

Bisonalities, Again



A quarterly Newsletter dedicated to the Alumni of Waterford and Fort Le Boeuf High Schools

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Spring Issue

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Contents

<i>Letter to the Editor - Wes Nicklas</i>	1
<i>Cat's Corner</i>	2
<i>Nostalgia</i>	3
<i>Remembering sweet victory - Paul Reichart</i>	3
<i>Mr. Dove and me - Herb Walden</i>	5
<i>E-Mail Addresses</i>	6

Welcome to the Spring 2001/2002 edition of the Newsletter dedicated to the alumni (students, teachers, and administrators) of Waterford and Fort Le Boeuf Senior High Schools. This newsletter will be issued quarterly. New issues will be posted for viewing on the Web site on, or about, October 5, January 5, April 5, and July 5.

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 an e-mail address of one of your classmates? Send it to me at the following e-mail address:

bisonalities@candoer.org

or at my snail-mail address.

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Please, **NO** handwritten submissions.

The Bisonalities, Again Newsletter is available to any and all alumni, teachers, and administrators of Waterford or FLBSHS on the Web site, free. If you know an alumnus, teacher, or administrator who would be interested, please ask them to contact me.

None of the material in this newsletter has a copyright. If you wish to make copies of this newsletter

and distribute it to other Alumni or friends, please feel free to do so.

Letter to the Editor

The following letter was received from Wes Nicklas (Class of 1954):

I have been away from Waterford a long time (since 1957) but I still think about it a lot.

I guess I don't have enough other things to think about.

There are lots of thing to remember, but snow has to be high on the list. Now, understand, we get some snow in Kentucky, but if you ignore our snow it sort of goes away on its own.

Lake Le Boeuf was always a big part of our summers and it was good about not getting us drowned.

There are lots of other things to remember, such as cute girls and innocent boys.

There were great baseball teams and some pretty good other teams, also.

I think I remember going to French Creek, New York, to drink beer at age 18 but may have forgotten some of the details.

The list goes on and on but the thing that mostly sticks in my head was "**working**." People who knew me probably wouldn't remember ol' Wes as a ball of fire in the world of work. I can't help that but work was what I remember most.

To make some sense out of this, consider my situation. Being mostly a town kid, I wasn't obligated to do lots of farm work--every day--no pay. I doubt there are many farm kids who look back with fond memories of all that work. Also being a guy, there were lots of good healthy, dirty jobs that were available.

To The Work

Worst first — This had to be hauling hay. It was the old fashioned string-tied square bales. Hot,

duty, fairly heavy, and even hotter in the barn loft.

Picking up potatoes was about as dirty, but was usually cooler. I was too slow to be good at picking up spuds.

Cabbage and corn — Now this is better. The weather is now cool to cold and dust was no problem. Cutting cabbage with an old time butcher knife requires a bit of bending, but we started in the morning and Mrs. Sharpe fed us lunch (Mr. Sharpe was on the school board — this probably helped us boys to get sprung from class for a day or two of cutting.)

I can't remember who we worked for in the corn patch, but it was for filling a silo. No real problem here as the weather was cool and a bundle of corn stalks was not all that heavy.

Driving tractor and combining — Lots better. I didn't have experience plowing but still got to do some driving for various projects. This was working for Ray Salmon and the combining was managed by his son, Jim Salmon. It was kinda bouncy riding on the combine, and when the oats were right, you were constantly tying off full bags. Boy, I really got good at tying a "miller's knot" — everybody has to be good at something. Another nice thing about combining was watching the wildlife that concentrated in the island that always was left in the center of the field. All in all, this was a great experience.

The Cross Factor

Many of my later jobs came about because of "The Cross Factor." It seems, the Cross boys were known as good workers and always had more jobs than one family could handle. The overflow came to people like me, who didn't know how to say "no."

