



Columbus Public Schools Alumni News



Winter 2016

Class of 1970 pulls out victory

The Class of 1970 held on to their narrow lead to win the CHS/Kramer Class Challenge.

The Class of 1970 had 20 lifetime members followed closely by the Class of 1960 with 18 and Class of 1968 with 16. We have a total of 396 lifetime members.

A big thank you goes out to all the CHS/Kramer grads who became lifetime members. The money raised helps to offset the cost of printing and mailing the newsletter as well as other expenses.

Just because the friendly class challenge is over doesn't mean you can no longer become a lifetime member. The cost of a lifetime single member is \$200 and lifetime couple is \$300. To become an annual single member the cost is \$10 and for an annual couple \$15. The Alumni Association is part of the CPS Foundation.

We would like to thank all of our Alumni for their wonderful support.

GETTING READY - Kindergarten students from Emerson Elementary "Get Ready to Learn" by starting the morning off with a yoga video.



ON HIS OWN - A Lost Creek student works independently with adapted books that were purchased through a CPS Foundation classroom enrichment grant.

Foundation gears up for new year

Landon Wietfeld
CPS Foundation Executive Director

With 2016 well on its way, the CPS Foundation is excited for the year ahead. Starting this spring the Foundation will award up to five classroom enrichment grants submitted by staff members from across the District. These grants give our staff the opportunity to bring new ideas, concepts, and projects into the classroom. Grants given for the 2015-16 school year included: IXL Math online software, adapted and accessible books, educational DVD's and necessity items for Kindergartners to start their day of learning, wind energy models to teach sustainable energy engineering, and SolidWorks applications used for sketching and drafting of 3-D objects.

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Looking for nominations

Was there a CPS Staff member that impacted your life and went above and beyond his or her job? Is she or he still currently employed with CPS? If yes, then you should consider nominating them for Educator of the Year or Operations Employee of the Year (non-teaching staff). Nomination forms can be found online at foundationforcps.org. Completed nominations must be emailed to wietfeldL@discoverers.org or mailed to the CPS Foundation office at P.O. Box 947 Columbus, NE 68602-0947 on or before March 7, 2016.



Jeanne Lemke Klinker

Graduating year: 1969.

Favorite Class/ Teacher: Mr. Callan, Biology, and Mr. Swartz, Physiology

CPS teacher that influenced you the most: Ms. Harrafil, 5th grade and Ms. Frantz, 2nd grade, both of whom passed on their love of teaching to me.

Most memorable high school experience: One year in biology Mr. Callan had us hunt, stuff, and label a small mammal. Most 14-year-old girls don't hunt, so my dad took my girlfriends and me road kill hunting one fall afternoon!

What would you change if you had to do high school all over again? Besides motivation, nothing! I love telling my city friends about life in a great small town, where like it or not, everyone knows your name!

Where do you live now? Omaha, Nebraska.

What are you doing now? I graduated from UNL in 1973 with a double major in Elementary Education and Special Education. I got a Master's Degree from UNO in 1976 in Learning Disabilities and in 1996 in ESL. After graduation, I taught for Papillion La Vista Public Schools until retirement five years ago. My husband, Mark, and my son, Luke, and daughter in law, Christine, are lawyers in Omaha. My son Adam and his wife work

Meet the Lemkes

for Creighton and Con Agra, and son John works for KETV, and his wife is a teacher in OPS. All of us are in Omaha! We have five grandchildren.

Life in Columbus was what shaped me, and I'm proud to say I grew up there!

Mike Lemke

Graduating Year: 1973.

Favorite Class/Teacher: No specific prioritization.

CPS Teacher That Influenced You The Most: Miss Nissan.

Most memorable high school experience: Too many to list but all contained a large group of friends that are fortunately still in place today.

What would you change if you had to do high school over again? Focus.

Where do you live now? Garden City, Kansas.

What are you doing now? Senior Technical Sales – Bayer Animal Health, Married (20 years) to Birgit, and has three daughters, Corinna 18 at Kansas University, Marie – Isabel 16 at Garden City High School and Elena 14 also at GCHS. We return to our family lake house on the Platte River quite often and also for our annually family reunion.

