

# Plattsmouth Alumni Association

Linking the Past with the Future

Published October 2019

## Charles Kerns named 2019 'ALUM OF THE YEAR'



Our 2019 Alum of the Year was nominated by a PHS football teammate! He described this year's nominee as kind and hardworking. A man who came from nothing, served his country, learned a valuable skill and turned that skill into his own business. Living the American Dream even further when the business became a family business of three generations!

Charles Kerns was born in Holton, KS in December of 1936. His family moved to Plattsmouth when he was a young child.

He attended Plattsmouth Schools from Kindergarten until he graduated in 1954 when he graduated. While in High School, Charlie played football for the Blue Devils and was also a tuba player for the Plattsmouth High School Marching Band.

He met Ella Mary Nielsen his freshman year in high school and during their sophomore year they began dating and dated all the rest of their high school years. Following high school he joined the Navy and even though he wasn't stationed in Korea he did serve during the Korean Conflict. During his service in the Navy he served aboard the USS Mount Olympus in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans as well as above the Arctic Circle in Alaska. In October of 1955 he came home on leave and married Ella Mary Nielsen.

They have three children, Tallie VanWesten '74, Tammy Gebhart '78, and Terry Kerns '78 all PHS graduates. He has 6 grandchildren and five of them are PHS graduates, Martin VanWesten '05, Ken Kerns '06, Alicia VanWesten Wolles '07, Amy Kerns Kotera '09, Chris Kerns '13 and Nick Gebhart '13 in Papillion. He also has two great grandchildren, Loretta and George Kerns who will one day be attending Plattsmouth Schools as well.

Following his service in the Navy, Charlie went to work for a dredging company, working on underwater pipelines and utility construction, which took him and his family all across the United States and also into Canada and Mexico.

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# 2019 HONOR CLASSES



## 50 YEARS - CLASS OF 1969

First row (LtoR): Janet Nolte Urbom, Linda Snell Worlein, Deborah Fry Coglazier, Donna Grove Johnson, Gayle Eaton, Marcia Gruber Paul, Marge Waterman Keasling, Mary Lepert Johnson, Penny Payton Jackson, Vicki Molck Christensen, Gail Sullivan Hackwith, Vicki Bracken. Back row (LtoR): Tom Welstead, Joe Solomon, Ken Henry, Ed Johnson, Frank Finch, Rod Glup, Laurie Grosshans Arn, Patricia Hopp, Rob Hackwith.



## 60 YEARS - CLASS OF 1964

First row (LtoR): Mary Larsen Pohlmeier, Barbara Newsom Noell, Marilyn Vinduska Cahalane, Kathy Lutes Culbertson, Roberta Range Hightree, Sherrill Jose Konfrst, Back row (LtoR): Louis Austin, Ronald Christenham, Jim Lutz

## *Alum of the Year Continued -*

Plattsmouth was always home and in September 1976 he came back to Plattsmouth for good and started his own construction company, Kerns Excavating. The company started with a single backhoe with Charlie and son, Terry as the only employees. Today they have twenty plus pieces of heavy equipment and trucks and fifteen employees.

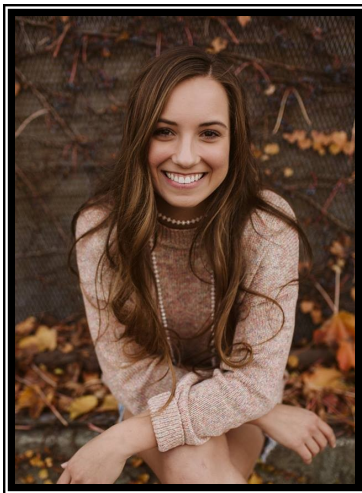
During the years he has owned Kerns Excavating, the company has been involved in the community and school system in many different ways. He helped buy and install the handrails in the current Blue Devil stadium so he could go to the games and sit up high enough in the bleachers that he could watch his grandsons play for the Blue Devils. He has been a long time member of the Booster Club. Kerns Excavating was also involved in the building of the current high school by doing dirt work as well as putting in the sewer and water systems for the building. They have done pipe and utility work at all the other buildings in the District as well.

Even though he is now retired he still keeps up with what is happening with the company now that Terry, Ken and Chris are running the business. Family is very important to him and he spends time with them as often as he can. FAMILY is probably his most loved past time!

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## **CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2019 ALUMNI SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS**

The PHS Alumni Association awarded three \$750.00 Scholarships in 2019.



**Rachel Widick**

Daughter of  
Justin & Jennifer <sup>'91</sup> (Wehrbein) Widick



**Nathan Konkler**

Son of  
Charlie <sup>'81</sup> & Kim <sup>'81</sup> (Parriott) Konkler



**Kelby Meisinger**

Daughter of  
Buck <sup>'86</sup> & Heather Meisinger



### ***LOOKING FOR A CHARITABLE DONATION FOR 2019....LOOK NO FURTHER!!***

The Plattsmouth Education Foundation is a 501c3 charitable organization whose mission is "Enhancing Educational Opportunities for Plattsmouth Students." Charitable donations are used for scholarship opportunities, educational grants for teachers and supporting the Plattsmouth Alumni Association. Please send your contribution to the Plattsmouth Education Foundation, P.O. Box 283, Plattsmouth, Nebraska 68048.

# 2019 HONOR CLASSES



## 65 YEARS - CLASS OF 1954

Front (LtoR): EllaMary Nielsen Kerns, Dee Beins Schuetz, Patricia Bailey Porter  
Back (LtoR): Jon Schuetz, Charlie Kerns, George Ebersole, Larry Vallery



## 45 YEARS - CLASS OF 1974

Marcia Bryant & Tallie Kerns VanWesten



## 40 YEARS - CLASS OF 1979

Sandy Schreiber Kerns



# THANK YOU PHS ALUMNI!!!

The PHS Marching Blue Devils would like to extend their thanks to the PHS Alumni who helped them purchase uniform accessories, and much needed equipment for the band. These items will help meet the needs of our growing band for many years to come. GO BIG BLUE!

Join the PHS Band Alumni Facebook page to stay up to date with the latest happenings with the PHS Band

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/156853241408671/>

**SIGN UP NOW**  
**E-Newsletter**

<http://eepurl.com/ddrSOP>

Receive Alumni updates and newsletters by email.

**Make Plans to  
attend the  
PHS Alumni  
Banquet**

**May 23, 2020**

**More information  
available soon!**

Plattsmouth Alumni Association  
P.O. Box 283  
Plattsmouth, Nebraska 68048

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ORGANIZATION  
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# SAVE THE DATE

## WHAT:

Plattsmouth Education Foundation  
5th Annual  
Cecil McKnight  
Charity Golf Tournament

## WHEN:

May 30, 2020  
9:00 AM

## WHERE:

Lakeridge Golf Course  
1536 Country Club Circle,  
Plattsmouth, NE 68048

For more details please contact [plattsedfoundation@gmail.com](mailto:plattsedfoundation@gmail.com) or 402-298-8513