MINNETONKA

AlumniMagazine

2012

IT'S TIME TO RECONNECT

REMEMBERING MINNETONKA'S DRIVE-INS

Tom Staggs '78
2012 Distinguished Alumni Award



Minnetonka
IT'S A FAMILY TRADITION

Kennetmueller©

MINNETONKA
Alumni Awards

Congratulations 2011 Award Recipients & Hall of Fame Inductees!



2011 Alumni Award Recipients - Front (L to R): Kenny Holmen, Yosh Sudo, Roger "Bud" Leak, Kara Holthe (widow of Peter Holthe) and Jill (Lindquist) Hanson. Back (L to R): Lee Blessing, Charlie Kanan, Frank Kuzma, John J. Ziegler III and Joe Lane. Not pictured: Ann Reed

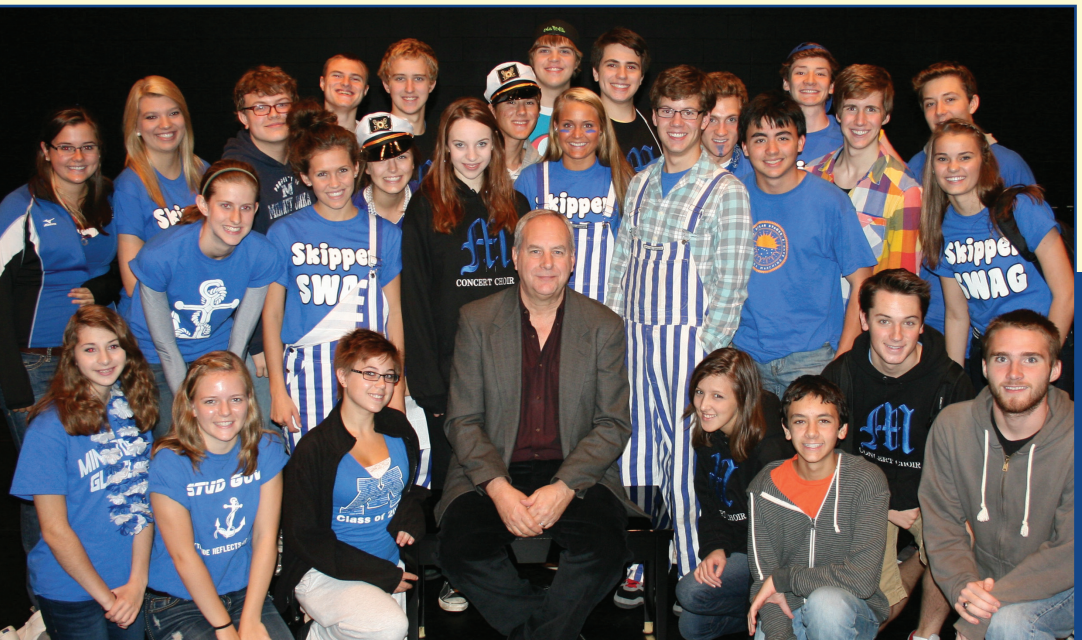
Save the Date!

The 4th Alumni Awards Brunch & Annual Meeting will be held Saturday, September 29, 2012 at MHS.

2011 Alumni Awards

Distinguished Alumni Awards: Lee Blessing '67, Peter Holthe '78 (*posthumous*)
Distinguished Service Award: Charlie Kanan '69 and Frank Kuzma '79
Faculty Hall of Fame: Joe Lane, Roger "Bud" Leak, Yosh Sudo
MHS Skippers Hall of Fame: Jill (Lindquist) Hanson '70, Kenni Holmen '76, Anne Reed '73, John J. Ziegler III '82

Before accepting his Distinguished Alumni award last September during Homecoming last fall, playwright Lee Blessing '67 met with current MHS students to discuss writing, acting and the creative process.



The Minnetonka Alumni Magazine is an annual publication of the Minnetonka Alumni Association (MAA) and the Minnetonka School District. The MAA includes graduates of Minnetonka High School, Excelsior High School, Deephaven High School, non-graduates who attended those high schools for at least one year, and all present and former members of the faculty, administration and school board. Membership is free.

Story suggestions, news, events and comments are always welcome, but submission does not guarantee publication.

