



# MOUNT VERNON COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT ALUMNI NEWS

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Above are signatures from students from the class of 2005 while they were in 5th grade.. A long lost quilt project was un-earthed and is now on display in the Alumni case. See story on page 15.

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Bruce Mullen '58  
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## 2024 HERITAGE DAY ALUMNI AND COMMUNITY EVENTS - SHOW UP AND ENJOY!

**FRIDAY 100th Year All Theater Reunion-- July 12, 6:30-8:30 pm**

**Performing Arts Center (PAC) at Mount Vernon High School**

Mount Vernon Theatre is celebrating 100 years of making theater and is hosting a reunion to celebrate. The Velvet Curtain and the Alumni Association will host an all-theatre reunion. We will have performances from theatre alumni, a history of theater in Mount Vernon, and a reception to celebrate.

**SATURDAY ALUMNI-COMMUNITY BREAKFAST -- July 13, 8-10 am**

**Mount Vernon High School Commons**

Enjoy breakfast, coffee and juice, along with other alumni and families, school staff, and MV community. Cost of breakfast is a monetary donation. Plenty of time to enjoy this event and then head on to the parade which starts at 10:30 AM.

School tours available **ALUMNI FUNDRAISER**

**SATURDAY RECEPTION -- uptown, July 13 after parade until dark**

Join alumni and community at the Alumni Tent. Location outside the Old High School (The First Street Building). Enjoy cold water, pictures and yearbooks. Great meet-up spot.

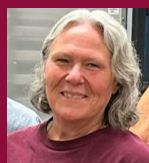
**ALL ALUMNI EVENTS  
ARE OPEN TO THE  
COMMUNITY &  
FRIENDS**

FIND UPDATES AT  
[www.visitmvl.com](http://www.visitmvl.com)  
OR find a complete listing and  
updates in the Heritage Days  
issue of the Mount Vernon-  
Lisbon Sun newspaper

*The annual **Heritage Day Festival**, Mount Vernon's biggest summer festival, will take place on Friday and Saturday, July 12-13. Many of the town activities will take place on our own school grounds including a Friday night drone show at the Martha Parsons Activities Complex (MAC) on Friday night. 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, and several other local organizations.*

*Watch for complete event information to come in the 'MVL Sun' and online at [visitmvl.com](http://visitmvl.com) & [mvalumni.org](http://mvalumni.org)*

525 Palisades Road SW  
Mount Vernon, Iowa 52314  
[alumni@mvcasd.org](mailto:alumni@mvcasd.org)  
319-895-8845  
[www.MVAlumni.org](http://www.MVAlumni.org)





# Mustang ALUMNI

## Call for Volunteers

Volunteer to help to Association on Saturday July 13, 2024 from 8am-9am or 9am-10am at the High School or later in the day at the Alumni Tent. It's a fun way to see friends and classmates! Contact Julia at 319-721-7953 or email alumni@mvcsd.org

Unable to make it on July 13?  
There's always opportunity to help the week before or at Homecoming! Reach out for more info! alumni@mvcsd.org

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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 Coordinator. For advertising rates write or call 319-895-8845.

## MV Community Events

www.visitmvl.com

2024

July	Lincoln Highway Nitty Gritty Heritage Days
August	Lincoln Highway Arts Festival
Oct	Chili Cookoff
December	Magical Night and more!!

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings,

So much has happened since the last newsletter and so much is scheduled for this summer. In accordance with Mustang tradition, the athletic teams all had outstanding seasons, and the marching band did not disappoint with their performances. The fine arts students did an unbelievable performance of Mary Poppins this spring. If you have not had the opportunity to see a performance in the Performing Arts Center, you really need to try and see one. And you will have the opportunity to do so on July 12th, when the Mount Vernon High School Theatre is celebrating 100 years of making theater and it is hosting a reunion to celebrate. The Velvet Curtain and the Alumni Association will host an all-theatre reunion. They will have performances from theatre alumni, a history of theater in Mount Vernon, and a reception to celebrate.

In May, we will be welcoming approximately 107 new alumni and hopefully many of the will join us at the Heritage Days breakfast. Always an excellent chance to catch up with old friends and reminisce with others.

I hope to see many of you at Heritage Days. Enjoy your summer.

Cathy Hufford  
President, Alumni Association



Cathy Hufford '83  
Alumni Association  
President

## UPDATE-UPDATE-UPDATE-UPDATE-UPDATE-UPDATE-

## UPDATE TO NEWSLETTER MAILING

Due to rising postage costs, The Alumni Association Board has decided to update our newsletter mailing procedures.

1. For five years after graduating, classes will receive a **DIGITAL** copy of the newsletter. At each 5-Year reunion, alumni can choose to opt into a print copy.
2. In the fall, District teachers will receive the newsletter in their District mailbox instead of USPS.
3. Families with multiple alums will receive one copy of the newsletter when requested by the family or alum.

If you want a hard copy of the newsletter, we will make sure that you receive a hard copy. The Board wants to ensure that we maintain a vital communication to our alumni while still practicing financial responsibility with donations.

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



# 2024 REUNIONS

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

## 2019 5 years - Heritage Days

### Friday, July 12

7 pm - 9 pm in the basement of The Local in uptown MV.

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

## 2014 10 years - Heritage Days

### Saturday, July 13

Saturday, 7-9pm  
1616 O'Connor Rd, Mt Vernon, IA

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

## 2009 15 years - tba

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

## 2004- 20 years - Heritage Days

### Saturday, July 13

July 13 Heritage Days parade  
(prep and parade starting around 9:00/10:00 am)  
July 13, Saturday night for a casual meetup at The Local's patio area starting at 7:00pm.

Facebook page 'MVHS (IA) Class of 2004'  
Contact: Laura Damon-Moore  
Phone: 319-361-8128  
Email: laura.damonmoore@gmail.com

## 1999 - 25 years - Heritage Days

### Saturday, July 13

Party like it's 1999!  
6:30pm, into the evening. 412 4th Ave NW  
Light refreshments provided, but feel free to BYO. Plan on being outdoors if the weather is favorable

Contact: Kristin Stewart Livingston  
Email: kstewliv@gmail.com  
Contact: Meredith Ash Crawford  
Email: meredith.ash.crawford@gmail.com  
Phone: 415-722-7682

## 1994 - 30 years - Heritage Days

### Saturday July 13, 2024

6pm, Tim Roof Hideaway & Event Center, Lisbon. 1003 N. Washington. Social Hour 6-7pm. Eat and Games 7-8pm. Head to Heritage Days at 9pm. Donation collected in memory of the late Kasey Merrill.

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

## 1989 - 35 years - Heritage Days

### Friday July 12 & Saturday July 13

Friday evening of Heritage Days at Yock's landing. We will plan a class float for the Saturday morning parade. Saturday night July 13th at 5:30 pm meet at Sutliff for dinner.

Contact: Jenifer Carmer Back  
Phone: 319-310-6365  
Email: jencarmer@gmail.com

## 1984 - 40 years - Heritage Days

### Saturday, July 13, 2024

Saturday, July 13, Renegade Revival Palisades Lodge Time: 12-4 pm Saturday, July 13, Private Party, Glyn Mawr Winery/The Local 7-9 pm  
Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/MtVernon1984>

Contact: Jackie (Jordan) Morrical  
Email: morricalhome@gmail.com  
Contact: Dan Drahos  
Email: Lazervet1@gmail.com  
Contact: Wade Squiers  
Email: wade@ss-designgroup.com  
Contact: Beth Hufford  
Email: hufford.beth@gmail.com

## 1979 - 45 years - tba

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

## 1974 - 50 years - Homecoming September 27 and 28, 2024

Postcards with more information will come out this summer

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

## 1969 - 55 years - Heritage Days Friday July 12 & Saturday July 13

Friday, July 12, Private Party, Glyn Mawr Winery/The Local 5-7 pm  
Saturday, July 13, Alumni Breakfast in the morning then evening party at the Stoner farm.

