

George is Valley's

by Marlyn French

George Black was born in the house where he now lives — just a hop, skip, and a jump from Tippecanoe Valley High School. He thinks of Valley as his "second home." Years ago, his great-grandfather owned the land where the school now stands.

As an avid sports fan, George devotes much of his time to TVHS. He attends every sports event, and if there is one night that there is no game -- he goes to watch the practice!

At 74 years of age, George says "I'm never lonely, guess that's why I feel so great!" "I really don't feel my age, in fact I wouldn't realize how old I am, if I didn't look in the mirror." When I asked George what his secret of good health was, he replied, "Dr. Herrick, I guess. He's taken good care of me."

Three years ago, however, George wasn't well at all, and after a rough surgery, he was told he'd probably never come back home. But he made it, and is very thankful.

In 1969 Vera, his wife died, and he lost his mother too. He also went through three surgeries -- all that in one year.

So it hasn't always been easy, but sports helps fill the void and gives him a zest for life.

With the football season just finished, George commented how proud he was of the team this year, and at every game you could spot him a mile away, clad in green and gold from head to toe, and a huge smile for every passerby.

At home George is surrounded by a jungle of plants as he sits in

The Valley students think very highly of George, too. Last year, just before the state football finals, a special pep session was scheduled. George, though a little hard of hearing, says this was one place he turned up his hearing aid to pick up the loud confusion. At one point in the pep session, everyone kept pointing at him and telling him to go down onto the gym floor. George said, "I had no idea what was going on," but he "very bashfully went down". He said he couldn't believe it, as he was presented a green and gold letter sweater. To top it off, a large poster was presented to him, which had every sport named on it and was assigned to him as a lifetime pass to any sports event. He also received a small one for his billfold, which would be a little more convenient to present to the admissions gate at each game. George sure lives up to the honor -- "Tippecanoe Valley's most loyal fan".

After some of the ballgames, George stops with Devon and Wilma Tucker to get a bite to eat. You can imagine the looks he gets as he sports his brand new letter sweater. George just grins and says, "I've been a little slow getting through school."

When asked which was his favorite sport, George replied, "Girls basketball of course boys, too and volleyball. Didn't miss a baseball game either, swimming too, then there's cross country.... oh, I enjoy gymnastics, tennis, and golf too"

A well liked couple, Tom and Karen Roy are responsible for getting George started in sports. Tom was formerly a teacher and

looks a lot better of it down."

Being a plant lover right at home. As the living room, I had a rock band s where. Not your (an older persons' what surprised un speakers and stere up into the living brightest room I t seen. A teenagers a bedroom but a s eyes! Red velvet v off the blinding b striped curtains ar bedspread. The be I was sure it must water beds on top I couldn't figure o ed like rolling hills plained that it was Oh, I forgot to me pet is red too.

There's a story b I'm not sure I und You have to realiz is not your averag he seems to have r than most people!

One of George's playing the organ, right outside the o It seems that late c he is usually sleepi



his favorite chair and watches out his picture window. From here he says he can see all his farm land. Pictures decorate the house, friendly photos stare at you from every knook and cranny, and on the table is an album full of Senior pictures, along with name cards.

George said, "I get a lot of pictures, and I even get invited to many of these kids weddings, and I kinda like that!" The Valley youth bring much happiness to his life.

coach at Tippecanoe Valley.

What's it look like in a sports' enthusiasts home? Not the way a average 74 year old persons' home would be imagined.

When you come to the back door, the jungle of beautiful plants in the window makes one wonder if there is a passable route through this way. Above his kitchen sink is another tropical garden, that looks almost as dense as the one by the other window. But according to George, "that one above the sink



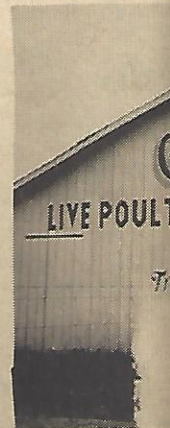
EVEN in earlier years George showed a flair for the sporting life.

Remo

by Marlyn Fr

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Eula Smith

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GEORGE BLACK in his Tippecanoe Valley letter sweater.

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was still wrapped up at the organ.
 All of a sudden he heard a crash
 and as he peeked around the cor-
 ner, he saw that the plaster and

ceiling had caved in -- on the bed.
 So he had to re-decorate anyway,
 so why not go all out?

As George sat down in his favo-
 rite chair for a picture he stared
 at a family photo. He said,
 "They're all I've got left." Just

before that he'd named a list of
 all his close relatives and friends
 that had passed on from this
 world. The picture is of his only
 son, Brock Black, and his wife





GEORGE and his wife Vera.

Loretta, and their five children. Brent, Cheryl, Rhonda, and Todd, are very lucky to have such a beautiful human being for their grandfather. And to think that George didn't want to do a newspaper story. He said, "I don't think I would make a very good story ... Why don't you wait till after I'm gone." No way, George!

Remembering the huckster truck

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George and Vera grew up on nearby farms and were wed after finishing high school - she at Akron and George at Beaver Dam.

For a few years they lived in Flint, Michigan, where George learned his trade in a fancy grocery. He had assistance from Geo. Grochel, a "retired Bohemian millionaire" who clerked for fun, according to George.

In 1927, the Blacks came home and paid Byron Spitler \$2,500 for the Doran Station, which was then

a stop on the old Goshen-to-Peru, Winona interurban and the community's social center.

In the busy years ahead Vera tended the store and George traveled the region buying eggs, poultry and cream, and also selling groceries to his clients from his "huckster" truck. The train being the only supply to them, another need was coal, so they started a coal yard too.

In the late 30's, their son, Brook, arrived. After World War II the Winona line died and so did the Black coal yard. After George's father died, he took charge of the family farm, raising cattle and hogs.

Three days a week George still would serve his 50 to 75 patrons in a 30 mile radius.

If you close your eyes and imagine cookies and candy in bulk boxes overalls, workshirts, galoshes hardware, ammunition, and drugs papers and magazines groceries and meats ... all crammed into a small, comfortably cluttered room, then you've been taken back through yesteryear, a time the years have melted away.

