

# Bisonalities Again



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

October 2013 Fall Issue Volume 15 – Number 1

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Welcome to the **Newsletter** dedicated to the alumni (students, teachers, and administrators) of Waterford and Fort LeBoeuf High Schools. This **Newsletter** will be distributed quarterly. New issues will be posted for your reading enjoyment on the [www.bisonalitiesagain.com](http://www.bisonalitiesagain.com) web site on or about, January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1.

**The success of this newsletter depends on you. I need story contributors.** Do you have an interesting article, a nostalgia item, a real life story, or a picture you would like to share with others? Do you have a

snail-mail or an e-mail address of an alumnus? If you do send it to me at the following e-mail address:

[candoercat@gmail.com](mailto:candoercat@gmail.com)

or to my snail-mail address:

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Please, **NO** handwritten submissions.

This newsletter is available **free** on the Web to any and all alumni, teachers, and administrators, past and present, of Waterford and Fort LeBoeuf High Schools. If you know any alumni, teacher, or administrator who would be interested, tell them about the Web site.

None of the material in this newsletter has a copyright, **unless otherwise noted**. If you wish to print the newsletter and make copies to distribute to others, please, feel free to do so.

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**Good health is merely the slowest possible rate at which one can die.**

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## Cat's Corner

Whether you believe in global warming or not, one thing you have to believe is that the weather this year, so far, has been unusual.

If this continues into the winter we are going to have a winter to remember (or hope to forget).

In July we had rain way above our normal rain fall and then came August and September and they were just the opposite. No rain and temperatures 3-5 degrees lower than normal.

**Waterford Days** was a great success. I want to thank the committee for the hard work and dedication to duty they showed to make this event come into fruition. They made this event happen in about a third of the time that would be needed normally and were extremely successful.

The [www.waterforddays.com](http://www.waterforddays.com) web site will be kept up-to-date with information on next year's event.

One of the pages on the Waterford Days Web site is a page of photos of Waterford and the Waterford area ([www.waterforddays.com/pictures.html](http://www.waterforddays.com/pictures.html)).

We are looking for photographs people may have taken of past events in town or any old photograph that you have of the area. Send them to me with an explanation of what and when and it will be included in the Photo Web Page. Both my snail-mail and e-mail address are listed above. If you snail-mail a picture to me and want it back it will be returned to you.

**While** in Waterford, for Waterford Days, Nancy and I attended the FLBHS Class of 1956's 57<sup>th</sup> reunion. We had a good turnout and had a very enjoyable time. On the [www.bisonalitiesagain.com](http://www.bisonalitiesagain.com) web site you will find several pictures of the event that were taken by Vera Powell.

In addition, Nancy and I were invited to the 59<sup>th</sup> reunion of the class of 1954. This is always a special event for us that we enjoy very much. The company is great, the food great, deserts to die for, and the hosts outstanding. On the web site you will also find several pictures of this event that were taken by Vera Powell.

**I** am now Web Master for another web site [www.fortleboeufhistoricalsociety.com](http://www.fortleboeufhistoricalsociety.com).

This site has a lot of information about Waterford and the Fort LeBoeuf Historical Society.

They are in the process of taking over responsibility for the Fort LeBoeuf Museum and the George Washington Park. They are going to need a **lot** of help in this endeavor. If you live in the area and can help, either with a donation of money or a donation of your time, I know they would gratefully appreciate it. You can find the contact information under "**Contact Info**" on the web site. You can also become a member of the Historical Society for a small donation. Information on how to become a member is located on the web site under "**Membership**". I am a lifetime member!

I encourage everyone who reads this newsletter to, at a minimum, become a member.

**An** article written in 1955 by a reporter of the Los Angeles Mirror-News is repeated in this issue.

I lost another friend this week. I really hate losing friends, but this one was preventable. He died because of his own stupidity. He drove drunk. Luckily, he did not kill anyone else

If you are one of those who think he can drink and drive remember this story. You may get away with in a few times, but when it does catch up with you the results can be catastrophic for your family and in many cases the families of those you kill or maim.