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

## 1964 - 60 years - Heritage Days Saturday July 13, 2024

Saturday am Breakfast at High School, Saturday 4:30 pm reunion dinner at Gwen's Restaurant, Please RSVP to Gary or Ray.

Contact: Gary Kaplan  
Phone: 319-393-8900  
Email: kapmacdog@mchsi.com  
Contact: Ray Stoner  
Phone: 319-895-6003  
Email: rayglennstoner@gmail.com

## 1959 - 65 years - Heritage Days

Meet at Alumni breakfast. Other activities planned at that time.

Contact: Richard Glattly  
Phone: 218-372-3973  
Email: rglatlty@frontiernet.net

## 1944, 1949, 1954

Meet at Saturday morning Alumni-Community Breakfast

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



*Class of 1969 -- 55 Year  
Class Reunion  
Friday and Saturday, July  
12 and 13, 2024*

Friday July 12th  
5-7pm Glyn Mawr Winery - The Local

Saturday July 13th  
8-10:00am All Alumni Breakfast

Saturday July 13th  
6-? Food & Drinks at Cathy Stoner's home  
1050 Linn Ridge Road Mt. Vernon

call Cathy Stoner with questions #319-551-  
6666

*Class of 1984  
50th Class Reunion  
July 13, 2024*

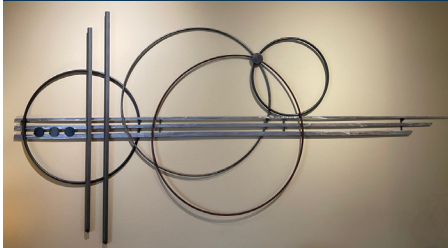
**SATURDAY AFTERNOON, July 13**  
Picnic at Palisades Lodge

**SATURDAY EVENING, JULY 13,**  
Glyn Mawr Winery/The Local  
Time: 7-9 PM

Evites were sent via email or text in April.  
Please RSVP to both

Jackie (Jordan) Morrical  
morricalhome@gmail.com  
Dan Drahos Lazervet1@gmail.com  
Wade Squires wade@ss-designgroup.com  
Beth Hufford hufford.beth@gmail.com

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*Class of 2004*

**SATURDAY MORNING JULY 13, 2024**

Prep and parade starting around  
9:00/10:00 am

**SATURDAY EVENING JULY 13, 2024**

Casual meetup at The Local's patio area  
starting at 7:00pm.

Check our class Facebook group for  
details, or email Laura Damon-Moore  
at laura.damonmoore@gmail.com.

*Class of 1999*

**SATURDAY JULY 13, 2024**

Party like it's 1999!

6:30pm, into the evening  
412 4th Ave NW

Light refreshments provided, but feel free  
to BYO. Plan on being outdoors if the  
weather is favorable

Contact Meredith Crawford with  
questions: 415-722-7682



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## HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT THE MV ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

The Alumni Association's Board has decided to move from a  
dues/support and donation system to simply a donation.

Please consider an annual donation of your choice to support the  
activities and publications of the Alumni Association. Either visit the

- back page of this publication
- or online at mvalumni.org

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

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



## Funky Fun Spot

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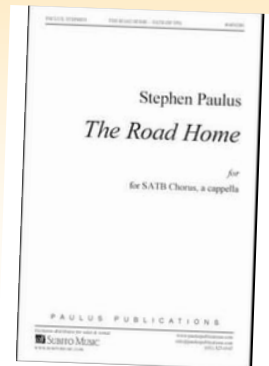
## Alumni With MVHS Concert Choir



Choir alums from the classes of 2013-2023 join the Mount Vernon Concert Choir for their final song. Each year the tradition grows larger and larger.

On Wednesday, May 15, 2024, the Mount Vernon Concert Choir hosted their final concert and senior night. At the performance MV Director of Choral Activities Thad Wilkins invited alumni to participate in singing *The Road Home* by Steven Paulus. The tradition, now in its third year, has grown in the number of alumni participating.

Watch social media to find about the 2025 Final Choir concert night and let's pack the PAC with alumni!



### *Class of 1964*

**SATURDAY MORNING, JULY 13,  
ALUMNI BREAKFAST**

**SATURDAY EVENING, JULY 13**

4:30pm reunion dinner at Gwen's Restaurant

Please RSVP to  
Gary Kaplan or Ray Stoner.

### *Class of 1989*

**FRIDAY EVENING, JULY 12,  
Meet at Yock's Landing**

**SATURDAY, JULY 13,**

Parade

**SATURDAY EVENING, JULY 13,**

5:30 Meet at Sutliff

**Contact: Jen Cramer Back  
319-310-6365**

## NEW ALUMNI MERCHANDISE FOR SALE

At right is a sample of the new merchandise. More colors and styles available online.



The Mount Vernon Alumni Association, in partnership with local business Causeteam, will offer new alumni merchandise for sale this summer. The project will serve as a fundraiser for the alumni association while providing comfortable and quality T-shirts and sweatshirts to alumni and friends. T-Shirts can even be branded with your class year on the back! Great for reunions and graduation gifts.

Interested in purchasing yours? Check out our Causeteam page at:

<https://www.causeteam.com/causepages/detail/mount-vernon-alumni-association>





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JEREMY HOTZ '99 Agent [jhotz@hotzagency.com](mailto:jhotz@hotzagency.com)  
JUSTIN ARNOLD '08 Agent [jarnold@hotzagency.com](mailto:jarnold@hotzagency.com)



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ing & Hall of Fame  
Events  
SEPTEMBER 27**

**DID YOU MOVE? HAVE A NEW EMAIL  
ADDRESS?**

**HAVE A NAME CHANGE?**

Don't forget to send your updated contact  
information, email addresses, and news  
items to [alumni@mvcisd.org](mailto:alumni@mvcisd.org)

# ALUMNI IN OUR SCHOOLS



The Alumni Association continues with their tradition of presenting each graduate with a mustang alumni pin at commencement. Association board members Kim Zangger Tucker '94 and Sarah Rife Patten '93, passed out pins to the class of 2024 including new alums Audrey Tucker '24 and Emily Patten '24.



2nd photo: Mount Vernon thrives on an alumni teachers and coaches working with current students. One example of that is our Speech Team. Alumni coaches include Trevor Baty '15, Alumni Association Board member Grant Freeman '06, and Milo Olinger '23. This year 11 individual speech team events were nominated for All-State and 5 groups went to the IHSSA All-State in Ames.



3rd photo: The Alumni Association annually sponsors the High School National Honor Society Reception by providing hosts and refreshments. At the November 2023 ceremony are President Cathy Hufford '83 and Kim Zangger Tucker '94.

Bottom photo: Every year in May, alumni, community members, and friends listen and select the class commencement speeches. This year's committee included Bob Campagna, Sara Kendall '78, Cory Brannaman '14, Kim Konkowski '81, Tommie Oувerson, Mitch Corcoran '83, Brenda Langenberg, Paul Morf '90, Josh Fell '12, and Josh Jordan '18.

The group is pictured in front of the Mustang statue that was donated by alum Dave Van Metre '55 located outside of the High School Performing Arts Center (PAC).





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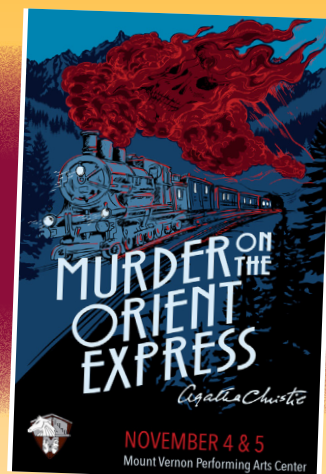


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PHOTOGRAPHY & DESIGN  
Lisa Lewis  
221 6th St. NW • Mt. Vernon, IA 52314  
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## Mount Vernon Theater to celebrate Centennial Season with a Theatre reunion July 12



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



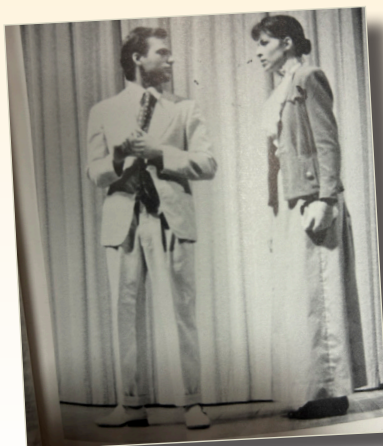
Mount Vernon Theatre is celebrating 100 years of making theater and it is hosting a reunion to celebrate.