One such job was grading potatoes for Aldie Phelps. Now this was a good job, but we first had to haul the bagged spuds from the field to the barn. Eugene Cross was stacking on the truck, two adult guys were loading one side of the truck, and guess who was loading the other side — all by his lonesome self. I was real glad when the last bag was loaded.

Another phone call from Eugene lead down a twisted path to a really good job. It kinda went like this: Mr. Waterhouse needed more help getting the cemetery trimmed up for Memorial Day. I worked several days on this project, but they didn't need me after Memorial Day. Mr. Waterhouse mentioned to Jim Breon that I was available and soon I was pumping gas and washing cars at the Atlantic station. What a great job — I learned about mechanical stuff, talked to a few girls, and got a good education, working for Jim. (I think a gasoline was priced at 26.9 cents per gallon.)

My best memory was one winter night when I was closing up the station during a bad snow storm. People kept coming in needing chains put on to get home. This went on long after closing time, but I didn't care since the tips were great, and both Jim and I made

money that night.

This story, being about Waterford, started with snow and ended in a snow storm. Now that part about innocent boys and cute girls — we were all quite innocent.

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Cat's Corner

In the Winter Issue I reported an e-mail address for Janet Newton Sucoln - 1955, her married name is Pichler, not Sucoln. Janet, the error was mine, please accept my apology. I have corrected the error on the Web site.

When I sent out the e-mail notice on January 6, 2002, to all Bisonalities, Again web members, I received 20 rejects for bad e-mail addresses. Below you will find a list of the alumni e-mail addresses that were rejected. If you have a correct e-mail address for these alumni, please furnish it to me ... and, remember, if you change your e-mail address, please send it to me so I may keep my records up to date and alumni informed. Thanks!

Richard Beeman	beemanfam@earthlink.net
Barry Burdick	barrydog@juno.com
Jeannette Callen	civ97@apk.net
Marilyn Ferguson	fergie.com@prodigy.net
Kathy Helmke	ghelmke@gateway.net
Joe Heim	bjrheim@webtv.net
Connie Holder	close2c@juno.com
Donald Holder	holder2dz@juno.com
Joe Leech	joevl@nauticom.net
John Leech	jasperjl@aol.com
Kay McCray	mkmc@aol.com
Mary Megna	marym@paonline.com
Robert Page	yankee@velocity.net
Dave Pifer	oxmister@aol.com
John Ray	jammoray@hotmail.com
Enid Reynolds	elghundn@access.mountain.net
Paul Reichart	pereichart@aol.com
Richard Vogt, Jr.	rvogtjr@velocity.net
Tammi Wirth	tammiky@gte.net

On February 6, Ms. Davis had a mini-stroke, but has made great progress toward a full recovery.

One of the alumni from the class of 1955 is trying to make contact with Patricia Clark, class of 1955. If anyone has information on how to contact Pat, please furnish it to me, or have Pat contact me. Thanks!

Lillian Turley Barnes- 1956 - furnished a new snail-mail address: 5842 Heron Park Place
Lithia, FL 33547

Nancy Dorman Swanson - 1955 - furnished an address for:

Marie Edwards Hart - 1955 - mariehart@aol.com
Ted Barton - 1955 - teamwba@technonet.com
Nancy Prosocki Austin - 1955 - ladyrider12@juno.com

On March 9, 2002, a Gathering of the Bisons was held at Lillian Turley Barnes ('56) house in Florida. In attendance at this Gathering were the following:

Bette Davis (85 and going strong)
 Lillian ('56) and Doug Barnes
 Leslie Catlin ('56)
 Robert ('56) and Nancy Catlin
 Charles ('56) and Alice ('65) Cowley
 Steve ('56) and Susan Graham
 Clarence ('54) and Marlene ('56) Kibbe
 Rollin Kibbe ('56)
 Nancy Swanson ('55) and friend, Richard

A great time was had by all.