Tim Lemke

Graduating Year: 1975

Favorite class/teacher: Even though I may not have been directly in some of their classes: Bart, Lanny Neese, and Dean Dartman. None of these guys took them-



selves too seriously. I think they related well to a younger generation because of that.

Most memorable high school experience: Most memorable high school experience had to be football senior year when we were one win away from a state championship and proceeded to get drilled by a mediocre North Platte team at the end. So close. Some of my other high school memories are vivid and some have faded to black. One thing I can tell you is there is no place I would rather have spent my formative years. I still get back fairly often for get togethers with family and friends. My best lifelong friends are the kids I grew up with.

Where do you live now? The Denver area for 32 years.

What are you doing now? After graduation from high school, I went to the University of Nebraska for undergraduate studies and dental school. I have been in the practice of dentistry in Denver for 32 years. I love EVERYTHING Colorado has to offer! Although I don't ski, it is possible to play golf here year round and I'm OK with that. And the climate and mountains cannot be beat. Children: TJ, who is 21 and attends Colorado State University and Katie, who goes to UNL.

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Second generation of Lemkes

Taylor Lemke

Graduating Year: 2006.

Favorite Class/

Teacher: Physics with Mr. Townsend.

CPS teacher that influenced you the most: Candy Becher.

Most memorable high school experience: Making it to State Golf my Sophomore and Junior years as a Team.

What would you change if you had to do high school over again? Get involved in more scholastic competitions.

Where do you live now? Houston, Texas.

What are you doing now? CPA working for a small business investment company. My wife is a Nurse Practitioner working at MD Anderson. I also love to play golf and travel when I can.

Lauren Lemke

Graduating Year: 2008.

Favorite class/teacher: Pop Culture with Mark Mueller.

CPS teacher that influenced you the most: Mrs. Kluth. I still think back to things she taught me to this day.

Most memorable high school experience: Playing in State Tennis at #1 doubles as a sophomore.

What would you change if you had to do high school over again? I would be involved in more than just sports and try new things.

Where do you live now? Omaha, NE.

What are you doing now? Working in marketing for Creighton University. I own a home



and live with my dog, Lilly. I am currently finishing up my MBA at Creighton and will graduate in May.

Libby Lemke

Graduating Year: 2010.

Favorite class/teacher: All of my art classes and Mrs. Wallin.

CPS teacher that influenced you the most: Ms. Saathoff had such a way of always helping students learn “outside the box.”

Most memorable high school experience: Probably getting selected for National Honor Society all four years as well as always being a part of the Homecoming set up process from theme to decorations!

What would you change if you had to do high school over again? Get involved in areas beyond my comfort zone.

Where do you live now? Hoboken, NJ.

What are you doing? I work as a print designer for a women’s wear label called Jude Connally. I

currently live with my fiancé Kurt Farmer (also a Columbus high grad) five minutes from NYC.

Noah Lemke

Graduating Year: 2016.

Favorite Class/Teacher: Law Education with Mr. Motz.

CPS teacher that influenced you the most: Ms. Heather Beavers.

Most memorable high school experience: Earning a CHS letter for the first time.

What would you change if you had to do high school over again? I would have become involved in more activities.

Where do you live now? Columbus NE.

What are you doing now? I will graduate from CHS in May of 2016 and have plans to attend Central Community College to get my general education requirements, then hopefully I will transfer to a university to pursue sports marketing or education/coaching.



Lemke Family

From Page 2

Luke Lemke

Graduating Year: 1979.

Favorite class/teacher: Physics and Mr. Griffiths. He challenged me to think critically for myself.

CPS teacher that influenced you the most: Mr. Chris Dixon, he made me want to learn!

Most memorable high school experience: There is not one experience, but the friendships that were formed are memorable. We had a very hard working and fun loving group.

What would you change if I had it to do all over again? Take time to listen to the wisdom of the teachers. Not take life too serious.

Where do you live now? Columbus, Nebraska.

What are you doing now? I worked as a Family Physician for 26 yrs, and I'm taking care of some of my old teachers. Children: Taylor 06', is a CPA in Houston, TX. Married and no children. Lauren 08' lives in Omaha and works as the marketing coordinator

for Creighton Heider School of Business. Libby 10' lives in the New York area and is a print designer for a fashion company. Noah is a senior at Columbus High School this year. I am blessed to be married to Kim for 31 years.

