



Taft Alumni Newsletter

Vol. XV No. 1

Winter 2001

Taft Does Grease

The **William Howard Taft Performing Arts Program** will host a Benefit Performance of **Jim Jacob's** award-winning Musical, **Grease** on April 7th. at 5:00 p.m. (black tie optional). A donation of \$50 per person entitles you to cocktails/beverages, hors d'oeuvres and a reserved seat for the performance. You will also become a **Taft Performing Arts Eagle**, with your name prominently listed in the musical playbill. All other show tickets require a \$10 donation.

Proceeds from this special evening performance will be used to revitalize William Howard Taft's Performing Arts Program and technical support equipment. Corporate sponsors and donations are welcome.

For further information and tickets, contact **Sue Gross at (773) 534-1000 x214** or visit the school at 6545 W. Hurlbut during school hours. Dinner ticket deadline is March 2nd.

Performance Schedule

Fri., March 30 at 7:00 pm.

Sat., March 31 at 7:00 pm.

Sun., April 1 at 1:00 p.m. (Senior Citizens Show)

Fri., April 6 at 7:00 pm.

Sat., April 7 at 7:00 p.m. (Benefit Show)

Arizona Holiday Party

Kay and Tom Kuciak threw a Holiday Party at their home for Alumni in the Sun City, Sun City West and Surprise Arizona area. About 40 people attended including 2 teachers. Kay says, "It was a lot of fun and we plan to do it again."



Back Row: Mr. Fizz, Ken Bixby, Bill Galitz, Babe Schalk, Howie Schalk, Mr. Sams, Ed Archambault, Sandy (Hubenthal) Sams, Rich Everitt, Kay (Carlson) Kuciak, Tom Kuciak, Kathy Thiel.

Front Row: Doris (Venema) Brunkhorst, Mrs. Bixby, Laraine (Peterson) Dayton, Rose Bressler, Margaret (Newman) Moshier, Claire Fizz, Jeanne (Waschow) Wead, Elaine (Pierson) Engstrom.

Kraft At Taft JA Volunteers Wanted

Have some spare time? Want to "give back" to the students at Taft? Then, join Kraft Foods, Taft and Junior Achievement and help us teach the students "Success Skills".

Kraft began this program in Fall of 2000, with 24 volunteers (16 classes) we have reached 350 students!

Junior Achievement's Success Skills program includes:

1. Interpersonal skills
2. Role playing
3. Video assessment
4. Interpersonal effectiveness
5. Building rapport
6. Influencing others

See **Kraft At Taft** | Page 9

The Grease Class Does 40

By **Shirley (Kalivoda) DeWeese**
(June, 1960) - Reunion Chairperson

The class of June, 1960 celebrated their 40th reunion on October 14, 2000, at the Hyatt Regency O'Hare in Rosemont, IL and it was such a thrill for everyone. The warm fuzzies that weekend were incredible. It was like we stepped back in time.

Our weekend began on Friday night with an ice-breaker in Knuckles Sports Bar at the hotel, a tour of Taft Saturday morning (thank you so much Kay and Frank for helping with the tour), the dinner/dance Saturday night and a champagne brunch at the hotel Sunday morning. Two mini grammar school reunions were held prior to the cocktail hour on Saturday night, Garvy and Ebinger. They were very precious to those of us who attended those schools.

See **1960 Reunion** | Page 2

CLASS REUNIONS

June, 1946

Date: To be determined
Place: To be determined
Contact: **Jean Whitehead Smith**
N4724 County Rd P
Delavan, WI 53215
E-mail: don-jean@elknet.net

January/June 1947

Date: Sometime, Year 2002
Place: To be determined
Contact: **Claudia (Phillips) Fuller** - (941)383-8339
6 Winslow Place
Longboat Key, FL 34228
E-mail: CLAUDIAFL@aol.com

January/June, 1951

Date: May 19, 2001
Place: Rosemont Convention Center
Rosemont, Illinois
Contact: **Ed Archambault** - (623) 546-9170
22013 N. Via De La Caballa
Sun City West, AZ 85375-2210
E-mail: LAZYAZ@aol.com

1952

Date: To be determined
Place: To be determined
Contact: **Diane Jung (Young) Braasch**
E-mail: Newbraaschps@cs.com

1981

Date: August, 2001
Place: To be determined
Contact: Reunions Ltd. - (847)229-1123

1983

Date: To be determined
Place: To be determined
Contact: **Laura McGrady** - (847)318-0769

1991

Date: To be determined
Place: To be determined
Contact: **Androniki (Velisuris) Gorski** -
(773)463-6804

Reunion Plans

The classes of June and January 1947 have had reunions every 5 years since graduation. In 1994, they had a 47th (in honor of the class graduation year) in the winter (in honor of the January class) and in Florida (because a lot of them were there - and the weather IS better). After their 50th reunion (1997) in Chicago, they decided that another five years would be too long to wait, so they planned a 52-1/2 year reunion in FLORIDA. They had a good turnout and a great time. **Shirley Huntmann Taylor** (1947), her husband Bill and other real musicians supplied BIG BAND music for their

See [Reunion Plans](#) | Page 3

1960 Reunion *Continued from page 1*

Our special guests included teachers **James Stamm, Irving Stein** and **Marie Muscarello**, and our very own Taft Alumni Association President, **Kay Kuciak**. How wonderful it was to have them with us!

The program was presented by class vice president, **John Breen**, reunion chairmen **Shirley Kalivoda DeWeese** and **Stu Dunn**, and special guest speaker, classmate **Jim Jacobs**, co-author of the hit musical "grease".

Both the Chicago Tribune and the Chicago Sun Times carried great articles about the "original cast of Grease" and their 40th reunion, complete with pictures from our yearbook. It was nice to have Taft in the spotlight again.

We sang the Taft Founder's March while our cheerleaders led us on. It was soooooo cool. Even our D.J., **Joe Bartel** (and his father), went to Taft. This was definitely a very special Taft night. (Of course, it would have been a bit better if I hadn't torn a ligament in my ankle dancing to Rock Around the Clock, but hey!)

