

A publication of Ottawa Hills Local Schools for alumni, families, and Villagers

AROUND these HILLS

SPRING 2020



Project explores
Jr./Sr. High learning spaces

Fundraisers benefit
parent-support groups

Reunited: Sharing updates
from class reunions

ohschools.org



NORTHERN exposure

**O Canada, meet O Hills!
OH Symphonic Band
makes international debut**



WINNERS:

Engineering Excellence Award
2020 Ohio Championships



THE WIZARDS OF STEM

Their name could not be more appropriate: **Misfit Mechanical Mages**. These 5th and 6th graders deployed aptitude and innovation (and maybe some magic) to succeed in STEM and robotics competitions. Their victories and teamwork earned them a ticket to a May tournament against international competition.

The Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation is proud to provide them with financial support for their journey. Let the magic continue.



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insidespring2020



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ENVISIONING THE LEARNING SPACES OF TOMORROW

Months of surveys and hands-on workshops are shedding light on how best to meet the educational needs of all learners at the Junior/Senior High School.



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SWIMMING TAKES THE PLUNGE AS A VARSITY SPORT

After eight years as a club sport, swimming joins the ranks of varsity sports after a committee studied its history, growing appeal, and potential costs.



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BIG APPLE, BIG STAGE FOR CHORALIERS

The Choraliers are performing (again) at Carnegie Hall in March as part of a four-day trip that also includes a performance at an OH alumni reception.

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AN AWARD-WINNING DISTRICT



Learn more about our awards at ohschools.org/honors

ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION:

Around These Hills celebrates the students, faculty, and alumni of Ottawa Hills Local Schools, and the donors making possible many of those achievements. It is published four times a year by the district's Office of Communications in partnership with the Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation. It is mailed to all homes and businesses in the Village, as well as alumni and donors to the Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU:

Around These Hills welcomes letters from readers at info@ohschools.org.

ADDRESS CHANGE REQUESTS:

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On the cover

The Ottawa Hills Symphonic Band hit all the right notes during its historic four-day trip to Toronto. The excursion marked not only the band's first-ever tour, but also a successful eight-year rebuilding process under Michael Leeds, the instrumental music director. Story begins on page 10

NEXT ISSUE: SUMMER 2020

Our next issue will look at the Class of 2020 and their post-graduation plans.



DEFINED BY EXCELLENCE. SUPPORTED BY TRADITION.

DISTRICT LETTER

An evolution in engagement

When I became superintendent in August, I asked students, faculty, and staff to tell me “WHY” they do what they do at Ottawa Hills Local Schools. As I discovered after first reading Simon Sinek’s book *Start with Why*, the answers we give to that question provide insights into the meaning behind our work. The WHYS explain our motivations and fuel and guide our actions.

This “new” edition of *Around These Hills* came about as we started applying WHY questions to district operations. Our district’s ongoing success depends on constant self-reflection and renewal. The enhancements also reflect our focus on collaboration and innovation, two important themes adopted for the school year.

In looking at *Around These Hills* and *InTouch*, we asked not only why they existed but how they could be improved. Each presented excellence and tradition in action by highlighting the successes of students, faculty, alumni, and donors. But they did so separately even though the audiences mostly overlapped. Those redundant efforts were costing time and money.

So with this issue, we combine the quarterly publications and keep the title of the older of the two (*Around These Hills* launched in the winter of 2016). Despite doubling the number of pages, we are still able to reduce our long-term costs. We are confident this reinvented publication, with its new and expanded features, will better serve its 4,500-plus readers: Village businesses and residents (both parent and non-parent), alumni, and donors to the Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation.

Great things are ahead for our district. And as those achievements occur, *Around These Hills* will be there to share the story. Go Green Bears!

Superintendent Dr. Adam Fineske
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fineskeadam

TALK TO US

OTTAWA HILLS LOCAL SCHOOLS

Board of Education: Rob Gnepper (President), Maara Fink (Vice President), Lisa Brown, Corey Hupp, Kate Pixler

Mission: In partnership with our community, Ottawa Hills Local Schools will challenge and inspire each student to realize his or her unique potential; to embrace learning as a lifelong process; and to become an active, responsible citizen.

Contact: Ottawa Hills Local Schools, 3600 Indian Rd., Ottawa Hills, OH 43606

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OTTAWA HILLS SCHOOLS FOUNDATION

Executive Board: George Lathrop, president; Dee Talmage, secretary; Scott Estes, treasurer

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

Contact: Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation, 3600 Indian Rd., Ottawa Hills, OH 43606

Web: ohschoolsfoundation.org **Phone:** 419-214-4838

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Dr. Fineske and students review options during the interactive workshop.

THE FUTURE OF LEARNING

Space redesign opens options

DURING RECENT DISCUSSIONS ABOUT A “Learning Commons” at the Junior/Senior High School, many parents and other residents of the Village asked a similar question: We have a *courtyard* in the middle of the building?

