



MOUNT VERNON COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

ALUMNI NEWS

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Above, Kathy Staskal and Susan Mounts Fisher '65 at Kathy's retirement reception held during Heritage Days 2023. Read more about the reception on pages 4-5.

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The Mount Vernon Community School District Alumni Association is pleased to announce the following alums were selected as 2023 Alumni Hall of Fame winners. Pictured above left to right:

- Achievement – Jamil Farshchi 1996
- Fine Arts – Holly Gunn 2004
- Service – Sara Kendall 1978
- MV Community Impact – Mike Woods 1977
- Athletic– Jeff Meeker 1989

They received their awards during Homecoming weekend on Friday, September 29, 2023. Turn to page 6 for recipient bios and photos.

2024 Alumni-Friend Events

January 1-December 31 – A reminder that we have changed our calendar year for donations to January 1 through December 31. So, now is a great time to think about supporting one of your favorite organizations – the MV Alumni Association! See back page or visit mvalumni.org to log in and donate online. The Association Board is changing direction in regard to our dues/support structure. At this time we will be dropping the 1-year and 5-year support levels, and switching entirely to a yearly donation request.

May 1 – **DON'T DELAY** – Nominate an alum you think is deserving of a Service, Achievement, MV Community Impact, Fine Arts, or Athletic Hall of Fame award now! Who can nominate? ANYONE – you do not have to be an alum to nominate.

July 13 – Heritage Days in Mount Vernon with alumni events and reunions.

Fall 2024 tba – Homecoming and Alumni Hall of Fame Ceremony. More information about events in the Spring 2024 Alumni News issue.



525 Palisades Road SW
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or 319-721-7953
www.MVAlumni.org





Mustang ALUMNI



The Martha Parsons and Family Activities Complex (MAC) and the Armstrong Family Field were dedicated at this year's Homecoming

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ALUMNI NEWSLETTER is published twice yearly for alumni and friends of the Association. Views are those of the authors. Articles and advertisements (preferably digital) may be submitted by email to alumni@mvcgsd.org or by mail to 525 Palisades Road SW, Mount Vernon, IA 52314. All materials submitted are subject to review by the Alumni Association Communications Committee. For advertising rates write or call 319-895-8845.

MV Community Events

www.visitmvl.com
2024

- May - Chalk the Walk
- July - Antique Extravaganza
- July - Heritage Days
- Oct - Chili Cookoff
- December - Magical Night and more

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Cathy Hufford '83
Alumni Association
President

It is a pleasure and honor to begin my service as president of the Mount Vernon Alumni Association. Thank you to Andrew Morf for his 7 years of outstanding service as our President. Little did I know that when I ran into Andrew at the 2021 Hall of Fame ceremony that I would be his successor as president. With the assistance of Julia Andrews and the board members I aim to carry on the great leadership of all my predecessors.

When I graduated in 1983 I was pretty sure that I would not be returning to Mount Vernon to live. After spending 30 years in the Chicago-area coming home in the summer of 2020 was pretty easy. Over Heritage Days we were able to honor Kathy Staskal for her 18 years of service to the Alumni Association. She was with the Alumni Association from the beginning and helped build it to where it is today. It was an exciting fall this year with the completion of the Martha Parsons & Family Activities Complex in time for the homecoming game (and victory). We had the opportunity to host an outstanding group of Alumni Award recipients and honor them over homecoming weekend. This is a special opportunity for all involved, and hopefully this alumni connection inspires current students to appreciate the opportunities they have at Mount Vernon and strive for greatness in all that they do.

As always we want to thank you for your continued contributions to the Alumni Association. Your gifts are essential to the work that we do and help us to maintain the best alumni association possible. I encourage you to connect with old classmates and friends through the alumni website. www.MVAlumni.org. If you have some learning opportunities for students or want to nominate someone for the hall of fame, we'd like to hear from you. As we start this new year, I wish you all good health and happiness.
Cathy Hufford

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT THE MV ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

In 2022 The Alumni Association's Board decided to change from a dues/support and donation system to simply a donation.

Please consider an annual donation of your choice to support the activities and publications of the Alumni Association. Either visit the - back page of this publication - or online at mvalumni.org

Online, just select 'Donate' located in the upper left hand corner.

NOTE: do not be alarmed that the page you are directed to is a Foundation page. For donation reporting purposes, the MV Alumni Association operates under the MVCSD Foundation, a tax-exempt organization. Select 'Alumni Association' for your donation and the total amount is directed to the Alumni Association.

2024 REUNIONS

You are a student once, but an alum for a lifetime.

2019 5 years - tba

Contact: Ryan Clark
Phone: 319-350-4574, 319-350-9373
Contact: Alina Merlak
Phone: 319-640-1683
Email: alinalmerlak@gmail.com

2014 10 years - tba

Contact: Cory Brannaman
Phone: 319-551-6189
Email: brannaman.cory@gmail.com

2009 15 years - tba

Contact: Alex Brannaman
Phone: 319-551-6188
Email: alex.brannaman@gmail.com
Contact: Kristin Kimm Dvorsky
Phone: 319-551-6571
Email: kristin.dvorsky@gmail.com

2004- 20 years - Heritage Days

Class activities will include a float in the parade on Saturday morning and a meetup on Saturday evening around 7:00 pm -- exact location TBA. Facebook page 'MVHS (IA) Class of 2004'
Contact: Laura Damon-Moore
Phone: 319-361-8128
Email: laura.damonmoore@gmail.com

1999 - 25 years - tba

Looking for classmates to plan reunion. Is this you?

1994 - 30 years - tba

Contact: Sara Reyhons Nost
Phone: 319-560-5227
Email: s.reyhons@gmail.com
Contact: Andrew Morf
Phone: 319-247-9625
Email: amorf@acumenadv.com

1989 - 35 years - Heritage Days

Friday evening of Heritage Days at Yock's landing Saturday evening of Heritage Days Sutliff General Store 5pm.
Contact: Jenifer Carmer Back
Phone: 319-310-6365
Email: jencarmer@gmail.com

1984 - 40 years - Saturday, July 13, 2024

Saturday, July 13, Renegade Revival Palisades Lodge Time: 1-5 pm Saturday, July 13, Private Party, Glyn Mawr Winery/

The Local 7-9 pm
Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/MtVernon1984>
Contact: Jackie (Jordan) Morrical
Email: morricalhome@gmail.com
Contact: Dan Drahos
Email: Lazervet1@gmail.com
Contact: Wade Squiers
Email: wade@ss-designgroup.com
Contact: Beth Hufford
Email: hufford.beth@gmail.com

1979 - 45 years - tba

Contact: Jody Murphy Stewart
Phone: 319-895-8282
Email: stewjs3@aol.com

1974 - 50 years - tba

Contact: Cindy Feaker Johnson
Phone: 319-455-2821
Email: cjohnson@hacap.org
Contact: Vickie Hill Reynolds
Phone: 319-551-1356
Email: vjsgt@msn.com

1969 - 55 years - tba

Contact: Cathy Humphries Stoner
Phone: 319-895-6346
Email: stonerkvmce@aol.com

1964 - 60 years - Heritage Days

Saturday am Breakfast at High School, Saturday 4:30 pm reunion dinner at Gwen's Restaurant, Please RSVP to Gary or Ray.
Contact: Gary Kaplan
Phone: 319-393-8900
Email: kapmacdog@mchsi.com
Contact: Ray Stoner
Phone: 319-895-6003
Email: rayglennstoner@gmail.com

1959 - 65 years - Heritage Days

Meet at Alumni breakfast. Other activities planned at that time.
Contact: Richard Glattly
Phone: 218-372-3973
Email: rglattly@frontiernet.net

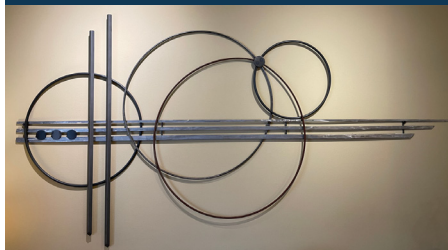
1944, 1949, 1954

Meet at Saturday morning Alumni-Community Breakfast

Your class may not be having a reunion, but come Heritage Days weekend to enjoy seeing classmates, other alums, teachers, and your friends from the community.

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Welcome Association Board Member

Join us in welcoming new board member Grant Freeman from the class of 2006.

I graduated from Mount Vernon High School in 2006. That meant our grade was the final Senior class to graduate from the second "old" building (now the Middle School). In school, I excelled in theatre and speech, which led me far from my Mount Vernon foundations. Upon graduating, I left Mount Vernon with the expressed desire to never return — and now, seventeen years later, I call it home.



As a lifelong learner, I hold a BA in Theatre Arts from the University of Puget Sound, an MFA in Theatre Pedagogy: Dramaturgy from Virginia Commonwealth University, and soon I will be returning to graduate school to obtain another Masters degree. My life has been lived in the theatre, specifically educational theatre. In fifteen years, I've directed over 250 projects, run my own company, and spent time as a college educator. However, while many of my colleagues sought the bright lights of Broadway or the comfortable chairs of tenured professors, I wanted to work on the ground level. I wanted to come home and continue the program of Maggie Ellison.

For the past nine years, I've served as the Head Coach of Group Speech. Alongside, Tawnua Tenley, we have built one of the best small school programs in the state of Iowa. But success cannot be measured in Allstate nominations and state championship banners alone, it must be measured in lives changed. The Speech program is built for everyone from the future Broadway star to the high school running back to the kid scared of their own shadow. I look forward to serving on the Alumni Association Board for the same reason. I want to help change Mount Vernon alumni lives whether they starred in our school or merely just survived it. Mount Vernon is home to all.

VOLUNTEER TO HELP AT HERITAGE DAYS ALUMNI-COMMUNITY BREAK-FAST OR RECEPTION AREA
-- Call 319-721-7953 or write alumni@mvcasd.org

Mount Vernon Alumni Association Communications Director Kathy Staskal Retires

EDITOR'S NOTE: Following is an excerpt of an article by Nathan Countryman in the July 13, 2023 issue of the MVL Sun. www.eastcentraliowanews.com/mvlsun/



Kathy Staskal has been the communications director for the Mount Vernon Alumni Association since the group's inception in 2005.

Staskal has been one of the voices that promotes the accomplishments and events happening in the district each year, connecting alumni via newsletter and communications throughout the school year.

"Over the last twenty years, 18 with the Alumni Association, I've enjoyed the interactions I've had with staff at Mount Vernon schools and the many wonderful alumni that I've met from classes in the 40s through current graduates," Staskal said. "Many whom I can call my friends. This position has made me grow personally and professionally — I love to keep learning and I love to 'do', so this has fit me perfectly."

Staskal said one of her favorite days of each school year is Alumni Hall of Fame Day, which is always part of Mount Vernon's home-coming festivities and gives current students opportunities to learn lessons from alumni.

"I am truly amazed at the graduates of Mount Vernon, and every year the inductees astound me," she said. "The Association is 15 years in with the Hall of Fame, and there is no end to the inductees worthy of this award. Staff and parents should be so proud."

Outgoing Alumni association president

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Andrew Morf said that Staskal does the majority of the heavy lifting for the Alumni Association.

"One example is the Alumni Association news- letter that is published monthly during the school year," Morf said. "That's been published 17 years, and it is the benchmark for other alumni associations in the state."

