

## Alumni Association

*Keeping Ties with Our Alumni*



**TAYLOR**  
School District



February 2019 Newsletter

## WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE “TAYLOR PUBLIC SCHOOL FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE”?



The Foundation is a non-profit organization of volunteers committed to enriching the educational environment of the Taylor Public School District.

Established in 1986 through an endowed gift from a local resident, the Foundation strives to maintain and enhance the excellent reputation of the district by building a broad base of financial support.

The founding members are:

Robert Bologna, Gail Gray-Delahmit, Eric Fritz, Thomas Iverson, Gary Knapp, Reno Maniago, Ernest Nagy, Joy Squire, Julius Vertes and Helen Wainio.

### Foundation Goal

Our goal is improving the opportunities available to students in the district by recognizing the scholastic achievements of students; supporting innovative approaches to education; promoting parental, community and corporate involvement; and supporting public relation and marketing issues for the district.

It is now 2018 and the Foundation is still much in evidence and its scope on serving the Taylor School District is strong and ever enlarging. During the 2017/2018 school year, the Foundation has provided funds for field trips for cultural events, Robotics Team competition; \$7000 in mini grants to teachers for added programs not covered in the school budget; and \$17,000 in scholarship awards.

The Foundation would like you to help us financially to continue to reach and expand

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Taylor Alumni Association  
11501 Beech Daly Road,  
Taylor MI 48180  
[tayloralumni.org](http://tayloralumni.org)

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our goals. Any contribution you make will assist in reaching our goals and commitments.

Make checks payable to Taylor Public School Foundation, and indicate whether you are contributing as a faculty/staff member, friend, company, or graduate (please include your school and year of graduation). All contributions are Tax Deductible (non-profit 501c).

Send all contributions to:

Taylor Public School Foundation  
23033 Northline Road  
Taylor, MI 48180

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## WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE NAME OF THE SCHOOL YOU ATTENDED?

For those of you who attended Bernice McDowell Elementary School.



McDowell was opened in 1972 and named after Mrs. Bernice McDowell who taught in the Taylor Township school system. She began her career in 1951 at Eureka Heights. In 1955, she transferred to teach 7th grade at Taylor Center. On October 17, 1955, Bernice was involved in an accident with a steel truck at the intersection of Telegraph Road and Wick Road resulting in her death. Mrs. McDowell was 29 year old at the time of her death.

### Memories

John Pantalone recalls the incident. In 1955 Taylor Center High School was occupied by grades 9th, 10th and 11th in the mornings. There were no 12th graders as the first graduating class was in 1957. The 7th and 8th graders attended in the afternoons. Mrs. McDowell taught in the afternoon as I also did. In 1955 there was not a traffic light at the corner of Telegraph and Wick Roads. It was strongly believed that with a traffic light Mrs. McDowell would not have been in an accident. Citizens had not been successful in their

attempts at having a traffic light installed, so for several days they formed a human chain across Telegraph disrupting the flow of traffic. As a result of that action a traffic light was installed. Years later Telegraph Road became a divided Highway.

We would like to hear from those of you that attended McDowell. Please share your memories with us by emailing to: [tayloralumniassociation@yahoo.com](mailto:tayloralumniassociation@yahoo.com)

Next month we will feature Clarence Randall Elementary. A question for those of you that attended Randall. Who was Clarence Randall and why was it named in his honor?

Please send information to [johnpantalone@sbcglobal.net](mailto:johnpantalone@sbcglobal.net)

## A LITTLE HUMOR

### A BIT OF ADVICE

ALL OF US COULD TAKE A LESSON  
FROM THE WEATHER...  
IT PAYS NO ATTENTION TO  
UNWARRANTED CRITICISM



## WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Harold Michaelis

Harold Michaelis was an administrator in Taylor at all three levels: Elementary, Middle School and High School.



Prior to beginning my career in education, I served two years in the USA Army and am now a proud veteran.

My career in education spanned 41 years, 20 of which were in the Taylor School District. I have many fond memories of those 20 years starting in 1977 as a biology teacher in Truman Junior High. We had a very young staff and a challenging student body. We learned and grew together. As we approached the 80's, teaching cuts were being made due to declining enrollment and it became obvious that I would not be able to hold my position as a biology instructor. Taking full advantage of the GI bill, I took additional class work and earned Master's Degrees in curriculum and the teaching of reading to help struggling students achieve academic success.

With those degrees I was able to receive an assignment with State and Federal Programs working with struggling students at Taylor Parks.

Director of State and Federal Programs, Dorothy Rife, told me I had administrative qualities and encouraged me to take classes that would allow me to become an administrator. It was back to school and another Masters' degree.

In 1993 I served my first year in administration at Hoover Middle School as an Assistant to Principal Lee Lewis. That was an outstanding experience with a fantastic staff and challenging, but fun to lead, school community.

