



# Taft Alumni Newsletter

Vol. XXIX, No. 3

Summer 2013

## **Tribute Concert Salutes J.J. Stamm**

By **Anne Lunde**, Class of 1969

A spring rainstorm just as the doors opened did not dampen the enthusiasm of the crowd that packed the Taft High School auditorium on June 1 to salute one of the legends of Taft, retired music teacher James J. Stamm.

It's been 30 years since he conducted his last Mixed Chorus concert and retired in 1983, but when reunion classes from his 23 years at the school get together and talk about their teachers, his name comes up, whether the grads call him J.J. or Mr. Stamm.

From the beginning of the evening when the quality of the voices in the auditorium soared forward to meet the student chorus on stage, there was no question about the enthusiasm this audience felt.

The "Stamm Jam," planned for over a year, involved the Taft Local School Council, and a committee of 24 – many of them Taft graduates from the chorus days.

There was an opportunity for the LSC vice chairman and event chairman, Lisa Schweiger, to introduce Principal May Kay Cappitelli, and Alderman Mary O'Connor (41<sup>st</sup> Ward). They explained about Taft's recent successes, the expansion of the International Baccalaureate curriculum into the junior high program and "wall to wall" through the high school, and some promises for long-overdue repairs and upgrades to the building. Taft anticipates it could have record enrollment, approaching 3,300, within the next year.

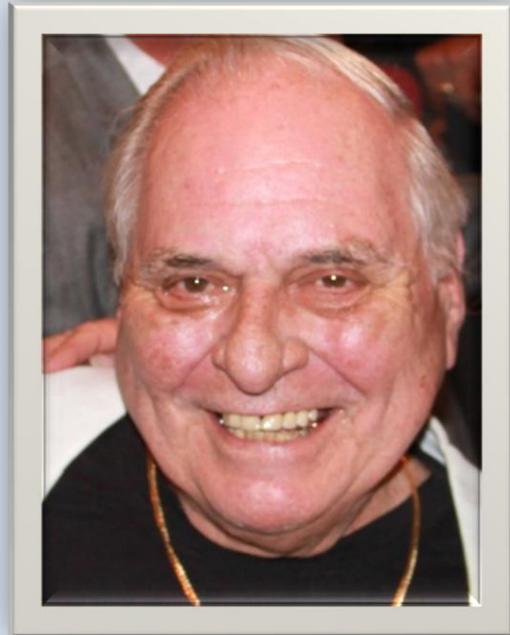
The program featured show tune performances by Taft students: the A Cappella Chorus, the Girls Chorus, the Eagle Singers, the Men's Mixed Chorus and the Women's Chorale. Performing Arts Chairman Brian Lavery, Philip Platakis, Kyle Shiver-Simpson and Kevin Harriman were faculty members involved in the performances.

Although many of the songs were from shows created after Mr. Stamm's retirement, the students also learned "To Sir With Love" and "You'll Never Walk Alone."

### **The career**

When he was hired in 1956, J.J. Stamm was assigned to direct the Girls Chorus. When Mrs. Ernst, the Mixed Chorus director, got promoted and left Taft, they added the Mixed Chorus to his duties. It became the most recognized role of all the parts he played while on the faculty.

"Remember the caroling at O'Hare Airport when it was still new?" someone will ask. Or they'll recall all the painstaking



### **To all of my friends, students, and faculty**

who so honored me on June 1, 2013. The love and gratitude you expressed made it one of the most memorable nights of my life. I was flabbergasted by the over 500 J.J. Stamm fans from yesteryear who were there. It is quite impossible to individually thank all of the people who attended. I feel humbled and happy for your loyalty and love. I will never forget June 1, 2013 as long as I live.

*My kindest regards to all, **J.J. Stamm***

*(The photograph is courtesy of 1970 classmate, Gary Richert.)*

rehearsals so the Taft choruses would be at the top of their game in the citywide choral competitions. Taft's Mixed Chorus usually won Superior ratings – Mr. Stamm helped to start the contest and set the standards.

The Stamm choruses never did simple music. They were challenged with four-part harmony in sacred music, professional arrangements from popular choral conductors like Fred Waring, and some he wrote himself. The Christmas concerts were part of the tradition – complete with his knit sweaters and a familiar stocking cap which would appear in time for the holiday numbers. Taft's arrangements of "Twas the Night Before Christmas," "The Twelve Days of Christmas" or "Christmas Was Meant for Children" were memorized by the audiences with all the extra nuances.

Others recalled the musicals which he introduced at Taft. Irving Berlin's "Annie Get Your Gun" in 1964, Mr. Stamm rem-

inished, was the first Broadway musical performed in the Chicago Public Schools. Rodgers and Hammerstein's "Carousel" tickets went on sale the next year and were sold out before lunch, and they had to add a second weekend. Ironically, while he directed many Broadway shows with high school casts elsewhere, there were no musicals produced at Taft for the next four years. Mr. Stamm directed Frank Loesser's "Guys and Dolls" in 1970 and Jerry Herman's "Mame" in 1971.

Concert co-producers Rick Winge and Mike Costanzo of the Taft 1970 class were veterans of "Guys and Dolls" and have been friends ever since.

During the musical gap, in 1969, Taft held its first Talent Show, a tradition that Mr. Stamm continued until his retirement.

Aside from those four musicals at Taft, he directed shows for 17 years at St. Viator's High School where his daughters attended, and turned in the early 1970s to working with citywide casts in Chicago. Actor John Herrera from Lane Tech (who starred as Che in the original Chicago touring company of "Evita") was among the future professionals who came from those shows. Mr. Stamm and fellow Taft teacher Irv Stein then launched the Chicagoland (Youth) Theatrical Troupe which kept Taft's top talents on stage on the North and Northwest Side in various venues into the mid-1980s.

For a number of years, starting in summer 1966, Mr. Stamm also taught a summer enrichment theater program for junior high age local grade school students. He directed – and often wrote -- the musical shows they performed, giving incoming Taft students some early stage experience.

### **The tributes**

Also there to greet the crowd were William Rankin, a former Taft counselor, who served as tech director for Mr. Stamm's musicals, and Nick Jason, a Taft alumnus who worked in various capacities on later productions while teaching college level police courses.

David Barth was recruited for the Mixed Chorus as a freshman, and found himself assigned to Gary Blohm, an upper classman who knew the ropes. Blohm made show business his career. Barth absorbed everything like a sponge, went out into the world to have a career, and ended up in his spare time organizing and directing the renowned "Spirit of Life Chorus" in the Northwest suburbs for its first 25 years. Friends told him he even directed like J.J. Stamm – a true compliment in Barth's opinion – and when they became reacquainted later, Mr. Stamm returned to enjoy many of Barth's concerts. Barth and Blohm are now members of Taft's Alumni Hall of Fame.

Not everyone could be in the choruses or be cast in the musicals, but every Taft student had to earn a music credit to graduate. J.J. Stamm and the other music teachers had the task of introducing the classics to students who wanted to be bopping at the hop.

Jim Jacobs, Class of June 1960 and another Hall of Fame alumnus, co-authored the hit musical "Grease" based on his Taft experiences.



### **"Grease" co-creator Jim Jacobs tells J.J. Stamm how general music at Taft introduced him to classical composers.**

"I walked into the auditorium, a scared 13-year-old kid," Jacobs told the audience that night. "I saw guys with sideburns and I said, 'If this is high school, I can't wait to get in!'.... It was the golden age of rock and roll. The girls were Pink Ladies ... without this school there would be no 'Grease.' Mr. Stamm was not a rock and roll enthusiast," he added.

"Not yet," Mr. Stamm replied.

"I can still recognize Bach and Tchaikovsky," Jacobs said of his music appreciation instruction, "but I think of other things." When he hears the "William Tell Overture," he recognizes "The Lone Ranger" theme – but he knows it's by Rossini.

Mr. Stamm's General Music students learned everything from Grofe's "Grand Canyon Suite" and Wagnerian overtures, to Frank Sinatra songs, and "The Taft Alma Mater" which J.J. Stamm composed. While the Taft Founders March served as a school fight song, the Alma Mater was generally reserved for graduations. (Copies of the Alma Mater can be found on the Taft Alumni Association web site.)

Nick Jason, who transferred to Taft the year Jacobs graduated, said his first class was general music with Mr. Stamm.

"I love him. He became my friend. I collaborated with him on a lot of shows... It's not often a person has the influence to impact someone (the way) he totally impacted my life."



