

Bisonalities, Again



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

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Winter Issue

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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 or 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.

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Welcome to the latest issue of the **Newsletter** dedicated to the alumni (students, teachers, and administrators) of Waterford and Fort LeBoeuf High Schools. The newsletter will be distributed quarterly. New issues will be posted for viewing on the 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 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

or to my snail-mail address:

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Cat's Corner

This is the time of the year that I wish I were a bear. I would like to crawl into a cave, hibernate, and then come back out when the temperatures warmed back up. I cannot say it often enough, I hate cold weather . . . I hate winter.

Nancy and I had the pleasure of attending a dinner in October at the beautiful home, circa 1860, of Phil and Ruth Hazen. Phil and Ruth bought the home along the shores of Herring Bay and overlooking the Chesapeake Bay in Deale, Maryland. They then, along with their sons, restored it to its original beauty. Without actually seeing it

you can not imagine the job they did. It is outstanding both inside and out!



Marshes Seat

Home of Phil and Ruth Hazen – Winter 2005

In February Nancy and I are going to be in Florida to celebrate our 50th Wedding Anniversary by taking a cruise out of Cape Canaveral. While in Florida we are going to get together with Steve Graham and his wife, Susan. They are holding a "Gathering of the Thundering Herd" at their home in Land O'Lakes, Florida. If you are going to be in Florida on the 9th of February, contact me and I will tell you how you may join us.

This is a small issue. I have no articles to publish. The one story included in this issue is a story I published in an earlier issue that was written by the Late Herb Walden. Help me to keep this Newsletter going. **I need stories!**

Death of **Henry "Hank" Zeigler Abbott**
WHS Class of 1951

Henry "Hank" Z. Abbott, age 78, of Millcreek, died Monday, October 18, 2010 at Saint Vincent Health Center. Born in Washington Township, Erie County on December 24, 1931, he was a son of the late Orson and Mildred (Lasher) Abbott.

Hank was a 1951 graduate of Waterford Joint High School where he played football and was known as "Hank the Tank" for his blocking and tackling abilities. He served in the U.S. Army and was discharged as a Private First Class in 1953. After

completing carpentry and blueprint reading courses, he became a member of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters of America, Local #81, retiring in 1993.

Hank was an avid sportsman, enjoying hunting and fishing, but he also knew how to kick up his heels while square dancing. He was a member of the American Legion, Knights of St. George, and a lifetime member of the Star Club.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his wife, Catherine L. (Reisinger) Abbott and a brother and sister, Charles and Marion Abbott. Survivors include three step-children, Albert W. Reisinger, wife Sandra; Duane E. Colvin, wife Diane; and Diane L. Wickramasinghe, husband Eardly; his caregiver and "Buddy" for the past three years, his granddaughter, Corina Martinson, husband Matt; eight additional grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren; a sister, June Pearce; two nephews and a niece.

Burial took place in Laurel Hill Cemetery with full military honors.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the Regional Cancer Center, 2500 West 12th Street, Erie, PA 16505.

Thanks to **Phyllis Cowley Belcher**, WHS Class of 1951, for furnishing this obituary.

Death of **Trevor David Russell**
FLBHS Class of 2007

Trevor David Russell, age 22, of Waterford, passed away Sunday, November 29, 2010. He was the son of David J. and Julie A. Russell and was born in Erie on September 7, 1988. **Trevor** graduated from Fort LeBoeuf High School in 2007. He worked for several years at Lavery's Convenience Store and did auto body work. Most recently, he began working as a line construction apprentice with W. D. Wright Telecommunications. **Trevor** loved his new job. He regularly demonstrated his many skills and abilities related to cars, woodworking, and being able to "fix anything". His natural ability was put to good use by helping his friends, and especially his sisters. **Trevor** was always known to be

"first in line" when it came to helping out. When it came to living life, **Trevor** had many interests and friends. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, archery, going to hunting camp, riding dirt bikes, and hanging out with his friends and family. Nothing was more special to him than spending time with his three sisters and his mom and dad. **Trevor** was the beloved son of David and Julie Russell of Waterford, and the little brother of three sisters: Jen Russell, Kimberly Russell, and Amy Russell. He is further survived by his paternal grandmother, Marian Russell; his maternal grandparents, Gerald and Maureen Arnold of Erie; and several aunts, uncles and cousins. He was preceded in death by his paternal grandfather, John Russell. Friends may call at the Van Matre Funeral Home of Waterford, 105 Walnut Street, on Tuesday from 2-4 p.m. and 7-9 p.m. Funeral services will be held there on Wednesday at 10:00 a.m. with Rev. Fr. Thomas Whitman of All Saints Parish in Waterford officiating. Interment followed at Waterford Cemetery. The family suggests that memorial donations be made to the John Kanzius Cancer Research Foundation or to a charity of one's choice.