The current answer is yes, but that could change in the near future. According to preliminary plans, that open-air space would be combined with three adjacent classrooms to create a learning space dedicated to testing, group and individual study, library services, and tutoring. The project would unite spaces from the original 1939 building and its 1955 and 1961 expansions.

A feasibility study for a “Learning Commons” received Board of Education approval in September 2019. Since then, there have been presentations, online surveys,

and group-design exercises with students, faculty, and parents. Those activities were designed to collect data and opinions about how such a space would improve academic performance for all students in grades 7-12 (currently 499 students).

The latest steps in the review and design process occurred Feb. 20, as architectural drawings developed by The Collaborative were unveiled for public comment and feedback.

Next: Review and processing of that feedback into a final design recommendation, which will be submitted to the Board of Education for review and possible action.

ONLINE: Learn more about the “Learning Commons” project at ohschools.org/commons.

WORTHY CAUSE

Upcoming events aid parent groups

TWO UPCOMING SCHOOL FUNDRAISERS

are benefitting projects and programs of three parent-support groups.

First up is the “**Lucky You, It’s a No-Show Auction**” that starts March 6 and ends on St. Patrick’s Day (March 17). Proceeds benefit the OH Boosters Association. Forty “experience” items will be auctioned, from “Superintendent for a Day” to coveted parking spots near district buildings and VIP packages to annual district events.

All bets are placed online through a smartphone app. Event organizers are Elle Cotterman, Carrie Julius, Julie Kowalczyk, and Michelle Walker. Nate and Elle Cotterman are hosting a watch party on the final day from 7-10 p.m.

The second fundraiser is “**Community Wait Night**” on April 18, which benefits the Ottawa Hills Schools Parent Association and the Ottawa Hills Music & Theatre Association. Each ticket is \$75.

Attendees help the organizations raise money by tipping their waiter; coaches, parents, and school leaders are among the volunteer waiters. Attendees can select a table or have one chosen for them. The Wait Night event is a biennial tradition.

The event is from 6-10 p.m. at the Inverness Club; chairpersons are Beth Rotman, Paula Sweeney, and Val Timmerman.

(To learn more about these events, visit ohschools.org/fundraisers.)

MAGIC-MAKERS

Robotics team in global event

THE "MISFIT MECHANICAL MAGES,"

a team of 5th and 6th graders from Ottawa Hills Elementary School, are competing in an international tournament in May after earning a top award at a state robotics tournament. They join 80 other teams from around the world gathering at the University of Arkansas May 14-17.

The OH team had earned an equally prestigious spot at a tournament in Japan, but event organizers cancelled the competition citing concerns over the coronavirus.

The team is advancing after receiving the "Engineering Excellence Award" at the FIRST LEGO League Ohio Championship in January. The team is one of only seven U.S.-based FIRST LEGO League teams to advance beyond state competitions. Even more remarkable, they are doing so despite competing against older teams (the league is for students in grades 4-8) and having only two members with prior experience in robotics.

Team members are Jasper Allred (6), Maya Choksey (5), Quinn Culler (5), Kaed Egan (6), Mary Lathrop (5), Thomas Lathrop (5), Joe Mayer-Heckathorn (6), and Sahil Parikh (6). Coaches are Dr. Dhaval Parikh and George Lathrop.



Center coordinator Michael Yuschak, field hockey teammates strike a pose.

CENTER OF ATTENTION

Facility humming with activity

IN ONLY A FEW MONTHS, THE KADENS

Family Fitness Center has established itself as the hub of student health and well-being at the Junior/Senior High School. Students participating in strength and conditioning programs for spring sports are the most frequent visitors, although students not on a team are using it as well.

The Center also keeps busy by hosting fee-based classes, managed through the Village's Office of Village life. Upcoming spring classes include yoga (visit ottawahills.org/villagelife for more details). The facility also hosts classes during the day in subjects such as anatomy, as students use the

equipment as part of class exercises.

The Center is the centerpiece of The Kadens Family Health & Wellness Capital Campaign; the Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation exceeded its \$1.5 million campaign goal. The campaign's other projects — renovations to the boys' and girls' varsity locker rooms and the Multipurpose Room — are going through design and engineering phases. Construction on both is expected to begin later this year.

ONLINE: Follow the Green Bear energy at [instagram.com/greenbearsfitness](https://www.instagram.com/greenbearsfitness)

TREASURE HUNT

How good is your Ottawa Hills IQ? Do you know what these images show and where on campus they are located? (Answers on page 9)



1



2

BEST BUDS

Every year, the Kindergarten Buddies program creates two-person teams at the Elementary School: one a 6th grader and the other a kindergartener. The pairs meet monthly throughout the school year, forming special and lasting bonds as they get to know each other through creative learning projects. Here is one pairing typical of the program's many successful partnerships:



AVI HANUSZ

Grade/age: 6th / 12

Homeroom teacher:
Andrea Williamson

Favorite movie:
"Coach Carter"

Favorite food:
Chick-fil-A spicy chicken sandwich

Favorite subject:
Social studies

Best thing about your buddy:
"He's really fun to talk to and he is always smiling."