A large vote of thanks to the reunion committee who did such a great job and they are: **Stu Dunn, Judy Caloud, Doris DeWitt, Arlene Laufer Ware, Pat Latimer Mortenson, Judy Schmidt Trisilla, Dennis Ferson and Dennis Anderson**.

Jim Jacobs said he often tells an audience, "Thank you for appreciating and loving the people I went to school with". The love of those people in the room that night demonstrated how right he was. You can go home again. GO TAFT!!!

We are definitely going to do a 50th after this wonderful experience. Class of June, 1960, please keep me informed of any address change so I can keep track of you. Here is a picture of the "Beauties and the Beast" cheerleaders. If anyone would like a copy, please send a self-addressed stamped letter size envelope to me at 1425 Caldwell Ln., Hoffman Estates, IL 60194.

Shirley Kalivoda DeWeese (June, 1960)
Reunion Chairman



"Beauties and the Beast" (L-R) **Mary Wolz Payne, Carolyn Hookanson Davies, Cindy Jackson Johnson, Wilma Horschke Aquavia, Jim Jacobs, Suzi Blumental Houff, Sandy Swanson Hipp**

Reunion Plans *Continued from page 2*

dancing and listening pleasure. What fun!

Plans are in the works for the 2002 - 55th reunion in Chicago. Any friends of the classes of 1947 are welcome to join us. Watch the Taft Alumni Newsletter for dates!

Claudia Ruth Phillips Vennell Fuller (1947)
CLAUDIAFL@aol.com



Valerie "Spook" Carlson Boyle (1947) in her wild 'Betty Boop' sunglasses at her 52-1/2 reunion in March, 2000.

Letters to the Editor

Dear TAA,

I'm interested in having/organizing a reunion for Ebinger School for the years of 1967 and 1968. But I would need volunteers to help me. Would you print this in the next newsletter, I appreciate it.

Nancy Mateling Cibic (1972)
847-854-5735

Subj: Alumni Gold Stars?

Date: 10/23/00 1:25:09 PM Central Daylight Time

Hi Jerry

Just saw the TAA Website. Great! While clicking on the various categories I thought perhaps one more would be in order. Would it be possible to list all of the alumni that lost their lives in the wars since WWII? Can you put it to the directors for their opinions? An appeal in the newsletter for additional names might be helpful.

Frank Zemaitis (June 1940)
PenStabs@aol.com

[President's comment: I have always thought this was a good idea but nothing ever came of it. I have a list from the 50th anniversary that probably has 15 names on it from WWII. Kay Kuciak]

Dear Kay,

Thanks so much for keeping up the newsletter. I enjoy reading it and look forward to it when it comes. I get back to the old neighborhood every now and then, and feel at home when I do. I attended the "Grease" rally a couple years back and that was so fun!

Nancy (Rodrick) Scatchell (1974)

Dear TAA,

Is anyone from Oriole Park, class of 1973 interested in getting together? Please contact me.

Kathy Golemba Wanta (1977)
630-654-3088

Editor:

I think that just about everyone had looked back on his or her high school years and at one time or another has said, "I wonder what ever became of so and so?" Or when we met someone we went to school with its, "Do you remember the time etc., etc." Some have even married their high school sweethearts.

Having graduated in June of 1952, my 50th class reunion will be coming up. The last class reunion my wife and I attended was in 1972, the 20th reunion. As a United States Postal Inspector, in 1988, the chance came up to transfer from the Chicago office to the Phoenix Arizona office. While working a case in Phoenix in 1990, I was coming out of a store. There was a man and woman just going into the store. They both smiled as we went by a the door and said hello. I said hello back and kept on walking out. It was at [that] point the man said, "what's the matter Mac, don't you say hello to old friends!" It was **John Fratzke**, who now also lives in Mesa, AZ with his wife and who I had not seen since 1952. We both played football at Taft. He told me at that time about the Alumni Association and the newsletter. I went home that night and told my wife Patricia about it and she said I should follow up on it, but until now I never did.

In 1993, due to Federal Law (20 years service and 55 years ago) I had to retire. I was always going to get in touch with the alumni, but never did. In 1997 my wife passed away and again, while in Chicago for her funeral, I was going to see about the alumni at Taft, but never did.

In August of this year I was back in Chicago on family business. This time I made it a point to go to Taft myself and inquire about the alumni. What a change, from a small school that I knew, to a very big, big school with security peoples all over. My wife would be very happy that I finally did it, and so am I. It only took 10 years!

Bill McCarthy (June 1952)

Dear Jerry,

How interesting it was to read **Tom Spenny's** (January 1958) letter (Summer 2000 TA newsletter) about the old New Hampshire Ave. school store next to the original Norwood Park School that was at New Hampshire and Hurlbut. Our family moved from Edgebrook to Norwood Park in 1944; we moved to the NW corner of Natoma and Hurlbut (5700 Natoma). At that time the New Hampshire/Hurlbut corner was vacant and remains of the old school's foundations were visible. I thought that was really "neat". Regarding your note about that old school and a Mrs. Wolufka - she taught at the Norwood Park School at Nina and Nickerson while I was there (1944-1950). She seemed "real old" then, to me, and when my classmate, **Paul Sampson** told us she

See **Letters** | Page 4

Letters *(Continued from page 3)*

had taught his father - WOW, she had to be ancient! The fact of the matter is that Paul's dad was probably in his early 30's - e,i,: born about 1914, so he and your dad may have been classmates at the old NPS in 1924-26. By the way, Mrs. Wolufka lived on Nina Ave - just across the street from the "lower grades side" of the school. She taught 7th grade and math, as I recall (we were in a "departmental" program in 6th, 7th and 8th grades, in those days. We moved from room to room for math, science, English, etc.) Mrs. Wolufka had a dentist son, "Charlie", with a practice in Edison Park. She was, in fact, probably only in her early 50s in the late 40s.

