

Hellooooo Brookfield!!!!

By Bill Thudium
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bill@smithmotor.com

Happy New Year!

I'm back!!! My apology to all of my readers for delaying this edition of HB so long. Just too much going on this past fall but I'm ready to begin sending out regular columns again. Didn't do a birthday and anniversary list this time but that will return with the next column.

Winter officially arrived in Brookfield with the 4 inches of snow and blizzard conditions we experienced the Sunday after Thanksgiving, with numerous smaller snows thereafter. The Farmer's Almanac predicted a lot of snow for our area this winter but December was fairly mild and it warmed up in early January but things changed yesterday!!! We got 11 inches of snow over night and it is still snowing today. Big Chief's game this afternoon – sure hope we don't lose power for that one! Go Chiefs!

Our town looked like a Norman Rockwell painting this fall with the incredibly gorgeous autumn leaves. We had not seen anything like that for a while and everyone sure enjoyed it. Between remodeling our family room and chasing around watching grandchildren wrestle and perform in concerts getting our Christmas decorations out and up was put “on the back burner” until very late this year! I always take some vacation this time of year and I can report that Shane and I were able to get the house together and decorated, inside and out, for Christmas. It was another wonderful family Christmas for us once again! Hope your experience was the same.

New Brookfield Businesses – We were all saddened when Karen Hahn decided to retire and could not find a buyer for her local Hometown Sears Store. Sears wanted her to sign a long term contract and she was not interested in being tied to something like that when it was her desire to retire. Anyway I am pleased to announce that a new business has now opened in the Sear's store building.

Prismscape Outlet opened the first week in November. It is an outlet store for companies such as Target, Macys and others. Brian Menini, owner of the Brookfield Bowl, and his wife are the owners of this new business. The store is open five days a week and their product offerings are continuously changing. Please check them out!

Captain Dan's Steakhouse Barbeque Grill and Bar opened up the 14th of December in the old Brickhouse Restaurant building. Owner Dan Downey offers a varied menu including steaks and his famous barbeque offerings. Everyone is thrilled this nice facility has reopened as a restaurant and we wish Dan all the best in his new endeavor!

Other activity downtown - hope to have another positive report soon!

Dreaded Remodeling - Shane and I had our house torn up with a family room remodel that seemed to go on all fall!! Our wood burning fireplace had been enjoyable over the past 36 years but despite taking care to keep the chimney cleaned each year we were tired of dealing with the mess of hauling wood into the house and had developed some concerns regarding the condition of the aging metal flu. A decision was made to remove the wood burner and replace it with a gas fireplace, one that is enclosed with a glass front and designed to both look good and provide efficient warmth. It had to be ordered and of course took forever to come in. In the meantime we also decided to remove the 15 year old carpet and replace it with wood look vinyl plank flooring. Shawn Pulliam laid that for us and we are well pleased with how it looks. Dogs seem to like it too! Of course you can't remodel a room without painting – in this case we decided to paint the natural woodwork and replace the wood front on our fireplace with stone appearance fireplace tile and redo the old popcorn sprayed ceiling. We literally had our family room furniture moved into every room in the house as we undertook this major project. What a mess!! What started out as a decision to replace the fireplace turned out to be a much bigger deal than expected, much more expensive as well! Oh well despite the time and the mess Donald Downey and his crew got us finished up and we were able to get the house back together and cleaned up for Christmas! Shane and I are enjoying our evenings in front of the fire. Absolutely love it! We will miss the smell of the wood burner but this new one is almost 100% efficient, burns clean and provides some real warmth to the house. We had hoped to have it done by Thanksgiving but that was a long shot – just glad we got it done before Christmas!

So Difficult for All - Recently a high school classmate of mine, Mitchell Burns was tragically killed in a traffic accident. He had stopped on a two lane road to assist someone whose tractor had broken down and was struck by a car that did not see him in time. A truly tragic occurrence! Mitchel had attended our 50th Class reunion in July, had a wonderful time and we all enjoyed seeing him so much. Just one of those guys who made you smile! We were fortunate we had the opportunity to see and visit with Mitchell one last time. No one is ever prepared for something like his accident to happen. We should all strive to make every day our best day ever because you just never know when your number will be called.

Mystic Moods of Love/Mitchel Burns – my buddy Jack Gillespie and I went to college at Northeast Missouri State in Kirksville after graduating from high school. Several other grads from Brookfield and other nearby schools attended Northeast as well and Mitchell Burns was one of us. So happens that his dorm room was right below ours. We were all good friends and enjoyed pranking each other every chance we got. I had received a really nice 8 track tape player as a gift at graduation and Jack and I thoroughly enjoyed listening to our favorite tapes in our dorm room. One sunny day we decided to lower my speakers down on either side of Mitchell's window. I had purchased a tape titled the Mystic Moods of Love and one of the tracks was of thunder and heavy rain. We called down to Mitchell and told him we had just learned that there was a freak rain storm about to hit our area. He didn't believe us since it was such a beautiful day out, at least not until he heard the thunder, rumbling and rain coming from the speakers outside on either sides of his window. He of course went to the window and hung his head out to check and we dumped a trash can full of water on him!! One of our best pranks ever. We all have laughed about that nearly every time we visited with Mitchel the past 50 years and he always joined us in the fun with a big smile!

Old High School Building News – for those of you out there who have shared our passion to get the old high school razed I have good news for you. The City was finally able to take ownership of the entire building complex when the Mundell family decided to give up their partial ownership. I can now report that funding is being put together right now to take the building down next fall. My understanding is that the City will obligate necessary funds over the next two budgets and will also seek donations to help defray the expense of the building removal. I know everyone will join me in a big Hip Hip Hurray for this Good News!

