

## 2 Decades Out

Saturday night, the Edgerton High School class of 1992 met to commemorate and reminisce on 20 **YEARS** of life following graduation. In total, 17 classmates (along with their significant others... well some with their s.o) gathered at Sam's Place. A golf outing had been arranged but those plans fell through which was fine with me (unless it was a round of mini golf). It was a special evening shared with some classmates I have not seen in 20 years. James is a 20 member of the military and a Navy Seal (took him three times to accomplish that but WOW!).

It really was a journey back in time as we shared memories as well as where life's journey has led us. I shared a table with Cousin Dan (and his wife Carla), Amy, and Angie (and her husband Trent). One of our memories took us all the way back to Mrs. Webb's Kindergarten class where Dan met with the paddle (for what I did not catch). He also mentioned that he wanted to have a book read to him so he brought one over to me.

I also caught up with Pastor Matt and Peggy (caught up is a loose phrase since we actually live a block or two away from each other). Matt did not know that I was a fan of the superhero genre. I was a bit shocked at this revelation since I have been for as long as I can remember and we discussed the finale to the Christopher Nolan/Christian Bale Dark Knight trilogy.

Following dinner, we remembered the three (or was it two?) classmates we had lost since graduation. Unintentionally, this turned into a rather humorous debate. We had a set of twins throughout our years and it was finally concluded that one of them in fact did not graduate with us.

Then, we remembered one of the sweetest girls who we were all

pleased to call classmate and friend. After receiving a kidney transplant, Heather's system ultimately rejected it and she passed away on July 19, 1998). Our hostess, Peggy, was able to locate Heather's mother who provided a picture and a poem that Heather had written especially for us:

## "MEMORIES"

Hold a favorite memory,

Hug it to you tight.

Dream of it fondly,

As you drift to sleep tonight.

Don't let it slip away like sand through

your fingers,

You'll want to keep it close so that it

always lingers.

Memories

are

treasured

more valued

than gold,

They're

guarded

cautiously,

never to be sold.

Make the most of memories, they're  
the best possession you've got,  
just be sure you make happy memories  
for they never can be bought.

## LOVE ALWAYS, HEATHER

Finally, came the obligatory photo session (unfortunately?, I did not make sure that my camera had a SD card). However, a group photo was taken of the 17 of us.



17 Member of the Class of  
1992



Just after dinner,  
preparing for the  
remembrance segment. You  
can just barely see the top  
of my head behind Peggy. :D

Overall, a fun evening of remembrance!

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# Yesterday

It really does seem like yesterday that I was on stage in what is now my third favorite role ever. A few fantastic parts over the last 6 years or so have pushed it back a few places.

I'm not one to play favorites but let's be honest... some roles just hold more meaning behind them. It was either May 29-30, 1992 or May 22-23, 1992 (I'm sitting here looking at my mobile calendar) I'll have to look at my old Log of E to find out the correct weekend but right now I have a bat roaming the premises and an Aunt visiting from California who just arrived and decided to run and hide while she could ☐

*Annie* will always hold a large piece of my heart. It was the last time I performed on the stage of the old high school auditorium. It was the final time (and only time) Ma 2 directed a musical I was cast in. It was the best cast of the three theatrical productions I was involved in at EHS. It was this cast and crew that first gave me the impression that a group of performers could be so much more than a group who performed two shows (I still could have done so many more) and went their separate ways. It created that sense of family that only the best experiences can create and the first which I was actually sad to see end. Several of my friends were cast as well as my sister and two of my cousins and the experience only tightened that bond. And Daniel Francis Hannigan/Rooster Hannigan/Danny the Dip was the first character that made me realize that I am a serious character actor (seems like a contradiction in terms "a serious character actor"?)

I know that I have related the audition process previously. How I "nailed" the role of Daddy Warbucks but "could do so much more as Rooster." I just knew that I had to recreate

that role somewhere down the line somehow. Even when I was not cast in the role in FCF's production a few years ago, I was not THAT upset because it would not have had the same meaning as it did the first time. Although I did hear several audience members (many complete strangers) comment that the part was horribly miscast.

The wrap party was hilarious for many reasons. Remember "Coke II"... previously marketed as NEW Coke? Yes, this was my first and last experience with the beverage. I don't remember being as emotional after the wrap party as I was following opening night. Maybe it was sitting through the sluggish *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* that caused the tears to flow. "Ah, YES, I remember it well."