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



Interested in performing a monologue or song for the reunion? Contact Tom Stephens, Theatre Teacher and Velvet Curtain Sponsor

at [tstephens@mvcsd.org](mailto:tstephens@mvcsd.org) or [alumni@mvcsd.org](mailto:alumni@mvcsd.org)



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

### History of Mount Vernon Theater

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







# REUNION PICTURES | REUNION PICTURES | REUNION PICTURES |

## ▼ CLASS OF 2024



Welcome Class of 2024! The class graduated 107 members on May 19, 2024 with commencement, followed by a senior parade through the community of Mount Vernon. Classmates Elsa Appleton and Luke Stephens were named Class Reunion Organizers, and received \$250 scholarships from the Alumni Association at their Senior Awards Night (see page 20). Photo by Matt Thede.

## ▼ CLASS OF 2018 - 5 YEARS



The Class of 2018 reconnected on Saturday, July 8 at Cameron Weaver's house. Fun was had and food was eaten. Thank you to the generous support from Weaver Farm Builders and Gary's Foods

Back Row Left-Right: Ben McGuire, Derk Keller, Jack Edaburn, Mat Zobac, Brian Harris, Josh Jordan, Cameron Weaver, Cale Sneddin  
Front Row Left-Right: Kathryn Opperman, Drew Adams, Chris Grice, Lisa Bythe-Ross, Sydney Hauser, Kyli Orr, Bailey Hauser, Zach Perry, Casey Noska, Keaton Fleck.



# S | REUNION PICTURES | REUNION PICTURES | REUNION PICTURES

## ▲ CLASS OF 2013 - 10 YEARS



The class of 2013 held their ten year reunion at the Davis Park Pavilion, 11:30 am to 2:30 pm. Special thanks to Hannah Ganzel for organizing the reunion. In the front row, starting left to right: Cassian Clark, Joe Liberko, Lindy Sherman, Hannah Ganzel, Sabrina Amundson. Back row starting right to left: Calvin Kranig, Rachel Reimann, Darrow Center, Katelyn Walters, and Kyle Henik.

## ▼ CLASS OF 1983 - 40 YEARS

On Saturday July the class of 1983 celebrated their 40th reunion at the Lester Buresh Center.



Reunion picture above: Front Row: Loretta Kamerling Welsh, Bryan McGinness, Amy Schmidt Mann, Kathy Hartl Snyder, Lance Schoff, Lisa Lewis  
 Second Row: Mitch Corcoran, Randy Petrick, Steve Goodall, Roxanne Edler Inman, Tracy Jo Sherman, Mary Plsarik Holubar, Julie Penn Johnson, Cathy Hufford, BetsyLee Krall Shepherd, Paige Peterson, Christine Grant Pientok, Tom Chittenden, Mike Drahos, Allen Pearson, Ben Walker  
 At right: The class of 1983 received Outstanding Float at the Heritage Days Parade!







## ▼ CLASS OF 1973



The class of 1973 held their 50th Reunion on Saturday, July 8. They enjoyed Friday evening at Yock's Landing and Saturday morning at the Alumni-Community Breakfast followed by riding their float in the Heritage Day parade. The evening reunion was held at Chris Starkweather's home. Pictured above: Front Row: Mike Clark, Charlene Hinchliffe, Doug Thumm, Ann Franks Clark, Chris Hanson Starkweather, Sheryl Koss Brindle, Pamela Gaines Sabin. Second Row: Mark Hylbak, Ann Cordell, Jody Lowenberg Clark, Carmela Miller, Mary Kaliban Green, Kevin Woods, Dan Reilly, Ty Larson, Linette Stewart Geissler, Vicky Tellecky Young. Third Row: Jackie Moore, Lori Dana, Kevin Smith, Elaine Palmer, Dave Brokel, Mark Kerr, Steve Moses, Erik Encke, Dirk Larson, Phil Heywood, Vernon Johnson, Mike Morenson, Jim Brannaman, Larry Covington, and Mark Kirkpatrick.



Left to right Dirk Larsen '73, Mark Whitley '75, Ty Larsen '73, Dave Brokel '73, Mark Kerr '73 and the late Mike Mortensen '73 playing cards at Sutliff.

## ▼ CLASS OF 1978

The class of 1978 met on Friday, July 7 at The Local followed by the Alumni Breakfast the next morning. The event was organized by Andy Wolfe, Jeff Spencer, Cynthia Deskin Halbmaier, and Ann Koppenhaver. Front: Charlotte Morrow Kirby, Kathryn Petrick Crowley, Mary Melchert Jorth, Loren Williams. Middle: Andy Wolfe, Bonnie Bartosh Pugh. Ann Koppenhaver, Sara Kendall Back: Cynthia Deskin Halbmaier, Nancy Clark, Gregg Pospisil, Blair Litts, Ron Berends, Pat Wallace, Dan Wolfe, Dennis Ties, and Russ Neal.





# S | REUNION PICTURES | REUNION PICTURES | REUNION PICTURES

## ▼ CLASS OF 1963 - 60 YEARS

The class of 1963 held their 60th reunion at Gwen's Restaurant in Lisbon. Nineteen class members plus guests were present. Sunday morning brunch was held at Bob and Beula Dvorak's home. A gathering was also held at Sutliff on Friday July 7, and the class attended the Alumni Breakfast on Saturday morning.



Back from the left: Bob Dvoark, Gary Neal, Karen Kaliban Fox, Jerry Krejci, Marcia Clark Kimm, Bob Jilovec, Marilyn Schnittjer Hayes, Andi Jennings Robinson, Dr. Francis Pisarik, Joan Hunter Brown, Chris Stoltz. Front from left: Rosalie Bowman Gallagher, Susan Ellison Kowalczyk, Deborah Lenz Hicks, Linda Peterson Nost, Harold Goodrich, Sandy Brush McNeal, Diane Richardson Hamed, Gloria Herboldshmeier Krob, and Thomas Childs.

## ▼ CLASS OF 1960 - 60 + 3 years

The class of 1960 held their 63rd class reunion at Sally's in Springville on July 8th. They were organized by Judy Caldwell Penn, John Rife, and Annamae Baker. Row 1: Annamae Stoneking Baker, Mary Ann Saathoff Prenosil, Judy Caldwell Penn. Row 2 Dorothy Wolfe Walsh, Susan Dye Hodin, Linda Stastny Bragg, Beverly Lange Chunka, Frankie Bensmiller Lanning. Row 3: Keith Clark, the late Tom Wilkinson, John Rife, Pat Lynott, Fred Niehaus, Paul Herboldshimer, Bob Beckman, the late Ted Pence (dec.) Lumir Nezerka







# | REUNION PICTURES REUNION PICTURES | REUNION PICTURES | R

## ▼ CLASS OF 2003 - 20 YEARS



The class of 2003 held their reunion on Friday July 7 Reunion at Morning Glory Farm in Mount Vernon, 7-9 pm. Thank you to Reunion Organizer Nikki Port Morgan. First row: Nikki Port Morgan, Courtney Frye Speed, Lindsey Gillespie, Maggie Burke Slaymaker. Second row: Krystal Bragg, Clarissa Huston Doscher, Emily Clute, Marcia Benter Wilcox, Katie Pitlik Eichhorn, Amber Gert Thompson, Amy Guetzko, Shannon Kowalski. Third Row: Kit Currie, Kate Walden, Angie Williams, Ryan Whitman, Abbie Reihle Hames, Matt Stoner, Jen Corcoran Juhl, Katie Keas Parpart, Richard Bell. Fourth Row: Ben Walton, Bryan Hoke, Ryan Wikstrom, Ryan Nicol, Adam Rebhuhn, Erik Triggs, Mark Pooley, Rachel Young Overton, Kelly Pisarik Johnson.

