

Alumni Association

Keeping Ties with Our Alumni



TAYLOR
School District



September 2019 Newsletter

KEEPING UP WITH GRADS!

Geno & Karen (Reeber) Salomone
1973 JFK High School Graduates

I asked Karen Reeber Salomone for an update. Following is her response...

We met as 9th graders at Brake Jr. High School in 1969, and became friends. Our first date was the JFK Jr. Prom on April 22, 1972. We have many fond memories of our time at JFK. There were so many friendships, both from our classmates and from classes that preceded us. We have been blessed to maintain many of these friendships to this day. We may not see everyone as often as we would like but, when we can, it is time well spent and usually

includes some laughter about our high school experiences.

In addition to these great friends, there were also great teachers at Kennedy. Mr. Clements, Speech and Debate, taught Geno research, advocacy and public speech skills. He has used this knowledge and techniques in his career as both a lawyer and a judge. Karen enjoyed Mr. Freeman's Biology class and Independent Reading classes facilitated by Mrs. Proctor. Both teachers fostered curiosity about the world and a love of reading.

After high school, Karen would work for the City of Taylor. Geno was employed as a custodian with the Taylor School District while attending Wayne State University (WSU). After graduating from WSU, Geno attended Detroit College of Law in 1981 and became an attorney in 1984. As a public sector attorney, he was proud to include the Taylor School District as one of his clients for several years.

In 2000, Geno was fortunate and proud to be elected Judge for the 23rd District Court in Taylor. He started and has

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continue from page 2

presided over its drug and sobriety treatment court program for over 16 years.

Karen would retire from the City of Taylor and concentrate on raising their 3 children, Angelo, Amy & Marco, through their teen years, high school, and even while they attended college! She would then go on to help start and supervise many downriver farmers markets, while employed at the Wayne Metropolitan Community Action Agency. She would also serve as the first Executive Director of Fish & Loaves Community Food Pantry, before retiring a second time in 2016.

With these lifetime roots in our city, and having received so many benefits from

this community, we have tried to be involved with activities and endeavors that would continue to improve the quality of life in Taylor. We worked with many of our friends (some from friendships forged so many years before at JFK) to build the Taylor Conservatory, start the City's first farmers' market, and to create the Taylor Reading Corps.

Thank you JFK and City of Taylor for a great life... Geno & Karen

WHAT YOU MIGHT NOT KNOW ABOUT TAYLOR

Taylor is the 17th largest city in Michigan and 418th largest in the United States.

WHAT'S IN THE NAME?



FOR WHOM WAS WEST MIDDLE SCHOOL NAMED

Robert West was an Architect who designed West Middle School, Brake Middle School and John F Kennedy High.



WE HEARD FROM YOU!

► Melanie Rabe Nelson, TCH 1961

"Thank you for sending the newsletter and for all the work that goes into doing it." Thank you, Melanie! It is good to hear that our work is appreciated.

► Michele Milledge Stephens, TCH 1975

Thanks to our wonderful Alumni team who put together the August issue of this Newsletter. Special thanks to Sheri who so graciously stepped in while I was away on a family emergency. You guys are the best.

TAYLOR CENTER GRAD BECOMES A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS OWNER AND AUTHOR

Perhaps the greatest time to be a student at any of the Taylor schools was in the 70's. The schools were fully funded, tons of sports teams, including swim and hockey!

I may be a bit biased because I graduated from Taylor Center in 1976. That year, the combine choirs of TC, Truman, and Kennedy recorded an album, "In God We Trust" to celebrate the bicentennial. Also, the three combined drama departments joined forces to produce the musical, "Guys and Dolls"!



My name is Larry Denham. Those who remember me might think of me as a gymnast, but I only competed my junior year (I was quite terrible, but my younger brother, Lindy (class of '77), was pretty good. Actually, in my junior year I discovered theater and choir, and my meager attempts at gymnastics took a backseat to entertaining the masses. With the help of my two favorite teachers, Barb Salinski (choir) and Jan Toco (drama), I found my inner voice. However, I was also influenced by Jack Nelson (gymnastics) and a teacher I never had, Mickey Turcheck.

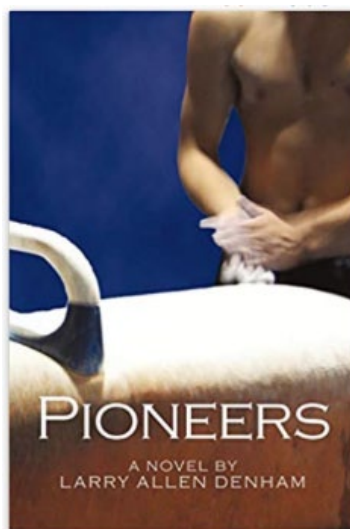
After graduation, I started school at Murray State University, in Murray, KY, began my quest for the footlights. My dreams were squelched in my first semester. Ironically, the fall production of the MSU theater department was, "Guys and Dolls"! Since I was about the only person auditioning, I figured I had a leg up on the rest. But a poor song selection (I wanted to do 'Luck be a Lady', but my voice coach thought it was a bad idea to do a song from the show) and a less-than-stellar audition, left me with no speaking part, just a solo dance part. Yeah, ego bashed, I withdrew from the show, tail firmly tucked. However, during that time, I was also responsible, for my work-study, to supervise the gymnastics equipment room. I started giving advice to students that would come in to learn a new skill, and before long, I realized that my love of gymnastics wasn't what I could do, but what I could get others to do. And gymnastics became my career.

