



# Updates from the Association

## *Several opportunities to get involved*

Welcome to the third issue of the Mid-Prairie Alumni and Friends Association Newsletter. We appreciate the positive feedback we have received on the first two issues. It is our goal to reunite our Golden Hawk nation and continue to support and celebrate their continued success. The four priorities that were outlined at our early alumni association meetings include:

- Providing an alumni newsletter
- Provide support for organizing 5-year reunions and help maintain an alumni database
- Organize alumni recognition awards
- Organize all school reunions

The newsletter is published in the spring and fall each year. We continue to look for ways to improve and provide sustainability of the newsletter being provided to our alumni and friends. To help with the financial aspect of printing and mailing a newsletter like this, we encourage more alumni and friends to send in their annual dues. The information for paying dues is on the back page and please note that (second year) subscriptions are due July 1. We hope to double our number of subscribers in the second year as we prepare for the All School Reunion in the summer of 2020. All alumni dues are used to support all alumni association activities in addition to this newsletter.

We are excited to announce this year's recipients of the newly revised alumni recognition awards. The recipients were selected, from nominations, by a committee including alumni association board members, alumni class representatives and Mid-Prairie teachers. For the first two years, we will focus on alumni to receive the awards and later expand to allow nominations of friends of Mid-Prairie. Each alumni receiving the award will be presented with a plaque at the Kalona Days Celebration following the parade on June 15, 2019. The plaques will be displayed at the high school for a year before being returned to the individual. Each recipient will then have their name engraved on a permanent plaque displayed at the high school. We hope to have a great turnout at the Kalona Days Celebration to greet and honor the alumni being recognized. Please keep the 2018 fall newsletter as a resource for your consideration of nominating deserving alumni for the 2020 awards. Nominations can be sent to [kstrickand@mphawks.org](mailto:kstrickand@mphawks.org) anytime from now through February 1, 2020. The 2020 awards will be presented during the All School Reunion at the July 4th celebration in Wellman.

The Mid-Prairie Foundation and our Alumni Association will be working together to organize the 2020 All School Reunion. Suggested activities and events include a golf tournament, slow pitch softball, bags tournament, 10K/5K run, banquet, auction and street dance. For those classes scheduling their reunion, this weekend provides an excellent opportunity to schedule your own events in combination with a weekend full of activities reuniting Golden Hawks of all ages. If you have an interest in helping to organize one of the activities or events, please contact [kstrickland@mphawks.org](mailto:kstrickland@mphawks.org) as soon as possible. The committees for each activity will begin discussions this summer. Mid-Prairie has so much to be proud of as we look back and celebrate 60 years of excellence!

# Class Reunions

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## **Class of 1964 - 55 years**

**Date & Details:** Friday, August 23, 2019 at Wooden Wheel Vineyard & Winery near Keota.

**Contact:** Larry Huber

**Email:** [lthuber@yahoo.com](mailto:lthuber@yahoo.com)

**Contact:** Donna Wade

**Email:** [jonkaw@netins.net](mailto:jonkaw@netins.net)

## **Class of 1969 - 50 years**

**Date & Details:**

Friday, Aug. 2, 2019 @ 6:30 p.m.

Informal gathering at the Kalona Brewing Company. Patio area reserved.

Saturday, Aug. 3, 2019 @ 2 p.m.

Guided tour of Mid-Prairie High School

Saturday, Aug. 3, 2019 @ 6 p.m.

50th Anniversary Class Reunion dinner at the Riverside VFW. 1259 Riverside Rd.

**Contact:** Al Kern

**Email:** [akern1951@gmail.com](mailto:akern1951@gmail.com)

## **Class of 1974 - 45 years**

**Date & Details:** Saturday, Sept. 21, 2019 @ Wellman

Parkside YMCA Banquet Facility

MP Homecoming Weekend

**Contact:** Glenda Seward

**Email:** [gmc1000@gmail.com](mailto:gmc1000@gmail.com)

## **Class of 1979 - 40 years**

**Date & Details:** August 17, 2019

**Contact:** Joyce Billups

**Email:** [jbillups@mphawks.org](mailto:jbillups@mphawks.org)

## **Class of 1984 - 35 years**

**Date & Details:** Sept. 21, 2019 @ Kalona Brewing Company.

**Contact:** Tracy Owens

**Phone:** 319-461-5598

## **Class of 1989 - 30 years**

**Date & Details:** October 12, 2019

**Contact:** Nancy Roth

**Email:** [nancyroth2658@gmail.com](mailto:nancyroth2658@gmail.com)

## **Class of 2009 - 10 years**

**Date & Details:** Saturday, August 3, 2019 at 6:30 p.m.

at Stonewall Brick Oven Pizza (3297 320th St., Wellman).

Bring a blanket/chairs and beverages of your choice to enjoy. The cost is \$15/person and checks can be made to the Mid-Prairie Class of 2009.

**Contact:** Kayla Duwa

**Email:** [kayladuwa@gmail.com](mailto:kayladuwa@gmail.com)

## **Class of 2014 - 5 years**

**Date & Details:** Saturday, June 29, 2019 @ Wellman Golf

Course. The course is rented for the full day so come and golf anytime. If you would like to rent a golf cart, contact Trever Owens at 319-330-4963. We will meet at 5 p.m. at the clubhouse to grill and eat around 6 p.m. Burgers and hot dogs will be provided. Bring a side dish to share and your own drinks. We will have some outdoor games but feel free to bring any games of your own! RSVP by June 8th to Shaylee Adrian at 319-936-7238.

# Historical Village features Kalona High School



The Kalona High School was organized in 1897 to house elementary and high school students. The Kalona High School Alumni Association was organized in 1906 for the purpose of more closely binding together the graduates of the school.

“Where within the borders of our state can be found a school that has been more successful in endowing the minds of its graduates with such regard and love of a higher education, and where can the alumni be found that have made a better start as a whole toward making use of their elementary education?”

*Kalona News, June 6, 1907*

Gary Kallaus, a 1955 graduate of Kalona High School, epitomizes the loyal, supportive alumni Mid-Prairie fosters in its graduates. In 2003, Gary led the campaign to preserve old

graduation pictures for display in a Kalona High School Alumni Room at the Wahl Museum. Not surprisingly, other alumni rallied around the project. In 2018 Gary, along with Tom and Angie Hofer (1958 graduates), joined a committee from the Kalona Historical Society to design a new Kalona High School Alumni Exhibit. Those same framed graduation pictures are displayed today, along with other artifacts from Kalona High School at the Kalona Historical Village.

A soup supper fundraiser for completing the new Wahl Museum was held in the museum at the Kalona Historical Village recently.

A variety of soups, salads and desserts were served. A freewill donation was accepted with all proceeds going to finishing the inside of the Wahl Museum.

Be sure to check it out the next time you’re in town!



## Honoring the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier



**Charlie Yoder '87**, back left, and other Iowa Funeral Directors Association members had the honor of laying a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, on April 2, 2019, on behalf of all who belong to the Iowa Funeral Directors Association.

## Alum speaks to students and Gala



Photos by Elsa Schmidt and Kristi Strickland

Jordan Montgomery '05 recently spoke to MP high school students on the topic of Respect. He returned several weeks later as the keynote speaker at the 2019 YMCA Gala where he spoke fondly of growing up in the small Washington County community. Jordan is a performance coach and keynote speaker through his company, Montgomery Companies.

# Mid-Prairie Alumni Awards

## *Achievement Award*

### Steve Berger Class of 1982

**Steve Berger '82** and his wife, Julie, continue the four generation Berger farm west of Wellman. The Bergers produce swine and about 2,200 acres of corn and soybeans.

Berger has continued his father, Dennis', practices of no-till farming which improves soil quality and preservation. In addition to no-till, he has been instrumental in using cover crops between seasons of corn and soybeans. The success and passion using these methods himself has led to giving of his time to educate other farmers about the methods. Steve is always willing to share with other farmers what is working well.

Last year the Bergers were named 2018 Iowa Master Farmers, an award given by Wallaces Farmer magazine. Previously in 2016, Syngenta and No-Till Magazine awarded him the No-Till Innovator Award. He was also the American Soybean Association's Conservation Legacy Award winner in 2015. For his success, recognition and educating others, he has been given the Achievement Award.

**Please describe your professional journey and service journey.**

My wife, Julie, and I operate our family grain and livestock farm near Wellman. I graduated from Iowa State University in 1986, worked briefly in state government before returning to the farm in 1988. We were married in 1997; Julie worked as a nurse until 2007 before joining the farming operation. We have and continue to be involved in many local, state and national activities.

**Career Highlights (awards, recognition, favorite aspects, etc.)**

Having the opportunity to work every day on the farm and navigate

the challenges of whatever weather and outside market forces offer is my biggest reward. We have been fortunate to be recognized by many farm organizations through the years for work in protecting the environment and soil conservation. Recent recognition has been the Iowa Master Farmer award from Wallaces Farmer magazine (2018) and the Floyd Andre Award honoring outstanding agriculture alumnus from Iowa State University (2019).