ANNNND coming this Fall... the 35th Anniversary Broadway Production. All of the orphans and Miss Hannigan have been cast. Alas... I am not a dancer which was something that came up this evening at work. There was a "Vault" photo in the Earth tonight of Aggie, Warbucks, Grace Ferrell, Annie, President Roosevelt, Lily, and myself which I attempted to scan but to no avail.

What a fun trip down memory lane!

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## A Hug For The Hugs

Strange how the events of a few days can change the atmosphere around you. Just days after I was joyously welcoming the arrival of two special little ones, a life-long family of friends experienced not one, not, two, but three tragedies.

On Thursday, one of my dearest friends welcomed a new granddaughter. The moments Teresa got to spend with her son Cody, his girlfriend Carly and their baby Cori were very happy

and will be remembered forever but very short-lived as she was taken home above only a few short hours after she was born.

Saturday morning after finishing shopping for my nephew and nieces' birthday, I found a message on Facebook asking if I had heard about Don. She had read on a family member's post that he had passed away. Before we confirmed it, we decided to find out for certain. A few moments later, I received a horrific phone call. I said a prayer to calm myself down before I called mom's cell phone.

Hours before Don's passing, the twin sister of Blake's (Jena's son) girlfriend was killed in a car accident.

Such great memories growing up with the Hug family:

- The family lived in this house until my parents bought it when I was about 6 months old. My poodle, Buffy was one of Digit's puppies and we took her out often so they could visit.
- I was always "Seah's" baby. Marilyn sat for the four of us quite often. In the summer, Teresa would take over. I even asked Don if I could marry her. On her wedding day, I went back before the ceremony to see her and she told me "Please, don't cry." I don't remember if I did or not (my memory fails me). While she lived in Ft. Myers, we would write to each other ON PAPER! Does anyone do that anymore? ☐ I was surprised when I rode along with Marilyn and my mother to pick Teresa up from the airport for Jena's wedding. I believe the ruse was that they had to go do something with the wedding dresses.
- Sunday night caramel corn. I put this on Facebook and Chad confirmed it! I KNEW that I was not crazy.
- I believe that I am too young to remember but my oldest brother Jeff was with them at McDonalds. He wanted a cheeseburger his way (Just ketchup). He did not get it 'his way' and got sick. ALWAYS The picky eater ☐

- Like Teresa did with me, Jena took Christi under her wing and took her wherever she went whenever possible. My sister was the flower girl in Ron and Jena's wedding.

So many great memories and I'm sure that I have only scratched the surface. But what an indelible mark the Hug's have left on not only myself but on my entire family. God, please watch over Marilyn, Van, Teresa, Jena, and Tod and their families in these painful days. Lift up their spirits and let Don, Cori, and Mickae rest in peace. As Jena's daughter Cassandra once stated: "We are like family who rarely see each other but know they are there,

Love you all!

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## Coming Full Circle

On Thursday, I purchased my "new" car. As another of our tangenteers surmised it is indeed a 2002 Honda CR-V complete with slide out table in the back. I was informed that Edy would be at the shop and then she and "Big" John would go to the bank and sign the title over to me. After this, I took a trip to the DMV and paid the taxes. The lady at the desk looked up at me and said "Two seventy five" and I reached in my wallet and handed her a \$20.00 in all seriousness. She looked at me and said, "Nice try." I had a good chuckle and made out my check for the correct amount.

A rather historic tale goes along with this purchase. Last week, I was informed that nearly 38 years ago I was driven home in a Firebird owned by the same couple from whom I bought the CR-V. On that day, my mom was ready to bring her third newborn son home. Instead of waiting for dad to come which

would have added another day on our stay at the hospital, she called Edy and she took me on my first car trip.

Along with this purchase comes certain provisos:

- I am to inform everyone that it was previously driven twice a week (to church on Sundays and to the beauty parlor on Thursdays)
- It is to be waxed twice a year and all the chrome and interior looking like new.
- No alcohol (in my present state, I am forbidden to drink and even if I were not, I would not have it open in any car I own... and neither would passengers)

A nice little car... and it doesn't even feel like it is much different than driving my old Sunfire... may she rest in peace.



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## Remember Your First Time

Yes, I very fondly remember my first time seeing Andrew Lloyd Webber's [\*The Phantom of the Opera\*](#). It was on a Saturday afternoon in October 1990 at the Auditorium Theatre at Roosevelt University (ok... so I had to check the Stagebill for the official venue name) in Chicago the day after our marching band performed it's halftime show featuring the music of the phenomenon... complete with Phantom masks and capes. Tonight, as the family gathered at one of the first high school productions ever produced, I was taken back to that day 20 years ago. In the row in front of me sat a woman who turned around and asked if I was one of Emily Curtis' students. I

very proudly stated that indeed I was and still am. The woman (who was a dear friend) told me that Ma2 spoke very highly of me on several occasions. We both told how much we dearly miss her. I knew that I was in for a memorable, magical evening.