### **Mary Frances Stamm Gregory spoke on behalf of the Stamm family.**

"These walls have echoes," Bill Rankin said. "Close your eyes and you'll hear Billy and Julie, Sky and Sister Sarah, Annie and Frank. Those are our echoes."

The entire Stamm family came for the ceremonies, including his daughters Mary Gregory, Pat Lum, Sue Stamm and Katie Cintron, and his sister and brother-in-law.

Mary Frances, speaking for the family, said music and musical theatre

were always parts of their life. She was in the crowd of Taft's "Carousel," but when she transferred to St. Viator's and her dad was going to direct a show there, she had to audition like everyone else.

"My dad put his heart and soul into every production he did," she added. She thanked everyone for loving him too.

### **The memories**

Mr. Stamm was assisted to the stage while a brief taped interview was shown, and then added some live remarks.

He came to Taft, Mr. Stamm explained, when it still looked like a college campus. Students were polite and followed a dress code created by their leaders. Miss Mary Gillies had just become Taft's second principal, and Leonard Teuscher was still assistant principal. Joe Kupcinet coached the football team and Jim Smilgoff coached baseball. In 23 years he also worked with principals Dr. Gerald Haley, Dr. John Graven and Sam Ozaki.

"Teaching was a huge part of my life," he said.

"My time at Taft was the most exhilarating time of my life. It capped all the things that I did in the rest of my life," he reflected. He thanked the parents who sent their children to Taft.

"My goal for the students was nothing but excellence. Geography cannot change my roots. I left my heart at Taft High School."

### **The gift**

The original goal of the concert organizers had been to get a new baby grand piano for the auditorium, but Winge explained the committee had an even better surprise – Mr. Stamm's own piano had been obtained and restored, and will now be the stage piano at Taft. A classic piano, it will feature a donation plaque in Mr. Stamm's name. Additional funds raised will go towards a second, digital piano and resources for the music department.

The school has established a new fundraising organization, the Taft High School Foundation, to give the school an oppor-

tunity to focus the funds collected towards projects it wants to achieve. Rick Winge pointed to the auditorium's already aging current sound system and the red auditorium seats (in a school whose colors are blue and silver) as being among projects he'd like to work on in the future.

The evening concluded with an opportunity for chorus veterans and other alumni to come on stage to sing the J.J. Stamm arrangement of Irving Berlin's "White Christmas." David Barth conducted a packed stage of singers, while Mr. Stamm accompanied them on the piano. *[All photos for this article provided by Anne Lunde.]*

## **Reflections on the "JJ" Concert**

By Mike Costanzo, Class of 1970

The Tribute Concert to former Taft music teacher, Mr. James Stamm had many heart-warming moments, like: Taft's Choir singing the poignant song "To Sir with Love" - Principal Cappitelli's warm, engaging welcome - a video of Mr. Stamm's recollections - the presentation of a wall plaque to Mr. Stamm - Mr. Stamm's entertaining thank you remarks - the sumptuous after-concert reception. All of it was fantastic. But, for me the pinnacle came as guests in the jam-packed auditorium were invited to come up on-stage and join in singing one last song while their beloved former teacher, Mr. Stamm accompanied them on piano. Over 100 impromptu singers gathered on-stage; many were his former students.

This was a stirring finale to an evening already filled with a trove of sentimental, old and many wonderful, new memories.

The Taft HS Foundation organization is planning other events for Taft alumnus. You are invited to stay in touch with the group by registering at its new website: [www.TaftHSFoundation.org](http://www.TaftHSFoundation.org). The fullness of life is measured by its cherished memories. There is a rich, rewarding experience waiting for you yet at Taft High School. *[Photo provided by Mike Costanzo]*



**David Barth conducts a chorus of alumni in Mr. Stamm's arrangement of "White Christmas"**

### Class January 1953

**Date:** September 14, 2013  
**Place:** Elk's Club - Des Plaines  
**Contact:** Lois (Plechaty) Rolf - 847-967-6993 - loisrolf12@aol.com



### Class June 1954 - 60<sup>th</sup> Reunion

**Date:** TBD - Interest to help?  
**Contact:** - Toni (Geisert) Lien - tlien002@san.rr.com or 858-451-1445.

### Class January 1957

**Date:** October 25, 2013  
**Place:** Zia's Trattoria, 6699 Northwest Hwy, Chicago  
**Contact:** Sue Moshier susanmathews@live.com by October 5<sup>th</sup> (must RSVP)

### Class of June 1959 Other Classes welcome!

**Date:** October 5-6, 2013 (54<sup>th</sup> Annual Reunion)  
**Place:** Des Plaines Hilton Garden Inn on River Road  
**Contacts:** Larry Marsh - fairseas2u@gmail.com or Anne Fear-McManus - annemcmanus@me.com  
**Website:** www.taftreunion1959.com

### Class June 1961

**Date:** September 14, 2013 - cocktail reception  
**Place:** (Downtown Condo Tower - limited to 50 attendees)  
**Contact:** John Prochaska - taft1961reunion@aol.com or 312-208-2582

### Class January/June 1961

**Date:** TBD - 2014 - picnic  
**Place:** TBD (NW suburban location)  
**Contact:** John Prochaska - taft1961reunion@aol.com

### Class 1962

**Date:** May 2-4 2014  
**Place:** Des Plaines Hilton Garden Inn - on South River Road  
**Contact:** Judy Merrill Ruegsegger - judy.ruegsegger@yahoo.com

### Class 1963 - 50<sup>th</sup> Reunion

**Date:** October 11-12, 2013  
**Place:** Hilton Garden Inn - Des Plaines  
**Contact:** Cheryl Henninger Krupa - taft1963@yahoo.com

### Class 1968

**Date:** TBD (looking for committee members)  
**Place:** TBD  
**Contact:** Robert Clark - clark7811@msn.com

### Class 1973

**Date:** August 3, 2013  
**Place:** Snuggery Pub, Edison Park  
**Contact:** Mark Krejci - 419-392-8657 oldwardawg1@msn.com

### Class 1993

**Date:** August 10, 2013  
**Place:** Moretti's Edison Park  
**Contact:** 20 Year Reunion Committee:  
[http://weplanreunions.com/www/reunion\\_info/reunions\\_tai93.html](http://weplanreunions.com/www/reunion_info/reunions_tai93.html)

### 1st Annual ALL CLASS Reunion Picnic EAST-South-EAST

**Date:** Saturday, April 5, 2014, Noon - 4pm  
**Place:** [REDACTED] (for those who cannot attend west coast affair in St. Petersburg)  
**Pot Luck:** a food item to share (BYOB)  
**Contact:** [REDACTED] or Jerry Bloom Stephenson - jbbloom@charter.net

### 11th Annual ALL CLASS Reunion Picnic South-EAST

**Date:** Saturday, March 8, 2014, 11am - 3pm  
**Place:** Ft. DeSoto Park, St. Petersburg, FL, Shelter 14  
**Donation:** \$3 per person (+ \$5/car parking fee)  
**Pot Luck:** a food item to share (BYOB)  
**Photo shoot:** 2:30 pm  
**Contact** (if needed): Leon Kathan - 815-814-1555 leonkathan@yahoo.com

### 4rd Annual ALL CLASS Reunion Picnic South-WEST

**Date:** TBD 2014, 11am - 3pm  
**Place:** TBD  
**Pot Luck:** Beer permit (non-glass containers)  
**Donation:** \$3 per person, bring lawn chairs  
**Contacts:** Kay Kuciak, taftalum@cox.net, or Paul Frizane, aztaftalumni@yahoo.com, or Paulette English, eagleemail@taftalumni.org

### Terry Kath Tribute Concert

**Date:** November 15, 2013  
**Place:** Taft H.S. Auditorium  
**Email Contact:** [dialogue.for.Terry@gmail.com](mailto:dialogue.for.Terry@gmail.com)

**Best Wishes To  
William Howard Taft  
Graduating Class Of 2013**

## **Grade School Reunions**

### Prussing School Class of June '63 50 Year Reunion

**Date:** Saturday, Sept 21, 2013 at 1pm  
**Place:** Hugo's Frog Bar and Chop House  
Rivers Casino in Rosemont - Tickets \$38 (drinks extra)  
**Contact:** Sharon (Blitzner) Deutscher, norridge@aol.com  
Gwen (Kammien) Ginocchio, gwengino@sbcglobal.com

## **Lost Classmates**

Are you looking for old classmates with whom you've lost touch? We will help you in your search by publishing the name(s) in this newsletter. If that party responds and agrees, we'll forward that person's name and address to you.

