

Bisonalities, Again



A quarterly newsletter dedicated to the Alumni of Fort LeBoeuf High School

April 2000

Spring Issue

Volume 1 - Number 3

Welcome to the Spring issue of the newsletter dedicated to the alumni (students and teachers) of Fort LeBoeuf Senior High School (FLBSHS). This newsletter will be issued quarterly. New issues will be mailed, and posted for viewing on the Web site on, or about, October 5, January 5, April 5, and July 15.

The Web site may be viewed by going to:

<http://www.geocities.com/candoer1>

The success of this newsletter will depend on you. I need contributors. Do you have an interesting article, a nostalgia item, a real life story, or a picture you would like to share with other alumni? Do you have a snail-mail or e-mail address of one of our classmates? Send it to the me at the following e-mail address:

bisonalities@candoer.org

or at my snail-mail address.

Robert J. Catlin
2670 Dakota Street
Bryans Road, MD 20616-3062
Tel: (301) 283-6549

Please, **NO** handwritten submissions.

The Bisonalities, Again, Newsletter is available to any and all alumni and teachers of FLBSHS on the Web site for free. If you know an alumni or teacher who would be interested, please ask them to contact me. The newsletter is also available to persons without Internet capability for a donation of \$4 per year.

The one-liners used at the end of each story or report were received from Lillian Turley Barnes and are titled, "Interesting Facts."

Donald Duck comics were banned in Finland because he doesn't wear any pants.

Nostalgia

The following was copied from the May 1956 issue of the Bisonalities.

Senior Personalities

This boy is 18 years of age and has blue eyes and brown hair. He was born on December 12, 1937,

in Erie, PA. He is five foot nine inches tall and weights 135 pounds. He likes farming and dislikes opera music. Since he likes farming, he has picked farming as his career after he graduates. He has attended school in the Waterford area from the second grade to the 12th grade. His favorite food is Swiss steak and he dislikes Spanish rice. His favorite sport is hunting. His favorite song is "Your Cheating Heart."

((His name will be revealed later in this issue.))

February 1865 is the only month in recorded history not to have a full moon.

Death - Elnora Cage Skibinski

It is with sadness and deep regret, I inform you of the death of one of our former classmates, Elnora "Ellie" Cage Skibinski, 61, 1035 W. 36th. Street, Erie, PA. Elnora died Saturday, Feb. 12, 2000, at Saint Vincent Health Center.

She was born in Greene Township, Erie County, on July 7, 1938, a daughter of the late Ross and Pearl Kinsinger Cage. She moved to Erie from Waterford after graduating from Fort LeBoeuf High School in 1956.

She had been the payroll department head for 39 years at the Erie City Iron Works and its successor company, Zurn Energy Division, and retired in 1995.

She enjoyed reading and crossword puzzles.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Edmund F. Skibinski, on October 1, 1977.

She is survived by a brother, William Rose of Calera, Ala., and many nieces and nephews, great nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were handled by the Russell C. Schmidt & Son Funeral Home, 2926 Pine Ave., Erie, PA. The Rev. James Patterson of Lakewood United Methodist Church officiated.

Burial was at the Waterford Cemetery.

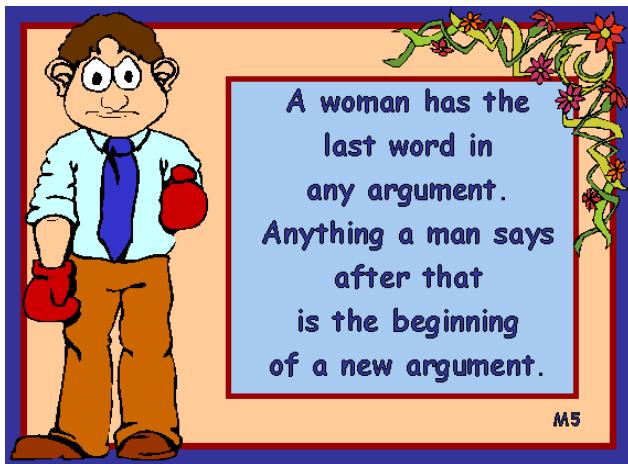
Memorial contributions may be made to the charity of the donors choice.

The name of all the continents end with the same letter that they start with.

