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DECEMBER 2016

AROUND THESE HILLS

A publication for alumni and friends of **Ottawa Hills Local Schools**

Ottawa Hills **SPORTS** make **NOISE**

OH STUDENTS EXCEL ON THE
ATHLETIC FIELD AS WELL AS
IN THE CLASSROOM.

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OH CONTINUES TO **LEAD** **THE STATE**

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REUNION RECAP

Catching up with
COACH CHRIS HARDMAN

Senior Andrew Krupp was district champion
and named TAAC Runner of the Year.

OH STUDENTS EARN NATIONAL MERIT RECOGNITION



MEET ERICA (GATCHEL) SILK '89, THE VERY FIRST DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT AND ALUMNI RELATIONS IN OH HISTORY

We are pleased to announce that Village resident and OH alumna, Erica (Gatchel) Silk '89, has been chosen to serve as the district's first director of development and alumni relations.

Erica assumed her new role this fall and has already begun creating a comprehensive strategy to raise funds and support for Ottawa Hills Schools. Additionally, she will serve as executive director of the Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation.

"Having grown up in Ottawa Hills, I'm forever indebted to this close-knit

community for a great education," Erica noted.

After graduating from OHHS, Erica earned a bachelor's degree from Miami University and a Juris Doctor degree from The University of Toledo College of Law.

Erica and her husband, Jim, have four children who attend Ottawa Hills Schools: James (10th grade), Jack (8th grade), Liam (6th grade), and Skylar (5th grade).

"I'm excited about my new role and look forward to working with fellow graduates to build a strong, connected community in support of education in Ottawa Hills."



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The mission of the Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation is to permanently enhance and extend the unique experience of excellence that defines Ottawa Hills Schools.

SUPPORTING THE OH FOUNDATION IS EASY!

Visit the Foundation's website at ohschoolsfoundation.org and give online or use the envelope attached to this newsletter.



ALUMNI & FRIENDS ENJOY HOMECOMING IN CHICAGO

Round up more than 50 Ottawa Hills alumni and guests, and bring them together at the historic Drake Hotel in Chicago. Add in long-time coach and teacher Norm Niedermeier, English teacher and artistic director Darrin Broadway, hors d'oeuvres, refreshments, and live streaming of the OH homecoming football game against Hilltop, and you have the makings of a great evening.

And that is exactly what Friday, October 7, 2016, was when "Homecoming without Coming Home" was celebrated with Chicago-area alumni and friends.

"We want to keep you connected to the school district that was an important part of your life journey. OH is part of your story and you're part of ours. That's why this evening is so meaningful for all of us," noted Dr. Kevin Miller, district superintendent.

While alumni in attendance represented graduation years spanning almost five decades (1960-2015), they made new connections that bridged time.

"Many did not realize old friends or classmates were in neighboring towns or lived so close. One graduate, David Roadhouse '62, discovered his neighbor, Catherine (Thomas) Sullivan '88, was an OH alumna. They plan to get together soon," said Erica Silk, director of development and alumni relations.

"Every time I turned around someone was taking a picture or selfie with Darrin or Norm. People came early and stayed late. We closed the place down," Erica added.

David Roadhouse brought it all home when he spoke of the many memories he has of growing up in Ottawa Hills—a common theme among all in attendance. He said he was inspired to give to the Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation because he wanted to make sure that future generations have the opportunity to experience memory-making moments just as he did.

"Those of us who graduated from Ottawa Hills are the lucky ones," David said. **"The kids at Ottawa Hills today are our legacy, and we celebrate and honor these kids with gifts to the Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation."**

REUNION RECAP

CLASS OF 1956

The Ottawa Hills High School Class of 1956 came together this summer to celebrate their 60th reunion. The group enjoyed a full itinerary that included a tour of the school and panel discussion with students, dinners together, and visits to the Toledo Museum of Art and Toledo Botanical Garden.

CLASS OF 1966

Members of the Class of 1966 gathered this fall to mark their 50th reunion at Shorty's Back Forty. Classmate **Paul Herron** reported that the event was a complete success thanks to the organizing efforts of three local classmates – **Annabel Dolgin DeBoer, Lucy Lambert Seay, and Sally Goodwillie Lee.**

"The Ottawa Hills experience is different compared to a larger school because our 'sense of family' extends well beyond our own classmates," Paul noted. "We remember individuals who were in the class ahead of us and the class behind us, as well as the classes of brothers, sisters, and neighbors. We remember entire families, where they lived, and the special contributions they made."