Send your request and/or response to Taft Alumni Association, c/o Taft High School, 6530 W. Bryn Mawr Ave., Chicago, IL 60631 or email us at [taftalum@cox.net](mailto:taftalum@cox.net).

The suggested donation for this service is \$5 per name.

## Taft Alumni Scholarships

The Taft Alumni Association Scholarship Program announced three winners of \$1,000 scholarships at this year's senior awards assembly, held at Taft June 13.

Carolyn Jedd received the Shirley DeWeese Memorial Scholarship. This award is presented for the first time, in memory of TAA's long-time officer Shirley Kalivoda DeWeese (Class of June 1960).



**Carolyn Jedd**

Carolyn, who ranks third in the graduating class, plans a career in music therapy. At Taft she has been in the International Baccalaureate program, the Principal Student Advisory Council, National Honor Society, Operation Teen Safe Driving, band, Girls Volleyball and Girls Softball freshman and varsity teams, *Student Government*, the *Letterman's Club*, *Teen Wellness/Garden Club*, and the Senior Committee. She worked as secretary for the Taft Driver's Education Program, and worked several summers at school in clerical jobs and with the Freshman Connection, which helps get incoming freshmen be better ready for high school.

She volunteered to serve at a number of charitable events. Extracurricular activities range from a traveling softball and club volleyball to participating at her church in choir, hand bell choir, as a counselor for Bible School and Fine Arts Camp. She is a member of the St. Luke's Lutheran Church choir.

Carolyn follows a family tradition in attending Taft, and is a granddaughter of the late Joseph Giambrone who taught business subjects at Taft in the 1960s and 1970s. Joe

Giambrone was also active in community leadership in Norwood Park in many organizations.



**Jazmin Bandera**

Jazmin Bandera received the Mary Carrier Stewart Scholarship. Mrs. Stewart, a member of the June 1946 class, donated the scholarship to give back some of the value that her degree gave her. She had come to the Chicago

area as a child with her family, who worked hard to overcome the humble circumstances they faced during the Depression.

Jazmin, who ranks 22<sup>nd</sup> in the class, plans to major in business management and administration, with a minor in Spanish. She hopes to work in the Hispanic community to provide more resources to help others to be more successful.

At Taft she has participated in the AVID program (Advancement Via Individual Determination), which challenges and encourages students to work hard and prepare themselves for success in college. She participated in Student Government, National Honor Society, Junior Achievement, Girls Fit-

ness Club, Latin Dance, Urban Tribal Dance, Ping Pong Club and the Senior Committee.

She has assisted in haunted houses, stage crew for the National Honor Society teacher talent show, and for events like the Autism Speaks walk and Chicago River Cleanup. Working with the Mikva Challenge, she has worked to campaign for national candidates, here and on the campaign trail, and to discuss issues in preparation for city elections.

The John P. Graven scholarship is presented annually through a memorial donation from Dr. Graven's widow. Dr. Graven was Taft's fourth principal, and the one who built the "new" addition in the 1970s during Taft's Baby Boom generation. This year, Anastasia Graven was able to present the scholarship personally for the first time.

Recipient Patrice Pirpiris ranks fifth in the senior class and



**Pirpiris family with Mrs. Graven**

plans to become an industrial engineer.

Patrice and her sister, Deanna, are the younger daughters of Ted and Cleo Pirpiris, active parents who helped to reestablish the Taft Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) and lobby for better opportunities for Taft. Her father has served as chairman of the Local School Council. Patrice served a year as PTSA secretary as a student member.

Patrice started at Taft through the Academic Center in seventh grade, and has been part of the International Baccalaureate program.

High School activities included serving in student government and National Honor Society, on the Senior Social Committee and on the Principal's Senior Advisory Committee, writing for the "Taft Today" newspaper, performing with the Eagle Singers show choir, representing Taft with the Operation Teen Safe Driving program, and participation in Greek Club and Letterman Club. She was on Taft's girl's varsity golf and softball teams for four years. Throughout high school she was a contributing reporter to the Chicago Tribune's publication, "The Mash," which is for high school students.

Her science fair projects advanced to city three years and to the state fair in 2012. She participated freshman year in Columbia College's Junior Research Science Program and the past two years in Illinois Institute of Technology's Boeing Scholars program (one of 100 selected based on academic achievement and an interest in science and engineering).

Extracurricular activities have included Girl Scouts (Silver Award), the Chicago Hellenic Choir, active participation at her church in choir, charitable events and the Greek Orthodox Youth of America.

## Taft Alumni Foundation Scholarship

Graduating senior Raymond Hutchinson was awarded a \$1,500 award at the June 13 awards assembly in the Taft auditorium.



**Raymond Hutchinson**

The scholarship – made possible through donations from the Taft Class of 1970 and members of the J.J. Stamm Tribute Concert committee – was presented by Rick Winge. Hutchinson was one of the choral soloists featured in the June 1 concert.

“Ray attended Taft for four years,” noted Winge, a co-producer of the Stamm concert, “and while he excelled in scholastics, he also distinguished himself as a member of the debate team and the mixed choir where he was recognized as a highly talented performer.

“Ray will be attending North Park University this fall and his plans include pursuing a degree in drama and theater.” [Photo provided by Richard Winge.]

## Launching the Taft High School Foundation

Lisa Schwieger, vice chairman of the Taft Local School Council, invites alumni and friends of Taft to learn more about the school’s new fundraising efforts:

“On June 1, the Taft High School Foundation, a brand new 501(c)(3) organization, was launched with great fanfare.

“The James J. Stamm Tribute Concert brought over 500 Taft alumni to celebrate the career of one of Taft’s great teachers. The evening was filled with music, memories and magic. Mr. Stamm was honored by family, friends, alumni and students. But the evening did more than honor a great man.

“The foundation was launched to help Taft High School rebuild, renew and reinvent the special majesty that has been a part of its heritage since the school’s beginnings in 1939.

***“The mission of the Taft High School Foundation is simply to aid Taft High School in its endeavor to educate, inspire and motivate its students to achieve academic success. Through the creation and sponsorship of alumni and student events, the Foundation seeks to raise funds to improve the overall academic environment for all Taft students, their teachers and the school administrators that serve them.”***

The concert was the first of several events for alumni, designed to bring folks back to Taft to meet friends and see how to help rebuild and renew the school for the students of today and tomorrow:

- At “Honor Our Eagles” on Saturday, Oct. 5, 2013 alumni who were involved in Taft’s athletic programs are invited to honor all retired Physical Education teachers. Whether you were a football player or cheerleader, swim,

bowled, ran on the track team or cross country, played golf or baseball or softball or soccer or basketball, did gymnastics, were on the pom pom squad or just a loyal Eagles fan in the bleachers, you’re invited to this “meet and greet” at Taft. All funds raised that day will be used to repair and repaint Taft’s locker rooms.

- On Friday evening, Nov. 15, 2013, join us in Taft’s Auditorium. The band “Chicago Tribute Anthology” will perform music written and originally performed by the rock band “Chicago” in the 1970’s. “Chicago” was co-founded in 1969 by Terry Kath (Class of 1964) Taft’s Mixed Choir will perform many “Chicago” hits. Proceeds from this concert will be used to repair the speakers throughout the Taft auditorium.

Complete details of both events are on the [www.TaftHSFoundation.org](http://www.TaftHSFoundation.org) website.

The need to repair the boys’ locker room was illustrated with tours after the June concert.

Mike Costanzo (Class of 1970), co-producer of the Stamm concert, explains: “The first fantastic project by the new Taft HS Foundation on June 1<sup>st</sup> helped acquire not one but two



wonderful pianos for Taft’s depleted Music Department.

“Now, the Foundation is turning its attention to the boy’s locker room as an obvious area of desperate need.

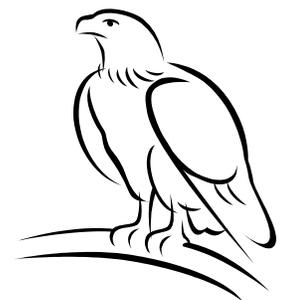
“Concerned alumni can learn more about the provocative measures underway to again instill the proud tradition of our northwest side high school by

logging onto [www.TaftHSFoundation.org](http://www.TaftHSFoundation.org)

“Taft High School gave it’s students a great background, a sound education and an excellent experience. Now, it needs help. Able alums are invited to participate in the revival of the brilliant spirit and enduring glory of Taft High School.

