



MID-PRAIRIE

Alumni & Friends Association

UNITING THE GOLDEN HAWKS

Fall 2019, Vol. 2, Issue 2



*To Our Veterans:
Thank You!*

More Inside:

**Positive Duo Brings Excellence
to Mid-Prairie**

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Honoring our Veterans

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Celebrating 60 Years!

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Dear Mid-Prairie Alumni and Friends,

Next summer we will be celebrating the 60th anniversary of the Mid-Prairie Community School District. While the district was first formed through a 1957 public vote, the first graduating class of Mid-Prairie High School did not occur until May 22, 1961. To celebrate this momentous occasion, the Mid-Prairie Foundation and the Mid-Prairie Alumni and Friends Association are planning an all-school reunion for the weekend of July 4th.

I have been reading old newspaper articles about Mid-Prairie's formation. It certainly had its share of controversies and difficulties. What is amazing to me, however, is that the vision of establishing "educational excellence" through "building community, respecting differences and diversity, and creating a caring learning environment" was paramount through it all. The district's founders persevered and put something special in motion and we are extremely grateful and continue our hard work to keep the vision alive.

The foundation and alumni association are two organizations that exist to advance the vision. The alumni association was formed after the work of the foundation became too large to manage not only the large number of scholarships given annually, but also the special events and outreach needed to promote past and present students and staff and the school district. Both organizations work in tandem and communicate frequently to ensure their goals are aligned.

The foundation and alumni association are planning numerous activities throughout the district for the July 4th weekend to bring the school community together. Some are outlined in this issue and you will be hearing more details in the months ahead. Depending on the success of next summer's event, similar celebrations may be scheduled every 3-6 years.

Every reader can contribute in some way to help keep the vision alive. Your monetary donations help continue the work of the foundation and alumni association by paying expenses like technology, administrative and service fees, accounting, printing and mailing costs that legally can't come out of funds donated for scholarships. You can volunteer to help or donate goods and services for the all-school reunion. You can become a member of the association or donate funds for scholarships. You can attend the all-school reunion and take part in the activities.

If you need more specifics on how you can be involved you may contact me (319)936-8601 or (mschneider@mphawks.org), Foundation President Hayley Hershberger (hayley.hershberger@yahoo.com), Alumni President Whitney Patterson (whitni-patterson@uiowa.edu), or District Communication Specialist Kristi Strickland (kstrickland@mphawks.org).

It is my hope that we can continue to unite from all areas of the district to reaffirm the founders' efforts, celebrate past district successes, and continue our outstanding vision for another 60 years. Your support and active participation are critical and very much appreciated.

Go Golden Hawks!

Yours in service,

Mark Schneider, Superintendent



Mark Schneider
Superintendent

MID-PRAIRIE COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Mid-Prairie Community School District Board

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Jeremy Gugel, member
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Jodi Meader, member
Marianne Schlabach, vice president
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Junell Swantz Duwa '79, member
Kari Hobbs Harland '97, member
Gerry Beeler, member
Terry Mangold '65, member
Phyllis Casper, member
Doug Slaubaugh '63, member
Jeremy Statler '90, member
Jessica Hochstedler Yoder '97, member

Mid-Prairie Alumni & Friends Association Board

Claudia Shaver Bishop '67, member
Pam Green '68, member
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Kristi Strickland, Editor & Communications

Get ready to celebrate 60 years!

Welcome to the fourth edition of the Mid-Prairie Alumni and Friends Newsletter. We have come a long way in our two years and appreciate the feedback and continued support we have received from so many alumni. It is through your participation of financial support and submitting news and information that the newsletter can continue. We encourage you to continue to share your news and the news of fellow alumni by sending it to Kristi Strickland at kstrickland@mphawks.org.

In early September, we had a joint meeting with the MP Foundation and the MP Alumni and Friends Association to begin working together on planning our All School Reunion next summer to celebrate Mid-Prairie's 60th Anniversary. The two groups are working hard to organize a variety of activities for alumni to reunite, share memories and celebrate 60 years of excellence at Mid-Prairie. The tentative schedule of events as shown here will include golfing, slow-pitch softball, a street dance, banquet meal and auction and more. This weekend would make a great time to plan your class reunions in conjunction with the All School Reunion event. We encourage you to join us in making this celebration a success! We will have more details and registration information included in the spring newsletter.

Thanks to all of you who came out to support our first six recipients of the revised alumni awards. It was a fun day for the association and for the community as always. Be sure to check out the photos on page 2. The award winners were very appreciative of the support they received along the parade route and at the presentation of plaques during Kalona Days last June.

It is also time to consider next year's award recipients. Please consider nominating a fellow alumni for this honor in one of the six categories. You will find the categories and nomination form on pages 18 and 19. The form is also on the alumni website, www.mphawksalumni.org and can be emailed to kstrickland@mphawks.org. The 2020 class of recipients will be selected from remaining nominations and new nominations made by February 1, 2020. Each recipient will be announced, featured in the spring newsletter and will participate in this summer's 4th of July Wellman parade.

What would you like to see in upcoming editions of the newsletter? We welcome your suggestions and participation!



2020 All School Reunion 60th Anniversary

Friday, July 3rd

- Golf Tournament @ Kalona Golf Course
- Banquet Meal & Auction (to benefit both the MP Foundation & Alumni Association)
- Street Dance, @ Kalona Brewing Company

Saturday, July 4th

- Alumni & Friends Fun Run prior to Wellman parade
- Kiddie & Main Parade - 9:30 a.m. & 10 a.m.
 - Featuring Alumni Award Recipients
 - Class Reunion Floats
- Slow-Pitch Softball Tourney @ Wellman North Park following the parade & lunch
- Bags/Cornhole Tourney @ Wellman North Park following the parade & lunch
- High School Tours - 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.
- Live Music @ Wellman Band Shell - 6 p.m.
- Fireworks at Dusk

Sunday, July 5th

- Class Reunions - as planned by each class

This is a tentative schedule with more details to be announced in the spring newsletter.

Alumni Award winners highlighted

The 2018-19 Alumni Award winners were featured in the Kalona Days parade and recognition ceremonies. The association tent had their plaques on display where community members could read about their accomplishments as well as participate in a Mid-Prairie gear giveaway drawing. Thank you to everyone who celebrated with our winners. See page 18 & 19 to nominate next year's alumni.



All award winners were represented at Kalona Days. Vicky Showalter, left, accepted the award on behalf of her husband, Don, Jessica Faselt, Steve Yotty, Jeremiah Gingerich, Blake Hershberger and Steve Berger. Congratulations!



Class Reunion Photos

Class of 2014 - 5 Years



The class of 2014 celebrated 5 years at the Wellman Golf Course with golfing, grilling and a potluck-style meal. Everyone enjoyed reuniting and hanging out together. *Back Row left to right:* Laura Yoder, Spencer Shalla, Jossie Harland, Cailee Stumpf, Michaela Van Winkle Shepherd, Riley Sieren, Christian Allen, Wade Stutzman, Seth Eash, Wyatt Cady, John Adams, Nathan Faselt, Kaleb Martin. *Front Row:* Kayla Gingerich Schlabach, Arissa Marine Moeller, Emilee Norman Tappan, Whitney Christiansen, Brooke Steckly Bringman, Kira Kerkove, Rachel Miller, Courtney Shalla, Dustin Yoder, Dayton Hall, Abe Troyer. *Kneeling:* Shaylee Brown Adrian, Kendra Graber Grosvenor, Elizabeth Fanatia Cox, Samantha Gatlin Lycke. Attended but not pictured: Dillon Dawley, Trevor Owens, Jesse Boone, Levi McCroskey and many significant others.

Class of 2009 - 10 Years



Members of the class of 2009 gathered for their 10 year reunion at Stone Wall Pizza. There were 20 classmates in attendance, which was great considering more than half of the class is out of state or not local. *Front row left to right:* Lindy Miksch Allen, Kayla Duwa, Amber Hurt, Alisha Bontrager Harland, Ashley Peters Sharpe, Natalie Nye Silbaugh, Megan Hershberger Holmes, Jordan Duwa Tranbarger, Abby Kos Schneider, and Abe Kos. *Back row:* Naomi Burrows, Lewis Plank, Emmett Allen, Sara Johnson, Colton Wilson, Bryan Horesowsky, Cari Breneman Strabala, Ryan Wertz, Ryan Fuhr and Schylor Altenhofen.

Class of 1974 - 45 Years



The class of 1974 celebrated 45 years during the weekend of Mid-Prairie Homecoming. *Seated on the floor, left to right:* Debbie Coleman Eckhoff, Wendy Redlinger Klostermann, Rebecca Redlinger Bush. *Seated:* Jack Seward, Bob Stagner, Simon Nisly, Dallas Schrock, Alice Schrock Hochstetler, Kris Patterson Wilkins, Judy Zinn Nagel, Rick Bush, Clayton Hershberger. *Middle Row:* Ron Boyse, Rob Hershberger, Randy Kelly, Rob Stout, Nina Beauseigneur Tadlock, Regina Patterson Frangul, Denise Longwell Fritz, Donna Scalf Logsdon, Peggy Griffith Mason. *Back Row:* Leonard Miller (MP 9th & 10th, IMS 11th & 12th), Robert Kanagy, Kenny Troyer, Jon Wagner, Glenda Ladehoff Seward, Martin Yoder, Matt McAndrew, Carl Benson, Arlis Helmuth, Mark Miksch and Greg Gingerich.

