

my Personal side

By Craig Hastings



"I'll stop by and sign the card later on this evening, see you soon." It's Friday afternoon and my sister Tracy is in town for the Homecoming affair. Brother Greg is being inducted into the TCHS Hall of Fame and my mother's side of the family is having another get together in Jacksonville on Saturday. I won't be able to make the Jacksonville trip this year but Tracy, Randy, and Eric are definite with Greg a maybe. My mom's brother, Bob, will be celebrating a 90 plus birthday so Tracy chose a card appropriate for the five of the Hastings clan to sign and my signature is needed before 11:00 a.m. tomorrow. Tracy is staying in our old homestead with brother Eric this weekend where Eric lives permanently ever since our mother passed away two years ago. This is just down the road from me out here in the Hillcrest subdivision so

it's easy enough to run over and sign. I probably haven't been back in that house more than two or three times since mom died. It's not because I'm haunted with strange feelings or bad memories but more so because this is now brother Eric's house and just barging in the front door like I had done for sixty years prior isn't appropriate anymore. My family moved into that house when I was just three years old and in about 1996 I bought this house I live in now that's just down the road in the same subdivision. Probably only about three hundred yards separate the two houses as the crow flies. Yeah, not only did I never move away from Tuscola but, I ended up in the same neighborhood I grew up in on top of it. I absolutely have no regrets either. This may get even stranger as this story moves on.

Tracy lives in Michigan

now and has for many years now so I don't see her much. It certainly wasn't an inconvenience for me to run down and sign the birthday card even though it's a Friday night. Even though it's a big weekend for Tuscola with homecoming and a few scheduled events taking place over the next two days and nights, I'll stay close to home like I have every evening for the past couple of years. With both boys out on their own now and both living in Charleston, my life has slowed to a snail's pace if you take work out of the equation. I'm not complaining. The last time I lived alone, many, many years ago, I was gone all the time, even weekday nights at times. If I wasn't at work I was on the move and planning for the next move. I'll blame Doug, Fred, and Virgil for that but I'd do it all again with these same three guys if I had a chance. This past year living alone is the first time in my life I can remember doing whatever I choose even if that's nothing which it is most of the time.

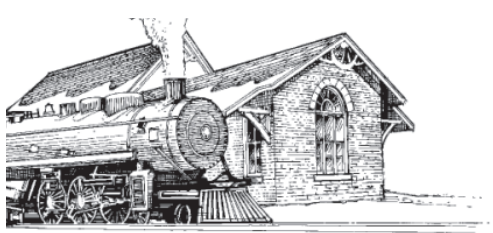
Anyway, off to Eric's house to sign Tracy's birthday card. What I thought would be a ten minute in and out turned out to be a little over an hour visit with my sister and

brother. The three of us sat down in one of the two living rooms in the house and began to just talk. We began to talk about just everything that happened as the five of us kids grew up in that house. The memories began to overwhelm my mind. My mouth couldn't keep up with my brain. I haven't had a conversation like that in that house since before our mother passed. Something changed for me that I couldn't have realized before tonight. The memories I have with my siblings in that house mean more to me than ever before now with both mom and dad gone. I've always felt blessed and lucky to have had such an amazing upbringing as a child. We didn't have much for a lot of years but we also didn't need much. Being one of five kids there was always something fun, exciting, or both to do. And we entertained ourselves without anything that plugged in, charged, and glowed in the dark spitting out videos of all things kids our age shouldn't be seeing anyway. Well wait a minute, we did have some things that glowed in the dark. Light Bright, Creepy Crawlers we cast ourselves (yes we got burnt, so what) and the Green Ghost board game

all glowed in the dark. Only the Light Bright art thingy plugged in. The other two required a flashlight we had to hold next to them in order that they might glow for sixty seconds or so. No matter, we were living the dream. Tonight, thinking about it all, I appreciate what our mother and father provided us with more than ever. When I got home I teared up a little. I was still thinking about the holidays I was blessed to have lived with three brothers and a sister to share them with.

Don't anyone ever tell me you can never go back because I can. I'm sure there's plenty of people who would rather not remember their past, I'm only speaking for myself and what I remember of my own childhood. It was never about material things either. The five of us made do with what was available to us and it seemed we always managed whether it was inside or outside the house. Very seldom did any of us completely break away from one another to hang out exclusively with neighborhood friends. We grew up out here in Hillcrest with other kids of all ages and much of the time, regardless of the age differences, we found things to do as a group.

