

my Personal side

By Craig Hastings



I'm sure all of you have seen something in the news about the Chinese spy balloon. I think I first started following this story on Friday of last week. If we are to believe what the Biden Administration has been telling us, the Chinese government, when questioned about the balloon, reported to us that this was simply a weather balloon gone astray from some wind shift event. Well of course this was not a weather balloon, nor was there anything simple and innocent about the balloon and its travel trajectory across America. I believe this was a test. A test of the Biden Administration's resolve to deal with a threat from a foreign government. Not just any foreign government but one that just may have every bit of the military might that the United States currently enjoys.

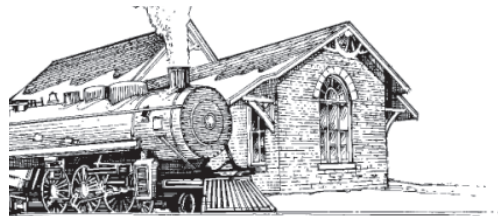
If you have been following national news closely this past year you would understand that events like this balloon debacle will take place more and more often. Especially so after how badly the Biden Administration mishandled our exit from Afghanistan, our poor followup on the who, how, and where of COVID, and now our drip, drip, drip, response to Russia's invasion into Ukraine. As tense as relationships are between The United States, Russia, Iran, and China, how in the world does this spy satellite, yes indeed that was a satellite attached to the underside of that balloon, ever manage to reach any boundary of The United States? That thing should have been vaporized the moment it reached our protected air space. But instead it was allowed to drift casually across America, stopping and just hovering over our most sensitive military bases when needed, for several days. It's Saturday night as I'm writing this and just a few hours ago the balloon was shot down as it maneuvered over the Atlantic ocean. So why a few hours ago and not a few days ago? Well President Biden and his military experts decided to let the spy balloon stay its course and gather all of the information it might be capable of for fear that if the balloon was shot down over our homeland, civilian casualties could occur from falling debris. Well it seems to this completely ignorant expert, me, that was a conclusion that should have been made prior to the balloon entering our protected air space. Why wasn't it shot down over the Pacific ocean or just as it reached the shores over Alaska?

I don't know how true the statement Secretary of State, Antony Blinken made stating that similar incidents with balloons have happened in the past but none have ever actually made it into our pro-

TECTED air space. I'm not convinced this statement was anything more than a deflection of the seriousness of this latest event. That statement and one other one where the American people were told that all military bases in the path of this balloon were taking preventative action to keep the satellite equipment attached to the balloon from gathering information that might threaten our national security. Well I'm sure the Chinese government took into consideration that we would do what we could to jam and disrupt probing signals from the device. With that in mind, just how capable was the spy equipment attached to the balloon? Who knows what they might have been able to capture. One thing I am sure of is that the Chinese military had to be absolutely shocked that their balloon was allowed to cross America without interference. Then I'm sure there was some heavy laughter in their war room after their balloon successfully made it across South Carolina and to the Atlantic Ocean. Don't believe for a moment that shooting that balloon down AFTER it crossed The United States and their intended targets within that China cared one bit that it was shot down. It was already mission accomplished at that point. Any intelligence collected was all immediately transferred the instant it was collected.

I have many questions I'd love to hear an answer too. I want to believe there is a lot about this balloon incident that the American people don't know and probably will never know. This was such a blatant violation of international rule of law and respect of another country, regardless of the make believe "weather balloon" story. If it would have indeed been an out of control weather balloon, why wasn't our government alerted to the fact? Here's what concerns me the most that I want to know the "what if". It was reported that the spy equipment underneath the balloon was the size of a couple of school buses. This being the case, what if there had been a nuclear device attached? What if there had been containers of a deadly virus attached? What if this had been three balloons carrying either of the above mentioned? So finally, why in the world wouldn't any foreign airborne device not be shot down over either ocean many miles before reaching our borders? Is the Biden Administration so dysfunctional that they can't protect the citizens of The United States? I think so.

(The views and opinions expressed in the submitted columns are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the position of The Journal.)



Back in the day...

