

# my Personal side

By Craig Hastings

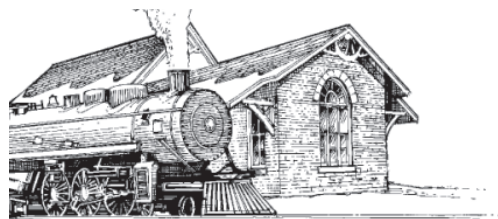


It's almost 11:00 p.m. on Saturday night and in an hour I'll finish up age sixty-five and move on to the first day of sixty-six. I haven't really liked to talk about my age much for let's say the last twenty years but, I'm being reminded the alternative to not getting older is just that, not getting older. I certainly don't want that. So what does a single guy living alone do on his sixty-fifth birthday anyway. In my case what I did today is what I've done on most of my previous birthdays, not too much. I've never been someone that felt the need to celebrate the day after yesterday just because it was the anniversary of the day I was born. Now I know I'm probably the odd man out with my opinion on this day of each of our lives but, that's always been me. Of course when I was little I enjoyed my parents buying me gifts for my birthday but selfishly, that was the only thing important to me about a birthday. The only birthday I looked forward to without presents was my sixteenth birthday and that was because I could get my driver's license. After I outgrew getting gifts as a child from my parents, I never expected or really wanted any more birthday presents from anyone. However, that mindset changed a bit in the past year or so ever so slightly. I've always told my boys to please not buy me anything for my birthday. I did so again this year. Especially now that both of them are out on their own trying to make their own way in life. I'd much rather they spend their hard earned money on themselves and not me. Like many of you, if there is something little I need or want I just go get now at this point in my life. I'm certainly not going to wait weeks and months to ask for whatever for my birthday.

Payton did surprise me with something today that was unexpected and didn't cost a thing but a trip to Tuscola. Last fall Payton moved out of the house and down to Charleston. He had gotten a labrador months before he moved out and me being the dog person I have been most of my life, I grew very close to Brodie. Well today Payton brought Brodie to Tuscola

to see me on my birthday, unannounced but extremely a welcome gesture. Brodie, even though he isn't here very often anymore, comes right in the house like he still owns it. He visits all of his favorite nooks and crannies to make sure no other dog or cat has invaded his space while he's been away. After his inspection is finished he perches himself up in the bay window where he has always stationed himself just so to watch over everything going on in his castle. He's a wonderful dog. He loves everyone and wouldn't bite to save his own life I think. Having German Shepherds for thirty years, this is a pleasant characteristic to have in a dog now. I'm sure a visit from a dog on my birthday when I was eight years old instead of presents wouldn't have thrilled me much.

So I said earlier that my mindset of getting gifts on my birthday has changed a bit as I've gotten older. Birthday presents are usually material things that we give people because we think they may be able to use them in some capacity in their day to day lives. An exception I guess is jewelry or an equivalent people give to express their love for someone on their birthday. Can we meet someone who puts a new twist on gifting on your birthday? Could it be it's no longer about the gift itself but the unseen meaning held within the gift? Could the gift just be a bridge by the person giving it to express their feelings when words alone just won't do? I believe this is true. Maybe I have gotten a wee bit wiser as I've grown older. Maybe I'm shedding some layers of my cold, hard shell that I've always prided myself on to protect my emotions because I didn't want to appear soft to those people who know me? Can life really continue to get better when a person enters their final third of the pie of life? When I turned sixty I certainly thought it was the beginning of my end and I was prepared to accept it. Today, as I finish my final hour of being sixty-five, I'm cutting my life's pie in quarters instead of thirds and believing I have a long way to go! On my way to sixty-seven and feeling much better about it.



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## 10 Years Ago March 20, 2013

Tuscola once again finds itself in the midst of an economic development competition, this time as an international fertilizer company, weighing the pros and cons of locating a billion-dollar plant in the Douglas County seat or in Osage, Iowa. Cronus Chemicals LLC, based out of New York, is a new startup company formed by an international conglomerate of leading experts in the fertilizer industry. The company is looking to build a \$1.2 billion plant to produce granular urea, a solid nitrogen fertilizer product produced from ammonia and carbon dioxide and a necessary component for growing crops.