COLIN WORL

Grade/age: Kindergarten / 6

Homeroom teacher:
Amy Wolff

Favorite movie:
"The Lego Movie 2: The Second Part"

Favorite food:
Spaghetti

Favorite subject:
Recess

Best thing about your buddy:
"He comes and does activities with me. Making ice cream was my favorite!"

BRIEFLY



District survey examines needs

To better understand residents' attitudes toward communications and improvement priorities, the district has created a brief survey. It is being mailed to every Village adult, and can be completed online, too. Please complete no later than March 20.



Performers grant audience wishes

More than 175 students in grades 4-8 created magic over four shows of Disney's "Aladdin Jr." The Friday and Sunday performances were nearly sold out; overall, the shows came close to beating the sales record of "Beauty and the Beast Jr."



Treasurer's Office receives audit award

The Treasurer's Office received a top award for how well it kept financial records for the fiscal year ended 2019. Less than 8 percent of 5,900 eligible entities statewide that spend taxpayer money receive "The Auditor of State Award."



Calling members of the Class of 2033

Village residents with a child who will be age 5 on or before Aug. 1 are encouraged to register now for full-day kindergarten; the first day of school is Aug. 17. Call the Elementary School office (415-536-8329) with your child's information.



ROMAN COLUMN

Hugh Wagoner (6)
Fire-glazed clay

ART GALLERY

IF YOU ATTENDED OR HAVE A CHILD

in the Elementary School, then you know that learning about and creating art is a big part of the curriculum. Every hallway is like a museum gallery. *Around These Hills* will share several pieces each issue to show how our K-6 students are using their creative talents to achieve their full potential.



POLAR BEAR

Cole Hemke (3) | Watercolor



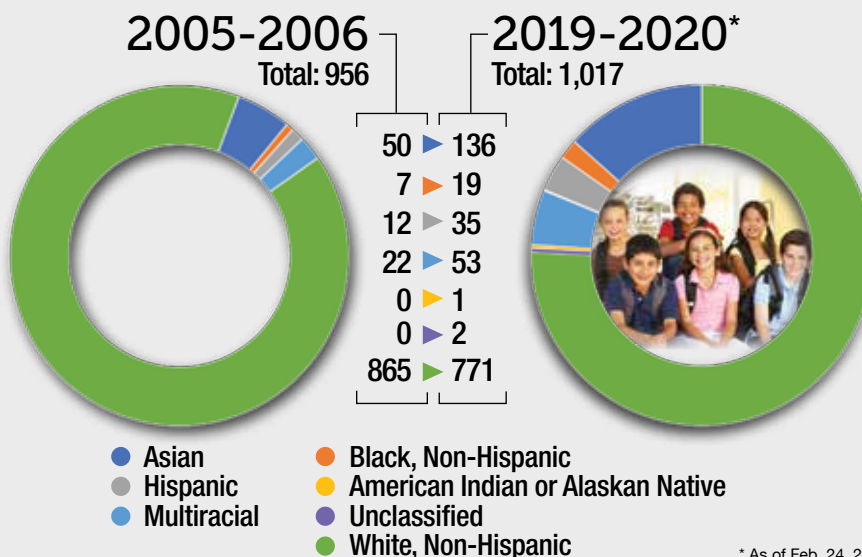
SNOWMAN

Francis Krieger (K) | Mixed media

DATABANK

BECOMING MORE DIVERSE

From 2005 to 2020, the racial composition of the student body – and therefore of the Village of Ottawa Hills – has changed considerably. During that time, district enrollment increased 6.4 percent.



INTERNATIONAL INSIGHT

Students share home cultures

THE ANNUAL DIVERSITY WEEKEND

brought together 11 international high school students studying across northwest Ohio to speak to OH classes about their homelands, families, and cultures.

The event (Jan. 30-Feb. 1) was as much for them as Ottawa Hills students. The group spent time together on field trips, sharing meals, and talking about life as an international student. Four of the 11 are juniors at Ottawa Hills Junior/Senior High School this year: Federico Celauro (Italy), Aliyya Izziti (Indonesia), Shayaan Sultan (Pakistan), and Mamadou Sy (Senegal).

The other seven are spending the academic year in neighboring school districts. In talks at both district buildings, the students used PowerPoint presentations, artifacts from home, and native clothing to tell the story of their home

countries: Brazil, France, Germany Italy, Paraguay, and Spain. During weekend activities, the students stayed in the homes of OH families.

After presentations at the Elementary School, all 11 attended a lunch in their honor at the Junior/Senior High School hosted by the AFS Diversity Club. All but one of the students participating in Diversity Weekend activities was placed through AFS Intercultural Programs, an international youth exchange organization.