Wallie Meisner (January 1954)
Hayward, WI

Dear Jerry,

So glad to have received the summer 2000 Alumni newsletter. The letter from **Tom Spenny** (January, 1958) regarding the school store on Nagle Ave. really peaked my interest because I happened to have lived two doors down from the store! My family moved into the house in 1948 when I was 12 years old and yes, at that time the store was one of the official Taft school stores, candy store and also teen-age hangout. As a 12 year old I was quite impressed with the guys and gals that hung out there; in fact, I do believe they represented the role models for the highly successful musical "Grease" which was written by Taft graduate Jim Jacobs.

The demise of the store and a wide strip of property paralleling the south side of Bryn Mawr Ave. happened because in 1955 the State of Illinois condemned all this land for the building of the Kennedy Expressway which we well know now runs parallel to Taft. Once all the properties were vacated, the land was leveled and construction began. I hope this confirms the fact that the store on Nagle Ave. is no longer around. This does not diminish the fond memories of a by-gone era; only makes one recognize that we cannot stand in the way of progress.

Caroline (Ostrowski) Puccini (June 1953)
Oak Brook, IL

Subj: Taft paper reply
Date: 12/11/00 4:52:21 PM Central Standard Time
Hi Jerry,

Thanks for making this paper happen, it is great. **Joe Hanket** (1955) got his paper and emailed me telling me that there was an inquiry about my journalism days. Well 7 days later I received my paper! Colorado must have faster postal people than California, and ours are warmer!

In response to **Penny Neeb Hoffman**, (1958) I am the ex-cartoonist from journalism class. My art career was pursued for about 4 years and then was dropped to marry, raise kids and move a lot. After retiring in 1995 I took up painting again.

Tom Frantz (1956)
tomandmargo@home.com

Dear TAA,

Just received my latest TAA newsletter. Everything stopped in this household while I read it cover to cover. I

always enjoy reading the TAA...

I have been corresponding via e-mail with one of Taft Alumni from class of 50 that I met through the TAA newsletter and it has been fun catching up on things that happen up that way.

Keep up the great work the TAA staff is doing. I noticed the article about Downsizing and was very interested in it. as I remember when I started to Taft I was not in the district and my Mother and I had to go downtown to the Cook County School Office and get special permission to attend Taft which was within walking distance (5 Miles) and Schurz, Steinmetz meant a long bus and streetcar ride to either one of them.

I will be looking forward to the next issue. and this site is now on my computer favorites so I don't have trouble finding it next time. Us OLDIES are a little slow with these new things.

Norma Brawner Cooksey (1945)
cookseyn@peoplepc.com

Subj: **Marylennicholson [Schwanitz - 1973]**
Date: 12/7/00 10:31:32 AM Central Standard Time
To: JBBloom

I read Marylenn's article in the last Taft Alumni magazine and was so surprised to hear that she is in London. I work for British Airways and go at least once a year there. I would love to meet up with her and she said to contact her in the letter to the Newsletter Staff but unfortunately she did not give her e-mail or regular address. I graduated with her and shared some very funny moments as we shared many classes together. Could you please pass onto her my e-mail address? Thanks a lot.

Maureen Nelson Baricelli (1973)
MKBari@aol.com

[Editor's note: Consider it done. J. Bloom]

Subj: Re: Reunion
Date: 10/30/00 3:30:47 PM Central Standard Time
To: Taft alum CC: JBBloom

Dear KAY...
Thank You. Thank You. Nosy me. By the way which grade school did you attend?

We hope to have a very successful reunion 29 of 36 have been located 6 missing only one deceased. Of the 29 located over 20 have expressed interest in attending. I think that is pretty good after 40 years.

Will you be having a special write-up in for the "GREASE" class reunion (1960) in the newsletter? I take it you saw all the news publicity in the papers.

When I meet new friends and we get into the subject of high school days I always note I went to the real "RYDELL HIGH" (though I caught the end of the greaser era.)

Thanx again for your help

Bob Johnson (January 1965)
Rbengrguy@aol.com

[Editor's note: Kay graduated from Hitch Grammar School. See Autumn, 2000 issue for Kay's comments on the 60s class reunion. This note arrived too late for me to insert in regular 'Letters to the Editor' section. J. Bloom]

See **Letters** | Page 8

CLASS NOTES



1940s

FRANCIS KLEBER (1940) graduated from US Naval Academy BS 1944, US Naval Postgraduate School MS Physics 1958, Keller Graduate MBA 1982, lives in San Diego, CA, has 4 children, 7 grandchildren, was the first Class President at Taft in 1940 and is now retired.

RICHARD DOLEZAL (JUNE 1941) lives in Grayslake, IL, has 5 children, 10 grandchildren and is a Photoengraver.

GENE QUINN (JUNE 1941) lives in Parachute, CO, has 2 children, 2 grandchildren and is retired.

JANE (GOODMAN) SEIFERT (JUNE 1941) lives in Ormond Beach, FL, has 2 children, 4 grandchildren, 2 great grandchildren and is a housewife.

DONALD JIRKA (JUNE 1942) graduated from Northern BS 1945, lives in Glenview, IL, has 1 child and is retired, enjoys doing metal sculpture.

JAMES BOARINI (JUNE 1943) graduated from U of WI 1949, AA Agriculture, lives in Mc Henry, IL, has 6 children, 17 grandchildren and is retired.

LOUISE (KOSEL) DAHM (JUNE 1943) lives in Morton Grove, IL, has 4 children, 13 grandchildren, 6 great grandchildren and is a homemaker.

ROBERT SUVADA (JUNE 1943) lives in Sarasota, FL, has 1 child, 3 grandchildren and is a retired Chicago Police Officer.

IRENE (ROSS) FRANSEN (JANUARY 1944) has 8 children (7 graduated from Taft), moving to Huntley, IL in 2001.