STIFEL

(800) 829-2827

Think you're in the know about our weekly photo offerings here in Back in the Day? If you are the first person to correctly identify a photo, you will receive a \$10 gift certificate to spend at a local business.

Vickie Miller, CPA, CFP® | Vice President/Investments Ryan Barrick, MPA | Financial Advisor
Stifel, Nicolaus & Company, Incorporated | Member SIPC & NYSE | www.stifel.com



DO YOU RECOGNIZE this week's Back in the Day photo? If so, drop us a note at The Journal. Your efforts will be rewarded. THANK YOU to our readers Daniel Ochs, Linda Moon and Michael Woods for identifying last week's photo. In the Feb. 1, 2023, Back in the Day photo are pictured left to right: Steve Thomas, Herbert Moon, Charlie Hardyman, Jerry Grimes, Joe Wright, Terry Bayes, Rick Eastin, Steve Haines, Dave Alsop, and Frank Porter.

10 Years Ago Feb. 13, 2013

Growing up in East Central Illinois in the 60s and 70s, Bob Zimmerman spent a lot of his teen years lost in the music, so to speak, enjoying the surprisingly abundant opportunities to hear original live music in his hometown of Tuscola and nearby Champaign-Urbana. The C-U area not only hosted a number of successful music events, but was where many of the musicians got their start, and Zimmerman was often cheering them on from the audience. Though not a musician himself, the music lover would go on to spend about three years in the late 70s as part of the road crew for the bands Skater and Starcastle.

The Tuscola Music Boosters dinner/show fundraiser, held Friday night, Feb. 8 in the TCHS gymnasium, was a very enjoyable and sold-out affair. Approximately 250 diners enjoyed a meal prepared by Nancy Smith of The Smith House, and more folks came and filled the bleachers for the entertainment provided by East Prairie and TCHS bands and choruses. Emcee Steve Ingram also conducted an auction of donated items throughout the evening.

The Tuscola Warriors were looking for some payback after an overtime loss to Sullivan Feb. 5, 2013 in the Okaw Valley Conference Tournament, and that chance came quickly in an Okaw tilt at Tuscola on Feb. 8. There would be no happy ending, however, as poor second and third quarters sunk Warrior hopes in a 58-52 loss, despite outrebounding Sullivan 27-23 and limited turnovers to just 10.

20 years ago Feb. 11, 2003

Extensive renovations would be necessary at The Hideout restaurant on Route 36, just east of Tuscola, after an early-morning fire Feb. 6 gutted the kitchen area and ceiling. The source of the blaze was a faulty refrigerator compressor.

Former Douglas County assistant state's attorney Kevin Nolan announced he would be seeking the top job in that office in 2004. Nolan planned to file his candidacy for the March 2004 Republican primary.

This year's field of contestants for the title of Miss Tuscola included Tiffany Carter, Spencer Hall, Micki Lucero, Elizabeth Hall, Brittany MacGibbon, Stephanie Pflum, Jessie Kleiss, Lesley Hettinger, Jessica Laley, Marlaina Dyke, Megan Watts, Megan Lehmann, Tory Pierce, and Amber Von Lanken.

TCHS senior Jordan Bozarth was named the February Rotary Student of the Month.

The five senior Lady Warriors honored Thursday night prior to their final regular-season home basketball game included Marissa McCumber, Blair Wilson, Chambry Gilmore, Megan Quick, and Nikki Corum. Tuscola defeated Villa Grove that evening in a one-point overtime victory.

TCHS Warrior wide receiver/linebacker Ryan Bonner recently signed a letter of intent to play football at Truman State University in Kirksville, Mo. Bonner was a First Team All-State selection by the Illinois High School Football Coaches Association.

30 years ago Feb. 9, 1993

Dan Liffick was officially named postmaster of the Tuscola Post Office on Feb. 6, 1993. Liffick first started in the Tuscola post office in July 1979.

The salary for the position of Tuscola city treasurer was raised to \$8,000 at Monday night's city council meeting.