Staskal said she will definitely miss working on that newsletter and the fun of helping the alumni board of directors plan and pull together alumni events throughout the year. But she's also wanting to spend more time with her grandchildren. "I love Mount Vernon and have a lot of family and friends in this area, so I hope that means I'll be around as much as possible," Staskal said. "But my children are in New Hampshire and North Carolina, so I'll be spending most of my time in these locations."

Staskal has always had a fantastic impression of the teachers she worked alongside at the Mount Vernon Middle School during her first year, including Dennis Gondek, Adrienne Coffeen, Karen Stewart, Steve Benson, Bill Meyer, Glen Helble, and new-at-the-time teacher Jo Ann Gage.

"A period of time that I treasure are my first years when I worked with superintendent Jeff Schwiebert, Carol Woods, and Matt Burke," Staskal said. "They were so invested in our school district and helped me fit in."

Staskal said that Woods work as district secretary and alum guided her life in so many ways she couldn't relate them all. "Her care and knowledge of all things Mount Vernon is incredible. I've relied on her knowledge and her willingness to team up with me countless times," Staskal said. "Even when we were both under pressure for one reason or another, I knew she was always there for me and had



Above: Carol Woods-Boren '75 and Kathy Staskal at the reception held for Staskal's retirement on July 9, 2023.



my back. I will always treasure those good times; it's rare to have such a loyal, good friend."

Staskal said that board member Susan Fisher has constantly worked along side her at alumni events. Board presidents Lisa Squiers White (Class of 1988), Dennis Jordan (class of 1987) and Andrew Morf (class of 1994) have also "guided the Alumni Association into

a successful organization that any school district would be proud of."

She also commended district secretary Amy Weber for help on a multitude of tasks and projects and the custodians, build- ings and ground crew, the summer crews, which includes Marty Williams and retired Roger Pitlik.

Mayor Tom Wieseler and former school board president noted that when Staskal took the position of alumni communications director, the district was in a transition period, with outgoing superintendent Ade Ringgold and school board president Dean Borg leaving at roughly the same time.

"We were ready to take the next steps for the alumni association, and one of our first steps was hiring Staskal as director," Wieseler said. "Thanks for making so many of those decisions look good."

"I want to thank former superintendent Jeff Schwiebert for giving me the opportunity to work with the fantastic people in our school district, and with the Alumni Associa- tion," Staskal said. "Thank you to the school board, foundation board, alum- ni board, school district administration and staff, alumni, school district friends and community, who through the years have impacted either me or the Alumni Association in some way.

"I am excited for the next twenty years of the Alumni Association. Julia Andrews, along with in- coming president Cathy Hufford and our current board members who I can only describe as fantas- tic, will start it off. Again, thank you to everyone who has been a part of my life with the alumni family and the school district. It has been a rewarding opportunity not many people get."



The Mount Vernon Alumni Association Board held a reception on Saturday, July 8, from 3-5 pm in the First Street Community Center library to honor outgoing Alumni Association Communications Director Kathy Staskal, outgoing President Andrew Morf, and to greet incoming Alumni Director Julia Andrews and President Cathy Hufford '83.

I'm writing to express a big THANK YOU. Thank you to alumni, district staff, and the Mount Vernon community for making my twenty years at Mount Vernon schools so rewarding.

Thank you to the Alumni Association Board for the retirement and welcome party held in July, and to so many who attended or sent a note. I appreciated it all!

I'm so pleased that our Association has grown to be such a highly respected organization any school district would be proud of.

I am excited for the next twenty years of your Alumni Association. Julia Andrews, along with President Cathy Hufford '83 and our current board members, who I can only describe as fantastic, will keep it on the forward track.

Again, thank you to everyone who has been a part of my life with the alumni family and the school district. It has been a rewarding opportunity not many people get.

Kathy Staskal

Below: The board is pictured above with Kathy Staskal. From left to right: Sarah Rife Patton '93, Alex Brannaman '09, Cathy Hufford '83, Susan Mounts Fisher '65, Cathy Humphries Stoner '69, Kathy Staskal, Andrew Morf '94, Kim Zangger Tucker '94, and John Pospisil '66. Not pictured: Taylor Sedlacek Brocka '10. Photo by Lisa Lewis





2023 ALUMNI HALL OF FAME



Hall of Fame events took place on Thursday and Friday, September 28 and 29, 2023. On Friday, high school students and staff and the public were invited to attend the Alumni Association Hall of Fame Awards Ceremony in the Mount Vernon High School Performing Arts Center, PAC. Following the ceremony, a reception was held in the PAC lobby. A President's Hall of Fame reception was also held on Friday for recipients. Between activities recipients attended lunch with students, talked with classes, and attended the all-school Pep Assembly.



ACHIEVEMENT -Jamil Farshchi 1996, **FINE ARTS** - Holly Gunn 2004
SERVICE - Sara Kendall 1978
COMMUNITY IMPACT - Mike Woods 1977, **ATHLETIC** - Jeff Meeker 1989

Friday evening was the Homecoming Game and presentation of Alumni Hall of Fame recipients during halftime at the new Martha Pearson Activities Complex. The Mustangs beat Davenport Assumption 24-7.

Pictured below, front row, left to right:

Achievement Recipient Jamil Farshchi '96, Service Recipient Sara Kendall '78, Community Impact Recipient Mike Woods '77, Athletics Recipient Jeff Meeker '89, and Fine Arts Recipient Holly Gunn '04. Back row, left to right: Student Council Vice-President Sierra Snyder, High School Principal Steve Brand, Nominator Ben Pospisil '96, Foundation President and Nominator Ann Koppenhaver '78, Superintendent Dr. Greg Batenhorst, MV Alumni Association President and Nominator Cathy Hufford '83, Nominators Diana Zinkula '72 and Truman Jordan, Scott Rose '93 representing nominator Kate Rose, Hall of Fame Chair Sarah Rife Patten '93. Mount Vernon School Board President Nannette Gunn, and Hall of Fame Master of Ceremonies John Rife '60. Pictures taken by Jeff Schmatt of Rubicon Photos and Lisa Lewis of Envisage Photos.

In addition, student events included the Thursday evening parade with Hall of Fame recipients riding in corvettes, followed by crowning of the High School Homecoming Queen and King and Powderpuff football game, and a Saturday Homecoming Dance.



John Rife '60 was master of ceremony at the 2023 awards. Sarah Rife Patten '93 was the Hall of Fame Chair.



Find pictures and video online at mvalumni.org or at these links:

Sept 29 Hall of Fame ceremony video <https://youtu.be/xEqcSWpDCD0>

Hall of Fame pictures, bios, info <http://tiny.cc/17rhvz>



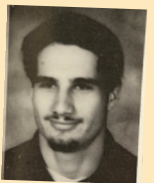
Achievement Hall of Fame recipient Jamil Farshchi '96 and his nominator Ben Pospisil '96.

This year's **Achievement Hall of Fame recipient, Jamil Farshchi '96**, might just be considered a superhero in the world of cyber-security. From Mount Vernon to the Ivy League, to advisor to the FBI, to NASA, and to a world leader in his current field of computer security, he both protects and handles projects worth billions of dollars every day. Jamil was nominated by classmate Ben Pospisil, '96.

Jamil's time as a student in Mount Vernon formed the basis for who he is today. He learned to program when he wrote a frogger video game for his middle school science fair, he learned the value of discipline as a member of Mr. Bellamy's '95 state championship football team (and then humility as they fell short in '96), and he learned the value of mentorship (and patience) because every time he tripped up - be it in Spanish with Senora Sneller, algebra with Mr. Scarce, or waking up anytime after 6am at Mr. Pospisil's house - there was always someone there who believed in him and pushed him to improve.

Jamil kicked off his foray into cybersecurity by hacking his college's computer network. "I wanted to test a cyber-attack that I had come up with, and ended up gaining access to everyone's usernames and passwords on the entire network," Despite the risk of expulsion, Jamil "thought it was really cool" and presented his hack to the dean of the college. Fortunately, in response, Jamil received a fellowship to improve cybersecurity for the whole University of Oklahoma.

Jamil's first job out of college was securing emerging technology at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). He worked on initiatives such as protecting the Mars Rovers, the Shuttle Program and the James Webb Space Telescope (JWST). While there, Jamil was awarded with both the President's Technology Excellence and the NASA Collaborative achievement awards for his work identifying next-gen cyber threats to the US Government.

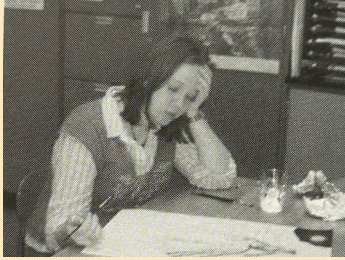


From there, Jamil moved into National Security. As Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) for the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) he rebuilt the United States' preeminent nuclear weapons institution into a cybersecurity leader. Jamil then held a variety of leadership roles protecting some of the largest companies in the world. He protected \$7 trillion of annual transactions at Visa. He defended Time Warner during North Korea's cyber-attacks which compromised Sony. And he rebuilt Home Depot following their cyber breach of 56 million consumers.

Currently, Jamil is EVP and CISO of Equifax. He joined Equifax in the aftermath of the most consequential data breach in history: The compromise of 148 million consumer records by the People's Liberation Army of China. During his tenure, he's led an unprecedented \$1.5 billion transformation and has built what is regarded as one of the most advanced cybersecurity capabilities globally.

Jamil is a Strategic Advisor for the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and he serves on the Board of Directors for Ultimate Kronos Group (UKG), the National Technology and Security Coalition (NTSC) and the Piedmont Park Conservancy. Jamil is named a "Top Voice" in Technology and Innovation by LinkedIn, has received multiple CSO and CISO of the year awards, and is a frequent contributor to media outlets including CNBC, WSJ, FOX, Bloomberg, WaPo, NYT and the Financial Times.

Jamil can be reached at: jamilfarshchi@gmail.com or <http://www.linkedin.com/in/jamilfarshchi>



Our community often brags about the many alumni that go on to work in fields that involve a passion for art. This year's **Fine Art Hall of Fame recipient, Holly Gunn '04** is one of those. She was nominated by the late Kate Rose. Kate's son Scott Rose '83 will represent Kate during the Hall of Fame ceremony and events.

In high school, Holly was an active thespian, musician, and artist. After debuting at age 9 as Tiny Tim, she went on to be an all-state choir member, a volunteer for art program for students, and honor thespian at the International Thespian Society. "I was so fortunate to have three teachers who profoundly influenced my high school career and life. Señora Sue Deibner, Mrs. Sarah Richardson, and Mrs. Laurie Zaiger all had an enormous impact on not only my school performance but my outlook on life. I am eternally grateful to all of them for inspiring me and making me feel so welcome in their classes."

Laurie Zaiger said, "Holly is a peach. Fun, funny and funky. She liked school, did well in classes, and had a variety of friends. She was an art room kid who thrived in that creative space of no defined right answers- just the answers that were right for her. She worked and practiced skills and techniques and then was open to playing around with the materials to develop her own ideas. Holly's path to a career in an art was clear in high school. Her dedication, open heart, and supportive family made her dream real. I was lucky to be her teacher, to provide her space and support, and to get out of her way as she grew artistically. I'm so happy she is living a creative life, making a living as an artist, and now receiving this well-deserved alumni recognition."

After high school, Holly studied Fine Arts at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She graduated in 2008 with a BFA in Film, Video, and New Media. Her focus in school was hand-drawn animation.

