



MOUNT VERNON COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

ALUMNI NEWS



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Above, former High School Principal Dennis Walsh & Carol Woods-Boren '75 volunteer to serve breakfast during the 2021 Alumni-Community Breakfast

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2022 HERITAGE DAY ALUMNI AND COMMUNITY EVENTS - SHOW UP AND ENJOY!

ALUMNI EVENT

Friday, July 8, 3-5 pm
EARLY BIRD RECEPTION

First Street Community Center lobby

Alumni of all ages are welcome to visit the First Street Community Center for a tour and reception. Enjoy refreshments and what was likely once your high school or middle school building.

ALUMNI & COMMUNITY EVENT

Sat., July 9, 8-10 am
Breakfast

Pick up your 'grab-n-go' breakfast & and enjoy coffee and juice along with other alumni and families, school staff, and MV community. Cost of breakfast is a monetary donation.

PAC tours available
ALUMNI FUNDRAISER

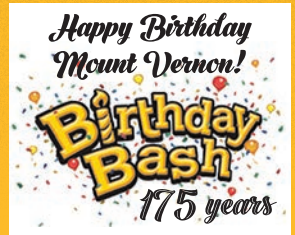
ALUMNI & COMMUNITY EVENT

Reception Area open at old Fire Station uptown Saturday, July 10 after parade until dark. Join alumni and community for a spot to sit down, enjoy cold water, pictures and yearbooks, a game of bags, and ice cream! Great meet-up spot!
Chocolate Shakes for sale \$3
Ice Cream Cups (many flavors) \$2

The Annual Heritage Day Festival, Mount Vernon's biggest summer festival, will take place Wednesday, July 6 through Saturday, July 9, with a theme of 'Happy 175th Birthday Mount Vernon!' On Wednesday night the Mount Vernon Fine Arts Association will host a story-telling event at the First Street Community Center from 6-8 pm, Thursday night a family fun night will be held at the Lester Buresh Family Community Wellness Center from 5-9 pm. Friday events will take place at Kernoustie Golf Club, and Heritage Day will be held on Saturday. Heritage Day is hosted by the Mount Vernon-Lisbon Community Development Group (CDG) in partnership with the Mount Vernon Alumni Association, the City of Mount Vernon, Kernoustie Golf Club and several other local organizations.

Watch for complete event information to come in the 'MVL Sun' and online at visitmvl.com & mvalumni.org

At left: We are indeed thankful for everyone who volunteers to help at our alumni events. At left are Linda Peterson Nost '63 and Karen Jilovec Martin '57, who along with Carol Woods-Boren '75 above, have helped at the Alumni-Community Breakfast every year since the event started in 2005.





Mustang ALUMNI

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

Volunteer to help the Association on Saturday, July 9 from 8-9 am or 9-10 am in the kitchen at the high school for our breakfast, or as a two-hour host/ice cream server any time from 11:30 am to 9 pm at the Reception held in the old fire station. Contact Kathy at alumni@mvcsd.org or text/call 319-389-8602.

Volunteer to help Heritage Days In addition, the Heritage Days committee needs volunteers for set-up on Saturday morning and Friday evening. Contact Joe Jennison at director@visitmvl.com or 319-210-9935.

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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@mvcsd.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

- 2022
- July - Antique Extravaganza
- July - Heritage Days
- Oct - Chili Cookoff
- December - Magical Night and more

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Andrew Morf '94
Alumni Association
President

Summer has arrived and with it a flurry of activities! We are excited to report that we will be co-sponsoring Heritage Days with the city of Mount Vernon again this July. Last year was the first year we co-sponsored this event, and we did so because in so many respects Heritage Days has become the true Homecoming for those who grew up and graduated from Mount Vernon Community Schools. We also did so because the future of Heritage Days was and continues to be uncertain without contributions like ours. I believe our Association and alumni make a difference in this community, and this is one of the ways we can contribute.

Summer has proven to be the time when individuals and families can and do return home year-after-year to not only connect with extended family and loved ones but also with friends and former classmates.

Most, if not all, class reunions occur during this festival as well. It also affords us the opportunity to host the Mount Vernon Alumni-Community breakfast at the high school on Saturday morning prior to the Heritage Days Parade. It is both fun and special to be part of an annual event that brings together Mount Vernon's youngest students alongside its oldest graduates, and with current and former staff, friends and community.

While we are pleased to be a large contributor to Heritage Days, we cannot continue our giving to this festival without your generous support. To that end we are planning a Fall Fundraising Campaign to help sustain and replenish our association funds. You will all be receiving a letter requesting your support sometime this fall. However, if the Mustang Spirit should move you to make a contribution beforehand, we will not turn away your gifts!

Your donations will help us pay for printing and mailing this newsletter, the Alumni Hall of Fame events & Homecoming Reception, our database and website, along with our Heritage Days sponsorship.

Finally, my second term as president of the Alumni Association is ending this summer, so this will be my last letter to you all. It has been an honor to serve the Association and work along so many great alums that serve on the board. Mount Vernon has been and continues to be a special place, and I hope whether you live near or far, this community continues to be a source of rich memories and much happiness.

Hope to see many of you on "The Hill" over the Heritage Days Weekend. Go Mustangs!

Alums at Heritage Days 2021...



From left to right: Alum and school board member Denise Henik Brannaman '81 and her son, alum and Association board secretary Alex Brannaman '09, greet guests coming to the Saturday morning breakfast. Dan Drahos '84 and Association Board member Kim Zangger Tucker '94 volunteer at the uptown Alumni Reception area in the old fire station. At right, 1973 classmates Kevin Smith and Mark Hyllbak catch up at the Association's Early Bird Reception in the First Street Community Center.

2022 REUNIONS

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

2017 - 5 YEARS - July 8

Meet up at the Friday evening Kernoustie Country Club events and fireworks
 Contact: Elyzabeth Sherrell
 Email: Elyzabethmarie17@gmail.com
 Phone: 319-321-5383

2012 - 10 YEARS - TBA

Contact: Zehra Khan
 Contact: Jordan Roe

2010 10+2 years - Heritage Day - July 9

Reunion at the Stoner farm (see next page)
 Find the Class of 2010 on Facebook at "class of 2010"
 Contact: Emily Stoner
 Email: emilyb@broadstar.com
 Phone: 318-551-6634

2007 - 15 YEARS - Heritage Day July 9

Reunion at the home of Rachel Laborde in downtown Mount Vernon. (see next page for details). RSVP by July 2 to Stephanie.
 Contact: Rachel Craig Laborde
 Email: rachelrlaborde@gmail.com
 Phone: 319-533-5918
 Contact: Stephanie Damon-Moore
 stephanie.damon.moore@gmail.com

2002 - 20 YEARS - TBA

Contact: Jessie Brown-Kwaiser Thurn
 Email: jessie.thurn@gmail.com
 Phone: 319-213-0146
 Contact: Mary Shook

1997 - 25 YEARS - - Heritage Day weekend

Fri eve at Kernoustie Golf Club followed by gathering at Beau Dylan's in Lisbon.
 Sat eve meet uptown at Heritage Day.
 See next page for details
 Contact: Nick Boots
 Email: nboots@lisbon.k12.ia.us
 Phone: 319-560-0836

1992 - 30 YEARS - Heritage Day July 9

Evening reunion at Liberty Iron Works.
 Information to come.
 Contact: Vince Ellison
 Email: vellison74@gmail.com
 Phone: 319-329-4742
 Contact: Amy Reyhons Glick
 Email: amymglick@gmail.com
 Phone: 563-357-7482

1987 - 35 YEARS - TBA

Contact: Bob Blythe
 Email: bobbyleeblythe@gmail.com
 Phone: 319-895-0188
 Contact: Sarah Miller Johnson
 Email: smillerjohnson@hotmail.com
 Phone: 651-695-8075

1982 - 40 YEARS - Heritage Day Weekend

Friday, July 8, Kernoustie Golf Club
 Saturday, July 9, Studio 104 in MV (see next page for details)
 On Facebook at MVHS Class of 1982
 Contact: Sonia Essex Redmond 1982
 Email: mvred3@aol.com
 Phone: 319-895-8259

1977 - 45 YEARS - Heritage Day Weekend

Friday: Float preparation Friday at 4 pm at

Warren Havill's home.
 Saturday: Meet up at the Alumni-Community Breakfast, then to Havill home to board parade float.
 Saturday eve: 6 pm Reunion at Kroul's farm
 Contact: Ann Lehman Currie 1977
 Email: mustangmama77@msn.com
 Phone: 319-350-2153

1972 - 50 YEARS - Heritage Day July 9

8 am - meet at the new high school for Alumni-Community breakfast
 9:30 am - load our parade float
 6-10 pm - Reunion at First Street Community Center (Old High School).
 On Facebook MVHS Class of 72
 Contact: Connie Ferguson Winters
 Email: cwinters2698@comcast.net
 Phone: 651-895-3066
 Contact: Joan Karr Berends
 Email: joannie054@yahoo.com
 Phone: 319-270-6105

1971 - 50+1 YEARS - Heritage Day July 9

Saturday, July 9 at the Alumni-Community Breakfast followed by float in parade
 Evening Reunion at Lester Buresh Center (see next page for details)
 Contact: Wendy Johnson
 Email: johnsonwendy725@gmail.com
 Phone: 319-551-1428

1967 - 55 YEARS - Heritage Day weekend

Contact: Jacklyn Wolrab Moore
 Email: moore.jacklyn.a@gmail.com
 Phone: 319-621-7414 (voice/text)

1962 - 60 YEARS - Heritage Days weekend

Friday, July 8 - Sutliff tavern
 Saturday, July 9 - Alumni-Community Breakfast at high school and evening Reunion event, tba. (See next page)
 Contact: Joel Clark
 Email: joel1934clark@gmail.com
 Phone: 847-337-9007
 Contact: Linda Buresh Brouillette
 Email: lindabrouillette44@gmail.com
 Phone: 619-447-1678

1960 - 60 years - tba

Plans underway. Watch for info to come.
 Contact: John Rife
 Phone: 319-310-8105
 Email: jtbr2@q.com
 Contact: Annamae Stoneking Baker
 Phone: 319-895-8979
 Email: abmrlk@gmail.com

1957 - 65 YEARS - Heritage Day - July 9

Friday attend Early Bird at First Street Bldg 3-5 pm, Saturday morning to Alumni-Community Breakfast 8-10 am, Saturday night dinner at Sutliff Cider, cocktails at 5, dinner at 6
 Contact: Myrt Clark Bowers
 Email: myrtb203@mchsi.com
 Phone: 319-895-8515

1952 - 70 YEARS - Heritage Day breakfast

Contact: Bill Yeisley 1952
 Email: hcyeisley@outlook.com
 Phone: 319-362-2732

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Ann Koppenhaver, CPA
 Class of '78
 Mount Vernon Community School District Foundation President

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CLASS OF 2007 REUNION

The Class of 2007 will be celebrating our 15th high school reunion on **Saturday, July 9!**

Please join us for grilling and lawn games at the home of Rachel Laborde (formerly Craig), 210 First Street SE in downtown Mount Vernon.

Families are welcome, however you define that. Food and drink will be provided, and we will pass the hat (or, the venmo ID) for contributions.

Please RSVP by July 2 with your name, number of people you're bringing, and any accommodations you're requesting (related to food, mobility, etc.) to

Stephanie Damon-Moore at stephanie.damon.moore@gmail.com.

CLASS OF 1971 50+1 REUNION

Classmates should meet up on **Saturday, July 9** at the Alumni-Community Breakfast 8-10 am, at the High School where we can also board our float for the Heritage Days parade

Saturday, July 9, 5-8pm socializing at the Lester Buresh Center— information has been sent to you to reserve a spot to eat.

If you have not received information and wish to participate please contact Wendy Kaplan Johnson at 319-551-1428 or by email at johnsonwendy725@gmail.com

CLASS OF 1997 REUNION

FRIDAY EVENING, JULY 8 - Let's meet up at the Kernoustie Golf Club for activities and fireworks, followed by a gathering at Beau Dylan's in Lisbon.

SATURDAY MORNING, JULY 9 - Stop by the Alumni-Community Breakfast at the MV High School from 8-10, and to the Lester Buresh Center for tours. Be sure to take part in Heritage Day activities uptown in the afternoon and evening.