**A** story written by the Late Herb Walden that was published in the first issue of this newsletter is being repeated in this issue.

I noticed on Facebook that a lot of you are recalling places that existed in Waterford during your growing up years. This article by Herb lists and described the many places and people in Waterford during his growing up years.

**In** addition, we have another story written by Dave Rutkowski, Class of '67. Rut has written several stories for the Newsletter and I hope he becomes a regular story contributor. Thanks Rut!

**And** last, but not least, there is another great story written by Wes Nicklas, WHS class of 1954, included in this issue. Thanks Wes!

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**Health nuts are going to feel stupid someday, lying in the hospitals, dying of nothing.**

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**Deaths**

The deaths shown below were published in the Erie Times and on the [www.bisonalitiesagain.com](http://www.bisonalitiesagain.com) web site.

Michael Stewart	FLBHS - 1970	July
Stephanie McCracken Williams	FLBHS - 1994	July
Pauline Wilcox Jenkins	WHS - 1946	July
Larry Arndt	FLBHS - 1965	July
Stephen Sekula	WHS - 1948	July
Lynda Humes Holmes	FLBHS - 1959	July
Jim Delfft	FLBHS - 1962	July
Chris Sanford	FLBHS - 1990	July
Carl Hunt, Jr.	WHS - 1945	July
Cynthia Jean Loll Borkowski	FLBHS - 1991	July
Garrett Conn	FLBHS - 2010	Aug
Cindy McGahen Cornwell	FLBHS - 1983	Sept
John Siegel	FLBHS - 1986	Sept
James (Coach) McGowan	Teacher	Sept

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**Don't worry about old age--it doesn't last that long.**

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**THE QUIETEST ROOM IN TOWN**

Written in 1955 by Bill Kiley  
Los Angeles Mirror-News

They have been expecting you. They knew that eventually you'd show up. It won't be possible for you to know what is happening, so I'm going to take the liberty of filling you in.

The beginning for you will be when you stagger to your car. The beginning for them will be when a bulletin goes out on the police radio reporting the location of a serious accident with instruction to "proceed at once."

You won't hear the sirens. The ambulance and the police car will arrive

together. They will check you over and pronounce you dead.

A few curious motorists who hear or saw the crash will stop their cars and walk back to look at your broken, bloody body. Some of them will get sick.

The ambulance driver will roll out a stretcher. The attendant will stuff your hands under your belt and grab you under the arms. The driver will take hold of your legs. You will be placed on the stretcher and covered with a blanket.

They'll drive you to the coroner's office, where a deputy coroner will wheel you over to a scale. He'll remove the blanket; shake his head and say, "Another one."

Your clothes will be cut off. You will be weighed and measured. The deputy coroner will make a record of your injuries, cover you up again and wheel you to a small room with white-tiled walls. There are hoses in that room. Traffic victims are almost always a bloody mess.

You will be cleaned up (as much as possible) and moved to a long hall with several stretchers lined up against its pale green walls. In that hall are 41 crypts. If it has been a slow evening, you will have a stretcher and a crypt all to yourself. But if it's Christmas, New Year's, Labor or Memorial Day weekend, you may have lots of company.

They will go away and leave you there in the quietest room in town.

In an hour or so they will come back and move you again. You will be placed behind a large glass window so your wife or your husband or your parents or a friend can identify you.

You won't see the agony and pain in their eyes, and it's just as well. Nor will you hear the screams and sobbing when they lower the sheet and ask, "Is this your husband . . . wife . . . son . . . daughter . . . brother . . . sister . . . friend?"

The police, the ambulance crews, the coroners at the morgue and the morticians, they are all expecting you.

Remember this, when you toss down that last drink and climb behind the steering wheel.

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**If you must drink, don't drive. If you must drive, don't drink.**

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**Waterford's heritage: people and places**

by the Late Herb Walden

FLBHS Class of 1956

I spent the 1940s being a kid. Not just any kid, mind you but a kid growing up in Waterford.

Now that we're all celebrating the 50th anniversary of -- uh -- 1949, I thought it might be fitting to share some of my memories of Waterford's business district.