Humor

Editor's Corner

On January 5, I received a telephone call from Charles Cowley. Chuck reported that he retired



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as leaving for a four-five week visit to Tennessee, Georgia, Florida, and beautiful Southern Maryland, among many other places.

On January 5, I received a call from John Scott. John is now retired and living the **good life**. John had an addresses for five of the alumni I listed in the Winter Issue. He furnished an address for Genevieve Rowland Sherred, Marlene Myers Kibbe, Wayne and Donna Falk, and Betty Lou Allison Ames. The only address I am now missing is for Jim Myers.

In addition, John said he had heard that both Wayne and Donna were very sick with cancer. Nancy (my wife) and I have added them both to our prayer list.

On January 8, after traveling to Erie, for the first time during the winter months in 27 years, I had the good fortune to spend some time with Merle and Connie Wilmire at their home in Waterford. Connie indicated that she had information on the classes of 1958 and 1959 and would furnish it to me for inclusion on the WEB site. As soon as this information is received, I will add it to the Web site.

Later that same day, I spent a few hours reminiscing with John and Ann Scott at their home in Waterford.

On January 12, after returning from Erie, I found a letter from Alan Hazen in my mail box. Alan reports that he has a pilot's license now and that his family continues to grow. His 8th grandchild was born this past year.

On January 12, I received an e-mail message from Kathy Scott Koehler, John Scott's daughter. She indicated she had visited the Web site and wanted to say "Hello." Kathy's e-mail address has been posted on the Web site.

On January 13, I received a telephone call from Bill Marsh. We talked for over 45 minutes. Bill told me he will be retiring as of March 31, 2000. Anyone wishing to contact Bill and/or Della be advised that his snail-mail and e-mail addresses are both on the Web site.

On January 17, I received a call from Mrs. Bowman. She informed me that her husband, Charles Bowman (taught Agriculture at FLB), had passed away this past November after a long illness. Mrs. Bowman expressed a desire to continue to receive the *Bisonalities, Again* Newsletter. Anyone wishing to send her a card or letter of condolences, her address is: Mrs. Grace K. Bowman
13164 Village Chase Circle
Tampa, FL 33624

On January 18, I had two copies of Issue 2 of the *Bisonalities, Again*, returned to me as "Unable to deliver, no longer at this address and no forwarding address available". The envelopes were for: Mrs. Marjorie M. Pfeffer Feldman
508 Walnut Street
Waterford, PA 16441
and
Mr. Vern H Graham, Jr.
46 Hampton East
Seguin, TX 78155

If anyone has a valid address for these two alumni, please forward it to me.

On January 21, I received a long letter from Lura Shields Silvaggi. Lura furnished a new address for her sister, Clara Mae Shields Hall.

On January 26, I received a letter from Dave Belt. Dave furnished his e-mail address. davidjbelt@aol.com

On January 26, I also received a letter from Bette Davis. Mrs. Davis is wintering in Port Richey, Florida. She furnished e-mail addresses for herself and her daughter.

Mrs. Davis Retbette@webtv.net
Judy Davis Johnson jerjude@ismi.net

On January 27, I received an e-mail message from Judy Davis Johnson. Judy furnished an e-mail address for her brother, Eugene (Buck) and a classmate of his, Harry Thomas.

Buck's address is: mtnestor2@aol.com
Harry's address is: hthomas@kmgslaw.com

On January 28, in an e-mail message, Mrs. Bette Davis furnished an e-mail address for Richard Vogt, Jr. His e-mail address is: rvogtjr@velocity.net

On February 4, Charles and Alice Cowley visited with Nancy and me for a few days. We spent the time reminiscing and touring Washington, DC.

On February 6, I added another alumni to the e-mail list, Don Turley, class of 1958. Don's e-mail address is: fd@wcoil.com

On February 10, I received a long letter from Marlene Kibbe. Marlene furnished a new address for Patricia Anne Mitchell Adams.

On February 14, I received a note from Louella VanZandt Falconer. She said her and Everett are doing well.

On February 17, Lillian Barnes furnished a new mailing address for Marjorie Pfeffer Feldman. Lillian received the information from Phyllis Doolittle Russell. So, at the present time, I am only missing mailing addresses for two members of the class of 1956: Vern Graham and James Myers.

