

# Bobcat Alumni Banner

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

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The Alumni Newsletter of Grand Blanc High School

## Distinguished Alumni Nominations

The Alumni Association is sponsoring its fourth annual Distinguished Alumni Awards. We are looking to honor Grand Blanc High School graduates that have excelled in their career or profession, made a significant contribution to their local community, or made an impact on the lives of others.

Tell us about it! We would like you to submit the names and accomplishments of those alumni that you think meet the qualifications above. It would be helpful if you have a current address and phone to contact the alum you submit.

Nominations are due by June 15th, 2006. Your Alumni Board of Directors along with the Superintendent of Schools Dr. Michael Newton will help select our fourth class of Distinguished Alumni. We will keep all nominations submitted

on file for future consideration.

The Distinguished Alumni will be introduced at this year's Homecoming Football game on Friday, October 6th, and honored at the Distinguished Alumni Awards banquet on Saturday, October 7th. More information will be in our Fall Alumni Banner concerning the banquet, and how you can make your reservations to join us for a memorable evening. In addition, a picture of each inductee will be placed in the Distinguished Alumni Hall, located in the front entrance atrium at GBHS.

Please send your nominations to:

GBHS Alumni - Distinguished Alumni Award  
12500 Holly Road  
Grand Blanc, MI 48439

## Come Join Us . . . For Homecoming 2006

We invite all Bobcat Alums to join us for our 70th annual Homecoming, which will be held on the weekend of October 6th and 7th. The schedule of events include:

**Thursday, October 6th:** Queens Court Assembly  
8:00 am-GBHS Gymnasium  
Grand Marshall Luncheon -  
12:00 pm-GBHS Library

**Friday, October 7th:** Interclass Games 8:45 am-  
GBHS Gymnasium  
Parade 5:30 pm-Saginaw St.

Football vs. Carman-Ainsworth 7:00 pm-Frank  
Thomas Coliseum

Halftime Festivities 8:15 pm-Frank Thomas  
Coliseum

lines at the gate. The parade begins at the Middle School at 5:30 pm and works its way through downtown Grand Blanc to the lower parking lot of the high school. Our halftime festivities will include the introduction of the Distinguished Alumni Award winners, the Crowning of the Homecoming Queen, the Bobcat Marching Band, the Pom Pom Squad, and the announcement of the winning class float. Tickets for the Alumni Awards Banquet will be available in September, 2006.



A reminder that tickets for the football game are on sale in the Athletic Office during the week of Homecoming. Please get your tickets in advance and save waiting in long



## **Tell it to the Marines!**

### **How One GBHS Family Supports the Corps**

By Wayne McDaniel, GBHS Class of '58



Wendell  
Jennings



Jerry  
Jennings



When I was a kid growing up in the early middle part of the last century, "Tell it to the Marines!" had a special meaning for everyone. Marines were laying down their lives in large numbers on faraway islands and atolls to help defeat the Japanese in the Pacific.

Another slogan that was very popular back then greeted visitors to the post office and other government buildings: "The Marines Want You!" These posters sported a picture of the sharpest Marine anyone could imagine, pointing his finger directly at the observer. As for me, I followed another slogan of the time which demanded that we, "Join the Navy and See the World!" I saw a lot of it in thirty-plus years with the Navy and Air Force, often working with and admiring the Marines.

One GBHS family apparently took the call of The Corps to heart. Enough of the Jennings family has joined the Marines to form their own platoon, or at least a good-sized squad. Wendell and Jerry Jennings, Class of '54 and '58 respectively, began the trend. Wendell, who graduated with my brother Stan, started the Marine tradition. His younger brother Jerry followed just a few years later.

Betty Jennings, Class of '61, married a Flint boy by the name of Richard McIntyre, who had graduated from Central High, and yes, Dick had joined the USMC. He fought in and survived Korea but fell victim to Betty's famous sparkling eyes. Wendell and Jerry's two daughters and a cousin also joined the Marines.

The Jennings family grew up in a typical household of the Post WWII era. Wendell tells us a bit about his school and work experiences back in the early '50s. "I didn't take school very seriously. I can only remember bringing one book home. That was Latin and I, like everybody else, didn't want to raise the ire of the famous Ms. Berdan."