SATURDAY EVENING, JULY 9 - Meet uptown Saturday eve. See you there!
Contact: Nick Boots, nboots@lisbon.k12.ia.us 319-560-0836

CLASS OF 2010+2 REUNION

Emily Stoner Bell along with Molly Giegerich and Tom Mlynarczark are hosting the 2010 10+2 reunion on the day of Heritage Days, **Saturday, July 9**, at the Stoner farm at 1050 Linn Ridge Road.

Find the Class of 2010 on Facebook at "class of 2010"
Contact: Emily Stoner Bell
Email: emilyb@broadstar.com
Phone: 318-551-6634

CLASS OF 1982 REUNION

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS HERITAGE DAY WEEKEND

Friday, July 8, 7 pm, informal gathering at Kernoustie Golf Club, look for the Class of '82 sign
Saturday, July 9, 5 to 8 pm gathering at Studio 104, 104 1st Ave NE, Mount Vernon

Join our Facebook page, MVHS Class of 1982 or contact Sonia Essex Redmond mvred3@aol.com 319-895-8259

CLASS OF 1962 REUNION

CELEBRATING 60 YEARS - Heritage Days weekend JULY 8 & 9

FRIDAY EVENING, JULY 8, Meet up at Sutliff tavern
SATURDAY MORNING, JULY 9, 8-10 AT ALUMNI-COMMUNITY BREAKFAST
Look for our table!

SATURDAY EVENING, JULY 9, event being planned. Watch for information. Joe says "Remember the next chance to see each other will be 2032, and for me I'll be 88.... Something to think about! Let me know if you have any questions!"

Contact: Joel Clark joel1934clark@gmail.com 847-337-9007
Contact: Linda Buresh Brouillette lindabrouillette44@gmail.com 619-447-1678

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Tom Kortemeyer

More memories from alums at Heritage Days 2021...



Yearbooks on display at the Alumni-Community Reception held in the old firestation are always popular!



Elizabeth Drongesen Mhire '86 on the right, looks through yearbooks with a friend at the Alumni-Community Reception.



Kay Jilovec Lind '55 and Annamae Stoneking Baker '60 are also loyal volunteers at the breakfast and help with the donation box.



Above 1970 classmates Mary Dvorak Brendell and Kathy Christine Rilett Bullis '70 look through the high school composites, and at right, Superintendent Greg Batenhorst welcomes the Alumni-Community breakfast crowd and announces it is time for a tour of the new Performing Arts Center, PAC.



The High School Commons is full with people of all ages during the Alumni-Community Breakfast.

MUSTANG OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT HALL OF FAME AWARD



ABOVE: Community members, alums, family, friends and students attended the July 10, 2021 Mount Vernon Alumni Association Hall of Fame Awards Ceremony, to honor Tristan Wirfs '17 with a newly minted 'Mustang Outstanding Achievement Hall of Fame Award.

AT RIGHT: Tristan's award was designed and forged by alums Dale Merrill '92 and his son Kale '19 of Liberty Iron Works. This will be on display in the Alumni Association's display case located in the High School Performing Arts Center, until after Heritage Days when it will be given to its owner, Tristan.



THE DAVE RYAN '85 FAMILY

Reprinted with permission by 'The Pin Doctors'



- Jacob Ryan, Class Of 2007: 3X placer/State Finalist at 2A 160 as a Senior.
- Trey Ryan, Class of 2014: 3X placer/State Champion at 2A 170 as a Senior.
- Paul Ryan, Class of 2019: 3X Placer/State Champion at 2A 170 as a Senior.
- Henry "Hank" Ryan, Class of 2023: So far he has qualified for state one time. He did so this season at 2A 152.
- Michael "Mikey" Ryan, Class Of 2026: He hasn't gotten into HS yet, but he has been a hammer at the youth level and placed 5th at AAU State just a couple months ago in Division C130.
- Dave's son Jacob has a son named Brody Ryan who is in 3rd or 4th grade and made it to AAU State this year, so now Dave has a grandson who is adding to the Ryan family accomplishments!
- In addition, Dave's brother Russ Ryan '90 also has a successful wrestling history.

That is incredibly impressive...And that doesn't include the various conference, district, sectional, etc. titles that they have also accumulated. I don't think people realize how much hardware these guys have accumulated over the years. And all signs seem to indicate that his kids are all very good in the classroom as well!

Dave did not wrestle in college, but he was an intramural champion at UNI. While at UNI, he earned his degree in finance and is now the President and CEO of Mount Vernon Bank and Trust Company! So the success Dave had on the mat in HS was just a prerequisite to the success that would carry over that he would have off the mat and his kids seem to be following in their parents' footsteps. Dave has helped with the Mount Vernon kids wrestling program for years and when it comes to Mount Vernon wrestling, he is one of the most loyal members that you will ever find in any wrestling community. Mount Vernon wrestling is a large part of his life and identity and with the emergence and steady increase of super clubs, HS recruiting and transfers in the state of Iowa over the years, Dave has remained a proud advocate/supporter of all things Mount Vernon and always will be. Huge props to the Ryan family! They are a good look for wrestling.



Anyone ever notice the family wrestling dynasty that the Ryan family out of Mount Vernon has quietly put together for decades now? And I say "quietly" because of the professional, classy and absolutely non-boisterous manner in which they've accomplished what they have over the years... Well, let's break it down.

Dave Ryan was a 1985 graduate out of Mount HS. He wrestled there since he was a kid and had some success for them. He was a wrestling state qualifier, but was also a 4X Eastern Iowa Hawkeye Conference Champion in his day, winning titles at 98, 105, 119 and 132 lbs. What makes this feat extremely noteworthy is the fact that out of the 3+ decades that the EIHC was in place, Dave is only one of 4 or 5 to win EIHC Championships! The other 3 besides Dave who won 4 of these were; Mike Furne of Durant, Greg Randall '82 of Mount Vernon and Cody Stanley of Wilton. That is some very impressive company for Dave to be in, as all 3 of those guys were state champs. Greg Randall won 4 state championships.

You know what else is some impressive company that Dave Ryan is part of? His own family. Dave and his wife Heidi had 9 children together, with 5 boys (Jacob, Trey, Paul, Henry and Michael) and 4 daughters (Emily, Sarah, Libby and Lauren). All of them are athletic, to my knowledge, not only on the wrestling mat. His daughters have built a name for themselves as being great volleyball and softball players... his sons have succeeded in football, baseball and just like their father, wrestling. Check out how Dave Ryan's sons have done on the mat to this point:

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS! THE 1973 STATE CHAMPIONSHIP BOYS BASKETBALL TEAM



You're invited to help us celebrate 50 years on
December 3, 2022
4 pm High School Basketball Game
at Mount Vernon High School
followed by a public reception after the game

Join us in the Mount Vernon High School gym on December 3, 2022 at 4 pm for the High School Boys Basketball game vs against Jefferson and celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the 1973 team's state championship. The 1973 team will be introduced either prior to the game or at halftime. While they will sit behind the bench during the game, please join us for a public reception after the game in the High School Commons.

In 1973 the boys basketball team was rated the top Class A team in Iowa throughout the season. Among the awards and honors presented to Coach Landis and his team were the Eastern Iowa Hawkeye (EIHC) Conference Championship, the EICH Sportsmanship Award, and a first place trophy from the LaSalle Holiday Tournaments. Jeff Werling '73, Dirk Larsen '73, Hal Hufford '73, and Phil Rilett '74 were elected to the EIHC All-Conference team; Jeff Werling and Hal Hufford were selected for the All-Tournament team at the Des Moines state tournament; and Jeff Werling was elected to the 3rd Team All-State. Both the coach and team received the highest award that can be earned by a high school basketball team: the State Class A Championship for 1973. In addition, Coach Landis who is now 90 years old, points out that this was the first state championship won by any Mount Vernon team or sport.

Pictured below left to right in row 1: Terry Studt '74, Mark Sargent '74, Aaron Van Dyke '75, David Brokel '73, Dirk Larsen '73, Mark Walden '74, Reid Goodrich '73, and Cal Woods '74. Back row: Brian Dake '75, Paul Brown '73, Hal Hufford '73, Phil Rilett '74, Jeff Werling '73, Mark Kerr '73, Eddie Slach '74, Randy Rundle '74, Ken Landis '75, and Coach Robert Landis.



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▼ CLASS OF 1996 - 25 YEARS



The Class of 1996 held their reunion on Saturday July 10 at Kroul Farms. Class representatives are Maggie Lessmeier Willems and Ben Pospisil.

Back row L-R: Adam Flockhart, Matt Meyer, Ben Pospisil, Brandi Viter-Pitlik, Kim Bjork, Matt Stewart, Josh Rife, Ryan Wieseler, Vicki Ellison, Liz Erenberger, Alex Burge
Front row: Carmen Sealock, Sally Korteum, Renee Meyer, Emily Jordlesma, Maggie Willems, Christina Osborn, Teresa Duppong, Caitlin Mogbana, Leah Clark, Chris Smith

▼ CLASS OF 1956 - 65 YEARS



The Class of 1956 held their 65th class reunion during Heritage Days weekend 2021. On Saturday, July 10, classmates attended the Alumni-Community Breakfast in the morning followed by the Heritage Days parade, and then an evening reunion at Roger Schmittjer's home. On Sunday, July 11 a brunch was held at Leona Smith's home. Class representatives are Leona Reyhons Smith and Roger Schmittjer.

Five members of the class of 1956 celebrated being together from kindergarten through their senior year at their 65th class reunion. They are Deanne Dean LeVan, Roger Reyhons, David Ennis, Janet Minor Glassman and Betty Stoneking.

Front row, left to right: Bonnie Clark Kieth, Betty Coon Ammeter, Gretchen Beckhelm, Bernice Stastny, Leona Reyhons Smith
Middle row: Kathleen Sikkink Heinzl, Nancy Anderson Ladehoff, Janet Minor Sessions, Betty Moore Stoneking, Barbara Becicka Larson, Albert Lnenicka, Deanne Dean LeVan, Doug Wolrab
Back row: Roger Schmittjer, Dick Kruse, Bert Sippola, Roger Reyhons, David Ennis and Mike Wolrab.
Missing from picture was Kenny Kaliban and Adolph Nezerka.



▼ CLASS OF 1990 - 30 YEARS

The Class of 1990 held their 30th Class Reunion during Heritage Days on Saturday, July 10, 2021 at The Local in Mount Vernon. Class representatives are Kim McGowan McAdams and Paul Morf.

Front Row: Jon Akers, Dan Aalbers
2nd Row: Aaron Telecky, Aaron Kirkpatrick, Kim McGowan McAdams
3rd Row: Aaron Cole, Andrew Mott Zastro, Angie Vittetoe Reed
4th Row: James Winchip, Paul Morf, Julie Harrington Nosek

In attendance but not pictured: Matt Slinker, Travis Allen, Benton Frey.

REUNION PICTURES | REUNION PICTURES | REUNION PICTURES

▼ CLASS OF 1961 - 60 YEARS



The Class of 1961 held their 60th Class Reunion during Heritage Days Weekend 2021. On Friday, July 9 Bunny Williams Copeland hosted a Ladie's Only Outing. On Friday evening classmates gathered at Sutliff on the bridge, then enjoyed evening fireworks show at the County Club. On Saturday, July 10 classmates attended the Alumni-Community breakfast at the High School, followed by the parade at 11 am. On Saturday evening a Class Reunion banquet was held at Sally's Restaurant in Springville with 18 of 34 classmates attending. A Sunday noon gathering was held at Jim and Melani Vislisel's farm. Class Representatives are Dick Miner and Bunny Williams Copeland.

Pictured above: Willy Bratton, Helen Blue Holder, Les Svatosch, Sharon Becicka Brokel, Mary Sue Reilly Freese, Mike Troyer, Kathy Jennings Jamison, Don Jilovec, Bunny Williams Mulligan, Frank Peterson, Marcia Reyhons Lehr, Dick Miner, Barbara Bys Michael, Darrell Jordan, Patti Bolton Erlenbaugh, Ritch Blew, Al Stoltz, Vic Wallace.