**What MP school personnel impacted you and your future career?**

Paul Swank, vocational agriculture, Shirley Statler, chemistry, and Chuck Gustafson "Gus," geometry, were my favorite teachers and subjects. The Future Farmers of America, (FFA) and vocational agriculture curriculum, contests, and events dominated my time and interests. My English, writing and speech classes were helpful later on which I probably didn't appreciate at the time. I wrote many letters and helped with speech writing for Iowa Governor Branstad while serving as administrative assistant.

**What is your source of motivation to strive for excellence?**

On our first day as freshman students, Paul Swank taught us to do our best and take pride in every task, no matter the importance. He challenged us beyond our expectations in the classroom, public speaking and FFA projects. The soil science textbook we used in Voc. Ag. class was the same one

we used in Agronomy 154 Soils Class at Iowa State University.

**What are your keys to success? What advice would you provide to younger alumni?**

Identify what you like to do and do it very well. Surround yourself with a network of peers and experts. Successful outcomes are the sum of many small details, then learning to balance them with the larger picture.

**Who was/is your strongest influencer or mentor?**

I have several: My parents by their work ethic, patience and dedication. My wife, Julie, is a positive influence and partner in life and our business. My MP teachers, ISU professors and colleagues along the way have helped inspire and guide me.

**Do you have a favorite quote or inspirational message?**

I graduated near the top my class alphabetically.

**Additional comments:**

Living in a world among 7.5 billion people in 195 countries, I feel very blessed and fortunate to live in a rural agriculture community with great schools, people and opportunities. We have to make the most of it and help others succeed.



# Mid-Prairie Alumni Awards

## *Vocational Award*

### Blake Hershberger Class of 2002

What started small has turned into a reputable business with growth from a single employee to currently 48. His success and impact has led to his nomination and selection as this year's Vocational Award recipient.

Blake Hershberger's journey to his current career began at about 12 years old when he'd help his Grandpa with small concrete jobs. He continued pouring concrete until he was old enough to get a job doing just that. As a high school senior, he decided to take early release to continue the work that he loved and so he and a friend started a small concrete business on the side. "We were pretty busy for the time we had to do it, which was only after school and on the weekends. We did jobs such as sidewalks, patios and driveways." After graduating high school, he continued to work for a local concrete company and do side jobs for another three years.

In 2005, he started Blake Hershberger Enterprises, LLC with his sister as his first employee, who was still in high school. During the day he would get a job ready and after school she would help him pour it. Small jobs such as driveways, sidewalks, patios, 4-foot walls, etc. were manageable jobs while he and his wife, **Jenni Kiefer Hershberger '02**, also built spec homes. By 2006, he had grown to 20 employees with a focus in the agricultural industry doing hog building pits.

His business continued to grow over the next seven years, transitioning from agricultural jobs to more residential and commercial work and adding employees and office staff.

In 2012, adding a Telebelt to the truck fleet improved self sufficiency to their jobs. Concrete pumps were

added and hired out to other contractors as a service.

Just two years later, he added commercial building work to his list and the first big project was three large apartment complexes in Coralville. With such a large project on the table, it was time to hire more employees and dig deeper into setting up more of a strategic office management system. After completing this project, it gave Hershberger and his employees a drive to do more commercial jobs and he likes the challenge of these projects.

In 2016, after seeing a need for drilled or cut holes in the concrete for electrical and plumbing for the commercial buildings, Hershberger expanded to add concrete cutting and core drilling to his services.

It wasn't long before Hershberger purchased another pumping company with locations in Pella and Des Moines. Those locations and employees remain and an additional shop was added in Iowa City.

To date, Hershberger Enterprises has 13 pumps and belts and serves a large area ranging from Iowa to Minnesota, Illinois, and Missouri. They currently have a total of 48 employees, many of which are local residents of the Kalona, Wellman and Washington area. They are comprised of multiple flatwork and wall crews, provide material placement services, cutting and core drilling, and hauling with dump trucks. They also continue to provide services for home renovations and new home construction.

Blake has enjoyed meeting and



collaborating with people all over the U.S. and world in the same industry.

He remembers his time spent at

Mid-Prairie and is appreciative of teachers and mentors over the years. "A few people that come to mind that I would say impacted me over the years: Shawn Kreman, Mark Dalton, Phil Conway, and Gerry Beeler. They were all very motivated men who pushed me to do my best in everything including football and wrestling. They held me accountable, taught me how to work hard, and be a self-motivated person."

Hershberger desires to also make an impact on those around him. He loves to see people staying in the community so he strives to create good paying jobs so they can buy homes, support their family and make a positive impact on the local community.

He credits his grandfathers, John Hershberger and Bill Riggan, for instilling in him, at a young age, the value of a strong work ethic, faith and family.

He would encourage young alumni to "Get up and go to work/school/extra curricular activities every day and strive to do what you do better today than how you did it yesterday."



Jenni and Blake Hershberger, owners of Hershberger Enterprises, LLC

# Mid-Prairie Alumni Awards

## *Service Award*

### Jeremiah Gingerich Class of 1996

**Jeremiah Gingerich '96** has been selected for the Alumni Service award based on his extensive work with the Mid-Prairie Foundation and the Kalona Historical Society. Both of these groups are nonprofit organizations, which is a requirement of this award. Jeremiah is currently the Vice President/Branch Manager at Federation Bank in Wellman. His education, professional experience and commitment to service make him a valuable resource to these groups.



His extensive knowledge in financial matters and agricultural background have been a great benefit to these organizations as well. Jeremiah has served on the Mid-Prairie Foundation for 17 years and just completed three years as president. He is a leader on the scholarship committee which connects high school seniors with scholarship resources through the Dollars for Scholars program. Jeremiah has served on the KHS board for 15 years which included a two-year term as president.

#### **Please describe your professional journey and service journey.**

My professional journey began at Freedom Security Bank in Kalona as a retail lender after graduating from Upper Iowa University in 2000 with a financial management and accounting degree. During my time at Freedom Security Bank, I built relationships with customers in the community, but I also learned as a community banker how important it is to participate and give back. I transitioned from a retail lender to an agricultural and

commercial lender over the next four years and was promoted within the bank. In 2010, I had an opportunity for professional growth and transitioned to my current job with Federation Bank

as the Vice President and Branch Manager of the Wellman location. This move has helped me to grow as a banker, while still allowing me to stay involved in many of the same activities. Throughout my career as a banker, I have been a board member and/or president of the Mid-Prairie Foundation and the Kalona Historical Society. I have volunteered at my church, the Kalona Jaycees and have recently joined Wellman Rotary.

#### **Career Highlights (awards, recognition, favorite aspects, etc.)**

During my career I have had several accomplishments. The most recent was the completion of the Iowa School of Banking. My favorite part of the job is building relationships with customers and helping them meet their goals and achieve their dreams, ranging from buying their first home to growing their business.

#### **What MP school personnel impacted you & your future career?**

Those that impacted me the most were Mr. Oyer, math teacher, and Mr. Knobloch, vocational agriculture and FFA advisor. Their passion and ability to challenge me as a student increased my enjoyment for math and agriculture. These two areas became a deeper passion of mine and make being a banker in an agricultural community a great fit. It also helped me achieve my goal of owning my own farm, raising cattle and growing crops.

#### **What is your source of motivation to strive for excellence?**

My customers, who depend on me for help, motivate me. As we build a relationship together, I enjoy helping them make the decisions best for

them. A second motivating factor is the community that I live in and enjoy. I believe we all have to contribute something to improve upon what was left to us. This was proven true with the establishment of the Mid-Prairie Community School District Foundation. There was a group of people in the 1980's who thought it was important to establish the Foundation and it is our duty to grow and improve it. The Foundation has been able to complete many projects throughout the district and give thousands of dollars in scholarships because of the contributions from generous donors and participation from community business people, alumni and friends of Mid-Prairie.

#### **What are your keys to success? What advice would you provide to younger alumni?**

Never think you are too wise to learn from others' advice or experiences. Instead, try to learn as much as you can from the ones who have come before you. This has been helpful in my banking career as well as in life in general.

#### **Who was/is your strongest influencer or mentor?**

I have had several mentors who have passed their experiences on to me and given sound advice. The person who has influenced me the most in my life was my father. Anyone who truly knew him knows he modeled a life of integrity and compassion for others in the community.

#### **Additional comments:**

There are many community organizations that are looking for volunteers. Even if you do not want to be a board member, find something you believe in and help with specific events, committees or tasks and pour yourself into it! Seek them out, participate, contribute and help make the Mid-Prairie Community the best it can be!

# Mid-Prairie Alumni Awards

## *Fine Arts Award*

### Jessica Faselt Class of 2010

American soprano, **Jessica Faselt '10**, is currently in her first year of the Lindemann Young Artist Program at the Metropolitan Opera and made her Metropolitan Opera debut as 'a Novice' in Puccini's *Suor Angelica*. She also made her Met: Live in HD debut as 'Helmwige' in Wagner's *Die Walküre*.