I remember stores that lined High Street in the '40s, and a few others off the main thoroughfare.

For instance, there were five grocery stores along the west side, Laing's, Irwin & Cross, Patten's, Phelps' (which later became Doolittle's), and the Red and White.

My father's brother, Vic Walden, owned the Red & White at the corner of High Street and West South Park Row, and my dad, Bill, worked for him.

Mr. Patten's store at the corner of West 2nd and High Streets wasn't exactly a fully stocked grocery, but in addition to the foods he did have, there were also boots and shoes. Mr. Patten didn't have a cash register; he kept the money in a drawer under the counter.

There were two hardware stores, and my purchases back then were often paints for toys, bikes, bird houses, and such. The brands were "BPS" at Myers' Hardware and "Lucas" at Bowersox Hardware. These were real paints, not the watercolors we have today. Oh, sure, they were probably full of lead, but as long as a kid didn't lick his fingers clean, he was fairly safe.

Some time in the late '40s, Sam Myers moved his hardware to the building now occupied by the Stancliff Hose Company and expanded his farm supply business. I still half-expect to see Farmall tractors sitting in front of the building whenever I'm in Waterford.

Mr. Brown's Variety Store, or 5 & 10s, as those stores were called, had just about

everything. There were toys and hats and greeting cards and toothpaste -- sort of a miniature K-Mark with prices that even a kid could afford.

Mr. Brown started his business in a store between 1st Street and the 2nd Alley. About 1944 or so, he moved up to the next block to the former Lindsley Hardware, just two doors from the Red and White. Waha's Restaurant took over Mr. Brown's old store and they were succeeded by Holman's Clothing.

Hewitt's "Park Pharmacy" was between our store and the 5 and 10, and Coon's Drugstore was down in the next block. When Mr. Hewitt retired, Eaton's moved in for a time, followed by Pizzo's and then Parke Phillips took over. Most drug stores had soda fountains back then, and Parke's was the place to get the best marshmallow sundaes with chocolate ice cream!

When Mr. Coon retired, the post office moved from the Masonic Building into his store.

Beyond Coon's was Kingen's Dry Goods, well-stocked with bolts of material and all kinds of sewing needs. The store was operated by Mrs. Stinson and her sister, Mrs. Gates. I liked going in there with my mother or grandmother because of the slippery bent-wood bench and tilting stools, both entertaining things for a little kid.

These were the days of restaurant/dairy bars.

Merle Heard's "Sugar Bowl" at the corner of High Street and 2nd Alley was a favorite stop. I think single-dip cones were a nickel, and double-dips were a dime.

At Roberts' Dairy Bar, Fred and Eleanor Roberts made their own ice cream. They started in business in the little building next to the Waterford Hotel. (The old Civil War recruiting station). They soon moved into the Masonic Building when the post office moved out. Robert's cold fudge sundaes were the best ever made -- plenty of delicious vanilla ice cream with enough fudge in which to lose your spoon. All that for 20 cents.

Once in a while during the summer,



Freddie would make what he called "Frosted Malted." That was my introduction to soft ice cream, and it was a thousand times better than anything you can find nowadays.

The Gem Restaurant, owned by Mr. Twitchell, was my supplier of Fudgesicles and Choco-Pops (chocolate-covered ice cream bars). Sometimes after finishing off a Fudgesicle, I'd find the word "Free" stamped on the stick. This meant that I could redeem the stick for a free Fudgesicle. And I did!

When Mr. Twitchell went out, Baker's Restaurant moved in. Eventually, Dave Doolittle took over the restaurant and tore out a partition to enlarge his grocery store.

There were four automobile dealerships in town: Delavern's "Central Motors" at West 2nd and High Streets sold Fords along with John Deere farm equipment. Moore's Chevrolet was on the corner of East 1st and High Streets, where the Post Office is now located. Humes DeSota-Plymouth was on East South Park Row, across from the baseball diamond, where Jake's on the Park is now. Humes also sold Case farm equipment. You could buy a Pontiac at Cross' Garage on High Street.