"As soon as I was old enough I found after-school work. My first steady job was as a pin-setter at the local Bowling Alley. The pay was pretty good for back then, especially if you set 'doubles'. I had the most fun, however, sitting in the box on the wall that held the buzzer for fouls. I got a lot of grief from some of the guys, and a couple of them even threatened to be waiting for me in the parking lot, but never showed up. They claimed I wasn't paying any attention to the guys and that I favored the gals. Guilty as charged, I can't remember ever hitting the buzzer on a lady. "My other jobs were at the new Hamady store on Dort Hwy., the biggest store in the area back then, and at Buckler Beverage Co. on Lapeer Rd. I bagged and stocked at the store and loaded trucks with tons of Hires Root Beer and other pop at Buckler. Both jobs were a bit far from home, but in those days it was common and easy to hitch-hike. "I recall my last 'appointment' with Principal Howard Pepper. It ended without the traditional paddle because he liked my excuse for skipping a school day in my senior year. I had hitch-hiked into Flint to join the Marine Corps. "I left for the Corps three days after graduation at age 17. Boot Camp at San Diego was an interesting experience, but for a country boy from Grand Blanc, it wasn't that much of a physical challenge. We all grew up running, climbing, and banging into one another. "I wasn't as well prepared for the psychological challenge of it all. We were convinced that 'they' were just looking for an excuse to kill us all and scatter our bones. So, for three months, I pretty well just kept my mouth shut and a low profile. "I finally survived Boot Camp and went to Twenty-nine Palms, California for the next two years. It was only a short trip to Palm Springs. It was not what you'd call tough duty.

"I first worked as a wireman, until they discovered that I could type. This was due to the fact that I had been moved from Senior English class for being a 'smart-mouth'. Mr. Pepper put me into typing, a move that turned out to be most valuable later. I was moved to Base Supply, then later to the MP Group and missed a lot of unsavory duty because I was busy typing up requisitions and citations. "I enjoyed all of my duty in the Corps and made a lot of friends. I'm still in touch with some of them after all these years. "I spent my last year in San Diego as a troop handler for a supply section. That meant I was in charge of thirty or so recruits during their 5th week of service at the base.

"All in all, my three years were great, with good fun, good friends, and a great social life. Many years later, I worked for VA, and I was always a bit embarrassed when people would come up to me and say they appreciated my Marine Corps service. Weekends playing tennis and running the beaches with the girls? Hey, I think I'm the one who owes The Corps."

Wendell admits, with good humor, that he is the lowest-ranking Marine in the family. He like many famous people rose only to the rank of corporal. The rank of the others in ascending order is: Richard McIntyre (Betty's husband)-Sergeant; Victoria (Jerry's daughter)-1st Lt.; Kimiko (Wendell's daughter)-Capt.; Chuck (a cousin and Southwestern grad)-Colonel.

Jerry Jennings, my classmate, is a very special case. He left the Corps as a Captain but remained in government service his entire career. He held a variety of high positions in the Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan and Bush administrations from 1973 until his recent retirement from the post of Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for POW/MIA Affairs, which he held since August 2001. His career would make a book in itself.

So, if you should ever find yourself needing "to tell it to a Marine," just look up a Jennings. Chances are you've found the right person.



## Alumni Gift Funds Band Bleachers 1956, 1971 and 1981 Football Teams Reunions

The Grand Blanc Educational Foundation has announced that a gift from Grand Blanc High School alumnus Joan Batchelor Kifer '45 has been used to help purchase bleacher seating for the Marching Band at Frank Thomas Field. Mrs. Kifer donated the funds for the Educational Foundation a number of years ago, with the stipulation that they be used for athletics - in memory of her father Don Batchelor, or band - because she played in the band as a student at GBHS.

The new bleachers will seat nearly 200 members, and allow the band easy access to the field, and enable the home crowd to hear them play throughout the game. They will be located in the northwest corner of the west endzone, next to the scoreboard and flagpole. Previously, the Marching Band was seated in the home stands at the west end, and played away from the home crowd. Marching Band Director Cory

Hutchinson '90 is delighted with the change. It will enable everyone to enjoy their music throughout the game, allow more seating for the home crowd, and allow the Band Boosters easy access to help with the band and their props.

Are you a former band member who would like to contribute to this project?? Please forward your donation to the Alumni Association in the envelope enclosed, and mark it "Marching Band Project".

By the way, our Marching Band has become one of the finest in the state of Michigan under the direction of Cory Hutchinson. Not only has the band tripled in size from when he took over, but they have recently purchased new uniforms, and finished their competitive season with a 3rd place finish at the State Championships. That was the highest finish ever for our Marching Bobcats. Congratulations!

The 2006 Homecoming on October 6th and 7th will feature the reunions of three great Bobcat Football teams. The 1956 Varsity team will celebrate the 50th anniversary of their accomplishments. They were undefeated in winning the league championship. That team was part of a 22 game unbeaten streak over a three year span under the watchful eye of coach Frank Thomas. The 1971 team will celebrate their 35th anniversary of their championship. The team was undefeated and our first football team to win a Big Nine championship. The 1981 team will gather to reminisce about their undefeated championship season from 25 years ago. Members of that team were part of a four year football dynasty of 3 league championships and playoff appearances.