Edith Bozarth was honored by the Illinois Federation of Women's Clubs on the occasion of her 50th anniversary of membership with the Tuscola Woman's Club. Bozarth was presented with a "Jewel" pin signifying the milestone.

Tuscola senior Missy Erixon signed a national letter of intent to attend and play volleyball at Morehead State University, a Division 1 school in Morehead, Ken.

The Tuscola Warriors outscored the host Arcola Purple Riders 12-0 in overtime for a 64-52 conference win. Four Warriors scoring in double figures included George Barnett with 17, Aaron Hastings with 14, Caleb Englehardt with 13, and Matt Daniel with 10.

40 years ago Feb. 15, 1983

Six to eight zoning code violations in Tuscola involving tractor-trailer trucks, the possibility of raising the Tuscola speed limit, and changing the flow of Sale Street traffic were among topics discussed by the city council at Monday night's meeting.

The official Douglas County average of bushels of corn per acre for 1982 was 138.1 according to the Illinois Co-operative Crop Reporting Service. This was a new record for the county, with the previous high being 137.6

bushels per acre set in 1976. Soybeans averaged 41.8 bushels per acre in 1982.

TCHS students honored at the DAR-SAR Good Citizens banquet included Diane Kohlbecker and Dan Meyer.

TCHS senior John Murray signed a national letter of intent to attend Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, where he would be playing football for the Huskies.

Tuscola got back in gear, heading into the final game of the regular season, by defeating Sullivan 79-54 at TCHS Friday night. The Warriors would be closing out their final OVC campaign by hosting Monticello this Friday night.

50 years ago Feb. 8, 1973

Brian Lee recently received Eagle Scout status with the Boy Scouts of America. He was the fourth member of his family to attain this honor, joining brother James, father Raymond, and an uncle in doing so.

Approximately 400 people attended a Feb. 4 reception honoring Bruce and Frances Williams, after their decision to close Williams Grocery (formerly known as the Dew Drop Inn) brought to an end 46 years of conducting business in Tuscola.

A shorthanded Tuscola team fought Unity to a near draw Friday night in the fourth meeting of the two clubs this season. After leading the Rockets for 98 percent of the game, Tuscola bowed 61-58 as the result of a tossup foul which eliminated Rudy Huber from further competition. Steve Mick did not dress for the game, and Doug Dietrich was ill and ended up going to Jarman Hospital at halftime.

Business Directory

To advertise in the

Business Directory, email

jamie@thetuscolajournal.com

PUT LOCAL BUSINESSES

at the Top of Your List!

EYE CARE

Chittick Family Eye Care

- Adult & Pediatric Eye Care
- Contact Lenses
- Custom Vision Correction
- Digital Retinal Exam
- Glaucoma detection and management

10 W. Adams • Villa Grove, IL 61956
Office: 832-2111 Hours: Mon-Fri 8-5

Medicare assignments accepted/Health Alliance Provider

VETERINARY

Four Counties Mobile Veterinary Services

Kathleen M. Mcmanamon, DMV

House and Farm Calls
Small Animal and Equine

Hours:

Monday-Friday Noon-8 p.m.
Saturday by Appointment
Phone: (217) 834-3472

Q.W.F Electric Electrical Work Wanted

Upgrade your existing lights and 4-8 ft. Fluorescent lights to LED's and save \$

Call Dan at

217-722-2259

Licensed, Insured & Bonded

INSURANCE

AMERICAN CENTRAL INSURANCE SERVICES

Group Employee Benefits

Individual Medical

- Dental
- Vision
- Short Term
- Life

Medicare Supplement, Advantage, and Part D

Sherri L. Stewart
Insurance Broker
sherri@americancentralins.com
(866) 549-2247
304 E. Southline Rd., Suite A., Tuscola

Let Us Bring Things Into Focus
Accepting VSP, Eye Med and Medicare!

Tuscola Eye Care & Sullivan Eye Care

We offer quality, one-stop vision care for the whole family.

Jamison T. Boyd, O.D.

www.tuscolaeyecare.com

Tuscola 253-2220 902 South Court Suite 1	Sullivan 728-4451 108 E. Harrison
--	---