From there she began working for various media companies before landing at Stereo D in Los Angeles. During her time there she worked as a Depth Lead and later a Stereoscopic Supervisor, converting movies into stereoscopic 3D. In 2014, she moved with the company up to Toronto, Canada. If you saw movies from 2012-2021, there is a good chance you have seen her work. Her credits include *Guardians of the Galaxy*, *Captain Marvel*, *Avengers Endgame*, *Star Wars Episode VII: The Last Jedi*, *Spider Man: No Way Home*, *Black Widow*, *Dolittle*, *Spider Man: Far from Home*, *Captain Marvel*, and *Godzilla*.

Holly said of her time with Stereo D: "I am the proudest to be given the opportunity to mentor artists at my workplaces and watch them grow and shine at what they do. It's really fulfilling to work on projects with them and grow artistically as a team. We work with so many talented artists."



Holly's former coworkers throughout her time working on feature films feel the same way. Christine Rinaldi, a former co-worker of Holly's said "Holly is a pleasure to work with and to work for. She has an amazing ability to brighten anyone's mood. She can keep everyone on track and inspire them to be better and work harder. I would not be the artist that I am today without Holly."

In August 2022, she started working as a Project Coordinator at PlayStation Studios in Agoura Hills, California, using her experience in working on feature films to transition to a different career path of Production in video games. Her role as a Project Coordinator focuses on the facilitation of scheduling, management and coordination of creative departments to establish and maintain a project's progress.

Holly said of her hometown, "Mount Vernon is a community which fosters rich diversity in Fine Arts, academics, and athletics. I am so proud to call it my hometown."

Holly can be reached at her email: holly.k.gunn@gmail.com.

On the right: Fine Arts recipient Holly Gunn '04 with retired art teacher Mrs. Laurie Zaiger



Over the years our **Service Hall of Fame** has included many outstanding members, and **Sara Kendall '78** is no exception. Sara was nominated by her classmates Ann Koppenhaver, Cynthia Deskin Halbmaier, and Andrew Wolfe.



She was in Choir from 7th through 12th grade and in band from 3rd to 9th grade. Her favorite teacher was Bill Meyer in 7th grade English. Sara said, "He prepared me for American Literature in College because we learned all the writers and stories they wrote. He was also my Driver's Ed teacher which made it fun learning how to drive. He remained relaxed with his students and made Driver's Ed enjoyable."

After graduating, Sara attended Kirkwood Community College where she graduated with Honors and an Associate Degree in Nursing. She was involved with the Student Government Association from 1987- 1990 and received a Leadership Award from MMU at graduation for her involvement with these organizations. She also helped with cancer prevention education as a nursing student at Mount Mercy through the American Cancer Society.

Sara graduated with her Bachelor Science in Nursing from Mount Mercy College and has been a member of the Mount Mercy University Alumni Board since 1992. She was inducted in 1995 as a Community Member of Sigma Phata Thau International Nursing Society at Mount Mercy University.

From 1991-1999 she attended the University of Iowa College of Nursing. While there, she helped with health fairs for cancer prevention, was involved with the Iowa Nursing Association (INA), and was named 5th District Nurse of the Year in 1994. She graduated with her Masters of Science in Nursing in Community Health Management.

Sara is currently a Registered Nurse at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics in the Admission and Transfer Center. She is the charge nurse of the Admission and Transfer Center, ATC, a role she shares with another RN every other weekend. She plans to stay in the ATC for 10 years in time to celebrate 50 years of nursing. Sara also teaches at Kirkwood Community College where she recently celebrated 35 years of teaching classroom and clinical nursing.

Sara is a 25-year volunteer with the Community Health Free Clinic in Cedar Rapids, IA. She volunteers because she enjoys, "being able to care for patients who cannot afford health care and feeling grateful and appreciative for the volunteers that share their time to care for other people."

In addition, Sara has been involved with the American Cancer Society for 35 years providing education in elementary and middle schools in Linn County. This knowledge and level of volunteerism allowed Sara to be a speaker locally, state wide, national and internationally regarding cancer.

Sara remembers in March of 1990, she had the privilege to visit Mount Vernon Elementary School to educate second graders about the American Cancer Society's Healthy Chew Program. From 1987 to 2000 Sara visited 36,000 students in Linn and Jones County.

In addition Sara has been a member of local Oncology Nurse



Service Hall of Fame recipient Sara Kendall and her nominator Ann Koppenhaver '78.

Society committees, as well as state and national committees for the Oncology Nursing Society. For the last 20 years she has volunteered with the VFW Auxiliary in Cedar Rapids and is currently Chaplin for Post 788 Auxiliary.

Sara says she is most proud of both her cancer education and missionary work. In March 2023 she returned from Tanzania on a Mission trip where she worked with physicians in various clinics and hospitals. In addition, her Mission group was invited to the local schools to work with children in their classes and to help teenagers with children who are now coming back to high school to get the remainder of their education. Sara said, "On this trip I visited three different tribes to learn about their way of life and how they educate their children. I also go to take a hot air balloon ride in the Serengeti where we saw 'The Big 5' - lions, leopards, elephants, rhinos and zebras. This was the 40th Country I have been too, and it was indeed a trip of a lifetime!"

Sara notes "I am not only proud of all my educational accomplishments, working accomplishments and career accomplishments, but proud of the MVHS Class of 1978. I came from a very intelligent class where many have excelled in their careers and professions."

Sara can be reached by email at sara-kendall@uiowa.edu



The Woods family is involved all over town with perhaps none more dedicated to his work for Mount Vernon than this year's **Community Impact Hall of Fame recipient Mike Woods '77.**

Nominated by alum Cathy Hufford '83, she says "Mike's community service list is exhaustive. "The work that Mike has done as a volunteer is more than paid employees do for larger towns and cities. It is easy to take for granted all the work that Mike puts into honoring veterans"

He has been the American Legion Commander since 2006. He led the drive to raise funds for the new Veterans Memorial in 2014, and he continues to be its primary caretaker. He installs flags on light poles on Main Street in May before Memorial Day. He leads the setting up and taking down of the Avenue of Flags in the cemetery. He secures honor guard participants for all Mount Vernon home football games. He secures honor guard participants at veterans' funerals. He lowers and raises the flag when federal or state officials call for the flag to be at half-staff.

Mike also coordinates and helps select American Legion Scholarship recipients. He collects old American Flags from depository boxes and ensures their proper disposal. He created a Veteran's Day video with photographs of all Mount Vernon residents and alumni, alive or deceased, who served in the U.S. Armed Forces.

"I have witnessed the extensive community and American Legion Service that Mike performs so well," said Ed Fordyce, '59. "We are fortunate that Mike chose to return to Mount Vernon after his Army Career."

Mike served twenty-two years on active duty in the U.S. Army, becoming a member of the "Green Berets," one of America's most elite and capable special operations units. Among his deployments, two were to Naples, Italy and the Caribbean Island of Grenada. In Grenada he participated in combat patrols, but after the mission was complete, the battalion shifted into security operations and distributed rations and potable water wherever needed. In Italy, he assisted in the mountainous areas after the Irpinia earthquake. Mike's military training was paramount as he deployed in small teams to distribute food, water, and shelter for the thousands of displaced and homeless citizens. For their efforts, Mike's unit received the Humanitarian Service Medal, awarded to military service members who lend assistance during a natural disaster.

In 1990, after graduation from Thai language school, Mike was assigned to Okinawa, Japan, and continued to deploy throughout the Pacific region. While on a scuba diving trip with three friends, they were able to rescue two people well beyond the surf line who were being thrown about in rough water. For their efforts they were awarded the Soldiers Medal, the army's highest award for heroism during peacetime. The trio was also presented with the "Good Deed" award by the Nippon Zenkokai, an association sanctioned by the Japanese government who annually present this award to deserving citizens and residents.

After finishing his military service, he went to college to complete his college degree at the University of Washington and earned his teaching certificate from Saint Martin's



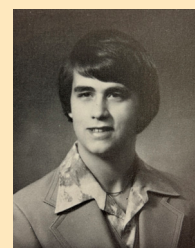
College. Mike then chose to come home to Mount Vernon. He was a substitute teacher in the school district for ten years. He also helped support his wife Joleen Woods in choir and musicals as a "roadie." Mike is currently a Medical Support Assistant at the Iowa City VA Hospital.

According to Mike, "Honestly, I was not a very good student in high school. I was more of a shop rat for most of my four years. Like many other students I applied myself in topics that interested me – although not terribly successfully. Beyond teachers Carol Stone and Steve Noll in shop class, I thoroughly enjoyed most classes in history and social studies. Instructors Bob Meeker and Richard Peters kindled my love of history inside and outside the classroom, an interest that stays with me today. Another teacher that inspired me was English teacher Donna Jacobs. A firm taskmaster, she was tolerant of my lackluster performance in the classroom – encouraging me to work harder. I will be eternally grateful for the tolerance of all my teachers who were incredibly patient with my antics as I fumbled along through high school."

Mike also noted that he "wasn't much of a joiner." He worked at Dave and Gary's Grocery Store in high school, then going on to basic training for the U.S. Army.

Mike reflected, "I have enjoyed a career that has taken me around the world with varied opportunities to volunteer wherever I have found myself. But retirement from the military gave me the chance to volunteer to a larger extent right back where I started, in my home community of Mount Vernon, where I will continue to volunteer and 'give back' for as long as I am able."

Mike can be reached at 209 Oak Ridge Dr SE, Mount Vernon, IA 52314 or by email at michael.woods@netins.net





Athletic of Fame recipient Jeff Meeker '89 and nominators Diane Zinkula '73 and Truman Jordan.

An outstanding addition to our **Athletic Hall of Fame is Mount Vernon resident Jeff Meeker '89**. He was nominated by Diane Zinkula '73 and Truman Jordan.

A Mount Vernon native Jeff was a four-sport athlete in High School. Jeff was all-conference in Cross Country and Student Council president. His passion for volleyball was sparked by watching Shirley Ryan's elite volleyball teams in the mid 1980's and by competing in MVHS's Shaving Cream Classic. When asked about favorite teachers from high school, Meeker said "My dad, Bob Meeker, of course, but we had so many outstanding teachers it is hard to pick just one. I loved learning to write poetry in Ruth Michaud's classes, performing in musical productions led by Maggie Ellison, and a highlight of high school was traveling to Rocky Mountain National Park with Dick Peters."



Jeff received a bachelor's degree in psychology from Knox College and a master's degree in sport psychology from the University of Iowa in 1995.

In 1993-94, Jeff was a volunteer volleyball assistant at the University of Iowa. He then enjoyed a successful run as head coach at Iowa Wesleyan, compiling a 61-68 record from 1995-98. Jeff revamped a program that won nine matches in his initial season to 20 wins in 1998. From 1999-2002, he was an assistant men's volleyball coach at St. Ambrose prior to taking over Cornell's program.

At Cornell, Jeff is a nine-time Conference Coach of the Year, and has compiled a 456-312 collegiate record, highlighted by an unparalleled run of success through 21 seasons at Cornell College. His 395 wins on the Hilltop are the most by a Cornell coach in any sport.

Jeff was named Cornell's Director of Athletics in January 2023,

after leading the athletics department in an interim role since July 2022. He oversees all operations within Cornell Athletics, which includes 20 NCAA Division III intercollegiate sports.

Meeker's Rams have won 10 consecutive Midwest Conference regular-season championships, the first volleyball program in MWC history to win more than three in a row. The Rams have qualified for the NCAA Division III Tournament nine of the past 11 non-COVID seasons (2011-15, 2017-18, 2021-22). He has been named Coach of the Year six times in the Midwest Conference (2012-17), twice in the Iowa Conference (2004, 2010) and once in the Midwest Classic Conference (1997, at Iowa Wesleyan College).

