Floyd Bennet Field, Brooklyn, NY. Our family consisted of my mom, Shirley, my dad John, my brother Steve and my sister Joan. I had attended P.S. 207 in Brooklyn on Flatbush Avenue from 1954-55 until 6th grade, and then Marine Park Junior High School for 7th grade. I started 8th grade in Gardner in the fall of 1962. Mr. Joe McNulty was my math teacher and track coach.”
6. If you are not a native, when did you first move to Gardner? 1962
7. What is your earliest memory of Gardner?
“When we learned we were moving from Brooklyn N.Y. to Olathe, Kansas, it might as well have been CHINA that was our destination. We drove there in a 1957 Ford 2-door. My earliest memory was seeing the GARDNER sign on the highway. I seem to remember seeing a sign getting into town that said population 1,600.”
8. What is your favorite memory of Gardner?
“All the friends I made at school. When I graduated from Gardner High School in 1967 I had life-long friends. I live in New York, and have attended every class reunion, every

five years, since 1972. My one and only son is a professional fire-fighter and engineer on the C5-A Galaxy, flying out of Westover AFB Mass. His name is John GARDNER Stortecky.”

9. What have you noticed that has changed the most about Gardner during your residency?

Do you perceive this as a good/bad? And why?

“The size and population has changed most. I can’t say it is good or bad, but it is sad. Today’s kids will not know the same happiness and joy that we all had in the 1960’s in the greatest small town in Kansas.”

10. Anything else you would like to share?

*“Don’t it always seem to go that you don’t know what you’ve got till it’s gone...
You pave paradise to put up a parking lot.”*