Class of 1964 - 55 Years

We had 29 classmates attending our 55th reunion coming from as far away as California, Indiana, Louisiana, Missouri, Texas and Minnesota as well as several Iowa communities. Larry and Tanna Huber did an awesome job of fixing pulled pork for sandwiches, providing water and lemonade and all the dinner supplies. Everyone brought a dish to share and it was amazing. There were those that especially enjoyed the dessert table!! We had a nice social time before the dinner to visit and get reacquainted.

Russ Parcell was our master of ceremonies and had a nice presentation as always. A special congratulations to Phil and Kathy Hesseltine who celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on August 25th. A Mid-Prairie key chain was given as door prizes to: Mike Patterson for traveling the farthest and a second one for the most great grandchildren, Donna and Jon Wade for being married the longest, Glenn and Wanda Miller for being married the shortest number of years, and Janet Driscoll for having the most grandchildren. Russ reported there has been discussion of setting a date and having an annual reunion ...



Photo provided

Front Row, seated left to right: Ruby Mast Wertz, Mary Ann Miller-Greiner, Deanna Statler Stoutner, Sharrie Groff, Laura Kempf Miller, Barb Strum Brown. Middle Row: Bev Yoder Bauer, Donna Graf Wade, Connie Peterseim Anderson, Charlene Bush Hartzler, Sandy Figgins Alper, Jan Bates Parcell, Ronda Ehrenfelt Stickle, Rita Koenig Bresnan, Judy Slemmons Gracia, Carmen Griggs, Janet Johnson Driscoll, Brad Kiesey, Bob Grout. Back Row: Kirk Bailey, Joel Schwartz (hidden) Gary Martin, Mike Patterson, Glenn Miller, Russ Parcell, Larry Huber, Phil Hesseltine, Rick Fry, Bob Belcher. We had 67 classmates graduating in 1964. We have lost 11 of our graduates: James McClumphrey (1974), Judy Eash Yoder (1974), Donna Schlabaugh (1989), Jack Tebockhorst (1994), Carol Batterson Miller (1996), Terry Berendts (1999), Ruth Bringman Herr (2001), Charles Kleinschmidt (2003), Fred Ellis (2012), Donald Whetstine (2013) and Glen Sakulin (2017).

perhaps at a restaurant. Classmates can then plan ahead and those that have to travel a distance can come the years that are convenient for them. No decision has been made yet so will keep you posted.

We then enjoyed the huge buffet

and more socializing. The weather was beautiful as was the vineyard setting. Thank you to Janet Driscoll for keeping up on the reservations, contacting people and keeping everything organized through a very difficult time for her!!

Class of 1984 - 35 Years



The class of 1984 celebrated 35 years at Kalona Brewing Company on Sept. 21. Seated left to right: Eileen Yoder Weidemann, Shawn Powell, Scott Niffenegger. Middle row left to right: Kurt Yoder, Ryan Miller, Coralie Kelley Miller, Mer Slaughtbaugh, Kevin Vest, Jenni Wade Nicholson, Jana Graber Miller, Tim Evans, Amy Housel Horesowsky, Margaret Groff Wardenburg. Back Row: Paul Thomas, Gene Graber, Tracy Owens, Locke Petersiem, Andy Spicher, Chrystal Karnes McFarland, Mike Riddle, Patty Spicher Stolbom, Julie Pooch Kinneer, Carmen Murphy Davis, Suzette Murphy, Brenda Fountain Jurgensmeier, Peg Horak, Ann Krotz Henkle. The 1984 graduating class had 66 members, one of which has passed away. In honor of him, Nick Adam, a toast was given.

Class of 1969 - 50 Years



Above: Patty Gingerich Mishler, left, Myron Ropp and Linda Houseal Edkin looking very 1969-ish.

Below: 1968-69 basketball center, Doug Greiner, was reunited with cheerleaders, Patty Gingerich Mishler, left, and Linda Plank Huber.



Front row seated, left to right: Mary Seitsinger Slezak, Connie Goodlander Maw, Sue Kinsinger Janecek, Marsha Koenig Belcher, Joan Anderson Gerot, Lila Moore Grout, Maureen Strabala Stokes, Deb Spreacker Wise. The back row (everyone in order left to right) : Dick Greiner, Tracy Janecek, Jim Yoder (in Iowa shirt) Roy Malichky, Fred Mishler, Steve Schlabaugh, Mike McClellan, Allen Kos, Linda Houseal Edkin, Doug Greiner (behind Linda), Rita Wright Phipps, Pam Goschke, Patty Gingerich Mishler (wearing the headband), Julia Miksch Bates, Alice Miller Theiler, Ramona Kauffman Amlong, Sandy Grout Gingerich, Pam Curtis Bidne, Dennis Davisson, Myron Ropp, Randy Patterson, Rodney Butterbaugh, Dave Swartzendruber, Sam Baker.

A note from a classmate

We recently had our class of 1969 reunion of 50 years. I want to say it was a good time to see everyone that showed up. It's been a long time for some of you. I also want to apologize to the class for starting a food fight in the lunch room in high school even though I don't remember. I'm sorry. Can't wait to see you soon.

Dave Swartzendruber

Class of 1979 - 40 Years



Photo provided

The class of 1979 celebrated their 40th reunion on August 17th at the Richmond Amvets with 36 of 99 classmates in attendance. *Front Row (kneeling) left to right:* Julie Stutzman Bontrager, Darryl Miller, Joel Griffith, Joyce Marner Billups. *Second Row left to right:* Tracy Fry Jones, Karla Wright Maxwell, Crystal Spicher Freese, Char Gent Brenneman, Kathy Duwa Troyer, Tim Wagamon, Brian Yoder, Ruby Eash Kern, Denise Bohr Austin, Jayme Scranton Kempf, Pam Hall Moore, Joni Miller Yoder, Delores Bender Gingerich. *Back row:* Ron Boyd, Terry Strabala, Junell Swantz Duwa, Tom Vincent, Dan Teets, Jim Woodin, Lyle Stutzman, Anothony Spitzer, David Kempf, Diane Gingerich Schrock, Jerry Murphy, Joni Moyer Caplan, Kim Miller Roby, Tony Evans, Jim Freese, Julie Miller Sojka.

Class of 1961 - 58 Years



The classmates of 1961 enjoyed a mini 58th reunion of an informal social gathering and dinner at Tin Roost in North Liberty on their outdoor patio. They also gathered on Saturday morning for a great breakfast buffet at the Marriott Hotel in Coralville. There were 14 classmates and 10 spouses/guests in attendance. *Front row, left to right:* Karen Kepler Plank, Karen Stromley Goodwin, Helen Birkey Hynes, Jim Slockett, Duane Goodwin, Shirley Bush Zahn, Mary Ellen Miller, Sally Skola Harper. *Back row:* Larry Hohenshell, Charlie Capper, Keith Semler, Art Lampe, and Dave Teets. In attendance, but not pictured was Shirley Slaubaugh Kuhns.

Class of 1999

The class of 1999 gathered at Stone Wall Pizza for pizza on the farm and a Halloween Haunted Barn. Stone Wall Pizza is owned by 1999 graduate Julia Stutzman McNurlen.

Save the Date

The class of 1970 is planning their 50th class reunion on Oct. 16 and 17, 2020. Included in the festivities will be a high school tour on Saturday morning at 10 a.m. Save the date and stay tuned for more details. For more information, contact any of the following:
 Denny Yoder (319)646 2778
agronomsol@netins.net
 Linda Potsander (319)698 2030
potsanderlinda@gmail.com
 Dan Dickel (319)541 6150
dfoot55@yahoo.com