On March 29, Dane Charlton, 1976, furnished an e-mail address: danechar@aol.com

On March 30, Alice Shaffer Cowley furnished names and addresses of the Class of 1965. The web page for the Class of 65 has been up-dated with this information.

On March 31, Dane Charlton furnished an e-mail address for Beverly Charlton, 1979: bevie@adelphia.net

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Nostalgia

Herb Walden "1956", forwarded the following to me as a nostalgia piece. Many of you in the class of 1955 may remember this event:

Sixth Grade Commencement Exercises Waterford Borough and Township May 25, 1949 Program

Invocation	Rev. T.G. Shallenberger
Recitation, "Welcome"	David Cassell
Song, "White Coral Bells"	Class
Recitation, "Success"	Crystal Carrier
Recitation, "America For Me"	Leslie Brace
Piano "Black Hawk Waltz"	Marjorie Sharpe (Solo)
Recitation, "Mr. Nobody"	Marion Chase
Song, "Swiss Walking Song"	Class
Recitation, "Ninety and Nine"	Theodore Barton
Recitation, "Deeds of Today"	Sue Ann Coffin
Song, "Cruising Down the River"	Patrick Fourspring
Recitation, "This Day"	Joan Lester
Recitation, "Daffodils"	Loretta Young
Song, "Juanita"	Maxine Burlingame Nancy Prososki
Recitation, "History Lesson"	Janet Runser
Song, "Cieletto Lindo"	Class
Recitation, "Farewell"	Joanne Flook
Presentation of the Class	William Carroll
Presentation of Diplomas:	
Gordon Marsh, President Borough School Board.	
Adrian Sharpe, Vice President Waterford Township School Board.	

Benediction Rev. T. G. Shallenberger

Six Grade Class

Theodore Barton III	John Hull, III
Stanley Beezub	Joan Lester
Charles Bliley	Howard Markham, Jr.
Joann Brown	Doris Ormsbee

Maxine Burlingame	Norman Ormsbee
Leslie Brace	Clayton Owens
Louise Brace	Floyd Pencille
David Cassell	Edward Post
Crystal Carrier	Nancy Prososki
Marion Chase	Aloysius Rinderle
Sue Ann Coffin	Janet Runser
Nancy Dorman	Joan Sanborn
William Falk	Joann Sanborn
Elizabeth Faulhaber	Marjorie Sharpe
Joanne Flook	Herbert Walden
Jack Edwards	Lelah Wilcox
John Fourspring	Winifred Woods
Theodore Fox	Alfred Young
Ralph Hawley	Loretta Young
Louis Heffner, Jr.	Olean Young

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Remembering sweet victory in Waterford

by Paul Reichart

Dew was collecting on the grass in Wilcoxes' yard and there was a late-August chill in the air, but we weren't ready to come in yet.

There were about 15 of us out there, playing tag and king-of-the-mountain in the faded blue T-shirts we'd worn through the three-month baseball season.

As the sun slipped from the sky the celebration continued.

It was 1958, the same year the New York Giants moved to San Francisco, where they enjoyed modest successes, finishing third behind the Braves and upstart Pirates.

But the Waterford Giants was a smallish team of lesser accomplishment. We also finished our regular season behind the Braves — and behind the Indians and Yankees, too — until lady luck smiled on us in the playoffs.

Of course, all four of the Recreation League teams had to bow to Park Phillips' select "traveling team" which got to wear real baseball uniforms and play half its games in exotic places like Edinboro and Sagertown.

They were the first to win their league title. The Giants' victory in the Rec League came about a week later, but in many ways it was sweeter because everybody figured we had the chance of a snowball in Tucson.

Waterford is rich in history. George Washington visited in 1753 in a futile attempt to convince the French to relinquish Fort LeBoeuf, Civil War hero Strong Vincent was born here.

But for an 11-year-old boy (as I was that summer), the history that really counted occurred between the chalk lines of a baseball field.

I knew a bit about Washington's visit — you can't miss the statue down by the Eagle Hotel — but all I knew about Vincent is that they named an Erie High

School after him.

