


June 2017

Richie Rebel says, "I  the internet!"

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Life & Times of the Rebels of '69

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

The Ultimate Google

by **Jack Wiers** (Hawaii) & **Carol Lei Bendell-Wiers** (TFS '69.5)



Our first date was December 1967, 50 years ago this year. It seems like yesterday. Our story began so typically it was almost as if it was out of an Andy Hardy movie. High School, date nights, dances, Chevy's, proms. But it didn't seem typical to us. It was and is our story.

New Girl... Carol was the new girl at South. A sophomore who arrived from Ohio in late October, she was someone who immediately caught your eye. Not only me. Within a couple of weeks of her arrival she was going to the Girl's Club dance with the captain of the football team, Jeff Brown (TFS '68).

Whoa! She was something. Still is. There was that 60's Jackie Kennedy dressed-to-the-nine's, cool, slightly (very slightly) aloof femininity that defined the time.

We met in late November at play practice for the 1967-68 tour play "Alice in Wonderland." I clearly remember talking with **Al Greenfield** (Kentucky) about

this “new girl.”

Fortunately for me, I was the one who wasted little time and summoned up the adolescent courage to ask her out on a date, after, naturally, some very suave back-of-the-theater, one-on-one banter; probably while drama teacher R. J. Phillips was railing on the poor cast and crew members during rehearsal of a particular scene, which Mr. Phillips did. A lot.

First Date...It’s easy to recall that cold mid-December Saturday night. The details are still fresh. Pickup at 5 p.m. in my parents red (*nice!*) ’65 Impala at Oakwood Estates.

Jack—White Levi’s, lettermen's jacket, penny loafers

Carol—Brown jumper, nylons, patent leather shoes, Navy P-Coat

Rich’s Restaurant on Torrence Avenue was our first stop (the original Rich’s on the east side of the street). Chicken Snack for me (\$1.25), only a Coke for Carol—she later said she was too shy to chew in front of me.

Then on to the Glenwood Theater (not many choices back then, this was before River Oaks!) to see Steve McQueen and Candice Bergen in the 7 p.m. showing of the “Sand Pebbles.” I remember the very cold long walk/dash to the theater from the parking lot. (When I think of Chicago-cold weather, these are still my memories). The movie had just started. Movie popcorn was followed by tentative forays leading to a hand hold. Success! Budding chemistry.

Afterwards we went straight home with some urgency to comply with Carol’s strict 10 p.m. curfew. The expected short “good night” in her driveway, however, lasted nearly 20 minutes. WHOA (again)! In those moments everything about our lives changed.

Oblivious to All Else...Those subsequent TFS times felt golden but also insulated. And, of course, it couldn't last forever. By 1971, real world life put a stop to us. It wasn’t Andy Hardy-time anymore. We each needed the life-experiences that would lie ahead of us, experiences that would take us to opposite ends of the world.

In 1971 we were two naive kids struggling to work our way through college, and we slowly drifted apart until we simply couldn’t find each other—for more than 30 years. We both agree now we didn’t try hard enough.

Rescued by Google...Fast forward to 2004. NOW the time was right—except for the inescapable fact that Carol and I lived more than two oceans apart; Carol in

Copenhagen and me in Hawaii. Oh yes, this too: We had no idea where the other person was living or what they were doing. NO CLUE!

But, technology brought us back together. Carol had tried classmates.com without luck. It took me several Google searches before I found a Scandinavian website. It was her. NO DOUBT!

Our reunion began with short email exchanges, which transitioned to more detailed letters. New and cheaper international phone service suddenly made calling (God bless Pennytalk) easier, and ironically the 12-hour time difference worked efficiently for regular evening/morning talks where one of us would be rising while the other might be coming home from work. We would sometimes talk for hours.

Finally, my first visit to Denmark in the summer of 2005 followed by a series of trips by each of us. We quietly married in Frederiksberg, Denmark, in the spring of 2006. The following year we married in a big way here in Hawaii for friends and family.



We still maintain the long morning and evening talks over morning coffee and evening glasses of wine. And we're blessed to do this in both Hawaii and Denmark. We're a bi-hemisphere family, you could say. Our current retirement plans call for spring and summers in Scandinavia at a little cabin Carol bought years ago.

Common Thread...Our beginnings? Our common ground? Of course, it's our Rebel days. We're reinforced by the most curious of reminders of how all this ties together for us. How else do we interpret that when we played Hamlet and Ophelia in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* in the TFS Competition Tour Play, we would wind up with a home just 10 miles from the REAL Castle Elsinore. We're betting on a better outcome than poor Hamlet and Ophelia.