(Thank you to AFS liaison Linda Sherry and Hannah Lehmann, Junior/Senior High School art teacher and advisor to the International Student Exchange Association.)

ONLINE: Learn more about exchange, international student programs at ohschools.org/international

SPORTS NOTES



EVERYONE IN THE POOL! After eight years as a club sport, swimming is now a varsity sport at Ottawa Hills Junior/Senior High School. The Board of Education unanimously added the sport after a committee analyzed its growing appeal and potential costs. While the sport is being added for boys and girls in grades 9-12 (giving each 10 varsity sports), the athletes will compete on a co-ed team under one coach. The change takes effect this fall.

ATHLETES PAY IT FORWARD: Part of the district's mission is enabling students to become active and responsible citizens. Green Bear varsity and junior varsity teams continue to meet that goal by raising money and awareness for a variety of local and national causes. This year, teams have raised money for or donated items to SeaGate Food Bank of Northwest Ohio (football); the Susan G. Komen Foundation (girls' basketball); Victory Center of Toledo and Komen Foundation (girls' volleyball); and the American Brain Tumor Association (boys' basketball).



COACHES HONORED: The National Federation of State High School Associations picked Nate Baer as its "Coach of the Year" for Ohio boys' soccer. During the 2019 season, Mr. Baer guided his varsity Green Bears to another Toledo Area Athletic Conference (TAAC) title, placing five players on First-Team All-League. The team won its district but lost in the regional finals. Speaking of the TAAC, Chris Hardman was named football "Coach of the Year" for guiding the Green Bears to a 5-2 TAAC record (6-4 overall). Jordan Kielty was named volleyball "Co-Coach of the Year" for guiding her squad to a second-place TAAC finish with a 5-2 record (17-6 overall). Congratulations, coaches!

KIGHT NAMED ALL-AMERICAN: Senior John Kight (left) was named to the boys' High School All-America Team for the 2019 season by United Soccer Coaches. John also was named to the All-Great Lakes Region Team. He helped the Green Bears win the Toledo Area Athletic Conference title this year and was named First-Team All-State.



BEAR NECESSITIES

STAYING FASHIONABLE AND TRENDY

is a year-round duty in Green Bear Nation. Thankfully, the Bear Cave (managed by the OH Boosters) can help. Here are a few items to add to your wardrobe. The Cave is open 11 a.m.-noon during the school year inside the Junior/Senior High School.



- 1 Windbreaker (Charles River)
Unisex | S-M-L | **\$35**
- 2 Golf visor (Nike) | Unisex | **\$20**
- 3 Quilted vest (Orvis)
Men sizes only M-L-XL | **\$50**
- 4 OH T-shirt (sports word-cloud graphic)
Women sizes only S-M-L-XL | **\$12**

TREASURE HUNT ANSWERS

- 1 The practical arts medallion is one section of the "Connections Window" artwork, which hangs above the Arrowhead entrance at the Junior/Senior High School. The Class of 1959 purchased the artwork.
- 2 A section of the bronze-relief image of Robert M. George, a former Elementary School teacher and coach who died in 1993; the memorial is by the main door of the building's new gym.

NORTHERN exposure

By KEVIN MERRILL



OH Symphonic Band makes international debut

As the chartered buses rolled away from the Junior/Senior High School in the darkness of a winter morning, a journey 12 years in the making was finally under way. Led by instrumental music director Michael Leeds, the 56-member Ottawa Hills Symphonic Band was on its way to perform for an international audience.

The four-day trip to Toronto, Canada, can be seen as a coda of sorts: marking the conclusion of the band's first stage of evolution and signaling the start of its next. Just over a decade earlier, the Junior/Senior High School had only six student musicians — and 33 districtwide. Today, 174 students in grades K-12 are learning to play an instrument and make music together.

The Symphonic Band is the symbolic head of the district's instrumental music program. It features the most accomplished students and performs the most demanding music. Its Toronto itinerary included two public performances at well-known locations and a private one before the top symphonic band professor at Canada's largest university. All three events featured a six-piece playset that took about half an hour to perform.

"They put some of the 90-minute clinic to use right away. She was able to identify some elements that, as a group, will help us climb our current performance plateau."

As you would expect, the tour had a musical theme. Students saw a performance of "The Phantom of the Opera" supported by a 40-person orchestra. And they heard the Toronto Symphony Orchestra perform Mozart's "Symphony No. 39" and "Requiem."

"It was music everywhere you looked and turned," Mr. Leeds said. "I was so excited for them, especially to be able to play in venues besides the Ottawa Hills auditorium, which is their only sonic experience."