I graduated in 1982 with a degree in Radio/TV (I was doing MTV before MTV was doing MTV), I married Lee Ann Harrison (TCH 1977) a month later, and together we dreamt of owning our own gymnastics school. After moving from gym to gym, we settled where we are now, Chattanooga, TN. We've been here since 1986 and have owned our gym since 1989. We've coached thousands of kids and placed many nationally as well as represented

several NCAA teams. At one point, I had the captain of the Minnesota Men's team (Justin Meyer) and Michigan's Men's teams (Phillip Goldberg) at the same time!

In 2007, I realized a dream when I became published. 'Pioneers' is a gymnastics novel about living every day like it's your last. It was my Magnum Opus, the story I had always wanted to tell. When there was interest in a sequel, I had no additional story. Taylor Center gave me one. From '98-2002, Taylor Center was closed and the classroom wings demolished. The remaining structure served as a public rec center before being completely demolished in 2011. I decided that 'Pioneers II: The Volunteer' would take place at TC at the time it was a rec center. Quick synopsis: Joey Johnson is from Tennessee (hence 'the Volunteer'), relocates to live with his dad in Taylor. After being blackballed by the "elite" gym in town, Joey, and his new-found sidekick, Alex, need a place to train. Alex leads him to TC Rec Center where, oddly enough, Joey's coach from TN, Jim Lowery, attended and was part of the most successful gymnastics teams in the school's history. So, along with training the way we had to back in the day, dragging out what equipment you were going to use, Joey reminisces about what it must have been like in his coach's days at TC. It's a fun read and a

stroll down TC memory lane. Available at any online bookseller.



The Kindle version of Pioneers 1 & II by Larry Denham as seen on Amazon.com

In 2014, I was diagnosed with colon cancer. After surgery, chemo, a year cancer-free, it returned in 2016. Another surgery, radiation, and chemo pills followed, and the result is it metastasized in my lungs. This means we've gone from trying to cure cancer to chemo for life, as currently there is no cure. But, in the 21st century, cancer caught this soon is no more difficult to treat than any other chronic illness; you take your meds, you stay healthy, and you continue to set goals you must live to achieve.

I loved my days at Taylor Center, and think about her most often. There will never be magic like that again.

Larry Denham, Class of 1976



Good to see so many students participating- come out and see them.

7TH & 8TH GRADE HOME SCHEDULE

FOOTBALL - All games at Taylor High Stadium

Hoover Middle School September 25th, 4 pm vs Davidson

West Middle School September 25th, 6 pm vs Allen Park

VOLLEYBALL - All games at home schools

Hoover Middle School September 18th, 4 pm vs West
September 25th, 4 pm vs Davidson

West Middle School September 16th, 4 pm vs Trenton
September 23rd, 4 pm vs Davidson
September 25th, 4 pm vs Shumate

TAYLOR HIGH FALL ATHLETIC SCHEDULE

FOOTBALL - All games at Taylor High Stadium

September 20th, 7 pm vs Gibraltar Carlson
September 27th, 7 pm vs Trenton

VOLLEYBALL

September 10th, 7 pm vs Woodhaven
September 12th, 7 pm vs Edsel Ford
September 24th, 7 pm vs Trenton
September 26th, 7 pm vs Gibraltar Carlson

SOCCER (BOYS) JV & VARSITY

Varsity
September 3rd, 4:30 pm vs Gibraltar Carlson
September 4th, 4:30 pm vs Trenton
September 16th, 4:30 pm vs Woodhaven
September 18th, 4:30 pm vs Edsel Ford

Jr. Varsity
September 3rd, 6 pm vs Gibraltar Carlson
September 4th, 6 pm vs Trenton
September 16th, 6 pm vs Woodhaven
September 18th, 6 pm vs Edsel Ford



September 10th Taylor Alumni Association meeting 6 pm Board Office

September 12th Taylor Educational Foundation meeting 8 am- Board Office

September 27th Alumni Party...all schools and all classes are invited. At Pia's Ristorante, 6 pm until closing. We are changing it up this time, for \$15, come enjoy pizza, salad, bread sticks, pop, coffee and a cash bar. Renew old friendships, make some new ones, grab some of your former classmates and have a mini reunion! Food buffet available until 9 pm. We need to give Pia's a count, so please let us know if you will attending, email us at tayloralumniassociation@yahoo.com by September 14th.

October 5th JFK CLASS OF 1969 50th Reunion. Taylor Meadows Golf Club – noon till 7 pm. More information contact Mike Connelly 773-952-9711 email mconnelly51@gmail.com or Greg Warsow 734-782-1742 email gwarsow@comcast.net

October 12th JFK CLASS OF 1979 40th reunion. Mallie's Sports Grill & Bar 7:30 pm - until closing. Casual attire – \$20 per person DJ and more. For more information call Steve Meharry 313-551-5159

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

Michael Allen Paielli, Class of 1969 (passed August 3, 2019)

Dennis "Huey" Cornwall, Class of 1971 (passed July 30, 2019)

Jeff Pafford, Class of 1979 (passed August 5, 2019)

Susan Murray Richards, Class of 1974, (passed August 17, 2019)

Truman High School

Linda (Cann) Chapple, Class 1979, (passed August 16, 2019)

John F Kennedy High

Caroline Michellod Bowles, Class of 1966 (passed June 8, 2019)

Staff

George Roman, taught at Brake Jr. High (passed June 30, 2019)

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