**Taft Alumni Forever Together.”**

[Photo of locker room provided by Lisa Schwieger.]



## **Reflecting on the Stamm concert**

"It was my privilege to participate in the recent concert tribute/fundraiser held at Taft, and wanted to thank the TAA for the initial information on the event. It was so great to see Mr. Stamm again, and more fun than I can say to visit with old friends and new acquaintances in the gym afterward.

"I certainly hope it is but the first of many such events to help get Taft back to the great school it was in the '50's when I was a student there. Yes, there are wonderful new additions to the school, but the condition of some of the older, and still necessary amenities is appalling! I would hope that the Taft Alumni Association would get behind the newly formed Taft High School Foundation in helping provide some of the improvements that the Chicago Board of Education budget cannot or will not provide.

"How about the TAA sponsoring an "all class reunion", reminiscent of the old Taft Socials; a D.J. with selections from the 40's through the present (played at a volume over which we could talk) and a donation bin. We could even pay our admission fee in quarters, just like the old days!"

**Penni Eichin Isaacson** (June 1959)

"Just thought I'd write a note about the J. J. Stamm concert. I was a fortunate committee member who witnessed the Herculean effort on the part of numerous people to create this very special night.

"James J. Stamm was the choral director at Taft from 1956 to 1983. It took 30 years to honor him! This man inspired thousands of students to achieve their goals. Music was the vehicle, but hard work, practice, patience and dedication were the lessons learned. It must have worked since the Taft auditorium was jammed, SRO, with alumni, students and friends. What a night it was, with the Taft choruses and jazz band performing, an emotional presentation of a fabulous plaque to be hung at the auditorium entrance, plus the gift of Mr. Stamm's personal grand piano to the music department! After this presentation, the chorus alumni came on stage to sing "White Christmas," which concluded each Holiday Concert for some 25 years! The piano accompanist? ..... J. J. Stamm. Pretty special, I can tell you!

"The evening ended with a reception in the gym which was dazzling! The decorations far exceeded any Taft dance and the food....OUTSTANDING, with exceptional presentation. The jazz band and swing choir added to the festive event. What a night! Best of all, it was done on a shoestring budget thanks to the participation of various talented Taft alums...

"The most important thing to come out of the event was the creation of a "not-for-profit" corporation to raise funds for Taft. Taft is still a first class school in a wonderful neighborhood... but don't let that fool you. The facility needs a lot of work. Just paint would help, but, as we all know, the Chicago school system is very short of funds, so WE ALL need to help. Any money raised goes directly to Taft, not through the system. There is so much that could be done.

"My granddaughter's band room in grade school has much better facilities than Taft's. My jazz band has a better sound system than [what's in] the Taft auditorium and most of us would think twice before entering the locker rooms and rest rooms. **Let's all give a little back to the school which helped shape our future.**"

**Bob Zaun** (January 1958)

## **Thanks for the TAFT Donation**

**Christopher Akers** (Class of 1995) recently made a generous donation to the Taft High School Science Department. We were informed by biology teacher and Science Department Chair Fakhira Huma Chander, who stated, "[It] was amazing to receive an email from an alumni asking for a list of lab supplies we may want. He then mentioned how he had moved back into the area and wanted to give back to the school. He has since then donated a ton of equipment which the science and art department are hoping to use. He works for Corning." The art department may be able to use the pipette tips Akers donated in techniques with creating artwork with "dots", similar to the techniques of the past with pen points.

Numerous cases of Pyrex flasks and pipette tips were among the donated items from Akers. And, as he goes through more of his accumulated "stash", he hopes to be able to donate more. TAA President, Kay Kuciak responded, by saying, "Chris, From the Alumni, we also thank you. Taft can always use outside help, especially from Alumni who were influenced by their years spent there."

In response, Chris, who now lives in the old neighborhood again, remarked, "Good 'ole THS has changed a lot since I went there and glad to see it's for the better."

## **Letters to the Editor**

To TAA,

My graduating class was 1968. I am interested in knowing if the Taft Alumni Association is still active. I would like to join in order to receive the newsletters.

**William Lopotko** (June 1968)

*[Bill, you bet we're still active! And, we'll be glad to have you as a member. I'm sending the membership form for your convenience. We can be found on the web at [www.taftalumni.org](http://www.taftalumni.org) and on Facebook as Taft Alumni Association. Paulette English, Web Editor]*

Jerry,

I read the Newsletter with great sadness when I saw that **George Fillebrown** had passed away. He was a dear friend and so active and full of life! He will be sadly missed. George and I [were] friends for all these years. We danced together at a Taft dance and at a reunion. The only other classmate that I know now is Frank Zemaitis.. I am a 1940 graduate...my diploma, the first given out of Taft, has been in the archives for a number of years. Best wishes to all of my classmates.

**Muriel Davies Kaminski** (June 1940)

*[Thank you for your comments, Muriel. When George handed me the few items for Taft "archives" he included a copy of a photo of you. I did not include it with the newsletter article, as I had no tie-in to it. But, it was sent along with the yearbook and other items he gave me. He must have been*

close to you, as he commented about you being his good friend. I feel honored that I was able to meet him. Jerry B. Stephenson, TAA Newsletter Editor]

Paulette,

One of my class mates, **Herb Korff** (June 1957) advised by email that **Bob Fizzell** had passed. Herb, **Kent Wallace**, Bob and **Tom Fizzell**, and myself all worked for Park Ridge News out of the Edison Park sub-office on Oliphant just south of the tracks in Edison Park. All of us, at one time or another also worked the news stand at the Edison Park CNW train station. All of the above are in our mid-70's and I do not recall an announcement in the TAFT newsletter advising of Bob's passing. [Ed. Note: It was posted in the Winter, 2013 issue. Jbbs, Editor]

The Fizzell's lived in the 6800 block of N. Oleander, one block south of us in Edison Park, had several children, James, Thomas, Robert and Madge, the only daughter.

Just thought I would shed some light on the Fizzell's. The father, James, I believe, was a very knowledgeable engineer, in what field I do not recall.

He was directly involved with the Cub Scouts (3849) and Boy Scouts (849) based at the Edison Park Methodist Church, as was my father, James Longman, and David O. Taylor. Mr. Schifelbien (Ray's dad) was deeply involved with the Scout program also. My father was a physics instructor at Lane Tech in the late 30's & early 40's, then at Taft and concluded his CPS career at Schurz (+/- 1959) David Taylor was in upper management at WGN, pre television. We frequently would attend a Saturday night live radio broadcast, and then get a tour of the Tribune printing presses, which at that time were still being run at Tribune Tower – basement. We would come home with "printer's hats" uniquely folded pieces of newsprint.

Drawing from over 50 years of Edison Park memories... some vague, [but] you have some insight.

**Bruce Longman** [January 1957]

Paulette,

As I peruse the Taft Alumni newsletter, I see familiar names and enjoy reading how and what everyone is doing. It would be nice to have email addresses published and available in the bios. I realize you would have to get the permission of the alumnae to publish his or her email, but I think it would be a nice touch. I for one, would not mind publishing my email when my bio is printed. Thanks for listening, and thank you for all of your hard work to keep us former Taftites informed with such a great newsletter!

**Valerie Stewart Sosnowski** (1969)

[Valerie, we're so glad you enjoy the newsletter. The TAA does have a free email directory on its webpage. Alumni don't even need to be members to be listed. A simple message to [eagleemail@taftalumni.org](mailto:eagleemail@taftalumni.org) will get you listed. Our "Class Notes" feature in the newsletter gives a mini-bio generated from the information provided on membership applications. This is one reason we have not gone to an online renewal--we want to know what our members are up to. We're always glad to receive ideas and suggestions, so keep them coming. Paulette English, TAA Web Editor]

Dear Taft Alumni Association,

Thank you so much for the very generous Alumni Association Scholarship! I have enclosed a couple of pictures, one of

me receiving the award from Ms. Anne Lunde and one of my



brothers and I at [my] Graduation: **Christopher** class of 2010 and **Steven** class of 2007.

**Carolyn Jedd** (2013)

Hello from Australia!

I retired from my position as Director of Pharmacy at Banner Estrella Medical Center, Phoenix AZ in May of 2013. I've relocated with my wife, Molly (also a pharmacist), to Brisbane, Australia for 18 months, taking a position as an ehealth analyst with United Caring Health to assist in their development of an electronic medical record and pharmacy distribution systems based on a model found in the states.