In addition to public performances at Casa Loma and the Ontario Science Center, the tour featured tourist stops at Ripley's Aquarium of Canada, Royal Ontario Museum, Eaton Centre, CN Tower, and Niagara Falls. One unplanned event sure to be talked about at future reunions: the tour bus getting stuck on an icy Toronto road for more than an hour, blocking traffic in both directions and forcing the cancellation of the first Casa Loma performance (later rescheduled).

As both a musician (bassoonist) and teacher, Mr. Leeds was most excited about the students' instrumental clinic with Dr. Gillian MacKay, a professor and director of the University of Toronto Wind Ensemble. The moment did not disappoint.



SHARING NOTES:

Top: Dr. Gillian MacKay conducts the OH Symphonic Band during a clinic. Above: OH instrumental music director Michael Leeds and students put their time with Dr. MacKay immediately into practice.

CHILLY, WITH A WARM RECEPTION:

Students gather in front of the Canada sign in downtown Toronto.

HISTORIC SETTING: *Students perform their six-piece set at Casa Loma.*

"They put some of the 90-minute clinic to use right away. She was able to identify some elements that, as a group, will help us climb our current performance plateau," Mr. Leeds said. "One major area of focus was the use of air and breath support. She had students breathe together and use 'both their lungs.' With some simple exercises, she had students tap into more reserves than they had experienced before. We noticed a darker, fuller sound immediately that they have used ever since."

THE EVOLUTION OF THE TOUR

Mr. Leeds joined Ottawa Hills Local Schools in the fall of 2007 after serving as a long-term substitute teacher at Anthony Wayne Local Schools. (A lifelong Toledo resident and 2000 Bowsher High School graduate, he joined Anthony Wayne after earning a bachelor's in music education and master's in musical performance from Bowling Green State University.)

As he accepted the district's part-time job as band director, he was told to face the music, so to speak: Grow a program that was then in the shadows of the district's better-known performing arts offerings or find a new job.

"The year before I joined, there were six kids in the high school symphonic/marching band," Mr. Leeds said. As far as a "pipeline," 33 students (out of 952 then in grades K-12) were playing an instrument as part of the district's music education program. Current bands such as Pep, Jazz, and Concert (grades 7 and 8) – not to mention



Drumline and 5th and 6th grade bands – were off on the horizon.

The size of the high school band (the title "Symphonic" had not yet been added) was perhaps to be expected. For decades, the district employed only a part-time band director. Teachers hired were often looking for full-time work; they moved on after obtaining it. A new leader would then be hired and begin anew the student musician-recruitment process.

"The message was grow it or cut it. And I said, 'I'm your guy,'" Mr. Leeds recalled. "We grew it the first year, and I said, 'I did my deal. Make me full time or I have to go somewhere else.' And they said, 'Okay.'" His role became full time starting in the fall of 2008.

Efforts to recruit more students and increase visibility started immediately. That first year, he volunteered to have student musicians (a handful then at most) lead the annual Elementary School Halloween Parade. "Adding the parade helped with recruitment. It became a touch point so families could see and hear us," he said of the tradition, which continues to this day. "Very few families with students

in grades 4 and younger go to football games, so they were never introduced to the band."

Next, the dormant Marching Band resurfaced in 2010 as the number of student musicians slowly increased. The start was humble. Songs were played from the stands instead of on the field (there were no uniforms or choreographed routines). Even the fight song had to be altered. "We couldn't play it because we had so few musicians," he said.

By 2011, the instrumental music program added a Drumline. Along the way, Mr. Leeds convinced district leadership to make scheduling changes to make playing an instrument more convenient. Band practice for Elementary School students was moved to after school from during lunch. "Kids had to either choose Brown Bag Chorus, band, or recess," he said. "You're going to lose that fight every time."

Fast forward 12 years, and nearly 17 percent of OH students (174 out of 1,017) are playing in a school band or learning an instrument this year at





GETTING BRASSY: Musicians (above) at Casa Loma; a final meeting and group photo (left) in their OH practice room before the trip.

the Junior/Senior High School or Elementary School. Higher participation rates and improving quality have allowed instrumental music to now stand shoulder to shoulder with the other anchors of the district's performing arts program: theater and the Choraliers.

TAKING SUCCESS ON THE ROAD

By 2018, the timing was right to begin talking about a multi-day, out-of-state tour. The band had achieved quantity in numbers, and music education was solidified as part of the Junior/Senior High School curriculum. (In addition to band classes, Mr. Leeds teaches "Music Technology" and "Music Theory.")

With each May band concert finale, the number of senior musicians asked to stand and be recognized grew. And many were becoming members of a growing fraternity: playing the maximum eight years (grades 5-12) under the direction of Mr. Leeds. "That's a lot of years with me," he joked. "Now, it's all about qualitative growth. And we've been slowly chipping away at that."

As important as quantity, a band "culture" had been established within the district. From learning marching formations in the heat of summer practices to playing "Pomp and Circumstance" at Commencement, each successive group of students had shared musical experiences – not to mention a lot of time together. Performance tours in high school are as much about reaching new audiences and playing new venues as they are strengthening team cohesion and celebrating past successes.

