

Bobcat Alumni Banner

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

The Alumni Newsletter of Grand Blanc High School

Married Grand Blanc Alumni

John L. Schlaud, Class of '52 and **Dorothy K. Weishuhn**, Class of '56 were married May 11, 1957 in Grand Blanc's Holy Family Church by Rev. Fr. John Bush. They have spent all their married life in Grand Blanc Twp.

They have seven children, ages 43 to 32. John M., Richard, Ann, Robert, twins Mary Jo and Mary Jane, and Diane. They also have 15 grandchildren and one great-grandson. They have 6 grand children in Grand Blanc Schools.

John retired as a Die Maker-Leader from GM's Grand Blanc Plant (Tank Plant) after 36 years of service. Dorothy worked as a Home Engineer (housewife). John has been a member of the Flint Banjo Club since 1970 and also works in genealogy and has written two family history books. Dorothy's favorite hobby is sewing and at present creates quilts. She is now starting a quilt for her 50th class reunion with all the class member's names on it. Both Dorothy and John are volunteers at the Grand Blanc Heritage Association's Museum. Dorothy as Curator and John works on the museum's computer among other projects. They both like to travel to see family members in Colorado, Oklahoma and Georgia. John also is a member of the Grand Blanc Alumni Association's Board.



Bobcat Sports Hall of Fame

On September 7th, the Grand Blanc High School Bobcat Sports Hall of Fame inducted its first class. The Hall of Fame was conceived to honor those people who have given so much of themselves to Grand Blanc High School Athletics. At halftime of the Varsity Football game vs. Davison, the Grand Blanc Community Schools honor included Don Batchelor, Frank Thomas, Joe Pitock and Judy Clegg.

Joan Batchelor Kifer and her son Chuck flew in from Oregon to represent Don Batchelor - former coach of football, basketball, baseball and athletic director. Mrs. Thomas and represented Frank Thomas - former football and basketball coach as well as athletic director. Joe Pitock and his wife Donna were on hand to see the former football, basketball, and baseball coach receive the Hall of Fame honor. Judy Clegg - former girls golf coach and her husband Larry were present to see Judy honored as a Hall of Fame inductee.

It was a very proud moment for all who were involved with these fine coaches to see them receive a plaque for their service, and see their framed Hall of Fame picture unveiled in front of the partisan crowd at Frank Thomas Field. The framed picture and inscribed plaque will be mounted in the lower athletic hallway above the trophy cases for all to enjoy. We hope to honor other individuals who have given so much to Bobcat athletics in the coming years each fall, with this class begin just the start of a great tradition at Grand Blanc High School.



A Message from the President

Charlie Carmody
Alumni President, '80

Hello again GBHS Alums! I hope that you enjoyed this expanded edition of the Alumni Banner. Your Alumni Board of Directors have done all the research and writing of this edition. If you enjoy getting this publication, please continue your financial support of the Alumni Association. We are mailing to about 1500 GBHS graduates (out of 18,000) across the country. If you know of someone who would like to receive the Banner, please send us their address.

All of your donations help your Alumni Association to continue publishing this newsletter twice each year, as well as frame and mount the graduating class composite pictures in Alumni Hall. Please stop in the front entry hallway at GBHS to see Alumni Hall in progress.

Homecoming 2001 will be on October 12th with the parade at 6 p.m., pre-game at 7 p.m., and the game vs. Beecher at 7:30 p.m. On Saturday, October 13th, the Alumni Association is working with the Class of 1951 Reunion committee in hosting a building tour of both Perry Center (the old high school) and the current GBHS building - including Alumni Hall and the Trophy Room. The tour will begin at Perry Center.

If you need to reach us for any reason, please phone/fax us at 810-591-7378, or check us out on the web at hswwww.grand-blanc.k12.mi.us - just hit the "Alumni" icon. The Bobcat souvenir store is now open online so check out our latest GB spirit wear!

Our next meeting will be ???????
Please join us.

*Do you have memories
of a favorite teacher?
Write us!*

Grand Blanc's Very Own Blessing

by
Jerry Wolfgang, 1969

Many people have moved into the Grand Blanc area since the pioneer days of the early 1800's. These people built homes, businesses, schools and churches. Grand Blanc became known for its friendly environment and fine education system. In time, the children of these families would leave home, seeking higher education or employment. Years later, many of these people would return to this area, bringing with them families of their own. Ensuring that their children, the next generation, would receive the same excellent education they had is but one of the reasons so many returned.

