

# Bisonalities, Again



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

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Fall Issue

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Welcome to the Fall 2002 issue of the Newsletter dedicated to the alumni (students, teachers, and administrators) of Waterford High School and Fort LeBoeuf Senior High School. 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](mailto: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 High School or FLBSHS on the Web site, free. If you know an alumnus, teacher, or administrator who would be interested, tell them about the Web site.

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.

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**Don't Leave Safety  
To Mere Chance  
That's Why  
Belts Are  
Sold With Pants  
BURMA-SHAVE**

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## Cat's Corner

In the last issue, Volume 3, Number 4, I included a picture of a mini gathering of Bisons at Lillian and Doug Barnes' house in Florida. I did not list who the attendees were on purpose to allow you to see if you could figure out who they were. I will now list them:

Back Row: Charles Cowley ('56), Bob Catlin ('56), Leslie Catlin ('56), Lillian Barnes ('56), Steve Graham ('56)

Middle Row: Alice Cowley ('65), Susan Graham, Clarence Kibbe ('54), Nancy Swanson ('55), Nancy Catlin, Rollin Kibbe ('56)

Front Row: Mrs. Bette Davis and Marlene Kibbe ('56)

**O**n July 20, 2002, the classes of 1956 and 1957 held their 46th and 45<sup>th</sup> class reunion, respectively. A great time was had by all.

In attendance as special guests were Dr. and Mrs. Earl Stubbe and Mrs. Bette Davis. Dr. Marie Smith Alford sent a letter extending her regrets. She lives in Washington state and at her age, in her 80's, she said the trip was just too much for her and her husband, but she wished us all the best of luck.

In addition to our distinguished special guests, the following class members attended: Lillian (Turley) & Doug Barnes; Barry Burdick; Barbara (Walters) Caldwell; Martha (Kerr) & Bob Carr; Nancy & Bob Catlin; Faye (Marsh) Clark; Rosemarie (Cisson) & Mike Clayton; Alice & Charles Cowley; Louella (Van Zandt) & Everett Falconer; Susan & Vern Graham; Susan & Alan Hazen; Judy (Davis) & Jerry Johnson; Marlene (Myers) & Clarence Kibbe; Karen & Raymond Kibbe; May (Steen) & Jim Kraus; Joe Leech; Marian & Ben Lewis; Karen & Bill Lewis; Janet (Powers) Lipinski; Joan Markham; Joanne & Don Osborn; Joyce (Marsh) & Gus Piolet; Vera (McWilliams) & Dick Powell; Marie & Francis Rinderle; Laura (Shields) Silvaggi; and Connie (Hager) & Merle Wilmire. Phyllis (Doolittle) Russell and Linda Phelps stopped in after dinner.

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**If Hugging  
On Highways  
Is your Sport  
Trade In Your Car  
For a Davenport  
BURMA-SHAVE**

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**Tar roads and clanking bells in Waterford**  
by Herb Walden

**I** was born in Waterford and spent the best years of my life growing up there in the 1940s and 1950s.

When a person is young, he is so busy being a kid that he takes things for granted. I never dreamed how my town would change. Heck, I never even thought about it. But change it did, and sometimes it's hard to remember how things were back in the good old days.

I do, however, recall a few things of interest.

**U**ntil World War II ended, none of Waterford's streets was paved, except for East and West 3<sup>rd</sup> Streets, which are state roads. In the summer, things got pretty dusty between rains. But before the season was too far along, the streets would be scraped with one of those big Galion road graders. You know the

kind — rear engine, tilting front wheels, center-mounted blade, sort of skeletal-looking.

It was a good time for me. I loved big machinery. Still do. One of my fantasies was to drive a road grader. Still is.

Sometimes after the grading was done, oil was sprayed on the streets. At other times, dry calcium chloride was sprinkled on them. The chloride absorbed water from the air and soon became wet. In either case, the dust was kept in check for a while.

The most lasting dust control came from a big tank truck with tar gushing from a row of "faucets" at the rear which would slowly spread a coat of glistening blackness on the road. Lots of folks hurried to close their windows because the tar was rather odoriferous. It didn't bother me. I kind of liked the smell of it. The tar hardened up after awhile, and it was almost like a paved street. (CAUTION: If the urge ever seizes you to walk barefoot in fresh tar, don't!)

There was a man who used to walk very rapidly along the sidewalks bordering these streets. He bought rags from anyone who had rags to sell. As he was striding along, he would holler, "Rags, rags, rags!" Actually, it sounded more like, "Regs, regs, regs." His voice had a peculiar duck-like quality and was really loud. I could hear him a block away, and it used to scare the daylights out of me when I was five or six years old.

I don't know who he was, or where he came from, or where he went, or what he did with the "regs."

**W**aterford's old Town Hall stood on High Street just a little south of East 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, The bank is there now. The Town Hall was a white, frame building with a belfry complete with a bell. I only heard the bell twice: once in the middle of the night when the Allies invaded France, and another time when the fire siren was being repaired. It probably sounded on V-J Day, too, but so did every other bell, siren, whistle, and horn, so it was hard to tell. The bell was kind of clanky-sounding, not like the pleasant tones of the church bells.

