

KATHRYN D. GIBSON

- o Resident from 1965-1977
- o Eaton parent since 1968
- o 39 years old

We moved to Cleveland Park in 1965....to 3409 Ordway Street. Later, during a Cleveland Park Citizens Association meeting, I discovered we were the first black couple to move into the neighborhood in about 6 years. We had many friends and co-workers in the neighborhood and the next four years passed rapidly. 1968 brought trauma and drama to both our public and private lives: Martin L. King, Jr. was assassinated and Washington, D.C. became a battleground; National Guardsmen patrolled the neighborhood; our daughter Julie was born, we became the guardians of Jim's older sister's four children and moved three blocks away to a big rambling house at 3462 Macomb Street. That fall our 8 year old niece, Tammie, whom we later adopted, was enrolled in the 3rd grade at John Eaton.

We have now been parents at Eaton for 16 years. We've enjoyed participating in Eaton's emergence into a fully integrated, culturally and racially rich and exciting mixture of faculty, students and parents. Yes, we did encounter racial prejudice, but not from the neighborhood. For example, when Tammie was ten, she became the first black student on Eaton's safety patrol. Her assigned corner was 34th and Newark Street. The neighborhood parents thought she was doing an excellent job, especially with the younger children, but the school received many calls from commuters protesting her having such a visible corner. The school submitted to the pressure and reassigned Tammie to the back door of the school. Now her younger brother, Carl, is one of Eaton's patrol captains, and finds that incident hard to understand.

Having three children enrolled at Eaton for the last 16 years, obviously means that Eaton has played a major role in our family life. I have been involved in many volunteer activities at the school and Block Parties....especially the production of the school calendar for ten years, where I designed a format which reflects the strengths of our diverse student population, through their drawings and writing.

We moved from Cleveland park six years ago and still retain many close relationships and memories of our 13 years there. Highlighted memories are of sledding at Tregaron, picnics at Rosedale, afternoons at the Macomb Street Playground, the Cathedral Flower Mart, Halloween parades, Block Parties, Ward III politics, 1/2 price nights at the Zebra Room, and a neighborhood and home full of kids, and good friends.