Frank and Kathleen (Minock) Blessing recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. Together this couple demonstrates the pride and commitment to their hometown that has become a living testament to Grand Blanc.

Kathleen (Minock) Blessing, class of 1937, remembers when her family moved to Grand Blanc from Detroit in 1927.

"At that time," Kathleen says, "Dixie Highway was just a two-lane dirt road."

Kathleen's eldest brother, Warren Minock, graduated from Grand Blanc High School in 1929, two years after arriving here. A sister, Leone Minock, class of '32, followed Warren. Then, in 1937, Kathleen graduated. Next her younger brother, Kenneth Minnock (a spelling error on his birth certificate produced the double "n"), class of '38, followed, and finally, brother Robert Minock, class of '43.

Kathleen remembers when she first met Frank Blessing, the man who would later become her husband. "It was 1935 (and we were both Juniors) when I saw Frank on the football field during practice one afternoon," Kathleen's eyes sparkle at the memory, "the team was playing in the field across S. Saginaw St. from the old high school."

"The WPA (Work Projects Administration)," Frank Blessing explains, "had the school's regular field, the one directly behind the old high school, dug up. So we had to play in the field at the southeast corner of S. Saginaw and Perry Roads. Where the gas station and donut shop are now."

"I was just a lineman," Frank blushes with modesty then, with a chest full of pride, he adds, "but Don Batchelor was our coach!" Frank Blessing continues to discuss his days on the gridiron, especially the last football game he played for Grand Blanc. "It was the Thanksgiving Day game of 1936," Frank smiles. "Grand Blanc and Bendle always played each other on their last game of the season. It had become tradition that we always played on Thanksgiving Day. At that time, Grand Blanc and Bendle were archrivals. Remember, this is also long before the advent of lighted football fields, so the game was played mid-afternoon."

Kathleen, listening attentively, nods in agreement as Frank continues, "Bendle was undefeated that year and would easily win the League Championship. "But," Frank says, "They had to accept the trophy with one blemish on their record; the defeat Grand Blanc gave them, 6-0, that holiday," and Frank smiles as he recalls the victory.

Frank also recalls that a few years later, in 1939, when he and his younger brother, Herbert Blessing, class of '38, now living in New Jersey, were hired by a contractor to help construct the viaduct over S. Saginaw Rd. in Grand Blanc. Frank and Herbert, both being young, and eager for work, and living in close proximity to the project, were often telephoned on Sundays if their supervisor needed additional work performed. "I believe Herbert and I may be the last people alive that helped build that viaduct," Frank wonders aloud as, deep in thought, he tries to recall the many names and faces of the people he worked with during that time.

Frank and Kathleen tell about the three-day train ride, from Flint to San Francisco, they experienced in 1941, en route to getting married. Frank, who was in the Army and stationed at Ft. Baker, which is located just north of the Golden Gate Bridge, says that the air-conditioning on the train broke down. "If anybody opened a window for fresh air," Frank tells with a grimace, "the passengers in that train car would be covered with smoke and soot from the coal-fired engine."

After their wedding, July 28, 1941, Kathleen returned to Grand Blanc. She later re-joined her husband, Frank, in California. "When I went back to California," Kathleen says with patriotic pride, her shoulders back and her head held slightly higher, "I became a Journeyman Burner, working at a shipyard in Sausalito, California. That is where we built the Liberty cargo ships. Those were the ships that provided supplies and material to our Armed Forces during World War II."

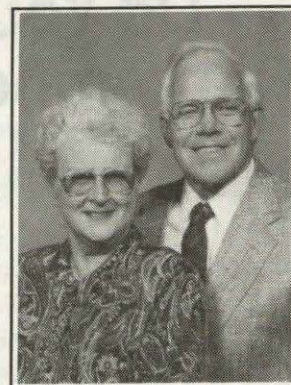
In 1949, as Michigan was distributing a monetary bonus to its war veterans, Frank and his youngest brother, Alfred Blessing, known as "Ike", class of '41, pooled their money together. They then built a business, 'Blessing Heating', located in Whigville, on the corner of Grove Ave. and Hill Rd. A few years later this enterprise became known as 'Blessing Plumbing and Heating'.

