

I have been putting off writing this for many months. I really did try to figure out how I could get to Valparaiso for Marge's funeral, but I just couldn't pull it off. She "inconveniently" died shortly before I was due to leave for Montana to go to my 11<sup>th</sup> Sun Dance. I couldn't figure out how to catch a plane to fly from Virginia to Chicago and get back so that my clients in the mental health center where I work would not have to go even longer without me. I know that Marge would have told me to take care of the living -- and do what I was so good at doing. So I did.

This is part of my Honoring of Marjorie Robertson.

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In Memoriam: Marjorie Robertson

It was the second semester of my junior year, early in 1970, when I walked into the social work class on child development. At first it seemed like any other class, me being one of the lone males, but this class really would become one of the most pivotal events in my life. I walked the classroom professor, and she set a bassinet on the desk. In the bassinet was her infant son, "Young Norman." Of course, the professor was Marjorie Robertson. Little did I know at that time that for the next 38 years, my life would be entwined with Marjorie and her family. Nor did I realize at that point that I would become part of her family as much as she, Norm and the boys would become part of mine.

Within a year, I found an incredible amount of support as the beginnings of what I'll call the "Troubles" at VU's Social Work Department began to erupt. For whatever reason, I was at ground zero. Eventually, I was able to meet Chuck Rivers and a few of the other "new" professors as the "Troubles" escalated. Those are stories for another time and place and need not be told to those who went through them, and heck I had left Valparaiso by September of '72. Suffice it to say that I found an extraordinary amount of support from Marge during those times.

After I graduated, I stayed in fairly close contact with Marge. As a result Marge had me come into some of her classes to talk about those subject areas that CSWE (Council of Social Work Education) had pushed off of the curriculum. It was a conspiracy of sorts, I, as a guest speaker, could raise topics/issues that CSWE held were out of bounds for the classroom teacher. Obviously, this appealed to both of us. Over the years, I came in to talk to at least one class per year, bringing my new experiences as a BA Social Worker/Child Care Worker. I may have also come back after I obtained my MSW in 1979, but I've gotten old and don't recall everything.

There were 6 years between my graduating from Valpo and getting into grad school. During some of that time, I still lived in Valpo and spent some time babysitting "Young Norman." It is strange to realize that that little child, who had a passel of medical issues would one day become Dr. Norman Robertson III, MD. I guess over the years, I've become somewhat of an ersatz uncle if you will. Even as recently as a couple of years

ago Marge called on me to try to help out Norman – mainly because of my proximity, but also because of the deep trust that she held me in and the respect in which I held her.

I was honored to attend Arthur's wedding in Michigan, but the reality is that I have a much closer relationship with Norman now. He had come to my house in Evanston, IL as well as Earlysville, VA. I have witnessed some of the drama in his life and tried to offer perspective for him. And let's be real, Marge pointed the youngster in my direction and we connected.

When I still lived in Chicago, I'd try to get down to Valpo and would always stop by to see Marge. You know, I still come in by the side/back door. I remember seeing the backyard "pool." I have celebrated birthdays and joyous occasions with Marge and her family. She was one of a few people who have met both of my wives. I forget the situation, but I do remember picking her up in Hyde Park back in the days that her dad was still alive.

Despite the multiple invitations, I never did attend any of the fabled New Year's Eve parties. She, however, made it to my wedding celebration in January 1998. It was right that she and "Big Norm" were there. Having lived in Arizona and now Virginia, I have missed those touchstone trips. I will tell you that I have cherished AT&T for the call pack I've had because there have been many many long phone conversations over the years

For me, Marjorie Robertson was a teacher, a mentor, a cheerleader, and a surrogate mother. Most of all, Marjorie Robertson was my friend, whom I loved so very much. She will always have a special place in my heart. I already miss her so very much.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Michael R. Wilson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "M".