One of several propositions on the April 9, 2013 ballot for Douglas County voters will be whether to impose a "retailers" occupation tax and a service occupation tax, commonly referred to as a sales tax, in Douglas County at a rate of one percent to be used exclusively for school facility purposes.

Tuscola native John Dobbs strolled into work at the Hillard Agency in Tuscola on Wednesday, March 13 sporting a pink cowboy hat, complete with lighted crown. It was a "prize" from a just-for-fun contest held during the recently concluded American Quarter Horse Association in Houston Texas, and Dobbs was—pardon the pun—horsing' around by wearing it.

Coach Drew Sterkel takes over Tuscola High School's girls track program this spring after Jess Lehman moved on at the end of the school year. Sterkel has coached football in the district for a few years and knows the lay of the land. The first-year track coach will look to build on the foundation that Lehman laid as he welcomes a solid group of returning runners and a few fresh faces that could donate points at the big meets.

## 20 years ago March 18, 2003

The Mainstreet Tuscola organization, with help from paid and unpaid workers, completed a restoration project that transformed a vacant, two-story building into a revenue-producing business space and charming upstairs apartment at 124 West Sale Street.

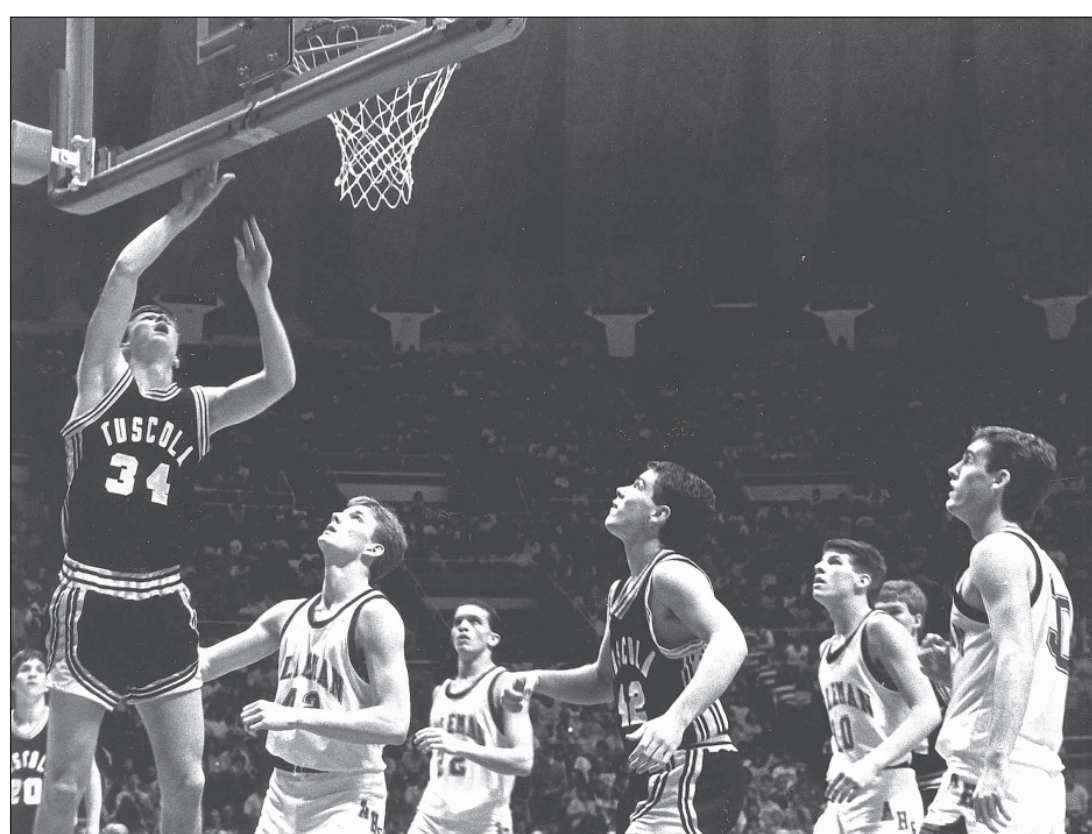
Tom Hollensbe took home a dinner gun as part of the festivities with the 20th annual Ducks Unlimited banquet held March 13 at Ironhorse Golf Club.