I could tell you, though, about Babe Ruth's 714 home runs and Joe DiMaggio's 56-game hitting streak. And I knew my Pirates hadn't been in the World Series since 1927 when they were thumped by the Yankees in four straight.

Baseball history was my passion in those days and from my sixth-grader perspective, Waterford had none of it. Except for the high school team, the town didn't have an organized baseball program.

All that changed in 1958. On March 6, The Waterford Leader announced a meeting later that week at the American Legion home for "boys 8 to 12 and their fathers who are interested in Little League baseball."

It was a sputtering beginning. Next week came news that the meeting had to be rescheduled.

"Come on dads, let's get out and make our sons great Little Leaguers," the Leader said.

But the next issue brought no news of the meeting. Instead, the paper assured post-Sputnik sky watchers that the light in the sky they had called in about was Venus, not a "space ship anchored off the moon."

Finally, on April 10 came a report that the new league had elected officers Albert Shields III, Raymond Proctor and Homer Taylor and trustees Herbert Briggs and Paul W. Donnell.

That was followed by news that Judd Palmer, Delbert Donnell, William Sherwood, John Eglin and Phillips would be the league's first coaches.

Tryouts were held on a cool April Saturday. Rec League players were issued caps and T-shirts and each team provided a meager supply of equipment, some of it secondhand. Most of us opted to use our own bats.

The first games were scheduled for Memorial Day — a doubleheader immediately after the annual parade. I remember rushing home to swap my trumpet for a baseball glove.

All games were played on the downtown diamond, next to the present-day library.

When I hear Paul Stookey of Peter, Paul & Mary sing "Right Field," I think of my Little League days. That was me out there in right field watching the dandelions grow.

In Little League, right field is where those of minimal skill usually wind up. It's only a small step above bench jockey, a position I also knew well.

My fielding was atrocious and the only reason I started is that I got on base a lot. I was scared stiff when I stepped to the plate and rarely swung my bat. Little League pitchers are not known for their control, so I usually walked.

I think I also led the league in being plunked in the ribs. I couldn't react fast enough to dodge an inside

pitch.

"Take your base," the umpire would say as I hopped around holding my side.

Recently I visited Ray Proctor, one of the league's first vice presidents and member of the first traveling team. On his desk at LeBoeuf Transit, Ray had pictures of all the first year teams. I recognized a lot of the kids from 42 years ago, though Ray knew even more than me. As I looked at them, I tried to figure out why my Giants were such doormats. We had some pretty good players — Dave Palmer, Tommy Thomas, Ken Wilcox and Leo Pfadt — but still finished dead last.

The juggernaut of the league was the Braves. Their picture shows out-sized catcher Paul Clarkson towering above his teammates. I concluded it would have been more appropriate if my brother-in-law had played for the Giants, since he was so much bigger than the rest of us, and I had played for the Braves, giving my willingness to take on in the side for the team.

Early on, the Leader printed standings, but when it became clear that the Braves were running away with it, they reverted to anecdotal reports. Readers learned, for instance, that the Giant's embarrassing 25-9 loss to the Braves in June was compounded by the fact that a player's glove was stolen when he left it in the phone booth across the street from the ballfield. (No, it wasn't me!)

At season's end, the first-place Braves beat the Third-place Yankees in the first round of the playoffs and the last place Giants surprised everyone by nudging out the second-place Indians.

That set up an unexpected best-of-three series pitting the best against the worst.

The final game was held about a week before Labor Day and it turned into a scorekeeper's nightmare. The Leader didn't publish the results, but if memory serves, the score was 32-23. That's an average of more than nine runs an inning.

The Giants got off to an early lead. I think I batted about four times and scored three runs, but was taken out of the game in the third inning for defensive reasons — and to nurse my bruised ribs.

Of course, I couldn't have been in as much pain as the dutiful parents who had to sit through such a tedious contest and offer up encouragement.