Thank You For Your Service

Community honors veterans in multiple ways

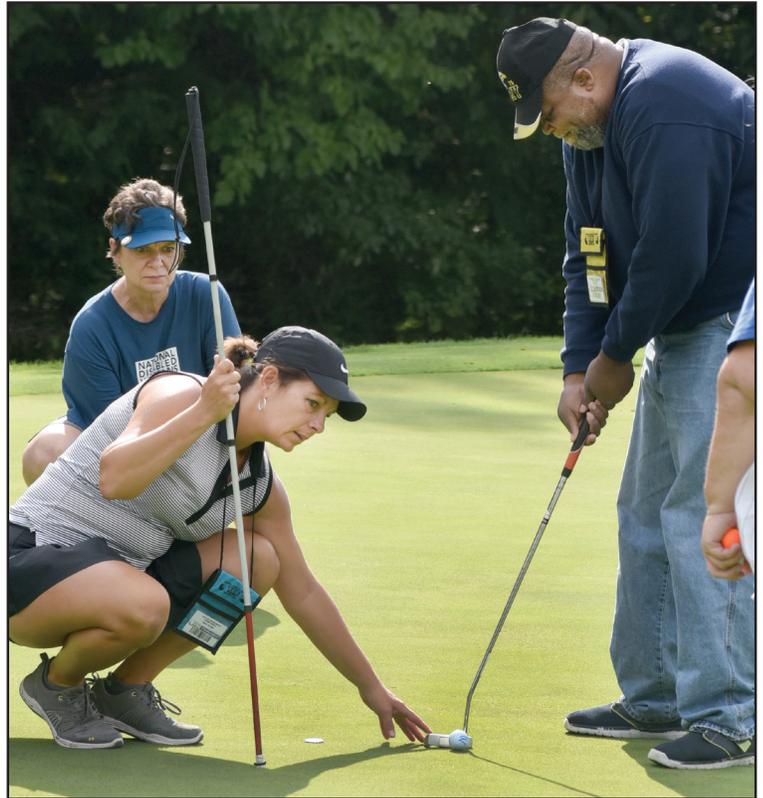
Did you ever stop to think about how many alumni in your graduating class volunteered to serve in the United States Armed Services? These classmates and alumni made a tremendous commitment and sacrifice to serve our country and to protect the freedom that we all enjoy. Too often their service goes without notice or recognition. We sometimes fail to consider the sacrifices they made, their time away from families, putting their professional plans on hold and most importantly putting their lives and safety in danger.

It is never too late to reach out to a military veteran and thank them for their service to our country. They appreciate knowing that we care and value their work toward successfully defending our country and continued freedom. To show your appreciation, we challenge you to reach out to one or more veterans, have a conversation centered around their years of service and most of all thank them.

Surrounding this year's Veteran's Day holiday, we'd like to pay tribute to our Mid-Prairie Alumni who have served our country. Their dedication and service are appreciated and we'd like to highlight ways our community and school district have recently honored veterans.

Most recently, Golden Hawk alum, Terry Mangold '65 led the way to fundraise for a new memorial marker and move it to a more prominent location at the high school football field in honor of fellow 1965 classmate, Robert E. Karr. Karr was a specialist 4 in the Army Engineering Corps from 1966-67. He was killed just 24 days after he arrived in Vietnam. The class of 1965 raised \$3,500 dollars for the \$2,200 memorial marker and the remaining \$1,500 was given as a donation to the Mid-Prairie Foundation in Karr's name. It is now located, along with the flag pole, at the south end of the football field, which brings both closer to the Peck-Powell memorial and the ticket booth.

On a more broad spectrum, our community and various alumni continue to serve and welcome blind and disabled veterans during the annual National TEE Tournament. TEE stands for Training, Exposure and Experience. The program was co-founded by Mid-Prairie alum, Eldon Miller '71. Miller was drafted out of high school and served in the Army from 1972-1975 and was a Platoon Sergeant of truck driving department, in charge of 27 trucks and 32 men during Vietnam. The idea to begin the TEE Tournament came to him after he attended the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic. He recognized there are



Photos courtesy of The News

Above: **Andrea Duwa '91** assists Veteran Michael Glynn during the TEE Tournament, a golf tournament for disabled veterans. **Tina Ulin Hershberger '75** watches Glynn prepare.

Below: A memorial for **Robert E. Karr '65** is relocated to the south end of the football field along with the flag pole and Peck-Powell memorial.

several programs and games for disabled veterans, but there were none for the blind. Following his first trip to the winter sports clinic, of which he gets to enjoy downhill skiing and does so each year, he went back to propose his idea for blind veterans. The idea took off and the first year there were 36 participants.

Miller explained the importance of having these programs. He referred to "22 A Day" which represents the daily number of veteran suicides.

"These programs really help a lot of people," Miller said, "It gives them the opportunity to get out of the house and something to look forward to each year."

The tournament has brought veterans from Alaska, Ha-



waii, Puerto Rico and beyond. It even reaches veterans beyond those in attendance. Miller said, "The veterans go home and share their experiences and stories with their own veteran groups so it affects more than just who shows up."

Over time it has expanded to seven area golf courses including the Kalona Golf Course for the last five years. The event became nationally recognized in 2008 as one of the VA's six national rehabilitation programs for Veterans. What once was for vision-impaired veterans has expanded to include amputees and post-traumatic stress disorder sufferers.

The tournament provides disabled veterans the opportunity to participate in activities they may not otherwise have the chance to. The participants and volunteers stay at the Riverside Casino and Golf Resort. In addition to golf, the week-long event gives disabled veterans the opportunity to bowl, fish, canoe and go horseback riding, just to name a few, all alongside enjoying the camaraderie and connection with other veterans.

This year, over 400 applications were received with 270 accepted. Planning and preparation is year long and requires about 650 volunteers for all events of the week.

Jacque Berg Wertz '81 has been involved with the tournament for the last seven years, so naturally when Kalona Golf Course was added, Wertz began coordinating locally. She enjoys



Photo provided Mid-Prairie Girls Golf Coach, Tracy McArtor '79, volunteered as a golf buddy during the annual TEE Tournament at the Kalona Golf Course.



Photo provided

Several alumni volunteer at the annual TEE Tournament, which provides golf and other activities for blind and disabled veterans. Alumni that served at the Kalona Golf Course were Tracy McArtor '79, left, Jamie Smith Martin '92, Hayley Sieren Hershberger '11, Kevin Reece '81, Jacque Berg Wertz '81, Ryan Wertz '09, Andrea Kos Duwa '91, Tina Ulin Hershberger '75, Brenda Slaubaugh Reece '82, and Nick Leach '99.

helping with the event and it makes an impact on her. The veteran feedback is always positive and sincere and the camaraderie is strong among the group.

"Each year I hear at least one story that really puts things into perspective for me and reminds me to not take the little things in life for granted," Wertz said.

Wertz mentioned several Mid-Prairie alumni who are also involved with the event. On the golf course alone, there are four veterans per hole with a golf buddy and cart for each. Alums who are golf buddies are **Tina Ulin Hershberger '75, Andrea Kos Duwa '91**, current MP girls golf coach, **Tracy McArtor '79, Kevin Reece '81** and **Ryan Wertz '09**. **Ward Niffenegger '65** placed flags around the course among other behind-the-scenes jobs. Groundskeeper **Nick Leach '99** has the course looking sharp and grills burgers and brats for lunch. **Jamie Smith Martin '92** joined this year as the Volunteer Coordinator. **Hayley Sieren Hershberger '11** and **Riley Hershberger '05** provide kitchen help and donate dozens of cookies for the meals each year. **Brenda Slaubaugh Reece '82** joined the volunteers this year organizing and preparing food and the clubhouse for lunches. Other meal/dessert contribu-

Veterans Invited

Veterans and a guest are invited to the Annual Mid-Prairie High School Veteran's Day Assembly and Luncheon on November 11, 2019 at 10:15 in the high school gymnasium. A complimentary lunch will follow the assembly program.

Please RSVP to Sarah O'Rourke at sorourke@mp-hawks.org or Karmen Cady at (319)646-6091.

tors include **Cindy Shalla Thrapp '76, Marge Maas McArtor '80** and **Amy Townsend Mattes '94**.

In addition to alumni, current middle school leadership students had the opportunity of helping out this year. Previous years have included high school students volunteering and FCS classes making desserts.

Seventh grader, Charlotte Sieren, and future alumna of 2025 said, "It was a fun experience and I would totally do it again. We got to see and talk to some of the people who served our country. We got to help with whatever they needed and it always feels good when you do that."

Last year, Reece, a Navy veteran himself shared a special bond with



Above: This mural located at the Riverside VFW PPost 6414 was painted by John "Lefty" Wilson, former Mid-Prairie Junior High and Elementary art teacher from 1973 to 2007. Below: The Kalona Veterans Memorial project located outside the city building was brought to completion in August 2017. A committee consisting of Jan Peterseim, Larry TeBockhorst '86, Kevin Reece '81, Larry Kern, Pete Buffer, Lori Chalupa, Steve Yotty '71, Anthony Spitzer '79, Mark Robe, Craig Spitzer '82, Ken Herington, Ed Yoder, Greg Schmidt, Ryan Schlaubaugh '89 and Ben Curtis created the memorial to honor Veterans and Kalona Volunteer Firefighters and First Responders.

his golf buddy who was also a Navy veteran. Reece sent a Christmas card and message with the hope to see him this year, but sadly he passed away after his health declined. A message from his daughter, thanked Reece and told him how much her father always enjoyed the event.

Golf coach McArtor brings expertise and previously helped a 90+ year-old-veteran sink a long putt to win a prize. Video also proves Ryan Wertz' blind veteran's priceless emotion after hearing his long breaking putt drop into the cup followed by the group's cheering.

Andrea Kos Duwa '91 has participated in the event for 4 years.

