

# Tamarack High School

By Aaron Underwood · Long Grove Historical Society

Historical societies like to enumerate the occasions and times a U.S. President has visited their town. That’s tough for Long Grove – the “Grant spent a night at the Long Grove Hotel” rumor doesn’t seem to hold water. Kennedy was in Barrington during his Presidential campaign, but no evidence he even drove through here coming or going. Lincoln was obviously in the area a few times, but no joy with him either. Regan was living downstate as late as the 1930’s, but seems there’s no reason for a downstate college age kid to pay a sleepy country crossroads a visit.



**LIONS CLUB BRIDGE FUNDRAISER**  
Green fees from a downtown-wide mini-golf day were donated to the Save The Bridge Fund.

Expand the circle to include Presidential candidates and it gets more interesting. Adlai E. Stevenson II was born in Bloomington, IL, but moved as a young married man to Mettawa in the 1930’s. He called Mettawa home until his death in 1965. Somewhere in those thirty years, it seems likely he found occasion to drive the two miles and pay Long Grove a visit.

Stevenson was Illinois governor from 1949 to 1953, and was the Democratic Presidential candidate that ran against Dwight Eisenhower in 1952 and 1956. He also ran for President in 1960, but lost out to Kennedy in the Democratic Primaries. Kennedy later appointed him UN Ambassador and Adlai died in that post in 1965.





It is election day morning, 1956, and you flip on the TV. Hey, that looks like Long Grovian Mibs Hill registering Presidential Candidate Adlai E. Stevenson II at the polling place in Half Day. And look, Mrs. Ferry from Long Grove is putting an “I Voted” sticker on his lapel. Helicopters swirl overhead and the lights and equipment from ABC, CBS, and NBC dwarf the little polling place. Some nine years later, when a high school was erected within a few hundred yards of that spot, it was to be called Tamarack High School, after a tree that was present there. People pointed out that the Tamarack wasn’t a valuable or desired tree, so maybe not such a good name. Stevenson High School was proposed, but that got political push back from the community’s Republican majority, who argued it was improper to name the school after a living person. The naming was postponed until the next school board meeting. In the intervening time between the two meetings, Stevenson died. Fate had interceded and chosen the name.

Mettawa’s Adlai E. Stevenson the second came from a family of statesman. Adlai the first, was US Vice President under Grover Cleveland. Aldai the third was a US Senator from Illinois. Counting Stevenson’s can be a little deceptive, though, as Adlai the second’s father is named Lewis. The Stevenson male line goes like this – Adlai I – Lewis – Adlai II – Adlai III. Despite the name handicap, Lewis was also a successful politician, serving a term as Illinois Secretary of State. You have to wonder if Lewis ever felt somehow slighted for being stuck in the middle of all these Adlai’s without being properly enumerated. And yes, there are more modern day Adlai’s. Adlai the fourth did not go into politics, and had commented that he wished his name was “Adlai the last”. Somewhere old Lewis is smiling. Nonetheless, Four christened his first born son as Adlai the Fifth.

THE STEVENSON LINE



LEWIS — THE UN-ENUMERATED MIDDLE — WAS A SUCCESSFUL POLITICIAN IN HIS OWN RIGHT.

Stevenson's home is the only place in Vernon Township on the National Register of Historic Places. We're rooting for our Long Grove Bridge to be the second. The Lions Club recently turned the whole downtown into a mini-golf course for a day (pictured on the opening page). Green fees were all donated to the Save The Bridge Fund. Way to go, Lions! This month's Save The Bridge limerick is a nod towards maintenance, to keep our most historic thing looking spiffy:

SAVE THE BRIDGE · NO. 5

*Our bridge might be too old  
To uphold much weight in the cold  
But a little care  
A weld here or there  
Will have her back good as gold*