The dealerships did auto repairs, and so did Lawrence Burdick at the "Pioneer Garage" on the northern outskirts of the borough.

Gas stations (or filling stations, as we called them) were not numerous. In the midst of downtown was Lockhart's Kendall, where the bank now stands. Humes' Keystone was just beyond the baseball diamond, and right across High Street was the Mobile Station operated by my uncle, Ronnie Walker. Way up High Street, just beyond 6th Street, was Cap Mauer's Gulf Station, taken over later by Mr. and Mrs. Cook.

My uncle's Mobile Station burned down in 1943 and was replaced by a new Atlantic Station operated by Jim Breon.

The big building across West 1st Street from the Eagle Hotel was Lyn Phelp's furniture store. Lyn was also the undertaker and had caskets for sale in the back. I didn't care much about going in there!

Mr. Mike's shoe repair shop was a

busy place because this was still the era of leather soles and rubber heels, both of which usually wore out before the uppers and could be repaired or replaced. Remember heel plates?

Dr. Elmer Coop's office was on High Street and Dr. V. K. Worster's office was on West 1st Street, just behind the furniture store.

Doc Worster delivered me and did his best to keep me healthy all the way through my college years. Doc was a big, strapping man with a big, booming personality. The word "robust" may have been coined specifically to describe Doc Worster. When I was sick, I always felt better immediately when Doc came in. I viewed Doc as a celebrity. It seemed like everyone in the world knew him.

When I graduated, I received an envelope in the mail from Dr. Worster. Scrawled on it was the address: "Herbie Walden, City" -- no number, no street, no town, no state. Evidently, Doc was in a hurry that day.

In the envelope was a congratulatory note, hand-written on a prescription blank. He couldn't have sent me a better gift. It is one of my most-treasured mementos.

Dr. Hood, our dentist, moved his office into the "Civil War Building" when Fred and Eleanor Roberts moved out.

Two barber shops were on the main street - Art Babbitt's and Guy Doud's. Haircuts were 50 cents.

The bank was locally owned by Mr. Ensworth, while Mrs. Waltz owned the Waterford Electric Light Company.

Two feed mills served the many farmers of the area: Burger and O'Brien on East 3rd Street, and the G.L.F., located a mile beyond and next to the railroad depot. EL. Heard's store and coal yard was across the road from the G.L.F.

To serve the alcoholic needs of the locally gentry, there were bars in the Eagle Hotel, the Waterford Hotel, and Curley Ober's Cafe.

Gordon Marsh's Sales and Service was located on Walnut Street at the end of West South Park Row. Gordon dealt in home

appliances as well as Surge milking equipment.

Business hours were the about the same for everyone, except bars (ice cream and otherwise, which seemed to be open all the time). Everyone else closed at 6:00 p.m., except on Wednesdays when closing time was noon, and Saturdays when the stores stayed open until 9:00 p.m. At least, that was the plan. In reality, most places didn't get their doors locked until 30 minutes or more after closing. As long as there were customers, the stores stayed open. On Sundays, everything closed except the ice cream/restaurant places -- "Blue Laws," you know.

On Saturday nights, especially in the summer, the downtown was a gathering place for everyone in the area. Some came to shop, but many came just to sit in front of the stores or in their cars and visit with everyone who came by. It was a good social time and welcome break for farm families who worked so hard the rest of the week.

Waterford's "downtown" district has changed a lot over the past 50 years, thanks in large part to the shopping plazas, malls and super-giant stores of Summit and Millcreek Townships.

Oh, I know, there are still many small shops and stores, but as someone once said, "It ain't the way it used to be."

I think it was me.

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### **Why does a slight tax increase cost you \$800.00, and a substantial tax cut saves you \$30.00?**

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#### **What I did on summer vacation this year**

By Wes Nicklas  
(WHS Class of 1954)

Since we have previously been as far west as the Black Hills, SD, it seemed but a short trip farther to Custer Battlefield in Montana. This is mostly correct, but the map scale gets large west of Iowa.

One theme could be "The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly". Gwen might have others.

The bad was messing around and using two hours to solve a leaky tire valve problem before we left KY.