Faselt was a winner of the 2018 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions performing with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra in the Grand Final Concert.

Jessica was a Studio Artist with the Florida Grand Opera covering the roles of 'Salome' in Richard Strauss' *Salome* and 'Florenca' in Daniel Catán's *Florenca en el Amazonas*. Jessica was a Gerdine Young Artist with Opera Theatre of Saint Louis covering 'Ariadne' in *Ariadne auf Naxos*.

Faselt received her Masters of Music from the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music and was selected for the prestigious Corbett Award. Faselt received her Bachelor's of Music from the University of Iowa School of Music with honors.

#### **Describe your professional journey and highlights.**

My journey to the Met has been an incredible one. Throughout high school I performed with choir and took outside voice lessons and participated in community theater musicals. I found outlets to support my passion. In college I was first introduced to the Metropolitan Opera through the Live in HD performances in movie theaters. I was then introduced to the documentary called "The Audition" that was filmed in 2007 documenting the process of the Metropolitan Opera

National Council Auditions. I knew after watching the documentary that this competition is something I could do and began working hard preparing 5 arias to present. I auditioned at age 21 (the first eligible year) and for five after consecutive years that I was determined to keep coming to the competition and improve and grow. Finally in 2018 my hard work paid off as I got to sing on the Metropolitan Opera stage with the Met Orchestra and won the National Council Audition voice competition. The next year I began the Lindemann Young Artist Program where I am coached and trained in voice, language, acting/stage craft, and movement. I am so grateful that my path has lead me here this far and I'm excited where an international career in opera will take me!

#### **What MP teacher/coach/principal impacted you?**

In middle school, playing the flute in band, Mrs. Becky Curtis was incredibly influential. She made band a fun experience. Being around beautiful music always felt natural and put me at ease. She encouraged me to attend summer camps and further my training. I always remember her positive and encouraging spirit and I thank her for that.

#### **What is your source of motivation to strive for excellence?**

I find motivation in the reactions and connections I make with people through music. It's very fulfilling to see music's power affect people. Music can connect with people on another level and it's a beautiful thing. It's a gift that can be given that is incredibly fulfilling. I am motivated by being able to express emotion through beautiful music. I have always loved working language, text, and poetry which I find beautiful and inspiring.

#### **Keys to success?**

Keys to success definitely start with yourself; find something you love to do and work hard toward honing your skills. They say it takes 10,000 hours to become a master of something. However, what has been amazing to find is that singing is a life-long journey. The voice changes and your life and experiences are constantly changing and influencing your expression. I think it's a wonderful reminder as a person that each day going forward we must continue to improve ourselves and strive to be better.

Success is also in part by surrounding yourself with others that lift you up and support your dreams and goals. I am very fortunate to come from an incredible loving and supportive family. For this I will forever be grateful. I would say even if you're not fortunate to grow up with support, you have to seek out a "tribe" or inner circle of people to surround yourself with that uplift and encourage you.



# Mid-Prairie Alumni Awards

## *Athletic Award*

### Don Showalter Class of 1970

Around here, **Don Showalter '70** is a familiar face and name to the game of basketball and that success has followed him from his time at Mid-Prairie to the next level and his current position with USA Basketball.

During his school days at MP, Showalter was a part of the 1970 basketball team taking MP to its first state tourney appearance and finishing as runner up. He also helped lead the football team to its undefeated season.

Showalter's career list includes teaching and/or coaching at the following schools.

Lone Tree – 1974 - 76

Central Elkader – 1976 -1984

Mid-Prairie – 1984 – 2012

Iowa City High – 2012 - 2016

USA Basketball – 2016 - present

His career record over 42 seasons is 601-346, making him the 12th coach in Iowa state history to reach 600 wins. His record also includes 16 district championships, 6 state tournament teams with a 4th place finish in 1996 and runner up in 2007.

During his 28 years at MP, Showalter finished with a 446-202 record.

You may also recognize him as the director of the well-known basketball camp, Snow Valley, which takes place every summer at Wartburg College in Waverly.

Several other honors and records decorate his resume as he was a 10-time winner of Iowa Coach of the Year (1981, 82, 91, 95, 96, 06, 07, 08, 10, and 16), National Federation State and Regional Coach of the Year (2009, 2016), National Coach of the Year by the National High School Athletic Coaches Association (2009), Nike Skills and LaBron Academy Coach, McDonald's All American Coach (1999), Jordan Brand Game all

star coach (2005, 2012), US Olympic Committee Basketball Volunteer Award Winner (2004), National Association of Basketball Coaches Advocacy Award (2004). In 2016 Showalter was an Iowa High School Hall of Fame Inductee and was the Mississippi Valley Conference Coach of the Year - Conference Champion. He earned US Olympic Committee (USOC) Volunteer Coach of the Year in 2012. During his time with USA Basketball, he has a 62-0 record for the U16-U17 National Teams. He has been the USA Basketball Developmental Coach of the Year 10 years in a row (2009 - 2018) and earning Gold Medal Coach for USA Basketball, 10 years (2009 - 2018).

His knowledge of the game has led him to travel internationally to speak at clinics in Italy, Russia, England, Canary Islands, Switzerland, Belgium, Australia, Scotland, Egypt, Dubai, Cuba, Slovenia, Hong Kong, Shanghai and Canada.

#### **What MP teacher/coach/principal impacted you?**

Several teachers/coaches really stick out for me as impacting my future. Cal Hickman who was my basketball coach and probably ahead of his time with the way he coached basketball in a very up-tempo style.

Tim Grady – football coach and assistant basketball coach was a great leader for our team.

Shirley Statler – chemistry teacher – he was a teacher who really cared about his students.

#### **What MP events impacted me?**

Obviously, finishing runner up at the state basketball tournament. This was an event that brought the three towns together for a common event. Also going undefeated in football was unforgettable.

#### **What is your source of motivation to strive for excellence?**

A strong desire to be the best I can

be provides motivation for me. As a coach/teacher it is to see young people develop and grow to be good citizens.

#### **What are your keys to success and advice to younger alumni?**

Two keys to success are to build great relationships and be a good person. I'd tell younger alumni – you must get out of your comfort zone to actually be the best version of you.

#### **Who was/is your strongest influence or mentor?**

Several people have had strong influence. From a coaching standpoint – Cal Hickman, former UCLA Coach John Wooden, who I worked camps many summers and college coach Buzz Levick.

Personal influence – my wife Vicky who was my high school sweetheart! She keeps me grounded and is my best friend as we do everything together. Also, my dad who allowed me to make mistakes and supported me.

#### **Do you have a favorite quote or inspirational message?**

I have many quotes, which I call Mind Candy, but one of my favorites is "Don't Chase Success. Decide to get better every day. Do great work and success will find you."

Another one of my favorites is "Great Things Never Come from Com-



# Mid-Prairie Alumni Awards

## *Community Impact*

### Steve Yotty Class of 1971

The nomination of **Steve Yotty '71** for the Community Impact Hall of Fame emphasized his involvement in an impressive level of business development, community service and being a long-time supporter of everything Kalona. It seems that very little goes on in Kalona without Steve being involved at some level or at least aware of potential developments as various groups seek his input.



Steve graduated from high school in 1971 and began working at Yoder Feeds. In 1974 he started his own gravel truck business. In 1976, his father, Bart Yotty, asked him to work with him at Snair Hardware Store which their family purchased in 1979 and changed the name to Yotty's Hardware Store. Yotty's Golf Cart Sales and Service was started in 1985 followed by Yotty's Ice Cream store in 1998. Being able to work alongside his son and two nephews in these two businesses is very important to him. All three of these businesses place a strong emphasis on customer service and promoting Kalona in the process. When a business owner offers to be available after hours

on the weekend to support customer needs, it means a lot.

Steve Yotty was elected to the Kalona Fire Department in 1974. He served with his father, who was the fire chief until 1995, when Steve was elected fire chief, a position he still holds today. Bart Yotty also served as president of the board at Kalona Cooperative Telephone Company until he passed away in 2006. Steve was elected to take his place as president and still continues in that role. KCTC was on the leading edge of installing fiber optics to homes in Kalona and was one of the first smaller communities to offer this service. KCTC now provides the same service to the City of Washington. Steve has enjoyed being a part of this remarkable expansion and has found it to be very rewarding for Kalona and on a personal level.

Steve has many fond memories of high school and several teachers who inspired him to make a difference. The faculty member who stood out as his strongest inspiration is Warren Olson.



Steve Yotty '71 received the Community Impact Alumni Award. He is pictured here with his son, Jordan Yotty '11, both members of the Kalona Volunteer Fire Department.

As his coach, Mr. Olson created an atmosphere of hard work and fairness, pushing students to strive to reach their full potential. Steve was honored to be a member of the 1970 basketball team that made it to the state tournament. Mr. Olson became a close friend after graduation and they enjoyed getting together to celebrate Iowa Hawkeye games.