The Braves gave it their best, but they'd dug themselves a deep hole at the outset and were never able to catch up.

Our coaches, Palmer and Mac Thomas, were so relieved when the end finally came that they treated us to ice cream sundies at Heard's drug store before trundling us off to Wilcoxes for an evening of family celebration.

Victory is especially sweet for an underdog. I

know a little of how David must of felt when Goliath came crashing to the ground, but I can't find an exact parallel in the world of sports.

In my mind, Clay over Liston in '63, Namath over the Colts in '69 and the 1980 "Miracle on Ice" don't even begin to tell our story.

I remember being mildly disappointed by the Leader's coverage the next week. It ran a team picture and caption that called us "unexpected winners."

There was no recap of Waterford's first Little League season or even a report of the startling Rec League Finale.

Probably the editor couldn't believe it either.

Paul Reichart, a graduate of Fort Le Boeuf, spent 30 years in the newspaper business, including 20 as managing editor of The Bradford Era.

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Mr. Dove and Me

by Herb Walden

I was glad to see an article by Lew Dove in "Bisonalities, Again" awhile back. Mr. Dove was one of my favorite teachers, which may seem odd since I was never in any of his classes.

I got to know Mr. Dove when I was working on the yearbook a lot after school back in '55-'56 ("Working" is used very loosely here). He would stop by the art room often to see how and what we were doing. I always enjoyed his sense of humor.

The fact that I was not in his classroom didn't stop Mr. Dove from teaching me a very important lesson. Inadvertantly, of course.

One snowy winter evening, I left the warmth and comfort of Helen's Ice Cream Bar with another kid, (I've forgotten who), to ride around Waterford's side streets in the midst of a near-blizzard. I liked doing that, because my old Chevy would go anywhere in the snow whether Hoot Gibson had plowed or not.

We drove down to the end of West 1st Street and I was about to turn right when we noticed a car setting in the middle of the road leading to The Inlet. We could see through the storm that the car was jacked up. Good Samaritans that we were, we stopped, backed up, and went to see if we could help.

Lo and behold, the car was Mr. Dove's, and he was in the process of putting on tire chains. He said that he had found he could go nowhere without them.

We offered to help, but he said he was almost through, and for us to stand out of the way. The car was jacked up on a bumper jack.

We stepped back, and instead of lowering the car in the standard fashion, Mr. Dove gave the car two or three pushes from the side. The car rocked back and forth and fell off the jack with a "thud" and all sorts of dirt, mud, and slush fell out from underneath it!

He calmly picked up the jack and placed it in the

trunk. As I recall, his exact words were: "She goes up, but she won't come down!"

We laughed until I thought we'd suffocate!

A couple of years after that, we were living in Edinboro, and if there is any other place that has "Waterford Winters" besides Waterford, it's Edinboro!

Our driveway, one winter day, consisted of a sheet of ice with about a foot of wet snow on top of it. I backed my car out of the garage and was stuck immediately. I tried the usual rocking back and forth, but the result was that the car slid sideways. That in itself was a problem, but to compound things, a fence with extra-big posts bordered the driveway. It didn't take much rocking until I found myself, (the car, actually), snuggled up tight against the fence. Any further attempt on my part would have either removed the fence or the side of my car. Or both!

Well, I sat there fuming away, not knowing what do do. I had already used all the profanity I knew and was now making up some original stuff. Suddenly, Mr. Dove popped into my mind!

I got out my bumper jack, jacked up the read end of the car, and pushed it off the jack! I did the same at the front end. I kept alternating front and back until I had moved the car sideways about eight feet from the fence. By that time, I had the snow pretty well tramped down, and of course, a lot if had melted from the heat generated by my temper tantrum. I backed out and went happily on my way.

So thanks, Mr. Dove, for a lesson well taught. And until I take up residence in Florida, I'll continue to carry a bumper jack in my car every winter!!

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Be Safe!