The initial idea for a tour came from then Superintendent Dr. Kevin S. Miller. Mr. Leeds accepted the challenge and began reviewing locations, costs, and impacts on students' schedules. "When the opportunity to work with Dr. MacKay became available, coupled with the performances and musical experiences available, I knew that Toronto was the trip for us," Mr. Leeds said. The tour was announced in March 2019.

While the district provided some money, most of the expenses were borne by students and their families. The balance – roughly a third – came from donations. The key donors were the Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation, Ottawa Hills Schools Parent Association, Ottawa Hills Music & Theatre Association, and the Irene A. Aubin Student Assistance Fund.

There is no word yet on the next trip. With many juniors and seniors traveling abroad in the fall of 2020 for Agora, chances are the next trip is four years away. But that's okay. It gives the Symphonic Band a chance to savor longer the memories of Toronto.

"This trip has been a success in every sense of the word," Mr. Leeds said. "I'm proud of how we were able to represent our school, community, and country. The students and I will carry these memories for a lifetime!"

(Special thanks to the tour's chaperones: Rebecca McLean, Michelle Underwood, Stephanie Risk, and Laura Randall.)

BIG APPLE ROAD SHOW



Choraliers return to Carnegie Hall

By KEVIN MERRILL

The Ottawa Hills Symphonic Band isn't the only group of student performers going on the road this year. For the second time in four years, the Choraliers are performing at New York's Carnegie Hall. The 38-member group departed March 5 on a four-day trip, capped by the March 8 performance at the Big Apple landmark.

The group performs at 8:30 p.m. on the Perelman Stage in the Stern Auditorium. They will be part of a mass choir of professionals and college and high school singers. They will sing Ralph Vaughan Williams' "Dona Nobis Pacem (Give Us Peace)" and be supported by an orchestra. The piece is about 45 minutes; the Choraliers come on stage during the second half.

When they return to Ottawa Hills, they will perform a section of that work at the March 15 Spring Choir Concert. "You do so much work on pieces like this and then you only get to sing it once," said Donna Wipfli, the vocal music director at the Junior/Senior High School. "I wanted to give our students a chance to perform it a second time for a local audience so families and the community can hear what it is we've been working on, raising money for, and talking about."

In addition to many rehearsals in New York leading to the Carnegie Hall performance, the group sang March 6 at an Ottawa Hills alumni event and March 7 at the Actor's Chapel at St. Malachy's.

(Learn more at ohschools.org/choraliers)

alumninews

REUNIONS



CLASS OF 1959: Twenty-two members and spouses gathered last summer at Lake Leelanau near Traverse City, Mich. The hub of activities was the historic “Cole Scuttle” cottage of **Sterling Cole**. Food was plentiful and sourced locally, especially the cherries (except for the Tony Packo’s hot dogs, which were driven up from Toledo). The group took a pontoon boat ride, visited a winery, and played shuffleboard. Attendees drove in from Colorado, Florida, Vermont, Nevada, and North Carolina. They also paused to remember classmates who passed since the last reunion: **Cathy (Klaus) Schear, Jim Seney, Rob Foster, Dick Harrah, Sandy (Arnold) Staver, Beth (Davis) Karren, and Nancy (Zimmerman) Weisberg**.

CLASS OF 1971: Members organized a Florida reunion and opened it to graduates of any OH class. The event took place in St. Petersburg and started at the Morean Arts Center, which houses the Chihuly Collection. Then, it was off to 400 Beach Seafood and Taphouse for food, drink, and great conversation. The class is actively planning their 50th reunion, although all agreed it must be for their parents since they are still much too young! Pictured below (left to right) outside the Chihuly Collection are (left to right) **Betty Kampfer ('71), Pam (Bradford) Volk ('71), Nancy (Rand) Wise ('66), Sarah Kline ('71), Nan (Kobacker) De Laubadere ('71), Bruce Schwartz ('72), and Katie (Northcraft) Reynard ('74)**.



THAT '70s SKI TRIP: Members of the classes of 1977, 1978, and 1980 enjoyed an epic late-season ski trip last year at Alta Ski Area in Utah. A late snowstorm delivered 20 inches of legendary light powder over two days. Better than the skiing was the time to reconnect with friends. Warming



themselves near the fireplace (above, left to right) are **Craig Niehous ('80), Craig Lemieux ('77), Jeff Hancock ('77), Bruce Friedman ('77), Steve Jenks ('77), Peter Kaplin** (foreground, an OH elementary student and village resident through high school), **Granger Souder ('78), and Ric Purtill ('78)**.