**John Placko** (June 1965)

[Hello back, John! We've since learned from you that the present Brisbane winter is chilly with very high humidity there on the ocean, that food costs a small fortune, you are cautious driving on the left side of the road, and that the scenery is absolutely fabulous. Since you're a reader of the online newsletter, you can read it down under. Thanks for keeping in touch and every success in your new endeavor. Paulette English, TAA Web Editor]

To TAA,

**Jan Zwicky DeLopez**, **Phil Deetjen** and **Bill Blomquist**, organized a great evening get together at Morretti's in Edison Park, June 22. 50 years of separation wasn't a deterrent for laughter or memories! Just wished more classmates could have been present to hear the stories we told about you! Hawks win 3-1!

**Sherry (McBee) Holmen** (June 1967)



Seated, **Debbie Degard**; right to left, **Julie Hedlund**, **Adrienne Ashton Reinholtz**, **Jan Zwicky DeLopez**, **Ida Webb Carlson**, **Don Koletsos**, **Phil Deetjen**, **Pat Bolin Thelin**, **Sherry McBee Holmen**, **Linda Culpepper**, **Sue Oenning Halihan**, **Bill Blomquist**, **Nancy Peters**, **Ralph Reinholtz**

## Help Wanted to Fill Board Positions

Don't be shy! We know you have talents and skills, so in the spirit of volunteerism, please lend a hand to TAA.

We need someone locally who will go to Taft weekly to pick up and sort the TAA mail, deposit members' checks at the bank at Northwest Hwy and Raven, and mail merchandise from our inventory.

This person will work with Frank Heyer ('48) who has been doing this task for 14 years. If interested, contact Frank at 773-631-4701 or fgheyer@gmail.com.

When Rich Lindberg ('71) steps down in November, we need a person to replace him on the TAA board. If interested in serving, contact Frank at 773-631-4701 or fgheyer@gmail.com.



Finally, we need someone to share few duties with the web editor. This person will update the TAA website ([www.taftalumni.org](http://www.taftalumni.org)) as needed, so knowledge of common web language is a must. Paulette English ('67), web editor, and Kevin Krieger ('73), webmaster, will provide support. Contact us at [eagleemail@taftalumni.org](mailto:eagleemail@taftalumni.org).

## 60<sup>th</sup> Reunion - Class of January 1952

By Bill Becker (January 1952)

The class of January 1952 celebrated its 60<sup>th</sup> reunion on October 6, 2013, with a dinner at Hackney's Restaurant in Glenview. Classmates and their companions enjoyed a pleasant opportunity to reconnect and share memories.

Earlier in the day, some of the classmates enjoyed a tour of Taft High School, generously conducted by Taft alumnus Frank Heyer, class of '48. The tour was followed by a nostalgic trip to Superdawg for a retro lunch of Chicago's famous hot dogs!

We were able to locate or account for over 90% of our scattered classmates and fifty of them requested our reunion biographies/class list/photo.



Photo "picture key" of the attendees shown below are as follows: Top row (l-r) Roger Nelson, Bob Winkates, Nancy Zuehlke Winkates, Ralph Korn, Bob Murray, Bill Becker, Gordon Guth; Middle Row (l-r) Gordon Schiefelbein, Ruth Sebastian Erickson, Howard Anderson, Joyce Hollen Ripple, Mary Crist Loeb, Arlene Petshauer Henricks, Judy Zink Christofferson, Paul Lauschke; Bottom Row (l-r) LaVerne Chmielowski Podgorski, Joanne Schaeffer Zimmer, Carolyn Eudy Wolf, Vera Janci Suvada, Joyce Felstow Depigian, Alice O'Grady, Phyllis Holowaty Albrecht, Donna Hagendorfer Moser.

## 74 years and counting

In fall 2014, William Howard Taft High School will mark the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its opening.

We celebrated the school's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1989, and we'd like to make plans to have a similar celebration in 2014. We'd like to include alumni from as many of these eight decades of graduating classes as possible, to plan ways to represent these times of our lives.

Alumni who still live in the Chicago area are invited to join a planning committee, which will be organizing later this year, to

develop ideas for the anniversary with the school leadership. We will be looking for memorabilia for exhibits, help with assembling multi-media presentations, and folks with memories which you would like to share.

If this is of interest to you, please drop a note to the Taft Alumni Association, care of Taft High School, 6530 W. Bryn Mawr Ave., Chicago IL 60631, Attention Anne Lunde, or email to [alundewriter@gmail.com](mailto:alundewriter@gmail.com).

## More Thoughts on "JJ"

By Mary Kay Cappitelli  
Principal, William Howard Taft High School

Taft High School experienced its most significant fund-raising celebration on Saturday, June 1, in the school's auditorium. Over 550 alumni, teachers, students, parents, and friends convened to honor Mr. James Stamm, Taft's music teacher and choral director from 1956 to 1983. This event was inspired by Taft's need to acquire a new baby grand piano. A planning committee of Taft alumni from graduating classes 1958 to 1981 joined together to create this wonderful event for the school and for Mr. Stamm.

Alumni came from as far away as California, Colorado, Georgia, and North Carolina and as close as Norwood Park. It was truly a breathtaking "reunion" of Taft alumni as hundreds of alumni came back to Taft to celebrate a teacher, Mr. Stamm, who retired 30 years ago. As the evening transpired, I kept thinking what a special high school this is, what wonderful alumni these are, and what an inspirational teacher Mr. Stamm was to them. As Principal of Taft, I was proud and honored to be there among all of them.

The "show" began as Lisa Schwieger, Local School Council Vice Chair, invited co-producers, 1970 alumni, Mike Costanzo and Rick Winge, to the stage. They promptly introduced several special guests including 41st Alderman, Mary O'Connor, and two of Mr. Stamm's closest friends, Nick Jason and Bill Rankin along with Mr. Stamm's four daughters and other family members.

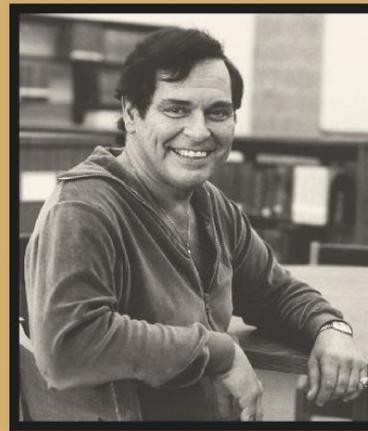
Taft's Performing Arts Chairman, Brian Lavery, with the assistance of Directors Kyle Shiver-Simpson and Philip Platakis directed a performance of some of Broadway's most successful shows including *Guys and Dolls*, *West Side Story*, *Les Miserables*, *Phantom of the Opera*, and *Grease*. Taft friend and 1960 alumnus, Jim Jacobs, was at the concert to show his support for Taft. As he said that night, "Without Taft, there would be no *Grease*."

Mr. Stamm was presented his Lifetime Achievement Award plaque that will be affixed in his former choral room for all future choral students to see and admire in the many years ahead. The most memorable part of the evening occurred when alumni members of the audience that were in Mr. Stamm's chorus were invited on stage to perform with Mr. Stamm one last time. Over 200 alumni once again stepped onto the stage to perform for and with Mr. Stamm as he played the Baby Grand piano that he donated to Taft. During his tenure at Taft, Mr. Stamm always ended his Christmas Concerts with the song, "White Christmas." It was Christmas in June for all alumni on the stage as he played beautifully and they sang wonderfully. It was truly a lovely moment when at the end of the song the entire alumni chorus surrounded the piano where Mr. Stamm was still seated, and the audience's applause thundered throughout the auditorium.

The reception following the concert was delightful as over 250 guests enjoyed the fabulous food prepared and presented by members of the concert planning committee Gloriane Halicki (Class of 1973) and Lynn Halicki Arnold (Class of 1970). The wonderful decorations provided by and arranged by Susan Miller Aldrich (Class of 1961), Tina Hauri (Class of 1978), and Penni Issacson (Class of 1959) created the ambiance of a 1960's junior prom for all guests to enjoy. It was truly fabulous!

As Principal of Taft High School, the most inspiring development produced by this event was the formation of the Taft High School Foundation, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. This new organization's mission is to aid Taft High School in its endeavor to educate, inspire, and motivate Taft students to achieve academic success. Proceeds from the James Stamm Tribute Concert were used to acquire two pianos for the school. The first one, is Mr. Stamm's personal Kimball Baby Grand Piano that was shipped to Chicago and completely refurbished to "like new" condition, and the second one is a state-of-the-art Yamaha digital piano that can replicate an entire orchestra of sounds for our music directors to use for teaching and enhancing choral performances both at Taft and at concerts throughout the Chicago area. Future events created by the Taft High School Foundation will be similarly designed to raise needed funds to help Taft High School prosper.

