

# Bobcat *Alumni* Banner

Grand Blanc High School • 12500 South Holly Road • Grand Blanc, MI 48439

810-591-6021 • [www.grandblancschools.org/alumni](http://www.grandblancschools.org/alumni)

The Alumni Newsletter of Grand Blanc High School



## HOMECOMING 2012 Distinguished Alumni Awards



Grand Blanc High School Alumni Association honored five graduates with the Distinguished Alumni Award during our Homecoming 2012 celebration. Grand Blanc Schools Superintendent, Dr. Norm Abdella joined us for this evening's festivities. His monthly newsletter to all Grand Blanc Schools employees made us quite proud of our school system:

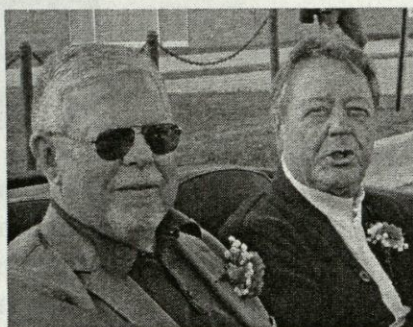
"I had the opportunity to attend the Grand Blanc High School Alumni Banquet and Award Ceremony Saturday night, which Charlie Carmody and his committee did an outstanding job planning and hosting! Five former graduates were honored as distinguished alumni:



*Terry Pierce (1969)  
Larry Mancour (1953)  
Janet Messerly Sifferman (1972)  
Denise Brush Peppard (1975)  
Peter Farrehi (1983)*



*Janet,  
Peter  
&  
Denise*



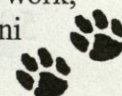
*Terry & Larry*

*Larry Mancour (1953)  
Denise Brush Peppard (1975)  
Peter Farrehi (1983)  
Janet Messerly Sifferman (1972)  
Terry Pierce (1969)*



One by one these outstanding individuals stood to accept their plaques and as they did so, went out of their way to thank their families, their teachers, and administrators for their success. Each and every one of the honorees had specific stories of teachers and administrators who believed in them, supported them, encouraged them, and took extra time to assist their studies. One honoree thanked former teacher Richard Hoag for her "C" in science, a grade she appreciatively called a "gift." My point is a simple one. None of the distinguished individuals thanked a legislator, none thanked a governor and no one spoke of a Grand Blanc superintendent. But one did bring her high school yearbook to read what her high school administrator (Bob Burek) wrote to her so many years ago. His encouraging message obviously remained with her all these years."

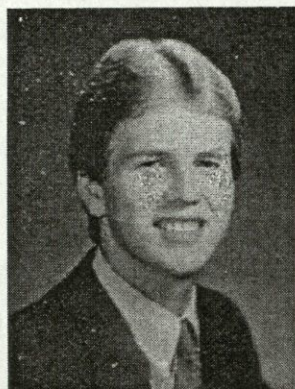
We look forward to our 11<sup>th</sup> annual Distinguished Alumni Awards this September 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> during our Homecoming 2013 weekend. If you know of a GBHS alumnus that should be honored for their life's work, outstanding accomplishments, or their contribution to their local community, please contact the Alumni Association President Charlie Carmody at [ccarmody@grandblancschools.org](mailto:ccarmody@grandblancschools.org).



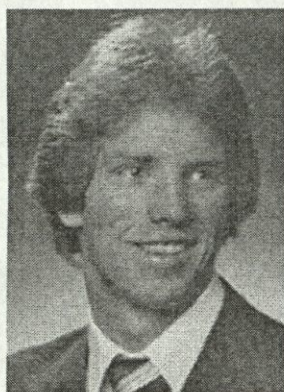
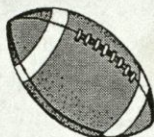


## HOMECOMING 2013 - SAVE THE DATE

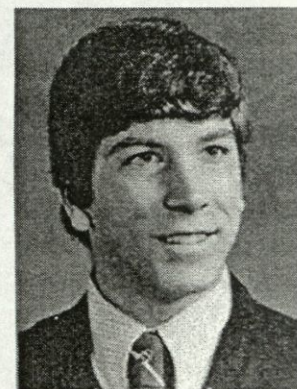
Our 2013 Homecoming weekend will be September 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>. The Friday Homecoming activities include the Parade at 5:00pm. It is now starting from the GBHS East Campus, and winding its way up Saginaw Street to Grand Blanc Road and ending at the GBHS West Campus. The pre-game at Frank Thomas Field will begin at 6:45pm and kick off of the football game will be at 7:00pm. Halftime will include the introduction of the Distinguished Alumni Awardees, the introduction of the Homecoming Court and the crowning of the Queen and King, and it finishes with the Bobcat Marching Band. We are proud to be awarding three GBHS graduates with our Distinguished Alumni Award. They include:



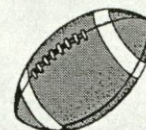
**Jim Gooch '85**  
who has worked most recently as the President and CEO of Radio Shack.