We are planning a great weekend for you former players and your families. On Friday, October 6th we will attend the Homecoming parade and game. We will recognize the members of those teams at the start of halftime by introducing you on the field with your teammates and coaches. On Saturday, October 7th the teams will attend the Alumni Banquet where all three teams will be honored. We invite all former players, family, friends, and spouses to participate in our Homecoming festivities. Tickets for our Saturday night Alumni Banquet will be on sale in September by calling 810-591-6014.

If you know how to contact any member of one of these teams, please contact Charlie Carmody at [ccarmody@grandblancschools.org](mailto:ccarmody@grandblancschools.org). The 1956 team leader is Bob Burek '58. The 1971 team leader is TBA. The 1981 team leader is Larry Whetstone.

### Staff of the Alumni Banner

This is a BIG and heartfelt thank you for your dedication to publishing the Alumni Banner. Because of the Banner I was able to find a classmate, and dear friend, who I had lost touch with for 35 years.

I put a notice in the Banner asking if anyone knew the whereabouts of Janie Beasley, a graduate of 1964. A friend of Janie's, who receives the Banner in Arkansas, let Janie know I was searching for her. Much to my surprise, I received a call from Ar-

kansas from my long lost friend. Right away we made plans to see one another. Janie came to Michigan and attended our 35th class reunion with me. We have kept close touch every since.

Thank you again for reuniting friends and for all the nostalgia articles we get to read in the Banner.

In great appreciation,  
Beverly (Marsh) Wootin



## GBHS Teachers from the 60's, 70's and 80's Gather at Creasey Bicentennial Park

This past July, over 125 former GBHS teachers, staff and spouses gathered at Creasey Bicentennial Park in a second reunion for the one-time high school staff. The first occurred six years ago at Silver Lake Park in Fenton. It was a perfect day with blue skies and temperatures in the 80's. A picnic was the setting with everyone bringing a dish to pass. Staff came from throughout Michigan and other areas from Florida to Alabama to Tennessee.

Department chairmen from that era called their departmental colleagues to inform them of the reunion, the same approach as six years ago. Once again, the response was great. Stories about teaching and working at GBHS over those three decades occupied the afternoon. From today's Perry Center (GBHS in the 50's and early 60's) to the "new" building that

opened in 1963 (today's high school) and from split sessions in the period 1969-76, to the two campus (East and West campus) operation of the 70's and 80's, memories abounded.

The Population of GBHS was 1100 in 1963 and rose to a high of 2903 in 1976. It was a close staff brought together by the problems of an exploding student population and the societal issues facing teenagers in an era marked by student dissent and the drug scene of the 60's and 70's. We all agreed, however, that the students of that era were bright, enlightened and talented in so many ways.

A third reunion is likely in 2007. We had too much fun to stop here!

Bob Burek, Principal, GBHS (1972-84)

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## Something Old and Something New For GBHS

With the enrollment of Grand Blanc High School continuing to grow, now more than 2300 students, changes are taking place at Grand Blanc High School with something old and something new for the students and staff.

The something new is the opening of the new Bobcat Field House on January 27, 2006. The state of the art facility has three full basketball and volleyball courts, a four lane running track, weight and fitness center, training room, locker room, athletic offices, and trophy display area. The Field House is attached to the high school next to the old gym and pool. More than 3200 spectators attended the opening night celebration and basketball games with the Bobcats christening the new Field House as victors in both the Junior Varsity and Varsity games. Prior to opening the Field House, many gym classes were held in classrooms and hallways because of a lack of space in the gym. Now, all students can enjoy using both the old gym and new Field House as part of their physical education experience.

Something old is the return of the two buildings campus at Grand Blanc High School in the Fall of 2006. The East and West Campus set-up was used from 1976 through 1984, before the West Campus was converted to the Middle School for use by 6th through 8th graders. The Middle School will become the 9th grade building at GBHS, and 10th through 12th graders will occupy the current high school building. Some students will have to pass between buildings as was done so often when the East-West set-up was used. Two new middle schools have been constructed to split the current middle school (one of the largest in the state) into two smaller groups of students. The West Middle School is located next to Reid Elementary on Reid Road, and the East Middle School was built on Perry Road, just east of Belsay Road. Both will open in the Fall of 2006.

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## Alumni Banquet 2005

The Grand Blanc High School Alumni Association celebrated our 68th Annual Homecoming on the weekend of October 7th and 8th. We recognized three Distinguished Alumni: Tom Pettit '64, Dennis Smith '78, and Kam Towns '78, for their significant contributions to their local communities, excelling in their career or profession, and the impact they have had on the lives of others. The trio rode in the Homecoming Parade and were introduced at halftime of the football game. On Saturday night, they were the guests of honor at the Alumni Banquet, which was held in the Perry School Gymnasium. About 100 GBHS alumni, family and friends attended the catered event.