Jeff has coached 58 all-conference selections and 21 all-region performers during his time on the Hilltop. Cornell has boasted the conference's Player of the Year nine times since 2009. During the 2020-21 pandemic season, Cornell achieved its highest national ranking at No. 11 in the AVCA Coaches' Poll.

In 2018 then Mount Vernon High School students interviewed Jeff along with several players and assistant coaches as a part of the Smithsonian "Museum on Mainstreet" project. During the interview, Cornell Volleyball assistant coach Polly Blythe '86 said, "He cares about those girls a lot, and he cares about his program a lot." Then Cornell College Athletic Director Keith Hackett commented, "Meeker is an outstanding coach, he does a great job in our community."

Jeff said, "We encourage our players to bring their best possible attitude every day. So having a positive outlook on what we're doing in the gym, and what they're trying to accomplish at Cornell, is really important. And then perhaps the most important thing we try and teach is to help our players learn how to be great teammates. And that's something that coaches always talk about, it's easier said than done. And it's a hugely important part of being successful as a team. Because even when maybe things aren't going your way as a player, how do you make sure you're contributing to what we're trying to do as a team? So being a great teammate is very important. Responsibility, commitment, those are two things that we think are very important as well."

Jeff and his wife, Dr. Monica Lehner Meeker '86, have four children in Mount Vernon Schools: Sydney class of 2017, Jackson class of 2019, Jayden class of 2021 and Jensen class of 2023. He can be reached by email at jmeeker@cornellcollege.edu





CEREMONY & RECEPTION



Front from left to right: Achievement recipient Jamil Farshchi '96, Service recipient Sara Kendall '78, Community Impact recipient Mike Woods '77, Athletics recipient Jeff Meeker '89, Fine Arts recipient Holly Gunn '04. Back: Dr. Ben Pospisil '96, MVCS Foundation President Ann Koppenhaver '78, Alumni Association President Cathy Hufford '83, Diane Zinkula '73, Truman Jordan, and Scott Rose representing the late Kate Rose.



Superintendent Greg Batenhorst received standing ovation at the conclusion of the Hall of Fame Ceremony. Batenhorst will retire at the end of the 2023-24 school year.



MV School Board Member Jeremy Kuntz and former 25-yr School Board member and current Mount Vernon Mayor, Tom Wieseler at the Hall of Fame reception.



Lexie, Ansley, and Achievement Recipient Jamil Farshchi '96.



2011 Hall of Fame recipient John Rife '60, 2017 Hall of Fame recipient Becky Thumm Whitman '77, Joy Koehn Kuntz '76, and 2018 Hall of Fame recipient Carol Woods-Boren '75 relax after a busy morning volunteering.



President Cathy Hufford '83 and Service Recipient Mike Woods '77.



Truman Jordan, Athletics Recipient Jeff Meeker '89, Syndey Meeker '17, and Retired Social Studies Teacher Bob Meeker.

THE PARADE, STUDENTS, & PEP ASSEMBLY and FOOTBALL FIELD



Hall of Fame recipients on a Corvette ride to the MAC. From left to right: Jamil and Ansley Farshchi with nominator Ben Pospisil, Holly Gunn, Sara Kendall, Jeff Meeker with nominator Truman Jordan, and Mike Woods with wife and retired MVHS teacher Joleen Woods.



Homecoming King Luke Stephens '24 and Homecoming Queen Audrey Tucker '24.



Hall of Fame Recipients join MVHS teacher Maggie Willems '96, Sarah Patten Rife '93, and John Rife '60 before the pep assembly



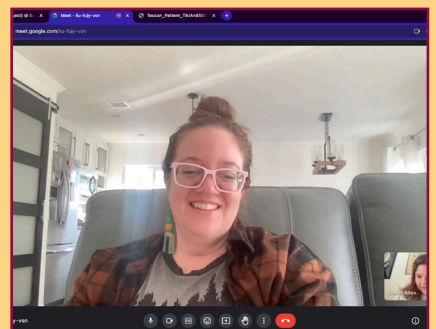
The parade traveled from the First Street Field to the new Martha Parsons Activities Complex (the MAC)



Above, Hall of Fame Recipients Mike Woods, Sara Kendall, and Jamil Farshchi receive recognition at halftime on Armstrong field.



Above: Hall of Fame recipients speak classes in the PAC. At right: Holly Gunn speaks about her career with alumn Quinn Alles '2020 via Zoom.



MAIL BY MAY 1

How will we ever choose just five people out of the many deserving alums of Mount Vernon Schools? We'll let the Selection Committee sweat about that -- just get in your nominations!

Hall of Fame winners will be announced in July and presented during Homecoming weekend, but please don't wait! We encourage you to fill out this nomination form and mail it in.

If you don't know all the qualifications for the person you are nominating, fill in as best as you can or work with your nominee. We will also mail a questionnaire to each nominee.

**DEADLINE IS A MAY 1, 2024
POSTMARK -- GET YOURS IN THE
MAIL NOW!**

'The Spirit Lives On In You'

ALUMNI HALL OF FAME

All nominees must be an alumna of Mount Vernon High School at least 28 years of age.

NOTE: If you have already submitted a nomination, you do not need to resubmit, and your nominee will be considered for an award this year.

MVCSD Alumni Achievement Hall of Fame

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

Criteria:

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

MVCSD Alumni Service Hall of Fame

Given to alumni for specific and meritorious service to the MVCSD 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.

MVCSD Community Impact Hall of Fame

Awarded to alumni who should be rewarded for their service impact on the Mount Vernon Community.

Criteria:

- Significant service contributions either while in school and/or post-high-school to the Mount Vernon 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.

MVCSD Fine Arts Hall of Fame

Awarded to alumni with exceptional accomplishment in the fine arts while attending Mount Vernon 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:

- Outstanding character and leadership.
- 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.

MVCSD Athletic Hall of Fame

Awarded to alumni with exceptional accomplishment in athletics while attending Mount Vernon 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.

2024 MOUNT VERNON ALUMNI HALL OF FAME NOMINATION FORM



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

His/Her address (if known) _____

His/Her phone (if known) _____

Select Desired MVCSD Alumni Hall of Fame Award(s):

- Achievement Service Mount Vernon Community Impact (service) Fine Arts Athletics

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 _____

Daytime Telephone (_____) _____ Home Telephone (_____) _____

Email _____

All awards will be granted based on nominations, which can be submitted by mail using this form, or online at www.mvalumni.org. Nominations will be reviewed and selected by the Selection Committee, and approved by the Alumni Association Board. Nominations are held. Questions - 319-721-7953 Julia, or alumni@mvczd.org
Send this form postmarked by May 1 to: Alumni Association, 525 Palisades Rd SW, Mount Vernon, IA 52314.

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

HALL OF FAME HISTORY

2008

| ACHIEVEMENT | SERVICE | ATHLETIC | FINE ARTS |
|---------------------|------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| | | | |
| Dr. James Croft '47 | Jean Minish Stoner '37 | Gary Knutsen '65 | Marcia Russell '89 |

2009

| ACHIEVEMENT | SERVICE | ATHLETIC | FINE ARTS |
|--------------------|------------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| | | | |
| Richard Bowman '58 | Treva Moore Heiser '50 | Paul Hufford '80 | Kristin Stewart '99 |

2010

| ACHIEVEMENT | SERVICE | ATHLETIC | FINE ARTS |
|-----------------|---------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| | | | |
| Lee Beranek '31 | David Van Metre '55 | Joy Jordan '87 | Elizabeth Stoner '97 |

2011

| ACHIEVEMENT | SERVICE | ATHLETIC | FINE ARTS |
|---------------|------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| | | | |
| John Rife '60 | Millicent Hogard Zenshek '47 | Randy Hoidal '61 | Mark Benesh '83 |

2012

| ACHIEVEMENT | SERVICE | ATHLETIC | FINE ARTS |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------|
| | | | |
| Graham Harman '86 | Dolores 'De De' Staskal Hicks '50 | John Hearn '75 | Margaret 'Maggie' Quinn Ellison '62 |

2013

| ACHIEVEMENT | SERVICE | ATHLETIC | FINE ARTS | COMMUNITY IMPACT |
|----------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| | | | | |
| Darla Stoltz Templeton '64 | Richard McKeen '51 | Dennis Wolrab '64 | William Pringle '72 | Karen Jilovec Martin '57 |

2014

| ACHIEVEMENT | SERVICE | ATHLETIC | FINE ARTS | COMMUNITY IMPACT |
|------------------|-----------------------|------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| | | | | |
| Lindsey Borg '85 | Myrt Clark Bowers '57 | Greg Randall '82 | Paula Holcomb '72 | Ann Koppenhaver '78 |

2015

| ACHIEVEMENT | SERVICE | ATHLETIC | FINE ARTS | COMMUNITY IMPACT |
|-------------------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------|------------------|
| | | | | |
| Joan Suchomel '74 | Chris Lyon '81 | Deb Winchip Douglass '86 | Alex Morf '99 | Dan Gaines '77 |

2016

| ACHIEVEMENT | SERVICE | ATHLETIC | FINE ARTS |
|--------------------|----------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| | | | |
| Thomas Zinkula '75 | Carol Croft Kent '51 | Vic Wallace '61 | Richard Nelson '50 |

COMMUNITY IMPACT

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | |
| The Stompers: Bill Bauman '66, Steve Edwards '65, Brian Harman '69, Greg Harman '65, and Randy Harman '68 | | | | |

2017

| ACHIEVEMENT | SERVICE | ATHLETIC | FINE ARTS | COMMUNITY IMPACT |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------------|
| | | | | |
| Mark Hylbak '73 | Janet Johnston McCannon '55 | Matt Kroul '04 | John Gaston '82 | Becky Thumm Whitman Kevin Whitman '78 |

2018

| ACHIEVEMENT | SERVICE | ATHLETIC | FINE ARTS | COMMUNITY IMPACT |
|--------------------|------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| | | | | |
| Michael Bowers '87 | Matthew Borg '90 | Carol Woods-Boren '75 | Dewane Hughes '88 | Mike Smith '68 |

2019

| ACHIEVEMENT | SERVICE | ATHLETIC | FINE ARTS | COMMUNITY IMPACT |
|-----------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| | | | | |
| Lloyd Duffe '51 | Michael Seiler '67 | Robert Bowman '58 | Sadie Busse '90 (Sarah Martin) | Richard Moore '52 |

2020

| ACHIEVEMENT | SERVICE | ATHLETIC | FINE ARTS | COMMUNITY IMPACT |
|-------------------|----------------------|------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| | | | | |
| Peter Kollman '62 | Scot Christensen '78 | Steve Andrew '68 | Braden Pospisil Rood '93 | Sonia Essex Redmond '88 |

2021

| ACHIEVEMENT | SERVICE | ATHLETIC | FINE ARTS | COMMUNITY IMPACT |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| | | | | |
| Phoebe Ball '91 | Crystal Cardon Eskelsen '95 | Shelby Kintzel '09 | Jefferson White '08 | Gwen Stewart Drahos '70 |

2022

| ACHIEVEMENT | SERVICE | ATHLETIC | FINE ARTS | COMMUNITY IMPACT |
|------------------|--------------------|---------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| | | | | |
| Larry Ringer '55 | Jerry Ringer '55 | Jeri Neal '66 | Barb Thomsen Neal '68 | Steve Goodall '83 |
| | | | | |
| Dan Bern '77 | Scott Peterson '71 | | | |

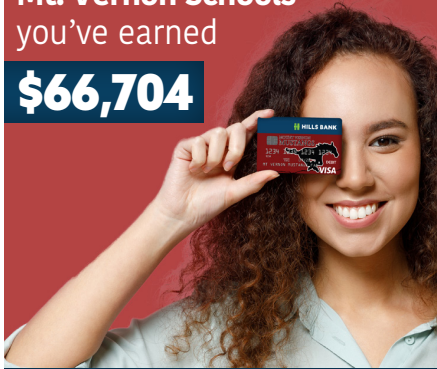
2023

| ACHIEVEMENT | SERVICE | ATHLETIC | FINE ARTS | COMMUNITY IMPACT |
|--------------------|------------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------|
| | | | | |
| Jamil Farshchi '96 | Sara Kendall '78 | Jeff Meeker '77 | Holly Gunn '04 | Mike Woods '77 |



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Final Game at First Street Field Retrospective

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following was Announced over PA after the final game was completed on September 15, 2023. By David M. Ryan '85

Ladies and Gentlemen, at this time the school district would like to share a brief history of the historic and memorable First Street Field.