CLAY MOTT (JANUARY 1944) graduated from Northern Bsed 1949, lives in Des

Plaines, IL, has 3 children, 3 grandchildren and is a retired Alumni Hall of Famer.

WALTER KOSMEN (JUNE 1945) MARRIED BARB (LATTNER) (JUNE 1949), they live in Park Ridge, IL, have 3 children, 4 grandchildren and are retired.

RICHARD DALY (JANUARY 1946) lives in Taylorsville, UT, has 4 children, 4 grandchildren and is retired.

AILEEN (PFEIFFER) NICHOLS (JANUARY 1946) graduated from Cornell College BA 1950, lives in Rochester, MN, has 3 children, 5 grandchildren and is a Minister's wife.

ROSEMARIE (SCHICK) ANDERSON (JUNE 1946) lives in Spring, TX, has 4 children, 5 grandchildren and is retired.

MARION (LUND) BUNGE (JUNE 1946) graduated from St Olaf BA, lives in Greensboro, NC, has 4 children, 5 grandchildren and is a realtor.

RUTH (RUNZEL) MEISTER (JUNE 1946) lives in Mt Prospect, IL, has 1 child, 5 grandchildren and is a housewife.

REYNOLD NELSON (JUNE 1946) lives in Corona, CA, has 4 children, 8 grandchildren and is a lithographer.

JACK RISTOW (JUNE 1946) lives in Mt. Prospect, IL and has 3 children.

ROGER CORINTH (JANUARY 1947) graduated from U of I BS 1957, MS 1963, lives in Coraopolis, PA, has 3 children, 1 grandchild and is a retired civil engineer.

GERALDINE (BAKULA) BOULET (JUNE 1947) graduated from the U of New Orleans, lives in Waveland, MS, has 1 child and is retired.

SHIRLEY (ENGLUND) MC DOUGALL (JUNE 1947) lives in Mendota, IL, has 4 children, 9 grandchildren and is retired

DAVID MESKAN (JANUARY 1948) graduated from Mo School of Mines BS 1952, lives in Park Ridge, IL,

has 3 children, 2 grandchildren and is President of Meskan Foundry in Chicago.

NANCY (CRIPPEN) MICHENER (JUNE 1949) graduated from Antioch BS 1955, U of CO MA 1968, lives in Denver, CO, has 2 children, 5 grandchildren and is a retired teacher.

1950s

KENNETH MEYER (JANUAR Y 1950) MARRIED CAROL (EBNER)(JUNE 1950) he graduated from Trinity BA 1954, MADIV 1956, Rice PhD 1978, they live in Gurnee, IL, have 3 children, 8 grandchildren and he is Chancellor at Trinity U.

CHARLES O'MALLEY (JANUARY 1950) lives in Des Plaines, IL, has 3 children, 5 grandchildren and is an appraiser.

BETSEY PACKARD (JANUARY 1950) graduated from Lawrence BA Psych 1954, lives in Sarasota, FL and is a retired human resources manager.

TINA (MAZZONI) SOLARZ (JANUARY 1950) lives in Des Plaines, IL, has 5 children and is an artist.

MARY ANN (BUDDENBAUM) TITTLE (JANUARY 1950) graduated from Northwestern BS Education, lives in Dune Acres, IN, has 2 children, 2 grandchildren and is a homemaker.

MARSHALL ZUGE HAR (JANUARY 1950) graduated from Rochester Inst Tech BS Business 1969, lives in Salisbury, MD, has 3 children, 3 grandchildren and is retired.

DORIS (ANDERSON) ALLISON (JUNE 1950) graduated from Augustana BA 1954, lives in Wheat Ridge, CO, has 2 children, 3 grandchildren and is a retired teacher.

RICHARD BENNETT (JUNE 1950) first name at Taft was Clark, graduated from IA State BSCE, Yale MSCE, lives in Ft Washington, MD, has 5

children, 5 grandchildren and is a retired civil engineer.

RONALD CLOUGH (JUNE 1950) MARRIED JEANETTE (NELSON) (JUNE 1950), the live in Arlington Hts, IL, have 3 children and 5 grandchildren.

MARJORIE (JACOBS) DE FRIES (JUNE 1950) graduated from U of I BA 1956, U of CO MA 1977, lives in Boulder, CO, has 2 children and is retired.

CARL JOHNSON (JUNE 1950) lives in Wauconda, IL, has 5 children, 15 grandchildren and is a painter.

ANNETTE (MATULA) KISTLER (JUNE 1950) graduated from Washington U BS Business 1954, lives in Noblesville, IN, has 2 children, 1 grandchild and is a retired office manager.

DENNIS SCHACHNER (JUNE 1950) graduated from De Paul BA Business, lives in Mt Prospect, IL and is retired.

NANCY (BOULTING) STONEBURNER (JUNE 1950) graduated from IL State BS ed 1954, lives in Galena, IL, has 2 children, 6 grandchildren and is a retired teacher now owns a bed and breakfast.

CHARLENE STUECKEMANN (JUNE 1950) lives in Appleton, WI, has 2 children, 3 grandchildren and is retired.

JOAN (WUERFFEL) WINFIELD (JUNE 1950) lives in Dundee, IL, has 3 children, 5 grandchildren, 1 great grandchild and is a part time secretary.

OUILA DES ROCHERS (JUNE 1951) graduated from Worshan College of Mortuary Science, lives in Largo, FL, has 8 children, 17 grandchildren and is a retired funeral director, now a building contractor.

LUCY (BRUNDRETT) JEFFERSON (JUNE 1951) graduated from U of Chicago, BA 1954, BA 1955, MA 1957, lives in Boston, MA, has 1 child, 3 grandchildren and is a family therapist.

RICHARD LALLY (JUNE 1951) graduated from Chicago

CLASS NOTES

Tech College 1958, lives in Roselle, IL, has 2 children, 4 grandchildren and is retired.

WILLIAM MC CARTHY (JUNE 1952) graduated from Kansas State, Criminal Justice, lives in Mesa, AZ, has 1 child and is a retired US Postal Inspector.