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FROM THE MAA PRESIDENT

Dear Alumni,

It feels like the calm before the storm. The fourth Minnetonka All Class Reunion will be held on July 26, 2014 (mark your calendars!). The All Class Reunion is a popular and very fun event, but it requires a huge amount of effort to make it happen. We'll start the planning process for the 2014 event in less than a year, so watch for our volunteer recruitment to start ramping up soon. In the interim, we have an opportunity to focus on other matters that are important for Minnetonka Alumni.

A key initiative of the Minnetonka Alumni Association (MAA) this year has been to expand outreach. One exciting project is the investigation of new website and database software that offers many features not afforded by our current site, such as online event registration and merchandise sales. The MAA recently entered a beta program for the new software and if all goes well we should "go live" later this year.

Another initiative underway is identifying Class Representatives for each graduating class. The role of a class representative is to serve as a liaison between the MAA and their classmates. Many graduating classes are still in need of a representative (See page 16). If you want to learn more about the program, I encourage you to visit www.minnetonkaalumni.com and click on the "Class Representative" link.

In September, the fourth Minnetonka Alumni Awards Brunch and Annual Meeting will be held at Minnetonka High School. I encourage you to take some time to nominate alumni and former teachers and also to attend the event. When I first attended, it had been several years since I had been in the high school. I was very impressed with the improvements that have been made, like the new student union and the remodeled Arts Center.

The Minnetonka Alumni Association meets every month at 6 p.m. at the Minnetonka School District Service Center, 5621 County Road 101. Meetings are open for all alumni to get involved.

Since its inception, the MAA's primary use of the funds generated through the All Class Reunion, merchandise sales, and from donations has been the Minnetonka Alumni Fine Arts Endowment Fund (FAEF). The FAEF supports the visual, performing, and literary arts in Minnetonka Public Schools. Educators from all schools in the District are invited to submit proposals for activities that extend and expand the fine arts experiences of their students (see pages 10 and 11). The MAA works closely with the Minnetonka Public Schools Foundation to select proposals to be funded. For the 2012-13 school year, the MAA is providing more than $6,500 in funding for five fine arts projects. Thank you to those have contributed!

Finally, I want to say thank you to my parents. They specifically chose to move into the Minnetonka School District when their children were approaching school age. I recognize now that their decision provided me and my siblings with an outstanding education and many other opportunities that growing up in this area provides. I am proud to be an alumnus of MHS and to call Excelsior my hometown.

Sincerely,

Brad Bohlmann

Brad Bohlmann '69



Brad Bohlmann '69, MAA president

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FROM THE MAA PRESIDENT 1

2012 GRADS WITH ALUMNI PARENTS 2

WHAT'S UP MR. ADNEY? 2

UPCOMING EVENTS 4

ALUMNI VETERANS 5

MHS CHORAL PROGRAM 6

MINNETONKA DRIVE-INS 8

FINE ARTS ENDOWMENT FUND 10

MINNETONKA FOUNDATION 11

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD
Thomas O. Staggs '78 12

MHS 2012 - FIVE TO WATCH 14

MINNETONKA THEATRE
10 years under the direction of Kent Knutson 16

DAN GELDERT ANNIVERSARY 18

ALUMNI NOTES 19

BECOME A FAN!

www.facebook.com/minnetonkaalumni

Alumni on the cover: (L to R) Holly Roberts Adams '75, Marcy Adams '12, Abby Kuzara '12, Robyn (Johnson) Kuzara '80, Janet (Uptagrafft) Johnson '56, Jane (Rademacher) Warner '81 and Sam Warner '12.

What's Up Mr. Adney?



"Times, they are a changing," as the Bob Dylan song goes. Student learning has changed and so have the opportunities for our students. The Class of 2012 was our inaugural "SMART Board" class (the first grade level of students to have interactive white boards in their classrooms in 2003). Since they were in fourth grade, most of their learning and curriculum has been digitized, with teachers posting homework and notes online, interactive flashcards for vocabulary, even recorded math lessons in case they needed that explanation one more time. The impact of this technology can be seen in student achievement and it has continued to soar. Among this year's graduating class, 61% took at least one AP or IB exam during their senior year.

