

Hellooooo Brookfield !!!!!

By Bill Thudium

August, 2015

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Sorry to be so late getting my column sent. Seems like I have been so busy doing other things I just haven't had time to sit down and write. There are plenty of other things happening in town and I will try to catch you up with those in the next column. Hope everyone had a great summer. Can't believe fall is nearly upon us!

Good News - Positive economic news in rural communities has been hard to come by the past several years so when two of our local industries jointly announced expansion plans just recently it was indeed big news for Brookfield. Brookfield Fabricating Corp. has purchased the old Sale Barn property along West Helm Street and is currently constructing a new 30,000 square foot building. This will mean an additional 68 new jobs for this highly successful highway overhead sign structure company. Fab has been providing jobs for graduates of our Linn County Area Career Center welding program for several years with more available jobs just around the corner. Excelsior Manufacturing is adding a 20,000 square foot addition to their east industrial park site and expects to increase their employment up to a dozen people and boost their daily shipments from six to 13 trucks. Excelsior builds venting systems for forced air furnaces and is benefiting from a much improved new home construction climate in the US right now. Fab currently employs about 145 people and Excelsior is around 45 so the additional new jobs will be significant employment boost for both of these two Brookfield companies. The two manufacturers will be investing multi-million dollars in their expansions and hiring a bunch of people – that is indeed Good News!

What a Weekend It Was - More good news for Brookfield this summer was our 6th Annual Alumni Weekend. This event grows in popularity each year and is simply a must attend event for every BHS grad. Because the School was in the middle of having the floor of the High School gymnasium refurbished it was necessary for the Alumni Committee to find another location for the Hall of Fame banquet. Fortunately the Park Baptist Church Fellowship Hall was available and it worked perfectly for the event. Attendance for this really neat annual event had been declining somewhat the last couple of years but this night BHS alums and their families filled up the place. The Committee knew ahead of time that more tickets had been sold than last

year but they were pleasantly surprised to see so many additional ticket buyers show up at the door. Luckily ample food had been prepared and there was seating for all.

The evening kicked off right at 6 p.m. and we were done by 8 p.m. Inducted into the BHS Hall of Fame were former teachers Doris Dodd and O.H. Williams, and myself. Doris was there with an entourage of family members who returned home to help her celebrate her special weekend. She gave a very gracious acceptance speech. There were no family members there to accept posthumously for O.H. Williams, a former student Eldon Burr '75 accepted and commented for his family. My family, like Doris' family, was there in big numbers and I was very appreciative! The entire night was rather overwhelming for me with so many people offering their congratulations and shaking my hand. It was such an honor to be nominated and inducted into the BHS Hall of Fame - truly a special night I will never forget. Congratulations as well to my fellow inductees, Doris Dodd, O.H. Williams and their families.

Bulldog Football – Football season is here and in full swing! Two a day's started on August 3rd this year with the Aquafina Game on Saturday the 8th. The Jamboree was held this year at Burlington Field on the 14th and the first game of the year will be an away game at South Shelby on the 21st. Tickets for the annual Booster Club Steak Feed are on sale and available for \$20 apiece. The Steak Feed was held on the night before the opener at South Shelby and we had another great crowd and a fun evening.

The Bulldogs opened the season with 57 kids on their roster – the squad includes eighteen seniors, thirteen juniors, ten sophomores and sixteen freshmen. Not sure what happened to the sophomores – hopefully more will come out next year??? Importantly, the majority of our seniors have varsity experience. Replacing our entire starting offensive line is the real trick this year, however I must say I have been favorably impressed by the new group watching them get ready for the season, and really pleased to see how they put it together against South Shelby the first game and took care of business against a weaker opponent in Highland this past week.

