

Alumni Association

Keeping Ties with Our Alumni



TAYLOR
School District



October 2020 Newsletter

DOWN MEMORY LANE: THE 70'S

SCHOOLS

McDowell, Myers, Career Center and Truman Junior and Senior High Schools were built.

In the mid 70's enrollment hit a peak of over 20,000 students, compared to this fall's enrollment of under 6,000 enrollees K thru 12.

Alumni data shows 1975 graduates from the 3 high schools totaled 1350. June 2019 there were only 316 graduates. The single highest graduating class in the 70's was 1973 JFK with 651 Grads. 1972 TCH graduated 552 their largest for the 70's. HST graduated 564 in 1979 which was their largest class ever. The largest graduating class in the District was TCH 1965 with 745 Grads.

CITY

Population in 1970 was 70,020 and increased to 77,568 by 1980. Current population is approximately 61,500.

Southland Mall opened in 1970 and consisted of three anchor

stores: Hudson's at mall center, Woolworth's Dime Store, off the center court, and a Kroger supermarket on the eastern side. A two-screen movie theater was opened within weeks of the mall opening.

AREA

- Detroit was the 5th largest city in the USA.
- The RenCen became the tallest building in Detroit.
- Fairlane Town Center opened with a People Mover

[continue on page 2](#)

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continue from previous page

from the Mall to the Hyatt Regency Hotel which had a revolving top floor.

➤ John Norman Collins was tried and convicted of killing an Eastern Michigan student. He is still serving time in Marquette State Prison.

NATIONALLY

➤ Top songs of the 70's included American Pie, Bad Bad Leroy Brown, Rhinestone Cowboy, Dancing Queen, Born to Run and MacArthur Park.

➤ Top movies included Godfather, Jaws, Rocky, The Sting and One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest.

➤ TV Shows included All In The Family, Mash, Mary Tyler Moore and Saturday Night Live.

➤ Number of Women attending college increased 45%, the 70's also saw the 1st Female Governor, Fire Fighter, Airline Pilot, and Railroad Engineer.

➤ Protests of the Viet Nam War.

➤ Richard Nixon became the first President to resign from office.

➤ Leisure Suits were popular. 📝

ALUMNI NEWS!



Welcome New Lifetime Members

The Taylor Alumni Association welcomes the following graduates who became Lifetime Members.

Robert Hampstead, JFK Class of 1968

We are the fastest growing Alumni Association in the State. If you are not a lifetime member, please consider becoming one. The lifetime membership fee is only \$25, part of which goes to scholarships. Just mail a check for \$25, payable to Taylor Alumni Association, along with your school and year of graduation to: Taylor Alumni Association, 11501 Beech Daly Road, Taylor, MI 48180.

THANKS



NEW CONTRIBUTORS

The Taylor Alumni Association thanks

Janet Fetcenko Furman, TCH 61,
for the donation of TCH Yearbooks

KEEPING UP WITH GRADS!

Dr. Tom Gonda | JFK 1972

Tom, a 1972 Graduate of JFK, was named a Distinguished Alumnus in 1982. I recall some details from the nomination application. By that date Tom had graduated from Harvard with honors; then from Stanford with a medical degree, specializing in heart surgery. Established as a heart surgeon, he also performed as a member of a Rock Band and competed in Triathlons. Dr. Thomas was a unanimous choice and returned to JFK to give the commencement address.

Since we are featuring the 70's in this edition, now seems a good time for an update of Dr. Gonda's career. He was gracious enough to send the following:

After graduating in 1972, I was headed to the finest Ivy League school in the country. Many changes had happened to me at JFK just in the last month of school that made me the man I am today. In the audience on graduation day was my family, but minus one key person—my father.

On May 31, 1972, my father, Thomas Andrew Gonda Sr., was murdered in a failed robbery attempt at his furniture store on Grand River Ave. in Detroit, Michigan. Three thugs

brandishing weapons threatened to shoot everyone. My mother and father's sister were there working. My father grabbed a shotgun to protect his family, but, before he could fire, he took several bullets and died at the scene. The killers were apprehended, but I never did find out what happened to them. If any reader can enlighten me on that point, I would like to know. My father's death was devastating to all our family members and those in the community. I was going to graduate from JFK in a few weeks, it was a success that my father would never see. Many nights I cried myself to sleep. I was determined to honor my father's hard work ethic and continue to run the furniture store at age 17, but I was grieving and confused. I couldn't decide for many weeks whether to continue the business or go to college. I was running the business successfully and potentially could have continued, but, despite having no source of money, I decided to go away to college. I left for Harvard in August 1972 with a full financial scholarship.



continue on page 4

continue from previous page

As a child, I wanted to be either a cardiac surgeon or a psychiatrist. I was enamored with the idea of curing disease by operating on the heart and also helping people by talking to them. I was fascinated when Mr. Robert Smith, my 6th grade teacher, described the Freudian concepts of id, ego and superego. While enrolled at JFK, I was drawn to two things: Debate, Forensics and Gymnastics. Fortunately, for me, JFK had the best coaches in the state—maybe the country—for Gymnastics. Our coach, Roger Bechtol, is a man who brought us to our full potential. He coaxed us in a most gentle and caring way. Because of him, our team won the State Championships every year that I was there. I never liked the term “jock” but I came to be comfortable with the term after I won an All State High School Individual Championship in 1972. I still remember the great gymnasts: Mike O’Malley, Steve Rimar, Randy Mills, Elliott Everson, Steve Wiggins, Timothy Witz, Frank Sieminski, Eddie Ewald, Duane Nimitz and many more I could mention. I would observe them in awe in practice and at competitions. I couldn’t believe the strength, balance, nerve and courage of the JFK warriors in white tights. In retrospect, this was a group of really great guys—workers, untiring effort, devotion, intensity and strength. There was no drama, chaos or conflict but rather an atmosphere of humbleness and



quiet appreciation for the chance of athletic competition. I think of an ideal sports team as having these qualities.