## ▼ CLASS OF 1993 - 30 YEARS

Thank you to reunion organizer Braden Rood for hosting the class of 1993 30th reunion. The reunion was held Friday, July 9 at Braden Rood's house. Front row: Janda Mott Wilden, Braden Pospisil Rood, Sarah Rife Patten, Sara Swender, Rob Hansen. Back row: Jason Locke, Bruce Johanson, David Leatherman, Scott Rose, Shanna Morrissey Cooper



Join Us At Heritage  
Day 2024

Best time all year to see many people you know at our traditional Alumni-Community breakfast from 8-10 am at the High School. Alumni-Community Reception in uptown Mount Vernon.

**SATURDAY, JULY 13**



# | REUNION PICTURES | REUNION PICTURES | REUNION PICTURES

## ▼ CLASS OF 1988 - 35 YEARS



The class of 1988 met on Saturday, July 8 at Suttiff. Thanks for Jennifer Clark for organizing the event! Front Row: Marty Jacob, Amy Thomas. Second Row: Sandy Zehms Tracy, Kim Wulf Schultz, Angela Harms Randall, Amy Harms Koerselman, Deede Bair Stastny. Third Row: Pat Spellerberg, Stacy Gross, Erich Jacobsen.

## ▼ CLASS OF 1968 - 55 YEARS



to the left:  
Basketball Coach  
Bob Landis, Ken  
Pospisil, Head  
Football Coach  
Don Ringgenberg,  
Fred Sterenberg,  
Doug Wolfe,  
David Stoner,  
Gary Reyhons



Above: Basket Ball members Fred Sterenberg, Head Basketball Coach Bob Landis, Craig Scheetz, Rob Stoll, Assistant Ken Pospisil



The class of 1968 help their 55th reunion over Heritage Days. They spent Saturday at Alumni-Community Breakfast at the High School and Saturday evening reunion dinner at Mount Vernon Creates 5 pm. They had such a good time that they sent over these candid shots instead of taking a group photo!

To the left: Lana & Don Ringgenberg with Lavonne & Bob Landis at MVHS Class of 1968 55-yr reunion.







# MEMORIES FROM HERITAGE DAYS 2023



Alumni Board member Alex Brannaman '09 drives the golf cart at the Alumni Breakfast.



MVMS Teacher Whitney Bennett Turner '00 and MVMS Service Dog Roscoe Turner greeted alumni at the breakfast. Roscoe earned credit toward his service dog certification and was willing to be paid in sausage.



Tom Childs '63 took a break from his 60th reunion to volunteer for the Association Breakfast.



Former Superintendent Jeff Schwiebert catches up with School Board President Nannette Gunn and Mayor Tom and Vicky Wieseler.



Dirk Larsen '73, Ty Larsen '73 and Gregg Larson '71 enjoy the Alumni Breakfast



Russ Neal '78 looks at the class composites.

Annamae Baker '60 and Kay Lind '55 greet breakfast goers at the Alumni Breakfast.



Jennifer Stanerson, Jake Stanerson 2019 and Logan Stanerson volunteer the first shift at the ice cream tent.



The Fruit Cutters balled, sliced, and chopped fruit for the Alumni Breakfast. Pictured L to R is Ann Koppenhaver '78, Carol Woods-Boren '75, Cathy Hufford '83, Joy Koehn Kuntz '76, Incoming Alumni Director Julia Andrews, Chef Kris Abodeedy, and Ruth West. Photo credit and Heritage Days Hero: Kathy Staskal



## How to make a Mount Vernon Quilt

Editor's note: The following article was written with help from Rebecca Delaney's article in the February 5, 1998 *Mount Vernon Lisbon Sun*.

Tucked away in Steve and Mary Young's attic was a quilt created by part of the class of 2005 in 1998 as a class art project with photographer Bob Campagna. "I stored it in my attic. My daughter, Beth was part of the 2005 class," said retired MVHS teacher Mary Young. "When I was subbing recently, I noticed a newspaper article about the quilt in a display case outside the PAC. I thought the quilt should go with the article."

In 1998, 27 students in Sheryl Peshek's fifth grade class at Washington Elementary School took time out from their books and the classroom to work on a historic project for the Mount Vernon community.

Parent volunteers drove the students in groups of six to Bob Campagna's Mount Vernon photography studio, Abbe Creek Gallery, where the students printed the photographs they had taken of their classmates, their parents, their friends and neighbors. Claudia Ternes used the squares to create a quilt that displayed the students' photographs.

Said Campagna in back in 1998, "This is an artistic, timely and visual project, one which I believe will benefit the community and represent its history through the eyes of fifth graders,"

The fifth graders took 2 photographs, six of the two different subjects. One of the subjects had to be a classmate. The other subject had to be someone outside the classroom who had made a difference in the student's life.

Lauren Penn Oliphant '05 snapped a picture of her grandmother, Judy Penn. "I picked my grandmother because she has lived in Mount Vernon practically her whole life."

The quilt contains 54 pictures total and features the work of Bryan Osborn '05, Lena Brandt, Leif Stensland '05, Jammie Lowe '05, Daniel Holland '05, Jeremy Clark '05, Geoff Glenn '05, Beth Young Arjona 2005, Jillian Diesburg, Colt Beall, Candace Stone,

Jamie Wistrom, Conrad Lichty '05, Jessica Ehls Clark '05, Dustin Smith '05, Annie Thomsen '05, Ellen Miller Sellers '05, Lexi Currie Lane '05, Mollie Burke '05, Lauren Penn Oliphant '05, Cisco Aquire '05, Stacy Pisarik, Ben Harmon '05, Ben Legore '05, Keaton Burge '05, Kelsey Kirby '05, and Amanda Melichor '05.

Community members featured on the quilt includes Rick Alger, Becca Brandt, Bob Campagna, Sheryl Peshek, Dan Dye '72, Bill Deskin, Steve Young, Jan Moore, Elaine Henik, Karen Thorton, Lyle Lichty, Catherine Lawson Kennedy, Mike Smith '68, Mary Thomesen '75, Dorothy Taupe, Fred Lehman, Lee Neiderhauser, Judy Penn '60, Bill Thomsen '72, Raphael Pisarik '38, Ed Timm, Keith Burge '67, Wayne Novak, and Denise Havill '79. Three squares are still unidentified by the Alumni Office.

Said Campagna in 1998, "This quilt will be a historic timepiece that, 100 years from now, will show what Mount Vernon and its citizens were like at the turn of the century."

Said Rebecca Delaney, former staff writer of the *Mount Vernon Lisbon Sun*, "Think of it. A hundred years from now, the descendants of today's residents can see real estate agent Lee Neiderhauser sitting in her office or music teacher Catherine Kennedy at her piano or Big Creek Market proprietor Karen Thorton in her store. They can look into their eyes and see what Mount Vernon was like 100 years before their own time."

While it has not been 100 years, the class of 2005 will have their 20th reunion next year. The quilt will be in the alumni display case located in the Performing Arts Center lobby throughout the next year and then shared with the class of 2005 at their 20th reunion in 2025

Below: The quilt that the class of 2005 made in 5th grade. At the Right: Judy Penn '60 was chosen by her granddaughter Lauren Penn Oliphant '05 as a person that a difference in the her life.





# Mustangs...what are they doing now?

## ■ MICHAELA LENGWIN 2015

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

I graduated April 14th, 2023 Summa Cum Laude from Northwestern Health Sciences University in Bloomington, Minnesota as a Doctor of Chiropractic with a Sports Emphasis. I had the honor of being the chiropractic student speaker at commencement. Following graduation I moved back to Iowa and began working as an associate chiropractor in North Liberty. My training was specialized in rehabilitation and therapeutic exercise; extremity care as well as spinal care; tailbone pain and dysfunction; and physical laborer prehab and ergonomics. I also participated in research on female youth athlete injury prevention and placed second in a national competition with the American Chiropractic Association Sports Council for the research.

