

# LifeStyles

SECTION C • THE DILLSBURG BANNER • DECEMBER 8, 2011

## Northern High School Alumni

# Where Are They Now?



By **Steven M. Nesbit**  
Feature Writer/Dillsburg Banner

## L. Richard Eichelberger, Jr. - All-American Man

"People try to call me Mr. Eichelberger now and I say, 'No, that's my dad,'" said Richard Eichelberger, Jr. sporting a big grin.

I was really looking forward to reconnecting with an old high school friend and fellow athlete. One of the highlights of moving back into the Northern school district was just that: reconnecting. It had been four decades - 42 years to be exact - since the last time Eichelberger and I had talked.

It was a cold and rainy November night when I set my GPS and headed to York Springs. Little did I know that when I got off Route 15 and onto the next road, my last two or three miles would remind me of the first time I rode a roller coaster at Hershey Park.

Whew! Made it. After ringing the doorbell, the porch light came on and Nancy, Richard's wife, opened the door with one hand as she held her infant grandson in her other arm. She welcomed me inside. Immediately, the cold and rainy mood vanished as the feeling of warmth and country hospitality surrounded me. Seeing the country kitchen reminded me of when I was a kid and used to visit my Grandma Anderson on her farm.

Within a few seconds, Eichelberger greeted me with a hearty handshake and gestured to the table. As soon as we sat down, he started asking me questions. Ten minutes later, I responded, "Whoa, aren't I supposed to be asking you the questions?" We laughed. In the meantime, Nancy placed a plate with about a dozen homemade cookies right in front of me. She mentioned that my previous interviewee, Carol Knisley, had cookies waiting for me as well.

The interview was ready to begin, but first I had to know how to reference Mr. Eichelberger. After all, it had

been more than 40 years and time changes things. I remember calling him Ike in high school. He answered, "Rich is good."

Rich and I began with a conversation about elementary school.

"I started out at a one-room school house right out here across from the new Northern Elementary," he said. "Right across the street where the apartments are, there used to be a one-room school building. I went there in first grade. In second, third and fourth grade, I went to another one-room school called Western School."

"One of Lobar's the first projects was to build the new Northern Elementary School, which was right across the street from where I went to first grade. I made sure we got that job. It was one of my first construction accomplishments. That was pretty neat!"

I asked him if he ever got in trouble at school. "From first grade on, I remember getting the belt and swats a lot," he replied. "My first-grade teacher had a two-inch-wide leather strap that she would use." He paused, grinned and continued, "I remember I got paddled by the principal for breaking Barry Albert's arm, too." I don't know why we laughed so hard, but we did. It just sounded funny, I guess.

"The last time, I believe, was Mr. Eckard in eighth grade. Or maybe it was Mr. Allison in ninth grade."

When he was in the fifth grade, Rich's family moved to Camp Hill to get his father closer to work. "I went to East Pennsboro School District for two years. After two years, Dad didn't like it over there. He was York County through and through. He bought some land out here and built a house. I started seventh grade at Northern."

During sixth and seventh grade, Rich was working with his dad, helping estab-



## Up Close and Personal Rich Eichelberger - Class of '68

1. Rich's Family:  
Mother and Father - Barbara and Lloyd  
Brothers - Bill and Lee  
Sisters - Sharon and Marianne  
Sons - Frank and Aaron  
Grandsons - Nicolas and Lukas  
Granddaughter - Riley
2. First paying job: Baling hay and picking cherries. I used the money to buy my first shotgun.
3. Proudest accomplishment: Marrying Nancy. That wasn't a tough question.
4. Best advice: Don't spend what you don't have, pay what you owe and always save some.
5. TV shows watched as a kid: "Star Trek," "Roy Rogers," "Sky King," "Bonanza" and "Covered Wagon Theatre" on Saturday mornings
6. Your idea of relaxation: Mowing on the tractor, riding motorcycles and splitting wood
7. What do you wish you would've learned earlier? The importance of education
8. Something people would be surprised to know: It doesn't take much to make me cry.
9. People who influenced you the most: My father, Lloyd Eichelberger, my grandfather, M.C. Chronister, John Estright, my high school football and wrestling coach, Ed Foreman, motivational mentor and friend from Dallas, Dr. Dennis Waitley, author of "Psychology of Winning," and Dr. Stephen Covey, author of "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People."
10. If you were a superhero, what power would you have? The ability to heal children
11. Would you rather fight a pirate or a samurai? A samurai, because pirates have guns
12. What makes you angry? Dishonest people

lish the family business, Lobar Construction. Rich's first (nonpaying) job at age 12 was raking stones for his father.

"Hunting is a huge family tradition, too. When a boy turns 12 in our family, hunting becomes a big part of his life," said Rich. "When I turned 12, my dad told me that he would not take me to the hunting cabin that year. What a big disappointment! I was heartbroken. My Pop-Pop Chronister told me, 'That's all right, don't worry. You can come up here and go buck hunting with me.' Next morning, we headed to the rock I was going to hunt from. I knew the woods because I played there a lot growing up. I was getting ready to settle in on that rock and he said, 'OK, you have a good day. I'm going to work.' I said, 'You're not going to be here with me?' He said, 'Nah, you go out there and get a buck. I know you can do it.' I climbed up on the rock and waited. At about 11 a.m., a buck stepped out and I shot him. I was so proud of myself. But the best part of the story was that when Dad came home from the hunting camp, he didn't have a deer! Needless to say, I got to go to buck camp the following year."