Bart Yotty and Warren Olson are the two men having the greatest influence on Steve. They provided an example of honesty and hard work that guides him as a businessman today. A valuable lesson that sticks out for him is to be sure to treat people fairly and they will do the same for you.

### Showalter . . .

fort Zones.”

#### Additional Comments:

I am proud to be associated with Mid-Prairie which provided not only myself with a great education but my son and daughter as well. Both Vicky and I have some great memories of Mid-Prairie both as high school students and also as teachers in the school system. Mid-Prairie is an amazing place that helped to shape my career.

Showalter has coached the following NBA Players during his career.

- Jabari Parker - Milwaukee Bucks
- Brad Beal - Washington Wizards
- Andre Drummond - Detroit Pistons
- Stanley Johnson - Detroit Pistons
- Justice Winslow - Miami Heat
- Jahlil Okafor - Philadelphia 76er's
- Tyus Jones - Minnesota Timberwolves
- Justin Anderson - Dallas Mavericks
- Rhonde Hollis-Jefferson - Brooklyn Nets
- Johnny O'Bryant - Milwaukee Bucks
- Tony Wroten - Philadelphia 76er's
- James McAdoo - Golden State Warriors
- Marques Teague - Chicago Bulls

- Doug McDermott - Chicago Bulls
- Kyle Anderson - San Antonio Spurs
- Josh Jackson - Phoenix Suns
- Jayson Tatum - Boston Celtics
- Henry Ellenson - Detroit Pistons
- Ivan Rabb - Memphis Grizzlies
- Quinn Cook - Golden State Warriors
- Justin Jackson - Sacramento Kings
- Kevin Knox - New York Knicks
- Colin Sexton - Cleveland Cavs
- Gary Trent Jr - Portland Trailblazers
- Wendell Carter - Chicago Bulls
- Jaren Jackson - Memphis Grizzlies
- Troy Brown - Washington Wizards
- Jared Vanderbilt - Denver Nuggets

# Recipes for Success

## Alumni Pursue Culinary Arts Careers

### MPHS Features State of the Art Kitchen Facility



When the Mid-Prairie facilities committee began their needs assessment ahead of the most recent Mid-Prairie bond issue, 'doing something to update the old home ec. rooms' was given as a possibility. The department, now known as Family and Consumer Sciences, had grown over the years to have one full-time teacher and one half-time teacher and the space had not been changed or updated since the high school was built in 1962. Marlinda Beachy and **Glenda Seward '74** had been teaching in the existing classroom spaces for a number of years and had spent a good amount of time discussing and creating a vision for the future.

While the emphasis in FCS will always be on supporting and promoting healthy children and family units, it has broadened to emphasize career development in FCS-related areas, including culinary arts and hospitality. Beachy and Seward used professional days to visit other high schools around the state that had updated FCS programs and more professional-styled kitchens, including Pella High School, Cedar Rapids Washington, and Des Moines Central Campus. From these visits, evolved a clear vision for a culinary lab at Mid-Prairie that would enable students to learn skills that would serve them well both in home kitchens and in culinary careers. It is truly said that every skill needed to work in a home kitchen can be learned in a professional kitchen, but not every skill needed to perform well in a professional kitchen can be learned in a home-styled kitchen. With the help of professional kitchen designers, an entirely new space was created to house an industry-standard culinary lab, complete with all the equipment needed for students to learn professional-level culinary skills.

The already large number of

students interested in taking FCS courses grew even larger, to the point where the half-time FCS position morphed into another full-time position, which for a school our size is phenomenal. As the vision developed, it became clear that the culinary lab would be an asset not only to the school district but to the community as well, with the potential to offer cooking classes of all sorts to the community and enable students to develop industry-ready culinary skills. In addition to funds generated by the bond issue, a \$100,000 grant was awarded by the Washington County Riverboat Foundation to equip the space.

While there are some facilities similar, Mid-Prairie is the only school in the state that has a Concurrent Culinary Program with Kirkwood, allowing high school students to earn college credit.

The following courses are currently offered at MP.

#### **Non Kirkwood Community College:**

**Basic Foods:** Basic kitchen concepts that everyone should know are covered in this class. Ex. measuring, reading and understanding how to work through recipes, making simple meals, how to prepare all types of food (the basic food groups), etc.

#### **Kirkwood Community College Concurrent Classes: (3 credits each)**

**Safety and Sanitation:** Students have to take and pass this class, as well as passing a National Certification Exam (ServSafe Exam) before being allowed to move on to other classes.



#### **Kitchen Essentials/Culinary**

**Techniques:** These two classes are taken during the same semester, KE for the first 4.5 weeks of the semester and CT for the second 4.5 weeks. KE focuses on mastering knife skills and preparing one-dish meals with the knife cuts they have practiced. CT focuses on specific cooking techniques and has a lab based around each technique: Broiling, Saute, Pan-frying, Deep-frying, Poaching, Simmering, Roasting, Baking, Braising, and Boiling.

**Food Fundamentals:** This course reviews all of the techniques in KE/CT but incorporates those techniques into full-meal preparation.

**Bakery Basics:** All basic bakery techniques are covered. Examples of lab topics are: Cheesecakes, Dessert Sauces, Custards, Croissants, Quick Bread, Crisps, Cobblers, Fruit Pie, Cream Pie, Tarts, Pate a Choux (Cream Puffs), Cake Decoration, Yeast Breads.

# Riverside Casino in good hands with Zeph Leaton '02

**Describe your current job and responsibilities and what you like/dislike.**

My current job title is Executive Chef at Riverside Casino and Golf Resort. I manage a staff of 75 people and oversee operations of five restaurants and our banquet facility, as well as food service operations on the golf course during the season. This involves but is not limited to, menu writing, costing, budgeting, scheduling, ordering, hiring, firing and cooking when needed for all outlets. I have been the executive chef for 9 years.

I have won awards for my food in several Iowa Culinary Competitions including a silver and 3 bronze medals for culinary creations and a gold medal for a formed sugar centerpiece sculpture.

I also serve on the board of directors for the the Iowa Restaurant Association.

**What were your steps from high school graduation to now?**

During and after high school, I spent my time working in local kitchens in Iowa City and Coralville. I chose to enter the workforce and gain my knowledge through hands-on experience in the restaurant industry. Our field is one of the few left where you can go from zero experience to the top with no formal education. Through the years I have made it a point to challenge myself to learn and grow on my own by reading, practicing my craft, and involving myself with food in any way I can through travel, competitions, charitable events, seminars, or any other opportunity to experience food or management.

**How did you become interested in culinary arts? What are the best parts or favorite foods to make?**



Photo provided

Zeph Leaton is the Executive Chef at Riverside Casino and Golf Resort.

I was raised in a family of cooks. My parents owned a restaurant and bakery when I was growing up and naturally I was exposed to food service almost daily from a young age. When it was time for me to find a job, this opened doors for me to get into the kitchen where I was able to realize the natural talent I had for cooking and operating businesses.

**What are your future goals in the field?**

Continue to work every day at learning and growing as a chef and operator to ensure I am ready for the next challenge or opportunity that may present itself.

**What Mid-Prairie memories do you have? What did you appreciate, gain, or learn from your time there?**

Most of what I have learned to appreciate about Mid-Prairie came after leaving school and having children that are now in the district. As a parent and member of the community, I see the attention and

care that the district has for its students and families. I appreciate having such an amazing school available to my children where they can flourish and find their own path to success.

I know that many of the teachers may remember having me in their classes and will tell you that I was an exceptional student that always gave 100%! I was also very funny! I would make it a point to lighten the mood of any situation I was in and this is what helped me prepare for the career I have now that challenges me every day! I wish I had the professional culinary lab that is available at the school now, but I'm thankful I had the amazing teacher and facility I did have even if I didn't realize it then. My favorite memory from high school, aside from

meeting my amazing wife, Samatha, there, would probably be the day I graduated, and shaking hands with Peter Cavanagh. Never would I have thought that I would understand years later the patience and restrained investment needed to mentor someone to challenge themselves to rise above. This is a tool I use every day in my field to develop individuals into something and someone they can be proud of. That's memory one, now memory two would probably be doing smokey burnouts in the parking lot in the Berlinetta!

**Tell us about your family, hobbies or other things you'd like to share.**

My wife, Samantha, and I live just outside Wellman with our two children Niah and Nasya, both of whom attend Mid-Prairie. In my free time I am an avid musician and car enthusiast. We enjoy traveling, eating good food, listening to good music and spending time with friends.

# Shane Durian '04 in charge behind the scenes

## **Describe your current job and responsibilities and likes/dislikes.**

I am the Director of Culinary Operations for 30hop. Essentially I oversee the chefs and back of house functions. This role was created when 30hop decided to open a second location in Cedar Rapids with the potential to open more in the future.



I have been in this role for almost 6 months. My primary responsibilities include mentoring chefs and cooks, creating good company culture, menu and recipe development, and back of house cost management (food and labor being the big ones). What I really like is being able to work on some of the big picture items such as company growth, major event planning, and helping employees reach their goals and potential. This position does require more administrative work so sometimes I do miss just cooking in the kitchen.

