**Allegan, Michigan - Hometown Tribute**

THOUGHTS ABOUT MY “HOME TOWN” – ALLEGAN, MICHIGAN

Grateful appreciation

Personal health

The Hunters (Tomas “The Magnificent” & “The Munificent” Rosie”)

Coach Armitage

Wonderful friends/great memories

Appreciation for historic role of the Perrigo Company

“Hunter’s” bicycle sales & repair store

Steaks at “The Grill House”

AFTER INDUCTION: AHS SPORTS HALL OF FAME May 18, 2013

Right After the awards event Sat. nite, I checked my eM/phone… and there were congrat. messages from EVERYWHERE; people I hadn’t seen nor heard from since leaving high school, 51 years ago. Between Facebook, LinkedIn, and eM accts. there were so many, I knew I couldn’t answer them all adequately, so I’m sending this via all three. (Please, please pass it along to those for whom you might assume I’m not connected via FB, Linked, or eM… i.e. Steve Thompson, Dick Godfrey, Pam Crandell, etc.) I’m sending it to myself with Bcc’s so I don’t spread your eM address across the universe =(;-o)

As many of you know, I’m battling cancer, recovering from triple bypass op., (and myriad other maladies from my reckless, but adventure-filled life, and my wife, Marva, recently was diagnosed with cancer & Crohn’s disease. But, please don’t despair, all med. probs are early-stage and Doctors say we both have many years to enjoy or four kids, six grands, and wonderful friends and acquaintances LIKE YOU! (This is starting to feel like one of those Holiday update letters. Suddenly I understand why people write them!!!)

OK, here we go! First a special thanks to Tom Hunter (The Magnificent One), who rallied ’62 classmates (and many others) to support the award AND attend the wonderful reception at “The Rock Bottom Bar,” his lovely, fascinating and energized wife, Rosie (Mrs. Magnificent), and my former football coach, the redoubtable (look it up) Prof. Chuck Armitage, who STILL supports “his guys” from the 60′s better than any other “former” coach I know of, and his beautiful wife Mary, who loves the players like we were her’s!!

Next, my heartfelt appreciation to ALL of you who attended, the reception, awards event, or sent messages one way or another. Don’t quite understand how, but I got wonderful notes from afar from people I haven’t seen in many decades and who attended neither H.S. nor college (MSU nor Olivet). The Internet, though sometimes very frustrating to some of us dinosaurs, is an amazing, even miraculous, technology.

And how ironic is it that a guy with whom I collided (literally) on both the football field (ouch) and the basketball court, Plainwell’s Wally Kaechele and wife Cheryl now own “The Allegan County News,” ([http://www.allegannews.com](http://www.allegannews.com/)) – and made sure the word got out for this event! All the best to you and Cheryl, Wally.

Feeling very much “reconnected” to the most important years of my life, growing up in a small, safe, prosperous, amazingly friendly and supportive town, like Allegan, Michigan, for all your friendship, all your support, and all the great memories, please accept my humble appreciation.

Oh, many of you asked about my son, Greg, the musician and I promised to connect you. He spends half each year in China as headliner at the “Shanghai House of Blues and Jazz,” and the rest mostly in the Boston area, but he was in Atlanta and Portland, OR last week. You can hear his music and check his schedule at Greg Luttrell’s website. Proud papa is always happy to promote ;)

One last thought! For any of you who have never been to Allegan, Michigan, but love small, well-preserved towns with a Norman Rockwell feel, check it out. And while there, take the boardwalk tour that runs the length of the town along the Kalamazoo River (artists have come there to paint landscapes since before I was born), visit the massive complex of Perrigo Company, the largest manufacturer of private label over-the-counter pharmaceuticals in the United States, which stayed and gave small-town Allegan hope and a future, when other companies were fleeing to find cheaper labor.

AND you must stop and see HUNTER’S bicycle sales and repair store, you’ve never seen anything like it – morphed from your friendly “Western Auto” store (defunct name now, I think) as the owner Tom Hunter maintained it like an old country store. You can find things there that you just didn’t think they make anymore. You must SEE it to believe it. (DISCLOSURE: I’m biased. Tom & I have been friends since kindergarten. But, at my/our age. 69, I know he’s thinkin’ about sittin’ down.)

If you’re an entrepreneur, or know one, looking for a small-town business with exceptional historical roots, just happens to be the place people go/meet to find out what’s really happenin’ in town (great breakfast two doors down), you might want to check-out HUNTER’S in Allegan, MI. Oh, and wrap-up your visit with a trip to a steak house that’s just too good to believe in small-town America – <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tqLOEROphkM>.

Abrazos to all,

Walter Buzz Luttrell

AHS Class or ’62