TCHS senior Melinda Kappes, daughter of Gary and

# Back in the day...

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.

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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, James Grimm, for identifying last week's back in the day photo. Back row: Gordy Cross, Phil Lewis, Dave Dietrich, John Pflum, and Steve Laley. Front row: Dee Dee Moody, Kathy Kalmar, Andi Huber, Kim McCarty, Janice Oakley. King & Queen were Phil Lewis and Kim McCarty.

Becky Kappes, was named the Rotary Student of the Month for March.

Individual award winners at the TCHS winter sports banquet were the following. For girls basketball: Marissa McCumber, Defense Award; Megan Quick, Sportsmanship Award; Chambry Gilmore, MVP, Rebound Award; Whitney McGillen, Most Improved JV; and Holly Nichols, Free Throw Award. For boys basketball: Nick Kidwell, co-Defense Award; Cole Clapper, Iceberg Award; Justin Long, Most Improved Varsity; Austin Hogue, co-MVP; Ryan Bonner, co-MVP, Rebound Award; Anthony Gunnell, Defense Award, Free Throw Award. For pom pon: Emily Lawrence, co-Most Outstanding, Most Creative; Ashley Ross, Most Improved; Lauren Meyer, Sportsmanship; Brittany MacGibbon, co-Most Outstanding. For cheerleading: Kara Batts, co-Most Improved; Elizabeth Scribner, co-Most Improved; Amber Durbin, Most Spirited; and Blair Wilson, Most Outstanding.

## 30 years ago March 16, 1993

Tuscola residents Rudy Bergner and his son Mike started selling Nu-Ag Seed products last October, and were hoping to hit their stride in this, their first full season of sales.

Longtime Tuscola businessman and pillar of the community Frank Michener, owner of F.H. Jones Lumber, died March 2 at the age of 84.

The 16 new members inducted recently into TCHS National Honor Society rolls included Nichole Utterback, Lisa Wright, April Mason, Holly Henderson, Kim Harris, Julie Harris, Toni Best, Holly Sluder, Doug Foltz, Chris Mattix, David Vukelich, Tony Stenger, Caleb Englehardt, Phillip Michener, Brian Mitsdarfer, and Blane Reinhart.

TCHS junior George Barnett walked away with a lot of hardware at the winter sports awards night. He was named MVP, and won the Free Throw and Rebound awards. Toby Russell and Travis Dobbs shared Most Improved Award. In girls basketball, Andrea Wax was voted MVP and earned the Rebound Award. Erin Henderson won the Defense Award, and Heidi Gaddey won the Free Throw Award.

## 40 years ago March 22, 1983

Declining enrollment and budget considerations led to the Tuscola School Board cutting back on one full-time and two part-time positions, for an anticipated savings of up to \$30,000. The affected positions were a full-time art teacher, part-time commercial teacher, and part-time speech therapist.

Twenty-seven-year-old Alan Brian of Tuscola was killed instantly when the tractor he was driving the morning of March 16 was struck by a westbound Missouri-Pacific freight train at a rural crossing one mile east of Arthur.

Guidelines for selecting the

first recipient of the Ray Wulliman Scholarship from the 1983 graduating class were presented to Tuscola High School Principal William Butkovich.

The seventh-grade Lady Hornets basketball team posted a perfect 6-0 in recently concluded regular-season play, and was champion of the JHOC. The eighth-grade team finished with a 4-2 record, outscoring their opponents by an average of 8.7 points.

## 50 years ago March 15, 1973

Tuscola National Bank president William McCarty recently announced expansion plans for the facility, with four new teller stations, additional employee parking, and office space in the mix. Construction was to start in 60 days.

William Betzold was elected president of Tuscola Chamber of Commerce during the annual organizational meeting held recently. Earl VanSteenhuysen would serve as vice president, Joe Aschauer as secretary, and Patti Waters as treasurer.

A municipal electoral board ruled recently that charges made by mayoral candidate Jim Hilgoss against another candidate, Garland Strohl, were without validity. The board's decision was unanimous.

Fouls eliminated the Tuscola Warriors from a shot at a state basketball title, as TCHS lost a 71-67 contest with Cerro Gordo in sectional tourney play.

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