**Bob Stefanski '80**  
an engineer and lawyer, who founded the Michigan eLab, an early stage investment fund based in Ann Arbor focused on technology start-ups from the University of Michigan ecosystem.



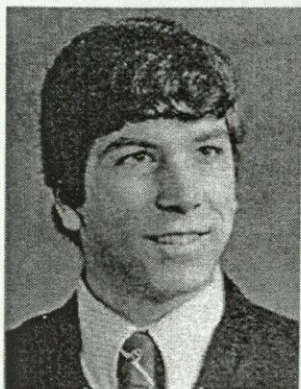
**Steve Jaksa '74** the Head Baseball Coach at Central Michigan University the only GB Grad to be Division 1 head coach in any sport.



We hope you will join us for all the fun. The Class of 1963 is joining us for their 50th class reunion that weekend. They'll be in the parade, and join us for the Homecoming game too.



**STEVE JAKSA to  
Enter Alumni Hall of Fame  
As the only NCAA Division I Coach  
from Grand Blanc High School**



This October 5<sup>th</sup> marks the next induction ceremony for distinguished alumni from Grand Blanc High School. One such alumnus is Steve Jakska, Class of 1974, who currently coaches varsity baseball at Central Michigan University.

Steve is believed to be the first and only Grand Blanc grad to head a NCAA Division I team.

Steve's career took a circuitous route to Mt. Pleasant and the Chippewas. Following graduation from CMU in 1979, he coached football, basketball and baseball in the early 80's at GBHS while teaching at Holy Family. He then went to Lake Fenton from 1982-84 where he was the head basketball coach and where he met his future wife, Patty. From Lake Fenton, Steve went to Flint Southwestern where he coached the Colts to a Valley Championship in baseball.

Next for Steve were stops at Saginaw Nouvel (baseball coach and athletic director) and Northwood College before he landed the assistant baseball coach at CMU in June of 1998. Four years later, Steve became the head coach of the Chippewa baseball team where he has been ever since, enjoying great success.

Steve was elated to hear of his coming induction. In a recent telephone conversation, he said "I am truly honored and humbled to receive this honor. Grand Blanc holds special for me and my siblings who also graduated from GBHS. I will forever be indebted to the teachers and coaches who taught and mentored me in my four years there."

**GRAND BLANC Schools  
Largest in the County**

The Grand Blanc Community Schools are now the largest in Genesee County with Grand Blanc High School being one of the 20 largest in the State of Michigan. Here are some fast facts about our schools:



**Operating Budget**  
\$78.4 million

**Total student count**  
8,751 students

**High School**  
2,697 students

**Middle School West**  
1,043 students

**Middle School East**  
1,099 students

**Indian Hill Elementary**  
512 student

**Anderson/McGrath**  
802 students

**Perry School**  
208 students

**Myers Elementary**  
541 students

**Cook/Mason**  
848 students

**Brendel Elem**  
469 students

**Total Staff**  
903

**% College Bound**  
93%

**% in HS sports/activities**  
58.5%

**School District Population**  
50,259



## Grand Blanc High School Teachers Celebrate 5<sup>th</sup> Reunion

Grand Blanc High School staff from the last half of the twentieth century will hold their 5<sup>th</sup> reunion from 12 noon 4:00 p.m. on Sunday July 21, 2013 at the Charles Creasey Bicentennial Park. It is a chance for the staff to reminisce about the "old days" and catch up on students and colleagues alike. Bill Chittle, assistant principal from 1979-2004, put it best. "It has been a great event to bring back those folks to rekindle old relationships."

Over 100 staff members have attended each of the previous reunions. Teachers from the 1950s through the year 2000 continue to support this event. Nita Larpenieur, former French teacher from 1964-1997, and a co-organizer of this event with Bill Chittle, said, "It is wonderful to get together and remember and celebrate our years at GBHS."

It is likely this will be the final reunion for this wonderful group of people who helped build the best high school in Genesee County and one of the best in the State of Michigan. Great kids, great parents, great staff.....a recipe for success!



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