

Perhaps Karen got a bit off topic this time but read on to discover why

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Ever been somewhere waiting on someone and they were already there wondering where you were? Bingo! That's what happened this week at The Forum when I met my guests. I texted "I'm here," after about 20 minutes. "We are, too!" Right behind me. So, we got together, and had a super time. I have known them through various aspects but this was the first time I really got to visit much with them in such an enjoyable time!

She grew up in Bainbridge, then New Ross but graduated from CHS, which was his Alma Mater as well. Their love story began at the Dog'n'Suds. She had semi-noticed him before but he always had a buzz cut and she liked guys with nice hair. One evening, though, he had let it grow and she loved it. Thus, their eyes met and it was love. They were married August 21st in 1970 at his parents' home (yep, 50th coming up). This was an old farm house where his gma' was raised and they wed in front of the gorgeous fire place. When I heard his cousin was one of my favorite fellows, Delmas Chadwick, I queried him a bit more on his family. The Montgomery County ties go back to the early 1830s on several sides, including the Brocies, Chadwicks, Hartungs, and VanHooks. She knows little about her ancestors but had fabulous stories (her grandmother had four sons in WWII) to tell me of the newer generations.

Shocked I was when she told me she used to be shy and her hubs agreed. In high school, she worked in the candy counter at Danner's. Why, I probably purchased treats from her as we had to have candy about every time we shopped. It was working at McDonald's when she was forced to come out of her shell. We laughed, agreeing that everyone who uses any drive-through (I remembered coney days, too) should have to work at least one day during a busy time. She said they'd whistle at her like she was a dog or scream or pound the speaker. After McDonald's she worked at Banjo for 13 years, working her way up to the head of the Pump Room. None of this until after their two boys were in junior high, though. He worked at Donnelley's for three years after high school, then for his dad and retired from Maintenance at the State Highway after 28 years.

He enjoyed coaching the two boys in Little League and hunting and fishing. These two fellows produced them three grandsons and three grandgiriels with one each great, too. Hearing about all the amazing Halloween costumes (Pikachu, Pooh, Blues Clues...) was fun. She hand made them all, but what really amazed me was that she made her sister's wedding gown. Had me laughing that she sewed gorgeous white satin roses for it, but her sister said they should be red. "Well, why don't you just put a big red IU on the front of the dress!"

Those two sons also made it possible (since Brad was a Navy Nuke 12 years and Allen in the Marines six) for her to be a Two-Star Blue Star Mother as a charter member of Crawfordsville Chapter #3, the Blue Star Hoosier Mothers. In fact, he got her involved (and wow has she gotten involved) when Jessica Williams who he worked with at the Highway Department told him about the organization. He's just about as involved as she is, because men can join too as associate members. Since my grandfather was in WWI, my dad WWII, my brother in Nam, and two grandsons (love you AJ and Dane) currently serving, I love the organizations who help the Soldiers and Vets and this one surely does.

One of the biggest items they do is sending care packages – 12 x 12 boxes filled with goodies – to the troops from our area. Gracious, this group is active all the time. BTW - each costs \$18-20 to mail USPS. This summer they shipped almost 100 boxes, eight stateside, 48 to Sailors aboard the USS Abraham Lincoln, 26 to Afghanistan and others across the world.

Ya' just missed a chicken and noodle supper, and they are selling noodles to the public now (great for Thanksgiving dinner). Add two bean dinners to all this and these folks are busy beavers just because they love our country, our troops and their children. Some items they could use for the Freedom Boxes to ship to the troops are: Hot Chocolate Mix; Tea Bags; Instant Coffee; sugar packets, creamers, sugar substitutes. Individual packages of instant soups; chicken salad kits; hot sauce; salsa; crackers; beef jerky and Slim Jims; individual boxes of cereals; Oatmeal packets; Energy Bars; Nuts; Train Mixes; Paperback books only; Current magazines to interest young adults (no bigger than 12x12 though – remember the box size); Cards; Travel size games; Crossword Puzzle Books; Word searches; Yoyos; Sudoku; Hackie sacks; Lip balms; eye drops; nose spray; Avon Skin-so-soft, Sunscreen; Cold Water Wash (Woolite); Bootlaces; sore throat drops; hard candy (they use for packing between things); Tissues; Q-tips; Band Aids; Hair brushes and combs; Mouthwash; Foot powder; Flip flops; fly paper; Music CDs and DVDS; thin black stocking hats to wear under helmets; all-occasion cards to send home and letters of encouragement and appreciation, plus pens, pencils, small pencil sharpeners. And, please watch expiration dates on the food items. Of course, monetary donations are also welcome keeping in mind this is 100% nonprofit. Anyone, parent, grandparents, family, friends, neighbors can give the addresses of a current soldier to receive one of the packages. Call Gayle 765-362-5713 or Facebook her or visit the website at: <https://www.facebook.com/Blue-Star-Hoosier-Mothers-107490059274130/>. They are working on getting boxes ready for shipment in October (last donation by Oct 16th with packages to go out Oct 19) so if you have donations or questions about the SOS (Support Our Soldiers) boxes or a soldiers' name/address, or the organization in general, contact Gayle now!

One item that is heart touching but oh so sad is presenting a mother a Gold Star, indicating a death. Gayle and Bob Sosbe, my guests this week, have been involved in presenting nine. Not long ago, the chapter (one of six in Indiana) was dying itself. Gayle noted to me that it's her "heart and soul," so she talked to God and told him she had done everything that she could do, that it was up to Him to touch the hearts of mothers (and fathers and friends) and, that He did. The chapter is seeing a new spurt with new mothers joining and hoping for even more!

Yes, I know I centered mostly on what Gayle does, but she is so involved, and with my grandsons serving, I was just impressed enough to write more about the Blue Star Mothers but do know that I appreciated the Sosbes for being my guests and wish them all the luck in this year's quest. Oh, one more thing – all vets are invited to the Oct 17th (8-2) Vet Expo at the American Legion – Biscuits and Gravy for breakfast; Brats and potatoes for lunch and all types of things going on – flu shots, eye exams, all free!

Karen Zach is the editor of Montgomery Memories, our monthly magazine all about Montgomery County. Her column, Around the County, appears each Thursday in The Paper of Montgomery County.