And, by the Way...Life is good and we are blessed.

Jack and Carol live in Honolulu and Gilleleje, Denmark. Their ohana (extended family) consists of daughter Christa, her husband Kenneth, and grandson Benjamin in Denmark, and son Andy in North Carolina.



Lansing seems about equal distance between Denmark and Hawaii when you look at a map, right? Jack thought so, so he checked it on Mapquest.

Distance from TF South to Carol's home in Copenhagen, Denmark—4,269 miles.

Distance from TF South to Jack's home in Honolulu, Hawaii—4,269 miles.

"That's right," says Jack, "4 thousand 2 hundred AND '69 miles!"

Jack & Carol's TFS Photo Album

Carol & Jack's first prom

Carol as Ophelia, Jack as Hamlet in
Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead

Jack, Carol, and a truck load of drama
talent

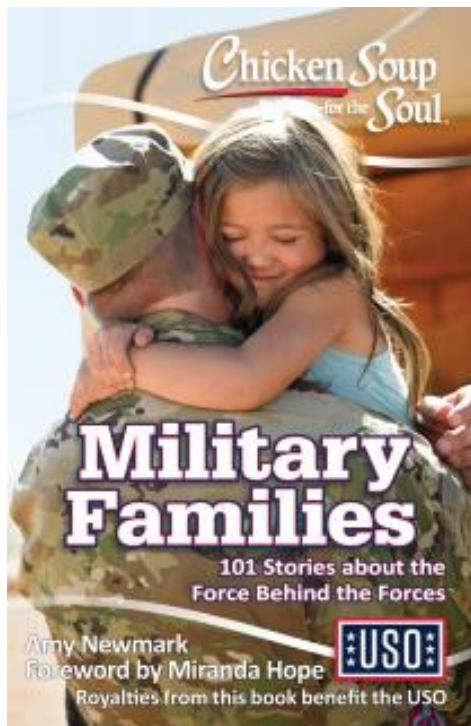
Jack defends Carol's honor when drama
tour bus driver makes a faux pass

Carol graduated midyear (TFS '69.5)
and was not allowed to attend her Class
of '70 prom. Instead, Jack & Carol
"prommed" at The Chicago Pump Room.





Life & Times Story Chosen for New Book



Patricia Walsh (Arizona) is honored to have her story, "Lest We Forget," chosen for the new book, *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Military Families*, a collection of 101 inspirational stories about members of the armed forces and their families.

Life & Times readers got a first read when Pat's story about her uncle, a fallen WWII soldier who lies at rest in the American Cemetery in Margraten Netherlands, appeared in our October 2016 TF South Class of 1969 newsletter.

Chicken Soup for the Soul Publishing is donating the proceeds from the sale of this book to the USO. It is available online at amazon.com and Barnes & Noble.com and in bookstores.

Life & Times Photo Selected by AT&T



Mike Wright's Colorado photo of columbines blooming in the Maroon Bells–Snowmass Wilderness was selected by AT&T to be the first of a series of photos showcased worldwide on 255,000 AT&T desktops in 64 countries.

Mike's photo and article, "The Story of Photo 1198," were featured in our April 2017 TF South Class of 1969 newsletter, which Mike forwarded to the AT&T Associate Director of Technology. That led to AT&T's decision to publish Mike's photo company-wide.

Mike says, "Thanks *Life & Times* staff for your decision to run my story & photo!" Mike's photos can be enjoyed on his website www.mwrightphotography.com

TFS **TEAM69** Heard from...

Maxine Hinze Rogers (Nebraska)—I love **Pam Neal Pfeffer's** article about the wine festival in Michigan each year in June ["An Exquisite Summer Festival," *Life & Times* May 2017]. Made me feel as though I was right there. I'd love to attend sometime. Always great articles, every month. Great job!



Darlene Barzda Snell (Florida)—Very interesting article about wineries in Michigan ["An Exquisite Summer Festival," *Life & Times* May 2017]. I have a sister in St. Joseph and I visited a couple wineries when I was there. Lemon Creek is my favorite. Their cherry wine is wonderful. Many good tasting wines to choose from. Thanks for the info, **Pam [Neal Pfeffer]**. Great job everyone. Love the newsletter!

Mike McNary (Georgia)—Thanks so much for everything you guys do to keep us all connected. I especially enjoyed **Mike Wright's** article ["The Story of Photo 1198," *Life & Times* April 2017]. Sometimes we can be a bit bashful about sharing personal stories that are out of the "mainstream," but I'm so glad Mike shared his insights. They were super informative and very encouraging.