Council meetings were held on the second floor of the Town Hall, and the fire truck was kept on the ground floor. The 1930s vintage fire truck had an open cab and a hand-cranked siren. It looked like a fire truck ought to look.

Floyd Irwin usually drove the fire truck. Floyd had a grocery store and had been friends with my folks

forever. Because he drove the fire truck, he was a celebrity in my eyes. I always wanted to ride in it with him, but not to a fire, that was too scary! I just wanted to ride in a parade or something, but it never happened. I had to wait 40 years for a ride in a fire truck. It was great and I thoroughly enjoyed it! But, gee, I wish I could have gone with Floyd.

I don't remember exactly when the Town Hall was torn down, but afterwards, the fire truck was kept in a garage on West South Park Row. After the war, the Stancliff Hose Company purchased two new trucks: a Ford pumper and a Chevy tanker. I remember watching the firemen practice with the new equipment on the baseball diamond.

Around that same time, a new firehouse was built on the southeast corner of the Diamond. Today, that building is the borough building/library.

Of course, these were the days before 9-1-1. If you had a fire, you called Eddie Briggs, and he sounded the siren. Eddie was crippled in an auto accident before my time. I knew him only as the guy on crutches who blew the siren. The strange thing is that when the siren went off, everybody in town called Eddie to find out where the fire was. I assumed that's the way the fireman found out since emergency radios weren't around yet.

**A**long the south edge of the Diamond, a large concrete grandstand was built in the late 40s to accommodate spectators of the athletic events, which were mostly high school football and baseball. However, Waterford did have an adult baseball team, as did many other small towns back in those days. Dad and I went to those games quite often. Little League was yet to come.

But the most important function of the grandstand (in my view, anyway) came each September when the Waterford Fair set up on the Diamond. It was from the grandstand that we viewed the "free acts" each night of the fair, hosted by the perennial emcee, Sheriff Paul Babbitt. At least two or three times each year, Sheriff Babbitt would introduce an act by saying he or she came from a place, "where the wind blows hard and the ducks fly backwards." We must have heard that line a million times over the years, and yet it was funny each time.

During most of the 40s, we lived on East 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, so the Diamond was just a short walk down the alley that ran behind our house. We just about took up residence at the fair for those four days in September. So did everyone else in town.

**A**cross High Street from the Diamond is The Park. I don't remember any organized activities being held in The Park except for the Memorial Day services (we called it "Decoration Day" back then). Among other things, Mr. Thomas Shallenberger always recited Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. Mr. Shallenberger was a retired high school teacher. I didn't know him well, but I was in awe of him nonetheless. When he gave the Gettysburg Address, I thought he was Abraham Lincoln!

Both my mother and father were in Mr. Shallenberger's classes when they were in school. I was told many times that he could write on the blackboard with either hand! I used to try, but to no avail. One hand is trouble enough for me.

The speeches in The Park were given from the Pavilion. The younger generation doesn't use the word "pavilion" nowadays. They call it a "gazebo." Gazebo is a perfectly legitimate word, but to me, it sounded like some kind of antelope. I do not like the word "gazebo." The structure in The Park will always be the Pavilion as far as I'm concerned!

The old Pavilion was torn down several years ago, and a new one was built in its place. It looks about the same as the old one except that it's only half as tall. But it's nice, and I'm glad the old one wasn't torn down and just forgotten.

During World War II, the American Legion erected a "Roll of Honor" at the edge of The Park facing High Street. It was a billboard-sized sign that listed all the Waterford area men who were in the service. I think most small communities had one. It's gone now, but I do have a photograph of it.

Speaking of photographs, here's some advice for younger readers: No matter where you live, the place is going to change. And chances are that someday, in your old age, you're going to try to remember how things were and you may not be able to. So, get a camera and take a few thousand pictures of your town. You'll be glad you did! I wish I'd have done that, but I couldn't. I didn't have time. I was too busy trying to get the tar off my feet.

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**Passing cars  
When you can't see  
May get you  
A Glimpse  
Of Eternity  
BURMA-SHAVE**

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## NOSTALGIA

The following "Nostalgia" item was received from Kathy Scott Koehler (Class of 1980).

If you are old enough . . . take the stroll . . . Close your eyes . . . And go back . . . Before the Internet or the MAC . . . Before semiautomatics and crack . . . Before SEGA or Super Nintendo . . . Way back . . . I'm talkin' bout . . .