Then the subject of sports came up in eighth grade. Mr. Estright and Mr. Allison were trying hard to recruit Rich. "You need to come out for football," they said. "I can't," Rich told them. "I have to work." But that didn't stop them. "We'll talk to your dad," they said.

In ninth grade, he heard, "You need to come out for wrestling." Rich said his father "didn't fuss too much" when he asked about signing up. "I guess they did talk to him," he said.

"In high school, Allison put me in a headlock and said, 'You're coming out for track this year, aren't you?' I said, 'No, I'm not.' Well, I

did. I went out for track. I competed in the three field events: shot put, javelin and discus."

Teachers that Rich remembers fondly include Mr. Blyler (industrial arts and drafting), Mr. Eckard (English), Mr. Aeppli (mathematics), Mr. Kochenderfer and Mrs. Pitcher (English and composition).

"She really helped me with my writing," added Rich. "She was tough. I still remember all of the red marks around my essays," he said.

After a short pause, his school-boy enthusiasm burst through, "And I had Mrs. Armstrong for typing. Why in the world did I ever take typing? I don't know!" He thinks for a moment, then comments, "But later, computers came in. Now, I'm thinking, 'How lucky am I?'" It was fate that we took those classes back then. The computer's keyboard was much easier because of that typing class.

But learning to type before computers became popular isn't the only reason Rich feels lucky about his school days.

"I'm sure I was a handful for some of the teachers, but that's where I met Nancy. That was the best part of it," he said, glancing at his wife.

*Continued on 4C.  
Eichelberger*



# 100-year-old goes back in time

## Remembers Armistice ending hostilities during World War I



Curt Werner/Dillsburg Banner

Cheyenne Nygaard watches as her great-grandmother, Wyoma Arlotto, blows out a candle at her 100th birthday party on Oct. 3.

Jeff Roth  
Staff Reporter/Dillsburg Banner

When the nation paused to honor its veterans on Friday, Nov. 11, a Dillsburg-area woman reflected on that date in 1918, when World War I unofficially ended.

Wyoma Arlotto, who recently celebrated her 100th birthday, was born on Oct. 3, 1911. She was a mere girl of 7 when the Armistice between Germany and the Western Allies went into effect on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918. When the cease-fire was declared, Arlotto was living on her family's ranch just north of Cheyenne, Wyo., the state that inspired her name.

"I remember that day - I was in school," said Arlotto, now a resident of Elmcroft of Dillsburg, a senior living community. "My one-room school was a mile north of my home, and we could hear the bells from Cheyenne ringing. We knew what had

happened. It was quite exciting because my father had been drafted and, naturally, I didn't want to see him go to war. I couldn't see how he could leave everything and go."

In 1909, her father, Ernest Harrison Goodman, settled their land under the Homestead Act. Like most of their neighbors, the Goodmans were primarily cattle ranchers. They bred horses and grew grain, wheat and hay for the cattle. They also operated a small farm, growing vegetables, as well as raising a few pigs and chicken.

Arlotto said she had a brother, Phil, who was seven years her senior. When World War I ended, he was 15.

"If my father had gone off to war, my mother was very capable of running the ranch," Arlotto said. "She had her own revolver and she could shoot. We were all happy that my father did not have to go."

When Arlotto was 12, her mother died. Her father sold the ranch and moved to California. Arlotto said that her only other family in Cheyenne was the cousin of her father.

"He left me in Cheyenne so I could finish high school," she said. "I lived with another family ... I helped the lady with the dishes and little tasks. She treated me almost like a daughter and she was very good to me."

In the 1920s, Cheyenne had a population of about 20,000. Flappers, the Charleston, bootleggers and gangsters - all staples of the Roaring '20s - were city culture and had little effect on life on the ranch, she said.

"I remember going to Frontier Days - they still have them," Arlotto said. "They would bring in the Sioux Indians and they would camp on the streets. They would have their dances."

The Wild West event



Wyoma Arlotto as a young teenager on her horse in Wyoming.

began in 1897 and is still held in Cheyenne during the last week of July.

When the stock market crashed on Oct. 29, 1929, a day known as Black Tuesday, Arlotto was living in San Diego. She was working as a credit officer. It did not take long before she was furloughed indefinitely.

"I went to live with my father in Encinitas, Calif., along the Pacific Ocean," Arlotto said. "He owned an auto court (motel) where peo-

*Continued on 2C.  
Turning 100*

# American Legion Post 26 Installation of Officers

Photos by Mark Ryder/Dillsburg Banner



American Legion Post 26, Regular Veterans. Pictured seated from left are Frank Magaro, sergeant-at-arms; Jenni Wilhelm, assistant; Ed Andrews, financial officer and Colin Wolfe, 1st vice commander; back row standing are Rick Bentz, 2nd vice commander; Hal Anderson, chaplain, Bob Greenfield, historian; Ron Hastings, service officer and Bill Albright, commander.