This year, our freshmen were the innovators, as we issued iPads to the entire class. The results were impressive, with more organization, more collaboration, and more completed homework. Overall, the class had fewer D's and F's and more A's and B's. We used less paper and more online resources, phasing out the need for textbooks in math. Students read ibooks in English classes, highlighted with digital ink, typed notes in the margin of the screen, and generated digital notes summaries for review.

At the upper levels, our International Studies class, which you read about in last year's magazine, continues to grow—connecting students with classmates in seven different countries. We've begun hybrid courses in sociology, psychology, and biomechanics. Students complete part of their work online, part in class, and part doing research in the field.

When sites like Google can answer many of the factual questions in the world, the new challenge for leaders of the next century is using that information to create new knowledge, to make connections that never before existed, and to critically analyze what's important and what's not. We're proud to be preparing our students to be those leaders.

Sincerely,

Principal, Minnetonka High School

A Family Tradition!

Graduating from Minnetonka High School is a family tradition for these 2012 graduates who join their parents and grandparents as proud MHS Alumni this year.

Marcy Adams and mom, Holly Roberts Adams '75

Danika Jo Anderson and mom, Patti Ann (Perrault) Anderson '75

Marcie Bachler and parents, Amy (Thompson) and Gary Bachler '80

Beau Bates and mom, Penny Perrault '78

Alexa Bennett and stepdad, Patrick Fitzimons '83

Madeline Berg and dad, Doug Berg '84

Derek Beutel and grandmother, Nancy (Amundson) Goetzman '56

Alexander Burich Smith and dad, Benjamin Burich Smith '80

Samantha Cartier and mom, Maggie (Williams) Cartier '80 and grandfather, John "Corky" Williams '46 (Excelsior)

Ricardo Celleri and mom, Kirsten Appelgren '86

Joshua Chenault and mom, Carol Anderson '79

Rashad Cohen and dad, Chris Cohen '87

Jenine Einhorn and dad, John Einhorn '73

Elise Fester and mom, Diane (Rust) Fester '82

Cody French and dad, Dennis French '70

Sam Garneau and dad, Tom Garneau '80

Scott Goodman and mom, Carol (Nosewick) Goodman '75

Kyle Hance and mom, Kelly (Ziegler) Hance '76

Jacob Herron and mom, Sharon (Tillmann) Herron '87

Nikki Hoaglund and parents, Jonathan Hoaglund '75 and Mary (Cragg) Rotunno '81

James Holden and mom, Julia (Soule) Holden '83

Robert Hullsiek and dad, John Henry Hullsiek '77 and grandfather, Robert Hullsiek '41 (Deephaven)

Maddy Johnson and dad, David Johnson '78

Zachary Johnson and mom, Kim Karels '89



Evelyn McLaughlin '12 and her dad, John McLaughlin '78



Jamie Rix '12 and her dad, Don Rix '84

Elizabeth Kendall and mom, Lisa Nash Kendall '78

Kevin Knapp and mom, Julie (Schrupp) Knapp '79

Madeline Kohls and parents, Lydia (Sutherland) '78 and Mark Kohls '76

Todd Kollodge and parents, Susan (McGee) and Kent Kollodge '77

Annie Kruger and dad, Mark Kruger '82

Abby Kuzara and mom, Robyn (Johnson) Kuzara '80 and grandparents, Janet (Uptagrafft) '56 & Franklin Johnson '53

Marit Larsen and mom, LeeAnne (Schafer) Larsen '77

Peggy Leisz and dad, John Leisz '79

Ashley Lundquist and parents, Tracy (Muehlberg) '84 and David Lundquist '80

Matthew L. Martin and mom, Andrea K. (Parker) Martin '83

Marley McCarthy and mom, Tippy McInerny '81 and grandparents, Mary Jane (Peterson) & Bob McInerny '44 (D)

Megan McGlynn and mom, Barb (Niesen) McGlynn '82

Evelyn McLaughlin and dad, John McLaughlin '78

Lauren Meese and parents, Nancy (Jensen) '75 and Rob Meese '74

Brady Neiberger and parents, Douglas Neiberger '83 and Jennifer (Shaw) Evjen '84

Brett Ploen and dad, Jeff Ploen '78

Jessa Richards and mom, Wendy (Standke) Richards '85

Jamie Rix and dad, Don Rix '84

If you are an alum with a 2013 MHS grad in the family, email us at alumni@minnetonka.k12.mn.us so we can include you in next year's magazine.

