

August 2016

Richie Rebel says, "Hello, William. It's me."

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Life & Times of the Rebels of '69

Thornton Fractional Township High School South Class of 1969, Lansing, Illinois

Only One Call Away

by **Bud Jenkins** (Illinois)



Bud holds up the Great Wall of China while on his 2008 Viking River Cruise Tour.

I have been asked to tell you about my 2008 trip to China and the interesting phone call I received while traveling in this beautiful country. Ah, the wonders of travel. Be

it intra-country or inter-continental, both can be fun and entertaining.

Our three-week Viking River Cruise Tour took us to numerous sights including Ming Dynasty gardens, cities with entrepreneurs setting up shops, and restaurants with fantastic food.

Then we boarded a long boat to cruise the Yangtze River and visit a number of UNESCO World Heritage sites including the Three Gorges Dam and Chongqing, home to the Giant Pandas and home base of the famous "Flying Tigers" of WWII.

Towards the end of our trip, I was enjoying an early morning coffee on my room deck aboard ship when my cell phone rang. It was my good friend **Len Rompca** calling from Dyer, Indiana. Len asked what I was doing. I responded, "Just having a cup of coffee," at which time he said, "A little late in the evening for that."

He continued to tell me about an upcoming event at TFS on May 6th, 2008. **Harry Smith**, then host of the CBS Early Show, was going to be surprised by his producers with a simulcast TV show segment on high school reunions. Some of Harry's TFS classmates from 1969 would be in the high school gym in Lansing, Illinois, and more classmates would be in the New York TV studio. Len wanted to make sure I could be in Lansing for it.

[You'll find a link to a video clip from the TV show below.]

I told Len that would work perfectly as I would get back into O'Hare on May 5th and would stay in town overnight instead of heading back home to Peoria. Len didn't miss a beat as he asked me, "Where are you this time?"

"Cruising down the Yangtze River," I said.

"No, where are you really?"

After hearing the background river noises, Len was finally convinced. We both broke out laughing, and Len realized why I was enjoying a cup of coffee at 10 pm Indiana time.



I seldom buy souvenirs

for myself, but on my 2008 China adventure I couldn't pass up the opportunity. The tour group asked if I finally bought something. I said yes, I bought a Terracotta Warrior replica and it will be delivered. They said the cute 12-inch statue would look good on my bookcase, and I replied, "I'm not sure it will fit into the space."

"Oh, you bought the 2-footer. You can put it on the floor next to the cabinets."

My "gift" finally arrived in Illinois after a 3-month journey on a slow boat from China with stops at Los Angeles and O'Hare and a truck delivery to Peoria. My 6-foot, life-size army general was home. I am a distant relative of Robert E. Lee, the American Civil War

To this day we occasionally ask each other on the phone, "Where are you this time?"

general. So, of course, I call him General Lee.

TerraCotta Warriors in the U.S.

photos and story by **Bill Hutchison** (Indiana)



In Oct. 2014, my wife Maureen and I got to see the TerraCotta Warrior exhibit in Indianapolis. Really amazing! I could only imagine what first emperor Qin Shi Huang's entire TerraCotta army looks like in China. This first picture is a complete restoration of a copy of one of the pieces to show how they actually would have looked when made around 245 BCE. The child emperor had this army put in his tomb to protect him in the afterlife.



The exhibit in Indianapolis had about 10 of the actual pieces. They also had a 40-minute movie telling about it and showing the site east of Xi'an in China. It's remarkable that only about 1,900 of an estimated 7,000 life-size TerraCotta soldiers have been found, and every one has a different face. One more thing. Maureen would really love to have a 6-foot souvenir statue like Bud's.

The exhibit of the TerraCotta Warriors is currently at the Chicago Field Museum through January 8, 2017 www.fieldmuseum.org



Watch TFS Classmates Surprise Harry on the 2008 CBS-TV Early Show

Click and watch this CBS video clip of the Early Show aired in 2008, when our TFS classmates surprise host Harry Smith and dance to the music of The Association.