▼ CLASS OF 1981 - 40 YEARS



The Class of 1981 celebrated their 40th Class Reunion during Heritage Days 2021 with a Friday evening at Sutliff Bridge. On Saturday night classmates gathered for our second time at The Skillet Restaurant in Mount Vernon. Emcee and 1981 Homecoming Queen Ellen Townsen led the festivities while Carol Dolezal presented a heartwarming tribute to lost classmates including Kevin Rogers, the only classmate lost since the last reunion. Kevin's spouse Matthew joined them. Class Representative is Rhondi Ewing.

Here is the Class of '81 at Sutliff Bridge on Friday night of their reunion weekend. Bottom Row/seated L to R: Kim Mortenson Konkowski, Annette Palmer, Penny Randall Light, Quynh Nguyen Piccioni, Jude Smith, Sharren Loomis, Kim Klinsky Broulik, Ellen Soukup Townsen. Middle row on bench: Carole Dolezal, Brenda Harms Lynch, Denise Henik Brannaman, Molly Niederhauser Wolfe, Rhondi Staley Ewing, Jim Koehn. Back row: Steve Pizarik, Jeff Funk, Lance Campbell, Chris Lyon. At right: Karren Loomis, and behind L to R - Dave Tuel, Ron Corkin, Bob Penn, and Scott Johnson. These (and more!) classmates traveled from near and far to enjoy great food and ambiance at Baxa's Sutliff Store & Tavern.

The Class of 2001 is looking for a volunteer(s) to help plan their next reunion.
 If interested contact Jessie Bigley Gallagher at jessiehgallagher@gmail.com
 or 469-544-7858

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REUNION PICTURES | REUNION PICTURES | REUNION PICTURES

▼ CLASS OF 1966 - 55 YEARS



The Class of 1966 celebrated their 55th reunion during Heritage Days Weekend 2021, Saturday night July 10th at the home of Jeri and Barb Neal. Class representatives are Jeri Neal, Cindy Buresh Prewitt, and Margaret Ellison Stoner.

Front: Rose Lynott Ubben, Linda Richardson Moore, Karilyn Mead Eastvold, Margaret Ellison Stoner,
Back: Eugene Stoneking, Dan Lambertsen, Jeri Neal, John Pospisil, Bill Bauman, Jack Werling, Steve Neal, Dave Hudson, Larry Riley

▼ CLASS OF 2022



Welcome Class of 2022! The class graduated 92 members on May 22, 2022 with commencement, followed by a senior parade through the community of Mount Vernon. Classmates Tessa Baty and Aden Grudzinski were named Class Reunion Organizers, and received \$250 scholarships from the Alumni Association at their Senior Awards Night (see page 12). Photo by JoAnn Gage.

Early Bird Reception
July 8 3-5 pm

You're invited to the First Street Community Center for an Early Bird Reception on Friday, July 8, from 3-5 pm. Enjoy some refreshments, good company, and a tour of what was either your Middle School or High School. You will be **AMAZED** at the variety of shops and businesses now in the building.

2022 Homecoming & Hall of Fame Events
SEPTEMBER 9

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Mount Vernon High School Thespian Troupe Turns 50

Editor's Note: The following excerpt is from an article by MVL Sun editor Nathan Countryman. The complete article is in the March 17 2022 issue.

The Mount Vernon High School Thespian Troupe 1470 celebrated its 50th year reunion March 9, 2022. Mount Vernon thespian troupe sponsor and High School teacher Tom Stephens created a YouTube video featuring past and current members experiences to outline the importance of the organization to the community and school. Find the commemorative video at tiny.cc/mvhs theatre along with an additional video message from Thespian Gabby Veleva '11.

The troupe was formed in March 9, 1972, by Gladys Rife, who sponsored it from 1972 through 1979. "Mom was pretty adept at getting people involved in theater, one way or another," said John Rife, class of 1960 and Gladys' son. "She recruited students that never thought of plays or getting involved in theater. It would put a big smile on her face to know this troupe is still going on more than 50 years later." John also said his mother was proud of not only the students who worked on productions, but also the faculty and staff who helped as well.

Following Gladys, Marv Hippen was troupe director from 1979 through 1983 and then Maggie Quinn Ellison from the class of 1962 was the sponsor from 1983 through 2008.

Braden Rood, class of 1993 (2020 MV Alumni Fine Arts Hall of Fame Recipient), commended the work of Ellison and Donna Jacob in encouraging her love of theatre in the arts. "Their guidance helped me blossom as a theatre artist, and I hope current Thespian members have that too," Rood said. "My experience in high school was a base for what my life in the arts became."

In 2008, Tom Stephens became the



photo from Nathan Countryman
Gladys Rife helps a student adjust a costume during practice of a show. Gladys was the sponsor of the Troupe 50 years ago.

troupe sponsor, a role he still holds today.

Over the past 50 years, Thespian Troupe 1470 has put on numerous productions at the high school and state level and given students numerous opportunities to develop a love of theatre on the stage.

Lydia Benesh '23, member of the current Thespian troupe and State Thespian Organization chair, noted the importance of the Thespian Troupe to Mount Vernon schools.

"Being a Thespian is more than just points and stars and certificates, it's about building a community, not only at your school, but also at your state, country and internationally," Benesh said. "Theatre helps you find 'your people' and it also helps you find your voice and yourself, which is why it instrumental to have a program like Iowa Thespians at our high school and so cool we've had a troupe for 50 years. I want to thank everyone who has made and makes this program what it is today, one I'm proud to be part of and pass onto future Thespians. I'm excited see many more anniversaries in this group's future."

Kristin Stewart, class of 1999 (2009 MV Alumni Fine Arts Hall of Fame Recipient), spoke about theatre being alive and well and possible to make a living in theatre

Teen Scene by Carolyn Henderson Gets Charter of Thespians

The International Thespian Society, high school speech and drama organization, has assigned a charter to Mt. Vernon High School's Velvet Curtain, according to an announcement received by Mrs. Wayne Rife, sponsor of Velvet Curtain.

The charter number is 1470, and 11 charter members were accepted. Initiation of the new troupe is to take place within 90 days.

The official honor point system is similar to that of Velvet Curtain, with Thespians requiring 10 points and Velvet Curtain 15 points, which are given for participation in speech activities.

A student must participate in at least two full-length productions, one full-length and two one-act plays, or four one-act plays. Participation should be in at least two areas, such as acting, directing, producing, business and writing.

— Sun file photo

today. She's the director of the national tour of "Frozen: The Musical." "My time at Troupe 1470 meant the world to me, and led to me pursuing this in college and now as company management," Stewart said. "There's a lot of life, a lot of love, a lot of creativity and a lot of tolerance in theater. We need more of that every single day."

Bryce Cox, class of 2016, spoke highly as well of the impact the arts have had on his life. "When I look back on my life, the influence Mount Vernon theatre, music performance and art have had, I'm speechless," Cox said. "The gratitude I have for my role models and the opportunities I had have been wonderful. I can't thank Troupe 1470, the arts programs and choir for the influence on my life. Your love for the arts doesn't have to stop at high school for you."



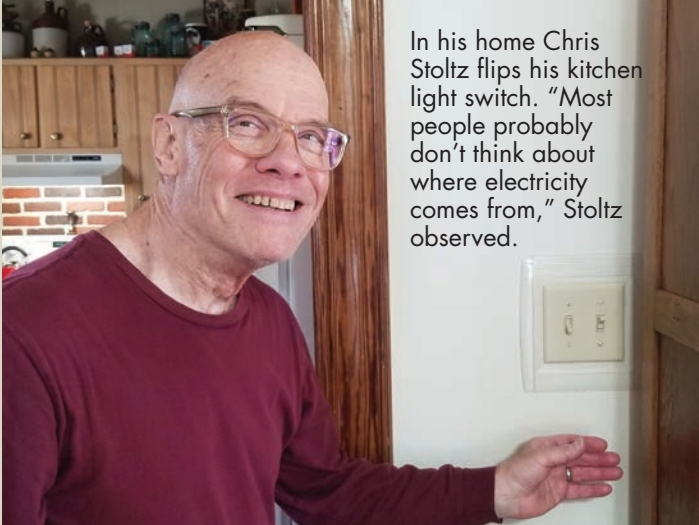


Mustangs...what are they doing now?

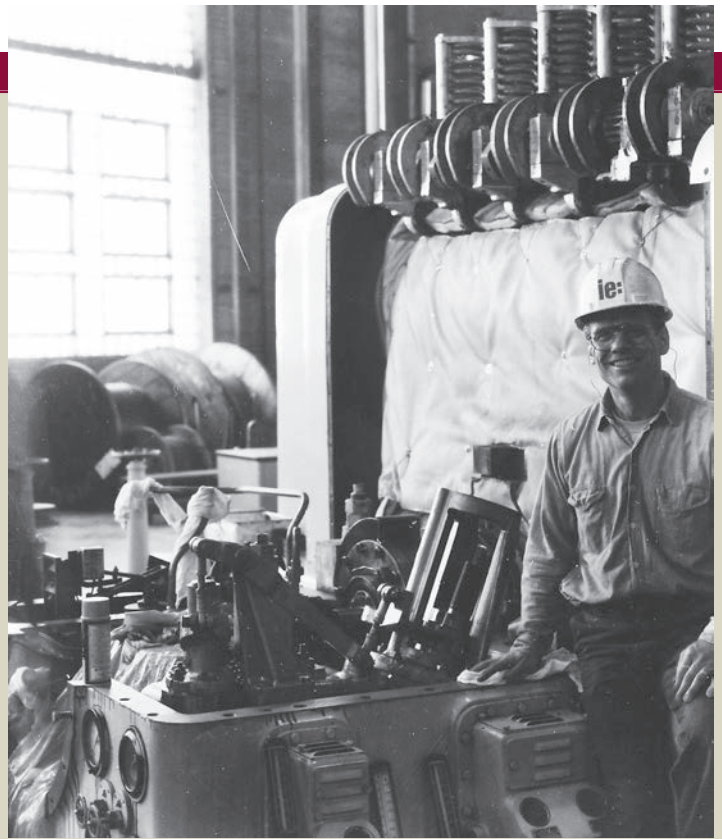
■ CHRIS STOLTZ '63, DOUG PITLIK '69

LET THERE BE LIGHT! (THE INSIDE STORY)

Story and photographs contributed by Bob Campagna



In his home Chris Stoltz flips his kitchen light switch. "Most people probably don't think about where electricity comes from," Stoltz observed.



As a maintenance team member, Chris Stoltz is photographed in 1995 with a turbine that he kept running in the power plant.

Do you ever wonder about the simple fact that when a switch is flipped, the lights turn on? For a combined 55 years, two Mount Vernon men labored to produce that modern day fact.

Doug Pitlik '69 spent his 38-year career at the 6th Street Power Station in Cedar Rapids. Chris Stoltz '63 gave 17 years there. Stoltz worked maintenance as "part of a team that repaired everything. We kept things running," he proudly noted.

Pitlik was a Grain and Locomotive Engineer. He operated the small engine that moved coal from the adjacent railyard into the plant's boilers. "The super-heated boilers powered the turbines, producing 55 Megawatts of electricity. It also produced steam, a byproduct that heated Cedar Rapids' downtown," Pitlik furthered.

Tucked behind Quaker Oats near the Cedar River, Iowa Electric's archaic, six

story structure was an "expensive place to run," said Pitlik. Built in 1888, it was terminally damaged by the 2008 flood and demolished in 2014.

"I watched the flood waters rise. Things exploded as water hit hot pipes and boilers," Pitlik recalled, "the flood destroyed my personal locker which held my clothing, photographs, and boots." Life inside the 6th Street Station piqued Pitlik and Stoltz's senses.

ALUMNI IN OUR SCHOOLS



Photo by JoAnn Gage

The Alumni Association continues with their tradition of presenting each graduate with a mustang alumni pin at commencement. Above Association Treasurer Susan Mounts Fisher '65 and alum Barb Thomsen Neal '68 presented at the 2022 graduation on May 22.



2022 Classmates Tessa Baty and Aden Grudzinski were named Class Reunion Organizers, and at right Michele Meyer Grudzinski '92 presented \$250 scholarships from the Alumni Association at their Senior Awards Night. They will keep open lines of communication with their respective classmates, coordinate reunion planning, and serve as a link between the Association, the school, and the alumni. Aden is the son of 1992 alum Michele Meyer Grudzinski.