While in Erie, on February 20, I had a long telephone conversation with Lura Shields Silvaggi. She and Domeneck are doing well.

Ialso talked with John and Ann Scott while on my visit to Erie, on February 20. He and Ann are also doing well.

On February 22, I received a snail-mail letter from Betty Lou (Eliason) Ames. She and Bob are doing well.

On February 25, I learned that Sally Fox Ames had surgery for cancer and is expected to fully recover.

On February 28, Bette Davis furnished a snail-mail address for Lois Byers Hamilton (Art Teacher). Anyone wishing to write to her may do so at the following address:

Mrs. Lois Hamilton
45 Country Club Road
Grove City, PA 16127
Tel: 724-748-4275

On March 1, Phyllis Doolittle Russell furnished her e-mail address and gave permission for it to be listed in the Newsletter: swansong4me@aol.com

On March 15, I sent an e-mail message to one of the members of the class of 1980, Teri Wilmire Keiser. Teri is the youngest daughter of Merle and Connie Wilmire and a graduate of FLB SHS. Teri replied and gave permission to publish her e-mail address: tkeiser@moroch.com

On March 27, I received a nice letter from Lois Byers Hamilton. Lois has a pottery shop in Mercer, PA, called the Pottery Dome. It is located two miles west of the Grove City Factory Shops. In addition, she raises Andalusian horses. She furnished an e-mail addresses two FLB SHS alumni:

Carol Bosley - cbosley@wviz.org

Phil Hazen - phazen@erols.com

On March 29, I heard from both Carol Bosley (1954) and Phil Hazen (1954). There e-mail addresses are now listed on the Web site.

On March 29, Mrs. Bette Davis let me know she is in the process of packing to leave Florida and return to Erie for the summer. She will be out of e-mail touch for approximately two weeks. She is going to visit friends and relatives on her way to Erie and expects to take about two weeks, or so.

My '37 Chevy

by Herb Walden

The summer of 1955 held a couple of big ups and downs for me. On the upside, I had made arrangements to re-start my high school career after a three-year absence, (I had a really bad cold). The downside was my car, which had passed away that spring after a lingering illness. Except for occasional use of my parents' car, I had no wheels! The school was two blocks from where I lived. With no car, how would I ever get there?

Thankfully, my cousin came to my rescue. He had just purchased a sort-of-new car. So, he gave he his old one --- a 1937 Chevrolet!

The Chevy was no stranger. My Dad had owned it first and had given it to my cousin a few years before. It was practically a family heirloom.

The car was dark green when Dad had it. My cousin painted it dark blue. Neither of these colors appealed to my taste. (Actually, I had no taste back then). So, I went down to Bowersox Hardware and bought a couple cans of paint and brushes. I painted the top portion of the car "Tulip Yellow" and the bottom "Sea Turquoise". It was a sight to behold. I'm sure some of you remember beholding it. Even now, I can't get over how good it looks in old pictures. Especially if they're in black and white.

To say I was nervous on the opening day of school would be a gross understatement. I didn't know very many people, and being a bit shy, it was hard for me to get acquainted. But the old Chevy proved to be a great icebreaker. Total strangers, kids I had never seen before would come up to me and say, "Why are you driving that thing?"

Conversation would ensue, and before I knew it, I'd have a new acquaintance.

My car was a real stand-out in the school parking lot. Not only was it colorful, it was taller than anyone else's car. Except for Alan Hazen's, which was a 1936 Chevy. But it was black, so there was practically no chance of confusing the two.

The only drawback to the color was that it was nearly impossible to go anywhere "incognito." You would be surprised how few cars there were painted yellow and turquoise. Well, maybe you wouldn't. The Chevy always announced my presence, whether it was in the school parking lot, or down at the restaurant, or up in the cemetery late at ----- never mind.

Everyone kidded me about the old car, but no one ever refused a ride in it. Before the school year was very old, I was running a regular bus service after class to Helen's Ice Cream Bar. By the time I'd get to the car at dismissal time, the backseat was already packed.

Cars of the 1930s were pretty narrow, and not many bodies were required to produce overcrowding. I never allowed more than two others in the front seat with me, and the one in the middle had to be small. As a matter of fact, the middle position became a

Our eyes are always the same size from birth, but our nose and ears never stop growing.

permanent, assigned seat for Brad Gilmore, who, as you may recall, was smaller than anyone.