The Ugly was the smell of a Nebraska cattle feed lot just windward of our interstate highway.

The good was everything else, even though it rained a lot while going up the highway. It quit nicely on the three days we were actually present in the parks and one day returning.

Everybody knows about the Badlands, but I'll show you pictures sometime anyhow. They now have hundreds of buffalo loose in the park.

The second day we drove down to Indian country at the Pine Ridge Reservation. Saw the monument for the Wounded Knee attack, and the tribal college. This reservation is for the Lakota, Oglala branches of the Sioux group. Gwen wouldn't eat the buffalo burgers. Pine Ridge admits to be one of the poorest of reservations.

After rainy trip to Hardin, MT, we took the complete tour of the Custer/Reno battlefields. Our tour guide was a Crow guy who was great.

The three parts of the battlefield are intact and look as I expected. Park is contained within a huge Crow Indian reservation. This was much nicer than the Pine Ridge reservation. Maybe this was due to the Crows being allies of Custer and the Seventh Cavalry. The Crows now even have a casino, but it was too crowded to be enjoyable. In addition to the dozens of Crow scouts, Custer's party included four of his close relatives, including his brother, Capt Thomas--all killed. (Major Reno lost only 40 or so people and was able to keep his command intact.)

After a FULL day on the battle field, we headed south the next day. One of the best parts of the trip was driving past the Bighorn Mountains. Gwen said "that looks like snow up there" and she was right again. It was a clear day and we could see the snow for nearly an hour driving down the interstate. It turns out these mountains were ten to twelve thousand feet high and we guess that what fell as rain on us was

snow on the mountains.

We returned by way of the Nebraska feed lot and stayed in Coralville, IA the same as on the way out. Saw lots of irrigation and wind turbines on the way and took a side trip thru Hannibal, MO to see the Mark Twain home. Big river was at flood stage.

Final thoughts -- If you ever do much travel this way, you might as well buy a National Park membership. At least for seniors it is a good deal.

**Editor's Note:** Touring the National Parks can be expensive because of the entrance fees. You can cut the cost by purchasing a Golden-Age Passport. It is a "Lifetime Admission Permit" to all National Parks. The pass can be purchased at any National Park by any citizen who is 62 years of age or older. The pass costs \$10 and even offers 50 percent discount on other charges within the parks.

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**In the 60's, people took acid to make the world weird. Now the world is weird and people take Prozac to make it normal.**

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### High School Homework Revisited

The following was written by Dave Rutkowski for 12<sup>th</sup> Grade English, Class 7, and submitted on February 21, 1967. It received a grade of "A".

My "pet peeve" is people who start talking about one thing and, in the course of conversation, switch to another, unconnected subject. This really burns me. You might say that these people go off on another tangent. By tangent, I don't mean the tangent used in geometry, which is the sine over the cosine. The word "sine" is pronounced the same as "sign". You know, I'll never forget the time my mother backed into a stop sign. She backed right into it, and almost hit a Chevy, too. The Chevy was one of those with the big fins, like a sailfish's. Man, I'll never forget the biggest trout I ever caught. I used a Royal Coachman fly. Did you know that in England the taxi drivers are called coachmen? One time, in Erie, I got in a taxi and when I got

to my destination paid the driver. I started to walk away, and the driver called me back. He claimed I gave him a slug. Did you ever see a slug? I mean the animal...the one that looks like a snail. They are kind of slimy and gooey. They crawl around slower than a turtle. One time I saw a giant snapping turtle. He was really huge! He (maybe she, I don't know. I never could tell the sex of a turtle. A male turtle can tell a female turtle from another male turtle, though. I can't imagine what he sees in her, however) got tangled up in seaweed, and I lost sight of him (or her). The Japanese eat seaweed. I bet you didn't know that, did you? They form the seaweed into shapes that look like right angles and bake them. That reminds me of something we learned in geometry class...the tangent of an angle is the sine over cosine. You know what really burns me? Well, I'll tell you, people who go off on a tangent. They really get me mad. When I say "mad" I do not mean the magazine. One time I read in a magazine.....

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See you next  
quarter!

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