"Hill Road, wasn't much more than a two-lane mud road," Frank says, "and every Spring it would have ruts in it as deep as your knees!" Soon thereafter, Frank and Kathleen built a house on Schram St., in Grand Blanc, and began raising their three children, each of whom attended Grand Blanc schools. Their eldest daughter, Linda (Blessing) Carlson, class of '62, recently returned to the Grand Blanc area. Linda, a designer, is now working at 'Blessing Company', which is currently located on Grand Blanc Rd. in downtown Grand Blanc. Frank and Kathleen's second daughter, Joanne (Blessing) Normand, class of '66, is the manager of Head Start in Adrian, Michigan. The Blessing's youngest child, Lou Blessing, class of '72, a local businessman, now owns 'Blessing Company'. Lou's wife, Debra (Kahrnoff) Blessing, also a GBHS class of '72 alumni, is a Special Education teacher at Grand Blanc's Indian Hills Elementary School.

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Memories Are Golden

By James C. and Marilyn (Marsh) Taylor
3979 S. Huron Road, Greenbush, Michigan (Class of 1948 and 1951)



In October of this year, I will be traveling back to Grand Blanc to celebrate with classmates at our reunion marking the 50th anniversary of our high school graduation. On July 13th of this year, Jim and I celebrated the culmination of another fifty years - our golden wedding anniversary. The two are more closely connected than you might think, for we are high school sweethearts. We first dated in October of 1948. I was a Sophomore and Jim had graduated the previous June. I knew who he was because he

was a friend of my brother through F.F.A. and his brother was in my sophomore class, but I had not really noticed him that much. Then came the annual fall dinner for the F.F.A. and F.H.A. clubs. The idea was that the boys were to shoot the turkeys and the girls were to cook them, but it was more like tame turkeys with the school cooks doing all the work, if memory serves me right. Anyway, it was a good formula for an evening of fun, music, and dancing.

As the evening was drawing to a close, a nice looking senior approached me and said some of the kids were going to the local drive-in for refreshments. He asked if I would like to go along. Assuming he was asking me to go with him, I eagerly replied in the affirmative. Imagine my surprise when we arrived at his car in the parking lot and he got in the front seat with my best friend. I was still wondering how to respond to this unexpected turn of events when a tall good-looking boy got out of the car and opened the door for me to get in the back seat with him. Though I immensely enjoyed the evening, I spent much of it wondering why this quiet lad had not asked me himself. At first, I even felt a little trapped into going with him, and wondered if he felt the same about me. Doubts vanished into thin air as we enjoyed our root beer floats and jokes and good conversation. I remember lying in bed that night and wondering if I would hear from him again. I did, but in a rather strange indirect way. My brother, Richard Marsh and Jim Taylor worked together at a Standard gas station at the point in Whigville, and a couple of nights a week he would inform me that Jim had asked him if I would like to do this or that. I accepted these indirect invitations three or four times before finally telling my brother to inform Jim that if he wanted to go out with me, he could ask me himself or not bother. Then I sat and worried for the next few days that maybe I had been too bold and maybe I would not get that direct invitation. But, thank heavens, before Friday night's football game, my terribly shy friend called with a personal invitation. On Friday night, he appeared at my door with flowers and candy and his shyness seemed endearing.

We dated throughout that sophomore year, and in my junior year we began to go "steady". He wore my senior ring in a chain around his neck and I wore an identification bracelet he had given me with his name and mine in the middle of a heart. We often wore matching pull over sweaters, as was the custom for couples "going steady". I was a sport nut and played on all the various girls teams. Jim seldom missed a game or a chance to cheer us on, which automatically gave him the opportunity to drive me home. He came on lunch hours to buy me a hamburger at the "Bungalow" next door to the school. Our principal, Mr. Howard Pepper, stopped him in the hall one day and told him he was in school now more than when he was actually attending. He said it with a smile on his face.

Those three high school years were filled with the normal activities of a teen relationship. Football games, parties of celebration at various homes of friends, an after-date malt to extend the evening before going home, the annual circus at the I.M.A., and window shopping on the main street of Flint long before the advent of malls, and supper at my house almost nightly. My mother told me I would have to marry him because she had too much invested in feeding him to lose him. After supper, we often played cards with my parents because Jim did not have enough money to take us out. The games were more fun than going out. Simple things. Probably even corny things by today's thinking. But such meaningful things are the making of wonderful memories.

