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**Subject:** Lincoln High Newsletter - 4/28/05  
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## *Lincoln High Newsletter*

*Memories of then! News of now!*

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I had a call from my Mom a couple weeks ago. She is 81 and in very good health for her age. She proceeded to remind me that I had not been to Rapids to see her for 3 months. Yes, she must keep track of my visits. So April 9th, though I really could have gotten a lot done in my yard, I boogied to Rapids to make the daughterly (is that a word?) visit. Mom lives on 12th Avenue South so I usually will take the Expressway. But as I was driving down 8th Street I decided to take a drive through town by way of Grand Avenue. I have not been on Grand Avenue for longer than I can remember.

I could not believe how the downtown, if you can called it that anymore, has changed. I remember the day when on a Friday night you couldn't find a place to park. Where have the stores gone? I hardly recognized my hometown. As I drove farther out of the downtown, I thought I took a wrong turn off I-39 and ended up in some strange place. With the Grand Avenue construction businesses and houses are gone. I almost missed 12th Avenue.

Hey Cary, your old house is standing empty. There were so many memories came to mind as I drove past your house and Ron Grundeen's house. And on 13th Avenue Pat Cornwell and Rodney Zuehlke lived. Remember when there was all swamp from 13th to 17th Avenue? We used to pick pussy willows and catch tadpoles back there.

I am looking forward to the reunion. So is Mom because at least she knows for sure that I will be home for a weekend in August!

**Jean (Dykstra) Kruchten (65) - [jvanruth@chorus.net](mailto:jvanruth@chorus.net)**

**Editor noted that Jean had changed her last name and asked her about that.**

Yah, I remarried October 5th of last year. Foolish me!!! I married my best friend who I have known since 1991. We actually have worked together since '91. Ray was always there during Art's Alzheimer's. He let

me vent, cry on his shoulder, or to just sit with Art. He would talk to Art for hours as if Art was understanding everything that was being said.

We were engaged right after the new year in 2003. We pulled off a secret engagement and eloped to Bayfield and got married at the Old Rittenhouse Inn. We work at the same place and not one person, with the exception of our supervisor knew anything about our engagement or marriage until we returned to work. Jaws literally dropped to the floor. It was great!

My email address will remain as is. See you in August.

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**Beth (Wherley) Kashner (65) [bkashner@hotmail.com](mailto:bkashner@hotmail.com) writes:**

My father, William Wherley, died of emphysema in Bradenton, Florida, on March 9, 2005. He moved his family to Wisconsin Rapids in 1962 when he bought an insurance agency which came to be known as the Wherley Insurance Agency. My father was born in Kankakee, Illinois in 1912, and moved to Chicago in the 1920's, the son of an conductor on the Illinois Central Railroad. Bill served in the navy at Great Lakes during World War II. He and his wife Marian lived in Chicago until 1946 when they moved with my sister Pam to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where I was born a year later.

In 1980 Bill sold the Wherley Insurance agency and retired to Florida, where he enjoyed the climate, and his garden. After over 30 years of living with emphysema, he passed away peacefully in his sleep with my sister Pam at his side.

William C Wherley leaves a wife of 64 years: Marian Best Wherley; daughters Pam Wherley Hilsheimer and her husband David and son David; myself, Beth Wherley Kashner, husband Lenny, and children Anna, Zoe and Max; two sisters, Ellen Marshall (age 95) in California, and a sister Gladys, age 86, in Chicago; also, good friends Preston and Jeanette Pierce who lived in Wisconsin Rapids when he did, now in Lacrosse, Wisconsin. Bill also leaves three great grandchildren and a blind toy poodle, Brindy. His devoted dog, Buddy, preceded him in death in 2002.

I think my father's years in Wisconsin Rapids were some of the best of his life. He belonged to the Elks club, and he was always happy to attend the three day Polish weddings of some of the owners of farms he insured. As an outsider, a big city guy, he was able to fit in and establish the trust of the local people, as well as the owners of cranberry marshes. He had a lot of enthusiasm and always provided his customers and friends with a drink and a lot of laughs. He did everything he could to help the people of Wisconsin Rapids and the rural areas with their insurance needs. He loved owning his own business, and his own building-- the old telephone building in downtown Rapids, which he remodeled in the early 70's.

A funny story about Bill Wherley was when he went into "Kneipps Our Own Hardware" with a pistol, a family heirloom from the gangster days of Chicago, because he wanted a holster. He had the gun in his pocket, and when he was in the hardware store he pulled it out and put it on the counter. There was an off-duty policeman in the store who immediately came over and arrested him for carrying a concealed weapon. Bill made the Police Blotter of the Tribune, much to his embarrassment.