In 1994 I applied for and was given the position of Assistant Principal to Principal Wayne Hamilton at John F Kennedy High School. What a great experience working in that building and all the while learning a great deal from Wayne about being a Principal.

In 1995 my certification at all levels allowed me to apply for an open Principal position at Myers Elementary. I was awarded the position. For two years we developed a family-oriented community and were proud of our accomplishments and the changes that had occurred.

In retrospect I realize I was fortunate to have started my career in the Taylor School District and was able to experience the high level of staff development provided by the district for decades. Those experiences maximized the opportunities for many of us to become educational leaders.



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I have been told that I may be the only administrator to have served at all three levels in Taylor. I was honored to serve in each of the school communities mentioned and have many fond memories of students, staff and families.

My career in Taylor made it possible for me to meet my lovely wife Betty, who is a Kennedy High School graduate and Taylor teacher and consultant for many years. Together we are spending our retired lives enjoying our three children, Patrick, Herrick and Adriane and our grandchildren.

When I think of my legacy as an educator and administrator, I believe I provided teachers an opportunity to teach, students an opportunity to learn and parents an opportunity to share in the experiences. None of this was done alone but with everyone in the school community working for the growth and success of our children. 📖

Marianne Peel,  
1977 Graduate of Truman High School



Below is an except from Marianne's story, to read the full story of her life and memories of her time at Truman, please visit the Alumni's website and click on the inspiring alumni tab. [tayloralumni.org](http://tayloralumni.org)

"Meet me in the parking lot at 6 pm on Saturday," Mrs. Volk told me after class on a Friday afternoon in 1976. Now, if you knew Mrs. Volk, you knew this was more than a simple request. You didn't even consider not showing up, and you certainly knew to be punctual. And when I showed up fifteen minutes early that Saturday, I discovered Alan Murray waiting in the Truman parking lot, too. Neither of us knew why we had been summoned, and our curiosity was palpable. At exactly 6 pm, Mrs. Volk pulled up in her Volkswagon Beetle, told us to hop in, and then proceeded to drive us down to the Fisher Theatre in Detroit. There, Mrs. Volk introduced us to Emily Dickinson, who was played by Julie Harris in Luce's production of *The Belle of Amherst*. We witnessed theatrical magic that night, breathing in this one woman show that captivated us for over two hours. Thus began my lifelong love affair with Emily, the world of theatre, and the power of language through poetry. All because of Mrs. Volk's generosity and her desire to share her passion for poetry and the theatre with Alan and me.

There was Mr. Horst, too, who guided so many through debate and forensics, helping us

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embrace the sound of our own voice as valuable and perhaps even necessary. My best buddy Diana Hrabowecki created her own brand of memorable magic developing her voice through Children's Storytelling. I entered the world of Serious Interpretive Reading, delving into all manner of poetry, prose, and drama, to construct 5 to 8 ½ minute readings for Saturday tournaments. Diana and I often spent Friday nights together, rehearsing for the crack-of-dawn bus that would take us to Saturday competitions hours away. Being a novice poet at the time, I would occasionally insert my own writings when sharing new readings with Mr. Horst. I did this not because I wanted to read my poetry at the tournaments, but because I wanted an honest opinion of the adolescent musings in my notebook—and Mr. Horst always delivered. I could count on his honesty and expertise as he helped me develop the best possible scripts for upcoming contests. When he actually suggested including one of my own poems I had anonymously slipped into the mix, I felt like flying. Further, Mr. Rick Horst taught me the value of speaking truth to power. In our wall-less high school, with agoras that went on forever with only file cabinets dividing classrooms, our forensics class was inappropriately noisy for that space. Instead of silencing our emerging artistry, Mr. Horst quietly asked Ed Culp to practice his storytelling script with the class — standing on top of a table. Within seconds, the entire agora

was captured by Ed's many voices, with all desks turned toward our classroom. Applause erupted for Ed's performance, along with a standing ovation from the entire agora. The very next day, we were given our own self-enclosed classroom, which is what Mr. Horst's endgame was at the time. Speaking truth to power.

And then there was Mr. Drees, whose ability to create perfect circles the height of the chalkboard mesmerized us on Day One of Honors Geometry class. He introduced us to postulates, which he told us were "givens" and that we should simply accept them as true. They would be used to construct proofs as the course progressed. Being the skeptical human I am, I immediately went home and tried to "prove" each of the postulates. I drew pictures of lines and points intersecting, of corners of walls where planes intersected. Suffice to say, I could not "prove" any of the postulates, and I ended up pitching my geometry book across my bedroom floor. The next morning, I met with Mr. Dress, handed him my broken textbook, and told him that I needed to be transferred out of his class immediately. Wondering why I was requesting this, I told him of my foray and failure into proving postulates the night before. "Are you worried about your grade in this class?" he asked me. A resounding yes. "I'll tell you what," he said. "If you decide to stay in this class, I guarantee that you will not earn less

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than a B.” So, I proceeded to ask him... if I don’t do any homework and fail every test, would you still give me a B? A resounding yes. So, I stayed. Mr. Drees gave me perhaps the very best gift of my education at Truman High – the willingness to take on something challenging and difficult, without fear of failure. He removed the looming threat of the grade and, as a result, my mind was liberated to truly think and begin to understand a subject area that was exceedingly difficult for me.

