

NANUET HS GRADUATION SPEECH - 2005

Travel Light & Don't Panic

Welcome to our graduates, family members, friends, administration, teachers, support staff and my fellow Board Members. Thank you to our buildings and grounds crew for preparing our graduation tent. And a special thanks to our music department and performers.

Just a week ago I hit the 50-year mark. It hardly seems possible – but it happens. So I've decided I'm old enough, to share some "Chauncey" words of wisdom – not too profound, but that's the whole point.

Keep it simple so you won't forget when you start forgetting.

One of my favorite books from years back – before it became a movie - was Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy, by Douglas Adams. I took two important teachings from Hitchhikers – "Travel Light" and "Don't Panic".

When my husband and I started our lives together over 28 years ago, we had nothing – I'm not kidding. At our wedding, we had taken in a total of \$1500, and we gave \$500 to our parents to help cover the cost of the reception. Talk about traveling light – in our first apartment we had one chair, an old table, and a cot which was our sofa. We pushed the table close to a radiator which became my chair.

We had college degrees and the bills to prove it. We were happy.

We were lucky. We had no possessions to tie us down to any particular place. We were healthy and capable of working hard to get ahead.

We didn't panic.

Every morning we'd wake up and point our noses in a direction we'd chosen and step out. We didn't necessarily accept everything that life threw our way in a gracious manner. Sometimes life was disappointing.

On the other hand sometimes the day brought delights that still give us great joy today.

I wish all of you simple beginnings as you venture forth – a blank canvas which awaits your design. Good luck – enjoy your lives!

Posted by sachancey at July 11, 2005 12:49 AM