Debate and Forensics: The success of the JFK debate and forensics team was equal to the amazing accomplishments of the gymnastics team. Our hero and coach was Robert Clements. A very devoted, intense, supportive, challenging man who orchestrated many individuals and teams into performing their best. We won tournament after tournament and honor after honor. I remember and think fondly of the great debaters: Denise Gorsline, Marsha Solem, Mark Taylor, and so many others. The experience inspired me to continue debate in college on the Harvard debate team. Now in life, I am very comfortable giving expert witness testimony in courtroom and legal depositions for my patients.

TO BE CONTINUED

Next month Dr. Gonda as a Cardiac, Thoracic, Vascular and Trauma Surgeon and after some 20,000 surgeries the desire to train in the field of Psychotherapeutic and Forensic Psychiatry. 📖

Another Graduate Success Story



HARRY S TRUMAN GRADS ARE SUCCESSFUL ENTREPRENEURS

Krissy and Jason McGuire are owners of Humbug Marina in Gibraltar. She stands in front of the newly constructed platform that will become a patio for a waterfront restaurant the couple is building. Both Krissy Noble McGuire, 1997, and Jason McGuire, 1992, are graduates of Harry S Truman High School. The fact that Jason and Krissy McGuire want to build a waterfront restaurant is no secret. In fact, they made it known when they purchased the Humbug Marina in Gibraltar that a restaurant and bar figured prominently in their plans. Now those plans are turning into a reality. When the McGuires purchased the property two years ago, they quickly made some changes, but the biggest is yet to come. A large platform was constructed just a couple

of weeks ago which will serve as the restaurant's patio. Krissy said she is uncomfortable giving timelines since they are subject to change due to circumstances beyond their control. She said a tentative opening for the restaurant is early October.

The McGuires reside in Gibraltar, but both are originally from Taylor, where they have owned JP McGuire's Bar & Grill for almost 10 years. When they purchased the marina in 2017 they had no experience with marinas, but when they purchased "JP McGuires" in Taylor they did not have any experience with restaurants either. In the volatile restaurant and bar business, lack of experience can hurt some owners, but the McGuires say that has not been the case with them. JP McGuire's Bar & Grill is a popular place to dine and enjoy a beverage in Taylor, and they are confident they can do the same thing in Gibraltar.

Jay unfurled the project's blueprints to reveal the layout of the restaurant, which will have a seating capacity of up to 300 people, including the patio.

One thing that will make this restaurant unique is that it will have approximately 45 transient slips for boaters who wish to stop in for a drink or bite to eat.

The McGuires say a couple of restaurants in the area offer a few boat slips for diners, but not nearly as many as they are planning. Krissy said they plan to mimic what they're doing in Taylor, in terms of the menu, although the Gibraltar restaurant will have a nautical theme and will serve steak and seafood on a daily basis. "There will be no price gouging," Jay said. "People will be able to afford to eat here."

Many Gibraltar residents know that the food that will be served will be similar to the offerings at JP McGuire's in Taylor. They say if you like the food at the Taylor location you will like the food at the Gibraltar location. The McGuires say many of those residents have visited the Taylor location to check it out. Krissy said the plan is to train new employees at their restaurant in Taylor so they'll be ready to go when the Gibraltar restaurant opens this fall. 📝



FALL SPORTS AT TAYLOR COMMUNITY HIGH

Football and other fall sports are being played but, as per a Michigan State Athletic ruling, attendance is limited to two people per athlete, and pre-registration is required in order to attend.

October 21st — TCH Class of 60 monthly luncheon, 12:30 p.m. at Bravo Italian Kitchen, 286 North Adams Road, Rochester Hills. Let Bill Riggs know if you are attending – (734) 771-6622 or willee6742@gmail.com



November 3rd — Election Day. Exercise your right to vote. Get out and vote.

May 21, 2021 — A reunion to be held in Florida for JFK Grads is being planned. First reunion to be held outside of the State of Michigan. More news to follow.

May 22nd — Taylor Center High School Football Players. Coach Tom Mall has a tentative date of May 22, 2021 for a golf outing as a kind of reunion for all football players. Would you be interested? If so, send coach an email at Thomas.mall@lpps.info



THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

It takes a special kind of person

To care enough

To take the time for others...

It takes the kind of person

Who, in a quiet and sincere way,

Will do whatever it takes

To help someone out...

Someone who knows that giving

Makes living a pleasure,

And that thoughtfulness

Is the best measure of a person.

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.

Please Note: If we receive deaths from the past that are not listed in our newsletter, they will be posted on the "In Memoriam" section on our website. If you know of a deceased graduate that is not listed in the Memoriam section of our website please let us know the name, school, graduating class and date of passing.

John F Kennedy High

Rudy Winslow, Class of 1969 (passed September 6, 2020)
Jacqueline Britz Moritz, Class of 1970 (passed September 3, 2020)
Michael Turner, Class of 1969 (passed September 10, 2020)
Samantha Tabone, Class of 2008 (passed September 20, 2020)

Truman High School

Joseph Dyer, Class of 1978 (passed February 12, 2020)
Clark Damon, Class of 1981 (passed September 1, 2020)

Staff

David McGhee, retired Teacher – Kinyon, Brake & JFK (passed August 31, 2020)

For more information about the deceased and their families, please visit the alumni website tayloralumni.org and click on "In Memoriam".