

Hellooooo Brookfield !!!!!

By Bill Thudium

The "I'm Back" Edition – 2021

Seems like forever since I wrote my last Hellooooo Brookfield! Turns out it was last August! This whole pandemic thing has completely uprooted our lives and I guess I just didn't feel like writing about it. I know Spring finally sprung, Shane and I are both fully vaccinated and it's time for the Country to come out of "hibernation"! Thankfully temps are back to normal, kids are playing baseball and summer is upon us.

I am pleased to tell you things around Brookfield are picking up. Our community sadly experienced lots of covid cases this past several months, and worse yet recorded some associated deaths. At this point, following a recent second spike, the weekly cases are down by 50% and people's spirits are on the rise. Actually our town only partially shut down, and just in a few places. Except for a short hiatus for Stanbury Uniforms all of our other industries have remained open throughout the pandemic, taking necessary precautions of course. Some of the downtown businesses chose to close temporarily but most remained open throughout. Restaurants experienced some down time as well but they were open for carryout and the community supported them in an amazing way. Brookfield elementary, middle school and high school opened on time last August and despite experiencing some covid issues remained open throughout the year. We experienced a full football season with the exception of a couple of games that had to be postponed, and of course there were limitations on fans in the stands in some of the communities (not Brookfield). If they held a game we were there! Most middle school and high wrestling events were held as planned but many limited fans to 2 or 4 per wrestler. Basketball was affected more than the other sports with numerous games postponed but they continued to play, with or without fans, when the situations allow. We still had track, golf and baseball.

Really a strange year for this year's Senior Class – something they will no doubt humorously share during class reunions and with their grandchildren someday! Vaccines are readily available here now and many folks are taking advantage of them. We are all holding out great hope that the vaccines will help bring back a complete level of normality this summer. Graduation ceremonies were held at Burlington Field for the second straight year. Last year we waited to hold graduation until July and it was really hot! This year it was held in May and the weather was nice. Only concern was possibility of rain but it held off and we had a great day!

Turning 70! I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge that October 13th, 2020 marked my 70th birthday. I don't have a clue how that much time could have passed or where it went!! Like everyone I have experienced the bad with the good but must say most of my time on this earth so far has been a wonderful experience. Growing up in a town I love has provided me with a lifetime of great memories. I have a great wife, family and friends, and living and growing up in Brookfield has been my good fortune.

My earliest memories as a kid included riding my pony Dexter - he was a gift from my Grandparents Cecil and Ethel Nickerson. I was barely old enough to ride him and took a few falls but wouldn't trade those days for anything! When my folks moved to East Clark Street we arrived there just in time for the Tastee Freeze to open just down the street. Couldn't guess how many trips I made down that sidewalk to buy an ice cream cone. I know I have mentioned this before but I was five when those jaunts began and many of those walks included losing my nickel along the way and having to retrace my steps without any luck and having to beg for a replacement nickel. We lived just two blocks from the New Adams school via the alley when I started school there as a Kindergartener with Mrs. Ehrich. Kind of crazy, I have trouble remembering who I talked to last week about a car but can remember the names of my Kindergarten Teacher and the kids in my class! Dad worked for Missouri Power and Light in those days and Mom was a stay at home Mom at that time. That gave her time to help out at school as a room Mother and watch out after my brother Bob and me when we were home. She was a Cub Scout Den Mother too. I attended the New Adams School through the 6th grade. As a 6th grader I had the good fortune to be chosen as a School Boy Patrolman.

My fellow Patrolmen included Steve Slater, Danny Lyford, Larry Summy, Randal Hylarides, Wes Almond and Alvie Schreckize. We came early each morning to raise the American Flag and help out at the street crossings. A lot of kids in the southside neighborhoods walked to school in those days and it was important to help monitor those corners to make sure traffic stopped so kids could cross the streets safely, both in the mornings and after school.

Moving back home to Brookfield was the best thing Shane and I could have done. Brookfield has it's downfalls and limitations like every other rural community but what a great place to live and raise our kids and grandkids! We are blessed!

BHS Wrestling – Wow what a season we had this year. The Bulldogs qualified eight boys and two girls for State and all eight boys and one girl finished with a medal. Our grandson Donovan Parn won his second State Championship, finishing 44-0. Last year he finished 2nd, his Sophomore year he won his first State Championship (undefeated), and he finished fourth as a freshman. We couldn't be more proud of him and our team. He accepted a scholarship offer to wrestle at Missouri Valley College this fall and we are excited to watch him at the collegiate level. BTW – our grandson Gambal Staddie also qualified for State as a Sophomore this year and won a Sixth place medal. He made such great strides as a wrestler this past year and we look for great things from him in his Junior and Senior years. Our Grandson Devan Parn will be a freshman wrestler this fall and we are looking forward to watching him carry his considerable skills to the high school level.

Missouri Wrestling Association Awards – We attended this Banquet with our Grandson Donovan recently. He was named the Class 1 State Wrestler of the Year and also named an Academic All-State member for his fourth straight year. What a way to cap off his Senior year of wrestling and Academics for BHS. He has some awfully proud grandparents!

Brookfield Baseball – 2021 was the inaugural year for Brookfield High School Baseball. We struggled to just a two win season but we were young and will certainly get better with experience and once the program has time to grow. Our

new baseball/softball facility at the High School is set to be completed in August. Everyone is so excited with the new facility and other improvements underway at the school. The new facility will include a combination concession stand, rest rooms, plus an announcers booth which can be used for both track and the baseball/softball field. Both facilities will be lighted. A new paved parking lot for both school and sports use is being built as well and that is something that is long overdue. If you are back for Alumni Weekend you need to drive by the school and take a look at the new improvements underway.

BHS Alumni Weekend 2021 – The Alumni Committee has announced we will be holding this event this year. The only change at this point is that there will not be a Banquet, only outdoor activities. These will of course include the Alumni golf tournament, softball tournament, Parade, and Party in the Park! Dates set for Alumni weekend are July 16 and 17. Activities will begin with the Golf tournament on Friday followed by the Party in the Park Friday evening. Saturday will include the Softball tournament, Alumni Parade and another Party in the Park (if we old folks can go another night! 😊). We hope to generate a big crowd for our outdoor events.

Thanks as always for reading **Helloooo Brookfield!!!**. Please remember to shop Brookfield first and don't forget to let me know when you have good news to share! Hope to see many of you during Alumni Weekend!