[Click Here!](#)

[TFS Prom Reunion on CBS Early Show May 2008](#)

Still a Rebel —

From Sideburns to Medicare

by **Patrick Sassone** (Arizona)

In May 2016 I celebrated my 65th birthday, and like many others, I began to look back on my life. I thought about the things that I had wanted to accomplish and the decisions I made or should have made. I don't usually spend much time looking back. I've always preferred to live life as it comes and look to the future.

After leaving TFS High School and my so-called "Sideburn Issue" behind, I spent years kicking around with my music. In 1969, my band, "Society's Children," was receiving good airplay with a song I wrote called "Mister Genie Man." It's still being sold in digital format today. During the following years, I met with Phil and Leonard Chess of Chess Records and Kurtis Mayfield of "Superfly" fame. They gave me great direction in the industry.





As I got older I wanted something more out of life, so I became a police officer with Tempe Police Department in Arizona and shortly after transferred to Scottsdale Police Department. After some time as a patrolman and training officer, I became an undercover detective. I loved working undercover and was able to work on several federal task forces.

I spent almost five years working undercover when I tested and then was chosen to become a member of Scottsdale, Arizona's first S.W.A.T. team.



During these years I continued to write music and also became a competitive powerlifter. Life was good.

But after a quarterly S.W.A.T. qualification, I suffered a career ending injury to my neck. Suddenly my life came to a grinding halt, and in one swoop, I lost who I thought I was. After a year, I began to physically feel better.

Without the support of my wife Barbara and our children, I'm not sure how things would have turned out. Barbara has always been the most positive and giving person I have ever known. She took great care of me and brought me back to where I needed to be.

Once again I returned to my music and started performing. I also took a shot at acting for a few years. Nothing big mind you. Not much work for an actor in Arizona. I did some extra work and even had a speaking role in an "America's Most Wanted" episode. It was fun, but I wanted to devote my time to family and music.

In 2010 I began a big push as an Independent Recording Artist releasing my album "Just a Man" on my wife's record label Coyote Productions. Several other albums followed, and we have been lucky enough to score airplay in over 70 countries worldwide.

Our youngest daughter Kylee and our grandchildren Taylor, Colin, and Jordyn, shown here with Barbara and me, are also involved in the photography and video aspects.

My life has been, and continues to be, an adventure. I have only good thoughts of T. F. South and all of you and hope to see you one day.

So here I am! Still a rebel, 65 years young, and still chasing my dreams.

www.patricksassone.com/



SIDEBURNS!

What was all the fuss about at TFS in 1968?

Click here to go Back to the Past and read all about it in [The Lansing Journal, October 5, 1968,](#)
"Allowed Back Until Board Hearing"

TFS TEAM69 Heard From...

Harry Smith (New York)—Many thanks. As always. Love the stories.

Donna Lee Franklin (Florida)—Really enjoyed this issue and all the stories. [Life & Times July 2016] I love the newsletter, and it really makes me feel that I am in touch with my wonderful classmates. Can't wait to see everyone at the 50th. We have a great class!

Donna Torgerson Clark (Illinois)—The newsletter was great. [Life & Times July 2016] I am amazed at all the work **TEAM69** does. Thanks for taking this on. I love reading it.

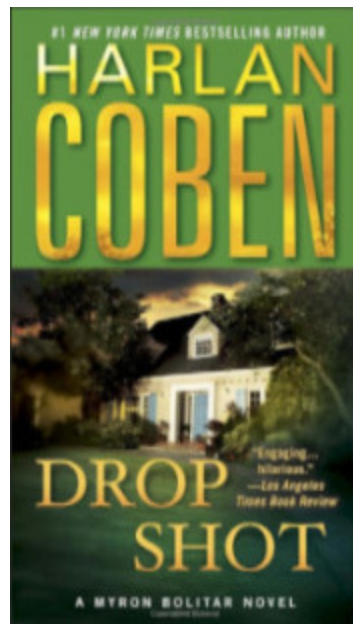
Sue Taylor Hasse—I so enjoyed reading all your TFS '69 stories. I look forward to reading about what you've all been up to. Although I didn't go to TFS, my husband **Fred Hasse** (Kentucky) did. I just love each and every one of you. See you at the 50th!

