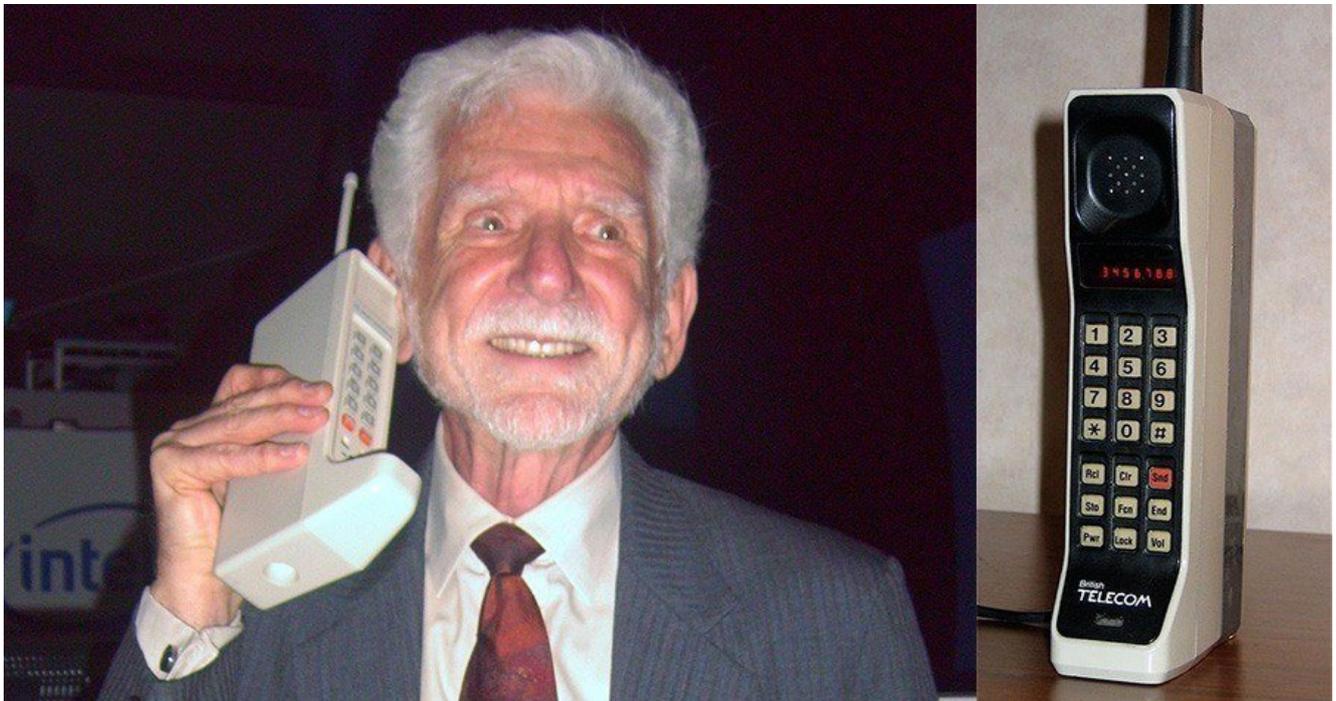


# When I Was 17... It Was A Very Good Year



It was 45 years ago that the first cellular phone call was made. Here's a fun fact: in keeping with the true spirit of competition, the call was made by Martin Cooper, who headed up Motorola's cell phone development team, and the person he called...? None other than Joel Engel who was in charge of the team over at AT&T's Bell Labs trying to do the same thing. Just a friendly call to say "we got there first."

And for all you millennials, no... the first cell phones did not come with cameras or apps of any kind. My first cell phone actually came in a handbag I had to sling over my shoulder like a knapsack.

It struck me that this new cellular development was occurring the same year I was graduating high school. Imagine that – getting all the way through grade school without the aid of a smart phone. The class of '73 had to use pay phones and phone books. Some of us had the newest technology and carried around pagers. (Although most of us spent way too much time figuring

out what words we could spell out using the pager's LED numbers. Like 07734 held upside down spelled out hELLO. Didn't take the guys too long to learn 5318008.)

What other events took place 45 years ago?

- FedEx began operations as Federal Express.
- Richard Nixon infamously declared "I am not a crook."
- Johnny Carson made a joke about a toilet paper shortage which led people to begin hoarding it thus causing an actual shortage.
- George Steinbrenner and 12 investors bought the NY Yankees for \$10 million
- Skylab is launched; The World Trade Center first opens; the Sears Tower becomes the world's largest building.
- Gas cost 45 cents per gallon
- The average cost of a new house was \$32,500
- The mortgage interest rate was 8.82%
- And I graduated from Robert E. Peary High School in Rockville Md.

Happy 45th reunion Huskies. Sorry not to have made it this year. Maybe I'll catch the next one.

*Michael Ondrasik and Home Video Studio specialize in the preservation of family memories through the digitalization of films, videotapes, audio recordings, photos, negatives and slides. For more information, call 352-735-8550 or visit our [website](#).*