"I absolutely think it is such a rewarding experience for both the volunteers and the veterans," she said. The bond created in a short amount of time is lasting. For the first three years Duwa had the same veteran from Arizona and maintained email contact while looking forward to connecting again the next year. This year he was unable to come so Duwa was paired with a new partner, Michael Glynn, who is completely blind.

"It was definitely new for me, but once we got past the initial challenges of how I would help him set up and hit the ball, we had the best time," she said, 'He was a big teddy bear that

had such a great sense of humor. I loved to hear how he lives on his own and manages his daily life being blind. It was pretty inspirational!"

Next year's tourney will be the week of Sept. 13 with Tuesday, Sept. 15 and Thursday, Sept. 17 in Kalona. Jacque Wertz welcomes anyone to volunteer and be impacted by our veterans. Contact her at jacque.wertz@va.gov.

At MPHS, the Student Leadership Team and Family, Career and Community Leaders of America invite all local veterans and a guest to their Annual Veteran's Day Assembly and Luncheon at 10:15 a.m. A complimentary luncheon will follow the assembly. Please RSVP to **Sarah Gent O'Rourke '05** at sorourke@mphawks.org or to Karmen Cady at (319)646-6091.

Below we have compiled a list of our Mid-Prairie Alumni who have served or are currently serving our country. We want to thank you for your service!



We did our best collecting names from several resources, but if you or another alum was missed, please submit your information to Kristi Strickland, kstrickland@mphawks.org.

ARTHUR LAMPE '61

Navy, Vietnam era
June 1962 to August 1966
Reserve Aug. 1966 to June 1968

JIM SLOCKETT '61

Army, Vietnam
1966-1970

LEE SWAIN '61

Army, Vietnam
1966 to 1971

TOM BAILEY '62 (1943-2018)

National Guard, Vietnam
1964-1970

KENNETH BISHOP '62 (1944 - 2013)

Army, Vietnam
1964-1967

RONALD BOMBEI '62

Army, Vietnam
1968-1970

FRANK W. STRANSKY '62

Army Special Forces (Green Beret) Vietnam 1966-67
1963-1967, 1979-1982 (TX National Guard)

RON DAVIS '62

Army Specialist, Vietnam

JAY HOUGH '62

US Air Force
1962-1966

GARY SWAIN '63

Army
As a dentist I was never deployed in a combat area.
1970 - 1996. 26 years

DON MILLER '63

Air Force/Air Force Reserve
Vietnam 1965-1970 and Desert Storm 1982-1992
15 years total

ROBERT HOUGH '63

US Air Force
1966-1970

KIRK A. BAILEY '64

Army Reserve, Vietnam
Jan 1966 - Jan 1972

ROBERT BELCHER '64

Marines, Vietnam
1966-70

RICK FRY '64

Army, Vietnam
1968-1971

DALE SCHROEDER '64

Army, Vietnam and Germany
1965-1968

PHIL HESSELTINE '64

Army, Vietnam
1966-1969

MIKE PATTERSON '64

Army, Vietnam
2 years

LARRY PLECKER '64

Army

BOB GROUT '64

US Army, National Guard SGT
1966-1972

Vietnam 1969-1971

Korea 1978-1979, Germany

1982-1985, 1988-1991. Saudi

Arabia 1990-1991

KEITH ANDERSON '65

Army

MIKE CURL '65 (1946-2009)

Marines

DOUG GOSCHKE '65

Marines

DOUG KIEFER '65

Army

1970-1972

LARRY PICKERAL '65 (1947-1996)

Navy, Vietnam

STEVE WALKER '65

Army

FRED LEFEVER '65

Air Force

ED HAZELTON '65

Navy, Vietnam

Oct. 1965 -Oct. 1967

ROBERT E. KARR '65 (1945-1967)

Specialist 4, Army Engineering Corps., Vietnam War
1966-1967

JIM GROFF '65

Air Force, Vietnam
1969-1972

DENNIS BECKLER '65

Army, Vietnam May 1967 to May 1970. I was a CC on a UH-1H helicopter. Logged 1,103 hours in flight time while in Vietnam.

WARD A. NIFFENEGGER '65

Air Force, Vietnam
1965-1969

DAN WHETSTINE '65 (1947-2019)

Air Force

HARLAN YODER '66

Army, Vietnam

LAWRENCE WADE '66

United States Air Force
Vietnam War

23 Years

BILL EASH (LEON)'66

US Air Force, Korea
1968-1971

RUDY GORBATJUK '66

Army, Vietnam

1967-1970

TIMOTHY J. PATTERSON '66 (1947-2017)

Army, Served in Korea during
Vietnam War

1966-69

JOHN WENGER '66

Navy, Vietnam

1966-1970

PAUL MILLICE '66

Iowa National Guard and

Army Reserve

Oct. 1966 - Dec. 1995

GARY GROUT '66

US Army Infantry SGT
1968-1974

ALFORD HAZELTON '66

Army SP5

1967-1969

DICK HARVEY '66

US Army

GARY KOS '66

US Army Reserves, 410th
Infantry Division

1970-1976

BILL MARTIN '67

Air Force

PHILIP J. ROTH '67

Air Force & Army
Vietnam Era 1969-1993

8 yrs 3 mo USAF, 12 years US
Army Drill Instructor, Instructor
retired and proud.

DUANE MILLER '67

Air Force, Korea (Pueblo Incident) '68, Vietnam '69
1967-1971

DOUG ULIN '67

Army, Vietnam

1969-71

RICHARD YODER '67

Air Force, Vietnam

March 1969 -December 1972

RON WILES '67

Army, Vietnam

1968-1970

RANDY SWARTZENDRUBER '67

Army, Vietnam

1968-1970

ROBERT HUBER '67

US Army, Vietnam Era / Cold
War Era. Berlin, Germany

1971-1973

JAMIE MARTIN '67

Air Force

RUSSELL GROUT '67 (1949-2012)

US Navy Petty Officer
1968-1974

LARRY SCHAULF '67 (1947-2008)

Army, Vietnam

1968-1970

BILL GROUT '68 (1950-1976)

Army

1968-1974

BILL SWARTZENDRUBER '68

Air Force

BILL KINDRED '68

Army

STEPHEN MELLINGER '68

Navy, Vietnam

1968-1972

LARRY CUDDEBACK '68

Army

MIKE CRAWFORD '68

Army

RANDY TADLOCK '68

Army

PATRICK DURIAN '68

Air Force, Vietnam

April 1969 - September 1989

DAVID SWARTZENDRUBER '69

1969 Army, Vietnam war

1971-1973

WARREN YEGGY '69

Army

ALLEN KOS '69

Army

CHEERIE SMITH '69

Army

ROBERT EMBREE '69

USMC

STEVE SCHLABAUGH '69

Army

BERYL BUTTERBAUGH '70

Army, Vietnam

2 years (drafted)

LORI HARLAND WELLS '70

Army Nurse Corp

3 years (1994-1997)

VAUGHN WILKINS '70

Army

JAY PLANK '70

Vietnam

1971-1973

ELDON MILLER '71

Army, Vietnam

Platoon Sergeant of Truck

Driving

1972-1975

LEE HARLAND '71

Army

CRAIG SMITH '71

Army

MIKE WELTE '71

National Guard

SHELDON MILLER '71

US Army 1972-1975

Fort Carson, CO

1 year in Korea

KEN EHRENFELT '72**DOREEN KOSHATKA STRA-****BALA '73**

Army
1974-1978
MIKE TADLOCK '73
Air Force - Communications
Guam
1983-1986
JON WAGNER '74
United States Marine Corps
Vietnam Era Veteran
1974-1977
JACK SEWARD JR '74
United States Army - 4th
Infantry Division (Mechanized)
Vietnam Era
June 1974 - June 1977
TOM GROFF '74
Army
JOE PORTER '74
Army
KIRBY MILLER '74
US Marine Corps
1975-1977
RON GROUT '75
US Army National Guard Staff
SGT
1980-2000
DAVE GASCHO '76
Army, Peace Time
1976-1979, 3 years
JOHN BERG '76 (1958-2019)
Navy
RICK GROUT '77
Army Combat Engineer SGT
1985-1989
TERRY SMITH '77
Navy
CONNOR PETTIT '77
Navy
ROBERT ARCENEUX '78
Navy
RYAN HARTLEY '78
Navy/Army
PERRY HESS '78
Army
SCOTT BUTTERBAUGH '78
Sgt US Army Reserves A
Company, 389th Engineer
Combat, Battalion, Iraqi
Freedom
ROBERT SHAVER '79
Army
PHILLIP KEMPF '80
Chief Petty Officer, US Navy
1987-2007.
Fire Control & Data Systems
Technician maintaining the
Navy's Tactical, Navigation
and Weapons Control systems.
**RICHARD "RIC" ALLEN
'80**
Army