## **What were your steps from high school graduation to now?**

My path to my position is not unlike a lot of people in the industry. I started off as a dishwasher when I was 18 and moved out of my parents' home to go to college. After a couple of years I realized it was the career for me and I dropped out of college to pursue cooking more seriously. I've worked my way up from there. I tried to work at successful, independent restaurants to gain as much knowledge and experience as possible. I also quickly realized the value of reading and cooking from some of the best chef's cookbooks. Knowing how much there will always be to learn about food and management keeps me driven to continually grow.

## **How did you become interested in culinary arts? What are the best parts or favorite foods to make?**

There are some key memories I have that I didn't realize their impact at the time, but they were the

beginning of love and excitement for food and flavors. I remember loving tomatoes from my Grandma's garden and would always be blown away by how much better

they were. I remember trying my Uncle Pat's marinade for his ribeyes and it being so good (I now know it's because of umami) that I ate spoonfuls of it straight from the bottle. Trying balsamic vinegar for the first time was also a game changer and after that I just wanted to try more ingredients and different cuisines. Eating and developing your palate is a huge part of cooking skills. Now I try to have as many food experiences as possible to help shape who I am as a chef, anything from trying pupusas sold on the street to dining at top restaurants in the country. It's all very exciting and interesting to me.

Some of my favorite things about my job are the people and teamwork. People from many different countries and backgrounds work in restaurants and getting to know them and learning their stories has significantly shaped me. I've always enjoyed cooking professionally in kitchens because it is team oriented. You've got to help each other out and have each other's backs. Everyone has the same goal and we work together to reach it.

I don't think that I have a favorite food to make, although currently I gravitate towards Mexican flavors. What I really enjoy is making something that requires a lot of technique or care. Then it's really rewarding when it turns out!

## **What are your future goals?**

I would like to be an owner of multiple restaurants one day. Preferably



Photo provided  
Shane Durian, left, is the Director of Culinary Operations for 30hop.

they would be very different concepts from each other to keep myself growing and learning as a chef. I would also like to be in a position to help people around me achieve their goals as well.

## **What Mid-Prairie memories do you have? What did you appreciate, gain or learn from your time there?**

There are a lot of great things I could say about Mid-Prairie. I'm very grateful to have attended a smaller school. I got the chance to really get to know a lot of amazing human beings and some of the most important people in my life today are people I went to Mid-Prairie with. This taught me a lot about community and fostering relationships. I also can't thank the teachers enough. They always pushed me to do well even when I wasn't sure what the next step was. They took the time to explain that no matter what I chose to do in life, I need to do it one hundred percent and I should be happy doing it. I realize more now that I am older that Mid-Prairie really is a special place!

## **Tell us about your family, hobbies or things you'd like to share.**

When I'm not working I enjoy anything outside (disc golf especially), reading, playing guitar, and playing pool. Most of all I love to spend time with my wife and two kids. We enjoy cooking, movie night, and going on short vacations.

# You'll find Oliver Hassman '10 at Kalona Brewing Company

## **Describe your current job and responsibilities and likes/dislikes.**

I am the Executive Chef at the Kalona Brewing Company. I run day-to-day operations in the kitchen ranging from ordering food from vendors and local farmers to creating menus for the restaurant and special events. I have been employed here for 5 months.

## **What were your steps from high school graduation to now?**

After Mid-Prairie High School, I attended Kirkwood for their great Culinary Arts Program. While in school, I worked at The Mill (Iowa City) for a year and a half as a line cook. After The Mill, I was employed by Vesta (Coralville) as a line cook, worked my way up to Sous Chef, then eventually Head Chef. I was employed by Vesta for 6 years, learning the ropes on caterings, wine tastings, and beer dinners. Attending Kirkwood brought me a great amount of knowledge from all the variety of classes that were available, from international cuisines to fabrications and baking. The Culinary Arts Program is in the same building as Kirkwood's Hotel and event center where students take classes in their restaurant and event center for hands-on learning.

## **How did you become interested in culinary arts? What are the best parts or favorite foods to make?**

My interest in culinary arts didn't come until I was a senior in high school trying to figure out where to go to college and for what. I have always been hands-on and wanted to pick a career path that was able to let me do different things every day while working on my feet and with my hands. Both of my parents have worked in hospitality on and off their whole life and that is what inspired me to pursue a career in culinary arts. Once I got a job working in a kitchen, I quickly learned that I really enjoyed and appreciated all the hard work that goes into your typical day and knew

it was the right path for me. The best things about being a Chef is the ability to be creative when it comes to your dishes. I like to get inspired by a dish that I read or see and twist things around to have my own touch. Another appreciated part about my job

is having every one of my employees come together and work as a team.

It builds a comradery and makes coming to work every day all that much more enjoyable. Having a specific food or cuisine that is my favorite to cook is difficult to narrow down. I enjoy working with various types of meats and proteins along with creating new pizzas because everyone can enjoy a pizza.

## **What are your future goals?**

My future goal is to continue to grow working with farmers around the community. Supporting local businesses really helps a town keep growing. Eventually I would like to own my own restaurant with my older brother, Jeremy Hassman, who is also in the hospitality industry.

## **What Mid-Prairie memories do you have? What did you appreciate, gain or learn while there?**

Some of my best memories while at Mid-Prairie would be the support for athletics.

Learning from Don Showalter and making it to state basketball. Mr. Cavanagh's football teams helped the



Photo provided

Kalona Brewing Company's Executive Chef, Oliver Hassman, is busy preparing meals in the kitchen.

players enjoy football all that much more and watching Mid-Prairie's track team break a national record at state track. Being a part of athletics has helped me to know how to bring people together and feel like a team in my profession. Watching and knowing the teachers has also helped me to learn how to educate my staff and make things enjoyable so that my staff is eager to come to work every day as well.

## **Tell us about your family, hobbies or other things you'd like to share.**

I have one older brother (Jeremy Hassman) that attended IMS and also has been working in hospitality for years including some time being a captain server at a worldwide known restaurant called Blue Hill at Stone Barns out in New York. I also have one younger sister, Lydia Runquist, that also attended Mid-Prairie who got married over this last summer to Caleb Runquist. They live in Washington D.C. where Caleb is stationed in the military. Outside of work, I enjoy playing golf as much as possible, working out at my gym, and eating at restaurants around the area.



# Kelsey Gent Byrnes '08 deepens early kitchen roots

**Describe your current job and responsibilities and what you like/dislike.**

**Full-time job:** Consumer Outreach Director at Iowa Pork

**Fun “side gig”:** Blogger behind [dancearoundthekitchen.com](http://dancearoundthekitchen.com)

As the Consumer Outreach Director at Iowa Pork, I’m in charge of our social media and youth programs. With our lean staff, we all wear numerous hats and stay busy with various events throughout the year. I spend a lot of my time on our social media strategy sharing recipes with our consumers, telling them about the great things pig farmers are doing in their communities, and to help them better understand where their food comes from. I’m also in charge of our youth programs including the Iowa Pork Youth Team contest, scholarships, internships, and various youth events. These youth are the future of the pork industry, so my goal is to push these young individuals to get more involved and excited about the future of the industry.

I’m also the food blogger behind the website [dancearoundthekitchen.com](http://dancearoundthekitchen.com). This little side gig began just a couple months ago as my creative outlet and a reason to develop recipes and improve my food photography skills. It’s been so fun to hear people say they made my recipe

and their family loved it – being able to provide recipes to get the family together for dinner is the best! It also helps me better understand social media for my current role at Iowa Pork, where I work with various food bloggers from around the US.

**What were your steps from high school graduation to now?**

After graduating from MPHS in 2008, I attended Iowa State University to obtain my bachelor’s degree in food science. Throughout my college career I had four internships, but fell

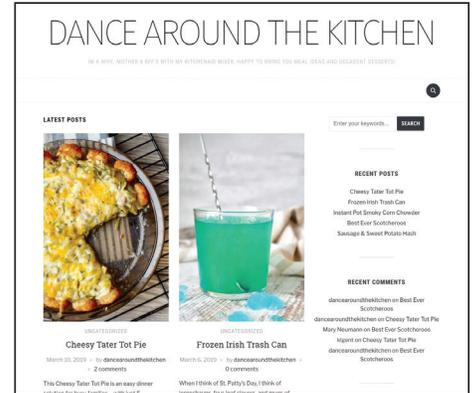
in love with the culture and work I was involved in at Johnsonville Sausage. Therefore, when I graduated from ISU, I moved to Sheboygan Falls, WI to begin my career as a sensory scientist at Johnsonville. As a sensory scientist I was essentially the liaison between the product developers and our consumers. I helped develop and run consumer taste panels across the US (and one in Japan) to better understand what our consumers wanted in a certain product category. Then I’d summarize the data and present it to the developers

and management, recommending next steps. With that job I was also able to develop new recipes to go on our website, oversee competitive product analysis, and be involved in taste tests (sometimes up to 6 times a day!). During my time in Sheboygan, I also obtained my Masters



Photo provided

Delicious looking treats and recipes fill the Dance Around the Kitchen blog.