2018 Leadership Class – This year's Brookfield Area Growth Partnership Class got underway with 22 students this past fall. As part of the training we took a group of them on a Tour of Brookfield. This is done to help educate folks about their community, it's history and to show them interesting things about their town few have any knowledge of. The BAGP Leadership program has been a most effective tool of the community development organization placing graduates in leadership positions throughout our Community and County. The group was meeting at McDonalds to enjoy a meal that was furnished by Larry and Kathy McCurry and then the plan was to board a Church bus being provided this year by the God's Garden Church. I arrived about 20 minutes early and was met at the door by the Church Pastor who was terribly upset. He told me he had filled the bus up with gas earlier and took it home to pick something up. When he started to get back in to drive to McDonalds he noticed a large spot of water underneath. Turns out his water pump was out and the bus couldn't be used. We had to scramble at that point as the students were beginning to arrive for their meals. It was decided to pile into cars together for the "tour" - required improvising this year so we took

time between stops to get out of our cars to talk about the community and fill them in about Brookfield's interesting history. Seemed to work ok and the students seemed to enjoy the tour!

Bulldog Football Season – Our 2018 Bulldogs held so much promise but seemingly everything that could go wrong went wrong this past season. The Dogs finished with a one win season. Competition was tough and we played competitively with every team in and out of our Conference but just couldn't get "over the hump"! We all look forward to next season when a good group of current sophomores and juniors take over the varsity. Many of our younger kids did get plenty of varsity experience this year and our JV had a good season finishing with just a couple of losses and several good wins over some quality competition.

1911 Bulldogs – the 1911 Bulldog Football team won 6 games, tied 1 and lost one game. "We scored 176 points to our opponent's 31 and five of our games were on the road" "A banner year, not alone from the player's standpoint, but from a financial standpoint of view as well. For the first time in years at the close of the season and after all debts had been settled, Manager Owen reported a balance remaining in the treasury. In addition to this, no part of the \$25 so generously donated for athletics by the School Board had been touched"

2012 Echo, Brookfield High School Annual

Community Chorus – The Linn County Community Chorus held our 61st Annual Christmas Concert the first weekend in December at the Brookfield First Christian Church. We had a full crowd and a really good Concert. Everyone went away with some Christmas spirit in their hearts!

Blue Pride Wrestling Club - This year we have four grandchildren wrestling for BPWC. Gambal, Devan, Dylan and Kingston. Dylan and Kingston are first year wrestlers so it is fun watching them as they learn. Devan is an experienced two time State Champ and in 6th grade this year and Gambal, an 8th grader is also experienced kid wrestler with the added experience of wrestling Jr. High this year. This is his last year with BP and Devan will wrestle two more years for BP. Our son in law Matt Parn is the Coach and director of the Club, with a lot of help from daughter Kjersten and numerous volunteer.

Matt provided me with some history on the wrestling program. "BPWC started in 2013, switched names from Brookfield Kids Wrestling which was started by Gary Haag in 1983. We weren't parting ways with the old name, school or club. Change was made to start a new brand and philosophy, we had a chance to have our own facility, and felt this is what was needed to get more kids involved and better "feed" our high school wrestling program".

Approx. number of kids by year.

2007- 20

2012- 30

2016- 40

2018- 70+

In 2012 we approached John and Josh Fay about renting the upstairs of their building downtown. They offered us a rent and utility free building. We invested around \$5000 in remodeling and equipment. This included the purchase of a 15 year old mat for \$1500.

2013-present - We have more than doubled our membership from 30 to 70+ kids. We hold 7 practices each week between 3 different groups. Our wrestlers are between the ages range from 4 to 14, and include both male and female.

We just completed a fund raising drive to purchase new mats, the ones we have now are over 20 years old. The purchase price for the new mats is \$11,500. Weston Tschannen Memorial donated \$5000 and we used that to kick off our drive. I can proudly announce now that our goal has been reached and exceeded. We ordered two new Blue Pride wrestling mats this week! Thanks to everyone who helped put us over the top!

Results of the 2018 Brookfield Rotary Christmas Program: Each year the Brookfield Rotary Club sponsors a Christmas shopping program for area families. Needy kids and families are identified by our School and a couple of weeks before Christmas we bring a bus load of kids to Walmart to shop. Kids identify their family members in advance and the Rotary Club and other volunteers assist them in shopping for their family, not themselves. Once shopping is completed Rotary members bring the kids out to the School where packages are wrapped and the kids are fed. This year the kids enjoyed McDonalds value meals which were provided as a result of private donations. Once they are finished Rotary members return the kids home to their families along with their bag of Christmas Purchases at Walmart for 58 Children, representing 29 families with 45 children shopping. Also purchased for 16 families when the children shopping did not have a sibling to buy for. Total purchases of \$3,457 to average \$46.72 per child and family gifts or \$119.21 average per family represented.

Also, each family received a \$25 gift certificate at Spragues.

Our gross receipts were \$4,370.

Our total expense was \$4,182.

Project Margin was \$188.

The Rotary Club voted to gift \$500 to the Linn County Ministries/Food Pantry as appreciation for Debbie Scott and all the helpers who volunteered to assist the night of our project, December 20, 2018.

Also, a big shout out thank you to all who donated toward the project, and a special thank you for Dr. Kyle Collins for bringing the resources of the school to this project with selection of the children, delivery to Walmart, and use of the school for the Wal-Mart meals he donated and space to do the wrapping before delivering the kids home with presents for Christmas.

Thanks as always for reading Hellooooo Brookfield !!!!! Please remember to shop Linn County for Christmas and don't forget to let me know when you have Good News or Interesting Stories!