So, oddly enough, the last thing the three of us talked about was where we might be buried. This was brought up because the property across the street from my house out here is owned by the Township and slated to be the site of cemetery plots in the future. It appears some of the work required has begun and Tracy wondered what was going on in the field across from me. Once I told her the conversation started. I told her for sure if plots become available before I die this is where I want to be buried. Eric quickly chimed in that he too wanted the same. With that, Tracy did the "me too" and wondered if all five of us might do this together. Well, Eric and I are not married so we have no one intervening in our decision. Tracy said she thought Scott wouldn't care so that leaves Randy and Greg to sit down with their wives and make their own decisions. Maybe they already have. Anyway, to grow up, live my life, and be buried all in the same small neighborhood might seem creepy to some of you but, for me, I can't think of a better place for me to spend the next million years or so but from where it all started for me! Well, unless aliens abduct me first.



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10 years ago

Oct. 9, 2013

A large crowd attended The Vault Arts Collective Monster Ball bash. Attendees enjoyed face painting, pumpkin abd skull painting, fake tattoos, made monsters, participated in a costume contest and enjoyed refreshments.

The Douglas County Courthouse held a special event to benefit Relay For Life. Employees were allowed to wear jeans for the day for a fee, There was also alunch offered for a fee. A door decorating contest and recipe contest were also part of the event.

The Warriors football team was vistorious over the Raiders for win number four. The final Okaw Valley Conference was a success for the golf team. Boys and girls both took second place as teams. In cross country, Eric Ponder continued to be one of the top runners in the area. With 19 seconds over his closest competitor, he captured medalist honors with a time of 15:53.

20 years ago

Sept. 30, 2003

TCHS Homecoming king and queen candidates included Kane Kleiss, Andy Pollock, Justin Bozarth, Austin Arseneau, Craig Roberts, Brittany MacGibbon, Jessie Kleiss, Lesley Hettinger, Elizabeth Hall, and Jessica Laley. Court attendants included juniors Amber Durbin and Jahaun Shirazi, sophomores Ali Ray and Michael Pflum, and freshmen Ashley Durbin and Wil Maxey.

Two fires in as many months at the First Christian Church in Tuscola had fire and police officials on alert.

City officials purchased the old North Ward Elementary School building, with plans to demolish it. Officials were researching the feasibility of building a community recreational center on the site.

Was it time for Tuscola to abandon the Little Okaw Valley Conference and join the restructured Okaw Valley group? That was the

question laid before the Tuscola Board of Education and Supt. Joe Burgess.

The Lady Warriors upended Villa Grove in dominating fashion, dropping the Lady Blue Devils in two games, 25-6 and 25-8. Myranda Kroll toed the line with 11 aces, six of which were consecutive serves during a pivotal time in game two.

Tuscola's football team delivered a not-so-very-gracious "welcome back to varsity football" to Okaw Valley, posting a lopsided 67-6 victory over the Timberwolves to move to 4-1 on the year.

Matt Best emerged as the top runner for the Warriors at the Cumberland Invite last week. Best clocked in at 18:31 to lead the Warriors.

30 years ago

Sept. 28, 1993

An attorney for Four Seasons store owner Don Couch told city officials the site for the proposed factory outlet mall "had no

business" being included within the city's TIF district. The attorney spoke at a public hearing Monday night before the regularly scheduled city council meeting at the Community Building.

Tuscola police were called to Okaw Trailer Court in the early-morning hours of Saturday, by residents who thought two men were attempting to break into the trailer of Mrs. Charles Gire. When police arrived they discovered the men had been trying to wake Mrs. Gire because her house was on fire.

The Tuscola Warriors' 52-0 drubbing at the hands of the Macon Ironmen Friday night had Coach Stan Wienke and his staff groping for answers to the mystery of a defense that allowed Macon to rack up 443 yards of offense, 352 of that on the ground.

TCHS volleyball picked up another two wins last week, against Cerro Gordo and Shiloh, and dropped a

third match to Lovington to bring its record to 7-4 on the season, 6-1 in the LOVC.

Toby Ring, a 1993 graduate of Tuscola High School, was selected to play on the Parkland College baseball team. He was one of only three new players chosen to wear the green and gold for the Cobras.

40 years ago

Oct. 4, 1983

King Justin Walker and queen Dena Pickett were crowned just before the Tuscola High School Homecoming dance commenced.

On Oct. 8, First Federal Savings and Loan would be celebrating its 100th anniversary at the offices at 504 South Main Street. Parent organization of First Federal was Tuscola Benefit and Building Association.

WITT-FM, Tuscola and Douglas County's only broadcast station, discontinued broadcasting recently until further notice.

Graduation for officers from the Ill. Dept. of Law Enforcement Training Academy was held recently. Tuscola resident John Chambers (DCSO) was president of the class, and Mark Payne (TPD), another Tuscola resident, received straight A's in the courses.

Jill Little, 8-year-old daughter of Jim and Kaye Little, was selected as Little Miss Tuscola during

Tuscola's Old-Fashioned Days celebration.

