

September 2016

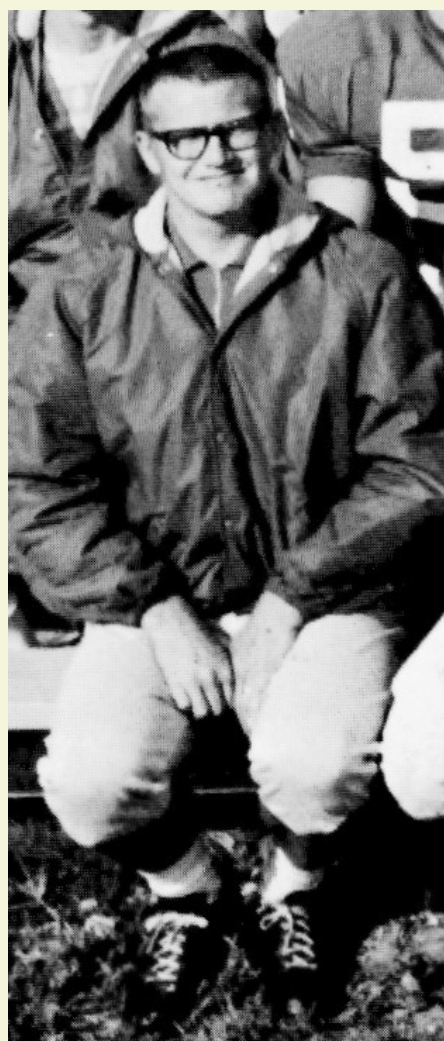
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Richie Rebel says, "When you speak and write from the heart, good things can happen."

TEAM69 HIGHLY RECOMMENDS THAT YOU CLICK THE LINK ABOVE for a .pdf version and links to past issues.



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



Recently, a post on Facebook caught the eye of **TEAM69**. It said:
A few years ago, I was sent an article about my father. He had taken a

The Heart of a Coach

An Essay by **Mike Wright** (Colorado)
Originally printed in the TFS Class of 1969
40th Reunion Souvenir Book, 2009

One spring morning in the waning days of our senior year, rather than sending us outdoors for P.E. class, Coach Bill Beckwith marched us into a vacant shop class instead.

Unsure what to make of the unusual departure, we sat quietly and waited for Coach to collect his thoughts (he'd more than earned everyone's respect by that point), which he seemed to be struggling with as he stood before us. After a couple false starts he finally began to speak.

He talked about the future—our future—and about how some of us would be going off to college in the fall and how others would soon be joining the workforce. He treated us like compatriots, lifelong buddies; the mask of authority was off as he mused and joked with us. It was a regular love-fest.

group of seniors into a shop room to talk about their near futures with the war in Vietnam still going strong. It was so beautifully written. If anyone knows of the author or knows where I might get a copy, it would be gratefully appreciated.
—Bill Beckwith, Jr.

We recognized the reference to **Mike Wright's** essay about TFS Coach Bill Beckwith that was in our 40th Reunion book in 2009. We told Bill Jr. that we had the essay. His reply: *I would love to get a copy. It was such a wonderful essay, and I want to be able to pass it down to my grandchildren.*

An extra 40th Reunion book was found in storage and we sent it to Bill Jr. telling him, "We'd like you to have this. Your dad is very fondly remembered by us all."

Then he got down to the real reason why we were summoned to the classroom on this warm, sunny day rather than partaking in the usual horseplay outside.

He addressed the war—the one with seemingly no end—the one none of us dared give a moment's thought to, the possibility it would continue its long-running engagement by the time we turned draft age.

He told us how proud he was of us. Then he stated that some of us would be going to the other side of the world to fight in that war—and that some of us may not come back.

At that point, he stopped dead in his tracks and—in a surreal scene none of us could have ever imagined—this big, bruising hulk of a man's man did the unthinkable: He began to cry. Like a baby. For us.

As we silently filed out, we realized gym class was over and that our lives would soon be changing in dramatic fashion. And that when we departed T.F. South in the coming days, we would be leaving behind a true friend with a huge heart who showed his unconditional love for us like no other.



Home of the Free Because of the Brave

TFS Students, under the guidance of TFS History teacher, Mr. Chris Roberts, are developing a military Wall of Honor for our high school. It's an ambitious student project titled "Rebels Remembered."

The plans call for a series of plaques displayed in the front of the building that will commemorate Rebel alumni killed in action and honor the bravery and courage of all alumni who served in the military.

The project has already raised \$8,800 towards its goal of \$20,000. Upcoming fundraising events include a September pancake breakfast. If you can provide information for the Wall of Honor or help with a donation, please contact Mr. Roberts at croberts@tfd215.org. And



Saved from the Wrecking Ball!

by **Patricia Walsh** (Arizona)

In 2009, our TFS Class of 1969 held its 40th Reunion pizza gathering in the basement bar of the VFW on Ridge Road in Lansing, Illinois. You still had to be buzzed in (*ERRRRRR*), it still smelled the same (beer), and it felt a lot smaller than I remembered from the 1950s and 60s. Funny how that happens.