CLASS OF 1979: About 40 members of the class plus spouses gathered in the Village in July to celebrate their 40th reunion. The two-day event featured many activities, and started with a Friday dinner at The Heights, the rooftop bar at the downtown Toledo Renaissance Hotel. Several classmates arrived by boat (show-offs!). Saturday morning started with a golf outing at the Toledo

CLASS OF 1969: More than a third of class graduates (33 out of 92) returned during Reunion Weekend (Oct. 4-6) to share old memories and make new ones. The weekend began with a Friday reception at the home of **Patrice (Casey) Spitzer**. Saturday started with a group walk at Wildwood Preserve Metropark, followed by bagels, orange juice, and coffee. The day continued with a VIP tour of the Junior/Senior High School and ended with dancing and a DJ at The 5th Street Pub on Monroe Street (where the photo at right was taken). Sunday started with breakfast at Rick’s City Diner followed by visiting the Dave White car show. Thank you to members of the alumni committee for organizing activities: **Scott Schwab, Larry Levy, Marcia (Minns) Drumheller, Patrice (Casey) Spitzer, Cathy (Skilliter) Gordon, Janet (Goldner) Killam, and Craig Burkhardt**.





Country Club, followed by lunch at Barry Bagels' Westgate location and then a tour of the Junior/Senior High School. The main event was a backyard party at the Ottawa Hills' home of **Mary (Lewis)** and **Jim Geiger** (where the picture above was taken). Interestingly, the home was built by a classmate's family who also attended the reunion.



CLASS OF 1989: Members celebrated their 30-year reunion with activities throughout Reunion Weekend in October. One of their stops was The Stubborn Brother Pizza Bar on Bancroft Street. Pictured (above, left to right) are **Katie (Thomas) Talbott**, **Scott Robertson**, **Jason Liber**, **Tricia (Epstein) Ethier**, **Ranjit Singh**, **John Cilerzo**, **Erica (Gatchel) Silk**, **Gus Hatoum**, **Heather (Bates) Carroll**, and **John Sully**. (Not pictured: Dan McCullough)

Planning an OH reunion? Contact **Erica Silk ('89)** at esilk@ohschools.org for help in finding alumni and their contact information.

ALUMNI NOTES



Sean Mercer, girls' varsity basketball head coach, traveled to see **Olivia VanSlooten ('16)**, one of his star former athletes,

play in one of her last collegiate games. Olivia's High Point University team was taking on Butler University. She is studying education and currently is finishing her student-teaching program.

Pete Kadens ('96) recently announced that his family foundation will pay for any qualifying 2020 Scott High School graduate to attend a university or trade school. He also extended the same offer to a parent or legal guardian of each graduating student at the school, which is part of Toledo Public Schools.



Kristján Gislason ('74) from

Iceland traveled the world on his motorcycle in 2014. He provides a beautiful recounting of the experience in his new book titled *Sliding Through: Around the world on a motorcycle — alone*. He has donated a gift copy to the high school library. He attended Ottawa Hills High School in 1973-74 and still remains in touch with his classmates. Because of his son's positive experiences while here, his father created an award

in gratitude for the friendship shown to Kristján. The annual recipient is a student who "gives unselfishly" and who has a "positive attitude."

Alumni of the district's award-winning Quiz Bowl Team returned in January to help Ottawa Hills host its first-ever tournament. Alumni and other volunteers read questions and scored results as more than two dozen teams from across Ohio competed. Thanks to alumni (below, left to right) **Randall Johnson ('18)**, **Steven Randall ('18)**, **Michael Docis ('13)**, **Adam Wright ('15)**, **Daniel Liu ('19)**, and Tony Torio, math teacher and team advisor.



In memoriam: Jim Tenney ('58), an inaugural member of the Ottawa Hills High School Athletic Hall of Fame, died Dec. 24, 2019. Mr. Tenney was honored in October for winning the 1956 state doubles' tennis title with teammate **John M. Hill ('56)**.



THE BRIDE WORE WHITE (AND GREEN)!

The Oct. 19, 2019, wedding of **Jessica (Figy) Brown ('07)** and Lance Brown became a Green Bear reunion within a reception as 14 alumni were present to share the special day. The event took place at the Renaissance Hotel in Toledo. Helping to show the colors were (back row, from left) **Scott Schoenberger ('08)**, **Katie Figy ('11)**, **Nikki Schoenberger ('11)**, **Chris Figy ('09)**, and **Natalie Temme ('11)**. In the front row (from left) are **Jenny Geiger ('07)**, **Liz Merritt ('07)**, **Dr. Sudipa Biswas ('07)**, **Kelsey Netter ('07)**, **Megan Jamieson ('07)**, the groom Lance, the bride Jessica, **Lindsay Roshon ('08)**, **Annie (Keener) Koslow ('07)**, and **Elizabeth (Huebner) Marshall ('04)**.

foundationnews

Adrenaline flowing at new Fitness Center

From its first hours of operation, The Kadens Family Fitness Center has been delivering the adrenaline rush we all expected it would. It starts most early mornings with spring athletes going through strength and conditioning programs and continues throughout the day as classes use its equipment as part of class experiments. The rush continues into the evening as community members participate in Office of Village Life classes (from yoga to interval training).