Since the Chevy had a floor-shift, Brad took over the job of shifting gears because if I did it, he was subject to a pummeling about the head and face with my elbow. I, of course, did the clutch work. Our timing was phenomenal. We never ground the gears. (In all fairness, I should tell you that, because almost everything about the car was worn out, you could shift gears without using the clutch at all --- if you were careful).

So, with 12 or 13 kids in back and 3 in front, we would make our way to the ice cream bar. You might think with all those bodies piled in the backseat, that a little hanky-panky went on. Well, there were so packed in that no one could even move. Heck, there wasn't room for any hanky, much less panky!

You know those little cars in the circus that drive out in the center ring and a million clowns get out? That's what we looked like when I'd pull up in front of the ice cream bar. The car doors would open, and half the high school would tumble out!

My bus service didn't go unnoticed. After a few weeks of up-staging Ringling Bros., Mr. Thomas caught me in the hall. Because he taught driver ed., he seemed to think he had some authority over all student drivers. I thought so, too, so at least we agreed on that point.

He said that he had had several reports of my car being overloaded. I admitted that there were times when a few arms and legs were sticking out the windows, but I also pointed out that there were never more than three in the front seat, (which, by the way, is the only thing the law stipulated at the time).

Mr. Thomas continued to mumble and grumble about overloading and safety and so on. Finally, he said, point-blank, "Don't do that anymore!"

Well, I pulled myself up to my full-height, looked him squarely in the eye, and said, as clearly as possible, "Okay."

I imposed a "10-person-per-backseat" limit. Evidently that was acceptable because no one ever bothered me about it again.

Evenings spent at Helen's Ice Cream Bar often ended with all the guys having cars laying as much rubber as possible as they took off for home. Naturally, there was always a bunch of bystanders who sort of kept score, I guess.

Most of the guys were driving cars two or three years old. My car was almost old enough to vote! When it came to peeling out, I didn't stand a chance. Heck, I couldn't even spin the wheels on slick ice!

So when my turn came, I'd back out onto High Street, rev the engine a few times, shift into 3rd gear, pullout the choke, and pop the clutch!

The old Chevy would cough and wheeze and literally jump a half-dozen times all the way to the Eagle Hotel while spewing a cloud of black smoke similar to Vesuvius!

I'd swing around the block to get the car running

smoothly again and re-adjust my cervical vertebrae. Then I'd drive back by the restaurant. The bystanders would be convulsed in laughter, some practically falling on the sidewalk.

I must have done that routine a dozen times, and I got the same reaction every time.

Wintertime was great fun in the Chevy. With chains on, it would go anywhere. Except for color, it was a lot like a John Deere tractor. A couple of times, I was the only one able to drive into the school parking lot in the morning. A good, old Waterford snowstorm was just a bit too much for those fancy, new, log-slung cars that everyone else had.

One night in march, 1956, someone (I've forgotten who) was asking how fast the Chevy would go. I didn't know. I didn't care. Until then. Now I was wondering, too.

So we drove out the "High Road" to Stull's Hill. At the top of the hill, I turned around and headed down. I held the gas pedal to the floor, and we hung on for dear life!

I'm not sure how fast we were going! The speedometer needle was bouncing all over between 40 and what I estimated to be 130! That averages out to 85 mph, which is probably close to our actual speed. At the time, however, 130 seemed more like it!

It was not a comfortable ride. You know those paint-shaking machines in hardware stores? It was kind of like riding one of those.

Now you may not think 85 mph is very fast. Well, it isn't so fast if you're in, say, a Jaguar. Or a '59 Cadillac, for that matter. But picture yourself aboard a hay wagon at 85 mph. Or the tractor pulling it. Speed seems to be a relative thing, doesn't it?

I slowed down at the bottom of the hill, and we drove back into town at a nice, safe 30 mph. The car rode very smooth then. However, we were still shaking!

The next day, I took the car to have it inspected. It didn't pass. Whatever it is that is supposed to hold the front wheels on ---- wasn't! Only a couple of cotter pins were keeping the wheels from going their separate ways!

After the night before, this was news I didn't need to hear! Of course, my hair turned white instantly, and I developed a nervous facial tick which gave me the appearance of an intermittent snarl. Luckily, it was a weekend, and I was back to normal by Monday morning.