Columbus Alumni Association

2508 27 St. ~ PO Box 947~ Columbus, NE 68602-0947
Phone: 402-563-7000 Ext. 1102 ~ Fax: 402-563-7005

Alumni Association Board of Directors

- Shelly Nielsen-Schmidt `88 - President
- Anne Cruickshank Hughes `90 - V.P.
- Gayleen Oppliger Hingst `60, Treasurer
- Steve Anderson `68, Past President
- K.C. Belitz `86
- Amy Busted Blaser `88
- Tom Goc `81
- Abbi Groteluschen Hellbusch `02
- Morgan Pillen Kapels `05
- Miki Averett Naylor `80
- Jim Schaefer `70
- Annie Slusarski Sokol `98

Columbus Alumni Association

Please use this form for address corrections or changes, what's new information, or if you wish to pay dues.

First Name _____ Last Name _____ Class of _____
(Please include maiden if applicable.)

Spouse _____ Last Name _____ Class of _____

Address _____ City, State Zip _____

Telephone _____ E-mail _____

What's New (job, degrees, comments, suggestions etc.) _____

I/we would like to become an annual member(s) for the year 2016.

_____ Annual Single \$10 _____ Annual Couple \$15

or

I/we would like to become a lifetime member(s).

_____ Lifetime Single \$200 _____ Lifetime Couple \$300

Return to: Columbus Alumni Association * 2508 27 St. * PO Box 947 * Columbus, NE 68602-0947





VIEW FROM THE SKY - Ariel shot of the new high school.



DRIVING IN - Drawing of the new entrance to the high school.

A New Voyage of Discovery

Dr. Troy Loeffelholz
Superintendent

We have reached the half way point in construction on the new High School. North 33rd Avenue and the Lost Creek Parkway have changed in the last eighteen months. Columbus High School's next moment in history is taking shape. This 270,000 square foot facility will be the home of the Discoverers for the next 60-80 years. The facility includes, 75 regular classrooms, library media center, and 5 state of the art career and technical education rooms. The new high school also includes a 780-seat auditorium, a gymnasium that seats 2,200 and a second gym that seats 700. We will be able to host youth activities and tournaments on

5 full length basketball and volleyball courts. Completion is set for January of 2017.

The focus for Columbus Public Schools over the past 18 months has been STEM education (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math). CPS has been at the forefront of this project at the local and state level. Columbus is a great place to raise a family with many careers available to our students. Our STEM Academy focus allows our students to take many courses with dual credit opportunities through Central Community College and Southeast Community College. Many students will leave Columbus High School with 15-24 credit hours toward either an associates degree or transfer of credit to a four-year institution.

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STEM, playground focus of Foundation

Landon Wietfeld
CPS Foundation Ex. Director

The Columbus Public Schools Foundation is teaming up with the CPS District for two very important projects, the Lost Creek All Inclusive Community Playground and the CHS STEM Academy.

The playground is an idea that was introduced by two Lost Creek Elementary teachers. These individuals have a dream to truly 'engage all learners to achieve success' by meeting the unique needs of students with motor difficulties. The purpose of this project is to create a play environment that will serve the physical, social, sensory, cognitive and emotional needs of all children in the community, regardless of ability or disability.

The inclusive playground will have ramp access and also a rubber-matting surface, which will allow children with special needs to play more independently and freely.

Presently, the nearest inclusive playgrounds are located in Omaha (83.5 miles) and Kearney (115 miles). The goal of this project is to raise \$310,000. Although this is a large goal, it is not unattainable if we join together in a united effort to make this dream a reality for CPS students and the community of Columbus.

The STEM Academy's Branch Out campaign is also very important. The STEM Academy at CHS will affect the future of Columbus by meeting the workforce needs and wants of local

businesses and industry. STEM education prepares our students to become the next innovators, doers and inspiring minds of the future. Students will discover new realms of learning and infinitely grow through inquiry and investigation. The goal of CPS and the CPS Foundation is to raise \$600,000 to provide our STEM Academy with scholarships and updated equipment necessary to prepare our students for the workforce.