James Roden and mom, Lisa (Pfeffer) Roden '77 (deceased)

Kate Roy and mom, Barbara (Richie) Roy '78

Ellen Samuelson and dad, Larry Samuelson '71

Abbie Sharpe and mom, Trinka (Schuele) Sharpe '80

Carly Sikorski and Eric Sikorski and parents, Molly (Savoie) '82 & Jim Sikorski '81

Charles Stauber and parents, Jennifer (Mueller) and Eugene Stauber '85 and grandmother, Mary (Pederson) Stauber '56

Abby Sternard and dad, Bill Sternard '80

Elsie Stickler and mom, Diane (Wakefield) Stickler '81

Matthew Truex and dad, Richard Truex '71

Eric Vanderploeg and mom, Jean (Schrupp) Vanderploeg '81

Kira von Steinbergs and dad, Kurt von Steinbergs '78

Sam Warner and mom, Jane (Rademacher) Warner '81

Matthew Weik and dad, Thomas Weik '73

Emma Whicher and mom, Sara (Peterson) Whicher '81

Jennifer Wyers and grandfather, Ray Jezierski '56 (a retired MHS teacher!)

Alumni Association Board of Directors

President	Brad Bohlmann '69
Vice President	Open
Past President	Bonnie (Board) Niles '67
Secretary	Kathy (Kramer) Richardson '69
Treasurer	Bonni Walz Bright '83

Directors

Gail (Wartman) Bollis '67, Nancy (Palm) Countryman '59, Elizabeth Wright '96, Marietta Jacobsen '70, Joy (Davis) Fruen '71, Andrew Pike '98, Gail (Thacker) Ofstehage '68, Mike Bright '83, Mary (McGinn) Morseth '71, Jens Midthun '05

The MAA is actively seeking Alumni interested in joining the Board of Directors. E-mail alumni@minnetonka.k12.mn.us to learn about opportunities to get involved!



UPCOMING EVENTS

July 13-15 **Class of 1992 Reunion**, BayView Events Center, Excelsior
July 15 **Deadline for Alumni Awards Nominations**
July 20-Aug. 4 ***All Shook Up*, Minnetonka Community Theatre**, MHS
July 26-27 **Class of 1972 Reunion**, Excelsior/Medina
July 28 **Class of 2002 Reunion**, Pinstripes, Edina

August 3-4 **Class of 1962 Reunion**, TBD
August 4 **Tour de Tonka** bike ride, MHS
August 10 **Class of 2007 Reunion**, TBD
August 11 **Class of 1977 Reunion**, BayView Events Center, Excelsior



Above: Lucinda (Mack) Laymon, Nancy (Levering) Mattson, Dan Bradford and Sherry Wojtaszek at the Class of 1961 50-year reunion in 2011.

Left: Kelly Thiesse, Megan Orr and Dana (Martin) Bohlen last summer at the Class of 2001 10-year reunion.



September 8 Visit the MAA booth at **Apple Day** in downtown Excelsior
September 23 **Dan Geldert 50 Years of Conducting Concert,** MHS Arts Center
September 28 **Minnetonka Homecoming Football Game** versus Edina
September 29 **Alumni Awards Brunch and Annual Meeting**, MHS
September 29 **Class of 1961 Reunion**, Southshore Community Center, Shorewood

October 6 **Class of 1982 Reunion**, Oak Ridge Hotel & Conference Center, Chaska

February 9 **Minnetonka Public Schools Foundation Dream Makers Dinner**
February 20 **Arizona Alumni Picnic**, Mesa, AZ - contact Kay at khf7807A25@yahoo.com for details.

RECONNECT TO MINNETONKA SCHOOLS

Minnetonka High School is fortunate to receive tremendous support from the community.

All of these organizations welcome volunteers, and gifts are greatly appreciated. An envelope is included with this magazine for financial donations to these organizations.