American Legion Post 26, Sons of the American Legion. Pictured from left front row are Fred Miller, interim 1st vice commander; Mark Habajec, adjutant; Keith Miller, commander SAL Post 26; Tim McCoy, 2nd vice commander and Alan Hoffman, chaplain; back row, Ken Warner, past state SAL commander; Joe Crawford, sergeant-at-arms; Ken Orr, treasurer and Keith Orr, historian. Missing from picture is Barry Chubb, 1st vice commander.



American Legion Post 26, Ladies Auxiliary. Pictured from left are Cecilia Andrews, treasurer; Carmen Edwards, 2nd vice president; Ruth Wolfe, secretary; Pat Miller, president; Barb Kowaleski, historian and JoAnn Klase, sergeant-at-arms. Missing from picture is Sandy Reid, 1st vice president.



American Legion Post 26, Legion Riders. Pictured from left are Jim Dove, sergeant-at-arms; J.R. Lucas, road captain; Kim Bentz, secretary; Doug Wonders, treasurer; Rick Bentz, president; Jim Arbutnot, sergeant-at-arms and John Levine, sergeant-at-arms.

## Sons of the American Legion Squadron 26 - 2012 Officers

- Commander - Keith Miller
- 1st Vice Commander - Barry Chubb
- 2nd Vice Commander - Tim McCoy
- Adjutant - Mark Habajec
- Finance Officer - Kenny Orr
- Historian - Keith Orr
- Chaplain - Allen Hoffman
- Sergeant-at-Arms - Joe Crawford
- Acting 1 Up - Fred Miller
- Detachment Commander for SAL - Ken Warner

## Eichelberger

Continued from page 1C.

"I took her out in ninth grade and she told me she would never go out with me ever again ... I took her to the races because I really liked racing. That was my first pas-

sion." He thought for a moment and continued, "Yeah, she dumped me in ninth grade! I went out with another girl, but it just wasn't the same. So I kept chasing her and finally, in 12th grade, she decided she'd go out with me again."

Nancy, who was sitting with us at the kitchen table, added, "He had a motorcycle and I wanted a ride on it." We all had a good laugh.

Eichelberger's high school days were very good him. He had some athletic success with the football, wrestling and track teams. He admitted, "At the time, the academics weren't too important to me."

After high school, Nancy got accepted to Elizabethtown College and Rich had offers to many places, but he wanted to be where she was going to be. He said, "I was accepted at E-town, too, and we got engaged that summer."

Nancy hated the college scene. After one year, she withdrew. Rich went another year before withdrawing. Then they got married.

"My dad was never in favor of me going to college. He was starting the business and wanted me to start working, too. Lobar was incorporated in '68. Dad made me vice president and I didn't even know it."

"We started with about four or five guys in '77. Soon, we were up to 15-16 guys and it kept growing from there. We built a few more schools and did a lot of military and state work. In '08, we had about 350 employees working. Unfortunately, when the economy tanked, we felt it, too. I guess we're down to about 200 employees today. It's definitely a challenge today."

What's next for Rich? He believes it might be time to slow down a little, though that doesn't necessarily mean retirement.

"I can't ever see retiring from the family business, because it's just part of who I am," he said. "We're in transition again, another restructuring. This is our third generation. It's freeing up some

time for me. I won't have to work 50-60 hours a week anymore."

Rich just got back from a three-week hunting trip to Saskatchewan. "That was the first time I was ever able to get away for that long and I'll tell you, I didn't like it. I missed my family and friends."

He's made a lot of friends racing, having participated in the sport for 40 years, starting right out of college.

"Racing is a whole other life of mine," said Rich. "As long as I can remember, I've been going to Williams Grove. When I could walk, my grandfather would drag me along, and then my dad would take me to the races until he saw that I was really interested in it. Then he stopped taking me. I was told that as long as I was living at home, my dad wouldn't let me be a race-car driver. When Nancy and I were on our own, it would be different."

Nancy added, "He took out a diamond and said, 'Before I give this to you, I want you to know that someday I will be racing. And if you can't accept that, just say so now.'"

Rich jumped in quickly, adding, "She accepted that one condition. You see, she thought it would be a three- or four-year thing and then it would be over. I'm still doing it. It became a lifestyle. Racing is not for everybody. From late March to October, it's three or four nights a week."

However, recently Rich made a big announcement. "I have the guys in the shop right now and I told them I'm not going to race next year," he said. "I've had a lot of success with it. I still have the track record at Silver Springs Speedway. Being a race-car driver was my childhood dream. I am very blessed to say I'm one of the few people who can truly say that I lived my childhood dream. You don't think you're getting old until you have a son turn 40. Nancy and I love to ride motorcycles and go snowmobiling. We'll do more of that. Like I said, it's time to slow down a little."

Somehow, though, slowing down doesn't seem to be an option in Rich's world. He said it all in one phrase: "If it has a motor on it, I like it!"

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