I do not believe that I have ever seen a professional production of any show before I saw a high school production of the same. It has been many years since I have seen Phantom on stage (the movie does not do the musical justice AT ALL) so there were some things that I did not remember. But everything about tonight's production was shockingly gorgeous.

The set design was phenomenal. My favorite piece was the bridge used during the "Don Juan Triumphant" scene. It honestly looked like it could have been used as the barricade in *Les Miserables*. The graveyard scene ("Wishing You Were Somehow Here Again") was dark and mysterious with just a faint glow of moonlight (but no fireballs thrown by the Phantom ☹️).

I was also impressed with the illusion of the Phantom and Christine's journey to the lair beyond the lake.

The young thespians on stage when PHENOMENAL. The leads both began taking voice lessons a year ago in preparation for auditions and it certainly showed. The title character had an extraordinary range. I was on stage with the young man in my first Village Players production (*Meet Me in St. Louis*) and he has come A LONG WAY since then. Every time I have seen Phantom, I measure the quality of the production on one thing: the amount of goosebumps I get when he sings his signature song "Music of the Night." Needless to say, the high school JUNIOR nailed it!

The actress playing the role of Christine in ANY show must have a wickedly outrageous voice. The runs in tonight's delivery of "Think of Me" were crazy good.

I must say that my least favorite character in the show is the third leg of the triangle: Raoul, Vicomte de Changy. He

always seems to me to be a whiner. But again, a fine performance.

NOW for the real stars of the show: Msrs. Firmin and Andre, the theatre owners. They are the comic relief that holds the show together and their timing as well as their voices were impeccable. The outrageous "Notes" and "Prima Donna" pieces in which there are like 50 melodies at one time (ok... not THAT many) were handled very nicely. In younger days, I would have so gone out for the big two roles; however, after a little high school show that I was in (not a post about my on stage experiences), I definitely know which roles I am so suited for.

If I had one complaint, it is what could not be done in this production. Do not go to be blown away by HUGE theatrical spectacle. Some of the big stage pieces simply are not possible on a stage and budget of a small school and most are there (just no fireballs). Yet, if any school in my little corner of the world could pull it off, it was this one at the most glorious setting we have to offer.

My 6 year old nephew's favorite scene: "the dummy who dropped from the ceiling on the noose." Ok, that was enough for him who slept through the last 10 minutes.

Yes, a small school CAN produce extraordinary things. Thank you to the lady in front of me for taking me back 20 years and making me remember how special my own "Angel of Music" is to me. Emily would have been ecstatic!

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# Echos From The Earth And Beyond

Another feature of my small town scandal sheet (a steal at \$1.00 for eight pages) is the "Echos from the Earth" column which gives flashbacks from articles from 5 to 20 to 50 years ago. Two of the topics really took me back. Five years ago in the paper dated 8-25-2005, Ma2 was named Ohio American Legion Educator of the Year. An honor I know she cherished very fondly.

The second item that really caught my eye was dated 8-29-1980... **30 years ago, folks!**. It even was from the days when school opened in September. I was going into the first grade. My oldest brother was going into the 6th grade and the other one would be starting the 5th grade. We won't say how old my baby sister was!

Thirty years ago this year, my school system welcomed a new P.E. instructor/basketball coach (whom I remember very well from my elementary days), another teacher I cannot place because he was a high school instructor and was gone before I got there. Also welcomed was a certain teacher who "will assist music department head Bill Quackenbush whose primary responsibility would be to the junior high bands." (That is how the sentence read so the grammar is not my fault). I have been told that Emily was a student teacher at the high school where another [tangenteer](#) was enrolled.

(A tangent from one of my memorable moments with Mr. Q. Not only was he the high school band director back in the day but was also the tennis (?) coach. He was the instructor of the summer tennis program. We were volleying the ball back and forth. All of a sudden, I felt a ball SMACK into my eye! We rush into the school, get an ice pack, and a Mt. Dew. The next day, I woke up with a shiner. ☐ )

Emily was also the music instructor at the local Catholic school for a number of years. So she was the teacher of 5 Sh kids and two Sh grandkids. God must have helped there!

Emily also is having a hand in my song list for the evening of fun and music I am planning with some of my best friends and my new coach. We had been working on one of the selections for a great while and is now at the performance stage after a bit of polishing and tweaking.