The 2015 Brookfield Bulldogs opened their season at South Shelby Friday with a 40-7 win over the Cardinals. The Dogs went on top the first play of the game and scored on an 80 yard scoring pass from QB Bryce Howerton to Tucker Noble. Place kicker Art Huerta kicked off into the end zone. Our defense was stiff and held them to three and out. We took over at mid field after the punt and four plays later RB Reed McBroom was in the end zone after two long runs off tackle. We led 14-0 with 9 minutes left in the first quarter. We had a third TD attempt intercepted in the end zone and that gave South some momentum, particularly when we fumbled in our next possession to give them a short field. They were able to connect on a pass over the middle on a 4th down and 9 from the 20 yard line. The offense put another drive together in the 2nd quarter but received a questionable offensive interference call that happened on their 4 yard line taking us back to their 40 yard line. They held and Huerta kicked a 30 yard field goal to finish the half at 17-7. We collected ourselves following the break from a sloppy first half and began to dominate a big, tough South Shelby team. QB Howerton connected on a long pass to

receiver Scott Speichinger in the end zone – Spice caught the ball completely stretched out, truly an all –state catch. After Howerton was sidelined for a minor injury his back up Curtis Rulon came in and didn't miss a beat. He threw a bubble screen to Speichinger and he made his way down the sideline to the end zone for another score. It was time for the defense to shine – with SS throwing the ball to try and get back in the game Speichinger was able to pick one off and ran the length of the field with all kinds of blocking for another score. South's backup center later hiked the ball over his punters head out of the end zone to give us our final 2 points and a 40-7 victory.

This past Friday night the Highland Cougars came to town. It was not a nice trip for the Cougars as they fumbled on the first play of the game and three plays later McBroom scampered into the end zone. We scored twice more following interceptions and led 21-0 at the end of the first quarter. A fourth TD came on a long pass to Speichinger, one of three he would have for the night, and we led 28-0 heading into halftime. Brookfield received the kickoff and brought it back to the Cougar's end of the field. QB Howerton faked to McBroom and kept it up the middle for a 40 + yard TD. McBroom broke for one more long run to the one and then punched it over for our final score. He also set the School's all-time rushing record with that run. The JV and freshmen played most of the second half and the Highland starters final scored late in the 4th quarter. We ran out the clock and took home a 49-7 victory.

Bell Game this Friday night at Burlington Field. Marceline comes in 2-0 with wins over hapless Knox and Schuyler Counties. We cruised to our 2-0 record as well so this will likely be a first real test for both teams this season. Hope to see a lot of you there for the big game! Come early, there will be a huge crowd for the 79th annual Bell Game!

Kansas City Chiefs – My good friend Jack Gillespie and I attended Chief's camp again in St. Joseph in early August. Our BHS grad & star player Dan Baker and his wife Marilyn host a few of us every year in their home. They have a wonderful home, pool and their hospitality couldn't be better! We were at camp for their first practice which was held in the afternoon. The crowd was huge and we had to stand the entire time in 95 + degree heat. I was soaked from head to toe. All other practices are scheduled for 8:15 in the mornings so the next two we attended allowed for plenty of seating the temps were in the 70's. The Chief's additions thru draft and free agency all looked really good. We were pleased to see Mizzou rookie Mitch Morris work with the 1st team offensive line a lot. Jeremy Maclin will be a fantastic addition to our offense. He is so fast and quick! Mizzou's own Chase Daniels is still listed as the backup QB to Alex Smith but he sure looks good enough to take over and be successful anytime he gets a chance. We have Derrick Johnson and Mike DeVito back after missing much of last season with injuries and they both looked fit and stronger than ever. I like our chances to compete for a League championship this year!

Great American Balloon Derby- This great Brookfield/Laclede event will enjoy its 39th anniversary over Labor Day weekend. Amazingly many of the people who helped organize the event 39 years ago are still involved and serving in leadership roles. Their commitment to the annual event is amazing! This is good in many ways but also points out the need for fresh faces! If you would like to get involved on the local level please don't hesitate to ask – they are always in need of volunteers.

Brookfield Area Growth Partnership Leadership Academy – This year's Academy begins on Sept. 9th with the Tour of Brookfield. I am the tour guide as we travel around town learning about our history and stop by local businesses and industries to see what is going on. If you would like to be a part of this unique opportunity please contact Marsha as the local BAGP office (258-7278). The Academy runs thru graduation in March of 2016.