One of the first adventures I took as a chiropractor after graduation was actually 8,000 miles away in Nairobi, Kenya in the summer of 2023. During our 3 week trek, we visited several rural areas outside of Nairobi treating several hundred students, teachers, and staff at 5 different schools. We also spent a whole week treating another couple hundred patients at the Kilimanjaro Mission Hospital that is graciously funded by people all over the United States. This was my first global missions-focused trip. Others may relate as I left on the trip with the attitude of immersing myself into their culture through the act of service, but returned feeling like I was the one filled up. Though the vocal language barrier was strong at times, the smiles and joyful reactions that shined after treating with our hands was

well understood - and a favorite of my experiences.

### What do you do now?

Since graduation and my adventures in Kenya, I continue to work in North Liberty at Humpal Chiropractic. I work with patients of all ages from newborns to those actively aging and everyone in between. Seeing my patients not only get out of pain, but reach their functional goals is my favorite part of my job. Everyone has something to train for whether they sit at a desk, take care of their family, labor on the farm, or play on the field every week. To keep up with the latest research related to the care I provide, I am a member of the American Chiropractic Association's Sports Council and their Research Committee. I am also an active member of the Iowa Chiropractic Society to be sure Iowa state laws and legislature support my patients.

On a day off, you might catch me at Kroul Farms working in the garden or greenhouses, volunteering at the North Liberty Community Pantry, or helping out at a Mount Vernon High School softball practice!

Being back in the area, I am very excited to connect more with Mount Vernon, North Liberty, and surrounding communities!



Above: Dr Lengwin graduated in 2023 from Northwestern Sciences University. Below, Lengwin working on children in Nairobi, Kenya. Bottom left, Lengwin with 2 fellow chiropractors while in Kenya





## ■ HALEY KROB 2018

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following was featured on the Wealth of Nature Blog, a project of Preserve our Parks. the <https://awealthofnature.org/haley-krob-artist-in-residence-in-the-milwaukee-river-greenway>.

Since graduating from Mount Vernon in 2018, Haley Krob is now a mixed media artist based in Milwaukee. She graduated with my BFA from the Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design in 2022. Krob worked on the Riverwest Mural Project, shown work in the Morgan Conservatory, Aquae Nguvu, and was selected for the North American Hand Papermaker's 8th Collegiate Triennial Exhibition.

In 2023 Krob became one of twelve selected to be an Artist in residence in the Milwaukee River Greenway. Krob among 12 artists participating in a year-long residency program called ARTservancy, a collaboration between Gallery 224 in Port Washington and the Ozaukee Washington Land Trust, River Revitalization Foundation, Milwaukee Area Land Conservancy, Tall Pines Conservancy, and Lake Michigan Bird Observatory. The mission of ARTservancy is to promote the visionary work of both the artists and conservationists. Each artist has selected a preserve to spend time in and to engage with.

Krob's artist statement notes: "Despite all the awareness surrounding climate change and humanity's impact on the planet there still is a tendency to forget that we humans are a part of the natural world as well. We separate ourselves from nature as though we aren't biologically, physically, and spiritually intertwined. In my work I explore the connections that exist in the natural world and the complex relationships between humanity and the planet. I depict the inherent connection that we have with the Earth within landscapes through drawing, printmaking, and a mix of cut paper colored with natural dyes. Materials foraged outdoors help remind me of my own connection to nature, while using recycled and biodegradable materials serve as a reminder of the footprint I leave behind.

The Milwaukee River Greenway trails have been familiar and comforting places since I moved from my rural Iowa hometown to Milwaukee. There's



Haley Krob at Milwaukee River.  
Photo Credit: Eddee Daniel

a lot of repetition in the act of following the trails along the river, and yet, through this residency, I've been able to experience a place I thought I knew in a whole new way. I was amazed by the nature I'd been missing out on every winter that was spent tucked in an apartment, waiting for spring.

Though the leaves have fallen and the foliage has all died back, covered in a thick white blanket of snow and ice, in winter the lichen was almost glowing as it danced up the trunks and along the branches of trees. Even moss, still green, peeked out in little areas, hinting at the impending awakening of forest.

As the season changed to spring, buds slowly sprouted into leaves over the course of a week or two, and yet the change seems to happen in the blink of an eye. The moss and lichen, though still present, faded into the background as spring erupts into summer and wildflowers begin to bloom. Throughout all the changes, the river stays constant. Though the water is slightly frozen over in the winter, it never stops moving, accompanying you along your journey through the winding paths.

At the same time, the sketches and photos I took along the way went through their own metamorphosis. My goal was to make the body of work reflect the changes and discoveries made throughout these last months, creating the feeling of a journey where certain elements seem to fade, yet not disappear, and each individual journey on the same path leads to its own conclusion."



Mother Tree, 17" x 22". Handmade paper dyed with rosehips and iron. 2022.



Lone Oak. 16" x 14". Handmade paper dyed with acorns, iron, walnuts and onion skins. 2022.





## ■ BRUCE MULLEN 1958

Bruce Mullen sent this 'News from the Arizona Desert.'

"The Arizona Peace Trail! It's a rugged, 750-mile off-highway vehicle (OHV) adventure that draws thrill-seekers from all corners of the world. Lucky for us, we live quite close to the trail.

As a member of the class of 1958 and thought I would share our Peace Trail run with you. We recently made the run with a crew of fellow riders, including Bruce, Joe, Denny, and Turbo Denny. Joe was the mastermind behind the logistics, and he had a good plan for our run. He had our side-by-sides provisioned with extra gas, water, and general supplies, as well as trailer rigs to haul everything to Wikiup, AZ the starting point of our adventure. Once on the trail, we tackled the high passes, rough and rocky terrain, and very rough washes with great abandon. We even hit some snow-packed areas, which made for an even more challenging ride.

One of our most memorable stops was at Secret Pass, where we took a breather and soaked up the stunning views of the mountains around Laughlin and Bullhead in the distance. We spent the night in Lake Havasu, where we visited about past adventures and laughed about our misadventures. From there, we made our way to Parker, where we spent the night and fueled up for the next leg of our journey. The trail was rugged, off-camber, and full of challenges, but we persevered, pushing our speeds to the limit, barely moving at times, but always moving forward.

OHV on the Arizona Peace Trail. Bruce Mullen '58 is the driver



The final stretch of the trail took us through Salome and back to Wikiup, where we started our adventure. It was a huge challenge, but so very rewarding to complete. We reveled in the sense of accomplishment, knowing that we had tackled one of the most rugged and rough OHV adventures out there."

If you're up for a challenge and looking for an unforgettable adventure, the Arizona Peace Trail is the place to be. It's a rollercoaster ride through stunning desert landscapes, and the camaraderie and sense of accomplishment that come with it are nearly unmatched.

## ■ SAMANTHA WHITE 2019

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following excerpt is from the <https://www.muhenberg.edu/news/2024/samwhitefulbright.html> by Meghan Kita. The story outlines White's application and acceptance as a Fulbright Award to teach English in Mongolia.

As a Muhlenberg student, Sam White had a transformative experience studying abroad in the Buddhist kingdom of Bhutan. White spent three months in this country that sets strict limits on tourism in the interest of protecting its environment and culture. She chose Bhutan partly because of an interest in sustainable development she developed in her political science classes. Another deciding factor: the Himalayas. White got involved in the Rock Climbing Club and the Outdoors Club at Muhlenberg to enjoy Pennsylvania's varied terrain. Bhutan is the most mountainous country in the world.