Minnetonka Skippers Booster Club
www.minnetonka.k12.mn.us/mhs

Minnetonka Public Schools Foundation
www.minnetonkafoundation.com

Anchor Club
www.mtkaanchorclub.org

Buckets Club
www.tonkabuckets.org

Curtain Call Club
www.minnetonkatheatre.com

Diamond Club
www.minnetonkadiamondclub.org

Minnetonka Band Boosters
www.minnetonkabandboosters.org

Minnetonka Vocal Support
www.minnetonkachoir.org

Minnetonka Lacrosse
www.mtkalax.org

Tonka Pride
www.minnetonka.k12.mn.us/tonkapride

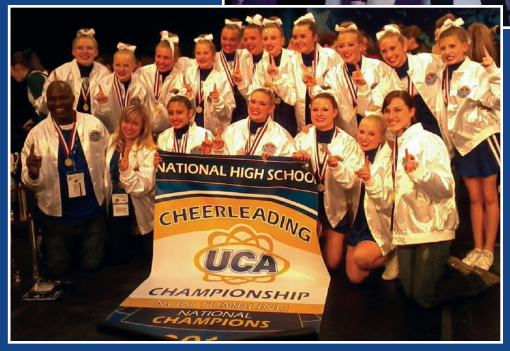
Touchdown Club
www.minnetonkafootball.org



The Minnetonka Girls Hockey Team won their second consecutive State Championship this year. *(Photo courtesy of patch.com)*



Minnetonka's spring production of *Legally Blonde* earned a record 21 SpotLight Awards from the Hennepin Theatre Trust.



The MHS Varsity Cheer Team won a national championship at the UCA National Cheerleading Championships in Orlando, FL, the first team from Minnesota to win a championship at this competition.

ALUMNI Veterans

The Minnetonka Alumni Association is proud of our alumni who are Veterans and those currently serving in the Armed Forces. Thank you for your service!

If you or someone you know is a Minnetonka graduate, a Veteran or active military member, and not on the list below, please contact us at alumni@minnetonka.k12.mn.us or 952-401-5000.

1931 E	Melvin Colby*	Army
1941 D	Robert "Bob" Hullsiek*	Air Force
1945 E	Hugh "Oz" Arey	Air Force, Army, Navy
1945 E	Jerry Gibson	Navy
1948 E	Lowell Jergens	Air Force
1949 E	Phillip "Bud"Haley	Navy
1950 D	Charles "Chuck" Lobb	Air Force
1953	Arthur Fredrickson	Navy
1955	Anthony McKeown	Navy
1956	Carl "Bud" Kollmeyer*	Navy
1956	Robert Kleven	Air Force
1957	Joseph Moyle	Army
1957	John "Al" Tilton	Army
1957	Leroy Foote	Navy
1959	Alicejean (Leigh) Dodson	Army
1962	Arthur Johnsen	Army
1962	Jerry Martin	Marine Corps
1963	Dick Engebretson	Navy
1963	John Michael Horton	Navy
1963	Keith Wassmund	Air Force
1963	Lloyd Hammerstrom	Air Force
1964	Bill Griffin	Navy
1964	Jeremy "Jerry" Brown	Air Force
1964	Keith Johnson	Navy
1965	William "Bill" Armstrong	Navy
1965	Chris Bollis	Army
1965	Charles "Chuck" Ham	Marine Corps, Navy
1965	Allen "Trey" Labatt	Army
1965	Terry LeDell	Army
1965	Dave Leitzman	Air Force
1965	Don Lundman	Army
1965	Jim Mackie	Air Force
1965	Brian Mahin	Navy
1965	Ronald "Ron" Mielke	Air Force
1965	Win "Gilbert" Peirsol	Army
1965	Karl Petersen	Navy
1965	Thomas "Tom" Shelton	Army
1965	Judy Vander Ham	Navy
1966	Cullen Anderson	Army
1967	John Hanley	Navy
1968	Geoffrey Gipson	Air Force
1968	Donald Merhar	Air Force
1971	Barbara (Lush) Henderson	Army
1972	Lindy "Paul" Leach	Army
1972	Karla Peterson	Navy, National Guard
1973	James Conklin	Air Force
1973	Ann (Stranik) Lund	Army, Army Reserves
1973	Michael Perrault	Navy
1974	Carl Boertjens	Navy
1975	Todd Cherland	Coast Guard
1975	Jonathan "Jon" Hoaglund	Army
1976	Steven Shermock	Navy
1976	Doug Thomas	Navy
1977	Doug Hansen	Navy
1978	David Wells	Navy
1979	Ricardo Brooks	Marine Corps
1979	Kurt Shaddrick	Air Force
1979	Brent Flaskerud	Navy
1979	Alan Winters	Army
1980	David Chinander	Air National Guard
1980	Tamara (Wells) Azuras	Navy
1980	James Kohnke**	Navy
1980	Anthony Woitalla**	Air Force, Army
1982	Michael Brinkhaus	Air Force
1982	Michael Glaccum**	Air Force
1982	John J. Ziegler III**	Air Force
1983	Mark Oswald*	Navy
1983	Alan Tollefson	Air Force
1983	Tom Klouda	Army Reserve
1983	Layne Beckman	Army
1984	Robert Gunderson	Air Force
1985	Chuck Frizelle	Navy
1985	Ryan Opel	Army
1987	James Garrigan	Air Force
1987	Joel Johnson	Navy
1990	Keri (Schreiber) Singleton	Air Force
1991	Jeremy Bowers	Navy
1991	Corby Koehler	Army National Guard
1992	Matthew Wisegarver	Army
1992	Anthony Ardito	Navy
1992	Jacques Baumer	Air Force
1993	Scott Barnacle	Air Force
1994	Justin Brisley	Navy
1994	Daniel Dvorak	Air Force
1995	Scott Hedtke	Navy
1995	Ben Osborn	Army
1995	Mike Ringer	Air Force Reserve
1996	Jim Panacopolous	Air Force
1996	Scott Gerling	Army
1996	Ryan Richard*	Navy
1997	Ryan Ambrose**	Air Force
1997	Chad Shenk**	Air Force
1997	Jennifer Kreisler	Navy Reserve
1998	Kyle Fransdal**	Air Force
1999	Elizabeth (Follese) Fransdal**	Air Force
1999	Brian Mosley	Marine Corps
1999	Edmund Nevin	Marine Corps
1999	Kathleen (Mattson) Sharpe	Army Reserve
1999	Gary Slater	Marine Corps
2000	Matthew Radde	Marine Corps
2000	Kellen "Casey" McDonald	Army National Guard
2000	Ross Stadsklev	Army
2003	Wade Radde	Marine Corps
2003	Peter Shenk	Air Force
2004	Tyler Gustafson**	Navy
2004	Robert Wold**	Marine Corps