Larry Valent (Illinois)—Another great issue [*Life & Times* May 2017]. Thanks for all you do. Keep up the good work.

Happy June Birthday!

Nancy Hekkema, Paul Carter, Harrison "Butch" Porter, Lynda Schneider Gleim, Kathy Neumann Smith, Donna Franklin, John Valco, Rich Wold

Celebrating May Anniversaries

Bill & **Janet Truman Clark** (Indiana)—48 years

Marian & **Ken Malsch** (Indiana)—27 years

Rich & **Donna Fazio Mrskos** (Indiana)—33 years

Jane (TFS '73) & **Dave Kats** (Indiana)—45 years

Debbie & **John Valco** (Texas)—35 years

Congratulations to...

Dean Groom (Indiana) welcomed his new grandson and namesake, Dryden Dean, to the world in May. Dean says Dryden's first name comes from new mom Anna's side of the family, a name that goes back several generations.

Carol Stanhope (TFS '68) and **John Jones** (California) welcomed new granddaughter Kelsi to their family in May. John says, "Love life!"

Darlene's Double-Double Blessing

Dave and **Darlene Barzda Snell** (Florida) are blessed with two great-grandchildren. The Snells first welcomed great-grandson Kaison, now nine months old, born to grandson Zachary. Then, in April, they welcomed great-granddaughter Indy Kate, born to grandson Tyler and his wife Alyssa. The grands and great-grands live in Indiana. Darlene says, "Looking forward to a trip to visit them soon."



TFS Class of 1967 50th Reunion—Sept. 16, 2017

TFS Class of 1967 will hold its 50th (yes, FIVE-OH) Reunion Saturday, Sept. 16, 2017. Linda Eckstein Todd (TFS '67) encourages members of her class to register at the reunion website or to contact her through her Facebook page.

www.tfsouth67.reunionmanager.com

Congratulations to the TFS Graduating Class of 2017

The TFS Class of 1969 wishes the Class of 2017 lots of success as they meet the challenges of life beyond high school.

Click the video below and watch the kids dance, dance, dance into the future.



**Click the Video and
Get Your Rebel Pride On!
TFS Students rock the hallways
in this YouTube video with a
BONUS—a tour of today's TFS!**

Mission Accomplished!

TFS teacher Chris Roberts and his History Club students presented the TFS Rebels Remembered Wall of Honor to the public May 27, 2017. Story and photos in your upcoming July *Life & Times*.



Our Heartfelt Condolences to...



Nancy Horvatich Tschischik and her family on the passing of Nancy's father, Rudolph Horvatic, in May at the age of 89. Mr. Horvatic was a TF grad and led the 1945-46 TF basketball team to the Illinois High School Tournament. He owned Rudy's Floors & Kitchens in Lansing for 34 years.

Help Us Connect with Our Classmates

Help us locate our classmates with whom we've lost contact. Invite them to get in touch and to subscribe to our monthly TFS Class of 1969 *Life & Times* e-newsletter. Classmates can reach us through our website tfsclassof69.weebly.com, email address TFSouth69@gmail.com, or on our Facebook page [Tfsouth Classofsixty-nine](https://www.facebook.com/TfsouthClassofsixty-nine). Here are the classmates we're looking for this month—

Dora Berumen Reynolds
Russell Berglund
Christie Beres Bis

Judith Becker Alberts
Paul Barclay
Harry Baran

Susan Bennett Miller
Sue Bedell Gossiaux
Jim Bedell

Jeff Bakker
Joe August
Dawn Arney Irby

 Click here to forward the Life & Times to classmates, family, & friends

Stay in Touch!

Our 204 subscribers stay in touch through our free monthly e-newsletter, the *Life & Times of the Rebels of '69*. Send us your comments, news, photos, classmate re-connections, questions, stories, story ideas, and reflections on the past, present, or future to TFSouth69@gmail.com or message us through our Facebook page [Tfsouth Classofsixty-nine](#).

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For the June *Life & Times*

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Editorial: Patricia Walsh, Cheryl Ridder Woldhuis

Technical & Design Consultant: Bill Hutchison

Snailmail & Facebook Birthday Wishes: Dave Dickinson

Googler: Bud Jenkins

Need to Update?

Have you changed your email address, snailmail address, phone number, or name? Keep current in our class database by sending changes to TFSouth69@gmail.com or by messaging us on our Facebook page.

And remember to let our MailChimp service know about a change in your email address by clicking the "update your preferences" link at the bottom of this newsletter.



 [Tfsouth Classofsixty-nine](#)

 [@TFSTeam69](#)

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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