Denny Walton (Utah)—Thank you for the article on Dave Dickinson and me. ["Denny and Dave Reconnect Over a Few Fish in Utah," *Life & Times* July 2016] We did have a great time. I can think of about 100 more friends for a get-together. I love the *Life & Times* and

look forward to it every month. You guys are great! Thanks again.

John Giles (Georgia)—TFS69'ers...a great read. thanks.

Ken Hanes (Indiana)—Another great issue. Wish I could see much more of the world, but I'm kind of happy staying right here in Indiana. Thanks for the adventure story, guys. ["Happiness" and "Journey," *Life & Times* July 2016] I bet it was beautiful. And maybe someday I'll go and pester Walton out there in Utah. I'm sure he would show us a good time. ["Denny and Dave Reconnect Over a Few Fish in Utah," *Life & Times* July 2016]



While diving into some summer reading, **Dave Dickinson** (California) came across the following mention of a classmate in the Harlan Coben mystery, *Drop Shot* (Dell 1996):

*“Myron offered up his warmest, most trustworthy smile. One part **Harry Smith**, two parts **John Tesh**.”*

Happy August Birthday!

Phyllis Vander Noord Evert, Sharon Aurich Comer, Mary Ebbens Monts, Harry Smith, Floyd Ballard, Dave Dickinson, Peggy Peacock Kubic, Nancy Deboer Deangelo

Oops—A July Birthday We Missed!

Happy belated birthday to Sandy Fritz Zaborski

Celebrating July Wedding Anniversaries!

Barb Lafferty and **Owen Watterson** (Wisconsin)—31 years

Debbie and **Dick Schoon** (Florida) —2 years

Larry and **Cheryl Baily Zima** (Indiana)—39 years

Barbara and **Denny Walton** (Utah)—33 years

Welcome Grandbabies!

Eston (Skip) Ellis (Illinois) and family welcome grandchild # 4 with the June birth of Parker Michael Eston Gunter to Eston's daughter, Sarah.

Bud Jenkins (Illinois) and family welcome his first grandchild, Sawyer Lee

Davis, born on the *Fourth of July* to daughter Jamie and son-in-law Brien.

Ken Hanes (Indiana) and family welcome Lexi Rayanne Horner, who was officially adopted by daughter Kate, son-in-law Ray, and big sister Cheyanne in July. Ken says, "Little Lexi is now a very much loved member of our family."

Patty and **Len Rompca** (Indiana) welcomed new grandson Lincoln Edward to the Rompca family on July 30.

Help Us Connect with Our Classmates

If you are in contact with these classmates who are not subscribers to our *Life & Times* e-newsletter, please invite them to subscribe for free. They can sign up at our website tfsclassof69.weebly.com or by emailing us at TFSouth69@gmail.com

Steve Wahlert
Hank Vlietstra
Carol Vierk Schrum
Jim Vanderwoude
Debbie Vanderwoude Stevenson
John Valco
Denise Troppman Thompson
Bruce Tobey
Mike Tiltges
Alberta Tilendis

Tom Tikalsky
Debbie Tegtmeyer Rhyne
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Ellen Stole Culver
Carolyn Stokes Miller
John Philip Stewart
Jim Stevens
Cindy Stelzer
Jerry Stefaniak
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For the August Life & Times

Photos: Bud Jenkins, Cheryl Ridder
Woldhuis, Bill Hutchison, Patrick Sassone
Technical and Design Consultant: Bill Hutchison
Editorial: Pat Walsh, Cheryl Ridder
Woldhuis
Correspondent: Dave Dickinson
Cultural Attaché: Bud Jenkins

questions, or reflections on the past, present, or future with us all. Email **TEAM69** TFSouth69@gmail.com

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Keep your snailmail and email addresses and phone number current in our class database by sending changes to us at TFSouth69@gmail.com

Our Mission: To promote and grow our network of TFS Class of 1969 friendships by sharing information and planning reunion events to keep the spirit of the 40th Reunion alive and vibrant.

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