This gun is still in the family. He kept it under his mattress in Bradenton, because he was always fearful of home invaders. Recently I hid it in their attic because I was afraid that he might wake up in the middle of the night and shoot my mother, not realizing where he was. To his dying day he wanted to know what I did with that gun. After he died I retrieved it from the attic, and found that it was loaded with six bullets, though he always swore it was unloaded. It was a .38 caliber 1903 Colt, so maybe it is worth a lot, but I think we will keep it because of its family history. His other prize possession was his 1993 Cadillac Deville, only 47,000 miles, which was only driven within a two mile radius of his house.

I write this essay about my father, because when you live to be 92, you don't leave behind a lot of people who remember you. Most of your friends and relatives are already dead. When he was 90 I made a photo collage of his life, and now that he is dead, I try to write about his achievements, remember funny stories, and wonder what the purpose of his life was, anyway. I write about him so that his grandchildren and his grandchildren's children might keep his memory alive. Our lives go by so fast, and in only 34 years we all will be 92 years old, the class of 1965, if we live that long.

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Hi Kent & Judy

I am including two pictures that John took of me this winter. The top one was taken in Upper Michigan on a snowmobile trip to Copper Harbor. We went with four other couples. This was a three day, two night, 400 mile round trip. We had a great winter for snowmobiling up here this year. The second picture was taken on the island of Aruba about two weeks ago. We took a 16 day cruise from Fort Lauderdale to South America. The highlight of the cruise was the 180 miles that we went inland on the Orinoco River in Venezuela. We were both surprised when we got back on April 11th that all of our snow was gone. John and neighbors put the docks and lifts in Thursday and now the weather has turned cold again. Hope to see all of you at the reunion this summer.

Rosemary (Akkerman) Passer (65) [rjp@nnex.net](mailto:rjp@nnex.net) Phelps, WI



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### Old K-Mart on 8th St has a new owner



DOUG ALFT/Daily Tribune **New vehicles await customers in the parking lot of the former Eighth Street Kmart on Monday as the renovated facility becomes the new home of Rapids Ford.**

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**Editor's note: The following was written by my nephew, Jonathan Hanneman [jonhanneman@yahoo.com](mailto:jonhanneman@yahoo.com) of Seattle. It is so well written that I thought I'd include it in the newsletter.**

### Up and Becoming

Unlike most children, I never wanted to grow up.

Perhaps I should say that I never recall wanting to grow up. But from my earliest conscious memory, I never, ever wanted to grow up. I fought it the best that I could, claiming the Toys 'R' Us theme song as my own, living in the world of cartoons and video games, avoiding shaving until my peach fuzz was plainly no longer peach-ish and more like an extensive and ill-mannered mildew devouring my upper lip. But growing up has a way of catching you, no matter how deftly you work to evade its grasp.

There comes a point when reality is what it is, a point where childhood has vanished--vanished like the memory of frost on an August day. Sooner or later, each of us must grow up. Sometimes we are physically mature long before our mentality reaches adulthood, but if we are to continue to live, we must accept maturity and all of its troubles and responsibilities.

Living in a house with three other guys (and I intentionally avoid the word "men") has a way of forcing you to take responsibility. Guys hate taking responsibility, no matter their age. But responsibility is exactly what each of us needs. There comes a point where you must stop talking about mowing the lawn (or listening to someone talk about how he plans to mow the lawn) and just start mowing. There comes a point where you actually have to clean the bathroom instead of leaving it to someone else who won't clean it. There comes a point where you realize that if you do not take responsibility, you will be forced to live in the squalor of childhood ignorance and intention, a squalor multiplied by the comparative mass of an adult body (or four of them, in my house). You realize that if no one else will be the adult, you must claim the role for yourself. You must build order from chaos.

Responsibility, not just intellectual acumen and physical ability, is what makes a child into an adult. The

voluntary acceptance of responsibility--taking charge of a situation for the benefit of all involved--combined with the continued execution of that responsibility, is what turns a boy into a man.

No matter how much you feel like a five-year-old faking his way through a professional dinner party, no matter how much you would rather be rocked on your mom's lap until the problems disappear, no matter how much you fight or run or hide, sooner or later, adulthood will find you. And though you must abandon your many toys, it is good to be caught. As adulthood lifts you, you discover that your feet still reach the ground. You realize that you can walk much farther on longer legs, that you can hike places no child can go. You have left your toys, but you have discovered the hope of adventure.

On the rarest of occasions, you may even feel like you're finally ten years old.

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**Editor's restaurant re-review:** Judy and I went to the **Sportman's Bar** on 8th Street Wednesday evening to catch a sandwich for supper. Last time we were there, a year ago, everything was quite good. Couldn't say the same Wednesday night!

I had the French Dip sandwich which was OK. Judy had the 1/4 lb. hamburger and said it tasted like liver and the lettuce and tomato tasted more like refrigerator than lettuce and tomato. French fries were absolutely terrible! They had a very strange flavor that was NOT conducive to eating more of them. They have added "sour cream & onion" french fries to their menu list and we guess that the flavor came from old cooking oil impregnated with burnt "sour cream & onion" flavoring. **Yuck!**

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