First, Tom Pettit was recognized for his many years of service to the Grand Blanc Community. He has been involved in the Parks and Recreation Baseball Program from its start by coaching kids and umpires, and running baseball tournaments. Most importantly, Tom was instrumental in the development and construction of the Little League baseball diamonds at Bicentennial Park. Tom was nominated by his

daughter Cindy Pettitt '85, and honored to be selected as a Distinguished Alum. His work in the community continues as he truly enjoys helping others and building positive programs for kids and adults in Grand Blanc.

Next, Dennis Smith was honored for his service in the City of Grand Blanc. He worked at City Hall as a police dispatcher, police officer, fire fighter and building inspector. Dennis is currently the Fire Chief for the City of Fenton. He teaches the Fire Engineering program at Mott Community College. Dennis was nominated by his wife, and spoke highly of his experiences at Grand Blanc High School in shaping his career path, and helping him achieve the success that he has enjoyed.

Finally, Kam Towns was recognized as a Distinguished Alumni for her continuing work as a prosecuting attorney in Wayne County. Kam has worked in the Homicide Division for the past two decades successfully arguing hundreds of trials. In one year, she tried 16 homicide cases and had guilty verdicts in all 16. Kam is a tireless worker for those victims of crime in the City of

Detroit. Kam was nominated by her sister Karol. Kam enjoyed being in the plays and musicals as a student at GBHS. She felt that the skills she gained on stage as a student, have helped her become successful arguing cases as a trial attorney.

After honoring our Distinguished Alumni, we welcomed back the 1985 Girls Golf State Championship team and the 1985 Big Nine Champion Football team. The golf team won the first ever female state championship in school history, in addition to being Big Nine and Regional Champs. Coach Judy Clegg joined her team and spoke of how proud she was of her teams accomplishments. This team started a string of now 5 Girls Golf State Championships. The Football team from 1985 assembled to remember their undefeated season as the school's first ever playoff win. The team enjoyed a highlight film assembled from 1985 16mm films and video tape, and Coach Joe Delaney reminisced about the accomplishments from that team comparing them to his 2004 Big Nine Champs in many ways.





## *...Reunions and Messages...*

**Class of 1955 Gathers For Their 50th Reunion** - The weekend of Oct. 7-9 brought members of the Class of 1955 back to Grand Blanc for Homecoming weekend. Over a dozen of the class participated in the Homecoming parade. Following the parade they watched the Homecoming game in a special section of the bleachers. On Saturday night over fifty of the class members gathered for dinner at Walli's. This was an evening of reminiscences and laughter as old friends met and shared experiences. Memories of classes, teachers, sporting events, clubs, and other activities were shared. On Sunday morning, a brunch was held before those who had traveled left for home.

**Class of 1952** - Hi everyone - - - See you at the 55th. Stan Delisle.

**Class of 1956** - To the 2005 Varsity Football team. I was so honored to meet with you players and coaches. I'm so thrilled to have been coached by Thomas and Jack Pratt - memories to last a lifetime. Monk (Jack) Richardson.

**Class of 1973** - 33rd Reunion, Saturday, June 3, 2006, 6:00 p.m., Mario's Pizzeria, G-5227 Fenton Rd. \$10.00 per person. Hot hor d'oeuvres, cash bar and music. RSVP by May 28th. Your check is your reservation, make payable to GBHS Class of '73 Reunion Fund. - Send to Pam Heos, 620 Whitehills Dr., East Lansing, MI 48823. E-mail: [heosp@cooley.edu](mailto:heosp@cooley.edu).

**Class of 1996 Reunion** - The class of 1996 will be holding their 10th Reunion October 7, 2006 at Grand Blanc Golf Club - Cost \$30.00 single - \$50.00 couple. Call Wendy Williams (Pruett) at 810-233-7294 - [faithandtrust@comcast.net](mailto:faithandtrust@comcast.net) - or Anne Cox (Dunk) at 810-695-0387 - [Anneec7@aol.com](mailto:Anneec7@aol.com).

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Donna Turrel McCloy, former Grand Blanc teacher and Class Sponsor for the Class of 1956 passed away in Texas on February 3, 2006.

Lorraine A. Parker passed away Saturday, January 28, 2006 at Genesys Health Park. Lorraine was a 1938 graduate of Grand Blanc Schools. She later became the secretary to the school Superintendent, a position she held for 44 years until her retirement in 1984. In addition to serving four different Superintendents over the span of her career, Lorraine was also secretary to the Grand Blanc School Board. She was appointed Township Clerk in 1987, and held that position through re-election until again she retired in 2004.

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