CLASS OF 1996

Members of the Class of 1996 also celebrated their 20-year reunion this fall, traveling from as far away as California, Illinois, and North Carolina to reminisce and catch up.

High school Principal **Ben McMurray** hosted the class for a school tour and noted, "Each time I meet with alumni, I learn just how formidable their Ottawa Hills education was in relation to their success beyond high school. They always look back fondly at their experiences. They realize the incredible value of an Ottawa Hills education and growing up in the Village."

ARE YOU PLANNING A CLASS REUNION?

**We can help you connect
with your classmates.**

Contact Erica Silk '89

Director of Development
and Alumni Relations

419-214-4838 | esilk@ohschools.org



CATCHING UP WITH Chris Hardman COACH AND EDUCATOR

A “D” in chemistry is not usually a good thing. But if it were not for that “D,” a certain Piqua High School student would never have ended up in Ottawa Hills.

We are referring, of course, to beloved Ottawa Hills teacher and coach, Chris Hardman.

Coach Hardman grew up in Piqua, outside of Dayton, and spent countless hours in the hallways and on the athletic fields of the high school where his father, Jim, taught and coached.

When it came to life after high school, the younger Hardman had only one goal in mind: to go to Princeton.

“I was recruited to play football at Princeton. I remember it clearly. On April 1, 1969, the recruiter came to visit me. He said, ‘Tell me about your ‘D’ in chemistry.’ I really didn’t have a good answer.”

A few weeks later, Coach Hardman received a letter from Princeton that, in his words, said, “Thanks, but no thanks.”

Coach would go on to play basketball and baseball at Ohio Wesleyan, graduating with a degree in health and physical education. After college, he got an assistantship at BGSU to coach baseball. It was there, on a bulletin board in the education building, that he saw a posting for a job at OHHS. He took the number and called.

That phone call led to the first of two chapters for Chris Hardman at Ottawa Hills Schools.

Coach recounts those early days. “My faith says I was directed to be here, but it wasn’t that simple. After six years of teaching and coaching, I was broke. I had young kids and no money, so I made a decision that I had to leave.”

He resigned from Ottawa Hills and spent the summer trying to get a job at Owens-Illinois. When no job materialized, he took a position with Central Catholic for even less money. Finally, the following spring he went to work for Libbey Glass.

“I left Central and started working at Libbey. I was a round peg in a square hole. I was making more money than ever before, but I disliked it every second I was there,” said Coach. “One day, I told my supervisor that I didn’t want to be a shift foreman. I thought I would be a good fit for an opening in personnel. The next day, they called me in and told me I didn’t have a job at all and sent me on my way.”

Coach Hardman notes that, as difficult as that experience was, every time he drives by Libbey he says a silent “thank you” because it made him realize his heart was in education.

Coach took another job to put food on the table and began hunting for a path back to education. That’s when Larry Geresy called and asked if he wanted his old job back. For Coach Hardman, chapter two had begun. He dove back into teaching and coaching with a renewed passion and a fresh perspective.

It would be difficult to find another educator who has invested as much time and energy into coaching as Chris Hardman.

“The greatest serendipity of education is relationships. I run across a number of parents and former students and it’s special,” he added. “Nothing beats that. The sports moments are great, but they’re just a part of the bigger picture of being an educator.”

“Every day that I’ve walked in these doors since coming back in August of 1983, I’ve been so thankful to be here,” Coach added. “Everything that I have is due to this school system and this community. That moment was life changing.”



Coach Hardman retired in 2014 to spend more time with his family. Today, he stays busy by continuing to coach at Ottawa Hills, broadcasting with Buckeye Cable Sports Network, and working with the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. He speaks to students and adults through his company, At Your Best.



THE LAST OF THE FIRST John Galbraith '41

No one knows Ottawa Hills Schools like John Galbraith. He is one of a kind. He calls himself “the last of the first,” as he is the last surviving member of the first graduating class of Ottawa Hills: the Class of 1941.

John and his classmates were integral to convincing the community that a high school was needed. If not for this group of committed students, Ottawa Hills might look much different today.

The Galbraith family moved to Ottawa Hills in 1930. John still remembers their first home—3715 Sulphur Spring Road. He would start second grade in the brand-new school built on Indian Road. His sister, Nina, started kindergarten that same year. Younger brother Evan, who later became Ambassador to France, also attended Ottawa Hills.

At the time, OH students attended the school on Indian Road through ninth grade and went on to DeVilbiss High School for the next three years. John and his classmates, on the cusp of “graduating” from Indian Road, went door to door in the fall of 1937 to convince their neighbors to support a bond issue to build a high school in Ottawa Hills.