With your help, you can make a difference in the lives of our students community-wide. Our goal can be your goal. Take the time to visit our website www.foundationforcps.org to learn more about these two projects that will forever have an impact on Columbus Public Schools and the City of Columbus.



What's Happening

Ardeth (Maw) Greenquist '48 – Enjoying retirement and co-teaching a sign language class.

Wayne Schild '48 – He and his wife, Darlene, made a Great Lakes trip with Road Scholar from August 18-29, 2015 commencing in Tornoto, OH and Chicago, IL.

Kathleen Swanson Schelert '56 – Participates in local foot races and skis in the mountains in wintertime.

Gayle & Jeanetta (Swanson) Janssen '63 – Celebrated their 50th anniversary in Norfolk with

family and friends and lots of alumni from their class.

Roger Nyffeler '67 – Retired from UNK after 44 years in education (elementary teaching, principal and college staff).

Peg Potter Nyffeler '68 – Retired after 25 years in college health.

David Vollbracht '68 – Retired and is enjoying traveling, camping, drag racing, spending time with the kids and grandkids.

Lorrie Person Miller '70 – new superintendent of McPherson County Schools in

Tryon, NE.

Brenda Collins Onstead '73 – Bachelor in Elementary Education and Master in Family Therapy.

Vickey Hammer '81 passed away.

Tracy Lynn Blessen Belitz '84 – Had her first book, “A Farmer’s Wife,” published on August 26, 2014.

Chris Mulligan '93 – Vice President Managing Regional Director at Natixis Global Asset Management.

Josh Kobus '95 – works at information USA in Omaha.

Heather (Rohde) Kobus

'96 – works at Boys Town in Omaha.

Ryan Mueller '98 – full time in the U.S. Army.

Brandi Ronkar Fehringer '99 – an optician at O’Neill Family Eyecare. She has two daughters, Codi born in 2000 and Alyssa born in 2004.

Jessica Zimmerer Garnett '03 – launched her custom wedding stationery full-time.

Elizabeth Wheatley '09 – Marketing Director at Hilltop Mall in Kearney, NE.

Foundation prepares for new year

From Page 1

Also taking place are the selections of Educator of the Year (EOY) and Operations Employee of the Year (OEY) who are nominated by community members, students, and colleagues. The CPS EOY and OEY finalists are then selected by a group of community members based on district impact as well as community involvement. Added to this, as May approaches, the Foundation will be tallying the final scores on the applications for the 13 scholarships that will be awarded at CHS Honors Night.

Fast-forwarding to next fall, the Foundation will be co-hosting with the Columbus Area Chamber of Commerce the ‘Taste of Columbus’ on October 9th. This is a community-wide event held each year with proceeds being divided with the Chamber.

The CPS share of the revenue will support our STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) Academy and help in reaching the \$600,000 goal to receive matching funds from

the Columbus Quality of Life Projects Campaign. All of this is leading up to the grand opening of the new Columbus High School.

The CPS Foundation, Booster Clubs, and parent-led organizations have continued to invest in our students. Our Foundation is growing and becoming more and more successful each year. For this, we are thankful for the community of Columbus, the CPS staff, and our Alumni who have generously invested so that our students are given opportunities that they might not have been able to experience otherwise. We encourage all to visit our new website at www.foundationforcps.org and follow us on twitter @foundation4cps to keep up to date on all of our events and special happenings.

As your Columbus Public Schools Foundation Director, I wish you the best for 2016 and, as always, GO DISCOVERERS!

New Voyage

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In addition the potential for internships and job shadowing with many employers in the community is an advantage for our students. The connections with the local business and manufacturing community

are making this a reality.

The alumni are an important component to the viability of Columbus High School. We are asking all alumni to consider being a partner in our STEM program and our entire K-12

academic program. CPS has a strong Foundation that is working and giving back to the district.

In the last three years, the Columbus Public Schools Foundation has given back \$357,280.14 to

our schools and students. If you are interested in being a STEM partner, please contact Landon Wietfeld, Executive Director of the Columbus Public Schools Foundation at (402) 563-7000, Ext. 1103.