Construction of the facility began in the mid 1930's and was mostly completed by 1938. For reasons unknown, the first official high school football game wasn't held here until September 26, 1940, a game won by Tipton by a score of 13-6. The field and half bowl stadium were constructed as part of a federal relief effort called the Works Progress Administration during and after the Great Depression. As the late local historian Richard Thomas noted, "The entire field and grandstand area were financed by the federal government to help the area unemployed earn a small living and to lift community spirits in very hard economic times. The field was dug from the hillside by hand with picks and shovels...the field is not just an athletic facility, but also an important community gathering place with a history of its own."

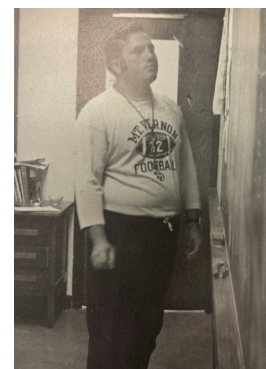
And so it was, school football games and track meets once held at Cornell College's Ash Park now had a place of their own, right here behind the then newer school that was built nearly a decade earlier (1927). If you look closely, you may still recognize the outline of the cinder track which surrounded the field...along with the rough terrain not far underneath. In 1946, modern lighting was installed for night games, something that had already been done at several neighboring communities.

And more of memory lane...with great annual fanfare, the school's homecoming celebrations and ending parade routes were held here, with the coronation of school royalty, the unforgettable "Burning of the M", entertaining powder puff games, tremendous cheerleading, and of course, the award-winning marching band Performances.

And Football.....there most definitely has been football here:

The Mount Vernon Maroons patrolled the field in the early years until the early 1950's, when they were renamed and officially branded the Mount Vernon Mustangs. Participation, popularity and success followed for the next 20 years, including, three conference championships and two undefeated teams: 1957 under longtime Head Coach Don Hipple and in 1967 under Head Coach Don Ringgenberg.

For as long as most locals can recall, high school football in Mount Vernon, Iowa (and played on this field) has been a unique source of community pride and tradition and also a central topic of discussion at various gathering spots. Enter the year 1970, a new coach was lured to town from



West Liberty by two young former colleagues by the names of Adrian Ringold and Dick Peters... and little did we know at the time...a new era of football was born... an era which forever put Mount Vernon on the high school football map...the coach's name...Jim Bellamy.

"Just do your job, Son" was likely the most often used First Street sideline saying from Bellamy over the course of his 37 years here... "Just do your job, Son" epitomized the disciplined blocking/tackling schemes and the toughness and personal accountability which were demonstrated by the "team first" culture and players who competed here from 1970-2006...and I'm proud to say very much of the same continues under current Head Coach Lance Pedersen and the Mustang teams of today.

Bellamy's career at Mount Vernon saw the formation & expansion of the Iowa High School Athletic Association (IAHSAA) play-offs, the rise & fall of the competitive



Above Coach Jim Bellamy. Right: the 1974 State Championship football team

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306 Hwy 1 SE in Mount Vernon

JEREMY HOTZ '99 Agent jhotz@hotzagency.com
JUSTIN ARNOLD '08 Agent jarnold@hotzagency.com



Serving alumni across the midwest

Eastern Iowa Hawkeye Conference, and the conversion to statewide district football. All the while, his teams played its home football games right here at the historic First Street/uptown stadium. This stadium, considered by most opposing coaches/fans to have always been tired, worn, and unfit for play, is uniquely Mount Vernon and has provided a home field advantage second to none as hundreds (in some cases thousands) gather on Friday nights on the half-bowl hillside with one of the best homeside fan views in all of high school football.

Bellamy's coaching record was among the greatest of all-time in Iowa at the time of his retirement and included three (3) state championships (1974, 1993, and 1994), five (5) runner-ups (1973, 1978, 1989, 2002, and 2003), twenty (20) state qualifiers, and sixteen (16) conference/district titles along with an impressive winning percentage of 74%.

Fast forward to today, Head Coach Lance Pedersen...who is known for his particular attention to detail, player leadership training, and prolific offensive performances. Pedersen is in his 10th season at the helm of Mount Vernon Football and continuing the Mustang winning ways with a won-loss percentage of 72%, two (2) state runner-ups in 2015 and 2022, five (5) state qualifiers, and three (3) District championships.

And let's not forget the great players....those considered among the all-time best in Mount Vernon history. We obviously cannot name all the great young men that played so well here over the years, so we will limit their introduction to the six (6) Des Moines Register Elite team members, as well as the 45 First Team All Staters of yesteryear:



ELITE AND 1ST TEAM ALL-STATE PLAYERS

Des Moines Register All-State Elite Team:

2016 Tristan Wirfs, OL
 2015 Connor Hermann, WR
 2003 Matt Kroul, LB
 1994 Scott Pospisil, OL/Center
 1979 Paul Hufford, NG
 1973 Joe Hufford, OL/Guard

FIRST TEAM ALL-STATE

| | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2022 Henry Ryan, DB | 2000 & 2001 Erin Durgin, OL |
| 2022 Zatyk Holub, LB | 2000 Ben Havill, E |
| 2022 Brad Vislisel, DL | 1998 Mike Wieseler, B |
| 2022 Joey Rhomberg, U | 1998 Alex Morf, B |
| 2022 Clark Younggreen, OL | 1996 John Aronowitz, DB |
| 2022 Jackson Jaspers, LB | 1995 Matt Meyer, DB |
| 2020 Kean Kamerling, OL | 1995 Ben Pospisil, LB |
| 2020 Collin Swantz, WR | 1994 Gabe Allard, DE |
| 2020 Trenton Pitlik, Utility | 1994 Tom Rickels, DL |
| 2017 Paul Ryan, Utility | 1994 Luke McDermott, DB |
| 2017 Cale Snedden, DB | 1993 & 1994 Scott Pospisil, OL |
| 2016 & 2017 Drew Adams, QB | 1993 Jared Pospisil, DB |
| 2015 & 2016 Tristan Wirfs, OL | 1989 Matt Ostrom, DB |
| 2015 Jack Cochrane, DB | 1989 Dave Mullen Cosgrove, OL |
| 2015 Connor Hermann, E | 1988 & 1989 John Martin, DL |
| 2014 Josh Hof, DL | 1984 Wayne Hormann, DL |
| 2013 Jake Pisarik, P | 1984 Jeff Clark, LB |
| 2013 Robbie Peters, DL | 1983 Wade Squiers, DB |
| 2006 Jacob Ryan, DB | 1981 Steve Randall, DB |
| 2003 Jacob Craig, DB | 1978 Jon Bellamy, C |
| 2002 & 2003 Matt Kroul, LB | 1978 Paul Hufford, NG |
| 2002 Ryan Nicol, DB | 1974 Joe Hufford, G |
| 2002 Jesse Vislisel, DL | |

My apologies for not listing more great teams and players of yesteryear...there are nearly 100 more all-staters at various levels found in the all-time record book at www.mountvernonfootball.com

continued on next page



And so tonight...we say farewell to the First Street Field...certainly fond memories of the thousands of volunteers that kept this place together for over 80 seasons....fond memories and respect to the groundskeepers, to the chain gang members, to the press box workers, to the medical and emergency professionals, and to the concession stand workers, to the teachers and administrators that watched over us and the facility....and certainly to the facility to The Save The Field volunteers. Your contributions were significant....and most of all we say farewell to the uptown fans and crowds that are forever part of the First Street Field experience. Thank you!!!!

At this time, I would like to direct your attention to the Stadium's flag pole, where members of American Legion Hahn Howard Post 480 will lower the stadium flag for a final time at a Mount Vernon High School football game...and deliver the flag to student council president Anna Vavircek, who will deliver the flag to the Mount Vernon High School campus and to the Armstrong Family Field at the Martha Parsons and Family Activities Complex.



Above: The American Flag is lowered at the First Street Field and given to Anna Vavircek '24. It was raised two weeks later at the Martha Parsons and Family Activities Complex (MAC). Below Alumni football and cheerleaders at the final night at the First Street Field

Alumni Band Members Return to the Field and the Stands



Left: Chris Wilkins Heisterham '85, April Zehms '86, Joan Rice Williams '85 march in the Alumni Band at the First Street Field

Right: 2013 MV Hall of Fame Recipient Bill Pringle '72 returns to conduct the National Anthem at the First Street Field. Below mother and daughter Kim Zangger Tucker '94 and Audrey Tucker '24 march together.



Below: Dylan Winkler '23, Trystin Lashley, Aden Grudzinski '23, Lawson Hasley '23, Ben Nydegger '23, MV Director of Bands Scott Weber, and Kian Hageman '22 return to play for the basketball pep bands in December 2023.



Mount Vernon Theater to celebrate Centennial Season with a Theatre reunion

Alumni Basketball Game Has Great Turnout

High School Basketball Coach Derek Roberts and Will Teubel '12 organized the First Annual All-Alumni Basketball Game on December 22, 2023. Twenty five players competed in a match of recent alumni vs "seasoned" alumni.



Front: Brandon Keen '15, Jeremy Krogmann '17, Will Teubel '12, Nolan Teubel '15, Brody Ulch '22, Nelson Rhomberg '22. Back: Kaleb Brand '20, Hunter Ruth '12, Gabe Kringlen '09, Jake Timm '12, Adam Deeb '22, Alex Deeb '19, Kael Dimmer '22, Ben Gilbert Binder '22, Connor Spencer '22, Zack Krogmann '17, Ryne Moeller '23, Austin Deeb '23, Masen Pelley '21, Brady Ketchum '2, Cooper Schoff '22, Ben Hopkins '20, Collin Swantz '21, Nolan Brand '20, Jackson Rhomberg '23



Above the older alums won 57-33. Below Brandon Keen '15, Ben Gilbert-Binder '22, and Ryne Moeller '23 compete for possession of the ball



Above: members of the 1927 Velvet Drama Club. To right: A poster from the most recent Velvet Curtain production.