During that reunion evening in June 2009, **Dennis Knoerzer** (Missouri) said to me, "I think your mother's photo is on the wall in the bar."

"Well, hello, Mom!" I said when I found her in a line of photos near the ceiling. "What's your little Methodist self doing hanging over a bar?"

Long ago, someone decorated the bar room walls with portraits of Past Post Commanders and Past Presidents of the Ladies Auxiliary. My mother Florence was an Auxiliary President in the early 1960s. Which is why I spent many youthful hours washing dishes and putting away folding chairs at Kenneth E. Brady Post 7660.

When rumors started that the VFW building was going to be demolished, I could not let my mother's photo go down with the dust. I asked **Paul Warn** (Indiana) and Dennis, a Past VFW Post Commander, if there was any chance I could get the photo of my mom. Both of them called the current Commander for me. Alas, no action. No response. Ignored. But Paul and Denny did not give up. They kept calling.

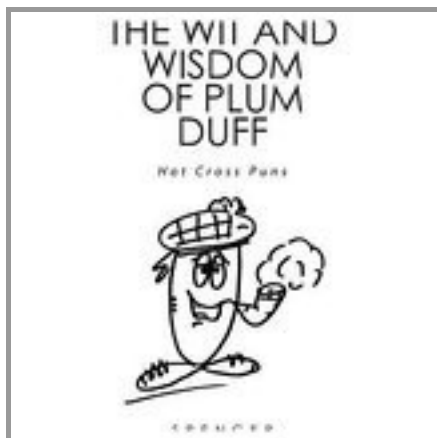
Then, months later, a fellow stopped by Paul's house with my mother's framed photo. Rescued!

Paul's wife Sue (TFS '70) cleaned up the frame. (Imagine the haze of cigarette smoke that must have clung to the glass!) Paul wrapped the photo and mailed it, and I opened the package here in Tucson, Arizona. Awww...There she is again in her jaunty VFW overseas cap, sporting her VFW pins.



Rumors finally came true and the building tumbled to the ground this summer. But the wreckers didn't destroy the memories so many of us have of the ol' VFW hall. And thanks to Paul and Denny, my mom is home with me now.

Well Done, Author David Spencer!



We have an author in our TFS Classmate Family. David Spencer, U.S. Army veteran, Indiana University history major, and most importantly husband of **Marilyn Reading Spencer** (Illinois), has published three books and donated them to the Lansing Public Library.

David's titles are *Autobiography* (2015), a book of poems about growing up in South Chicago; *The Golden Stag* (2015), a tale of love and war set in ancient Russia and the Assyrian capital of Nineveh; and *The Wit and Wisdom of Plum Duff: Hot Cross Puns* (2016), a showcase for his poems and drawings, some of which were originally published in *The Gary Post-Tribune*. David's books are available at Amazon.com.

Classmate Bruce Quenzler

passed away August 6, 2016. Our condolences go out to his friends and family, especially to his children Rock, Jake, and Tiffany, and to his soon-to-arrive first grandchild, Samuel. Bruce was a U. S. Army veteran and served in Vietnam. He lived in Tennessee and owned his motorcycle repair shop. Bruce is remembered as a TFS football player who played with a lot of heart.



TFS TEAM69 Heard From...

Scott Tatje (Arizona)—Once again another fantastic issue. [*Life & Times* Aug. 2016] We are blessed to have such a great class of different characters!!

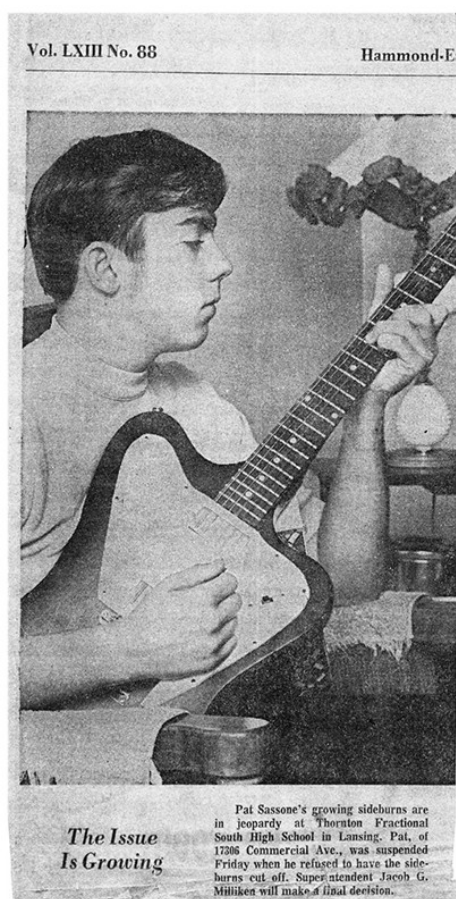
Kenneth Hanes (Indiana)—Great issue, quite a fantastic trip Bud. [One Call Away, *Life & Times* August 2016] This newsletter always QuickStart's my new month! Thanks for all the work associated in this endeavor. I sure enjoy it.