Death of Shane Patrick Patterson FLBHS Class of 2010

Shane Patrick Patterson, 18, of Summit Township, died Sunday morning, December 19, 2010. A resident of Erie most of his life he was born in Meadville, Pa. on February 3, 1992, a son of Douglas and Trina Midkiff Patterson. Shane was a 2010 graduate of Ft. LeBoeuf High School and worked at Target and also at the Meadville Area Recreation Complex as a lifeguard. He was a member of Summit United Methodist Church where he was involved in the youth group. He was a former Boy Scout and enjoyed the outdoors, especially hunting. He was an avid athlete and enjoyed playing baseball, basketball, and football. He was an avid Dallas Cowboys fan and loved hating the Pittsburgh Steelers. He loved spending time with his family and his dog, Remi. He was preceded in death by his paternal grandfather with whom he was

very close, Robert W. Patterson; a maternal great-grandmother, Iva Midkiff; a paternal great-grandmother, Leda Patterson; and a paternal great-uncle, Thomas Baker. In addition to his parents survivors include one sister, Nicole Patterson, at home; a paternal grandmother, Marlene Patterson, of Meadville; his maternal grandparents, Wayne Midkiff and his wife, Billie Lee, of Meadville; his maternal great-grandparents, Patricia Lowery of Meadville and Everett Fyock of Austinberg, Ohio; and many aunts, uncles, cousins, friends, and former classmates. Burial was private in Evergreen Cemetery. Memorial contributions can be made to Summit United Methodist Church, 1510 W. Townhall Road, Erie, 16509 or the Boy Scouts of America Troop #71, 1815 Robison Road West, Erie, 16509.

Native of historic Waterford traces towns 'four corners'

By The Late Herb Walden

Having been born and raised in Waterford, I always think of the old town as being much larger than it actually is. That is, it seems Waterford extends way beyond the business district, the quiet tree-lined streets, and the borough boundaries. Things are different now than in the 1940s and 1950s. Back then, following any of the four major roads out of town brought one various points of interest.

North - High Street, the main highway running through Waterford, is U.S. Route 19 and Pennsylvania Route 97. About one mile north of town, the two routes split, forming a "Y" with both branches headed for Erie. Route 19 goes up and over the hills. Everyone always called it the "High Road." Route 97 keeps to the valleys, and therefore (you guessed it), it was known as the "Low Road." When I was a little boy, I thought the old song was about going to Erie, not Scotland. Near the "Y" on the High Road side was the fox farm. It was called "LeBoeuf Silver Foxes" and was owned and operated by Joe Edman. It was quite a large business before man-made furs came on the market. Lawrence Burdick also raised foxes, but his

location was on Cherry Street, just beyond the water tank. That area was practically "out in the country" in the 1940s.

East - Traveling east on East Third Street, the first place of interest, then and now, is the Waterford Cemetery. Cemeteries are fascinating places to visit — on a bright, sunny afternoon. At night, well, that's a little different. I've always been a little scared of the dark anyway. Nowadays, I know many, many more folks residing in the cemetery than I know living in town. Scores of my relatives are buried there, the oldest being my great-great-grandparents. The original cemetery was located at the end of West Second Street. But due to construction or erosion, it was moved to the present location many years ago. The oldest part of the cemetery lies along East Street, although there are many very old markers throughout the grounds. The most celebrated gravesite is that of Michael Hare, who died in 1843 at the age of 115! He served during the French and Indian War and survived, the Revolutionary War and survived, and other Indian wars in which he was wounded, but survived. Then he taught school in Waterford before he died. Just shows you what a tough job teaching is! We always called East Third Street the "Depot Road," and for good reason: The Waterford Train Station was located at the railroad tracks about one mile from town. When the railroad came through in the 1800s, Waterford's town fathers would not allow it to pass through the borough. They didn't want the noise disturbing the serenity of the town. So the tracks were laid one mile east. At least, that's the story I was always told. After the railroad was up and running, a fair-sized community called East Waterford grew up around the station. It was mostly gone by the time I was around. Only Heard's Store and Coal Yard, the G.L.F. Feed Mill, and a few houses remained. The depot was there when I was a kid, but it is gone and so is the old Depot School, which was located between the railroad and Hood's Corner. It's too bad they couldn't have been saved.