A week or so ago, I was requested to find a good worship song to begin with. I cannot believe that it took me nearly four hours to come up with one. One of the last pieces Emily and I looked at was one of the most inspirational songs I have ever heard. Definitely will need a prayer to get through but she will be watching and I will be able to lean on her shoulder.

Not really gone as long as we remember.

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## **My Darling Susie**

While everyone else dispersed to the various ballgames for the evening (a niece and a nephew actually played against each other on the t-ball field while another was in a neighboring community), I took my 5 year old niece to Story Hour at the library. I had taken Syd to the first gathering a few weeks ago and learned that someone needed to stay for the entire hour (of course, this was after I left and came back after the hour). Tonight, I stayed for the entire hour.

It was a cute hour... thankfully, I knew a few of the parents (one being a church organist I know). This week being dolphin and shark week, we heard true life stories about each of the creatures. Then the kids sang "If You're Happy and Ya Know

It.” Then, arts and crafts in which the little ones made tear out sharks. They took a piece of construction paper and tore their sharks and glued them to another sheet of paper. No snack... Sydney was slightly miffed about that.

I remember Saturday morning Story Hour at the old library. I attended (until I was in the third grade) and later was the leader. The one thing I remember aside from the stories, Farmer in the Dell, London Bridge, and musical chairs was my darling, Susie. She was the library’s resident mascot. A rather green, birdlike marionette. Who knows where she is now? To the great aviary in the sky, one might surmise ☐

But, it was kind of fun to see the little ones hearing the stories (even adding their own commentaries at times) and being creative

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## **Would Ya, Could Ya, Ain’t Ya Gonna, If I Asked Ya, Would Ya Wanna**

Funny thing about living in a small town for the better part of 36 years, you have many memories that really do take you back. Last night, a customer who used to work at the store when it was known as Shaffer Value was in and I had to recite her full name (which is six in length... K.J.E.S.H.P) that she made it a point to teach me when we worked along with the Master Meat Lady in the back. I recall that it was during this time when I was introduced to a great amount of country music (it beat the musak that played through the store. One song in particular comes to mind: John Michael Montgomery’s “Be My Baby Tonight.” Is that the title or is it the tongue

twisting refrain of:

*Would ya, could ya, ain't ya gonna, if I asked ya, would ya  
wanna be my baby tonight?*

I still can't remember how long it took me to get that lyric down. Forget the rest of the song. I would be quizzed every time I went to work. I think my fumbled lyrics were even more memorable than the real thing.

Sorry I could not find an official video. Everything else was karaoke versions.

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## A Voice From The Past

Usually when an unfamiliar caller pops up on the caller ID, I let the machine pick it up. Unless of course, the caller redials then curiosity rears its evil head.. Tonight, a friend I have not seen in four years phoned me. Mandie (I swore it was with no -e) and I worked together at Wal-Mart and along with Karen, were inseparable. I even confided in Mandie about my attraction to our other compadre... but, alas. And she even **shared** the same last name of the most attractive employee at Dunder-Mifflin (now Sabre) Scranton Branch.

Apparently since I left WM about 3 years ago (she left before that... even before the transition to Supercenter), Mandie has been asking about me from time to time (don't get any ideas... she is attached and we were never more than really good friends). Former co-workers have told me she has been in and said... "Where is Jamiah?" She does have my home phone number. Tonight, she phoned and we talked for like 2 hours catching up. Her four boys are no longer the little ones I remember. Her oldest is now **14!?** The youngest, Ashton, whom I remember seeing a day after he was born is now 4! She also works with Squirmy! Small world!

Even smaller world... she lives in an apartment above a pizza shop very close to the Quarterline Cafe where *He Crossed That Line* just wrapped. So... we made plans to get together and have a movie night soon along with her four boys.

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# Toboggan... t-o-b-o-g-g-a-n

Just found out that my nephew, Joshua came in second place in his school's spelling bee putting him on the next step to the National Bee. As you might have guessed, he misspelled toboggan. As his father so eloquently pointed out, Joshua did not inherit his spelling and grammar skills from him. Definitely his math and computer knowledge.

I just am curious as to when they started taking the top two finalists on to the next level. I would have progressed not only my 8th grade year but at least my 5th grade year when the champion and I went back and forth until I finally incorrectly spelled *illegible*. My sixth grade year, I had an unfortunate slip of the tongue when I put a *g* in pajamas (still remember that). I do not remember how far I got my 7th grade year nor do I remember the word I won on my 8th grade year... go figure.

Anyway... good luck Joshua in January.