LISA KEMPF GILES '81
Navy
KEVIN REECE '81
Navy
JON MCARTOR '82
Army,
Desert Shield/Desert Storm,
9 years, Iowa Army National
Guard
DAVE SPITZER '83
Army
1988-1996
JODI HENRICHSON '85
Navy
MARK MILLICE '86
Army, Desert Storm / Shield
1987-1992
TONY DUNBAR '86
DENNIS MURPHY '86
TOM SLAUBAUGH '87
Army - Iowa National Guard
Gulf War - Operation Desert
Storm
1987-1995/8 years
ANTHONY GROFF '87
US Army
1986-2014 28 years
TERRY DURIAN '87
Navy
COREY WADE '87
Air Force/Air National Guard
Operation Northern watch,
Operation Southern Watch,
Operation Iraqi Freedom,
Operation Enduring Freedom
Sept 7, 1988 - Present; 31
years
**BRADFORD MILLER '89
(1970-2010)**
US Army, Sgt. Army Intelli-
gence
SEAN CONWAY '90
Navy, Desert Storm
1990-1996
MATT TUTTLE '90
Army, Desert Storm, Iraqi
freedom x2
23 years
TROY LOVETINSKY '90
Army National Guard, Opera-
tion Desert Shield/Storm/Fix
(1990-91), Mechanic, cook,
combat medic.
1989-97, 8 years
ANTHONY LEONARD '90
Army, 2007 in Iraq during the
Surge. Served 23 years-13
years in the Army and 10 with
US Public Health Service
working with Indian Health
Service.
JERRY ZAHRADNEK '91

US Army Reserve, Desert
Storm
1991-1998
DILLION ARMBRUSTER '91
Army Reserves, Was not de-
ployed. Served stateside.
1990-1998
**BRENNA CONWAY GOODE
'92**
Navy, Persian Gulf
1996-2002
**KELLEY CONWAY REIN-
FELDS '95**
USMC
1999-2001
MATTHEW DEHERRERA '97
Army, Combat Medic
Operation Enduring Freedom
03-04
2001-2009
JONATHAN MINNIS '98
Navy, Operation Enduring
Freedom, Global War on
Terrorism
2004-2009
**MICHELLE BENEDICT WE-
STRA '98**
Army National Guard, Opera-
tion Iraqi Freedom
1998-present
NATHAN BONTRAGER '98
Army, Iraq/Afghanistan
2002-2019 17 years
MIKE LEONARD '98
Army
LINDSEY GROFF HORAK '98
Navy/Army
RYAN WALSCHMIDT '02
Iowa Air National Guard
TYLER GROUT '03
Army, Operation Enduring
Freedom/ Afghanistan 04-05
8 years
JOSHUA GAULE '03
Air Force
The war in Afghanistan
2003-2006
RYAN HANRICHSON '03
National Guard
**RANDIE FISHER FRIEDEN
'03**
Army, Operation Iraqi Free-
dom
2002-2010
KYLE ROTH '03
Army
TYLER SCHNEIDER '04
Army
MICHAEL REECE '04
Navy
BRIAN FREES '05
USMC

JED SEWARD '05
USMC, Operation Enduring
Freedom
2009-2018
KRANDAL BONTRAGER '06
Air Force
JEREMIAH DUWA '06
National Guard
SEAN WAGAMON '06
USMC
CHRIS PASSMORE '06
USMC
STEPHANIE PATTERSON '06
Army
April 11, 2011 - March 16,
2016
TYLER HARLAND '06
Army, Afghanistan 1 tour
2004-present
**COURTNEY WILKINSON
GONZALEZ '07**
Marines, Operation Enduring
Freedom
2012-2016
ZACHARY RIDDLE '07
Iowa National Army Guard
Operation Enduring Freedom
Two tours in Afghanistan
Currently attending military
flight school at Fort Rucker in
Alabama as warrant officer
2007 - present
SPENCER MILLER '07
Army National Guard Re-
serves
2007-present
CRAIG MILLER '07
Air Force, Senior Airman
Guam 2007-2009, Japan
2009, Afganistan 2011, 2018,
South Korea 2012, Nevada
2011-2012, Georgia 2009.
ALBERT SCHWARTZ '07
EMMETT ALLEN '09
Air Force
2009-2016
RILEY HANRICHSON '09
Air Force
DWIGHT SLAUBAUGH '09
US Army SGT
2009-2013
KASSANDRA FELLING '12
Marine Corps, Operation En-
during Freedom
3 years
CALEB RUNQUIST '16
Army, Operation Freedom's
Sentinel
2016-present / 3 years 14
weeks
ALEX VILOVCHIK '16
Army

Positive duo brings excellence to Mid-Prairie

Gary and Becky Curtis came to Mid-Prairie in 1978 and challenged the norm of hiring practices upon their arrival before spending a combined 61 years in the district. Gary graduated from Clarke Community High School in Osceola ('64) and then received his BA in Chemistry and Physical Education from Simpson College ('68) before teaching science for five years at three different schools. He received his Masters in School Counseling from the University of Northern Iowa ('78) before interviewing at Mid-Prairie.

Of Gary's three counselor offers, he thought Mid-Prairie stood out above the rest. When Gary returned to sign his newly offered contract in person, he discovered that Mid-Prairie was also looking for a Junior High Band teacher. He knew Becky fit the part with her Bachelor's K-12 Music Degree from Luther College. Gary was told by Ray Schrepfer, junior high principal, that Becky was welcome to complete an application, but was warned that Mid-Prairie had an unwritten policy that husband and wife teams would not be hired in the same building. It had not happened to that point at Mid-Prairie. Upon reviewing Becky's application, along with her competition, Schrepfer liked what he saw in Becky and persuaded Superintendent D. Dean Curtis to recommend hiring her at the next board meeting. Everybody was on the same page and what a great hire it turned out to be. Gary stayed with the district 28 years and Becky 33 years before their retirement.

Coming into the district, the Curtises only knew the location of Mid-Prairie was between their two families, Becky from DeWitt and Gary from Osceola, but little did they know it was where they'd take root and grow to love the community and



school district.

"We just totally lucked out ending up in this fabulous district," she said.

Gary and Becky were known through the years for their commitment to student excellence and their passion for positive encouragement to each individual student to reach their full potential.

Becky hit the ground running full of encouragement for her students with the belief that everyone can learn to play and enjoy music if given the opportunity and tools to do so. She saw the value in each individual part in order to create the beautiful harmonies as a whole unit. She was the junior high 7th-9th grade band director from 1978 to 1998 adding the title of 7th-9th Gifted Music Facilitator in 1984-1998, a program which she created at Mid-Prairie. The gifted program challenged students in projects like writing and transposing Christmas music, silly commercial jingles and even writing and performing their own spring musicals. Her job roles remained the same in 1998, but were adjusted to 6th-8th graders when Mid-Prairie shifted to a middle school-level building.

During her time at Mid-Prairie, she took the band department to the

next level, creating growth for band students through weekly lessons. The change was made pulling students from class weekly instead of from study hall every two weeks. Her plan gave students at least three lessons a month grouped with students of similar instruments or ability instead of who was available in study hall.

Others may remember her implementing church performances or marching to the Kalona Fall Festival or creating the junior high and middle school jazz band, which despite meeting before school, brought between 30 and 55 students partici-

pating!

Under Becky's direction, the band wasn't limited to local and school opportunities only. She would lead students to Solo/Ensemble contests and large group contest and helping musicians pursue and audition for District and All State bands. One of her favorite memories was when students Havala Osdoba (clarinet) and her daughter, Tiffany (violin) became the first 9th graders from Mid-Prairie to make it to the All State Band and Orchestra, the top 1% of Iowa high school musicians. Another highlight was when she took her 8th-9th grade band to Washington, welcoming home the military unit from Desert Storm through pouring rain and a tornado warning. A second welcoming trip was during 100 degree weather while the band's classmates were dismissed early from school. She recalls giving a pep talk that the weather that day was nothing compared to what those guys had done for us. Her and the students' efforts did not go unnoticed and Becky and the band were awarded the State of Iowa Volunteer Award from Gov. Terry Brandstad.

Gary made his own mark at Mid-Prairie in the areas of counseling and coaching. He filled the junior high

and eventually middle school counselor or position up until he retired in 2006. Gary had a heart for each student in his counselor position. When he began his teaching career prior to coming to MP, he struggled with not being able to reach students who had problems outside of school. While focused on teaching, he didn't always have the time to help them handle the outside problems. He saw the opportunity of a guidance counselor to help all students and reluctant learners directly. That passion for students was recognized in his award as the State Middle School Counselor of the Year in 1998. Gary was nominated by previous high school counselor, Don Randol.

He was also the junior high/middle school girls track coach from 1978-2003 and wrestling coach from 1978-1988. He helped lead the 7th-8th girls track to 11 conference championships.