Those memories have been very real over the past month especially. Because of health concerns for Jim, we did not have a big party for our golden anniversary. We celebrated quietly with family on that weekend, but for the next month we celebrated quietly with a very large extended family. Our daughter "borrowed" our address book and wrote to friends asking them to drop us a note for our anniversary and to share a memory with us. We spent the next month reading about 15 such letters each day until all 500+ had been read and often reread. We laughed out loud and sometimes we cried silently, while cherishing our 50 plus 3 years together through the memories of those letters.

Among the most meaningful letters were those from grade school and high school friends. They were an important part of our lives and even of our romance, because we were all so closely entwined in everyday life and the joys of living that life. The young who I thought had invited me out that night so long ago, went on to marry my best friend. Many, many who we double dated with and hung

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Do You Remember?

Submitted by John Schlaud, husband of the Oldest Weishuhn Child, Dorothy

Do you remember the Centre Theater? Construction was started by Cecil and Kathryn Weishuhn in August, 1945 at the end of World War II. Cecil had to go to the War Board in order to get the steel for the building. When they bought the land, it had a Texaco gasoline station and a restaurant on it plus the house that they moved into. He built the whole building around the station and restaurant and those buildings are still there. The restaurant is now Custom Cut Barber Shop and the station is now Aremia's Imported Foods.



The entire building was known as "Grand Centre Recreation" and also included a dairy bar/lunchroom and an eight lane bowling alley. The theater opened Friday, October 25, 1946 and could seat 628 people. Admission prices were \$.35 for adults and \$.14 for children! Members of the family still have a congratulatory telegram from Dorothy Lamour for the Grand Opening.

In the early days, beside double features, newsreels, and cartoons, there was also an occasional stage show. One that this writer remembers is one that Throop Farm Equipment sponsored had Red Foley as the head liner (Pat Boone is Red's son-in-law). Remember the Free Shows that they had on a Saturday once a year?

In later years when television came into being, Art Shows were shown on Wednesdays.

The theater was closed in the fall of 1964 and converted to a family billiard room named "The Colonial Cue". A few years later, half of the room was converted to an arcade and was called "Invaders Arcade".

After Kathryn passed away in 1984, Cecil continued with the business until his passing in 1987. Their children continued with the business until they sold the building and land. The former theater is now All Star Sports Center. A granddaughter now owns a beauty shop business on the property called YuYi's.

Memories Are Golden

(Continued from page 3)

out together with, went on to make a life together from the foundations that were laid in their high school years.

So this year we celebrate the golden anniversary of the issuance of two of the most important documents in our collection of life's documents. Our high school diploma and our marriage certificate. They are closely connected. It was largely through the nurturing environment of earning the first that we were able to mature to the point of joyously honoring the second. That nurturing came not only from our friends and classmates, but from many wonderful teachers who taught much more than just what was in the books.

We were honored to have five of those teachers, Mr. & Mrs. Joe Jewett, Future Farmers of America; Mr. & Mrs. Howard Pepper, Principal; Mrs. Englehart, Home Economics Teacher; Miss Berdan, Latin Teacher, and Miss Dowd, Coach; attend our wedding. Mr. & Mrs. Joe Jewett attended church when Jim Taylor was ordained in the Free Methodist Church in Caro, Michigan in 1974. They also attended their 25th wedding anniversary party.

Tom Machette was the owner of the Standard gas station at the point in Whigville. He hired a lot of students to work over the years.

So it is, that even after being away for almost 50 years, whenever we have occasion to return to Grand Blanc, we do it with the gentle feeling of going home.



Grand Blanc's Very Own Blessing

(Continued from page 2)

Lou and Debra Blessing's two children, continuing the family's Grand Blanc tradition, went to school here, also. Their son, Matthew Blessing, class of '97, recently graduated from MSU and has begun medical school. Sarah Blessing, class of '98, has started her junior year at MSU.

Still reminiscing about the "Good Old Days" in Grand Blanc, and "Who's Who", Kathleen tells about her brother, Kenneth Minnock, class of '38, marrying Jean Nelson, class of '39. Unfortunately, Jean, the daughter of Arnold Nelson, recently passed away. It was Arnold Nelson that started Grand Blanc Cement Products on Center Road in Grand Blanc. Ken and Jean (Nelson) Minnock, have two children that also attended Grand Blanc Community Schools. Their daughter, Martha (Minnock) Schatow, from the class of '72, now lives in Fenton, MI, and their son, Stephen Minnock, class of '73, lives in Ortonville, MI. There is yet one more "GB Connections" within this extended family. Kathleen's sister, Leone (Minnock), class of '32, married LaMont Graham, class of '31. They recently celebrated 66 years of marriage. They had lived in the Grand Blanc area for many years prior to retiring and moving to Tavares, Florida. While living in this area, LaMont and Leone raised two children of their own, Dan and Patricia Graham. Dan, class of '69, is retired from the US Army, and currently lives in Lawton, Oklahoma. Dan's sister, Patricia (Graham) Baehr, class of '70, resides in Kentwood, MI.