On behalf of the Taft High School Administration, its teachers and its students, thank you to all the alumni who created, produced, attended, and supported this wonderful event to honor one of Taft High School's retired teachers and to financially support our and your beloved high school.



### MR. JAMES J. STAMM

Music Teacher, Producer, Director, and Inspiring Leader at Taft High School from 1956 to 1983

"It is necessary to create a world that we do not see." Mr. James J. Stamm, 1970

Mr. Stamm, we see it now.

Thank you for sharing your love of music, your passion for theater, your pursuit of excellence, and your dedication to helping your students thrive on the stage of life.

You are, and will always be, an inspiration to your students, the teachers who knew you, and to the family and friends who love you. With respect and admiration from two generations of Taft High School Alumni, we want you to know that you are truly one of the finest teachers any student ever had in any school, in any classroom, and on any stage.

Thank you, Mr. Stamm.

27 years of William Howard Taft High School Alumni

June 1, 2013



## Class Notes

To all TAA members,

Your Class Notes section here includes both TAA new members and renewals, when received and when space permits. If you don't provide new information, we reprint what we currently have on file for you. If you want your name to include "other" special details, you need to include that information when you send in your dues with the form as shown on the inside of the last page of this newsletter.

### 1940s

**Betty Lou (Olson) Bukowski** (June 1942) lives in Arlington Hts IL, has 4 children, 4 grandchildren, 2 great grandchildren. She is a homemaker and hospital volunteer.

**Jane (Wildeman) Groves** (June 1944) graduated from U of I BA 1948, lives in Sacramento CA and is retired from the Federal Government.

**Carl Read** (June 1944) graduated from Bradley BSME 1950, lives in Bluffton SC, has 5 children, 15 grandchildren, 11 great grandchildren and is retired.

**Margie Mc Bride** (June 1945) lives in Brooksville FL, has 2 children, 3 grandchildren, 5 great grandchildren and is retired.

**Shirley (Bergren) Goodman** (June 1947) lives in Arlington Hts IL, has 1 child, 3 grandchildren, 4 great grandchildren and is retired.

**Jacqueline Raff** (January 1948) lives in Eden Prairie MN, has 3 children, 2 grandchildren, 1 great grandchild and is a homemaker/musician.

**Frank Heyer** (June 1948) lives in Chicago IL, has 2 children, 2 grandchildren and is a retired sales manager, on the Alumni Board and is "our man" in Chicago for Taft.

**Shirley (Olsen) Horn** (June 1948) lives in Ramsey MN, has 3 children, 5 grandchildren and is retired from WISDOT (Wisconsin Department of Transportation).

**Stephen Nitschneider** (June 1948) lives in Elmwood Park IL, has 6 children, 5 grandchildren and is a retired Illinois Bell engineer.

**Barbara (Heckel) Petrillo** (June 1948) graduated from Purdue BS 1952, lives in Wax Hall NC, has 2 children, 2 grandchildren and is retired.

**Helen (Hahn) Cantrell** (June 1949) graduated from the American Conservatory of Music BA 1953, lives in Glenview IL, has 2 children and is a retired piano teacher.

### 1950s

**Harry Bentsen** (January 1950) graduated from Culver-Stockton BS 1954, lives in Springfield IL, has 4 children, 10 grandchildren and is a retired insurance executive.

**Fred Seagel** (June 1952) married **Ann (Ellfson)** (June 1952). Ann graduated from Masonic RN 1955; they live in Gulf Breeze FL, have 2 children, 5 grandchildren and are retired.

**Jane (Meadows) Abramchik** (June 1953) graduated from Northern BS 1957, lives in Skokie IL and is a retired special education teacher.

**Fran Hughes** (June 1953) lives in Park Ridge IL, has 3 children, worked at Edison Press as an account manager and is now retired.

**Arlene (Rogowski) Warner** (June 1953) lives in Park Ridge IL, has 3 children, 6 grandchildren and is a homemaker.

**Phyllis (Ruttkay) Verbrugge** (January 1954) graduated from Wright AA 1956, lives in Park Ridge IL, has 2 children, 2 grandchildren and is a retired accounting clerk.

**Richard Austin** (June 1954) graduated from American College MS, lives in Safety Harbor FL, has 2 children, 6 grandchildren and is a retired insurance company president.

**Tom Kruchten** (June 1954) graduated from U of I 1958, lives in Naples FL, has 3 children, 8 grandchildren and is retired.

**Peter Lauridsen** (June 1954) graduated from the US Coast Guard Academy BS 1959, lives in Virginia Beach VA, has 3 children, 4 grandchildren and is a Captain and marine safety consultant on US passenger vessels.

**Raymond Fath** (June 1955) lives in Palatine IL, has 9 children, 20 grandchildren and is a retired carpenter.

**William Herbst** (June 1955) graduated from IL State BS 1959, Northern MS 1964, lives in Fountain Hills AZ, has 3 children, 1 grandchild and is a retired middle school principal.

**Leroy Betz** (January 1956) graduated from College of Advanced Transportation 1960, Northwestern 1972, lives in Mt Prospect IL, has 3 boys, 4 grandchildren and is in real estate.

**Bob Carroll** (June 1956) lives in Valley Center CA, has 3 children and is retired.

**Neil Frumkin** (June 1956) graduated from U of NM BA 1960, lives in El Cajon CA, has 3 children, 7 grandchildren and is a real estate director.

**Nancy (Haaning) Johnson** (June 1956) lives in Park Ridge IL, has 3 children, 6 grandchildren and is retired.

**Allen Meskan** (June 1956) lives in Addison IL, has 3 children, 18 grandchildren and is a VP at Louis Foundry in Chicago.

**Carol (Small) Smalley** (June 1956) lives in Wood River IL, has 2 children, 7 grandchildren and is retired from the US Corps of Engineers and still rides a Gold Wing Motorcycle.

**Barbara (Gromke) Stephens** (June 1956) graduated from U of I 1957, U of WI 1961, U of IA BFA 1985, lives in Solon IA, has 3 children, 7 grandchildren and is an artist.

**Alan Carlson** (January 1957) lives in Springfield OR, has 1 child, 3 grandchildren and is a retired police officer.

**Leo Drummer** (January 1957) graduated Wright Jr. College, U of IL; has 1 child, lives in Elgin, and is a retired ice cream plant manager.

**Robert Steigerwaldt** (January 1957) graduated from Wartburg BS 1961, lives in Delmar IA, has 3 children, 6 grandchildren and is a retired farmer.

**Arleen (Galla) Soteris** (June 1957) lives in Crystal Lake IL, has 3 children, 2 grandchildren and is a part time stripper and pole dancer.

**Edward Freisinger** (June 1958) lives in Chicago, is retired and a muscle car collector.

**Dennis Pickett** (June 1958) married **Karen (Jensen)** (January 1960). He graduated from Northern BS 1963, MS 1969; Karen graduated from Northern BS 1973, MS 1977. They

live in De Kalb IL, have 2 children, 2 grandchildren and are both retired.

**Joe Bartel, Sr.** (June 1959) lives in Chicago IL, has 3 children, 6 grandchildren and is president of Print Sales, Inc.

**Allen Blume** (June 1959) married **Shirley (Molinare)** (June 1956). He graduated from Chicago Tech 1969, they live in Park Ridge IL, have 3 children 7 grandchildren and are both retired.

**Jeff Carson** (June 1959) graduated from Western MI BS 1966, lives in Phoenix AZ, has 2 children, 2 grandchildren and is retired.

**Leanne (Mattick) Spiegel** (June 1959) lives in Hoffman Estates IL, has 2 children, 5 grandchildren and is a teacher assistant.

## 1960s

**Ken Anderson** (January 1960) married **Sandie (Mau)** (January 1960); they live in Palatine IL, have 2 children, 5 grandchildren and are retired.

**Judy (Olsen) Gammon** (January 1960) lives in Lebanon IN, has 5 children, 3 grandchildren and is a retired receptionist/secretary.

**Cathy (Duval) Davies** (June 1960) graduated from Carroll College BA 1964, Mt Mary's BS 1989; lives in Waukesha WI, has 4 children, 11 grandchildren, 1 great grandchild and is a retired pediatric occupational therapist.