JANET (SWANSON) STOFFELS (JANUARY 1952) graduated from U of MN BA, lives in St Petersburg, FL, has 3 children, 3 grandchildren and is retired.

DORIS (MEYERS) WITTE (JUNE 1952) lives in Venice, FL, has 4 children, 9 grandchildren and is retired.

JACQUELINE (BODAMMER) PEARSON (JANUARY 1953) GRADUATED FROM Wesley Mem Hospital School of Nursing 1956, lives in Cary, IL, has 2 children, 3 grandchildren and is an RN.

EUGENE SWANSON (JANUARY 1953) MARRIED **SHARON (CHIZEK)** (1960) graduated from U of I BS 1957, U of Chicago, MBA 1972, the live in Naperville, IL, have 3 children, 2 grandchildren and are retired.

JUNE (BENNETT) WYLIE (JUNE 1953) lives in Wheaton, IL, has 2 children and is an executive sales director.

WAYNE GREENE (JANUARY 1954) lives in Sharpsburg, GA, has 5 children, 2 grandchildren and is retired.

PHYLLIS (RUTTKAY) VERBRUGGHE (JANUARY 1954) graduated from Wright AA 1956, lives in Park Ridge, IL, has 2 children, 2 grandchildren and is an accounting clerk.

RICHARD LINDQUIST (JUNE 1954) lives in Mora, MN, has 1 child, 2 grandchildren and is a retired truck driver.

MARIE (VALENZIANO) WERBY (JUNE 1954) lives in Evanston, IL, has 7 children, 10 grandchildren and is actively retired.

WALTER GUYER (JANUARY 1955) graduated from U of I BS 1959, U of Chgo MBA 1969, CPA 1969,

lives in Arlington Hts, IL, has 4 children, 5 grandchildren and is a semi retired merchandiser for Marshall Fields.

DONALD MELLEMA (JANUARY 1955) GRADUATED FROM Beloit BA 1959, lives in Park Ridge, IL, has 2 children, is retired from WBBM Radio and a Taft Alumni Hall of Famer.

PATRICIA (DUNN) HALL (JUNE 1955) lives in Dublin, CA, has 3 children, 2 grandchildren and is retired.

ARLENE (WANKE) TOBIASSEN (JUNE 1955) lives in Walnut, CA, has 5 children, 15 grandchildren and is retired.

JOAN DE MENT (JUNE 1956) graduated from IL Wesleyan BFA 1960, lives in Glenview, IL and is an art teacher.

CHESTER KOWALSKI (JUNE 1956) graduated from IIT BS 1967, lives in Norfork, AR, has 3 children, 3 grandchildren and is retired.

MARION (SPIERLING) LEAVY (JUNE 1956) graduated from Wright AA 1988, lives in Chicago, has 4 children, 1 grandchild and is an administrative assistant at U of IL Dept of Anes

ELEANOR (KUEHN) MEDE (JUNE 1956) MARRIED **GARY** (JUNE 1954) she graduated from IL State BA 1986, MA 1989, lives in Normal, IL, has 3 children, 1 grandchild and is a German instructor at ISU.

DON OSTROM (JUNE 1956) GRADUATED FROM St Olaf BA 1960, MA 1970, Washington U PhD 1972, lives in St Peter, MN, has 3 children and is a college professor

GORDON ARNSPIGER (JUNE 1957) graduated from Purdue BS Engr. 1961, lives in Flagstaff, AZ and is retired.

CAROL (PETERSON) GOERNE (JUNE 1957) lives in Wheeling, IL, has 2 children and is a buyer.

LOLETA (ANDERSON) DIDRICKSON (JUNE 1958) graduated from U of I, BA Communications, lives in Chicago, has 3 children and is a

former State of Illinois Comptroller.

BETTE (WOOD) GOULD (JUNE 1958) graduated from Lakeland College BS 1989, MBA 1998, lives in Mountain Home, AR, has 2 children, 4 grandchildren and is retired.

LYNN (ANDERSON) LEE (JUNE 1958) GRADUATED FROM De Pauw BSN 1962, lives in Oakbrook, IL, has 1 child, 1 grandchild and is an RN.

RICHARD LUTZ (JUNE 1958) graduated from Northwestern BS 1963, lives in Barrington, IL, has 2 children, 3 step children, 1 grandchild and is in sales.

ALLAN BROCKSTEIN (JANUARY 1959) graduated from U of I BSEE 1963, MSEE 1964, PhD 1967, lives in Chatsworth, CA, has 2 children, 2 grandchildren and is an aerospace engineer.

BONNIE (WAGNER) KELLER (JANUARY 1959) lives in Lake Villa, IL, has 5 children, 8 grandchildren and is a school bus driver.

JEFF CARSON (JUNE 1959) lives in Phoenix, AZ, has 2 children and is a director of consumer home sales for Dial Corp. and a marathon runner.

LARRY MARSH (JUNE 1959) graduated from US Naval Academy BS 1963, American U 1968, U of Munich 1970, lives in Great Falls, VA, is a retired Rear Admiral now executive VP for a non profit foundation and a Taft Alumni Hall of Famer.

1960s

KAREN (SCHULTZ) SWENSON (JANUARY 1960) graduated from Benedictine MBA 1992, North Park BA 1963, lives in Wheaton, IL, has 2 children, 2 grandchildren and is a college career administrator at IIT.

CAROL (PTAK) DEWIRE (JUNE 1960) lives in Punta Gordo, FL, has 2 children, 1 grandchild and is retired.

DENNIS FERSON (JUNE 1960) lives in Wakefield, MI, has 2 children, 1 grandchild and is a retired labor relations manager.

KEN FRIZANE (JUNE 1960) graduated from Wright AA 1962, U of I BS 1965, IIT MS 1971, lives in Mt Prospect, IL, has 1 child, 2 grandchildren and is a comp. Network mgr.