Photo by Kim Zangger Tucker '94

SOUND: Both remember the constant whine of eight turbines and the coal-fed boilers. Both wore ear protection, "though not everyone did," Stoltz observed. "The boilers roared like constant thunder," Pitlik said.

SIGHT: Safety glasses were required. The building's cavernous interior was of extreme light and dark due to large window banks and deep recesses in which equipment was housed.

SMELL: "No 'weird' smells, just dusty-like," explained Stoltz, adding "it didn't smell like burning coal." Pitlik described the plant's air as "fine dust. My nose always had black coming out."

TOUCH: "We wore gloves. The coal dust was always there," said Pitlik. "With lots of hot stuff we had to be careful," Stoltz added, "when working on hot items, we were isolated. It was a dangerous place."

Pitlik remembered the plant's intense heat, "on upper floors the air temperature reached 120 degrees."

TASTE: Neither Stoltz nor Pitlik recall any 'conventional' taste in the building. However, their remembered 'taste' was almost identical. Both described the station as a "great place to work that paid well."

"Iowa Electric was good to me, good pay, good benefits, I had a good job. No regrets," Stoltz concluded.



In his acreage north of town Doug Pitlik stands with his 38-panel solar array. "I produce and use a lot of electricity," Pitlik noted. In his acreage north of town Doug Pitlik stands with his 38-panel solar array.

"A lot of people take electricity for granted. They flip a switch and lights come on. People don't know where electricity comes from," Pitlik observed. Doug Pitlik and Chris Stoltz were part of a hard-working team who brought electrical comfort to our modern day lives.

"Just like everyone else, I flipped a switch and didn't know there was a power plant. It was a rude awakening," Stoltz observed. "Making electricity takes a great effort."



Editor's Note: Bob Campagna is a local photographer and writer. His email is: Abbecreek@aol.com.

Chris Stoltz can be reached at soltzcc@gmail.com

Doug Pitlik can be reached at bapitlik@live.com



The class of 2022 had six to seven students who presented their proposed Commencement Speech. These committee members came to listen, then worked as a committee to make recommendations as to which speeches they thought would be best for Commencement. The following alumni and friends met on May 4 at the High School. Front row, left to right: Jenna Brannaman Kannegieter '16, Barb Thomsen Neal '68, Amy White, Brenda Langenberg, Sara Reyhons Nost '94, Patty Mounts Woods '74 and Babs Beckhelm Moore '53. Back row: Bob Campagna, Mitch Corcoran '83, Cathy Hufford '83 - chair, Janet Griffith, and Chris Swiser '70.



Mustangs...what are they doing now?

■ DAN BERN '77

Editor's Note: Article excerpt by MVL Sun editor Nathan Countryman. Complete article in Feb. 10, 2022 issue.

Mount Vernon High School alum Dan Bern '77 is being inducted into the Iowa Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Labor Day weekend Sept. 1 through Sept. 4. "It's an honor I never expected," Bern said. "I wish Dick Peters was still around. He was such a great teacher and he'd probably get a kick out of it." Bern is one of the individuals to be inducted in the individual Hall of Fame Class of 2022.

Bern notes he came from a very musical family, with his dad, Julian, a concert pianist who taught at Cornell. His mother was a pianist, singer and also wrote poetry. His sister Jennifer was also a great singer and actor who paved the way for him in his own pursuits.

"I did every music and drama thing we could do in school," Bern said. "Mrs. Palmer in elementary school opened us to a lot of different kinds of music, listening and playing. Lois Nichols, Gladys Rife and Linda Bergman were great music and theater teachers/ directors. Mr. Nichols got us started writing songs. In junior high, Steve Sargent '77 and I made up songs to and from school. In high school, Eric Bostwick '77 and I did the same as we drove around."

Bern notes he was a Monkees and Beatles fan, but when he heard musicians like Bob Dylan, Woody Guthrie, Phil Ochs, and the blues and country greats, he realized musicians could do it on their own.

"I've had bands throughout the years, for touring and recording, but I've been a solo artist a lot," Bern said. Bern has released more than 30 albums and EPs since 1977, and played shows across North America and Europe. For the past 30 years he has been solely focused on his music. Prior to making music a full-time career, he taught tennis to help pay the bills. He taught Wilt Chamberlain how to serve when he was in Los Angeles.

His music has also appeared in numerous films and television shows. "One of my favorite things has been writing songs for movie and TV projects," Bern said. "I wrote or co-wrote a bunch of songs for the Judd Apatow-produced movies, 'Walk Hard: The Dewey Cox Story' and 'Get Him to the Greek.' I wrote and performed all the songs for two seasons of a kids' cartoon, 'The Stinky and Dirty Show' on Amazon Prime."

He co-wrote a song that will be featured in the next Judd Apatow film, "The Bubble," to be released this April. The song will be sung by Adam Levine. While the music business has always been a challenge, he views it as the best job in the world. "There's a lot of variety and I love traveling and connecting with people along the way," he said. "The pandemic has been a



new challenge, with the touring mostly on hiatus, but I've enjoyed doing live stream shows, which I call 'Hunkered in the Bunker.'"

Bern was scheduled to tour with Roger Daltrey in a number of West Coast shows in summer 2021, but those had to be postponed due to the pandemic. Bern lives with his wife, Danielle, and daughter, Lulu, in New Mexico.

Editor's Note: Dan can be reached at dbhq@danbern.com. Check out his website for music and more at danbern.com



**Early Bird Reception
July 8 3-5 pm**

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**Join Us At Heritage
Day 2022**

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 our Reception area and Heritage Days events from after the parade until 9.

SATURDAY, JULY 9



■ MARTIN BENESH '18



The design and technology concentration in the Department of Theatre Arts may not always get as much time in the spotlight as the performers. But the students who come to New Paltz University to hone skills producing sets, props, costumes, sound and lighting are just as vital to every successful story that gets told on our stages. Class of 2022 Valedictorian Martin Benesh '22 (Theater Arts) is one such artist. He came to New Paltz from Mount Vernon, Iowa, to pursue a career as a stage lighting designer. His experience underscores how the program bridges the gap between artistry and technical know-how. Good lighting design requires a mix of both.

"Every day of work I'm exploring new technologies, fixing things, and learning how they work," he said. "I believe this is particularly relevant to my work as a lighting designer because it helps me learn to be adaptable and quick on my feet."

Benesh complemented his theatre arts training with the College's Minor in Digital Design & Fabrication, giving him a unique skillset (and competitive advantage) for his entrance into the industry. "Understanding things like 3D printing, coding and mechatronics has really become beneficial, especially as I begin working more closely with more complicated lighting fixtures and consoles," he said.

The return to in-person theatre shows in 2021 was especially valuable for him. He says the pandemic created some "unique opportunities to dive into a lot of the new technology" while the department was focusing on virtual events, but this spring's Mainstage Production of "Songs for a New World" gave him a chance to fully apply himself as a lighting designer. "It was incredible to use everything I'd been learning throughout my time here for a production that was fully realized and quite flashy," he said. "The rest of the artistic team and the cast created a community, and I think the quality of the work is a testament to those close-knit relationships."

After Commencement this spring of 2022, Benesh will be moving on to a position with the Santa Fe Opera in New Mexico. His goal is to use this experience as a springboard into some more opportunities in New York, close to the beating heart of the American theatre industry. "My time in New Paltz has really prepared me for those kinds of big moves," he said. "For me, it was all about the people I met and making those connections. The biggest thing I learned here is that if you are a nice person to others, good things will come for you."

Editor's Note: This article came from New Paltz online news. See complete article at <https://tinyurl.com/26u6bc3d> Martin is the son of 1985 Mount Vernon alum Kim Benesh.

■ ANDREW 'DREW' TELECKY '01

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

I moved to Kentucky, received my bachelor's in law enforcement through Ashford University online and was married to my beautiful wife, Amelia. I have an amazing 8 year old son. I have worked as a private investigator in Kentucky, and started a few small tech businesses which I've sold throughout the years.



In 2016 I started a technology business called Streaming Guys which offers television services, but decided the name was not fitting and in 2019 changed it to Mogul Media Services. We started offering month to month, no contract television, internet and phone services and it blew up. In 2020 I took the company nationwide and I now offer services to hundreds of customers. I started this company with the hopes of saving people money and have been blessed enough to do so. I was just fed up with overpaying for these services and wanted to give others the same chance to save money too.

An accomplishment you are proud of ?

I am proud of my college degree, my successful business and my little family. I was adopted young and was blessed to have an amazing family which I'm proud of too. I'm also proud of my town and school. The people of Mt Vernon were so kind and helpful.

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

I have many memories from Mount Vernon and school. I enjoyed Mr. Ringold and all the school staff. I went through a lot growing up, going from the Shriners Hospital due to burns and a horrible car crash in high school. The school staff was always amazing and the whole community. It really was a wonderful experience to grow up in Mount Vernon.

I enjoyed the hallways full of students at the school. Yes, there were different groups of people or cliques you might say, but everyone got along. I remember after my car crash the school did a blood drive, and everyone always checked up on me and helped me when I got back to school.

Growing up on 5th Ave I was around most of the teachers and staff. I would always ride my bike and see them. My neighbors were Mr. Meeker, Mrs Ellison and a few more. I just really enjoyed my life growing up in Mount Vernon and being in the schools.

The sporting events were so fun, I remember the football games and playing on the big hillside. I enjoyed how engaged the school staff was with everyone.

Editor's Note: Drew can be reached at drewtelecky@gmail.com



In Memory of classmates we have lost

Lloyd Mallie 1943

May 23, 2022 Mount Vernon, Iowa

Janice West Johnson 1945

February 19, 2022 Mount Vernon, Iowa

Raymond Zinkula 1945

February 3, 2022 Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Helen Dvorak Stoner 1946

April 12, 2022 Marengo, Iowa

Jack Stanton 1949

May 29, 2022 Cedar Rapids Iowa

Lt. Col. Ret. Kenneth Moore 1951

March 22, 2022 Austin, Texas

Francis Cejka 1952

March 20, 2022 Fairfax, Iowa

Katherine Pennington Erenberger 1953

April 17, 2022 Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Crystal Carmer Osborn 1953

March 16, 2022 Mount Vernon, Iowa

Donald Walden 1953

February 4, 2022 Mount Vernon, Iowa

Carol Hartenberger Walden 1955

January 24, 2022 Mount Vernon, Iowa

Sue Ammons Booth 1960

January 16, 2022 Calhan, Colorado

Tex Clay 1964

January 12, 2022 Lisbon, Iowa

Donna 'Subie' Pieper Long 1966

January 30, 2022 Lisbon, Iowa

Eric Larsen 1970

January 14, 2022 Pella, Iowa

Darlene Maiden Larew 1973

March 10, 2022 West Branch, Iowa

David Kaplan 1975

January 22, 2022 Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Dona Baseman Wensel 1977

March 1, 2022 Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Garth Reiman 1993

April 9, 2022 Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Nathaniel Levi Scott Nidey '00

December 20, 2021 Des Moines, Iowa

- FRIENDS -

Margaret Koppenhaver

former Librarian and School Board Member

December 26, 2021 Mount Vernon, Iowa

(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@mvcisd.org

or call Kathy at 319-389-8602

BIRTHS

Amelia Carl Kibbie '02 and husband Lee of Lisbon, a daughter, Willamina Lee, March 1, 2022.

Nate Wolfe '05 wife Katie of Ankeny, IA, a daughter, Nora Jude, born January 12, 2022

ANNIVERSARIES/SPECIAL DAYS

Gene 'Buddy' Brown '58 and wife Pat of Summerville SC are celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary on June 17.

EDUCATION & MILITARY SERVICE

Connor Bilden '18 graduated from University of Northern Iowa with a BA in Criminal Justice this May.

Martin Benesh '18 graduated with a degree in Theater Arts as valedictorian from New Paltz State University of New York in May.

Rachel Hook '14 earned a master of Arts from Morningside University, December 2021

AND MORE...

Christian Cripe '16, accepted an Audio Engineering position at CSN, International in Twin Falls, Idaho, effective March 21st, 2022.

