

Here are words delivered by our own foreign exchange student, Dr. Peter Ferdinand at the 50th year celebration of our graduation from Port Huron High School, Port Huron, Michigan, on July 27, 2013, in the presence of guests in the McMorran Pavilion.

Walt Whitman

Leaves of Grass (1850 – 1881)

AN OLD MAN'S THOUGHTS OF SCHOOL

An Old man's thought of School;
An old man, gathering youthful memories and blooms, that youth itself cannot,

Now only do I know you!
O fair auroral skies! O morning dew upon the grass!

And these I see – these sparkling eyes,
These stores of mystic meaning – these young lives,

Building, equipping, like a fleet of ships – immortal ships!
Soon to sail out over the measureless seas,
On the Soul's voyage.

Only a lot of boys and girls?
Only the tiresome spelling, writing, ciphering classes?
Only a Public School?

Ah, more – infinitely more;
(As George Fox rais'd his warning cry, “Is it this pile of brick and mortar – these dead
floors, windows, rails – you call the church?
Why, this is not the church at all – the Church is living, ever living souls.”)

And you, America,
Cast you the real reckoning for your present?
The lights and shadows of your future – good or evil?
To girlhood, boyhood look – the Teacher and the School.