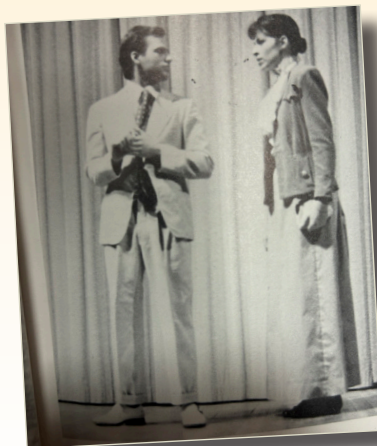


Mount Vernon Theatre is celebrating 100 years of making theater and it is hosting a reunion to celebrate.

During Heritage Days Weekend, on Friday, July 12, 2024, The Velvet Curtain and the Alumni Association will host an all-theatre reunion from 6:30pm-8:30pm in the Performing Arts Center (PAC) at Mount Vernon High School. We will have performances from theatre alumni, a history of theater in Mount Vernon, and a reception to celebrate.



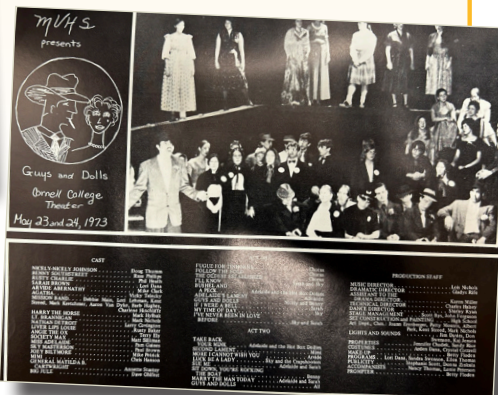
Interested in performing a monologue or song for the reunion? Contact Tom Stephens, Theatre Teacher and Velvet Curtain Sponsor at tstephens@mvcsd.org or alumni@mvcsd.org



Above: Daryl Becicka '84 and Kim Benesh '85 as Prof. Harold Hill and Marian in the 1984 production of *The Music Man*. To the Right: 1973 cast list from *Guys and Dolls*.

History of Mount Vernon Theater

The first drama club at Mount Vernon High School was organized in 1925 under the supervision of principal Seville Gaston to "encourage the dramatic arts in the high school." The first joint program of the dramatic club and music organizations occurred two years later. In 1934 the name Velvet Curtain Dramatic Club was formally adopted, but used inconsistently for several decades. By 1937, the dramatic society was also hosting declamatory contests. The Velvet Curtain title largely fell out of use upon the awarding of a charter from the International Thespian Society in 1972. That year also saw the first recorded mention of Mount Vernon attending the state Thespian convention, precursor to the Iowa Thespian Festival. Troupe 1470 continues today as a proud member of Iowa Thespians and the Educational Theatre Association. In 2012, as a nod to the past and present, the MVHS Theatre Department rebranded as the Velvet Curtain Dramatic Society to encompass our work as actors, technicians, orators, and thespians.



CONNECT WITH THE SCHOOL

WEBSITES
www.mvcsd.org
themustangmoon.com

SOCIAL MEDIA
<https://www.facebook.com/MVCSDMustangs/>
www.facebook.com/TheMustangMoon/

'MUSTANG VISION'
<https://www.youtube.com/c/gomvstangs>



Follow us on social media

 MVHS Alum

 MVAlumni52314

 @mvalumni3988

Join Us At Heritage Days 2024

Best time all year to see many people you know at our traditional Alumni-Community breakfast from 8-10 am at the High School or uptown at Heritage Days. Watch for more information to come about alumni-community events during Heritage Days

SATURDAY, JULY 13

Mustangs...what are they doing now?

■ CHRIS SMITH '96

What have you been doing since you left Mount Vernon High School?

I went on to attend Cornell College, graduating in 2000 earning a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology and Philosophy. My career in law enforcement began in March of 2001, as a Deputy with the Linn County Sheriff's Office. After graduating from the Cedar Rapids Police Department Academy in the summer of 2001, I have been with the Linn County Sheriff's Department, now for 22 years.



I live in Lisbon and have two sons.

What do you do now?



I was first assigned to the Correctional Center in 2001, until the winter of 2007 when I transferred to the Patrol Division.

I worked in the Patrol Division until I was promoted to the rank of Sergeant in the summer of 2014, and then was assigned to the Correctional Center as a supervisor. This assignment continued until the summer of 2016 when I transferred back to the Patrol Division as a patrol supervisor. I was at this position for five years until I transferred to the General Services Division in October 2021. I worked in the General Service Division until I was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant in August 2022 and was then assigned back to the Patrol Division as the Assistant Patrol Commander. I now oversee 33 Deputies and Sergeants assigned to the patrol division.



An accomplishment(s) you are proud of?

I am particularly proud of the law enforcement education and awards I have accumulated over the years, and I am thankful for the many opportunities I have had. In 2014 I completed the 5-STAR PLE 'Leadership 1: Becoming a Force Multiplier Course'. I continued my law enforcement education

in 2019 completing the 'National Command & Staff College Criminal Justice Commission for Credible Leadership (CLO)' and am a certified National 4-Star Credible Leader (CCL) - 1 of only 18 Sheriff's office employees to have this certification. This Certification puts the Linn County Sheriff's Office as only the 2nd agency in the nation to be recognized as a certified leadership organization.

In addition I have also completed the 'FBI Law Enforcement Executive Development Trilogy' and was recommended by the Linn County Sheriff's Office to attend the FBI National Academy. I have been a member of the Sheriff's Special Response Team (SRT) since 2005 and am currently a team leader.

I have worked many VIP security details, which have led to meeting of officials like Vice Presidents and President Obama. I have also assisted with conducting several high-risk felony apprehensions over the years.

I'm currently an instructor for the A.L.I.C.E. program (active Shooter Training), Defensive Tactics, Chemical and Less Lethal Munitions, and Firearms. I continue to assist the Linn County Sheriff's Office as an Armor for our Glock sidearms as well.

I have also been a member of the Iowa Army National Guard since March of 1998, and am currently a Major with the 185th Regiment, RTI. During my time with the military I have been deployed twice. First, in 2003 to Egypt as part of the Multi-National Force and Observers. While there, I was a member of the U.S. team competing in the Force Skills Competition. A competition involving 8 other countries involving a wide range of challenges and tasks that took place over the course of several days. It was only the 2nd time a U.S. Team took 1st place in over 20 years of competition.



Chris is pictured at left with his oldest son, Wyatt, in a Chinook Helicopter

Upon my return from Iraq, I attended Officer Candidate School and accepted commission as a 2nd Lieutenant. From Officer Candidate School, I attended Flight School at Fort Rucker, Alabama. After 14 months of training I graduated Flight School. Out of 120 students in my graduating class, I'm proud to say I graduated number 1 as a Distinguished Honor Graduate. From here I went on to pilot the OH-58 KIOWA, CH-47 Chinook, and the LUH-72 Lakota and have logged over 800 hours of flight time. I have been able to serve as a Squad Leader, Platoon Leader, Officer Candidate School Instructor (awarded instructor of the year out of 34 other instructors), Company Commander, and I am currently serving as the 185th Regiment Administrations Officer.

During my time in the military, I have attended many military schools and am pleased and humbled to say I have earned numerous decorations and badges. In addition I completed Air-Assault School, PLDC (Professional Leadership and Development Course) as an Honor Graduate, Sniper M-24 Small Arms, S.E.R.E Level C, among others. I have also been awarded the following badges: Expert Infantry Badge, Combat Infantry Badge, Army Aviator Badge, Driver and Mechanic Badge, and the Air Assault Badge.

I am currently working on the completion of the US Army Command and General Staff Officer Course (CGSOC), to earn the next rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

A favorite memory or two of your time as a student at Mount Vernon Schools -- or of a favorite teacher perhaps?

I would say classes with Jim Bellamy were memorable, but most of my memories come for all the long days of wrestling practice and tournaments with fellow teammates and coaches Vance Light and Rick Elliott. Coming into practice several pounds overweight with hopes of a hard practice to shed the pounds. The morning breakfast at a team member's residence after making weight. Those were some hard, but good times.

Editor's Note: Chris can be reached at Chris.Smith@linncountyiowa.gov



In Memory of classmates we have lost

Willard Bratton 1961

January 21, 2023 Cedar Rapids, IA

Treva Moore Heiser 1950

March 22, 2023 Loveland, Colorado

Madonna Meskimen Hartl 1953

July 27, 2023 Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Theresa Vislisl Clark 1962

May 29, 2023 Mount Vernon, Iowa

Helen Sievers Caspers 1965

May 30, 2023 Lisbon, Iowa

Larry Ringer 1955

June 28, 2023 College Station, Texas

Richard Dvorak 1944

June 30, 2023 Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Michael Mortensen 1973

July 16, 2023 Edgewood, New Mexico

Alan Yeats 2004

August 27, 2023 Baraboo, Wisconsin

John Studt 1954

September 7, 2023 Bentonville, Arkansas

Brenda Noble Schillz 1984

September 11, 2023 Mount Vernon, Iowa

Ted Pence 1960

September 15, 2023 West Branch, Iowa

Allan Miner 1963

September 26, 2023 Carmel Valley, California

Doug Gaines 1975

September 28, 2023 Mount Vernon, Iowa

Mark Smith 1983

October 9, 2023 Mount Vernon, Iowa

Randy Hoidahl 1961

October 17, 2023 Aurora, Colorado

Brenda Goodall 1986

October 17, 2023 Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Vaughn Schweitzer 1968

October 11, 2023 Bloomington, Minnesota

Lee Knutsen 1957

October 11, 2023 Marshalltown, Iowa

Robert Davis 1968

October 22, 2023 Mechanicsville, IA

Steve Howard 1964

October 30, 2023 Raymond, Iowa

Michael Zinkula 1977

October 31, 2023 Mount Vernon, Iowa

Roger Reyhons 1956

November 11, 2023 Mount Vernon, Iowa

Steve Becicka 1961

November 13, 2023 Bloomington, Illinois

Mary Carol Plattenberger Lambertsen 1942

November 21, 2023 Martelle, Iowa

Barbara Thomson Neal 1968

December 5, 2023 Mount Vernon, Iowa

Jim Kent 1950

November 25, 2023 Winchester, MA

John Maxson 1959

December 21, 2023 Wheatland, WY

- FRIENDS -

David Ohman

February 1, 2023 Mount Vernon, Iowa

Lois Straw

former School Secretary

November 11, 2023 New Hampton, Iowa

Sandra Bolton

former High School English teacher

September 7, 2023 North Liberty, Iowa

Michael G McConaughy

December 23, 2023 Boise, ID

(Please excuse us if your classmate or loved one is not listed here for their recent death, but let us know for inclusion in the next newsletter.)

Alumni News...

Send us your information...

alumni@mvcasd.org

or call Julia at 319-721-7953

BIRTHS

Samantha Weber Formanek '08' and her husband Kyle welcomed their fourth son Huxley Jo into the world on September 20, 2023. Sam and Kyle reside in LeMars, Iowa.

ANNIVERSARIES/SPECIAL DAYS

Alex Brannaman '09 and Amber Wiltgen 10/28/2023 The couple reside in Lisbon

Tom Schroeder '09 and Maddy Boesche, September 23, 2023. The couple reside in Chicago

Bill Yeisley '57' and Harriet Yeisley of Cedar Rapids, IA celebrated their 65th anniversary in 2023. They were married on August 2, 1958

Joyce Olmstead Lucas '57 and Jim Lucas of Central City, IA celebrated their 60th anniversary in 2023. They were married on July 1, 1963.

Linda Peterson Nost '63, married Larry Richardson on 11/26/23.