Birthdays –Aug. 26th, Shawn Kearns, Mary Almond, Ray Bennett, Chretien Dixon Gillman, Katie Eggerman, Britney Beach, Garrett Roe, Aug. 27th, Madison Spath, Nina Bingham, Larry Ellison, Tully Reid, Kevin DeVoy, Aug. 28th, Lilly Ann Lindsay, JoAnne Horton, Lois Johnson, Austin Potter, Robert Greene, Leslie Helton, Sonja Gillespie, Darlene Gordon, Aug. 29th, Rick Standley, Aug. 30th, Chas Gamblin, Jake Ball, Cora Kaye, Ron Snyder, Brittany Standley, Dena Still, Martha Montgomery, Aug. 31st, Jack Gillespie, Randal Hylarides, **RJ Staddie (our son in law), Breckin Thudium (our granddaughter)**, Paula Hamilton, Monty Clunn. Sept. 1st, Gayle Wilson Johnson, Nick Matheney, Art Rhodes, Larry McCurry, Sept. 2nd, Jeri White, Susan Hicks, Troy Dunkin, Sept. 3rd, Evan Fay, Pam Harper, Tiffany Sam, Caleb Galloway, Tyler Gordon, Sept. 4th, Mary Stuver, Scotty Clawson, John Peyton Hamilton, Marlene Watkins, Drew Hane, Gerrit Hane, Zach McMains, Thomas Coons, Ashley McCann, Johnie McGraw, Ryan Palmer, Sept. 5th, Beau Harrington, Almira Stephens, Gage Ham, Jane Nancie Saccaro, Jeremy McCann, Sept. 6th, John C. Murphy, Rhonda McKenzie, Charlie Reese, Abby Trentham, Olivia McCurry, Brendam Ham, Sept. 7th, Will Lincoln, Alex Moore, Gina Smith, Rachel Stauffer, Ed Dobrzanski, Janine Crist, Amanda Parker, Sept. 8th, Dave Hane, Ed Walsworth, Kyle Stahl, Sept. 9th, Elijah Beach, Stacey Bragg, Brittany Harrington, Linda Shaw, Natalie Bennett, Jim Stewart, Mike Stufflebean, Sept. 10th, Jeannette Packham, Toni Fay, Melinda McCormick, Debbie Smith, Chris Waugh, Matthew Anderson, Jake Edgar, Carson Wilkerson, David Minich, Kelli Alexander, Sept. 11th, Kathy Falconer, Grant Rodriguez, Amy Montgomery Stark, Kodi Kaularich, Evangelina Gonzalez, Sept. 12th, Jerod Gillman, Shawn Moore, Bob Roe, Chris Ham, Andrew Reed, Galen Hicks, Justin White, Sept. 13th, Alberta Gibson, Pam Spath, Jody Graff, Susie Overton, Joy Munsterman, Blaine Wilkerson, Sept. 14th, Luke Carmical, Katelin Dickson, Jerry Gall, Pat Kimbrough, Dana Melton, Trey Cunningham, Mel Greene, John Remol (my

father in law), Andrew Hoyt, Alyssa Elson, Sept. 15th, Chris Clark, Tricia Cleveland, Greg Wilson, Suzanne Rhodes, Matt Cunningham, Samuel Robinson.

Anniversaries –Stu & Gini McMains, Aug. 26th, Jim & Audra Clawson, Russ & Nelda Nickerson, Aug. 27th, Kevin & Brenda DeVoy, Aug. 29th, Shawn & Ginny Moore, Aug. 31st, Stanley & Janet (Knowles '68) Casady, Sept. 1st, Rick & Cheryl Butterfield, Donald & Nina Bingham, Pat & Freda Clark, Sept. 2nd, Ronnie & Carolee Hall, Burnie & Jennifer Hicks, Tom & Trudy Smith, Sept. 4th, Eugene & Bonnie Seaboldt, Sept. 5th, Herb & Julie Sensenich, Bob & Jane Walgren, Sept. 10th, Randy & Toni Fay, Sept. 11, Jon & Shirley Guilford, Sept. 13th, Danny & Jewell Phillips, Sept. 14th, Terry & Michelle Brosemer, Sept. 15th, Jack & Marsha Ogden, Caley & Megan Woods, Jim & Nanci Saccaro.

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