Sam White '19 during her semester abroad in Bhutan, pictured in Paro at the Taksang Monastery

"The opportunity to spend time surrounded by snow-capped mountains was so cool to me," she says. "Mountains pose a physical obstacle to development in Bhutan. Anything that's not able to be made or grown locally has to be shipped via flight. They're posed with unique environmental challenges when it

comes to development, but they've also chosen to develop in a different way than most countries. The government prioritizes cultural and environmental preservation alongside economic growth. The Bhutanese are so supportive about protecting the environment to an extent that I don't think really exists in other places."

"Sam is continually forging intellectual and social connections, which makes her a real asset to an educational and ambassadorial program like the Fulbright. I can easily imagine her thriving in a Mongolian school, deepening her understanding of Buddhist culture and her commitment to the environment, and developing close learning communities with her students and colleagues," [Associate Dean of Academic Life Kammie] Takahashi says. "I'm really proud of the months of hard work she did on her Fulbright application and excited about the positive impact her work there is certain to make."

White learned that she was a finalist for the award in March, and she'll leave for her 10 months in Mongolia this fall. Her long-term goal is to work in sustainable development, but first, she's embracing the chance to have another impactful long-term stay in a new country.

"From studying abroad, I gained a newfound appreciation for how important it is to really spend time in a place. I don't know if I'll be able to one day just travel abroad for a couple of weeks, because I learned how important it is to get a more intimate understanding of the country that you're spending time in," White says. "The opportunity as a Fulbright scholar to spend an entire 10 months abroad was a huge draw for me."



White in front of a monastery called Punakha Dzong in Bhutan





**Jayne Tschopp Kaegbein '56**

February 2, 2022 Cedar Rapids, IA

**Myra Croft Greve '58**

July 31, 2023 Northwood, IA

**Ronald Rhoads '56**

September 29, 2023 Green Bay, WI

**Randy Hoidahl '61**

October 17, 2023 Aurora, CO

**Susan Hansen Aragon '66**

November 22, 2023 Loveland, CO

**Darcy Holtz White '82**

November 28, 2023 Shellsburg, IA

**Alvin Klouda '48**

January 15, 2024 Moline, IL

**Alyce Paul Bramer '50**

January 15, 2024 Denver, CO

**John Arians '17**

January 30, 2024 Sioux City, IA

**Wayne Berry '55**

February 6, 2024 Gilbert, AZ

**Fae Sparks Edwards '54**

February 16, 2024 Cedar Rapids, IA

**Tom Wilkinson '60**

February 22, 2024 Atkins, IA

**Margaret Bair Meusey '59**

March 25, 2024 Littleton, CO

**Bill Lange '67**

April 6, 2024 Mount Vernon, IA

**John Schick '66**

April 16, 2024 Cedar Rapids, IA

**Deborah Holtz Studt 1972**

April 24, 2024 Apache Junction, AZ.

~ FRIENDS ~

**David Oliphant**

February 15, 2023 Cedar Rapids, IA  
Teacher in Mount Vernon from 1970-2010

(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.)

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**Alumni News...**

Send us your information...

alumni@mvcasd.org, Julia 319-721-7953

**BIRTHS**

**Kylea Weber Brautigam '11** and her husband Nick welcomed their third child into the world. Jozi Samantha was born on February 25, 2024. Kylea and Nick reside in Knoxville, TN.

**Nile Roudabush '11** and his wife Megan Roudabush have a son, Ellis Charles Roudabush born Friday, May 3, 2024.

**Ryan Winder '08** and his wife Naomi welcomed a son, Calvin Michael Winder born 5/9/2024.



Calvin Winder

**ANNIVERSARIES/SPECIAL DAYS**

**Eric Gerth '01 and Ashley Armstrong Gerth '09** are celebrating their 10 year wedding anniversary in July.

**Ben Koffran '12** married Halee Wiley on April 27, 2024.

**EDUCATION & MILITARY SERVICE**

**Kaiser Arndt '14** received his PhD in Neuroscience from Virginia Tech in the spring 2024.

**Kristina Dvorak '99**

graduated from the University of Iowa with his doctorate (EdD) in Educational Policy and Leadership.



Dr. Kaiser Arndt

**Lily Cripe '20** graduated from the University of Iowa with a Bachelor of Science degree in Geoscience.

**Miranda Roudabush Moore '13** will officially complete requirements for a Bachelor of Science in Healthcare Administration from National

University June 16, 2024. BU2 Moore is serving in the US Navy as a SeaBee in Gulfport, Mississippi.

**AND MORE...**

**Ted Biderman '86** General Counsel, Executive Vice President And Corporate Secretary at Atari- the video game company!

**Jim Baker '71** was featured by the University of Minnesota Center for Transportation website and Youtube channel this past February. The article seeks to highlight issues in rural transportation—as well as research that seeks to better understand and address them. Since losing his vision in 2017, Jim has become a spokesperson and advocate for other people with vision loss in Minnesota. You can find the complete video on the Alumni Facebook Page: 'MVHS Alum'

**Clint Henik '08** and wife Angela became the new owners of Mount Vernon's Dairy Queen. The Heniks are excited to welcome you in for your favorite treats.



Meredith Ash  
Crawford

**Meredith Crawford '99** was recently named 'Mover and Shaker 2024 for Advocacy' by *Library Journal*. Crawford, Community Engagement Librarian with the Cedar Rapids Public Library, launched the "Be Heard" program at a local youth detention center with the goal of reducing recidivism by engaging students with literature and art.

**Paul Morf '90** was recognized as 2024 "Lawyer of the Year" by Best Lawyers® for Business Organizations (including LLCs and Partnerships)

**Lily Cripe '20** Accepted the position of Staff Scientist at Braun Intertec Corporation, effective May 13, 2024.

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



Elsa Appleton '24 and Luke Stephens '24 were presented \$250 scholarships from the Alumni Association by President Cathy Hufford '83 at their Senior Awards Night in May. 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.

## US News & World Report Ranking

US News & World Report ranked MVHS as the #1 High School in the Cedar Rapids Metro Area & #16 in the state of Iowa!

Mount Vernon High School is ranked 16th within Iowa. Students have the opportunity to take Advanced Placement® coursework and exams. The AP® participation rate at Mount Vernon High School is 28%



Included with our Alumni graduation pins was a QR code. This code takes users to the "Stay in Touch" page of the Mvalumni website. The Stay in Touch page has all of our ways to digitally connect in one, easy place.

Prefer to type it in yourself? Check out: <https://www.mvalumni.org/Stayintouch>

## CORRECTIONS:

Apologies to Ben Brannaman for omitting his Alumni Association donation in the fall newsletter. We regret the error.

Apologies to the family of Randy Hoidahl misspelling his name in the fall newsletter.

When an error is made, we correct the digital copy of the newsletter immediately and note the correction in the next newsletter.

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

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

# ALUMNI BASKETBALL GAME

## ARE YOU A FORMER MVHS BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER?

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2024**

Interested in playing some fun basketball?  
Join us in the High School gym for the 2nd Annual Alumni Basketball game. Time tba.

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17**

enjoy watching our High School Mustangs playing at home vs Solon in in the High School gym. Time tba.

\*\*\*\*\*

If you are interested in playing or contributing to the game, contact High School Coach Derek Roberts at 563-212-5094 or by email [droberts@mvcasd.org](mailto:droberts@mvcasd.org)



Brandon Keen '15, Ben Gilbert-Binder '22, and Ryne Moeller '23 at last year's alumni basketball game. Come see if the older alums can continue their winning streak against the recent alumni.

## CONNECT WITH THE SCHOOL

<https://www.facebook.com/MVCSDMustangs/>  
[www.mvcasd.org](http://www.mvcasd.org)  
[themustangmoon.com](http://themustangmoon.com)

Fine Arts Streaming: <https://www.youtube.com/@GoMvArts>  
Sports Streaming: <https://fan.hudl.com/usa/ia/mount-vernon/organization/4165/mount-vernon-high-school>



## Imagination Library Coming to Mount Vernon

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following is an excerpt from Nathan Countryman's March 28 Article about the Imagination Library. <https://www.eastcentraliowanews.com/mvlsun/>

The Friends of the Lisbon Public Library are expanding their Dolly Parton's Imagination Library affiliation to encompass Mount Vernon. This will be the first year Mount Vernon children are eligible to participate in the local program serving about 70% of Lisbon's eligible children since its inception three years ago.