Be sure to visit and try a recipe at [dancearoundthekitchen.com](http://dancearoundthekitchen.com)

degree in Food Science through a distance learning program at Kansas State University. At the time, my (now) husband was working on the east coast and I was up north, so we made the decision to move to central Iowa, closer to family and each other. When we moved back, I became the Test Kitchen Manager at PurFoods in Ankeny for a year and then decided to go off on my own as a consultant. During this time, I did various projects for a few different companies including sensory work and recipe testing. Although I loved the work, I missed human interaction on a daily basis, so began looking for full-time work. The Consumer Outreach Position at Iowa Pork was open and after learning more about the position (and knowing it was a bit of a career change) I decided to give it a shot! Although I really enjoy my job, I had really missed working more closely with food. Therefore, I recently started a food blog, [dancearoundthekitchen.com](http://dancearoundthekitchen.com), to be that creative outlet and to let my passion for food and recipes shine!

**How did you become interested in culinary arts? What are the best parts or favorite foods to make?**

I’m so lucky to have a mom and two grandmas who are all fantastic cooks – their guidance and abilities in the kitchen ultimately inspired me to become more involved in food and make it into a career. Some

of my fondest memories of my youth were in the kitchen and at the dance studio (hence the name of my blog!). I remember all four of us kids lined up on chairs, taking turns adding ingredients to the KitchenAid mixer. We'd argue over who cracked the egg, who measured the flour, and of course who got to lick the spoon! Mom taught me how to make banana bread, cookies, bars, and to-go food for the farmers in the field; Grandma G taught me how to make killer kolaches and decadent pies, and Grandma U taught me how to make the perfect buttercream and how to decorate cakes.

In my role at Iowa Pork, I love organizing video shoots for new recipes and promoting pork on social media. It's really neat to be working in a place that connects me back to my family. My dad, brothers, father-in-law, and many uncles and cousins are in the pig farming business so it's cool knowing that what I'm doing in the office is affecting those I care about and respect so much. When I'm working on my blog, I really enjoy the recipe development and am loving the challenge of taking beautiful photos and writing engaging posts. Although I really enjoy making about anything in the kitchen, I love baking most of all (probably due to my persistent sweet tooth!).

**What are your future goals in the field?**

If you would have told me 10 years ago that I'd be working for Iowa Pork and have a food blog, I would have laughed and said "yeah right." It's funny how life has its way of closing one door and opening another one that is greater than you had ever envisioned. Although I always looked up to the hard work my family does on the farm, I never imagined I'd be connected to the pork industry like I am today. A few months ago, National Pork Board gave me the opportunity to



Photos provided

Left: Kelsey and her siblings gather around the KitchenAid mixer taking turns adding ingredients. Right: Kelsey and her husband, Zach, and daughter, McKinley, live in Ankeny.

visit Google Headquarters to better understand their technologies and learn what we can do better in the digital space. This has really inspired me to continue to learn about digital strategies to spend our Pork Check-off dollars in the best way possible. I'm looking forward to seeing what I can do to better our efforts at Iowa Pork. My goals for Dance Around the Kitchen is to continue to grow the blog, learn more about search engine optimization, improve my food photography, and ultimately inspire others to spend time in the kitchen creating memories with their families. Eventually, we plan to move up to my husband's family farm to raise our children and be involved in the farm operation. Although we love being in Ankeny, we are excited to be back in a rural community someday where we can send our children to a smaller school (hopefully as great as Mid-Prairie!!). :)

**What Mid-Prairie memories do you have? What did you appreciate, gain or learn from your time there?**

I came to Mid-Prairie in 6th grade and immediately felt like I was surrounded by a caring teaching staff and kind classmates. Looking back on my time at Mid-Prairie, I'm grateful for all the opportunities I was given, specifically in high school. Being in Mrs. Beachy's food classes solidified my love for being in the kitchen, Mrs. Jones' biology class challenged

me and gave me an appreciation for science, "Manson" (Mrs. Kirchoff) helped light a spark of creativity within me in art classes, and Mr. Pennington helped with the "real life stuff" and making sure I was on a path to set myself up for success. Having numerous AP classes available was a great way to prepare for my future. They taught me to study hard, focus in class, and reach out if I needed more help on an assignment. Therefore, going into college, I felt like I was well-prepared.

**Tell us about your family, hobbies or other things you'd like to share.**

My husband, Zach, and I live in Ankeny with our 1 ½ year old daughter, McKinley. Zach works for Precision Livestock Analytics in Ames and helps out on the family farm in northern Iowa in the spring and fall. Being in central Iowa has the perk of being close to some of our best friends (& the ISU Cyclones!) and being halfway between both sets of parents allows for frequent trips home to see family. In my free time, you can find me outside running, pushing McKinley on the swing set, or "dancing around the kitchen!"

**Blog information:**

**Website:**

[www.dancearoundthekitchen.com](http://www.dancearoundthekitchen.com)

**Facebook:**

Dance Around The Kitchen

**Instagram:**

dancearoundthekitchen2019

# Patty Gingerich Mishler '69 creator of MeemawEats.com



Hey Fellow Golden Hawks...I'm Patty Gingerich Mishler from the class of 1969!

It's an honor to be asked to share an update since our high school graduation.



1969 MP Yearbook  
Patty Mishler

In fact, our class is about to celebrate our 50th Class Reunion this August, God willing! And since I was selected to profile for this publication, you're actually getting a "Two for One Deal" since I married my high school sweetheart and 1969 MP classmate Fred Mishler. That's right...TWO alums for the price of one!

Fred and I married in 1971, and we lived in Oregon and California before we returned to Iowa City where we raised two wonderful sons named Aaron and Nick.



Fred spent 30 years as a UPS driver in the

Wellman, Kalona and Washington areas where he made many friends through the years, including these two!



Since his retirement he now enjoys helping folks by sharing his amazing skills as a handyman. He truly is a jack of all trades...but he's also a master of many! He even won an award from the Iowa City Historical Preservation Committee last year for his painting and historical building preservation skills.

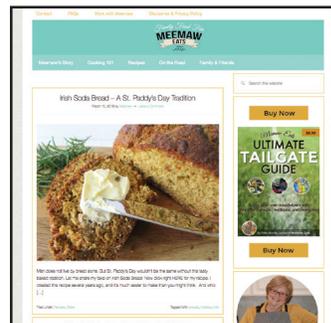
Our sons and their wonderful wives have blessed us with SEVEN grandchildren who truly are the light of our lives.



As those grandkids began to grow up, and I love spending time making good food (and memories) in the kitchen, I began to realize how many of MY childhood memories could be traced back to FOOD. What we ate...where we ate it...and what folks were gathered

around the table to share those meals. That's when I decided I needed to begin to document those family recipes, stories and photos so those special parts of my life would live on, long after I'm gone. In fact, I call my blog my love letter to our grandchildren.

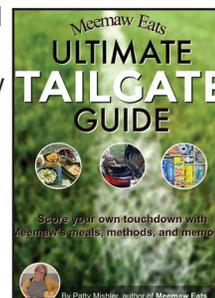
You can find my family recipes, travel tips, hotel and restaurant reviews and my childhood stories on my website at



MeemawEats.com.

(You guessed it...I was named "Meemaw" by some of our grands...and Fred is known as "Peepaw.")

And even though I'm no longer a "spring chicken", I have made every effort to stay connected in all the new-fangled ways that are now available to us. You'll also find Meemaw Eats on Instagram, Twitter and on my very own Meemaw Eats Facebook page. Heck, I'm even an author since I've written my very own tailgating



eBook cookbook!

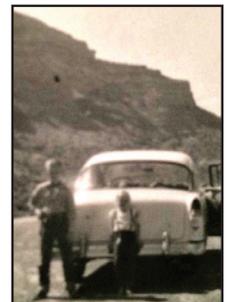
Both cooking and travel have been a big part of my life since...forever.

My mom was an amazing cook, and my love of "all things kitchen" started by watching and learning from her.

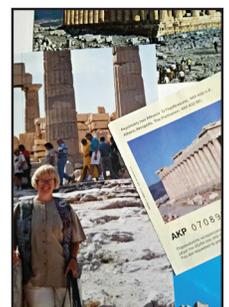


Mom and Dad took my brother and me on many road trips, including adventures on the back roads of America...all the way from Iowa to California. On two lane roads.

With no air conditioning. Prone to car sickness. In the back seat. With my brother Tom. (And we're still on speaking terms to this day!)



My years spent as a cruise specialist in the travel industry allowed me to experience fine dining and cuisines in many places throughout the world.



These days, ANY



kitchen is my “Happy Place” as I attempt to recreate those amazing food memories and create new ones. I simply love to cook, whether I’m in our Iowa City kitchen or spending our winter “snowbird” months at our Fort Lauderdale condo.

And Fred and I will drive miles out of our way to find the best little Mom and Pop diners as we are always in search of the road less traveled.