Jefferson White '08 and Casey Wortmann were married in the Fall of 2023.

EDUCATION & MILITARY SERVICE

Quinnie Rodman '19 graduated from St, Ambrose University with a Bachelor's in Music Education in spring 2023.

Ryan Clark '19 received a bachelor of science with magna cum laude distinction, in agricultural business from Iowa State University in spring 2023.

Joseph Hunter '19 received a bachelor of science with magna cum laude distinction, in computer engineering from Iowa State University in spring 2023

A special thank you to everyone that helped in the making of this newsletter. Photo contributors include Lisa Lewis, Jeff Schmitt, Greg Batenhorst, Amy Weber, Amie Roberts, Sarah Rife Patten, and MVHS students Lily Rechkemmer and Kadence Kaiser. Special thanks to Annamæ Baker and Diane Zinkula for assisting with Alumni News. Thanks to Stephanie Timm, Amy Weber, Cathy Hufford, Susan Fisher, Kim Tucker, and Sarah Rife Patten for assisting in names and graduating years. And, of course, thank you to Kathy Staskal for editing, layout assistance, and *Mustangs: Where are they Now?*

Thank you to everyone who volunteers to help at Alumni Association events -- they couldn't happen without you!!!

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Andrew Louwagie '19 received a bachelor of science with magna cum laude distinction, in agricultural business from Iowa State University in spring 2023.

Joshua Lynch '16 received a bachelor of science in accounting from Iowa State University in spring 2023.

David Wolfe '19 received a bachelor of science with summa cum laude distinction, in cyber security engineering from Iowa State University in spring 2023.

Samantha White '19 graduated summa cum laude with a bachelor of arts degree in political science and sustainability studies from Muhlenberg College in spring 2023.

Clarissa Player '18 graduated from the University of Iowa with a bachelor of arts in women's and sexuality studies in spring 2023.

Erin Belding '16 graduated from the University of Iowa with a bachelor of business administration in management in spring 2023.

Grace Krapfl '19 graduated from the University of Iowa with a bachelor of arts in elementary education in spring 2023.

Karlynn Connolly '20 graduated from the University of Iowa with a bachelor of arts in interdepartmental studies in spring 2023.

Kate Kragebrink '15 graduated from the University of Iowa with a doctor of dental surgery in dentistry in spring 2023.

Nathan Dickson '19 graduated from the University of Iowa with a bachelor of science engineering in computer science and engineering in spring 2023.

Oliver Crocker '19 graduated from the University of Iowa with a bachelor of arts in cinema in spring 2023.

Riley Clark '16 graduated from the University of Iowa with a doctor of pharmacy in spring 2023.

William Dragon '17 graduated from the University of Iowa with a master of science in biomedical engineering in spring 2023.

Benjamin Alger '16 graduated with a master of science in education in counseling (professional school counseling track) from Buena Vista University in Spring 2023.

Ella Brase '19 graduated summa cum laude with a bachelor of arts in elementary education from Wartburg College in spring 2023.

Anika Perry '19 graduated magna cum laude with a bachelor of arts in elementary education from Wartburg College in spring 2023.

Nicholas Bowen '14 earned a master of science in counseling from Drake

University in spring 2023.

AND MORE...

Maggie Lessmeier Willems '96, head volleyball coach at Mount Vernon High School, took her team to the state championship and earned a 2nd place finish. Willems was named 3A NE District Coach of the Year

Lucy Davis '70 retired from Chicago Northwestern Railroad/Union Pacific Railroad on May 1, 2022, with 28 years of service. Work order, billing, interchange, coal desk, Proviso no bill, crew transportation clerk.

Cathy Boggs '82 stepped down as the Mount Vernon Public Library Director after 26 years of service. She will continue as the Public Library Assistant Director and maintain her Thursday morning story time at the Library.

Grace Chamberlain Rowray '07 began her position as the new Public Library Director at Cole Library in Mount Vernon.

Helen Blue Holder '61 just received a box of children's book number 9, *The Crinkle Crackle Wall* from the printer! Book number 10 *Baking with Grandpa* is being illustrated. Holder's books are "fun to read aloud and fun for the 8-10 year old to read for themselves."

Anna Moore '22 published her first set of poems, *My Head But Make It Pretty* in November 2023.

Amelia Kibbie '02 completed her term in December as the Mount Vernon Area Arts Council' Poet Laureate. She served in this position since 2020.

Michael Bowers '87 traveled to Southeast Asia for the non-profit, Room to Read where he works as a chief program implementation officer. Room to Read is creating a world free from illiteracy and gender inequality by helping children in historically low-income communities develop literacy skills and a habit of reading, and by supporting girls as they build skills to succeed in school and negotiate key life decisions.

Adam Koffron '10 USMC Active and **Ben**

Koffron '12 US NAVY 2 years, sons of David Koffron '81 and Lynette Rodman Koffron '85, and **Sam Rodman '10** US NAVY 2 years son of Mark Rodman '85' and Deanna Rodman received the Quilt of Valor in June



2023. The three are the grandsons of Annamae Stoneking Baker 60' **Robyn Dochterman '81** and her business, the St. Croix Chocolate Company, recently competed at the International Chocolate Awards

World Finals competition in Florence, Italy. They won a Silver Award for its new Burnt Cinnamon and Bourbon bar and a Bronze in the World Finals for its Macadamia bon bon.

Sydney Dennis '21 and Lauren Schrock '21, former teammates at MVHS, competed against each other at the collegiate level at the Central Michigan vs. Iowa Volleyball game



this fall.

R.(Rebecca) Saffin Parrish-Sams '89 was named to the 2024 edition of The Best Lawyers in America(r) which recognizes the top five percent of legal talent in private practice throughout the United States.

HALL OF FAME RECIPIENT NEWS

Jeff Meeker '89 nine-time Conference Coach of the Year, has compiled a 456-312 collegiate record, highlighted by an unparalleled run of success through 21 seasons at Cornell College. His 395 wins on the Hilltop are the most by a Cornell coach in any sport.

Rev. Thomas Zinkula '75 Pope Francis has appointed Most Reverend Thomas R. Zinkula, Bishop of Davenport, as Archbishop of Dubuque. Archbishop Zinkula was installed as the archdiocese's eleventh archbishop on Wednesday, October 18, 2023.

DID YOU MOVE? HAVE A NEW EMAIL ADDRESS? GET MARRIED?
Don't forget to send your updated contact information, email addresses, and news items to the Alumni Association at alumni@mvcsd.org or call 319-721-7953



THANK YOU for your Support of the ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

The Following are names of alums who have supported us for the 2023 year with either 'Support' or donations. **Your financial support is greatly appreciated.**

At the Alumni Association's 2022 Fall Board meeting, it was decided to change from a dues/support and donation system to simply a donation.

The 2023 report will reflect only donations to the Association.

See back page for the 2024 Donation Form, or log in online at www.mvalumni.org and select donate at the top left corner.

Is your name missing? Call Julia at 319-721-7953 or email to alumni@mvcسد.org

2023 ANNUAL SUPPORT

Anonymous
David Wolfe 1950
Los Angeles CA
Ann Vislisl Pavik 1952
Granite Bay CA
Bill Yeisley 1952
Cedar Rapids IA
Suan Albright Kehri 1953
Manchester IA
Fae Sparks Edwards 1954
Cedar Rapids IA
Kay Jilovec Lind 1955
Cedar Rapids IA
Jane Johnston Perry 1955
Bloomington MN
Bonnie Clark Keith 1956
Mount Vernon IA
Deanne Dean LeVan 1956
Marion IA
Roger Reyhons 1956
Lisbon IA
Janet Miner Sessions 1956
Kent OH
Leona Reyhons Smith 1956
Mount Vernon IA
Bonnie Humes Boodon 1957
Milton FL
Barb Neal Hutchins 1957
Marion IA
Janice Lowe Whitman Majors 1957
Mount Vernon IA
Karen Martin 1957
Mount Vernon IA
Janet Hess Smith 1957
Urbandale IA
Class of 1958
Rodger Brush 1958
Willow River MN
Marilyn Dean Schnittjer 1958
Mount Vernon IA
David Sparks 1958
Ankeny IA
Karen Wolrab Smith 1959
Denver CO
Shirley Andrews Sparks 1959
Ankeny IA

Annamae Stoneking Baker 1960
Mount Vernon IA
Susan Dye Hodin 1960
Cedar Rapids IA
Judy Caldwell Penn 1960
Cedar Rapids IA
John Rife 1960
Mount Vernon IA
Helen Blue Holder 1961
Austin MN
Don Jilovec 1961
Mechanicsville IA
Bunny Mulligan 1961
Marion IA
Ernest Farris 1962
Marion IA
Mary Ann Jilovec 1962
Mechanicsville IA
Joyce Rife 1962
Marton, New Zealand
Class of 1963
Tom Childs 1963
Yuma AZ
Marcia Clark Kimm '63
Blairstown IA
Gloria Herboldsheimer Krob 1963
Lisbon IA
Mikal Brawner 1964
Boulder CO
Jeanne Peterson Cork 1964
Kansas City, MO
Bob Jilovec 1964
Mechanicsville IA
Gary Kaplan 1964
Hiawatha IA
Diana Kafer LaVoi 1964
Prior Lake MN
Joyce Miller Maxwell 1964
Central City IA
Susan Mounts Fisher 1965
Mount Vernon IA
John Pospisil 1966
Mount Vernon IA
Vance Rahn 1966
Anderson SC
Nancy Tonne Hansen 1967

Stanwood MI
Kandy Goodrich Kling 1967
Columbia MO
Terry Meeks 1967
Madison MO
Michael Seiler 1967
Bonita CA
Jane Colehour Pospisil 1968
Mount Vernon IA
Donna Clark Ulch 1968
Mount Vernon IA
Allen Forest 1969
Cedar Rapids IA
Stephen Maaske 1969
DeWitt IA
Cathy Humphries Stoner 1969
Mount Vernon IA
Dan Stoner 1970
Mount Vernon IA
John Pisarik 1971
Mount Vernon IA
Dennis Stewart 1971
Cedar Rapids IA
Kevin Woods 1973
Mount Vernon IA
Miles Meyer 1974
Madison WI
David Pitlik 1974
Mount Vernon IA
Vickie Reynolds 1974
Annamosa IA
Linda Royer Pitlik 1975
Mount Vernon IA
Mary Thomsen 1975
Lisbon IA
Carol Woods- Boren 1975
Mount Vernon IA
Joy Kuntz 1976
Martelle IA
Ann Lehman Currie 1977
Mount Vernon IA
Melanie Keith McClaughry 1977
Gulf Breeze FL
Becky Thumm Whitman 1977
Mount Vernon IA
Sara Kendall 1978

Cedar Rapids IA
Ann Koppenhaver 1978
Lisbon IA
Jeff Spencer 1978
Grand Prairie TX
Robert Durfey 1979
Marion IA
Terri Overman 1979
Cedar Rapids IA
Thomas Keith 1981
Mount Vernon IA
Kim Konkowski 1981
Mount Vernon IA
Cathy Boggs 1982
Lisbon IA
Cathy Hufford 1983
Mount Vernon IA
Dan Drahos 1984
Muscatine IA
Beth Hufford 1984
Laguna Niguel CA
Mike Martin 1984
Alpharetta GA
Jackie Jordan Morriscal 1985
Mount Vernon IA
Dave Ryan 1985
Mount Vernon IA
Tony Vislisl 1985
Cedar Rapids IA
Rod Sherman 1986
Ely IA
Sarah Rife Patten 1993
Mount Vernon IA
Andrew Morf 1994
Mount Vernon IA
Kim Zangger Tucker 1994
Cedar Rapids IA
Whitney Bennett Turner 2000
Mount Vernon IA
Grant Freeman 2006
Mount Vernon IA
Alex Brannaman 2009
Lisbon IA
Taylor Sedlacek Brocka 2010
Jacob Stanerson 2019
Mount Vernon IA
Ethan Stanerson 2023
Mount Vernon IA
Emily Patten 2024
Mount Vernon IA