Those scenes would not have been possible without the support of many individual and corporate supporters to The Kadens Family Health & Wellness Capital Campaign. Because of you, the campaign committee was able to exceed the \$1.5 million goal. And now, attention turns to two other campaign projects.

Renovations to the boys' and girls' varsity locker rooms (original to the 1939 high school building) are in the engineering and design phase. When completed, the modernized spaces will be dedicated as "The Swigart Family Varsity Boys' Locker Room" and "The Hylant and Berenzweig Families Girls' Varsity Locker Room" in honor of the families' love of Ottawa Hills, athletics, and our district.

The Multipurpose Room also soon enters a design and engineering phase. Updates are expected to range from the structural — fixing a sloping floor and improving electrical systems — to the aesthetic (windows and paint). Occurring over the summer and early fall, the renovations will ensure the space celebrates its 65th anniversary in 2022 in style.

On behalf of the Foundation and its Trustees, thank you for helping our students achieve their full potential. **Please consider supporting experiences like these and donating today to the Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation.**



George Lathrop
President
Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation



Erica Silk
Director of Development
and Alumni Relations

BRIEFLY

SUPPORTING A WINNING ARGUMENT

Support from the Foundation is helping the Speech and Debate Team enter more tournaments and cover the cost of student dues. Started in 2018-2019, the team is comprised of students in grades 7-12; they travel to about a dozen competitions and hosted their first tournament in December. The team finished in the top 10 in northwest Ohio last year and sent eight students to the State Championships.



CUTTING-EDGE TOOLS ADVANCE 'STEAM'

To help a "Makerspace" become a reality at the Junior/Senior High School, the Foundation has funded the purchase of a laser cutter and 3D printer (left). The equipment helps advance the building's STEAM curriculum (Science, Technology, Education, Art, and Math).

The machines will be used to help apply design concepts to solutions in everything from design templates and prototypes to works of art.

AIDING ENTREPRENEURS

The family of William "Billy" Ciralsky recently created a donor fund in his memory to enhance student entrepreneurial initiatives and projects. "The Billy Ciralsky Entrepreneurial Endowment Fund" recognizes his achievements in the field of business and strong passion for the Village and its schools. The Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation thanks the Ciralsky family for providing our district with this new resource to fuel imaginations for generations to come.





Ottawa Hills Local Schools

3600 Indian Road
Ottawa Hills, OH 43606

NONPROFIT
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PERMIT #311

upcoming events

March

MARCH 6-17

"Lucky You, It's a No-Show Auction"
Online fundraiser for OH Boosters

MARCH 13

6th Grade Science Expo
Elementary School | 8 a.m.-2:40 p.m.

MARCH 15

Jr./Sr. High Spring Choir Concert
Jr./Sr. High auditorium | 2-3 p.m.

Jr./Sr. High Spring Band Concert
Jr./Sr. High auditorium | 7-9 p.m.

MARCH 17

Watch party for "Lucky You, It's a No-Show Auction"
Home of Nate and Elle Cotterman
7-10 p.m.

MARCH 23-30

Spring Break

April



APRIL 18

Community Wait Night
Inverness Club
6-10 p.m.



APRIL 24-26

"Mama Mia!" (spring musical)

Jr./Sr. High auditorium
April 24 & 25: 7:30-9:30 p.m.
April 26: 2-4 p.m.

Ticket info: ohschools.org/theater

APRIL 30

15th Annual smART Show
Jr./Sr. High School | 6-9 p.m.

May

MAY 6

Brown Bag Chorus
Jr./Sr. High auditorium | 7-8 p.m.

MAY 8

Annual OHSPA School Carnival
Elementary School | 5-8 p.m.

MAY 12-15

8th Grade Trip to Washington, D.C.

MAY 15

High School Honors Assembly
Jr./Sr. High auditorium | 8:30-11 a.m.

MAY 16

Prom (location TBD | 7-10 p.m.)

MAY 19

All District Band Concert
Jr./Sr. High auditorium | 7-9 p.m.

MAY 20

Jr./Sr. High School Choir Concert
Jr./Sr. High auditorium | 7-9 p.m.

MAY 21

First Grade Circus
Elementary School | 1:30-2:30 p.m.

MAY 22-24

"Scorch" (spring play)
Jr./Sr. High auditorium
May 22 & May 23: 7-9 p.m.
May 24: 2-4 p.m.

2020

MAY 21: 8th Grade Recognition Ceremony
Jr./Sr. High auditorium | 8-10 a.m.

MAY 27: 6th Grade Graduation Ceremony
Elementary School | 3:30-4:30 p.m.

MAY 28: 79th Annual Commencement
Jr./Sr. High School | 6-8 p.m.