Larry Valent (Illinois)—The newsletter gets better each month

Janet Ferko Carey (Florida)—The August issue was fantastic. I can't thank the contributors enough. It was very enjoyable to read.

Kathy Neumann Smith (Texas)—I have been missing the newsletter. Help 🙄
[We helped! Kathy became our 195th subscriber!]

Rich Krilich (Illinois)—Excellent issue again, friends!



Dean Danks (Michigan)—Hi there, I enjoyed the article in the last issue about Pat Sassone's long sideburns. ["From Sideburns to Medicare," *Life & Times* August 2016] I remembered I had the picture from *The Hammond Times* [1968]. Here's a scan of it. Keep up the good work.

Patrick Sassone (Arizona)—I still have those old news clippings. Hard to believe so much time has passed. It has been so good to make contact with TFS after all these years.

Dennis Walton (Utah)—What a great August issue. Bud and all the guys' adventures were great. I went to my wife's reunion the other night, and it didn't come close to ours, not close. Can't wait for 50. We'll be there and have laughs just like before.

Rob Garrison (Illinois)—Great Newsletter. Can't believe it keeps getting better!

Paul Warn (Indiana)—Seriously, it really does keep getting better.

Maxine Hlnze Rogers (Nebraska)—Really enjoy these newsletters.

John Jones (California)—Thanks so much for the newsletter! A great job for all involved.

Chris Cooper (Illinois)—Love it!!!

Tom DiFilippo (TFS '68)—Enjoy your newsletters. You all do great work.

Happy September Birthday!

Kathie Christian Bruesch, George Vincent, Judy Gasquoine Hudock, Bob Armstrong, Pat Sartini, Keith Gardner, Pam Neal Pfeffer, Christine Jacobs Burr, Katherine Nelson Mader, Len Rompca, Renay Vanderby, Dean Groom, Gina Langbeen Russell, Dale Robinson, Scott Tatje, Donna Fazio Mrskos, Jim Vanderwoude, Larry Valent, Laura Merkel, Sharon Reid Kerley

Celebrating August Wedding Anniversaries

Fred & Diana Steinweg Plese (Illinois)—46 years
Carol Stanhope (TFS '68) & John Jones (California)—44 years
Sharon Reid & Boyd Kerley (Arizona)—45 years
Dennis & Sally Steeb Harvey (Indiana)—46 years

Congratulations!

To Janet Claussen Venecz (Indiana) on her new position as President of Hammond, Indiana City Council

Help Us Connect with Our Classmates



We follow the clues you give us to find missing classmates. **Dave Dickinson** (California) spent a lot of his summer vacation handwriting personal notes and mailing them to more than 30 classmates whose addresses we hoped we had tracked down. (*"I'm getting a hand cramp here!"*)

A few of those lost classmates became new subscribers to the newsletter (*YAY!*), a couple became new Facebook friends (*Hello!*), and we got back two or three letters as "undeliverable, return to sender." (*Darn!*)

We appreciate your help locating missing classmates and welcome all tips to their whereabouts. Our mission is to find and connect with every classmate and invite them to sign up for the newsletter. Why? Because we all share those TFS moments in time.

—**TEAM69**

Please invite classmates you know to contact us at our website tfsclassof69.weebly.com or to email us at TFSouth69@gmail.com

This month, we're hoping to hear from —

Anne Stamper Martin
Barb Sroka Carlson
Scott Southard
Angie Schurman
Sue Schultz Graunke
Karen Schultz
Bob Rossman
Harold Rossi
Bill Rosenthal
Jim Roesel

Linda Rodriguez
Jim Robbins
Alan Richardson
Tanya Reynolds Furr
Shirley Reiter Wolstenholme
Patricia Reidenbach Luedtke
Sharon Reid
Tom Reeb
Mike Rappatta
Bob Ranfranz

Party On, Kids!—

TFS Class of '71 Reunites Sept. 24

The TFS Class of 1971 will celebrate its 45th High School Reunion, 7 pm, Saturday, Sept. 24, 2016, at Jack's Place, 3325 Ridge Road, Lansing, IL.

A Saturday golf outing and an informal Friday night gathering for the '71-ers are in the



works. Click here to get the info:

<http://tfs71.com/reunion.htm>

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Keep in Touch!

Our 197 subscribers are keeping in touch. Share your comments, news, photos, questions, or reflections on the past, present, or future with us all.

Email us: TFSouth69@gmail.com

For the September Life & Times

Photos and Images: 1968 Postscript, Dan Bovino, Pat Walsh, David Spencer, The Family of Bruce Quenzler, Dean Danks, TFS Class of '71

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Remember to Update!

Click the update link at the bottom of this newsletter to update your subscription email address with our email service MailChimp.com.

Keep your snailmail and email addresses and phone number current in our class database. Send changes to us at

Go ahead!

Use the **Forward** button below to share the newsletter with classmates, family, and friends.

Forward to Classmates, Family, and Friends

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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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