Most notably, Gary started the cross country program at Mid-Prairie, after the season officially began and took the first year without pay because it was brand new. His daughter Tiffany Curtis Strande '99 and her friend Jill Miksch Spencer '99 brought the idea to Gary since he himself ran cross country in college and they were looking for a different fall option for girls other than volleyball. It was a challenge and a learning experience, but the team had a lot of fun. He'll never forget their district meet arrival in the only school vehicle available, a worn and run-down suburban only used for errands by transportation director, Danny Aggson. The muffler fell and dragged along once they reached Ottumwa, but with the start time approaching they had to continue and roared into the parking lot with everyone staring. Following the meet, a temporary fix helped, but leaked exhaust into the car so they went on with windows down in 40 degree weather. However, what was started with a few bumps has continued and has found success under current head coach, Mark Hostetler, who followed Gary's retirement and has led the team to three state championships.

Despite retiring from coaching cross country and track, Gary still loves to volunteer with the current girls track team. He says seeing the girls win back-to-back state championships is a dream come true. His expertise is appreciated from girls head coach Chris Tyler.

"Gary Curtis has been volunteering with the girls track team since 2009. We are very lucky to have someone like Gary that has a great breadth of knowledge in all areas of track and field. With 30+ years of coaching experience between track and field and cross country, Gary passes along a vast amount of knowledge, lessons learned, and passion for the sport. Being able to bounce ideas off Gary and knowing his feedback is honest, genuine, and reliable is a huge asset to our coaching staff. The athletes he has impacted over the years are also benefiting from these same qualities. Gary is also a master at communicating with people. He does a tremendous job building people up and handling constructive criticism in a manner that is well received by the athletes and coaches. When Gary arrives at practice or a meet there is a noticeable sense of calmness that falls across the entire team. He helps us all to be better at our role within the program. A thousand thank you's to Gary and his wife Becky for letting us have him



The first Mid-Prairie cross country team started their season late after getting the program off the ground, but each were eager to compete. Front row left to right: Ross Davison '99, Phil Peiffer '99, Joe TeBockhorst '98, David Mullet '98. Back row: Tiffany Curtis Strande '99, Michelle Huston Harland '97, Head Coach Gary Curtis, Abby Greiner Rediger '98, Jill Miksch Spencer '99. Not pictured Pam Harland Vercande '99.



Becky Curtis introduces her middle school band to the audience members in attendance.

throughout the spring season."

Superintendent Mark Schneider praised the efforts and legacy the Curtis duo left at Mid-Prairie on a personal note

To me, Gary and Becky Curtis have always been the epitome of kindness, fairness and inclusiveness and two events that happened when our son, Erik, was in middle school demonstrate this. Erik was born with autism and social situations are a challenge to him.

Erik started playing the trombone in fifth grade. He would not be considered a stellar musician, but he tried very hard. When Erik was in seventh grade he competed at solo contests. The judge did not have a very good

grasp of the situation. Erik deserved the rating he was given but the judge was very harsh on the scoring sheet with his written comments about Erik's performance. Becky took the initiative to explain the circumstances to the judge. While the rating stood, the judge reissued the scoring sheet being more realistic and positive to Erik.

To help Erik develop his social skills, Erik's mom and I were very deliberate in pushing Erik to be involved in as many school activities as possible. During the spring before Erik's ninth grade year, we brainstormed a variety of ways Erik could be involved in high school. I had decided that Cross Country Manager was a good possibility.

Gary, who knew Erik very well as the Middle School Counselor, was also the High School Head Cross Country Coach. When I approached him about the possibility of Erik being manager, Gary got a funny look on his face and said to me, "What's the matter, can't Erik run?" That comment hit me like a ton of bricks and Gary made me realize in a nice way that maybe it was I that had the disability, not Erik. Erik went on to thoroughly enjoy his four years of running high school cross country.

My wife and I can't thank Gary and Becky enough for their efforts on behalf of our children. They are two more stellar examples of all that is great about Mid-Prairie.

Additional memories resurfaced from former MP staff. Longtime co-workers of the Curtises, Jerry and Pam Nelson, found it hard to narrow down just a few memories of their friends and colleagues. The Nelsons were beneficiaries of the hiring spousal trend as they were hired within five years of each other and collectively spent 49 years at Mid-Prairie.

Jerry praised Gary for being a good coach and always standing up for his kids. He has such a genuine interest in athletes and coaching that it has carried on well into his retirement years.

Jerry will never forget when Gary

The Curtis Van

By Lacey Curtis Iverson '02 - Gary & Becky's youngest daughter

We always had a van growing up. Lots of families had vans, but the Curtis family van served a greater purpose. It represented the dedication of two, very devoted and passionate educators. The Curtis van picked up students on the way to school so they could participate in activities like STP Music or Jazz band even if their own parents were not able to give them a ride to school earlier than the bus. The Curtis van hauled instruments into West Music for repairs, and sometimes dropped them off at home for students who walked and couldn't carry a tuba or bari sax. The Curtis van carried equipment, and sometimes students, to small group and large group contests and honor bands. The Curtis van also drove students home when they wanted to take part in after school activities, both music and sports related. The Curtis van hauled shots, discs, batons, and hurdles every spring for loads of eager track athletes. And later, the Curtis van also carried tents and blankets for cross country runners.

People who don't know Gary and Becky Curtis assume that having my parents as my teachers in Junior High must have been embarrassing or traumatic. Of course there were the times that Mom reached her limit in band and ran her hands through her hair to make it stand on end. And, the times when Dad let out sighs of frustration while leading us through guided meditation as we all laid on the floor and giggled. Every teenager has times when they are learning to appreciate the humanness of their own parents. But overwhelmingly, I remember appreciating, even then, that I could depend on them to give 150%. I received no preferential treatment and had to take part in blind "challenges" for seating in band. My times in track determined the best contributions I could make to the team. Both Mom and Dad held all students to high expectations for both performance and behavior, and knew exactly how much support they needed to succeed. As a teacher, myself, for 14 years, I have an even deeper appreciation for all of the extras they gave to make that success possible. The extra purchases made with their own money when budgets were tight. The extra hours that they gave to planning, phone calls, evenings, weekends...anything to provide the best opportunities to their students. The extra love for students who needed more than they found at home.

Thousands of students, over decades, benefitted and grew because of the wholehearted devotion that those Curtis vans represented. Even in retirement, the Curtises still drive a van, and continue to touch the lives of another generation of MP students through private lessons, subbing, and volunteering with teams. The color, make, and model of the Curtis family van has changed many times over the years, but the contributions and commitment of Gary and Becky Curtis remain a vital part of the MP community.

noticed a student at lunch in serious trouble, choking on his food. Gary quickly attended to the student and performed the Heimlich maneuver, saving the boy's life. This demonstrates just another area of service to students and those around him.

The Nelsons highlighted that Becky is a talented musician herself. Mr. Nelson marveled at her ability to

play so many different instruments. Mrs. Curtis always took a sincere interest in her students, showing concern, always ready to offer a helping hand. The Nelson's four daughters were all in band and enjoyed it. They remember that she loved working with kids and teaching them music. She had a passion for seeing student growth as they worked hard to

Becky Curtis – Always a Smile

By Jim Hussey

Year after year, Becky Curtis would carry a stack of music folders half as tall as she was from room-to-room at the annual competition of the Southeast Iowa Bandmasters Association. In each folder was the sheet music for a young Mid-Prairie musician playing an instrument that could be as petite as a piccolo or as sizeable as a Sousaphone.

Each folder represented hours of practice (in most cases) of sweaty-palmed and quivering-lipped young people – some who had reached their teenage years, and others barely out of the single digits. No matter what the performers' age or skill level, she always made sure they were standing up straight and ready to play before situating herself at a piano. She would then nod her head, give a quick smile, and begin her accompaniment – proceeding measure-by-measure, and sometimes note-by-note, until the composition came to its conclusion. There would always be an even bigger smile at the end.

No matter what the musical outcome, each student got the chance to take a bow, and receive a word – or many words – of encouragement from Mrs. Curtis, which were delivered in both verbal form and in the countless written notes of encouragement she sent to her students and their parents over the years.

Mrs. Curtis saw the potential in every child. She worked with many hundreds during her distinguished career. In addition to her own office at Mid-Prairie Junior High and then Middle School, she also encouraged her students to learn in other venues such as the Dorian Music Camp at her beloved Luther College. She'd always send the kids off with encouragement and advice, and often with a dollar bill for a treat at the "Whippy Dip" ice cream shop in Decorah.

Becky knew that music was about more than converting written notes into sound. It was also about building discipline, developing self-confidence and, if all went well, demonstrating artistry. Since her students did more than play solo, an underappreciated lesson she was also teaching was the absolute necessity of learning to listen to each other to create something bigger than themselves.

That ability to collaborate – to get along – was always important to Becky. Occasionally, I would have cause to write a letter to our local newspaper when a member of the community would publish a piece that cast the members of another group in an unflattering and even hateful light. Invariably, a few days after my letter appeared in the paper, another letter would appear in our mailbox, printed in the unique penmanship that enabled me to immediately recognize its author from a distance.

She instilled that same spirit of acceptance, and encouragement, in her own children – the two girls she and Gary raised at home. I still recall the true joy of seeing a letter in the newspaper, written by her daughter Lacey, taking the intolerant musings of a local writer to task. I can only imagine the pride she has in having raised daughters who not only pay attention to world around them but, when they notice something isn't right, do something about it.