John Galbraith, Class of 1941

“We had good teachers,” John remembers. “Knowles Cooke opened the world for me. Robert Bolbach taught us math and science. We became close to these teachers. They got to know us well and we got to know them well.”

“We enjoyed basketball, and we had a good basketball team. We beat all the city schools but Waite, and we didn’t play them. Central, Woodward, Scott, DeVilbiss, Libbey—we never lost a game at home in our two years there.”

“We were active all the time. We had a rag tag football team our senior year. We played six games. I played on the team—everyone had to! Of course, there were only 26 in our class so we all had to be involved in the various school activities, and we were.”

From Ottawa Hills, John attended the University of Michigan. He joined the V-12 Navy program and left U-M after three years to serve in the Navy as an officer, assigned to a destroyer escort on a Cronin DE704 built to combat submarines. He was in the Mediterranean around the time of D-Day.

After the war, John went back to U-M for law school. He graduated in 1949 and went to work for Electric Auto-Lite. He and wife, Cynthia, married the next year. John was called back to the Navy in 1951 and the new couple moved to New York City where John was assigned to a destroyer escort. Two of the four Galbraith children were born in New York City.

In time, the Galbraiths returned to Toledo and John left Auto-Lite to pursue other business ventures including community sanitation and real estate. It was during this time that he became a state legislator, serving from 1966 to 1986.

“I was elected and served for 20 years in the House of Representatives. It was a great experience. I made many good friends. I would go down to Columbus on Monday or Tuesday and come back on Thursday. Most of the time I lived in the Columbus Athletic Club.”

After 66 years of marriage, John and his wife remain active. John goes to his office daily to pursue business endeavors. And though it has been 75 years since he joined 25 classmates to become part of OHHS’s first graduating class, it is clear those memories are still a valued part of John’s life.

“Ottawa Hills played a major part in my life,” he reflected. “You can’t measure the benefits I received from Ottawa Hills. It was a wonderful period. A wonderful time. And I have treasured memories of it.”



OH SPORTS ARE MAKING NOISE

OTTAWA HILLS STUDENTS EXCEL ON THE ATHLETIC FIELD AS WELL AS IN THE CLASSROOM.

Below are the highlights of a stellar fall season for a variety of sports.

WAY TO GO GREEN BEARS!

- **Girls' volleyball team** hosted a first-round sectional tournament game for the first time in the school's history.
- **Boys' cross country team** won the TAAC (Toledo Area Athletic Conference) for the third year in a row. They also won the district championship. Senior Andrew Krupp was district champion and named TAAC Runner of the Year.
- **Boys' junior high cross country team** won the TAAC and finished as runner-up in the statewide Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) Junior High Invitational.
- **Boys' soccer** won the TAAC for the 11th year in a row and finished as district runner-up.
- **Girls' field hockey team** was honored with the OHSAA Sportsmanship Award.
- **Girls' golf team** qualified for the state championship for the first time in the school's history.
- **Boys' golf team** won the TAAC for the 8th year in a row and qualified for the state tournament, where they finished 4th.
- Three high school golfers were named All-State: **Caroline Dayton, Brett Hoffman, Nick Durfee.**
- Girls' tennis players **Morgan Billstein** and **Lauren Stevens** (doubles) and freshman **Libbey Rhegness** (singles) qualified for the district tournament.
- **Varsity football** was victorious over Toledo Christian and brought the Bear-Eagle Trophy back to Ottawa Hills.
- **Girls' soccer** continues to grow, fielding a team for the second year since becoming a Varsity sport.

OH STUDENTS EARN NATIONAL MERIT RECOGNITION

Six Ottawa Hills High School seniors have been recognized for **OUTSTANDING ACADEMIC PROMISE** through the 2017 National Merit Scholarship Program.

Tony Zhou and **Spencer Colton** have been named National Merit Semifinalists, joining a nationwide pool of students who placed in the top one percent on the 2015 Preliminary SAT/ National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PAST/NMSQT).

These academically talented students have an opportunity to continue in the competition for some 7,400 National Merit Scholarships worth more than \$32 million that will be offered in the spring.

Priya Jindal, Nathan Card, Cameron Roller, and **Sean Kazmi** have been named Commended Students in the program by placing in the top five percent of more than 1.5 million students who took the test.