2023 ANNUAL SUPPORT *continued*

Luke Stephens 2024
Mount Vernon IA
Audrey Tucker 2024
Mount Vernon IA

FRIENDS

Kristin Anderson
Mount Vernon IA
Lauren Andrews
Mount Vernon IA
Greg and Mary Lou Batenhorst
Mount Vernon IA
Sheila Borg
Mount Vernon IA
Audrey Christenson
Columbia, MO
Jan DeCamp
Lonbard IL
Linda and Mark Desotel
Fairfax IA
Cot and Kay Graber
Mount Vernon IA
Nannette Gunn
Mount Vernon IA
Daniel and Nicole Jilovec
Mechanicsville IA
Bethany Keenan
Mount Vernon IA
Randy Krejci
Cedar Rapids IA
Sandra Lighthall
Lisbon IA
Joyce Loomis
Cedar Rapids IA
Sean McNulty
Mount Vernon IA
Sheri Nicol
Albert Lea MN
John and Cynthia Pansegrau
Solon IA
Laurie Reilly
Mount Vernon IA
Barb Russell
Mount Vernon IA
Shirley Ryan
Mount Vernon IA
Jeff and Deb Schwiebert
Mount Vernon IA
James and Susan Schmidt
Cedar Rapids IA
Jennifer Stanersn
Mount Vernon IA
Kathy Staskal
Mars Hill NC
Mary Young
Mount Vernon IA

IN HONOR OF RYAN WHITMAN
Janice Lowe Whitman Majors '57

IN MEMORY OF STEVE BECICKA '61 AND RANDY HOIDAHL '61
Bunny Williams Mulligan '61

IN MEMORY OF BILL BOWERS '57
Bonnie Humes Boodon '57
Ernest Farris 1962
Bonnie Clark Keith 1956
Melanie Keith McClaughry 1977
Gary and Donna Clark '68 Ulch

IN MEMORY OF RICHARD CLARK '58
Bonnie Clark Keith 1956

IN MEMORY OF THERESA CLARK '62
Sheila Borg
Linda and Mark Desotel
Nathan and Amanda Goodlove
Bob 1964 and Mary Ann 1962
Jilovec
Daniel and Nicole Jilovec
Don '61 and Carol Jilovec
Bonnie Clark Keith 1956
Kay Jilovec Lind 1955
Mike '84 and Mary Martin
John and Cynthia Pansegrau
Laurie Reilly
John '60 and Thelma Rife
Joyce Rife '62
Barb Russell
Dave '85 and Heidi Ryan
Shirley Ryan
Leona Reyhons Smith 1956
Gary and Donna Clark '68 Ulch
Steph and Tony Vislisel '85

IN MEMORY OF REX AND HELEN DEAN
Deanne Dean LeVan 1956

IN MEMORY OF HOWARD DECAMP '51 AND RICHARD MCKEEN '51
Jan DeCamp 1951

IN MEMORY OF STEVE HOWARD '64
Susan Mounts Fisher '65

IN MEMORY OF BILL LIGHTHALL '66
Sandra Lighthall

IN MEMORY OF ALISON HORTON JACOBI
Anonymous

IN MEMORY OF AMANDA KULA MEEKER '97
Sheri Nicol

IN MEMORY OF ALLAN MINER 1963
The Class of 1963
Janet Sessions '56

IN MEMORY OF BARBARA THOMSEN NEAL 1968
Annamae Baker 1960

IN MEMORY OF WAYNE NOBLE '69
Allen Forest 1969

IN MEMORY OF MARILYN OVERMAN
Terri Overman 1979

IN MEMORY OF MARGARET CLARK REILLY 1946
Bonnie Clark Keith 1956

IN MEMORY OF EDDIE AND "SIS" PITLIK

David '74 and Linda '75 Pitlik
IN MEMORY OF MIKE SMITH
Bonnie Humes Boodon 57
Janet Hess Smith '57 and
Thomas

IN MEMORY OF DAVID VAN METRE
Kay Jilovec Lind '55

IN MEMORY OF DENNIS WOLRAB '64
Gary Kaplan 1964
Bonnie Clark Keith 1956
Joyce '64 and George Maxwell
Karen Wolrab Smith 1959
Anita Wolrab

IN MEMORY OF 1957 CLASSMATES
Bonnie Humes Boodon 57

Thank You!

Don't See Your Name Listed Here?

THIS LIST IS FOR 2023 ALUMNI ASSOCIATION DONATIONS. WATCH FOR 2024 FOUNDATION DONATIONS TO APPEAR IN THE 2024 SPRING ISSUE. If you have any questions, or need to report a change to me, please let me know.

With continued gratitude,
Julia Andrews, Alumni Association
alumni@mvcsd.org
319-721-7953

DID YOU MOVE? HAVE A NEW EMAIL ADDRESS? GET MARRIED?

Don't forget to send your updated contact information, email addresses, and news items to the Alumni Association at alumni@mvcsd.org or text/call 319-389-8602

Thank you to EVERYONE who volunteers to help at Alumni Association events -- we couldn't do it without YOU!

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DONATIONS MADE TO THE FOUNDATION
(listed in the NEXT issue)
SUPPORT MOUNT VERNON STUDENTS



FOUNDATION NEWS



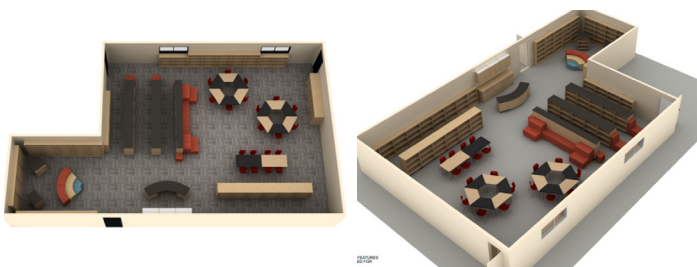
The new tax season brings to light recent tax changes to our retirees. Starting in 2023, retirement income (pensions, annuities, IRA, 401K distributions, etc) and farmland rental income for certain retired farmers is exempt from certain Iowa income tax. When our retired community members file their 2023 taxes this spring, they will notice the savings. Though initially this change may not be felt by the school districts in Iowa, the retirees will notice the personal benefit in a few short months. Long-term, some of the recent tax changes can have larger implications for education funding. For those interested in using some of their tax savings to help our school district, there is a new local effort called RISE.

Retired Iowans Supporting Education (RISE) is a campaign being led by Dick and Deb George encouraging voluntary annual pledges to our district by retirees. The Georges and other local retirees are planning to use some of their income tax savings to help support the local school district by making tax deductible gifts to the Mount Vernon School District Foundation. With the support of education in mind, the donor would elect which current school endeavor they wish to have their support go towards. They can specify programs, the District's general fund, current projects, or the Foundation's long-term endowment, all according to the donor's desire. The pledges can be directed on an annual basis, allowing the donor to tailor their gift allocations and amounts each year.

The goal of the RISE campaign is to help offset current and long-term public school funding shortfalls from the State of Iowa with some of the income tax savings on retiree income. The hope is that our retired community members wishing to support education can still do so in a tax beneficial way from this annual savings, allowing minimal impact on their current household income. Donors are always welcome to give in different ways, as well, such as time and other non-monetary support. This spring, closer to tax season, an informational meeting will be held for those wishing to learn more about this opportunity. Please feel welcome to reach out to the MVCSD Foundation Director, Amie Roberts, with any questions in between: aroberts@mvcسد.org or 319-531-2146.

WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY LIBRARY RENOVATION

Efforts are being made to update the Washington Elementary library for our students. The hope is to provide much-needed shelving for our ever-growing content, inclusive seating accessible by all student ability levels, additional interactive opportunities for our young learners, and more efficient use of the space through the next growth phases. This is only possible through the efforts of our community. Please consider donating today.



Above: New Library Design for the Washington Elementary Renovation Project

David Ryan '85 was announced as the new Foundation President. Ryan is the President and CEO of Mount Vernon Bank and Trust Company and the "Voice of the Mustangs"



Immediate Past President Ann Koppenhaver '78 continues as the new Foundation Treasurer.

MVCSD Foundation
[@mvcسدfoundation](https://www.mvcسدfoundation.org)



venmo

The MVCSD Foundation is pleased to offer yet another way you can support the students and staff of the Mount Vernon Community School District as they pursue Excellence in Academics, Arts and Athletics. A VENMO account has been established.

Scan below or use @MVCSDfoundation

You can specify a designation for your gift using the "what's this for" box. Please supply your address, as well, if a receipt is desired for tax purposes"

This is in addition to the other established donation methods. Thank you for your continued commitment to our students!

NEWS & CURRENT EVENTS JUNKIE

I am a news and current events junkie, and it is always interesting to watch the same flow of new stories every year from around Thanksgiving to just after the beginning of the new year. Prior to and just after Thanksgiving, we hear about the busiest travel days of the year. On Black Friday, we see reporters reporting from the same malls and stores to show the rush of shoppers storming the stores to score the best deal possible on TV's and gaming components. A few days later, we get to learn about what went down on Cyber Monday and are told how we can make a difference on Giving Tuesday. Reporters on Christmas Eve will track the progress of Santa Claus as he works his way across the globe (he is bringing me a Mustang pony), and between Christmas and January 1st we are told to get into the gym and fine tune our resolutions for the new year. Once we enter the new year we are told to get our financial house in order, and to prepare for the upcoming tax season. It is literally Groundhog Day every year, and it would be nice if the people in the media would work to be a little more creative in reporting in the future!



Dr. Greg Batenhorst,
Superintendent

So what's the point? What if our commitment for 2024 is to maybe mix things up a little bit, because oftentimes in our lives we can fall into the same pattern as I describe with the media this time of year. It is no secret that the months of January and February are not always the most fun in the wonderful world of education. Winter has a hold on things, the fun holiday season is over, the school work typically gets more challenging, and often it is hard to stay positive day in and day out. I encourage all of us to think of little ways as parents, community members, staff members, and students that we can try to flip the narrative a little bit and do things for one another to keep us from falling into our same predictable patterns. This is the most important time of the year to assess where we are with our connection to one another. It has never been more important that we focus on our connection to one another in our families, our community, and our school district. I think this is a simple resolution for the new year and is extremely realistic and reachable, to look for new ways to engage with one another in our quest to remain connected positively to one another.

I hope your holiday season has been great thus far, and that you have a great 2024!

Dr. B.

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FALL 2023/WINTER 2024

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MOMs and DADs, please help us update our contact information for your graduate(s). If you would also like to receive this publication, we can add your name to the list too.



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Select 'DONATION' located in the top left corner.

NOTE: do not be alarmed that the page you are directed to is a Foundation page. Select 'Alumni Association' for your donation and the total amount does come directly to us. For donation reporting purposes the MV Alumni Association operates under the MVCSDF Foundation, a tax-exempt organization.

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