Several years ago I was contacted by Kirkwood Community College to teach culinary classes. My classes were a little bit unusual since I found ways to teach my students how to cook an entire meal during class time so I could sit down and share the meal with them before the class was over. Some of life’s best discussions are enjoyed around a dining table, and my adult students loved the idea of getting to know new “foodie friends” over a plate of food they had just learned how to prepare! One of my favorite class topics was Cooking With Fresh Herbs. (Just Google these words

Meemaw Eats Cooking With Fresh Herbs to see the photos and read all about that class.)

My culinary classes for kids began by teaching my young chefs all about clean hands and tied-back hair. They learned to wash their hands with plenty of soap while singing the “Happy Birthday” song to make sure they spent enough time on that important task. (Just Google Meemaw Eats Kids In The Kitchen to see how fun and easy it is to find kitchen tasks children can learn...and at a very young age!) My kids’ culinary classes even included learning to set the table correctly, and how to use good manners too!

After a few years I ended my Kirkwood offerings since it’s lots of work and heavy lifting to transport all the ingredients and supplies to a certified kitchen, but I continue to cook with our grandkids every chance I get.



I still make an annual visit to Iowa City Regina High School to teach a class on identifying and cooking with fresh herbs. Last year I expanded that once per year herbs class to the students at City High School as well. At the end of those classes I serve two kinds of herb-laced breads I prepare

during the class for the students. After all, who doesn’t love the idea of eating their homework? (Google Meemaw Eats Herb Bread With Dill Seed).

Our road trips have taken us all across America, and we love the Pinot Noir wine region in the Willamette Valley of Oregon where we used to live. You can read all about those vineyard



adventures by clicking on the Oregon tab at Meemaw Eats.com.

Last year I was honored to have one of my food photos (Bacon Wrapped Asparagus) shared on the ABC TV show called The Chew.



I also had the pleasure of making enough Key Lime Pie to serve 200 guests for a charity event last summer!



But no matter what kitchen I’m in, or where our travels lead us, or what foods we savor along the way... Fred and I can trace our family’s history right back to the hallowed halls of Mid Prairie High School. I have such fond memories of my high school years. I was a cheerleader, a saxophone carrying band member, and a thespian, and I loved my time in the footlights...especially as the lead in our production of the musical, Finian’s Rainbow. Those school memories include all of the wonderful teachers who did their best to teach us many of the skills we still use today...almost 50 years later! Yes, those Mid Prairie memories will stay with me forever. And sharing those same memories with my classmate/husband of nearly 48

years is an added bonus. What an amazing journey it has been...and continues to be.

So Bon Appetit...and join us on our Road Less Traveled Adventures!



# Paul Swank leaves lasting impression

Paul Swank was a long-time teacher of Agriculture Education at Mid-Prairie for 28 years, from 1964 through 1992.

Swank received his Bachelors in Science and Masters of Science degrees from Iowa State University.

He served in the United States Navy after World War II and continued in the Navy Reserves for 40 years until retiring in 1986 with the rank of Captain.

Mr. Swank passed away in 2015, but his legacy as a teacher has long succeeded him.

During his time at Mid-Prairie he believed in his students and encouraged them to improve and try new things. He not only cared about their classroom performance, but his students' path after graduation.

## By Brent Reschly '89

I am not sure my words can do justice to summarize the life of a teacher that affected so many lives over the years. Mr. Swank was an exceptional teacher who cared deeply about his students and their success well after the classroom and graduation. He believed and supported all of his students, regardless of their background or situation. He encouraged (sometimes "voluntold") his students to try out for the various FFA sponsored contests, leadership workshops, and scholarships. Mr. Swank could see qualities and traits in his students that they themselves many times could not. His encouragement led many students to step out of their comfort zones and explore the world. For some, that led to military service, for others the step to go to college, and for a small few (sometimes to their parent's dismay) leaving the country.

He was a firm believer in the FFA Work Experience Abroad program and getting boys and girls out of Iowa to experience the world. It sometimes takes going half way around the world to learn to appreciate the life you left behind.

My favorite memories include soil judging, speech contests, FFA state and national conventions, FFA Color Guard, and of course, fruit sales. And how could I forget the numerous trips in the blue school station wagon where we played rock, paper, and scissors to see who had to sit in the suicide seat in the back. I attended the FFA Washington Conference Program in 1988 at the urging of Mr. Swank. It was a week-long leadership program where we met some of our representatives and senators wearing official dress in 100 degree heat. During this experience in D.C., I made friends that I have kept for over 30 years. Upon return, Mr. Swank urged me to apply for the Congress-Bundestag Scholarship to study in Germany for a



year. I was one of 102 students selected to study abroad that year. This was still the Cold War and while there were signs of the USSR changing, it had not happened yet. While in Germany, I got to experience the historic event of the Berlin Wall opening and the collapse of the East German government.

Without Mr. Swank's constant mentoring and pushing his students out of their comfort zones, I would never have had the opportunity to experience this. This trip turned out to be the first of many for me. I feel very honored and lucky to have had Mr. Swank as a mentor and a friend.

His support led me to many far places, where I have had the opportunity to meet and work with a variety of people and cultures. These experiences have made me the person I am today.

# Alumni Report



Left: John and Carolyn by the Rock of Gibraltar. Middle: On the set of the David Letterman show. Top right: Orr with friend Glen Campbell at a golf tourney. Bottom right: Pictured with a Cuban cab in Havana, Cuba. The cab is a 1941 Ford.

## John Orr

### *Palm Coast, Florida*

**Name:** John Orr  
**Graduation Year:** 1964  
**Spouse:** Carolyn  
**Wedding Date:** 6/20/1969  
**Children:** Courtney, Trenton  
**Grandchildren:** 6 grandchildren

#### What have you been doing since you graduated from MP?

After my wife and I graduated from Central College, we became Iowa school teachers. I coached football and track and taught high school psychology. Carolyn taught first grade at Mid-Prairie in Wellman. Four years of teaching and being paid \$6,000 for teaching and \$400 for coaching football, led me to look at another profession—selling television advertising at the ABC affiliate in the Quad Cities. From there up the chain, I went to TV in New York City.



1964 MP Yearbook Senior picture

Over the years, my hobbies and activities have included being the national tournament director/master of ceremonies of Compass Rose (CIA) Charity Golf Gala, Langley, Virginia. I handled worldwide press and Today

Show for the Charla Nash (chimpanzee attack in Connecticut) face and double hand transplant. I am the co-owner of a Russian submersible for private deep-sea exploration. I traveled the world with my career in television.

While in television in Illinois, selling TV advertising, we started the Iowa television network for delayed broadcast of University of Iowa football and basketball in the '70s – '80s. I joined Lorimar Productions in Hollywood (Dallas, Falcon Crest, Knott's Landing, and Alf) to work throughout their television stations around the country. Lorimar became Warner Brothers and Warner Brothers became Time Warner.

In the early years, I produced many sporting events including golf, football, basketball, and regular programming. My career led me to New York City, where I was chosen by Time Warner to launch local cable news in the United States. I commuted weekly to London from my office in New York City to launch cable television and news in the United Kingdom.

After retirement from television, a friend of mine in Chicago, who was CEO of a national healthcare company, asked me if I could reinvent his sales organization like he had seen

me do before in television. I told him I knew nothing about healthcare, I was a TV guy. He said perfect, I will teach you healthcare. So, off to Chicago, we went. Today I remain active in consulting and public speaking.

**What do you do now?** Retired and live in Palm Coast, Florida and Stratford, CT. We travel the world and recently returned from Argentina, Uruguay, Chile and Dutch Antilles.

**What's an accomplishment you're proud of?** Shaped much of what is viewed today on television.

**What did you enjoy about Mid-Prairie and the community?** Small town living and values.

**What's a favorite school memory?** Playing football for MP.

#### Other Comments:

With a national profile in TV, I use my public speaking to enhance living in Iowa and a small community. I often speak to growing up in West Chester, Iowa. I often sit in a board room in New York City or London and think about how a small town guy from Iowa ever ended up here.

# Golden Hawk Highlights

## Common Grounds now serving!



Common Grounds Coffee Shop is now serving hot beverages to staff and students at the high school. The purpose of the coffee shop is so students can learn work skills and real-life situations in a structured and supportive environment before entering the workforce. The goal is to help students learn the skills they need to succeed as adults.

Mid-Prairie received a grant from the Washington County Riverboat Foundation to help in both creating the coffee shop and remodeling the library.

Currently, Common Grounds is open from 7:50-8:15 a.m. each morning for students and staff. Occasionally the shop will open by request from teachers for their classes or other staff for various meetings.

For more information or to be a part of this special project, please contact Traci Zahradnek, [tzahradnek@mphawks.org](mailto:tzahradnek@mphawks.org).

## Back to Back Champions



The Mid-Prairie girls won their second straight Class 2A cross country title with Marie Hostetler winning the individual title.

## Mid-Prairie Special Olympics competes



The Mid-Prairie Special Olympics team competed in bowling this fall. Thank you to the Mid-Prairie Foundation for donating the team uniforms.