**Kenneth Fusick** (June 1960) graduated from Elmhurst BS 1984, lives in Elk Grove IL, has 1 child, 1 grandchild and is a retired computer manager/network engineer.

**Mary Ann (Gulino) Rojas** (June 1960) lives in Hanover Park IL, has 3 children, 6 grandchildren and is a retired medical assistant.

**Marilyn (Boettcher) Trovell** (June 1960) graduated from Augustana Hospital RN 1963, Oklahoma City BS 1978; lives in Crossville TN, has 2 children, 5 grandchildren and is in real estate.

**Robert Webb** (June 1960) lives in Maclenny FL, has 3 children, 2 grandchildren and is a third party claims administrator.

**Joyce Baxter** (January 1961) lives in New Port Richey FL and is a retired office manager.

**Linnea (Lundberg) Conway** (January 1961) graduated from Southern IL BA 1964, Washington U MSW 1971; lives in Mission TX, has 4 children, 2 grandchildren and is a clinical social worker.

**Judith (Andersen) Mack** (January 1961) lives in Palatine IL, has 2 children, 3 grandchildren and is a retired accounts clerk.

**Paul Laudina** (June 1961) graduated from Northeastern BA 1972, MA 1974; lives in Longbeach FL, has 2 children, 1 grandchild and is a professor of diagnostic imaging, CT & MRI.

**Judith (Grau) Hitzeman** (June 1962) lives in Ponte Vedra Beach FL, has 3 children, 2 grandchildren and is a housewife.

**Ken Lindenau** (June 1962) graduated from Northwestern & U of I, lives in Linfield PA, has 2 children, 5 grandchildren and is semi retired.

**Ray Setzke** (June 1962) lives in Madeira Beach FL, has 2 children, 3 grandchildren and is retired from Ace Hardware Corporation.

**Mae Beth (Frame) Williams** (June 1962) graduated from Wheaton College BAQ 1966, lives in Columbia MD, has 4 children, 10 grandchildren and is a practice manager for a counseling group.

**Lynn (Valters) Mays** (January 1963) graduated from Dominican College BA 1967, St Xavier MA 1995, lives in New Smyrna Beach FL, has 4 children, 8 grandchildren and is a retired 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teacher.

**Barbara (Bolling) Rimington** (January 1963) graduated from Augustana College BA 1967, lives in Elmhurst IL, has 2 children, 4 grandchildren and is a part time interior designer.

**Lois (Soby) Bahlow** (June 1963) lives in Valrico FL, has 2 children, 6 grandchildren and is in sales.

**Cheryl (Henninger) Krupa** (June 1963) graduated Wheaton College BS, lives in Des Plaines IL, has 2 children, 3 grandchildren and is a retired activity director of Covenant Village of Northbrook.

**Donald Mau** (June 1963) graduated from Yankton College BA 1969, lives in Hot Springs AR, has 4 children, 5 grandchildren and is a retired professional chef.

**Jo Ellen (Trefny) Pacheco** (June 1963) graduated from Northern BS 1967, AS real estate, AS credit & lending, AS computer science, lives in Lake Havasu City AZ and is retired from rental Investments.

**Karen (Kuehl) Adair** (June 1964) lives in Ft Wayne IN, has 2 children and is in real estate sales.

**Louise (Johannsen) Menter** (June 1964) lives in Deerfield IL, has 3 children, 5 grandchildren and is a retired teacher.

**Michael Parquette** (June 1964) lives in Wonder Lake IL, has 2 children and is in technical support.

**Martin Wordell** (June 1966) graduated from Lakeland College, lives in Jamestown NC and is the owner of Carolina Casters & equipment.

**Wayne Gibson** (January 1967) lives in Arlington Hts. IL and is a postal clerk.

**Pam (Erbach) Kuelczo** (January 1967) graduated from Northern BA 1971, lives in Lockport IL, has 3 children, 2 grandchildren and is an office manager.

**Pam (Schaller) Chapman** (June 1967) graduated from Wright AA 1975, Northern BS 1978, MS 1989, lives in Hampshire IL, has 2 children and is a retired professor of computer info systems.

**Vinette (Gramarossa) Engler** (June 1967) lives in Hoffman Estates IL, has 3 children and is a Federal government employee.

**Virginia (Scholl) Linowiecki** (June 1967) lives in Chicago IL and is a claims services manager.

**Deborah (Schwantes) Domes** (1968) graduated with a BA 1972, Med 1993; lives in Roselle IL, has 2 children, 3 grandchildren and is a retired Chicago teacher.

**Gale Fabisch** (1968) graduated from Southern IL BS 1973, IIT grad studies, lives in Park Ridge IL, has 3 children and is a semi retired consulting engineer.

**John Geschrey** (1968) married **Susan (Pietraszewski)** (1976); they live in Roselle IL and have 2 children and 2 grandchildren.

**Barbara (Gron) Grosse** (1968) graduated from Wellesley BS 1973, lives in Northbrook IL, has 3 children and is a retired philanthropist.

**Colleen (Maloney) La Paglia** (1968) lives in Sandy Springs GA, has 2 children and is a flight attendant.

## 1970s

**Kenneth Naatz** (1970) graduated from U of I BS 1974, De Paul MBA 1985, lives in Elmhurst IL, has 3 children, 5 grandchildren, is retired and currently a part time financial planner.

**Jean Jaster** (1971) graduated from North Park College BSN 1975, lives in Palatine IL and is a retired RN.

**Janine Klich-Jensen** (1972) graduated from U of I 1976, lives in Chicago IL and is an attorney.

**Jan (Ostromencki) Savage** (1974) graduated from Northeastern 1979, lives in Del Mar CA, has 1 child and is retired.

**Bob Uhlar** (1974) graduated from Drake BA 1978, Northwestern MS 1981, Unity MDiv 2002, lives in Indianapolis IN, and is an ordained minister/author. During the 80's and 90's worked at WMAQ & WBBM.

**Kathryn (Sullivan) Kostelancik** (1975) lives in Algonquin IL, has 5 children and 1 grandchild.

## 1980s

**Joseph Bartel, Jr.** (1987) graduated from Columbia BA 1992, lives in Mt Prospect IL and does inside sales and is our unofficial DJ for reunions.

## 2000s

**Esma Susuz** (2012) lives in River Grove IL and is attending Dominican U for computer science and will graduate in 2016.

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## In Our Memories

"In Our Memories" page on our web site now includes veterans with their branch of service and which conflict, if any, they were involved when that information becomes available. Feel free to contact us with any updates or corrections. We always appreciate your help to keep our files up to date.

**John Swider**, former Taft Physical Education teacher, died of cancer in 1993.

**Mardell (Young) Cooney**, class of January 1942 passed away in her home March 7, 2013.

**Francis Hazel Stanton-Coleman**, class of June 1945 passed away on April 28, 2013. She was the older sister of Joe Stanton (June 1948).

**Robert Ploetz**, class of Jan 1946 passed away April 11, 2013 of prostate cancer.

**Arthur Edward "Art" Uhl**, class of January 1947 passed away November 12, 2012. He was brother to Carol (Uhl) Connolly (June 1953).

**Bruce Burton Benson**, class of January 1950, passed away March 9, 2013 in Corpus Christi, TX.

**Donald Albert Gregornik**, class of June 1953 passed away November 13, 2012.

**Richard Edward "Dick" Griesenauer**, class of June 1956, passed away on May 30, 2013 from lung cancer.

**Carl Jaeger**, class of June 1956 passed away September 19, 2012; he is the brother of Gregory, class of June 1954.

**James (Taylor) McCandless**, class of June 1962, died from a fall in his home April 16, 2013. After working as an electrician for a number of years, began a long and successful career as a musician/singer/songwriter. His most recent CD was released in February of this year. If you google his web-site (James McCandless), you can learn much about his accomplishments.

**Mark Steven Tibbits**, class of 1967, died in December, 2003 subsequent to a skiing accident at Park City, Utah. He was the brother of Paul (Brad) Tibbits (1969).

**Charles 'Chuck' Kramarczyk**, class of 1968, passed away in 1974 the result of an accident.

**Mark Gibson Duffy**, class of 1969, died February 22, 2013 in Grayslake. He was brother to Brian (June 1963), Lynne, the late Julie (1971) and Carol (Duffy) DeGrazia.