Pedro Salazar '01 was named to the *Charlotte Business Journal's* '40 under 40' awards program. The awards program, which has been a staple in the greater Charlotte, NC region for the past 29 years, recognizes members of the local community who are under



the age of 40 and have already made a significant mark in their careers. Honorees are selected for their business success, community involvement, leadership ability, and influence in the region.

Kristin Elliott '18, a senior on the Luther College Women's basketball team was named to the 2022 American Rivers Conference Winter Sports All-Academic Team (source MVL Sun)

Dr. George Hill '49 received the Distinguished Alumni Award from the College of Science and Liberal Arts of the New Jersey Institute of Technology on May 4 in Newark, New Jersey. The Department of History at the CSLA nominated Hill for his 2021 book, "Health Matters: A New View of Human History." Hill is Emeritus Professor of Surgery at Rutgers-New Jersey Medical School. Health Matters proposes an audacious new concept of human history. The author argues that the primary goal of humans, from cave dwellers to the modern world, has been the search for good health and a long life. George lives in Baltimore, MD. Find out more at www.captgeorgehill.com

Ashton Douglas Pirrie '21 has joined the sales staff at Dave Wright Nissan Subaru in Cedar Rapids, IA.

Brittany Schorg '10 and **Trevor Schorg '19** are running a surplus and liquidation store with their parents, the Ornerly Octopus Surplus & Liquidation in Hiawatha, IA. In addition they help their mother with Czech Feather & Down also located in Hiawatha.

Christine Chadek Deignan M.D. '67, retired from Medicine after 45 yrs. Dr. Deignan graduated from UCSF in 1977. Returning to her home state of Iowa, Dr. Deignan ran a private solo practice in Internal Medicine in Davenport Iowa. After coming to the realization that solo practice was inconsistent with a healthy

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family life, she changed her focus to Occupational Medicine. Blending Eastern and Western Medicine she developed a well rounded knowledge of the human organism. Through CME with UCLA she earned board certification in Acupuncture. Dr. Deignan retired as the Workers Compensation Medical Director at John Deere. Her first grandchild arrived only days before her retirement.

Mount Vernon Fire Department crew members and alums **Jayden Casey '16**, and Assistant Fire Chief **Derek Boren '00** along with Mount Vernon employees and alums **Dustin Burnett '06** and **Matt Plotz '94** received commendations in May, 2022, for their efforts as First Responders during a lifesaving event that extricated 4 men from an avalanche of corn pouring out of a corn bin. Derek Boren was incident commander.

More memories from alums at Heritage Days 2021...



Volunteering at the Alumni-Community Reception during Heritage Days 2021 are Cindy Feaker Johnson '74, Boots Hufford '84, Deb Peshek Thorman '74, and Cathy Hufford '83



Enjoying the composites at the 2021 Alumni-Community Breakfast is alum Mitch Wirfs '14

THANK YOU...

To Douglas Moore, son of Elizabeth Bryant '33, for Class of 1933 photo.

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 - <https://www.facebook.com/TheMustangMoon/>
- District and individual schools website is at www.mvcsd.org

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2022 HOMECOMING & HALL OF FAME ... SEPT. 9
 Homecoming and Alumni Hall of Fame Ceremony.

F O U N D A T I O N

ANNUAL GIFT REPORT FOR 2021

Thank you to the alumni, businesses, parents and friends listed below who contributed to the Foundation during 2021.

2021

The Mount Vernon Community School District Foundation is a charitable non-profit organization that partners with alumni, businesses, parents, and friends of the Mount Vernon community to support a higher level of educational excellence and opportunities to prepare Mount Vernon School students for the challenges of global opportunities. The Foundation receives tax-deductible contributions to support the programs of the Mount Vernon Community School District.

2021

GIFT RECOGNITION LEVELS

Major Gifts \$15,000+ Founding Donors \$10,000+ Leading Donors \$5,000+ Mustang Donors \$1,000+ Maroon and White Donors up to \$1,000

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Thank you to the following area businesses who donate throughout the year and who also responded to our annual business campaign.

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Mustang Donors

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United Way of Johnson & Washington Counties for Jared Bienemann

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Alliant Energy Foundation for Douglas Kopp
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supporting the commitment
of the Mount Vernon
Schools to
Excellence in Academics,
Arts, and Athletics

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Terry & Sandra Sill
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Richard '59 & Constance Glattly
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Sandi Erenberger Hanna '67 in memory of Lyle Hanna '64 and Aaron Hanna '99
Nannette Gunn
Charles Halsey in memory of Jim Bellamy
Don & Donna Happel
Lois Harms
James '63 & Linda Hickey in memory of Mary Jo Lessmeier
Edward & Sharon Hill in memory of Ron Frantz
Edward & Sharon Hill in honor of MV's hardworking teachers
George J. Hill '49
Jase Jensen
Bob '64 & Mary Ann Bohren '62 Jilovec in memory of Vicki Edleman
Marilyn Jones
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Richard Kohl
Ann Koppenhaver '78
Roger Kost '64
John '77 & Kaylene Kroul in memory of Keith Jilovec '54
Christine & Theodore Lawler
Sandra Lighthall in memory of Bill Lighthall '66
Joyce Loomis in honor of Don & Judy Stine
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Jennifer Morf
Paul Morf '90
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2021 DISTRICT EMPLOYEE DONATIONS

Employee donations support the Foundation's Teacher Grants Program

Kaimée Akers	Megan Hach	Allison Schnoor
Lisa Alger	Robert Hanson	Brandy Schurbon
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Gina Bechthold	Megan Krapfl	Kate Stanton
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LeAnn Briesemeister	Susannah Maddock	Kelsey Strobe
Chris Brown	Susan Maurice	Sonya Sullivan '90
Lesly Bruner	Jan Moore	Stephanie Timm
Chiara Burke '78	Lori Moss	Lauren Tittle
Matt Burke	Patty Mote	Whitney Turner '00
Jennifer Carstensen	Kevin Murray	Shawn Voigt '86
Megan Casey	Chris Noll	Scott Weber
Chris Chapman '16	Jo Nowak-Thompson	Stephanie Whisner
Jenny Ciha	Abby Ohlaug	Krista Whitham
Susan Deibner	Stephanie Olney	Thad Wilkins
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Sarah Fitzgerald	Michael Raso	Deanna Winder
JoAnn Gage	Jodi Russell	Joelynn Winkler
Lisa Greif	Heidi Ryan	Miranda Zilaitis '14
Dennis Gross	Raechel Sabin	
	Kacey Schmit '00	

F O U N D A T I O N

Nancy Pisarik Mulder '59
Allison Nissen
Allison Nissen
in memory of Blaine Schumacher '18
Noonmark Foundation Inc.
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Karen Edwards '68 & Michael Packer
in memory of Steven Edwards '65
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in memory of Edward '46 & Kathleen
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John '66 & Cindy Pospisil
Jared '94 & Sarah Pospisil
George Pospisil '59
in memory of Doris Pospisil Gollobit '58
Steven '79 & Debrah Reyhons
in memory of Darren Loomis '79
Mike '73 & Katherine Thuerauf '80 Rice
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Roger '56 & Marilyn Dean '58 Schnittjer
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Allison, Emily, & Abbie Schnoor
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James '50 & Carol Croft '51 Kent
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Jim '64 & Jackie Wallace
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in honor of Ike '19, Leo '22,
& Elsa Appleton '24
Mark & Kim Benesh '85 Weldon
Kevin '76 & Becky Thumm '77 Whitman
in memory of Bob Wolfe '48
Wilma '47 Whittemore & Carol Waits
Whittemore
Matthew Wilch '72
Kevin Woods '73
Bill '52 & Harriet Yeisley
in memory of Jim Franta '52

Steven & Mary Young
Rae E. Zahradnik
Kim Moser '49 & Robert Zimmerman

IN MEMORY OF

IN MEMORY OF
JOANN KROUL CLARK '64
Jean Kuntz Bowman '64
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Diana Kafer LaVoi '64
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Jo Wilch

IN MEMORY OF DICK KOEHN
Dave & Heidi Ryan
in honor of Jay, Jim, and Joby

RESTRICTED DONATIONS

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Dr. Jerry & Donna Kaalberg
Steve Neal '66

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Shea & Emily Ryan '09 Stamp
Matt & Jessica Thede
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Dave '85 & Heidi Ryan
in memory of Jim Tesar

HIGH SCHOOL CHEER PROGRAM

John '60 & Thelma Rife

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Sharon Fordice in honor of the Koster boys

MV FINE ARTS ASSOCIATION

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CLASS OF 1964 FUND

Roger Kost '64
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in memory of Class of '64 deceased

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John '60 & Thelma Rife

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Barbara Bleile
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Kraig & Pamela Hunter

MIDDLE SCHOOL CHORAL PROGRAM

John '60 & Thelma Rife

MIDDLE SCHOOL ORCHESTRA PROGRAM

John '60 & Thelma Rife

MIDDLE SCHOOL BAND PROGRAM

John '60 & Thelma Rife

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Marc Wolrab '86 in memory of Joan Kohl

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Douglas & Diane Kopp
Stevenson Family Giving Fund

3RD GRADE PROGRAM

Douglas & Diane Kopp

6TH GRADE PROGRAM

Douglas & Diane Kopp

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Becky Meier, Meier Veterinary Clinic
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WETAP WEWALK

Douglas & Diane Kopp

E-CAUSE TEAM

Mount Vernon Bank & Trust Company
Dawn Hanna

HIGH SCHOOL SPANISH PROGRAM

Jenna Voss

continued on next page

MUSTANG LEGACY SOCIETY

Recognizing individuals who have chosen to include the Mount Vernon Community School District Foundation in their estate plans.

Anonymous

F O U N D A T I O N

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Mustang Donor
James Drahos '87
Beth Younggreen

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Kristin Schneider
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SCHOLARSHIPS

Thank you to the following businesses and individuals who donated to fund scholarships for our 2021 graduating seniors.

ALIYA KEATON SCHOLARSHIP
Ameriprise Financial

ANN KOPPENHAVER BUSINESS AWARD
Kopenhagen & Associates

MELCHERT BOOK SCHOLARSHIP
Amber Melchert '09 Hess

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Lindsey Borg '83

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Tawnua Tenley
Ed or Stephanie Timm
Nathan and Maggie Lessmeier '66 Willems
Suzette Kragebrink
Elaine Mulherin '57
in memory of Mrs. Jerome Mulherin
& Mary Mulherin '38

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Charles Halsey

HILLS BANK SCHOLARSHIP
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Anonymous

JOAN SUCHOMEL '74 SCHOLARSHIP
Joan Suchomel Foundation

JOHN '60 & THELMA RIFE SCHOLARSHIP
John '60 & Thelma Rife

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Sean '07 & Brooke Boren
Terry Boren '77 & Carol Woods-Boren '75
Derek '00 & Lori Boren
Kevin Woods '73
Jim Woods '79
Sarah Woods '95

MARGARET GARRY '79 MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP
Margaret Garry Memorial Trust

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Mount Vernon Bank & Trust Co.

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Mount Vernon Volunteer Firefighters Association

MVL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SCHOLARSHIP
Mount Vernon-Lisbon Community Development Group

MV HERITAGE DAYS SCHOLARSHIP
Mount Vernon Heritage Days

TEACHER CREATIVITY SCHOLARSHIP
Laurie Zaiger

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U.S. Nameplate Co.

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James Baty
Steve Brand
Jeremy '89 Elliott
Darrin Gage
Brett Karkosh
Mike Kragebrink
Steve Miller
Kevin Murray
John Hale
Joel Pendergrass
Joe Peters
Jon Rasmussen
in memory of Joseph P. Kelly III
John Rhomborg
David Roe
Dave Ryan '85
Dan Stoner '70
Ed Timm
Scott Weber
in honor of Jayden '18
& Trevor Weber '21
Steven Young
in honor of Nick '07, Sam '09,
& Jack '17 Young

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Paula Adams
Susan Alexander
Emily Appleton
Janet Ault
Mary Lou Batenhorst
Julie Baty
Julie Baumler
Lynn Bergman
Barbara Bleile
Polly Niederhauser Blythe '86
Abigail Neal Bock '99
Ann Booth
in memory of Joann Kroul Clark '64
& Judy Stine
Bonnie Bootsmiller

YOUR FOUNDATION DONATIONS WORK THROUGH THE TEACHER GRANTS PROGRAM

Every year the Foundation provides grants for district faculty and staff to fund projects that are innovative and promote a higher level of educational excellence for Mount Vernon students.