South - Just south of the town bridge and behind the present supermarket is the site of

the Washington Sentinel. It was a very old and very large hemlock tree which, legend has it, George Washington climbed to get a view of Fort LeBoeuf. There is no mention of this in Washington's journal, but it makes a good story. Lightning had destroyed the top half of the hemlock by the time I was around. Now the tree is gone altogether. A little farther south brings us to "The Y" where Routes 97 and 19 split, with 97 going to Union City and 19 to Hughes corners and Cambridge Springs and beyond. When anyone spoke of "The Y", it was understood that this southern split was the one being referred to, not the northern one. Right at "The Y," a replica of the Fort LeBoeuf blockhouse served as a gas station. It was moved down Route 97 to its present location many years ago. Before my time, there was a small zoo at "The Y." When I was a little kid, all that was left was a cage with some raccoons in it. Stanley Boarts had his auto repair garage at "The Y" for many years. Just south of "The Y" on Route 19 is Lake LeBoeuf and its outlet, LeBoeuf Creek. The old roller-skating rink, which burned several years ago, and the Showboat, a dance hall/night club, stood along the lake shore.

West - About a mile west of town on West Third Street were the pump houses that supplied Waterford with water. I came to know those two pump houses very well. Between grocery stores, Dad worked for the water company in the late 1940s. It might be better to say that Dad was the water company. He was the only full-time employee, and to him fell the jobs of running the pumps, repairing water mains, installing new water lines, reading meters, and collecting water bills. I was only around 12, but I helped as much as I could. There were times when Dad would be busy on some emergency repair, and Mom would take me down to the pump house to take care of the pumps. That meant shutting the pump down, re-filling the chlorine tanks, checking a dozen or so things to make sure they were working properly, and then starting up the pump again. It was quite a job, and I felt very important in doing it. I also helped in typing the monthly water bills, and Mom

helped in collecting them at the water company office (next to the old Civil War recruiting station). It was a family affair. I went meter-reading with Dad a couple of times. Therefore, I have the distinction of being one of the few people who has been in almost every basement in pre-1950 Waterford.

So ends the tour of the perimeter of old Waterford. I've had a number of people around here say, "Since you write and talk so much about Waterford, why don't you move back there?" Some have even said it in a kindly way. I would if I could, but I can't. The Waterford I knew isn't there anymore. Many years ago, author Thomas Wolfe wrote, "You can't go home again." You know, he was right!

Fort LeBoeuf School District Foundation

I wish to bring to your attention a group in our home town that I have been involved with for over six years, that is the **Fort LeBoeuf School District Foundation**.

At this years homecoming game at Carm Bonito Stadium the **Foundation** sponsored an event where they shook a lot of hands and handed out nearly 400 free pork sandwiches and also helped defer some of the costs of the fireworks display.

Over the past two years, the **Foundation** has given approximately 12 grants to teachers and projects in the district that have totaled almost \$8,000.00.

In addition, they sponsor Alumni Night at the fire hall every year during Heritage Days.

The **FLBSD Foundation** is a registered 501(c) 3 non-profit organization that's sole purpose is to enhance the learning experience for all students in the Fort LeBoeuf School District.

You may know many of the members who work tirelessly to help make this **Foundation** an integral part of the Fort LeBoeuf community:

- President:** Dennis Fortin
- Chairman:** Joseph Gausman
- Treasurer:** Kim Heller
- Secretary:** Kathy Proctor

- Advancement Officer:** Chris Keene
- Members at Large:** Ron Mennano
Sarah Breon
Benny Hunt
Michele Campbell

The FLBSD Foundation by the numbers

- 5** The **Foundation** serves the **five** schools of the Fort LeBoeuf School District and its teachers and students.
- 15** The **Foundation** was formed **15** years ago.
- 8** The **Foundation** board consists of eight members.
- 2** There are two active Ad Hoc Committees at this time.
- 4 / 2** Denny Fortin has been involved with the **Foundation** for the past **four** years and president of the **Foundation** for **two** years.
- 1** The **Foundation** holds **one** yearly meeting for its entire membership. (10/13/10).
- 3** The Board of the **Foundation** and Ad Hoc Committees meet the remaining **three** quarters.
- \$128,866** The **Foundation** is responsible for utilizing a growing fund that numbers **\$128,866** (9/13/10). Evan's Capital Management is the firm that manages the **Foundation's** funds.
- 6** The **Foundation** houses **six** individual scholarships.
- 1** Every year the **Foundation** gives out **one** scholarship from the **Foundation** to the Valedictorian.
- 11** In the past two years the **Foundation** has awarded **11** grants for projects, activities, and supplies to teachers in the District.
- 169** The **Foundation** seeks to

assist all **169** teachers in the Fort LeBoeuf School District.

2191

The **Foundation** exists for the sole purpose of helping all **2191** students be successful in life.

2

There are **two** questions to answer today.

1. How can the **Foundation** help you?
2. How can you help the **Foundation**?

Denny Fortin - President

Fort LeBoeuf School District Foundation

flbfoundation@gmail.com or
foundation@fortleboeuf.net

If you are interested in the activities of the **Foundation**, or wish to donate time or money, visit their web site at: **www.flbsdfoundation.com**.

Have a great winter!
Will see you next issue!

*Please help me to keep
this newsletter going, I
need stories.*