**Kathy Dayiantis**, class of 1973 died date unknown from cancer.

**Kathy (Rock) Hughes**, class of 1973 died December, 2012.

**Ron Wodja**, class of 1973 died in 1977.

**Mike Wickey**, class of 1973 died of a heart attack in 2013.

**Marion (Schick) Fricke**, class of 1973 died November 14, 1997 from cancer.

**Kevin J. Casciani**, class of 1973 died March 4, 2009 from ALS.

**Daniel S. Brezinski**, class of 1973 died July 25, 2005.

**Glen Nalepa**, class of 1973 died February 7, 2012 due to a heart attack.

**Steve Mietz**, class of 1973 died from a stroke, date unknown.

**Mike Sienkiewicz**, class of 1973 died from a heart attack, date unknown.

**Ron Blaszkowski**, class of 1973 died from a heart attack, date unknown.

**Daniel J. Drewniak**, class of 1973 died September 28, 2010.

**Diane Arnous**, class of 1974, died, date unknown.

**Marc Alveshire**, class of 1974 died, date unknown.

**Dave Doering**, class of 1974 was killed during a robbery investigation while on duty with the North Chicago Police Department on May 4, 1980.

**Dave Hoff**, class of 1974 died, date unknown.

**Michael Forschione**, class of 1974 died February 1, 1985 while fighting an arson fire in the line of duty with the Chicago Fire Department.

**Kim Watakins**, class of 1974 died, date unknown.

**Gary C. Hultman**, class of 1975(?), died January 22, 2013. He was the brother of Greg (June 1966) and Dean.

**Mike Conforti**, class of 1975, died July 24, 2005.

**Norm Smandra**, class of 1975 or 1976 died, date unknown.

**Jinny Luga**, class of 1976 died in 2013 from cancer.

**David Marciniak**, class of 1977 died about 2012.

**Cathy Marciniak Ostray**, class of 1981 died about 2010.

# TAA Merchandise Order Form

Qty	Item	Specifics	Price Each	Total Price
	Windbreaker—blue nylon drawstring bottom printed with white TAA logo	Medium Only	\$25.00	\$
	Baseball Cap—blue embroidered “Taft Alumni” with full-color eagle	One Size Fits All	\$15.00	\$
	Car Sticker—clear printed in blue/gray “You Can’t Hide That Eagle Pride”	----	\$ 3.00	\$
	T-Shirt—gray cotton printed with blue TAA logo	Medium	\$10.00	\$
	T-Shirt—gray cotton printed with blue TAA logo	Large	\$10.00	\$
	T-Shirt—gray cotton printed with blue TAA logo	X-Large	\$10.00	\$
	T-Shirt—gray cotton printed with blue TAA logo	XX-Large	\$12.00	\$
	T-Shirt—gray cotton printed with blue TAA logo	XXX-Large	\$12.00	\$
	Jacket , Fleece - Taft Alumni Logo	Medium	\$40.00	\$
	Jacket , Fleece - Taft Alumni Logo	Large	\$40.00	\$
	Jacket , Fleece - Taft Alumni Logo	X-Large	\$40.00	\$
	Jacket , Fleece - Taft Alumni Logo	XX-Large	\$40.00	\$
	Jacket , Fleece - Taft Alumni Logo	XXX-Large	\$40.00	\$
	Taft Yearbook (be sure to state year)	<b>Year:</b>	\$30.00	\$
<b>Shipping and Handling:</b> Stickers only = \$1.00, all other orders = \$6.00				\$
Total			Remitted	\$
Name (please print):				
Address:				
City/State/ZIP:				
Grad Month/Year:				
Phone: (     )				
<p><b>Send check or money order (no cash please) with completed order form to:</b>  <b>Taft Alumni Association, 6530 W. Bryn Mawr Ave, Chicago IL 60631</b>  <b>Please use a separate order form for separate addresses.</b></p>				

## Yearbook Inventory

Some years are hard to keep in supply. All requests are on a first-come, first-serve basis. As of today, we have the following yearbooks for purchase: 1940 (1), 1942 Jun (1), 1943 Jun (1), 1946 Jun (1), 1961 (1), 1963 (1), 1985 (24), 1986 (47), 1987 (76), 1990 (52), 1991 (9), 1992 (132), 1993 (5), 1994 (57), 1995 (183), 1996 (65), 1997 (52), 1998 (154), 1999 (151), 2000 (351), 2001 (123), 2003 (76), 2004 (77), 2005 (56), 2006 (40), 2007 (40), 2008 (40).



## Time to Renew?!!

Thanks to all who read our plea about keeping current with your membership. If you receive the newsletter electronically, you’ll find an emailed reminder in your inbox when you are about to or have lapsed. If you receive the newsletter by post, check your address label for your year of graduation above the eagle logo on the back page. Is it correct? Also, check the expiration date of your current membership with the Taft Alumni Association located just below the graduation date.

**Membership rates are expected to increase at the end of this year.** If your expiration date is close, sit down NOW, complete the membership form on the next page and write out a check for \$15 or just \$20 for husband/wife graduates at the same address. You’ll receive **TWO** full years of newsletters filled with opportunities to learn about classmates, reunions, school events and alumni programs. Be sure to use the application on the following page to share with us the latest updates in your life.

## Taft Alumni Association Membership Application

Please tell us as much about yourself as you like so that we can share your news in the newsletter's *Class Notes*.  
Only fields marked with an asterisk (\*) are required for membership. We will not publish your address or phone number.

*First Name ( PLEASE PRINT)	* Last Name at Graduation	* Current Last Name	
*Home Street Address	*City	*State	*ZIP
Home Phone	Email Address		
*Month/Year You Graduated	Name of Spouse	Year Married	
Month/Year if Spouse is a Taft Grad	Number of Children	Number of Grandchildren	
Schools of Higher Learning, Degrees, Year of Graduation			
Occupation	Elementary School Graduated From		
Other news you'd like to share			
<input type="checkbox"/> I wish to be listed in the <i>TAA Email Directory</i> on the TAA website <a href="http://www.taftalumni.org">www.taftalumni.org</a>			
You have three options for receiving the quarterly <i>TAA Newsletter</i> . Please select <u>one</u> of the following:			
<input type="checkbox"/> I wish to receive the newsletter by postal service only <input type="checkbox"/> I wish to receive an e-newsletter by email to defray the costs of postage <input type="checkbox"/> I wish to receive the newsletter by email <u>and</u> by postal service			
Dues are \$15.00 for a two year membership or \$20.00 for an alumni couple (give spouse's name if a Taft graduate).			
Enclosed is a check or money order for dues in the amount of <input type="checkbox"/> \$15.00 <input type="checkbox"/> \$20.00 <input type="checkbox"/> Enclosed is a check or money order donation in the amount of \$ ____ .00			
Please mail this completed application along with your check or money order to: <b>Taft Alumni Association, 6530 West Bryn Mawr Avenue, Chicago, IL 60631</b>			Summer 2013

### Taft Alumni Association Board of Directors

Kay (Carlson) Kuciak	1963	President, Newsletter Assistant
Anne Lunde	1969	1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President, Historian
Frank Heyer	1948	2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President
**Rich Lindberg	1971	Secretary
John Prochaska	1961	Treasurer
Jeraldene (Beesley) Bloom Stephenson	1962	Director, Newsletter Editor <a href="mailto:jerrybloom@fales.org">jerrybloom@fales.org</a> (920) 559-7440
	1973	Director, Webmaster <a href="mailto:webmaster@taftalumni.org">webmaster@taftalumni.org</a>
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Paul Madsen	-----	Faculty Representative
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Arlene (Laufer) Ware	1979	Assistant to Frank Heyer
Jim Hartford		

### Taft Alumni Newsletter [www.taftalumni.org](http://www.taftalumni.org)

The TAA publishes the *Taft Alumni Newsletter* quarterly.

Please address general correspondence and changes to:

**Taft Alumni Association**  
6530 West Bryn Mawr Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60631  
or email [taftalum@cox.net](mailto:taftalum@cox.net)

Send photographs and articles for the next issue to:

**Jerry Bloom Stephenson**  
(note **NEW SUMMER/FALL address**)  
2-2056 Brant Street  
Burlington, Ontario L7P 3A6 CANADA  
or email [jerrybloom@fales.org](mailto:jerrybloom@fales.org)

**Submission Deadline for the Fall Issue:  
September 30, 2013**

eNewsletter or TAA Email Directory Signup: [eagleemail@taftalumni.org](mailto:eagleemail@taftalumni.org)

TAFT ALUMNI ASSOCIATION  
6530 W. BRYN MAWR AVE.  
CHICAGO IL 60631

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