JOHN HALLDORSON (JUNE 1960) graduated from Southern IL, BA 1965, MS 1970, lives in Carterville, IL, has 2 children and is a retired HS teacher.

ANN (LOVGREN) HUDSON (JUNE 1960) lives in Zlawrenceville, GA, has 4 children, 3 grandchildren and is an LPN.

JOHN MAJKA (JUNE 1960) graduated from U of I BS 1973, lives in Louisville, KY, has 1 child, 3 grandchildren and is an instructor/engineer.

DONNA (ZAPP) REUSING (JUNE 1960) graduated from Wright AA Business 1962, lives in Lilburn, GA and is retired.

JUDY (SCHMIDT) TRESILLA (JUNE 1960) lives in Naperville, IL, has 3 children, 3 grandchildren and is a purchasing agent.

WARREN SCHIMPF (JANUARY 1961) MARRIED **JILL (WAGNER)** (JUNE 1963) he graduated from Wright 1962, U of WI BS Chemistry 1965, U of MI MS, MPH, PhD, Jill graduated from Northeastern BS 1967, U of MI MA 1968, they now live in Jeffersonville, IN running Schimpff's Candies.

GREGG SCHUMACHER (JUNE 1961) MARRIED **DONNA (CATANESE)** (JUNE 1960) they live in Palm Coast, FL and have 3 children.

ALLAN STROMSTA (JANUARY 1962) graduated from Northern BA 1967, Chicago State MS 1974, lives in Shorewood, IL, has 3 children and is retired.

MARILYN (ORZUP) GEHR (JUNE 1962) lives in Longwood, FL, has 3 children and owns a drapery installation service.

DEBBIE (WERNES) MAHLER (JUNE 1962) lives in Morris, IL, has 1 child and is retired on a 5 acre lake.

DARRYL SAMBORSKI (JUNE 1962) MARRIED

CLASS NOTES

MARY (PAPCIAK) (JUNE 1961) he graduated from Northeastern BA 1966, Northern MS, lives in Schaumburg, IL, has 2 children and is a science teacher.

LYNN (HIBARGER) SARACCO (JUNE 1962) MARRIED WILLIAM (JUNE 1960) they live in Bartlett, IL, have 5 children and Lynn is a realtor.

GARY CHRISTOPH (JUNE 1963) graduated from CA Inst of Tech BS 1967, U of Chicago, MS 1969, PhD 1971, lives in Columbia, MD, has 1 child and is chief information officer for Medicare.

ALICE (MOHRMAN) KOSNIK (JUNE 1963) graduated from Northeastern BA 1966, lives in Northbrook, IL, has 2 children and is a Spanish Teacher.

FRANK TURK (JANUARY 1964) graduated from Central MO State BS Education, lives in Arlington, TX and is retired.

KEN GABRIEL (JUNE 1964) lives in Bloomington, IL and is a regional sales manager.

RONALD ELSNER (JUNE 1965) lives in Huntsville, AL and was the recipient of year

2000 NASA Exceptional Achievement Medal.

SANDIE (STEWART) TEPICK (JUNE 1966) lives in Algonquin, IL and is a crew scheduler for United Airlines.

DAVID DE BROCKE (JUNE 1968) graduated from TSC Bible School OM, Western Truck School CDL (1st in class) 1991, lives in Sturtevant, WI, has 7 children and is a truck driver.

FRED GARZINO (1968) MARRIED MARY (STECKIEWICZ) (1968) Fred graduated from Drake BA 1968, U of NC MA 1974, Northwestern 1980, De Paul JD 1998, Mary graduated from De Paul BS 1972, Loyola Med 1976, they live in Chicago where Fred is an Attorney and Mary is an educational writer.

1970s

LINDA (BOOKIE) CARLSTONE (1970) lives in Deerfield, IL, has 3 children and is a congressional press secretary.

JUDITH (CRAWFORD) FERRARO (1971) graduated from Triton, Wright AGS 2000, lives in Chicago, has 4

children, 3 grandchildren and is a day care owner/director.

DEBRA (LEFTAKES) SCRIMGEOUR (1971) MARRIED JEFF (1971) they have 2 children and live in Chicago.

MARGIE (GORSKI) SZEWCZYK (1971) lives in Des Plaines, IL, has 2 children and is a corporate investigator.

CAROL (NAATZ) WODKA (1971) graduated from Eastern IL BS Elem. ED 1975, lives in Hoffman Estates, IL, has 2 children and is a preschool teacher.

ROBERT DONALD (1974) MARRIED LYNNE (MICHALEK) (1974), he graduated from De Paul BS 1980, lives in Arlington Hts, IL and is a software consultant.

DEBRA (RYBA) PARSONS-WAGNER (1977) graduated from Hunter College BA 1985, lives in New York, NY, has 2 children and is an editor for Episcopal New Yorker.

MARY (BORSKI) VACCAREZZA (1978) lives in Chicago and is a claims supervisor.

MICHAEL EK (1979) graduated from U of I BA

1983, John Marshall Law JD 1987, lives in Bartlett, IL, has 4 children and is an attorney.

NORBERT LEWANDOWSKI (1979) lives in Chicago, has 2 children and is a prepress supervisor.

SUSAN MOSS (1979) graduated from Western IL 1983, lives in Chicago, has 2 children and is a Chicago Police Sergeant.

KEITH RANG (1979) lives in Chicago, has 1 child and is a supervisor.

1980s

KIMBERLY (BRODACK) EPIFANIO (1980) graduated LPN 1980, lives in Lake Villa, IL, has 4 children and is a real estate broker.

JOSEPH BOTTALLA (1983) graduated from De Paul BS Mktg. 1988, lives in Des Plaines, IL and does landscape maintenance.

RENEE (KICINSKI) YOUNG (1987) MARRIED MICHAEL (1986) she graduated from ISU BA 1995, they live in Bartlett, IL and she is a broker representative.