These are but one reflection of the many families that are obviously proud of their Grand Blanc roots. It is people like this that have ensured that the fine traditions of this community, and its schools, are passed on, from generation to generation, continuing to make Grand Blanc what it is today.

We Need Your Help . . .

The Grand Blanc Alumni Association is in the process of recreating class composites from 1977 - 1992. Prior years are on display at the Grand Blanc High School. At this time, the Grand Blanc Community Schools has granted the association the rights to copyright the class yearbooks.

Some of the problems we have faced in recreating these class composites are: How to copy approximately 500 class pictures and reduce the size of each picture so the whole class composite will fit into a 16 X 20 picture frame? Should the names be hand written under each picture? Should the names be listed in alphabetical order in columns on left and right-hand side of all pictures?

We need help from individuals who have knowledge and expertise in typesetting, printing or photography in developing these composites. Would these individuals please contact the Grand Blanc Alumni Association.

By Jacquelyn Perigo

Education Foundation Sponsors the Alumni Association and More

The Grand Blanc Educational Foundation has been lending its support to the Alumni Association since its founding in 1995. The Foundation has underwritten the start-up costs for the Alumni Association including the mass mailings to all of our alumni. Their support of our Alumni Association has made us exist and grow into the organization we are today.

But, the Foundation means so much more to the Grand Blanc community! They raise money to support teachers and educational programs in the Grand Blanc Community Schools through mini-grants. Teachers approach the Foundation with unique and interesting ideas for their classrooms, and the Foundation helps them financially to realize the fulfillment of their ideas.

In the past year, the Foundation has purchased digital cameras for elementary school libraries, sent groups of elementary school students on a science field trip aboard a ship in the Saginaw River, and helped the high school Rocket Club acquire materials to enter and win their first rocket competition.

Our fund-raising efforts each year revolve around the Duck Classic during the Grand Blanc Summer Festival. Nearly 100 rubber ducks are sold, then loaded into the creek at Rust Park to race to the finish line. The proceeds from that race and a refreshment stand at the festival fund our projects each year.

If you would like more information on the foundation, please call 810-591-6014, or find us online at www.grandblanc.k12.mi.us.

...Messages...

1. To Class of 1953, from Lola Manner: "Our 50th Class Reunion is coming soon. To help or get information, please call Phyllis, (810) 694-6571 or Lola, (810) 735-7974."
2. To Class of 1943, From Joyce (Ackerman) Bartels: "Hi! How about hearing from you?"
3. To Class of 1964, From Diane (Dekett) Rowbotham: "Best wishes and good luck on your countdown to retirement!"
4. To Class of '36, From Theodore Nesmith: "Let's have a reunion down the road!"
5. To Class of 1957, From Brenda (Peterman) Debus: "Hi, you guys!"
6. To Girl Softball Players, From Sheila (Alexander) Bailiff: "How about a game of softball to get the girls together that played softball during their younger years?"
7. To Class of '75, From Katharine (Kathy Lund) Tood Schrock: "Hello to many of my friends in Grand Blanc. I live in Indiana and recently completed my Masters in Social Work. I have re-married and have a blended family with seven children. I would love to hear from any graduates from 1975."
8. To Class of '65, From Laura (Barnes) Osmon: "When will our next reunion take place? The last one I attended was the 25th. Did we have a 30th?"
9. To Class of '55, From Dolores (Del Duca) Cooke: "It was so good to see all of you at the 45th Class Reunion - Thank you for making it a wonderful event!"
10. To Class of '49, From Donald Maule: "Hope you are all well and enjoying retired life. You can contact me via e-mail at: tdmaule@juno.com"
11. To Class of '65, From Albert John Selesky: "Reunion Committee did a great job, we all had a wonderful time at our 35th in July, 2000!"
12. To Class of '65, From Susan (Marsh) Balog: "The reunion was fun, I was glad to see everyone! See you next time."
13. To Class of '50, From Jane (Benson) Spencer: "We will have a "Pizza Party" at Little Joe's, June 22, 2002."

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