Your generous support of the Foundation helps to make these projects a reality. Thank you for continuing to support our Mount Vernon students!

\$21,463 awarded to 25 projects throughout the school district during the 2021-2022 school year.

F O U N D A T I O N

Sheila Borg
in honor of Devan, Elaina, Emily,
& Anna Borg, and Caroline & Georgia
Mickelson
Susan Brust
Janet Budack
Nancy Buenger Rife
in honor of Emilie Minnick '02
Ruth Clark
in memory of Adrienne Smith '11
& Jackie Kerr '07
Thea Cole
Karen Cripe
in memory of Irene Werling
Glenda Davis-Driggs
Sharon Dendurent
Marie DeVries
in memory of Nancy Gale
Janet Dietrich
in honor of Catherine Wittry
Carrie Elliott
Trude Elliott
Catherine Quehl-Engel
JoAnn Gage
Katrina Garner
Deborah George
Kay Graber
Michele Meyer Grudzinski '92
Christine Hallier
Ginger Hansen
in memory of Gusti Kollman
& in honor of the Women of Entre Nous
Sherene Hansen Player
Donna Happel
in memory of Judy Stine
Diane Harrington
Debra Herrmann
David Hoagland
in memory of Kathleen
Hughes-Hoagland
Jennifer Hoffman
Lisa Janssens-Rud
Kay Johansen
Marilyn Jones
Ann Koppenhaver '78
in memory of Kathleen 'Sis' Woods
Pitlik '47
Elizabeth Wolfe Kroul '43
in memory of Joann Kroul Clark '64
Laura Krouse
Diane Legore
Joyce Loomis
Tracey Louwagie
Janice Lowe Whitman Majors '57
in honor of Becky Thumm Whitman '77
Marsha Siggins McWhinney '70
in memory of Don & Joan
Rhoads '45 Siggins
Mary McWilliams
in memory of Judy Stine
& Mary Jo Lessmeier
Ruth Miller
in memory of Joann Kroul Clark '64
Mildred Morf
Ann McCutcheon Niehaus '59
Renee Nydegger
Mary Palmer '74
Lois Pavelka

in memory of Joann Kroul Clark '64
Cindy Pospisil
Joan Rasmussen
in memory of Cheryl Russell
Christine Rebhuhn
in memory of Adrienne Smith '11
& Jackie Kerr '07
Amanda Rhomberg
Sarah Richardson
in memory of Maggie Quinn Ellison '62
& Ruth Michaud
Roberta Ringold
Kate Rose
in memory of Jo Wilch
Donna Rotschafer
in honor of her daughter
Virginia Roudabush
Shirley Ryan
Susan Salter
in honor of Ginna Owens
Kimberly Schwiebert
in honor of Theresa Gorham
Valerie Smith
in memory of Judy Stine
Mary Squiers
Karen Stewart
Jo Ann Thomson Stoner '70
Cynthia Strong
in memory of Helen Danforth
Gretchen Sutherland
in honor of Vivian Heywood
Stephanie Timm
David Van Metre '55
in memory of Carol Van Metre
Judy Vopava
Amy Weber
in honor of Samantha Weber
Formanek '08 & Kylea Weber
Brautigam '11
Laura Werkman '68
Stephanie Parish '86 West
in memory of Roberta Parish
Lisa Squiers White '88
Amy White
in memory of Alice Loope
Maggie Lessmeier '66 Willems
in memory of Mary Jo Lessmeier
Arlie Willems
in memory of Joann Kroul Clark '64
Carol Wozniak-Rebhuhn
in memory of Adrienne Smith '11
& Jackie Kerr '07
Carmen Wycoff
Mary Young
in honor of Rachel Young Overton '03,
Beth '05, & Rebecca '11
Laurie Zaiger
Laurie Zaiger
in honor of Mary Young

Welcome



Mount Vernon Foundation Director, Taryn Kuntz

Taryn joined the Foundation Board in April, replacing Ben Brannman '05, who had served in the position since 2014.

Taryn comes to the Foundation with a wealth of experience in nonprofit strategy and development. Previously, Taryn led the development program at University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital and served as an internal coach and consultant for the Teach For America national office. She continues to teach, train and coach nonprofit executives and fundraisers across the country and locally. Taryn received her undergraduate degree from Loras College and her master's degree from University of Northern Iowa.

Taryn is married to alum Kyle Kuntz '02 and is the daughter-in-law of Joy Koehn Kuntz '76 and Ivan Kuntz '76 (d). Taryn and Kyle returned to the area in 2019 with their three children, Oscar, Theodore and Winnie, all proud Mustangs.

If you are interested in getting to know more about Taryn, have questions about previous donations or current funding opportunities, Taryn can be reached at tkuntz@mvcso.org or 319-321-3681.

continued on next page

EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS. EXCEPTIONAL PROGRAMS. EXCEPTIONAL FACILITIES: THE MUSTANG ACTIVITIES COMPLEX



Thank you to the following donors who contributed to the new Multi-Activities Complex Campaign in 2021.

The new complex will serve our school district and the Mount Vernon community for years to come.

Major Donors

Anonymous
Anonymous
Mount Vernon Booster Club
Dave & Jo Kutcher

Founding Donors

Dr. Jerry & Donna Kaalberg
Dave '85 & Heidi Ryan
Matt & Jessica Thede

Leading Donor

Brad & Kendall Haverback
Bob & JoAnn Zinkula '83 Kintzel
Erin and Andy Moeller & Family
Andrew '94 & Reagan Morf
John '60 & Thelma Rife

Mustang Donors

Dr. Greg & Mary Lou Batenhorst
Jared & Caitlin Wieseler '04 Bienemann
Eric & LeAnn Briesemeister
Lance & Sarah Dickson
Ed Fordyce '59
Terry Lessmeier
David & Kim Schrock
Ryan & Angie Steen
Kent & Aimee Streicher
Kirk & Jenna Wiebel '91 Wischmeyer

Maroon & White Donors

Ben '05 & Brittany Corkin '04 Brannaman
Mark '73 & Lucy Hylbak
Amy Paulus
Joel & Kari Pendergrass
Michael & Shirley Ryan
Craig & Jean Smith
Ed & Stephanie Timm in honor of Jim Baty
Rob Wagner '82

You likely know this, and it doesn't hurt to be reminded: the kids and the people of the Mount Vernon Community School District are nothing short of exceptional.

It is our vision that our facilities - the Mount Vernon Community School District campus - are commensurate with the exceptionality of our students, staff and programs. Since the 2017 facilities vision proposal, considerable progress has been made to existing and new facilities on the Mount Vernon Community School District campus.

We are excited and proud of the significant progress we've made since then in our quest to ensure our facilities are commensurate with the quality of our students, programs and staff. And we are not done yet.

There are two pieces of the facility's vision that are critical for the future of the Mount Vernon Community School District campus, and they link together in a way to augment the educational experience for our kids. First, the growth of the community means the district will eventually need a fourth instructional building. Priority must be placed on putting this building in close proximity to the elementary and middle school to ensure we can share resources and staff. This means the best location for this building - in putting classroom education first - is just south of Washington Elementary, where the current track is located.

This places an importance on building a new activities complex on the existing Mustang campus. Finding a new home for track, bringing to campus practice and competition for track and field, football, soccer and marching band as well as a space for daily learning, are important opportunities this project brings to our kids. And while this space is in many ways crucial for the District, it is a community resource, providing a space for personal and group enjoyment as well as economic growth through 'home' events that currently are not possible in existing facilities.

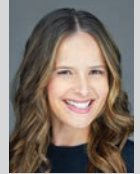
We feel strongly that an activities complex will give our students, staff, and community the exceptional facility they deserve!

Don't See Your Name Listed Here?

THIS LIST IS FOR 2021 DONATIONS. WATCH FOR 2022 DONATIONS TO APPEAR IN A 2022 SPRING ISSUE OF THE DISTRICT NEWS AND THE ALUMNI MAGAZINE. If you have any questions, or need to report a change to me, please let me know.

With continued gratitude,

Taryn Kuntz
Foundation Director
tkuntz@mvcsd.org
319-321-3681



DONATIONS MADE TO THE FOUNDATION (listed here) SUPPORT MOUNT VERNON STUDENTS

DONATIONS MADE TO THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION SUPPORT THIS NEWSLETTER, ALUMNI ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

WATCH FOR THE 2022 ALUMNI ASSOCIATION DONATIONS AND DUES/ SUPPORT TO APPEAR IN THE FALL/WINTER 2022-23 ISSUE

CORRECTIONS

Our apologies to the following alumni and friends
CORRECTION: Apologies to David and Shirley Sparks for incorrectly reporting their donation to the Alumni Association. Under donations 'in memory of Jim Vislisel' should be David and Shirley Sparks.

2022 SCHOOL DISTRICT RETIREES



LISA ALGER
36 years



CHIARA BURKE
25 years



MATT BURKE
24 years



JULIE DYE
24 years



LISA GREIF
21 years



DENISE HAVILL
28 years



KRISTI KEAST
31 years



SUZETTE KRAGENBRINK
27 years



SUSAN MAURICE
19 years



JO NOWAK-THOMPSON
13 years



SUE SMITH
24 years



CATHY STEINES
20 years

Lisa Alger

Year started at Mount Vernon: 1986
Total years at Mount Vernon: 36
Total years teaching: 36

First year favorite memory: When I first started my job at MV I loved (and continue to love) being at school. That first year, though, I was enamored with my classroom, my desk, the hallways, and most of all my students! Judy Penn (a wonderful former ES secretary) hand delivered my first paycheck to me and I remember responding, "Oh, ya, I get paid to do this!" I was having so much fun! I also remember Mrs. McClain (a co-teacher) telling me that it was ok to call her Barb.

Another teacher or staff member who was a mentor or helped you in your career and what did they do that was helpful to you? I have worked at many different grade levels with amazing people. Each of them touched my career and my life in a different way. I fear missing someone if I start to name them all! My co-workers have all been very important to me and I am fortunate to be able to say that I have learned from and worked with the best!

One or two memories of events that happened during your career at Mount Vernon that you would share. Many moons ago Ade Ringold (former Superintendent) came to my classroom and asked me if I would be interested in teaching the brand new Alternative Kindergarten program the district would be starting. I was overwhelmed with pride to be a part of that

new beginning!

As I speak of Mr. Ringold...I had an initial interview with this fine man. He got wind that I was to be married on June 28th. He called me to set up a second interview on the 28th. I was in the midst of explaining the wedding schedule and how I could fit that in when he told me that he was only kidding and that I got the job! Oh JOY!

In some capacity, I have worked in each of our district's three buildings. I have so enjoyed seeing how our students progress through those levels of learning and the diligence that our teachers possess in order to make sure that progress happens.

There are many students that thank me as they leave my classroom. This totally warms my heart! Thanks to the people raising them that you have instilled this sign of respect and gratitude.

I would be amiss to not mention something that relates to Covid-19. I will never forget the wonderful April 2020 day when our faculty and staff caravanned throughout Mount Vernon saying hello to all of the students we were so missing!

What has changed in education? As with all things, education has evolved. I have learned so much throughout the process! There is much more emphasis on professional development and leadership as an educator.

I will admit that frequently my students

are teaching me a new skill in the field of technology. I also love learning from them!

The MV school district is extending its focus on the social-emotional health of young people. Time well spent!

Chiara Niederhauser Burke '78

Year started at Mount Vernon: 1997
Total years at Mount Vernon: 25

I was born and raised in Mount Vernon. While I loved my time as a student at Mount Vernon Schools, I was anxious to finish high school so I could head off to college with the goal of moving to a big city after that. Shortly after I arrived at college, I met my husband to be, Matt Burke, who later became MVCSD's Business Manager. I eventually brought him home to meet my family and he was enamored with life in small town Mount Vernon. We married and eventually Matt convinced me to move back to Mount Vernon where we have lived and raised our family. I never looked back and have always been grateful for his persistence leading us to raise our family here.