## Boucher finishes 6th in State

Junior Isaac Boucher finished in 2nd place at Districts to qualify for State in the 195 lb. class.

Boucher finished 6th in the State Wrestling Meet. His record for the year was 38-7.

# Alumni continue on at Mid-Prairie



Photo by Dain Jeppson

A total of 49 alumni continue the mission of excellence in education and are on staff at Mid-Prairie Community School District. *Front row left to right:* Terri Huber Adam '99, Cherie Yoder Miller '75, Brooke Steckly Bringman '14, Lisa Ruegsegger Steckly '82, Karen Boone Fair '84, Sheila Yoder Raim, Lucas Troyer '06. *Second Row:* Collette Conway McClellan '97, Carrie Stutzman Schweitzer '05, Jillian Pock Wilson '95, Natalie Nye Silbaugh '09, Shelli Tobin Stafford '98, Becca Roush Droll '02, Kathy Beckley Miller '80. *Third Row:* Renee Rourke Fisher '93, Matt Freel '05, Melissa Stumpf Gerot '04, Sue Huntsberger Schweinfurth '81, Kristene McCall '07, Justin Barthelman '07. *Back Row:* Andrea Lemke Farrier '98, Sarah Gent O'Rourke '05, Bill Pock '89, Kelby Bender '91, Glenda Ladehoff Seward '74, Chris Kern '80, Jeff Murphy '83. *Not pictured:* Coralie Kelley Miller '84, Melissa Ulin Rediger '95, Teresa Butterbaugh Hartley '98, Cindy Malichky '78, Jaynie Litwiller Bontrager '82, Todd Troyer '82, Ryan Duwa '01, Joyce Marner Billups '79, Mike TeBockhorst '82, Jordan TeBockhorst '08, Melody Crawford Black '82, Wendy Redlinger Klosterman '74, Amber Kempf '99, Tracy Fisher '87, Jean Figgins Jamieson '68, Tom Ulin '73, Tom Duwa '73, Taylor Gordon '13, Candelina Schumann Helmuth '90, Lori Horesowsky Schrock '81, Jeremiah Lassy '14.

## MP cousins head to the lake



Photos submitted

Cousins **Terry TeBockhorst '62** (top left), **Judy Allen Walling '73** (top right), **Mike TeBockhorst '82** (bottom left) and **Larry TeBockhorst '86** (bottom right) enjoyed a fishing trip to Ontario, Canada this summer.

## Friends gather for Tractorcade



Photo submitted

Jim Cuddeback gathered friends and classmates last June to watch the WMT Tractorcade from his yard, five miles west of Washington. They watched more than 400 antique tractors drive by. Seated (left to right) are former MP teacher, Gary Murphy and class of 1966 members Paul Millice, Gary Kos and Jim Cuddeback.

# Alumni News & Notes

## Weddings



**Jared Gent '12** and Natalee Enfield of Washington were married on November 24, 2018. They currently live in Kalona.



**Delaney Cady '16** and **Jayse Horning '13** were married on October 13, 2018 at The Barn in Wellman with a reception at Parkside following. The couple resides in Wellman.



**Emily Stout '04** and Corey Meier of Stanton, were married July 21, 2018 in Norwalk. The couple resides in West Des Moines where Corey is a Sous Chef. Emily plans to pursue nursing after previously teaching for five years.



**Naomi Clouse '15** and Lucas Ohrt of Marshalltown, were engaged on November 17, 2018. The couple has set a wedding date of August 31, 2019 in Marshalltown. They currently reside in Liscomb, where Naomi is finishing her Social Work degree at UNI and Lucas works at Cycle Force, a bicycle warehouse company in Ames.



**Stacey Beeler '07** and Jason Cavey were married February 23, 2019 at The Newman Catholic Student Center in Iowa City. A reception was held at The Celebration Farm. The couple resides in Cedar Rapids.



**Kyle Mullet '12** and Becca Ohland of Sigourney were married on November 3, 2018. The couple now happily resides in Kalona.



**Courtney Hersberger '15** and Berke Roth of Milford, Nebraska, were married December 1, 2018 in Kalona. They now reside in Milford, Nebraska where Berke is a dairy farmer. Courtney is a massage therapist in Seward, Nebraska.



**Melody Miller '06** and Fikeveni Dlamini, both of Mbabane, Swaziland, were married Aug. 11, 2018 at Potters Wheel Church in Mbabane, Swaziland. Melody works at a non-profit as a nurse and also in discipleship and counseling.

## Births



**Stefany Shalla Lawrence '05** and Justin Lawrence, DeWitt, Michigan, celebrated the birth of their third daughter, Annalise, born January 28, 2018. She was welcomed home by her sisters Emmarie, 5, and Olivia, 3.

## In Memory

**Thomas Bailey '62** died Feb. 16, 2019.

**Keith Davisson '71** died March 22, 2019.

**David Zahradnek '74** died April 9, 2019.

**Jerry Griffith '78** died Jan. 30, 2019

**Earl W. "Bill" Martin '67** died Oct. 31, 2018.

**Randy Miller '73** died March 23, 2019.

**John Berg '76** died Feb. 15, 2019

**Allie Guengerich, Former KE teacher 1971 - 1988** died April 8, 2019

# Alumni News & Notes

**Reid Kaalberg '13** graduated from the University of Iowa with an elementary education degree with endorsements in special education and reading. He is now a behavior-disorder teacher at Polk Alternative Education Center in Cedar Rapids.

**Jared Schneider '93**, was recently elected president of the Iowa State Sheriffs' and Deputies' Association. He began serving on the board in 2014 first as secretary and first vice president. Schneider is currently the Washington County Sheriff of which he was elected in 2016.



**Charlie Yoder '87** is currently serving as President-Elect of the Iowa Funeral Directors Association and will step into the President role in June 2019. Charlie Yoder is the funeral director at Yoder-Powell Funeral Home in Wellman and Kalona.



**Michelle Hochstedler Bates '85** was recently featured in The Cedar Rapids Gazette and spoke at Founders Fireside, a panel-style setting featuring business people. Bates started her company, BluPrairie Technologies in 2015 and its success led to its sale just three years later to its close-working partner, Involta, where she is now chief innovation officer.



**Gina Waters '18**, University of Iowa / Tippie College of Business Class of 2022 has accepted a full-time internship position at Northwestern Mutual working as a Financial Representative in Coralville. She has also been selected for the 12th Annual Principal Leadership Conference with Principal Financial Group in Des Moines.



**Jordan Ulin '15**, graduated from the Des Moines Police Department Regional Academy recently in its 77th recruit class. Jordan received the Highest Academic Award in his class. He will continue to work and serve the Des Moines community. Pictured above is Jordan being pinned by his father and retired police officer, **Tom Ulin '73**.



**Janis (Jan) Ruegsegger Rodgers '66**, and her late husband, Dean, were honored at the 2019 national Pony of the Americas Convention with the induction of their late stallion Tribute To Prince, into the POAC Hall of Fame. POAs are a breed of little horses with appaloosa color patterns, started in 1952, in Iowa. This is the 5th pony from their Rising R diamond program to be inducted. Diamond status is achieved by raising several ponies that achieve championships in all disciplines and levels of competition. "We started our program in 1978 with the goal of raising top performance ponies with a disposition suited for the youngest age child to adults. I still enjoy raising a few foals each year." Our nine grandchildren are all being educated in the Mid Prairie school district.

## Graduates still pursuing music

*continued from Fall 2018 issue*

**Justin Adam '08, New Hampton**

### Current position/responsibilities:

High School Band Director, assist middle school bands taught by my wife, Jenny.

### What about M-P influenced you?

Mid-Prairie and the teachers I've had gave me the opportunities to figure out my career path. I developed a love of music from the FANTASTIC music teachers I have had. I developed public speaking skills through acting in plays, musicals, and speech. I learned leadership skills from marching band. Mr. Brooks served as a great example of patience and humor! Mrs. Curtis taught me about responsibility. Mrs. McClellan taught me that I can, in fact, sing. Mr. Kunz provided me opportunities to learn about being a music educator and pushed me to work outside my comfort zone. My experiences at M-P helped show me who I wanted to be and I'm now trying to give those same positive experiences to the students in my band program.



**Andy Thompson '07, North Liberty**

### What you are doing in/with music

While still in high school I started playing music in my church and that has been a wonderful way to keep music as part of my life. I am now the musical director for two churches and I get to play at least once a week. I also have written a number of short plays and musicals that have been performed in churches locally. I also have played in a number of local bands in the last ten years.

### What about M-P influenced you?

M-P was my first introduction to music performance and I loved it from the start! Playing the trombone and singing in choir became my (really fun!) gateway to learning music theory and then other instruments. The various band, choir, and musical theater opportunities I had in high school just added fuel to my desire to keep getting better and to broaden my abilities. Overall, the support of all my teachers and the opportunities I had to learn and perform made me, in no small way, into the musician and person I am today!



# MID-PRAIRIE

*Alumni & Friends Association*

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