

One Generation Back

I come from midwestern stock. My father was a teamster and WWII veteran. He stayed in the Army reserves and achieved the rank of W4.

My mother was a homemaker while I was a teen. When the nest began to empty, she began working outside the home.

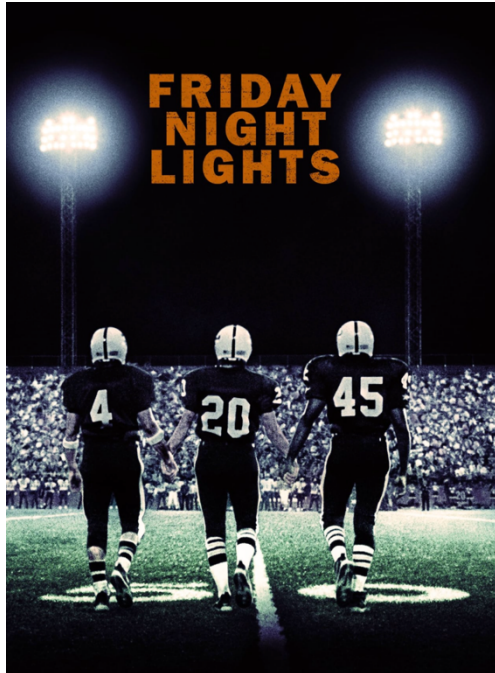
One day when I was in college, she announced she was going to run for city council. This was the 1970's so that was a rare feat. She became the first woman ever elected to the Sparta Illinois city council.

Suddenly when I would come home from college instead of discussing local sports, we would discuss her challenges getting EPA zoning restrictions lifted...



My formative years were spent in the Baptist church. This was Southern Baptist, and generally, yes, fire and brimstone.

However, I have never experienced the group electricity felt at an altar call at a Baptist church revival. It is a top 5 mystical experience.



Although it was the Midwest, not Texas, my hometown of Sparta was very much a Friday night lights sort of experience.

I played all of the sports: basketball, football, baseball, track – “weren’t no soccer in them days.....”

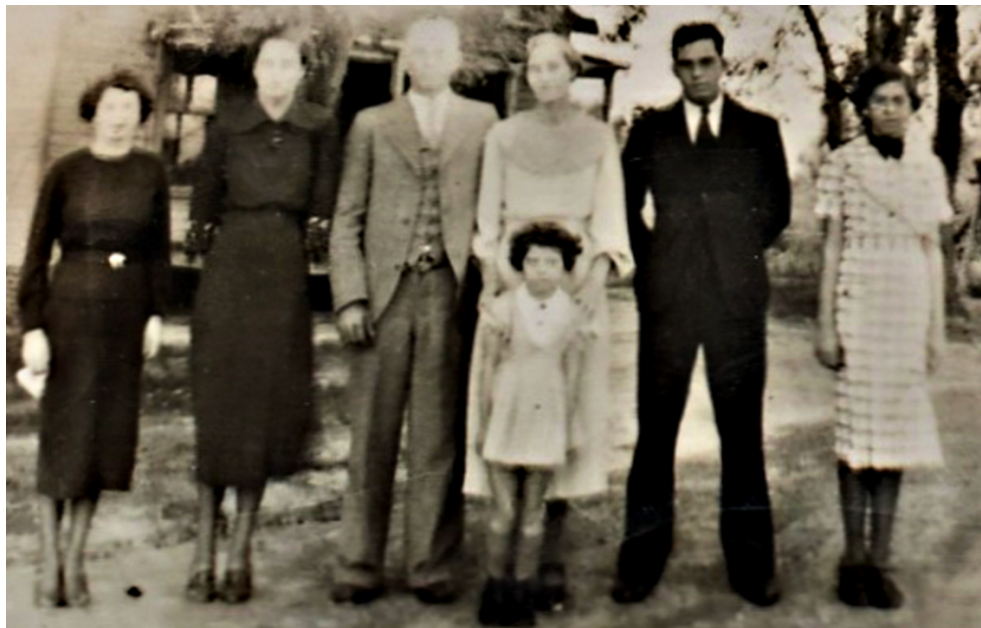
I also did the entire student government thing and was an A student.

I was one of kids those who actually looked forward to going to school every day.

All of that said... I never had a desire to return for a high school reunion or generally stay connected with high school friend.

Two Generations Back

My mother’s family was from Alabama. Yes, I am of hard scrabble hillbilly stock. During the era of the depression, the Peabody coal company opened mines in Kentucky and Illinois and the family moved to Illinois. They rented a home for many years and to move to homeowner status purchased their first home that lacked both running water and toilets – it was however, a generational step up.



My father's family were farmers and coal miners in southern Illinois.