Dolly Parton's Imagination Library (DPIL), the preeminent early childhood book gifting program globally, has distributed over 200 million free books. This initiative, led by The Dollywood Foundation, aims to foster a lifelong love of reading and inspire children to Dream More, Learn More, Care More, and Be More®.

DPIL is free to any child from birth to age five. Registering is easy. Parents can register their child/children online at [bit.ly/DPIL-LMV](http://bit.ly/DPIL-LMV). People can donate to the cause at this link as well.

Michelle Platt, president of the Friends of the Lisbon Public Library, said the group signed up their first child from Mount Vernon at the end of February and are now rolling out a variety of easy enrollment options.

"We have the goal of enrolling one-third of eligible children in Mount Vernon in the first few months," Platt said.

"Dolly Parton's Imagination Library helps establish a love of books in our youngest community members," said Amy White, recently retired Lisbon Library Director. "Seeing the joy these monthly gifts bring to their children is a gift to their caregivers and families. Our hope in providing funding for this outreach program is to nurture a love of books and to create a connection between families and their public library

## RISE program

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

Retired Iowans Supporting Education (RISE) is a campaign being led by Dick and Deb George encouraging voluntary annual pledges to our district by retirees. The Georges and other local retirees are planning to use some of their income tax savings to help support the local school district by making tax deductible gifts to the Mount Vernon School District Foundation. With the support of education in mind, the donor would make a donation to a school fund and offer allocation suggestions from a provided list of current school endeavors they wish to have their support go towards. This list will be kept up-to-date and includes specific programs, the District's general fund, current projects, or the Foundation's long-term endowment. The pledges can be directed on an annual basis, allowing the donor to tailor their gift allocations and amounts each year.

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



as a happy, welcoming place in their busy lives."

It's never too early to start reading to your baby. Research shows that children who participate in this program increase early literacy skills and are better prepared for kindergarten.

Those who want to financially support Dolly Parton's Imagination Library program with one-time, individual or recurring corporate match, estate or trust giving can donate at [bit.ly/DONATE-DPIL-LMV](http://bit.ly/DONATE-DPIL-LMV) (PayPal), link directly to the Library's website which is [bit.ly/LisbonLibraryFriends](http://bit.ly/LisbonLibraryFriends) or mail a check to the Friends, in care of Lisbon Public Library, P.O. Box 217, Lisbon, Iowa 52253. Please specify "DPIL" in the memo line of the check.



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## Hey Alumni!

Support YOUR Alumni Association today! See the back page for more info!



2023



2023

## ANNUAL GIFT REPORT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023

Thank you to the alumni, businesses, parents, and friends listed below who contributed to the Foundation during 2023.

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.

Ben Aalbers	Paul & Jaime Bentley	Jean & Robert Bowman	Dan L. Stoner Farms Inc.
Abbe Creek Ag Inc	Jason Berg	Nikki Bowman	Tandi Dausener
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Paula Adams	Theodore & Nancy Berns	Steven & Robin Brand	Kathleen Dean
Terry & Tiffany Adams	Gail Bertram	Ben & Brittany Brannaman	Tom & Jeannie Dean
Winston Addis	Michael & Susan Biderman	Denise & Dan Brannaman	Carol Hufford Deely
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Scott Akers	Ted Bielefeld	John & Stephanie Brehm	Rae Deklotz
Heather Allen	Michael & Linda Bigley	Chad & Talia Breidinger	Hal & Sharon Dendurent
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### 2023 DISTRICT EMPLOYEE DONATIONS

Employee donations support the Foundation's Teacher Grants Program

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Alaina Appley	Jennifer Lown	Lauren Tittle
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Heather Bauer	Jan Moore	Whitney Turner '00
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Nathan Bednarczyk	Patty Mote	Charlene Vig
Gina Bechtold	Kevin Murray	Shawn Voigt '86
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LeAnn Briesemeister	Abby Ohlaug	Scott Weber
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Jennifer Carstensen	Jodi Russell	Thad Wilkins
Megan Casey	Heidi Ryan	Erin Wilkinson
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Dennis Gross	Andy Shea	Joelynn Winkler
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continued on next page



## ANNUAL GIFT REPORT FOR 2023, continued

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Caryl Rammelsberg  
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Jessica Ray  
Ray & Nancy Reasland  
Jerry & Anne Rehfuss  
Diane Reininga  
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Chris Schwiebert  
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Karen Stoll  
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Kent & Aimee Streicher  
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Wendy Stryker  
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Gretchen Sutherland  
Steve Swaney  
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Kory & Conni Swart  
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Jill Swierczewski  
Craig Teague  
Ronald Telecky  
Tawnua Tenley  
Thackery's Photography  
The Benevity Community Impact  
Fund  
The Greater Cedar Rapids  
Community Foundation  
The Kent Family Revocable Trust  
The Maurice Foundation  
The Right Frame of Mind  
The Seidler Foundation (Mary  
Seidler Endowment Fund)  
Matt & Jessica Thede  
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Thrivent Charitable Impact &  
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Connie Vincent  
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Julie & Dave Vislisl  
Heather Visser  
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### 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!**

*Thank You*



# DONATIONS TO THE FOUNDATION

Your donations to the Foundation help the school district fulfill its mission in the classroom for students! The Foundation supports classroom and media center projects in the elementary, middle, and high schools, and each dollar you contribute goes directly to support excellence in academics, athletics, and the arts for Mount Vernon students.

## Ways to Contribute

Contributions to the Mount Vernon Schools Foundation are tax-deductible and can be made in a variety of ways:

- One-time cash donations
- Annual pledges of cash donations
- Donations honoring a person
- Memorial donations
- Scholarships
- Designated gifts
- Endow Iowa Fund
- Wills
- Stocks and securities
- Retirement plan assets
- Employer matching gift programs
- Charitable remainder trusts
- Charitable lead trusts
- Cash surrender value
- Charitable gift annuity
- Life insurance
- Property

Your donations are put into our general fund and then used for a variety of projects that work to make a difference for Mount Vernon students. You may also designate how you would like your donation used, for example, specifically for use by Kids Club, or Kids in Need, teacher grants, school trips, or any one of our district organizations. Thank you!

## SCHOLARSHIPS

Many of the scholarships awarded to graduating seniors are passed through the Mount Vernon Schools Foundation to the graduates. Through these scholarships, you help provide the next generation of Mount Vernon alumni with the help they need for their next step in education.

## CAPITAL CAMPAIGNS

During the construction of the new high school, the school district had used all of its available resources to construct the new high school and to remodel the current high school building into a middle school. It was the \$367,000 in Mount Vernon Foundation contributions to the 'Fulfilling the Promise' Capital Campaign that provided the necessary funds to help the school district finish the buildings.

Currently, the Foundation is working on funding for a new activities complex that will be used by both Fine Arts and Athletics.

## MUSTANG LEGACY SOCIETY

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

Anonymous

## Don't See Your Name Listed Here?

**THIS LIST IS FOR 2023 FOUNDATION DONATIONS during fiscal year 2023 (July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023)**

**WATCH FOR 2023 ALUMNI ASSOCIATION DONATIONS TO APPEAR IN THE FALL/WINTER 2024 ISSUE, AND THE 2024 FOUNDATION DONATIONS TO APPEAR IN THE 2025 SPRING ISSUE.**

**If you have any questions, or need to report a change please call 319-895-8845 or write to [foundation@mvcasd.org](mailto:foundation@mvcasd.org)**

DONATIONS MADE TO THE  
ALUMNI  
ASSOCIATION  
(listed in the next issue)  
SUPPORT THIS  
NEWSLETTER,  
ALUMNI ACTIVITIES AND  
EVENTS

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





# 2024 SCHOOL DISTRICT RETIREES



## DR. GREG BATENHORST

**Official title:** Superintendent

**Years of service:** 40 Years

**Years of total service to Mount Vernon:** 7 years

**Retirement plans:** Volunteer work, consultant at Ray and Associates, adjunct teacher at Creighton University (maybe), working on my sad golf game, drinking beer poolside and watching Mustang events from afar.