I guess it's not the nature of a musician to stay silent.

For more than three decades Becky Curtis endured the trials, and triumphs, of helping young people navigate a difficult period of self-discovery while simultaneously learning to love music and, even more important, to like themselves.

There is no more essential job for a teacher, and there was never anyone better at it than Becky Curtis.

accomplish their goals. She was an excellent encourager and dedicated teacher. Mrs. Curtis pushed her students to challenge themselves with things like trying out for Honor Band. Mr. Curtis was a positive leader in the school, very approachable and always wore a smile. Becky and Gary were both very dedicated educators and a friend to all.

Jim and Jan Truelson recall the Curtises coming to the community and coming to their home to introduce themselves. They remain close friends to this day. The Truelson's recall both Gary and Becky as dedicated teachers, always encouraging students to reach their full potential,

emphasizing responsibility, and genuinely having an interest in each and every student.

Gary and Becky's oldest daughter, **Tiffany Curtis Strande '99** remembers as a child feeling pretty special that BOTH of her parents were teachers at the junior high. She remembers tagging along to band concerts and athletic events until one day she would be able to participate herself. Tiffany joked that, of course during the junior high days as a teenager, it wasn't always easy having both parents at the school. However, she appreciates what she has learned from them in the band room and during life skills classes.

Now as both are retired, Gary and Becky fill their time with friends and family including five granddaughters Lara, Bea, Ali, Grete, Thora and a grandson, Harrison. They also enjoy church activities and service projects as well as traveling stateside and internationally.

A similar theme runs among all the memories of the Curtis duo. The MPCSD thanks you both for the genuine love and passion you brought to your students and careers.

If you'd like to pass along your own memories or share an update with the Curtises, I'm sure they would love to hear from you. You can reach them at garbecurtis@sharontc.net

Nominate deserving Alumni

It is once again time to nominate deserving Mid-Prairie Alumni who have served and succeeded at Mid-Prairie and in its community.

The category descriptions are listed below. Last year's nominees will remain in the selection pool for consideration. Please consider nominating alumni for their achievements. For nominations, fill out the form on the next page and return to Mid-Prairie Central Office, PO Box 150, Wellman; or fill out the form online - www.mphawksalumni.org; or email to kstrickland@mphawks.org.

The nominations will be reviewed by a committee of board members, class reps and teachers. The deadline to submit a nomination is February 1. The six recipients will be selected and recognized in the spring

alumni newsletter and at the Wellman 4th of July parade this summer during the 2020 All School Reunion weekend.

Previous winners: 2009: Warren Olson, Pat Anderson, John Orr, Doug Goschke, Tim Grady, Dan Dickel, Bill Marks, Nick Peck. 2010: Boyd & Wilma Emde, Robert Gaston, Willis Miller, Donald Randol, Paul Swank. 2011: Stan & Corrinne Barber, Rose Dillard Belk, Elsie Zook Blosser, Velma & Ferd Skola. 2012: Dwight & Junell Duwa, Don & Wilma Gingerich, Ken & Sue Kempf, Kenneth & Katheryn Kos. 2018: Steve Berger, Achievement; Blake Heshberger, Vocational; Steve Yotty, Community Impact; Jeremiah Gingerich, Service; Jessica Faselt, Fine Arts; Don Showalter, Athletic.

Alumni Achievement Award Categories

➤➤ MPCSD Alumni Achievement Award

Given to alumni who have earned recognition for their achievements and attributions in their professional life.

Criteria:

- Demonstrates a high level of achievement in his/her field and makes significant contributions to that field.
- Exhibits high moral character.

➤➤ MPCSD Vocational Hall of Fame

Awarded to alumni with exceptional accomplishment in the area of vocational education while attending Mid-Prairie High School and/or have made an outstanding impact in their professional vocation.

Criteria:

- Significant contributions in a vocational area.
- Received recognition for leadership or service in their vocational area while in high school.
- Received recognition or honors in their vocational area after high school.
- Makes significant contributions and has sought out leadership in their professional vocation.

➤➤ MPCSD Community Impact Hall of Fame

Awarded to alumni who should be rewarded for their service impact on the Mid-Prairie Community.

Criteria:

- Significant service contributions either while in school and/or post-high-school to the Mid-Prairie Community.
- Service may be for any purpose.
- Service may be in a non-compensated or a compensated capacity.

Other considerations:

- Outstanding character and leadership.
- Exhibits high moral character.

➤➤ MPCSD Alumni Service Award

Given to alumni for specific and meritorious service to the MPCSD Alumni Association, or any other not-for-profit organization.

Criteria:

- Service must be for a not-for-profit organization in a non-compensated capacity.
- Exhibits high moral character.

➤➤ MPCSD Fine Arts Hall of Fame

Awarded to alumni with exceptional accomplishment in the fine arts while attending Mid-Prairie High School.

Criteria:

- Significant contributions in his/her fine arts area.
- Conference honors and /or all-state recognition, or equivalent.
- Superior ratings earned in competition.
- Major roles in theater productions, solos, etc.

Other considerations:

- Successful participation in college and/or post-college.
- Major roles in theater productions, solos, etc. after high school.
- College scholarships in the fine arts disciplines.

➤➤ MPCSD Athletic Hall of Fame

Awarded to alumni with exceptional accomplishment in athletics while attending Mid-Prairie High School.

Criteria:

- Statistical records and/or awards received.
- All-conference, all-state and/or state championships earned.

Other considerations:

- Outstanding character and leadership.
- Successful participation in college and/or professional athletics.

Mid-Prairie Alumni Awards Nomination Form

Name of person I would like considered for an award(s): _____

His/Her graduation year (if known): _____

His/Her address (if known): _____

His/Her phone and email (if known): _____

Select Desired Alumni Award Category:

Achievement

Service

Community Impact

Fine Arts

Athletics

Vocational

Description of qualifications (attach additional pages as necessary):

(Note: a questionnaire will be sent to your nominee)



Name of person submitting the nomination: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Home phone: _____ Cell phone: _____

Email: _____

All awards will be granted based on nominations, which can be submitted by mail (Mid-Prairie Central Office, PO Box 150, Wellman) or online at www.mphawksalumni.org or emailed to kstrickland@mphawks.org. Nominations will be reviewed and selected by the awards committee and approved by the Alumni & Friends Association Board.

Questions:

**Elected or appointed members of the Alumni & Friends Association Board are not eligible during their term of service.

Memory Lane: Favorite Teacher

Mrs. Diane McCracken was an amazing Home Economics teacher who put her whole self into her teaching. She had us journal in our Family Living class and took the time to write detailed individual comments to us every week. She also revamped the very traditional Home Ec program here to be very innovative and up-to-date and set the tone for the forward thinking Family and Consumer Sciences program Mid-Prairie has today.

Glenda Ladehoff Seward '74

In high school, it had to be Mr. Shaw, for both shop and drafting. Me, a rebellious unteachable goof, and him, a strict and disciplined no-nonsense Army General. But we had common interests, such as re-furbishing guns, building cross-bows and architecture.

I grew up with a drafting table and I remember Mr. Shaw being surprised with my design ideas and ability to draw them up. I still have several of them.

I don't remember most of the teachers' names, because I wasn't there all the time. But I will always remember Mr. Shaw.

In elementary school, it was Mrs. Velma Yoder at Washington Township. I always wondered what it would be like, to be a 'city-kid' instead of a 'country-kid,' but she eased that identity and took a strong interest in us country-kids. She will always be my favorite MP teacher.

Nathan Miller '72

Mr. Thornton because of his sense of humor!

Naomi Burrows '09

My favorite teacher was my 3rd Grade teacher, Mrs. Elma Jirsa, at Washington Township Elementary School. Mrs. Jirsa loved each one of her students as if they were her own children. One of her strengths was showing us how much she truly cared for us. She always challenged us to do projects that were inter-

esting to us. I remember doing my own "research" projects about animals--reading about animals; making outlines; writing reports--I honestly think this is where I first knew that I was a writer. Mrs. Jirsa also loved reading aloud to us. Whenever I think of my favorite teacher, I will always think of Mrs. Jirsa!

Bill Poock '89

Wellman Elementary Kindergarten teacher Miss Zook was the most outstanding teacher ever! She treated every single student the same. If a student struggled she would invite them to her desk and work with them patiently until they understood. She also took her class on a field trip to her house. I will never forget her beautiful heart!

Jamie Smith-Martin '92

I remember Ruth Hitchings. She taught math at the junior high, which was a subject that I just didn't get. However, she made me feel like a real person when others made me feel I didn't belong. She made me want to be an educator. She made me want to be that person for others. Now I aim to do that every morning I go to work, which is at a school.

Michael Young '96

One of my favorites was my 4th grade teacher, Edna Blumenstein at Wellman Elementary - she was "old" and we were her last class before she retired. She made each student feel special.