There was no fix for the poor, old car, I retired it and put it out to pasture in a --- uh --- pasture on my uncle's farm. My cousin and I drove it around in the fields and woods for a while, but it was deteriorating rapidly. Its odometer was on its third trip around, and its time had come.

That summer, we hauled it to its final resting place: Roy Green's junkyard down by the depot.

It's been over 40 years, but I still think of the old Chevy every once in a while. I'd like to say that I never had a better car. I'd like to say that, but I can't. I've had lots of better cars. In fact, every car I've had was better

than the Chevy. But none of them has ever been as much fun!

P.S. Hey! Wanna see a picture of my old car? Grab your 1956 Sentinel yearbook and open to the title pages. There are a half-dozen pictures of the school. In the lower right is a night shot, and squarely in front of the school entrance is the Chevy! That's Miss Byers' Studebaker in front of it. And those are my tracks in the snow.

P.P.S. That picture was taken during one of our yearbook work nights. Mr. Stubbe was also working at something that night, and I told him I wanted to take some night shots of the school. He gave me the master key, and I ran up and down the halls lighting all the lights in the classrooms. I took a bunch of time exposures and then ran around again turning off lights and locking up.

Times have changed. If that were to happen now, I would have to be strip-searched, accompanied by an armed guard, and passed through a metal detector about twenty times. I'm glad we got ourselves born in the 1930s, aren't you?

American Airlines saved \$40,000 in 1987 by eliminating one olive from each salad served in first-class.

Do You Remember This?

GIRL-SHY
3-Act Comedy
Junior & Senior Classes
Fort Le Boeuf High School

A Comedy In Three Acts

Characters

Tom Arsdale.....	Jim McDowell
Oke Stimson.....	Steve Graham
Caroline.....	Joanne Beckwith
Anthony Arsdale.....	Joe Leech
Sylvia Webster.....	Joyce Marsh
Dean Marlow.....	David Belt
Oeaches Carter.....	Faye Marsh
Asthma.....	Joan Markham
Birdie La Verne.....	Lillian Turley
Babs Sanford.....	Beverly Owens
Alfred T. Murgatoyd.....	Herb Walden
Chuck Mayo.....	Bill Marsh

Time: The present. Graduation time.

Place: Living room in the bachelor apartment of Tom and Oke, in a college town.

Act One: Tom and Oke's apartment. A day in spring.

Act Two: The same. The next afternoon.

Act Three: The same. Evening of the same day.

Ushers
Marjorie Pfeffer

Donna Campbell
May Steen
Carol Hawley
Grace O'Sullivan
Nancy Ostryniec
Clara Mae Shields

Justine Monroe

Ruth Ann Allen
Flora Donnell
Sally Fox
Jane Tujetsch
Marianne Babbitt
Lura Shields

Director Mr. John Russell

Business Manager Vera McWilliams
Advertising Manager Carol McMahon

Editors note: Thanks to Herb Walden for furnishing the above program.

A Memory Test

The following was received from Lillian Turley Barnes (1956).

Does that make me archaic, or a history buff? Age Barometer: how many do you remember? Count 'em.

1. Blackjack chewing gum
2. Wax Coke-shaped bottles with colored sugar water
3. Candy cigarettes
4. Soda pop machines that dispensed bottles
5. Coffee shops with table side jukeboxes
6. Home milk delivery in glass bottles with cardboard stoppers
7. Party lines
8. Newsreels before the movie
9. P.F. Flyers
10. Butch wax
11. Telephone numbers with a word prefix (Olive - 6933)
12. Peashooters
13. Howdy Doody
14. 45 RPM records
15. S&H Green Stamps
16. Hi-fi's
17. Metal ice trays with levers
18. Mimeograph paper
19. Blue flashbulbs
20. Beanie and Cecil
21. Roller skate keys
22. Cork popguns
23. Drive-ins
24. Studebakers
25. Wash tub wringers

If you remembered 0-5 = You're still young. If you remembered 6-10 = You are getting older. If you remembered 11-15 = Don't tell your age. If you remembered 16-25 = You're older than dirt! Chances are, when God said let their be light, you turned on the

switch!

The class personality was: Charles Cowley

ENJOY!