In Our Memories

- **Warren Belzer** (class of 1940) died April 16, 2000.
- **Robert J. Smith** (class of June, 1943) died November 26, 2000.
- **Leroy Kirchwehm** (class of June, 1949) passed away September 24, 2000.
- **William Lindgren** (class of June, 1950) died October 8, 2000.
- **Diane Hupke-Stoffels** (class of January, 1951) died February, 2000 from cancer.
- **Dolores (Chison) LaPietra** (Class of 1960) died December 31, 2000.
- **Betty (Marschall) Erickson** (Class of June 1962) died December 1, 2000.
- **Laura Nathanson** (class of 1968) passed away on July 9, 2000 from cancer.
- **Al Copija** (class of 1969) died from cancer in 1998.
- **John Schneider** (class of 1969) died February 6, 2000 from complication of MS and Diabetes.

Letters *(Continued from page 4)*

Dear Editor:

In the last edition [Summer, 2000] of the alumni newsletter there was a photo of **Ral Donner** (1960) and **Rick Terry** (1960) in their Norwood Park little league uniforms. The accompanying letter from (late '50s Taft baseball great) **Lynn Terry** (June 1957) on the tragic premature deaths of both Ral Donner and his younger brother Rick was both a wonderful tribute and a touching eulogy.

His letter had special meaning for me since I was fortunate enough to have known both Rick and Ral quite well. I first met each of them when we played together on that same little league team back in the summer of 1954. The team was Colorado Springs (see photo). And, we finished in last place.

Since I went to a different grammar school, it wasn't until I got to Taft, a few years later, that I bumped into my old baseball teammates once again.

Ral (Ralph) Donner was already Mr. Rock 'n Roll. He dressed sharp, looked cool and he sang exactly like Elvis. He was 15 and he already had sideburns! He was threatened almost daily by **Miss Marquardt**, "Cut those sideburns off or you'll be expelled!"

Rick Terry, on the other hand, was one of the funniest guys I ever knew. And, he became one of my favorite high school "greaser" buddies. Sadly, he also became the first friend -- I mean, a guy I actually knew -- to lose his young life. I'll never forget it.

Rick was only 17 when he was killed in a car accident. Ral Donner succumbed to cancer at age 41. I am saddened by both their deaths to this day.

Jim Jacobs (June 1960)
Co-creator of "Grease"



Jim Jacobs (1960) in 1954 Little League uniform

To TAA Editor:

Is there any town of less than 10,000 people and located more than 400 miles from Chicago that can boast of more Taft graduates than St Peter, MN. St. Peter is the home of 5.

Don Ostrom (June 1956)

[Editors Note: Let us know if any City can beat this boast and we will publish it in the next newsletter. J. Bloom]

Remembering Our Teachers...

Dear Alumni Association,

I wanted to take this opportunity to mention an outstanding and inspirational teacher, **Mr. Patt**. I had him junior year for Trig. Mr. Patt was the kind of teacher who students could trust. He often shared personal stories with us about his first car, his family and kids, and about what college was like. He told us the truth - that it was hard. His honesty was much appreciated.

Mr. Patt's passion for math was what pushed me to pursue a concentration in math during college. He was the kind of teacher who made us not only memorize the quadratic equation, but also derive it. (It came in handy in college since I had to do that anyway).

Mr. Patt was also the kind of teacher who would work on a problem until he solved it. I remember one day we solved a problem that didn't come out right and we couldn't figure out why. The bell rang and the class didn't really care but Mr. Patt told us he'd figure it out. The next day we came in and he had it solved. His persistence was an admirable quality.

During my senior year Mr. Patt left the CPS System to teach in the suburbs. We knew it was a difficult decision for him and he was truly missed. I don't know if he receives your newsletter, but I wanted to thank him for being such a great teacher. I know others feel the same way. Unless he took up one of his side jobs of being a DJ or a carpenter full-time, I hope he's still teaching.

Kathy Dynak (1995)
kdynak1@hotmail.com

Dear Jerry Bloom,

I have received a copy every now and then but realized I did not get one very important (to me) issue, and that is the one with a picture of "**Pops**" **Rapier**! It was when I read the letters about the previous issue that I realized I need to subscribe. Would you be so kind as to send me that issue with Pop's picture in it?

When twin sister **Marilynn (Pfeiffer)** and I arrived at Taft we had been given the impression that instruments for Beginner's Band would be furnished. When we learned this was true of just a few large instruments we told Pops we couldn't be in the band. We were so disappointed and I was "crushed", figuratively and almost literally, when Pops offered me the base tuba. My Freshie tears of embarrassment told him this wouldn't work. Meantime Marilyn took her place in the trombone section with the only other furnished instrument. Pops must have been thinking, "What do I do with this other twin?" Bless his dear heart, he told me to borrow the cornet, which was in the instrument room. (I barely knew which was the cornet!)

The second day in Beginners Band, Pops handed me his own beautiful trumpet, and a mouthpiece to use for as long as needed! When Pops wanted to demonstrate a rhythm or

See **Teachers** | Page 9

Teachers *(Continued from page 8)*

get us in time, I'd hand over his horn, he'd put in his mouth-piece and play away! Each semester before Marilyn and I were able to get our own horns, Pops would insist, "of course you are to sing up for band."

What a gift! What a spirit and what a wonderful person! What an influence he had on so many lives, including Marilyn's and mine! No wonder we all just adored him! He was a really special "Pops."

My experiences with Pops in band for four high school years are my happiest memories of Taft! Pops opened up the world of music for me. (I no longer play my trumpet but I enjoy singing in our church choir.) One result is all three sons played brass instruments. Two of them still do on occasion and the other son kept up on piano and plays with his daughters. My beloved trumpet is waiting for one of our grandchildren to decide to play it. I'll always be grateful to Pops for so many fond memories of Taft days and the gift of his patience, his talents, use of his horn and especially for the start of a love for music.