Elvesta Miller Hochstedler IMS '72

Mr. Oyer in my mind was a teacher that was a no 'BS' type of teacher. I still use math every day and using the metric system I can do most calculations in my head. In my four years in the military I was an electronics specialist.... math math math. There at my side was Mr. Oyer. He also spent time in the military.

Gerald Niffenegger '61



Photo submitted

Chemistry teacher Mr. Shirley Statler, left, and English teacher Mrs. Gladys Kephart, at 1963 MPHS commencement.

I was privileged to have Mrs. Gladys Kephart as my English teacher all four of my years and was proud to receive all A's for my eight semester grades in English. I "tested out" of English composition as a freshman at Park College in September 1961 and took world literature.

Mrs. Kephart now lives at a retirement community in Champaign, Illinois. In 2016 she came to Washington, Iowa, my birthplace, to attend the 55th year reunion of the West Chester part of the Mid-Prairie Class of 1961 reunion. We have been friends on Facebook since the time of the reunion. Mrs. Kephart taught me a lot about written composition and helped me with literature.

Barbara McDowell Whitt '61

My favorite teacher memory was with Mrs. Montz my 4th grade teacher. She encouraged me by telling me I was talented in math. After that year my passion for math enhanced and my new passion was to become an accountant in 4th grade. There was no turning back and I went on to college to get my Accounting degree. I love the business/accounting field and I am very thankful for that "push and positive reinforcement" at such a young age!

Casey TeBockhorst Peck '93

Golden Hawk Highlights



15th Class completes Patient Care Academy

Another group of MPHS students completed the Patient Care Academy course, taught by Jaclyn Greiner, MPHS Nurse. The academy, which began at Mid-Prairie in 2004, provides them with CNA certification and 12 college credits while also earning high school credit. The Patient Care Academy is an introductory health career program for high school students where they are introduced to the healthcare system and the world of work through classroom, laboratory and clinical experiences. They learn about the language of medicine, a variety of healthcare pathways, develop basic health care skills and they learn about the behaviors and characteristics expected of a healthcare professional. Through

these courses, they can explore the healthcare field and decide if it's something they'd like to pursue after high school. The four courses completed throughout the year are Medical Terminology, Explorations in Health Care Careers, Nurse Aide, and Professionals in Health Care, all of which are completed at the high school except for Nurse Aide. The Nurse Aide course is completed at Pleasantview Home in Kalona, with the help of Elvesta Hochstedler, and totals 30 hours of clinical time.

Pictured above is (left to right) Shellbie Baughman '19, Madelain Harland '19, Cassidy Hershberger '20, Hayley Yoder '19, Lily Grepl '19 and Cierra Thurman '20.



The Mid-Prairie Girls' track team are once again 2A State Champions! They were led by Marie Hostetler who took first in the 3000 meter and 1500 meter races. The girls Distance Medley relay won by .02 seconds and was made up of Abbagail Evans, Cassidy Rourke, Amber Swart and Hostetler. Hostetler also took second in the 800 m. The Sprint Medley team (Maddie Edgington, Cassidy Rourke, Mitzi Evans, Amber Swart) took third. Finishing fourth in the 4x200 meter relay were Amber Swart, Mitzi Evans, Maddie Edgington, Abbagail Evans. Tori Boyse finished in eighth in the discus. The Golden Hawk boys took sixth in the 4x800 relay (Quinn Schmidt, Brad Tornow, Miles Burrows, Justin Schwartz) and seventh in the 4x200 meter relay (Clark Latcham, Quinn Schmidt, Grant Boyse and Elmir Ganibegovic). The boys sprint medley (Latcham, Schmidt, Ganibegovic, Boyse) finished 11th.

Marching Band receives superior rating at State

Congratulations to the Mid-Prairie marching band that came home from the state marching band contest in Pella on Oct. 19 with a Division 1 (Superior) Rating.

Just a week prior the marching band placed 3rd in class 2A at the Wilton Festival of Bands and received honors for outstanding horn line, drill design and marching execution.

Alumni News & Notes

Births, Weddings, In Memory



Hannah Miller '16 and **Chris Schveiger** of Maquoketa were married June 15, 2019 in West Union, IA. The couple resides in West Union where Chris is a Fayette County Sheriff's Deputy. Hannah is a 5th grade teacher at West Central School in Maynard.



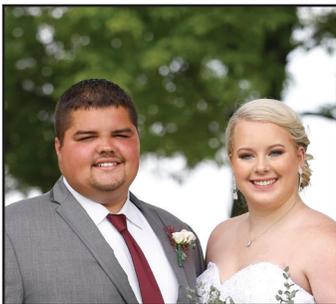
Janelle Redlinger '08 and **Mitchell Wayt** of Davenport were married August 31, 2019 at Olde St. Anne's Church in Long Grove, IA. The couple resides in Davenport.



Allison McArtor '11 and **Ryan Rice** of Laurel were married August 3, 2019 at The Old Fifty-Six in Grundy Center. The couple resides in Gowrie where Allison is a K-4 Special Education teacher and Ryan is an agronomist and on the volunteer fire department.



Kaitlyn Yoder Merck '10 and **Ryan Merck '07**, Wellman, celebrated the birth of a son, Tucker Lynn on July 20, 2019. He weighed 8 pounds, 8 ounces and was 21 inches long.



Trever Owens '14 and **Chelsea Kral '15** were married June 22, 2019 in a beautiful outdoor service in Wellman. The reception took place in Richmond. Trever is employed at Kalonial Lawn Care and at the Washington County Jail. Chelsea is a full-time paramedic for Johnson County and part-time for Washington County. The couple resides in Wellman.



Wade Stutzman '14 and **Ellie Stastny (IMS '14)** of Kalona were married September 21, 2019 at Celebration Barn in Solon. Wade is an IT Security Analyst at the University of Iowa and Ellie is a Veterinary Assistant. The couple resides in Tiffin.



Nathan Klostermann '98 and **Sara Housely**, of Coralville, had a son, Emerson Ival Klostermann on Feb. 11, 2019, three weeks early on his Aunt Andria's birthday. Welcoming him home was his brother, Connor Hayes. Emerson weighed 7 lbs. 1 oz and was 19.5 inches long.



Mackenzie Kiefer Shumake '08 and **Joey Shumake** celebrated their twin boys, Samuel Joseph and Sawyer Anthony, born on July 13th, 2019.



Andria Klostermann Hougardy '02 and **Trevor Hougardy**, of Aurora, Colo., had a son, Atticus Jullian Hougardy on Feb. 17, 2019. He weighed 8 lbs. 6 oz and was 19.5 inches long. Welcoming him home was his sister Iva.

Alumni News & Notes



Stacey Beeler Cavey '07 and Jason Cavey, Cedar Rapids, celebrated the birth of their first daughter, Charlotte Jo on August 3, 2019.



Arissa Marine Moeller '14 and Logan Moeller celebrated the birth of a son, Grayson David on August 7, 2019. He weighed 7 lbs and 10 ounces and was 21 inches long.



Alex Zimmerman '07 and Karly Zimmerman, Keota, celebrated the birth of a son, Charles Michael on April 8, 2019. He weighed 11 pounds and was 22 inches long.

Alumni hit the court at Volleyball Fundraiser



Alumni volleyball players challenged each other and the current MP varsity team as a fundraiser supporting the volleyball program. Left photo: Varsity players, sporting retro uniforms from the 90's, face a big block by alumnas Makensie Rich '18 and Katie Herington Berens '07. Right photo: Jolisa Huber Bombej '99 attacks over blocker Brandee Bohr Kleopfer '09.

In Memory

Judith Johnson Hackman '61 died April 30, 2019.

Colleen Accord Morgan '61 died March 27, 2019.

George Ogden Shelman '61 died July 19, 2019.

Jane Horesowsky Stoner '61 died Jan. 16, 2019.

Judy Horesowsky '63 died June 22, 2019

Rebecca Berg Myers Reid '69 died Oct. 1, 2019.

Donna Fisher '70 died Dec. 12, 2018.

John Kallaus '74 died August 18, 2019.



Scott Reagan Miller '82 died April 22, 2019.

Darlene Kelley (Former Staff Aug. 1967 - May 1987) died July 11, 2019

Notes

Jo Finley Weamer '66, of Wellman retired in October 2019 from Hills Bank after 18 years.



Ed Chabal '78, of Washington, was recently elected as the International Vice-President of the Association of School Business Officials, a three-year term. Chabal has been the Chief Financial Officer for the Mount Pleasant Community School District since 1997. In 2010, Chabal was selected for the Iowa ASBO Professional Leadership Award, the highest award given by Iowa ASBO.



Samantha Gatlin Lycke '14, of Kalona, is a CNA at Pleasantview Home.

Send your updates, news & notes to be published in the newsletter!

- Career changes
- Awards, honors and promotions
- Engagements & Weddings
- Baby announcements
- New business ventures
- Photos of alumni gatherings



Send to **Kristi Strickland**
kstrickland@mphawks.org



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