Long time board member dies

Our condolences go out to the Family of Bob Jaeggi. He died on November 20. Bob served on the Alumni Board since the organization started in 1993. He graduated from Kramer High School in 1947. He will be greatly missed.



Lifetime Single Member

Don Trotter '60 was accidentally omitted from the lifetime single membership list that ran in the Fall newsletter. We apologize for the oversight.

Save the Date

The Alumni Basketball Tournament is back!

April 29 and 30, 2016

For more information, contact Marcus Gillespie at gillespiem@discoverers.org or at 402-366-5625 or Jimmy Motz at motzj@discoverers.org. Jimmy is the new head varsity boys basketball coach at CHS and Marcus is an assistant varsity basketball coach.



Yes I wish to support the schools with a tax deductible gift to the Foundation.
Here is my donation in the amount of \$ _____

First Name _____ Last Name _____ Class of _____

Address _____ City, State, Zip _____

If you would like someone to contact you about including the CPS Foundation in your estate plans, please call Landon Wietfeld at 402-563-7000 Ext. 1103 to set up an appointment. The role of the Foundation is to provide the students of CPS with as many educational opportunities as possible by filling gaps created in the regular school district budget from funding shortfalls or regulatory constraints. The Foundation helps optimize the future of all Discoverers by creating funding for grants, after school programs, alternative educational opportunities, scholarships for current and graduating students, and recognition awards.

Thank You for your support!

Please make checks payable to the CPS Foundation.

Return to: CPS Foundation * 2508 27 St. * PO Box 947 * Columbus NE 68602-0947.

The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization.





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Columbus Alumni Reunion Plans for 2016 & Beyond

1935 - Local class members meet every 4 months for lunch (Oct., Feb., Jun.). All '35 grads welcome.

1937 - Meets 1st Wed., every 4 months (March, July, Nov.).

1946 - '46 locals meet the first Friday of each month for lunch. All classmates welcome. Contact: Ruth Olson Babka, 402-564-5991 or Laura Eller Stuefer, 402-564-2057.

1949 - Locals meet the first Monday of the month for breakfast at Picket Fence Cafe. All classmates welcome. Contact: Rosella (Blaser) Norris for info. 402-564-7498.

1954 - The Class is having a get together on August 20, 2016. Classmates can meet any time after 3 p.m. at the American Legion, 2263 3rd Ave. This will be followed by the Columbus Days barbecue in downtown Columbus. For more information, contact Colleen McEnerney Willman at 402-564-4780.

1956 - Meets at 10 a.m. the first Wed. of every month at Stack & Steak for morning coffee. All classmates welcome.

1956 -60th Reunion – August 19 2016. A Letter will follow. For more information, contact Wanda Schild Eihausen at 402-564-5119 and Donna Flamme Murray at 402-564-6777.

1958 - Class lunch the first Wednesday of every month at noon at Maximus. All classmates and spouses welcome.

1959 - Meets the second Thursday quarterly (January, April, July and October) at Stack n' Steak at 11:30 a.m. for lunch and conversation. Classmates and spouses are welcome.

1960 - Meets the first Tuesday of each month at 11:30 a.m. at Maximus.

1962 - Meets the first Friday of every month at 8:30 a.m. at Picket Fence. All classmates and spouses are welcome.

1966 - 50th Class Reunion - Labor Day weekend, Sept. 2 and 3, 2016. There is a group created on Facebook named CHS & Scotus Class of '66 Reunion. Please feel free to add yourself to that group if you have a Facebook account.

1976 - 40th Reunion - August 5, 2016 at the Columbus Horse Races. Meet at the front grandstand and after the races, going to Maximus. For more information, contact Linda Krumland at fatcatz@neb.rr.com.

Let us help you plan your reunion!

What we can do for you:

- Class list and mailing labels
- Nonprofit Bulk rate for qualifying mailings
 - Tours of CHS or CMS
 - Tips for planning reunions

Contact Landon Wietfeld: PO Box 947, Columbus NE 68602-0947; Phone: 402-563-7000 Ext. 1103;
E-mail: wietfeldL@discoverers.org.