Our children attended the same schools that I attended and we now have grandchildren in the district enjoying the same great education that I received all those years ago.

continued on next page



2022 SCHOOL DISTRICT RETIREES, CONTINUED

Once we settled in Mount Vernon and our children started school, I found a job here and volunteered at the preschool that our children attended as well as volunteering at Washington Elementary School. I was a founding board member of WETAP and my work in that capacity ultimately led me to apply for a position as a special education associate at Mount Vernon Middle School.

I supported special education students in the classroom, working with them on academics and also assisting them as they learned new life skills. I was drawn to middle school kids because I remember being an awkward and confused middle schooler myself and I really appreciated my middle school teachers because they seemed to understand me as an insecure and awkward kid. They supported me not only academically but also as an adolescent trying to figure out who I was. Some of the teachers I worked with at the middle school were also my classroom teachers when I attended school here.

As an adult now working with middle schoolers, I wanted to be able to offer that same support to students that I had when I was in middle school. I also assisted in the middle school office during that time when there was a need for extra support. I enjoyed supporting the office and ultimately ended up becoming the middle school building secretary when Joyce Loomis retired.

When the fifth-grade classes were moved into the middle school, my administrative office duties increased and Patty Mote took on more of the front office duties. We worked together as a team and always had each other's backs as we worked to support all of our students, teachers, parents and staff.

Over the last two and a half decades there have been substantial changes in classrooms, software, and facilities at the middle school but the one thing that hasn't changed is the caring environment of the middle school staff. The middle school is and always has been an outstanding and nurturing environment for our children.

I have always been amazed by the transformation of our middle school students beginning with their first day of fifth grade at the middle school to the day they moved on to the high school. I enjoyed being there to help support and nurture them and watch them grow and become more mature young men and women. The middle school was the perfect place for me to work and it was a gift for me to spend 25 years there. I was able to see our children and now our grandchildren enjoy their formative years in the Mount Vernon School District while also participating in and supporting the lives of our students, families and staff.

Matt Burke

Year started at Mount Vernon: 1998
Total years at Mount Vernon: 24

I grew up in another part of Iowa and I treasure my childhood, family, friends, activities, and all my years in school. There were so many great times and memories that it is easy for me to tell our grandchildren stories about my childhood. They were wonderful years and I would do it all over again. I did well in school but when I went to college, I had to take some night-time free remedial reading and writing non-credit classes offered by the university to help me catch up to where I should have been as a college freshman.

Later when it came time to decide where we wanted our children to go to school, I wanted them to have the same experiences that I had growing up but with a better education. So, Chiara and I decided to move to Mount Vernon so they could attend the school district and we quickly moved to one of the only houses available on the market at that time.

In those early years it was obvious to me from what our children were bringing home from school each day that they were doing well in school. I was working in Cedar Rapids and from time to time I got to meet our children's teachers at conferences and also other parents at events. From these brief interactions it seemed to me that we had made the right choice.

Then in 1998 John Wilch approached me after church one day and said he was retiring and asked if I would be interested in applying for his position in the district office at school. I started in that position and found out how great it is to work in the school district. I also learned about all the people who have made and those that continue to make Mount Vernon a great school district. The teaching staff, secretaries, associates, Board of Education, nurses, cooks, coaches, bus drivers, custodians, maintenance staff, day care workers, administrators, student workers, volunteers, alumni, parents, and students all play an integral role in making each day and each school year something special.

Our children had a great education at Mount Vernon and they were all well prepared for college especially in reading and writing. I have learned that the school district is a community in a community and there are many people who interact with the students on a daily basis for a great overall education.

Thank you so much to everyone in the school district over the years. I will greatly miss working in the district. Please support our schools and especially support the Board of Education. School districts in Iowa have changed quite a bit in recent years and although our School Board has always been

important, they are now more important than ever for our children.

Julie Dye

Year started at Mount Vernon: 1998
Total years at Mount Vernon: 24

The memories are so many, and so many are special, it's hard to pick just one. In the very beginning I relied on Lynda Benesh (retired) and Shirley Minnick Giannini '44 (d). They were mentors and supporters of us newbies. I have love and respect for my fellow retirees. I wish them well.

When I was 56 years young, I was assigned to work with a student that is blind. I was very glad to be with her because I wanted to help her. Such a sweet kid. She and I learned braille together. I took a course on line for braille and I was happy that I passed the test. You really have to use it daily to retain it, so I practice off and on. I am proud that I typed many early reader books in our elementary library for any future vision impaired children. I will miss this 6th grade class so much!

Jim and I (and our cat Layla) will be pulling out of Mount Vernon after school ends for the last time as residents. It's been our home town forever and it's hard to leave, but not that hard!. We are moving to Florida! Both of our sons live there now. We wanted to be near them and our 1 year old granddaughter, Morgan, (Jordan and wife Becca). Our youngest son Jared and wife Nikki moved to Florida in March. We are moving to a little town like Mount Vernon, antiques everywhere! Cattle ranching, and lots of orange groves. We are looking forward to the warmth, and sun and of course being closer to family.

I loved working with the kids and helping wherever I could over the years, but now I am ready for no more alarms and more peace and quiet and a lot more pool time! Thanks for the memories, it's been a wild ride!

Lisa Greif

Year started at Mount Vernon: 1999
Total years at Mount Vernon: 21 years
Total years teaching: 31 years

First year favorite memory: My first year I taught 5th grade at Harrison Elementary in Cedar Rapids. Repeatedly that year an adult would enter our classroom and exclaim, "Where is your teacher?" I'd raise my hand and we'd all giggle as most of my students were taller than me.

In 1999, we moved to Mount Vernon and I was hired as a Reading Recovery Teacher and Title I Reading Teacher. I remember thinking I was surprised by the number of hugs I received on a daily basis. It was one of the best surprises I received while teaching younger students.

Another teacher or staff member who was a mentor or helped you in your career and what did they do that was helpful to you?

Leigh Ann Jordan has been my mentor at Washington Elementary since my first year here when we were trained in Reading Recovery. Whenever I have struggled with regards to what might be blocking one of my student's learning, she has always helped me problem solve and provide ideas to try. My quality of instruction improved dramatically when we were able to teach in the same room as we could hear each other interact with other students. Her knowledge of the science behind reading and writing has been invaluable to me and my students. Her willingness to help me in any way has helped make my job an absolute joy.

One or two memories of events that happened during your career at Mount Vernon that you would share.

On a daily basis I get to watch a young reader/writer have "aha" moments. There is nothing more satisfying than to witness a child feel success by making a connection and immediately feel a little more confident. I have repeatedly had parents reach out to me years later and share appreciation for what a difference I made in their child's life. I have randomly received appreciative messages on Facebook which blows my mind. I have been thrilled to watch former students thrive as they become teenagers and then graduates of Mount Vernon. That is a bonus of being in a small school district. In recent years, I had the experience of working with a parent who I worked with as a first grader. I remembered working with her as a little girl and it was full circle when I was able to assist her son. It did make me realize how long I'd been teaching, but at the same time brought me so much joy to witness the next generation.

What has changed in education? Technology has definitely been the biggest change. I started during the time of mimeograph machines and overheads.

Plans for retirement:

Spending time with our three grandchildren, traveling, bicycling, volunteering and enjoying flexibility in my schedule. Looking forward to a little slower pace in life.

Parting words:

Early on in my career a principal gave me this advice which I never forgot... 'Pretend that every interaction you have with a student is recorded and make sure you are proud of how you respond.' My students have given me so much joy and kept me feeling very young at heart. I will miss my daily hugs!

Denise Clark Havill '79

Year started at Mount Vernon: 1994

Total years at Mount Vernon: 28

Another teacher or staff member who was a mentor or helped you in your career and what did they do that was helpful to you?

Gary Nelson. Gary was a wonderful man. He was patient, kind and encouraging. All three strengths for anyone working with children and all aspects of life. Washington Elementary has so many people who help each other. I had the benefit of spending my working days with friends.

One or two memories of events that happened during your career at Mount Vernon that you would share.

I have so many memories of Washington Elementary I would never be able to single out two. It was the little things which took place each day that kept me working for the district. Children make you laugh and the success in my life has been appreciating a life full of laughter.

What has changed in education?

Education is 'change'. In my eyes teaching the ability to learn and thoughtfully debate and consider new ideas are the most important aspects of education. The content and processes of teaching will ebb and flow with societal demands. Education changes with what the public demands. However, the educators are expected to keep the balance for the benefit of the young minds they impact. Therefore in my opinion, "what has changed in education" is the strength of the people who choose this profession.

Kristi Keast

Year started at Mount Vernon: 1991

Total years at Mount Vernon: 31

Total years teaching: 36

First year favorite memory: My first year the 5th grade team excitedly told me about the 5th grade musical. So we proceeded with 'The Music Man' spring of 1992. The scheduling, the rehearsals, the lines learned last minute. Alex Morf was Harold Hill and pulled it off beautifully. We all survived. Principal Joe Cullen came and congratulated me on the show and said, "You know, I didn't ask about the musical, this being your first year we could have skipped it..." We both laughed, and the tradition continues, now at the Middle School.

Another teacher or staff member who was a mentor or helped you in your career and what did they do that was helpful to you?

Oh my, when I came there had been no new hires for 10 years, according to the interview. There were 4 of us I believe, in the elementary. The entire staff was welcoming and always answered questions and gave suggestions when approached. They never demanded, but we worked as a team. Many of those retirees are my closest friends to this day!

One or two memories of events that happened during your career at Mount Vernon that you would share.

Student successes- there are so many! The 3rd grade recorder student who wasn't allowed to practice at home, diligently

practiced every morning at the corner of the building before school- She went all the way to black belt. One small student who hadn't been verbalizing, singing with his class this year! Every single time a student or class locks in to the music they're performing, and they hear the multiple layers creating a full ensemble. I love their faces when they hear it. There's no stopping them at that point.

A personal success- growing a chorus for 3rd and 4th from 7 students to an average of 30. Even without a Covid year for Chorus Club. About 12 years of that program. I am so proud of the students who put themselves out there and perform.

On an educational note, my family moved here. so I could pick up my masters and then my National Board Certification. That's opened the doors to mentoring candidates, developing test items, and scoring NBCT's.

What has changed in education?

I hear the echos of my favorite 7th grade teacher, "I don't know how you-all can teach, things are so different."

I started without internet, computer, and now we have 1-1 for the kids. After years of working with outdated texts, I am happy to use an online curriculum that can be maintained up to date.

Social media posting (yes, my twitter is pretty quiet from the classroom)

On my second set of National Standards (3rd if you count Iowa Core).

And I would not be supporting my fellow staff if I didn't add that student needs have shifted greatly. And still do, faster than we can prepare. We felt just the same in 90's when our first full inclusion student started. You have to love life-long learning to prepare and care for students in the classroom!

Suzette Kragenbrink

Year started at Mount Vernon: 1994

Total years at Mount Vernon: 27

Total years teaching: 33

First year favorite memory: Mount Vernon was the first high school I had worked in. I started my career teaching 4th and 5th grades for five years and then I was an elementary teacher librarian for one year. Vicky Weisler was my library associate and she also was new. That year I had to move the library from a card catalog to a digital catalog. Everything was new to me and I was the only working half-time as a teacher librarian. One night I went back to the library to work - it was about 9:30 pm. Ade Ringold, the superintendent, walked through and said, "what are you doing here?" I explained and he said, "I'm not leaving a young woman in the building alone. It's time for you to be done and go home."