Pictured at top are (l to r): **Spencer Colton, Tony Zhou, Cameron Roller, Sean Kazmi.** Pictured at bottom are (l to r): **Nathan Card, Priya Jindal.**

OH CONTINUES TO LEAD THE STATE

Last year, Ottawa Hills made history by becoming the first and only school district in the state to earn A's in all categories on its district and building Local Report Cards.

And now we've done it again. On Local Report Cards recently issued by the Ohio Department of Education, OH again is the only school district in the state to earn A's in all categories.

In a year when most school districts saw substantial declines in their Local Report Card ratings, OH continued to improve



its performance, earning the highest rating possible in all categories. This is a sign of a strong school with hard-working students, dynamic teachers, involved parents, and a supportive community.

To see our district's Local Report Card, visit the Ohio Department of Education website at reportcard.education.ohio.gov.



RECEIVING THE ALL A AND MOMENTUM AWARDS FOR OTTAWA HILLS LOCAL SCHOOLS AND OHES FROM THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ARE (L TO R):

OHES teachers Melissa Jankowski and Wendi Danzeisen, Director of Student Services Tracy Hertz, OHES Principal Kori Kawczynski, Superintendent Dr. Kevin Miller, OHES guidance counselor Darcy Browne, OHES teacher Cheri Palko, and Board of Education member Troy Greeley.



RECEIVING THE ALL A AND MOMENTUM AWARDS FOR OHHS FROM THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ARE (L TO R):

OHHS math teacher Joan Keckler, Superintendent Dr. Kevin Miller, OHHS Principal Ben McMurray, and Director of Curriculum and Instruction Dr. Bill Miller.



Since its formal dedication last spring, the Land Lab has been a resource for hands-on learning for Ottawa Hills Elementary students. The lab was funded with proceeds from the 2016 Green Bear Ball.

SIXTH-GRADE volunteers harvested produce from the Land Lab this fall, learning proper food-handling and plant-cutting techniques. They even shared their bounty with interested students at lunchtime.

FIFTH-GRADE students picked vegetables and herbs, classified them into groups in the classroom, and then took the delicious treats home to sample with their dinner.

FOURTH-GRADE students discussed how plants in the Land Lab might respond to fossilization processes over time and why some grade-level planting areas grew more than others. A great start to a potential scientific investigation!

GREEN TEAM students in grades 2-6 learned proper techniques for keeping a garden healthy, such as cleaning up rotting vegetation and pruning plants that overtake their environments.

Finally, **SECOND GRADERS** harvested tomatoes they had planted as first graders in the Land Lab. As the growing season came to an end, students observed dramatic changes in the Land Lab. They also picked the remaining produce and discussed the process of making a mixture. Back in their classrooms, students added fresh cilantro and onion and enjoyed a chips and salsa treat!

The Lab was designed by residents Todd Kime and Rich Effler '00, and constructed by Effler's company, Valle Homes.



Ottawa Hills Local Schools

Ottawa Hills Local School District
3600 Indian Road
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Don't forget to
share the OH News!

To join the mailing list, OH friends
and alumni should contact Erica
(Gatchel) Silk '89.

esilk@ohschools.org | 419-214-4838

ALUMNI CAN ALSO
REGISTER ONLINE AT:

[ottawahillsschools.org/
content2/ohalumni](http://ottawahillsschools.org/content2/ohalumni)

Agora 2016: Rites of Passage



OHHS students enjoyed the sites of Paris, including the Louvre, as part of their 2016 Agora experience.

Agora is a longstanding tradition at Ottawa Hills. Named for the Greek marketplace where people would meet to exchange goods and ideas, Agora provides a forum for students to experience ideas outside of the traditional classroom.

The goal is to have students participate in super-curricular experiences that expand the depth and breadth of learning within our community.

This year, Agora was held November 14-18 and themed "Rites of Passage." It provided a remarkable week filled with opportunities, challenges, and rituals intended to help students find their best selves.

Workshops ranged from "The Freedom School Art Collaboration," where students worked with area artists to paint inspiring murals in the classrooms of the Monroe United Methodist Church, which houses the Freedom School summer program, to "The People of Toledo" inspired by the "Humans of New York" movement. In this workshop, students worked with Artist-in-Residence Joni Johnson to learn interview and photography skills. Students took those skills to the streets to celebrate the diverse people of Toledo and capture their stories.

Additionally, many juniors and seniors took part in trips to Spain, France, Italy, and Costa Rica.

The Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation provided a \$5,000 gift to the Agora program to support workshop activities throughout the week.

Open for MORE NEWS from
AROUND THESE HILLS!