### Parting words to share:

Thank you for the best seven years of my career, all made possible thanks to the greatest staff around.

## DENNIS GROSS

**Official title:** Transportation Director

**Years of service:** 17 years as the director and 5 years as a route driver

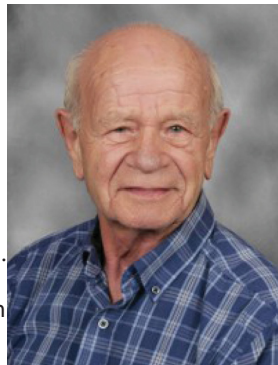
**Years of total service to Mount Vernon:** 22 years

**Retirement plans:** I plan to still run my regular school bus route and take care of my kids. I will be able to enjoy time tending our house and more time with my boys, 7 grandchildren, and 6 great-grandchildren. I will also enjoy time camping, fishing, and taking trips to western Iowa with my brothers and sisters.

### Parting words to share:

I learned a lot about how the school system works and was glad to be a part of it. I would like to thank all the drivers who helped to make the job easier and I would also like to thank all the help I got from the school employees in time of need.

Denny



## TIM LARSON

**Official title:** Assistant Director of Technology

**Years of service:** The journey to retirement (at least my IPERS retirement) began in 1987 as an assistant boys basketball coach while still in college. Through the years other titles included softball coach, track coach, baseball coach, business teacher, computer and technology teacher, Linn County IT professional, Linn County Elections professional, and finally the last 11 years as the Assistant Director of Technology for the Mount Vernon Community School district. In total about 32 years of public service.

**Years of total service to Mount Vernon:** 11 years

**Retirement plans:** While my retirement in IPERS does bring an end to one working climate... it doesn't mean working is



done. I am currently exploring other options, primarily in the technological field, but open to other possibilities. There are still bills to pay, people and places to see, and hopefully adventures yet to begin.

**Parting words to share:** I leave you with these parting words...it is the little things that count.

Listen a little more

Give a little more

Try a little more

Have a little more patience

Have a little more forgiveness

Have a little more kindness

Thanks to the friends, colleagues and students I have met during my stay at MV.

God Bless...

Tim

## MARGO MASSEY

**Official title:** High School Social Studies Teacher, Student Council Advisor, Girls Basketball Coach, Girls Track Coach and prom organizer.

**Years of service:** 18 years - All with the Mount Vernon schools. I came to MVHS after making a career change from Human Resources in the business world to teaching kids.

**Years of total service to Mount Vernon:** 18 years

**Retirement plans:** I plan to travel during retirement and my husband and I are also planning on purchasing a beach home to winter in.

**Parting words to share:** "It's not the number of years in your life that count but it's the life in your years!"

Margo



## MARCIA PURINGTON

**Official title:** Nutrition Director

**Years of service:** 25 yrs. All with the Mount Vernon schools

**Years of total service to Mount Vernon:** 25 years

**Retirement plans:** Not sure, I know I will find a job doing something. I will need to keep busy. Also, spend more time with grandchildren.



### Parting words to share:

I have enjoyed serving the students at the school and have been proud of the program. I hope whoever fills my position continues to grow the program and listens to the students and maintains the quality and integrity that has been established. I have been fortunate to work with some wonderful people within the food service department and in other positions within the school.

Marcia



## A NOTE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Seven years ago I couldn't have found Mount Vernon, Iowa, with a map. Well okay, I fired up the Google machine and found its location fairly easily and made it here for my interview. My wife did not come to Mount Vernon during the interview process, as she was extremely busy with her teaching of her beloved high school students. During the interview process and after the position was offered to me, I might have oversold the size of the community and the housing availability just a tad. When she made her first visit to the 52314, the woman who had only lived in larger cities was less than impressed and enthused. For people my age, please sing along with me: "Green Acres is the place for me!" I was in a fair amount of trouble, and she rightfully was not thrilled with me. She feared the adjustment to a small town, feared we would be living in a fish bowl where everyone knew our business especially given my role in the community, and wondered if she would find meaningful work to do. Then she got to know the people, got to learn about the community, got involved in teaching and volunteer work, became a fitness instructor at the LBC, got two new puppies, and adjusted to the pace and peace of this wonderful place. From the moment I first met the school board members and administrators in the district, I sensed something special here, and wanted to be here. As for me . . .



Dr. Greg Batenhorst,  
Superintendent

Mount Vernon, thank you for the most rewarding period of my forty year professional career. My only lament is that we didn't meet a little earlier in my career. You trusted me with your kids, with your school district, and showed me great respect as a community leader. You have supported the school district so well, and have become valued colleagues and friends. Mount Vernon was a great school district before I arrived, is still a great school district as I prepare to exit the stage, and will be a great district decades from now. Why is that? Because Mount Vernon has the best students, staff members, families, school board, and community members. One of my most important roles in seven years has been to serve as the biggest cheerleader for the school district. That has been so easy because it is not hyperbole when I speak of the greatness of the school district. Excellence in academics, arts, and athletics is not a tagline, it is who we are. It has been an honor to be the leader of Mustang Nation for seven years, and I cannot thank you enough.

I know I am not everyone's cup of tea, and that some of you reading this have been less than impressed and happy with my leadership over the past seven years. I apologize to those of you that I hurt or disappointed in any way. Education is an intensely human enterprise, and we are not always going to see eye to eye. I did work hard to please everyone and serve everyone well, but again I apologize when I fell short of your expectations or did anything to hurt you or the district in any way.

We are off to Omaha to be with family and old friends. However, while we can leave Mount Vernon, Mount Vernon will never leave us. My wife and I are Mustangs forever, and we do not plan on being strangers. Please give Mr. Leeman and his family the same warm welcome and support that you gave me, and please don't hesitate to stay in touch with me. My phone number is 636-675-1523, and my personal email is gregbatenhorst@gmail.com. Please do not hesitate to reach out if I can help you in any way. As our old friend Dean Borg used to say: "Yes, we are Mount Vernon!" I love you, Mustang Nation. Thanks for the ride!

Dr. B.

## Mount Vernon School Board Chooses Matthew Leeman as the District's Next Superintendent

Mr. Leeman is in his 20th year of education and is currently serving as the Associate Superintendent/6-12 Curriculum Director at Clear Creek Amana Community School District. He has experience serving as a building administrator across grades K-12 in various roles at CCA, Gladbrook-Reinbeck, and Postville, and started his educational career as a kindergarten teacher at Postville.

His current responsibilities involve day-to-day operations, supervision of administrators and directors across 7 campuses, oversight of curricular materials, and active involvement in hiring staff and district-wide budget development.



Matt Leeman, Incoming  
Superintendent

Most recently, he helped with the passage of a \$65 million general obligation bond, reconsideration of District boundaries and the planning for a new elementary building and other upcoming facility needs.

He and his wife Lori, along with their sons Myles and Zander and their dog Ozzy reside in Tiffin. Outside of the office he enjoys fishing, hunting, being outdoors and spending time with family and friends.

Board members worked with Ray and Associates, Inc. to conduct the search. Leeman interviewed with stakeholder groups consisting of students, teachers, support staff, and administration. Community forums were also held for community members to meet Mr. Leeman and offer their feedback.

Mr. Leeman will begin leading the Mount Vernon Community School District on July 1, 2024.





# ALUMNI

SPRING/SUMMER 2024

MOUNT VERNON COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
**ALUMNI ASSOCIATION**  
TAX-EXEMPT ORGANIZATION UNDER THE MOUNT VERNON  
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2024

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MOUNT VERNON COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
**ALUMNI Association**

Thank you!