SCHOOL YEAR 2021-2022

SUMMER 2021:

- Softball earns 2nd at state tourney and Coach Robin Brand is named 3A State Coach of the Year

AUGUST:

- MVCSD welcomes 8 new teachers.
- New HS iJAG program to connect business and education to provide the most cost-effective dropout prevention and school to career solutions
- Enrollment increased from 1,388 to 1,415 this year
- All students receive free breakfast and lunch

SEPTEMBER:

- Fall play is "Ugly Lies The Bone"

OCTOBER:

- 8th grader Emara Perreault has book signing for her book 'Turning' which can be found on Amazon
- Homecoming King Jacob Russell & Queen Anna Hoffman

NOVEMBER:

- WeWalk raises over \$20,000
- Mount Vernon-Lisbon cross country girls place fifth and boys 11th at 3A State Meet
- Five HS students selected as members of the 2021 Iowa All-State Chorus -- Tessa Baty, Natalie Spinsby, Finley McVay, Tyler Panos, and Dylan Winkler
- 20 students selected for Opus Honor Choir Festival.
- 7th grader Jonathan Winkler wins 7th-8th grade division of Hawkeye Haiku contest
- HS Volleyball coached by alum Maggie Lessmeier Willems '96 places 5th at State
- Marching band in Chicago Thanksgiving Day parade
- Amy Friedl Stoner '01 invites choir and jazz choir to perform at holiday show at the Paramount Theater

DECEMBER:

- Trystin Lashley and Ellie Barkalow selected as members of Bands of America Honor Band in the 2022 Tournament of Roses Parade
- 12 band students participated in the NE Iowa Bandmasters Association Honor Band

JANUARY:

- High School speech team earns 15 spots at State

FEBRUARY:

- Senior Maddie Plotz is the first girl to sign on to play at the collegiate level from the Mustang program
- Jackson Jaspers, Clark Younggreen and Henry Ryan earn a trip to state wrestling, with Jaspers placing 4th and Younggreen 6th
- Maddie Plotz, Claire Gaffney, Betsy Morf and Libbie Dix earn a trip to girls state wrestling with Dix placing 5th and Plotz 8th
- HS Speech team earns All-State banner for the group's ensemble acting piece 'Controlling Interest' Mount Vernon last earned a banner in 2007
- Six groups earned All-State Large Group appearances, head coach Grant Freeman '06

MARCH:

- 8th Grader Edith Dawson earned a trip to the National Scripps Spelling Bee in Washington DC in June
- 5 HS students earn All-State speech nominations
- Thespian Troup 1470 celebrates 50 years.
- K-12 archery teams advance to state tournament

APRIL:

- Aiden Grudzinski named to 3A All-State Jazz Band
- Marching Mustangs selected for 2023 Memorial Day Parade in Washington DC
- Senior Anna Moore places 2nd in national Josten's photography contest in landscape
- 'Hello Dolly' is the high school spring musical

MAY:

- HS Robotics teams compete in world VEX Robotics
- 92 graduates receive their diplomas

2022 SCHOOL DISTRICT RETIREES, CONTINUED

Another teacher or staff member who was a mentor or helped you in your career and what did they do that was helpful to you?

Mount Vernon was my first high school position. I knew I needed to weed the high school collection, but really felt like I didn't know which books to keep and which to remove. The only record of circulation was the library card in the front of the book. I asked one of the high school teachers, Ruth Michaud, if she would look at the books I was considering getting rid of just to make sure I wasn't removing a book that should be kept. She told me, "The English department will teach the old dead white guys and you make sure to keep books in the collection that students want to read." I've used that advice my entire career.

One or two memories of events that happened during your career at Mount Vernon that you would share.

Mount Vernon has been a great school district to work for. I've been given opportunities to develop leadership, worked with teachers who enjoy students and are experts in teaching. As a teacher librarian I chose to become Nationally Board Certified in 2008. Passing boards my first attempt was beyond satisfying. I also chose to renew my board in 2018. I am also proud of the number of former graduates that have decided to get a degree in Library Science. I really have had the best job in the district; managing two libraries, working with teachers and students and helping students to figure out who they are as a reader.

What has changed in education?

Technology - When I started at Mount Vernon the library still had a card catalog, vertical file, encyclopedias, "The Reader's Guide" to periodicals and a database that we got cd updates once a month.

Research 25 years ago depended on finding a book on your topic on the shelf. Today, teaching students to evaluate the quality of information and using quality information in their research and personal lives is the biggest challenge I see for our learners.

Jo Nowak-Thompson

Year started at Mount Vernon: 2009

Total years at Mount Vernon: 13 years

Total years teaching: 27 years

First year favorite memory: Susannah Maddock was very gracious about sharing the classroom. She taught the morning AK class and I taught the afternoon class. Thank you, Susannah!

One or two memories of events that happened during your career at Mount Vernon that you would share.

I loved the events that included families; The Lantern Walk on our farm in November,

Santa's Workshop with grandparents, Dads and Donuts, Mother's Day Tea. Oftentimes early childhood educators get the "my first teacher" label, but I think it is important to remember family members have already been filling that role for several years before the children walk through my door. I always tried to be mindful of building strong relationships with families to help create a solid educational foundation for our youngest learners. I also loved having the chicks or ducklings in the classroom each year.

What has changed in education?

Current expectations for preschool more closely match the expectation we had for kindergarten children in the late 80's. Now, I spend a lot more time on assessment and reporting progress data to the state.

Susan Roberts-Maurice

Year started at MV: 2003

Total years at Mount Vernon: 19

Total years teaching: 33

First year favorite memory:

I began teaching and working at Mount Vernon Middle School as a substitute after resigning from Linn-Mar Schools to adopt a child from India. I began as a support person for a student with needs that required attention throughout the day. I then transitioned into certified classroom teacher as an elective and special education teacher, I moved into teaching math and science in 7th and 8th grade and finally landed in 7th grade science in 2005. I have been teaching 7th grade science since that time

Another teacher or staff member who was a mentor or helped you in your career and what did they do that was helpful to you?

Kim Steele and I connected right away. We realized we had gone to middle school together at Franklin in Cedar Rapids. Shortly after we joined forces to create the middle school success lab program and Student Activities Team (SAT) program. Together we implemented the annual student variety show, activity nights and stay and play Fridays to build community and relationships amount students, staff and parents.

John Krumholtz and Noreen Bush were amazing administrative leaders that pushed me to be the best teacher, leader, and person, to meet the needs of all students. Connecting and building relationships based on the human behind the student helped to create a community and culture in the middle school that propelled students forward towards success.

One or two memories of events that happened during your career at Mount Vernon that you would share.

The greatest success has always been students who have returned to say how much they gained in becoming the person they are today, and what my influence has meant to them. It wasn't always about the

content, but rather how comfortable they were in class being who they were, regardless of the knowledge of what I was teaching. My classroom has always been a place where students/people could be themselves and feel safe no matter the 'grade' they were 'earning'. Students have always been people first, and students second. That is how success happens for them.

What has changed in education?

Politics. When I started teaching in 1988 teaching was about education and students. Government invested in education without caveats about what is and is not education. Federal and state testing has taken away from responsive student interests to focus on comparing every student and school building and district in a competition of scores and placement. A child doesn't learn to talk, walk, interact, and play because they are being assessed. It happens naturally; trial and error. The errors are important steps in learning. Learning is natural, testing is not a means to an end.

Sue Smith

Year started at Mount Vernon: 2009

Total years at Mount Vernon: 24

Watching the growth of the children in Kindergarten from the beginning of the year to the end. How these amazing little people went from holding on to Mom and Dad at the beginning, to performing for them and many others in the Kindergarten circus at the end. Stars were born!

Another teacher or staff member who was a mentor or helped you in your career and what did they do that was helpful to you?

Lois Pavelka: Lois was the heart of Washington Elementary. Her commitment to not only our school district but, also, the Mount Vernon community went above and beyond. I admired her hard work ethics and willingness to do everything she could to help all. She included me and always made me feel needed and appreciated. I was very lucky to have worked alongside her and many, many others that helped me along the way. Thank you!

One or two memories of events that happened during your career at Mount Vernon that you would share.

Swimming lessons with the 2nd graders at Cornell College. What an awesome opportunity, right? I'm thinking, I'm going to get paid for swimming. Doesn't get much better than that! Well, no one mentioned that the water temperature was 40 degrees!!! Slight exaggeration but, it felt like it and of course it was during the winter. The things we do for our kiddos!

What has changed in education?

Technology: Something I've had a hard time keeping up with, but the children are quick to understand. Used in the proper way this is such a valuable tool for learning.

Cathy Steines

Year started at Mount Vernon: 2001

Total years at Mount Vernon: 20

Total years teaching: 20

First year favorite memory:

I started my teaching career and my time in Mount Vernon at the high school teaching special education. I was in a converted closet with walls that didn't fully reach the floor, and there was plexiglass at the top of the walls. They were flimsy as could be. I could hear Tawnua Tenley's classes to one side and Erin Wilkinson's to the other. Frequently, a note would find its way under the wall or a face would appear above. I think I may have passed a note or two myself!

Another teacher or staff member who was a mentor or helped you in your career and what did they do that was helpful to you?

Thank goodness for Erin Wilkinson! No methods class or student teaching experience will ever fully prepare you for your first classroom. Erin Wilkinson showed me the ropes those first few years and showed patience with my endless questions. Erin didn't seem flustered by anything, always no nonsense, high expectations, but great with the kids. She always had Bath and Body Works lotions in her room, and all kids, not just her students, would come in to use the lotion. She really modeled how important it was to try to connect on a level outside of academics. I'm pretty sure I've never gotten as good as her at that, but some of my first students visited me for years after they graduated. That always warmed my heart and told me I must have done something right!

One or two memories of events that happened during your career at Mount Vernon that you would share.

The smallest moments sometimes have the biggest impacts. I had a mother of a student write me a Christmas card early in my career thanking me for helping her son. She had a lot of mistrust for schools, and it took a lot for her to make the effort to reach out. I still have that card. Of course, when a student had writing success, that was exciting. I had a student get to read his essay for a Barnes and Noble contest, one was a runner-up for a magazine contest, and recently, one student's poem was chosen for a University of Iowa contest. It was always fun to get to share in their success. But it was equally exciting to see a student enthusiastic about a writing opportunity and give it his all even if he or she may not have been a naturally gifted writer. I recently received an email from a student now in high school with nothing but the words to the helping verb song he learned in class. That made my day!

Mount Vernon has also been the most caring place to work. I can't imagine teaching anywhere else. When my girls had an event, someone was always willing to cover so I could slip away to a play or concert.

When the ice storms hit in 2008, our power was out for 8 days, and my husband was away on business. Gary Nelson came out and started a kerosene heater for me. I had parents offer to let us stay with them until the power came back. When I had a health issue that was going to keep me from the first week of school one year, I was panicking and felt like it would be the end of the world. Bob Hauge stopped my panic, expressed genuine concern for my well-being, and put the whole situation in perspective. That meant more to me than he will ever know.

What has changed in education?

There have always been students that loved learning and thrived in school. There have always been students that were less than enthusiastic about academics. So, teachers have always had to balance teaching, enrichment, and management. As time goes on, however, other factors are making all of that more difficult.

I remember we used to check out a computer cart or lab for an assignment or project. It was pretty easy to manage what students were doing at that time as the knowledge of and access to games, etc. wasn't nearly as widespread. No smartphones or smartwatches to worry about!

Now, a decent amount of time is spent daily making sure students are on the appropriate sites and using technology appropriately. Technology can be used by students to escape learning activities or as a weapon against others. We can't just ban it because it's everywhere. It's necessary in many adults' jobs and lives. Students have to know how to use it well, and schools are tasked with teaching them.

I truly believe that the rise of technology has factored into lowered learning stamina and increased social emotional issues. I miss the days when most of my time was spent planning engaging lessons and evaluating learning. Way too much time is now spent managing behavior.

One other lament is the reduced input of teachers in their own continued learning. The best learning opportunities I had as a teacher were from those I chose myself. When we were able to go to conferences, speakers, and training, I always came away with at least a nugget of wisdom I could apply to my craft. As those in decision making positions at all levels ask us to use more and more of our professional development time to account for everything we do in the classroom, align and analyze our curriculum in multiple ways, the more our craft suffers. Being accountable and consistent with curriculum is important, but it shouldn't get in the way of the time we need to learn and implement best teaching practices. I hope the pendulum swings back, and teachers once again are allowed to spend time becoming the super educators we need them to be. I am hopeful that can happen!



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Alumni Hall of Fame Events & Promotion approx \$2,000

Homecoming Reception approx \$300

Heritage Days Sponsor

Database Software \$2,800 and more

Your tax deductible support is very much appreciated and funds alumni organization publications & activities

2022

Alumni first & last name, including maiden name _____

Class Year/Friend _____ Spouse name (and class year if also an alumnus) _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____ Country if outside USA _____

Email address _____

Phone Home _____ Cell _____ Work _____

For tax purposes, the MV Alumni Association has been determined by the IRS to be a public charitable organization under Code 501(c)3

MOUNT VERNON COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
ALUMNI Association

Thank you!