The Decatur St. Teresa Bulldogs got their first victory of the season, an untimely one, as they defeated the Tuscola Warriors 36-14 at the 1983 Tuscola Homecoming Friday night. The very aggressive Bulldog defense held Tuscola only 199 total offensive yards.

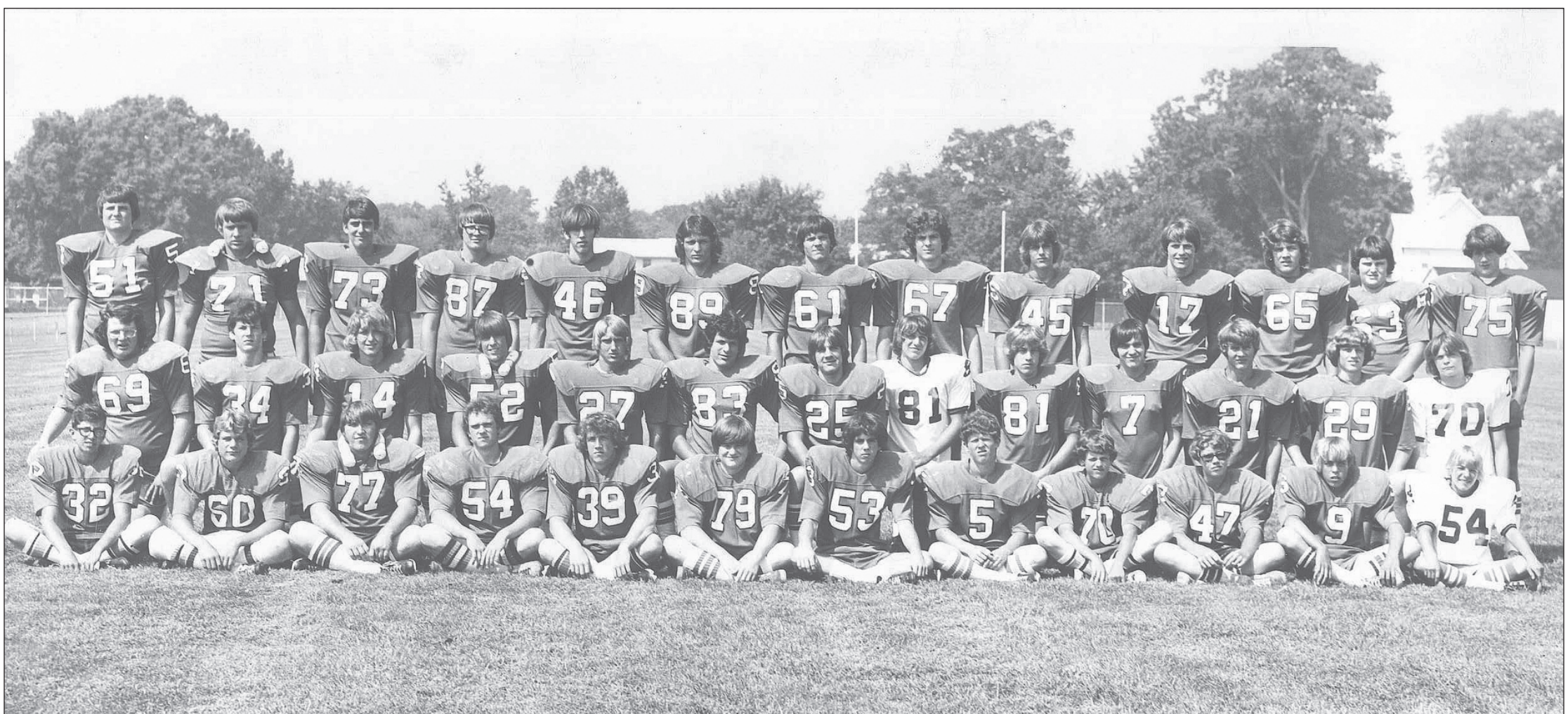
50 years ago

Oct. 4, 1973

Candidates for king and queen of the 1973 TCHS Homecoming were Susie Baird, Phil Waters, Denise Dietrich, Steve Sanderson, Marci Hausman, Rudy Huber, Jeri Lake, Rick Smith, Sylvia Welborn, and Alan Shoemaker.

A 30-acre tract of land which included the farm home of the late David L. Rice Sr. sold for \$71,000 at public auction Saturday, making the cost on a price-per-acre basis \$2,366. The tract was purchased by the Bill Huber family.

Following a sluggish start, the Tuscola Warriors tallied a touchdown late in the first half and added three more second-half TDs to surge past Warrensburg-Latham 25-0 on Friday night. It was the 22nd straight loss suffered by the hosting Cardinals.



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