- Hide and go seek at dusk,
- Sittin' on the porch,
- Simon Says,
- Kick the Can,
- Red light, Green light,
- Chocolate milk,
- Going home for lunch,
- Penny candy from the store,
- Hopscotch,
- Butterscotch,
- Skates with keys,
- Jacks,
- Mother May I?
- Hula Hoops and Sunflower seeds,
- Whist and Old Maid and Crazy Eights,
- Wax lips and mustaches,
- Mary Janes,
- Saddle shoes,
- Coke bottles with the names of cities on the bottom,
- Running through the sprinkler,
- Running behind the DDT truck,
- Sittin' on the curb,
- Staring at clouds,
- Circle pins,
- Bobby pins ,
- Mickey Mouse Club, Crusader Rabbit, Rocky & Bullwinkle, Kukla, Fran & Ollie, . . . all in black & white.
- When around the corner seemed far away,
- and going downtown seemed like going somewhere,
- Bedtime,
- Climbing trees,
- Making forts,
- A Coaster made from orange crates and an old skate,
- Backyard Shows,
- Lemonade stands,
- Cops and Robbers,
- Cowboys and Indians,
- Jumpin' down the steps,
- Jumping on the bed,
- Pillow fights,
- "Company",
- Ribbon candy,
- Angel hair on the Christmas tree,

- Running from the guards at Halloween,
- Jackie Gleason as "the poor soul",
- White gloves,
- Walking to church,
- Walking to the Community Center,
- Being tickled to death,
- Running till you were out of breath,
- Laughing so hard that your stomach hurt,
- Being tired from playin'

Remember that?-- Not steppin' on a crack . . . or you'll break mother's back,  
-- Paper chains at Christmas,  
-- Silhouettes of Lincoln and Washington,  
-- The smell of paste,  
-- Buck bags and Evening in Paris,  
-- Crowding around in a circle for the 'after-school fight', then running when the teacher came.  
-- What about the girl that had the big handwriting. . . who dotted her "i's" with hearts??  
-- The Stroll,  
-- Popcorn balls, & sock hops,  
-- Lunch Boxes with a Thermos (that broke).

Remember when . . .

- When there were two types of sneakers for girls boys (Keds & PF Flyer) and the only time you them at school was for "gym" . . . And the girls wore those ugly uniforms.
- When it took five minutes for the TV to warm up,
- When nearly everyone's Mom was at home when the kids got home from school,
- When a quarter was a decent allowance, and another quarter a huge bonus,
- When you'd reach into a muddy gutter for a penny,
- When girls neither dated nor kissed until late highschool, if then,
- When your Mom wore nylons that came in two pieces (or when you did!),
- When all of your male teachers wore neckties and female teachers had their hair done everyday and wore high heels,
- When you got your windshield cleaned, oil checked, and gas pumped, without asking, for free, every time . . . and you didn't pay for air . . . and, you got trading stamps to boot!
- When nobody owned a pure bred dog (except Bohart),
- When laundry detergent had free glasses, dishes or towels hidden inside the box,
- When any parent could discipline any kid, or feed him or use him to carry groceries, and nobody, not even the kid, thought a thing of it,
- When it was considered a great privilege to be taken out to dinner at a real restaurant with your parents,
- When they threatened to keep kids back a grade if

they failed . . . and did!

-- When the worst thing you could do at school was smoke in the bathrooms, flunk a test or chew gum,

-- And the prom was in the auditorium and we danced to an orchestra, and all the girls wore pastel gowns and the boys wore suits for the first time and we stayed out all night,

-- When a '57 Chevy was everyone's dream car . . . to cruise, peel out, lay rubber, or watch submarine races,

-- When people went steady and girls wore a class ring with an inch of wrapped dental floss coated with pastel frost nail polish so it would fit her finger,

-- And no one ever asked where the car keys were' cause they were always in the car, in the ignition and the doors were never locked,

-- And you got in big trouble if you accidentally locked the doors at home. No one ever had a key,

-- And lying on your back on the grass with your friends and saying things like "That cloud looks like a . . .

-- When stuff from the store came without safety caps and hermetic seals 'cause no one had yet tried to poison a perfect stranger,

-- And playing baseball with no adults to help kids with the rules of the game. Then . . . baseball was not a psychological group learning experience, it was a game . . . and . . . with all our progress . . . don't you just wish . . . just once . . . you could slip back in time and savor the slower pace . . . and share it with the children of the 80's and 90's . . . So pass this on to someone who can still remember Nancy Drew, The Hardy Boys, Trixie Belden, Laurel & Hardy, Howdy Doody, and The Peanut Gallery, The Lone Ranger, The Shadow Knows, Nellie Belle, Roy and Dale, Trigger and Buttermilk . . .

-- as well as the sound of a reel mower on Saturday morning,

-- Playing in Cowboy land,

-- Baseball games,

-- Bowling and visits to the pool,

-- And eating Kool-aid powder with sugar,

-- And summers filled with bike rides,

-- When being sent to the principal's office was nothing compared to the fate that awaited a misbehaving student at home. Basically, we were in fear for our lives but it wasn't because of drive by shootings, drugs, gangs, etc. Our parents and grandparents were a much bigger threat! But we all survived because their love was greater than the threat.

Didn't that feel good, just to go back and say, "Yeah, I remember that!"

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**A plea! I do not have any articles for the next quarters newsletter, please help me to keep this newsletter alive. Send me a story of your days in school or you life since.**

**Be Safe!**