Then there was Mr. Ed Rima, who handed me a tenor saxophone and told me to sit down and play. The forth tenor had quit Jazz Band, and he was in need of a replacement. “The fingering is very similar to flute fingerings, so just sit down and play,” he told me. I’d played around with a clarinet reed the summer after 4th grade, when my band friends taught each other our instruments. But I had never taken on a saxophone reed. Suddenly, I was a member of the Truman Jazz Band, sitting there in fear that he would point at me to improvise a solo. I kept hoping he would point at MaryKay Jackson, who was marvelously proficient on alto sax. I was undeniably relieved when she took over my whole-note improvisations, following the chord progression. Further, when in Mr. Rima’s Music Theory class, he would bring in records to instruct us in unfamiliar classical music. The records were incredibly scarred and scruffy, with

the music barely audible. When we complained, Mr. Rima calmly told us to “listen for the music between the scratches.” A lesson in patience, discernment, and ferreting through to discover what really mattered.

Please visit the Alumni website to read the entire article. 

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## *Wish for the Month*



FOR WOMAN AND MAN,  
A PLACE AT THE TABLE  
REVISING THE ROLES,  
DECIDING THE SHARE,  
WITH WISDOM AND GRACE,  
DIVIDING THE POWER,  
FOR WOMAN AND MAN,  
A SYSTEM THAT’S FAIR.

# ALUMNI NEWS!



## New Lifetime Member

Welcome to our newest Lifetime members:  
Jeff Lizewski, TCH 1986

You too can become a lifetime member of the fastest growing Alumni Association in the state. Make a \$25 check payable to Taylor Alumni Association and mail to: Taylor Alumni Association, 11501 Beech Daly Taylor, MI 48180. Remember to include school and year of graduation.

## Added Email to Data Base

Recently, I was at a function and Chris LeClerk, JFK 1970, recognized me. During our conversation the Monthly Alumni Newsletter came up. She had not been receiving them, of course, that meant we didn't have a correct if any email address for her. It has now been added to our data bank. If you know of anyone who is not receiving the Alumni Newsletter and would like to be added the list, please send their email address to us so that we can include them in our distribution list. Send to [johnpantalone@sbcglobal.net](mailto:johnpantalone@sbcglobal.net).

## Reminder

To those of you planning a reunion, please let us know the school, year, date, time, location, etc. The alumni association can offer you help in contacting class members as well as other things.

Many of you have changed from phone line service to cell phones. Please send us the new phone number so that we can update our data bank.

## SALE SALE SALE

**Hundreds of pictures of the JFK and HST schools all on CD**

Pictures taken inside and outside of the High Schools are on sale for \$4.99 plus shipping. They are a great gift idea, buy several and send them to friends and family around the world.



**THEME DINNERS AT THE CHOPPING BLOCK RESTAURANT IN THE CAREER CENTER** - Theme dinners are from 10:30 am till 12:30 pm and the public is invited to the following ones:

March 8th                      Asian

March 22nd                    French

April 13th                    The Taylor Foundation is sponsoring a "Comedy Night" April 13, 2019. Great entertainment will be offered by 4 well know comedians: Tom Masseur, Frank G, Tony Rony and Mary Ann DeMoss. The event will be held at the Democratic Club Hall. Twenty-five dollar admission includes entertainment, pizza and soft drinks. Cash bar for beer and wine. Doors open at 5:30 and entertainment starts at 7. Table sponsorships are also available. Contact Linda Newsome 313-295-7313 or Cindy Whittico 734-788-4341 for tickets information or table sponsorship.



## OBITUARIES



*The Alumni Association members would like to extend their deepest sympathy to the family and friends of the former classmates mentioned below. You will forever be in our thoughts and prayers.*

### **Taylor Center High School**

Eleanor Dul Ridenour, Class of 1958 (passed November 13, 2018)

Joseph Marasco, Class of 1973 (passed January 31, 2019)

Debra Pace Kovaleski, Class of 1975 (passed November 27, 2018)

James Skura, Class of 1960 (passed February 5, 2019)

### **John F Kennedy High**

Luther Goins, Class of 1966 (passed January 27, 2019)

Darin Adams, Class of 1981 (passed January 26, 2019)

### **Truman High School**

Robert Groat, class of 1979 (passed December 22, 2018)

### **STAFF**

Ardsley Brown retired secretary (passed February 25, 2019)

For more information about the deceased and their families, please visit the alumni website [tayloralumni.org](http://tayloralumni.org) and click on "In Memoriam".