Aileen (Pfeiffer) Nichols (January 1946)

Kraft At Taft *(Continued from page 1)*

7. Teamwork / team building
8. Developing resumes / cover letters
9. Interviewing

Mary Kay (Kretch) Haben, Judy Bauman, Jeff McGowan and Lisa Brandt-Whittington, Taft alums at Kraft are "teaching" and I am sure that they wish they had this opportunity when they were at Taft. So please, help us make a difference in a child's life!

It only takes 45 minutes a week for 8-10 weeks..you can arrange the time with the class teacher. You can also "team teach" with a friend, so you don't have to go it alone, and can have flexibility if your schedule does not enable you to make every session. Also, Dr. Tavardian will be allowing us to utilize Taft in the evenings and Saturday mornings for this project.

Interested? Please e-mail Judy Bauman at jwbauman@kraft.com to join us!



Judy Bauman, Lisa Brandt-Whittington, and Mary Kay (Kretch) Haben

"Where Are They Now? - Jim Jacobs"

by Stacy Adams (article reprinted from Chicago Educator, Vol. 6, No. 4 (December, 2000), p. 13. (for the Chicago Public School community)

Jim Jacobs [1960], co-creator of the longest running show in Broadway history, says that he is one alumnus whose life definitely changed for the better because he attended a Chicago public school.

Jacobs said that his experiences at William Howard Taft High School were the motivation behind "Grease," which, in addition to being the king of Broadway is also the biggest box office movie-musical of all time. The first version of "Grease," which Jacobs co-created in 1971 with the late Warren Casey, was a modest stage production at the Kingston Mines Theatre in Chicago.

Jacobs was acting on his high school dream of becoming an actor and a rock-n-roll star when he began composing "Grease" on his guitar and brought his ideas to Casey.

Those first performances were the catalyst for the book, music, and lyrics of "Grease," which eventually launched the careers of actors such as John Travolta, Richard Gere, Patrick Swayze, and Marilu Henner.

Jacobs said that "Grease" is based on a time when his live for music was being nourished at Taft, 6545 W. Hurlbut St.

"I had a great teacher who taught me more about classical music than anyone else, and then on Fridays he was hip enough to let us bring our own music," Jacobs said. "Mr. Compton was his name, and he was great. He didn't have any fear of art."

With that support, Jacobs began playing guitar and singing in several rock bands. However, Jacobs said that while his music interest flourished, his academics lagged behind.

"My focus wasn't there," he admitted. "It was funny, because my first year of high school I was really a superior to excellent student, but by my third year I was getting Fs and Ds."

Jacobs said he eventually did well enough to pass his classes, and shortly after graduating in 1960 he landed a job as a Chicago Tribune office boy. It was there that he met a community theater director.

"He said, 'Why don't you come and see a play,' and I kind of stumbled into it from there," Jacobs said humbly of his career.

He then began working as an actor and writer in community theaters and later landed the title role in the Midwest premiere of "Jimmy Shine" and a Broadway role in the Pulitzer Prize-winning play "No Place to Be Somebody" in 1971.

Jacobs also co-authored several other plays and musicals, including "Castaways - Island of Lost Coeds," "Bats in the Belfrey" and "Remember the Night."

Now, Jacobs has placed his main focus on promoting the worldwide resurgence of "Grease" and spending time with his wife, actress, singer and dancer Denise Nettleton.

He also tries to keep up with the current events at the real Rydell High - Taft High School, and recently attended his 40th class reunion.

"I had the best time of my life," he said of his days at Taft in the 1950s. "Those truly were 'Happy Days' for me."

TAFT ALUMNI ASSOCIATION APPLICATION FORM			
Name		Maiden Name	Month & Year Graduated
Address (Home)		City	State Zip
Address (Business)		City	State Zip
Home Telephone No: ()		Office Telephone No:()	
Name of Spouse		Year Married:	
Number of Children:	Ages:	Number of Grandchildren:	
College(s) Attended, Degree(s) Earned, Year of Graduation _____			
Occupation:		Other Interests:	
Other News or Information: _____			
<input type="checkbox"/> I am enclosing \$ _____ to defray newsletter cost. <input type="checkbox"/> I am enclosing \$15. 00 for two-year membership. <input type="checkbox"/> I am enclosing \$20. 00 for two-year Husband & Wife membership. Return to: Taft Alumni Association 6545 W. Hurlbut St. Chicago IL 60631			

Winter 2001

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

President: Kay Kuciak (1963)
 Asst. to President Frank Heyer (1948)
 Vice-president: Jeraldene Bloom (1962)
 2nd Vice President: Anne Lunde (1969)
 Secretary/Treasurer: Shirley DeWeese (1960)
 Special Events: Mike Guercio (1978)
 Directors: Cliff Raiman (1947)
 Tom Kuciak (1962)
 Joe Popp (1966)
 Paulette English (1967)
 Kevin Kreiger (1973)
 Judi Lenihan (1973)
 Michael Marras (1982)

Newsletter Staff:

Editor - Jerry Bloom - (920)743-8449
 E-mail - Jbbloom@aol.com
 Assistants: Kay & Tom Kuciak -
 (623)544-0226
 E-mail - Taftalum@aol.com

Website Coordinator: Kevin Krieger

RENEW NOW !!

Look at your address label on the back of this page. Check your year of graduation on the lower right corner. Is it correct? The most important area is here. This is also the area with the expiration date of your current membership with the Taft Alumni Association. If the date is close, the TIME is **NOW** to sit down and write out a check for \$15. Not one, but TWO full years of newsletters with opportunities to learn about classmates, reunions, school events and alumni programs. Be sure to use the application form above to fill in the latest updates in your life.

Taft Alumni Newsletter is published quarterly by the Taft Alumni Association. Send all general correspondence and changes of address: Taft Alumni Association, 6545 W. Hurlbut St., Chicago, IL 60631 or E-mail at Taftalum@aol.com.
 Website: <http://www.taftalumni.org>
 Alumni Directory E-mail address: EagleEmail@yahoo.com

TAFT ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
6545 WEST HURLBUT STREET
CHICAGO IL 60631

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit NO. 215
Des Plaines, IL