* Deceased ** Currently Serving
E - Excelsior High School graduate D - Deephaven High School graduate

MHS CHOIRS

Still Hitting All the Right Notes

BY SARA SKALLE

Rich traditions and fond memories extend through generations of MHS choir members. The consistent thread since the choral program's inception has been an outstanding level of excellence in teaching and performing.

The choir program, which now robustly includes five curricular choirs and three extra-curricular groups, began in the late '40s led by Ray Minkler, Minnetonka's first choral program director. Minkler was hired in 1949 to lead both the choir and band programs, based originally at Excelsior High School and moving to the current high school building when it was completed in 1952.

Minkler was a kind-hearted man who expected a lot from his students. In addition to the choral repertoire, he helped students gain personal confidence by having them prepare two solo pieces and perform them before their peers as part of their grade. "In practicing, he was always very encouraging and helpful, making sure you performed the best that you could," remembers Bonnie (Board) Niles '67, past-president of the Minnetonka Alumni Association. "He challenged you and wanted you to feel you were always doing your best and contributing in an individual way as well as part of a group."

"I had no idea how exceptional my experience was," says Bruce Tammen '67, conductor and artistic director for Chicago Chorale. "Even there in the upper Midwest, choral heaven, the Minnetonka Schools stood out." After years of teaching public school music and later at the university level, Tammen says, "I learned, in the most concrete manner possible, the value of what I had received back in Excelsior. And it is good to hear, over years of shrinking funding and shifting priorities, that Minnetonka Schools have remained committed to arts education."

The Minnetonka tradition of closing each concert with a Choral Benediction began with Minkler in 1949. He remembered when he was drafted in 1943 to fight in WWII, how his congregation in Estherville, Iowa, sang their good wishes to him in the Benediction before he shipped out. It left a deep and lasting impression and spurred a tradition that has lasted 63 years in Minnetonka. "That speaks highly of who he was," says Niles. "And that there was more to our education than just music, there was meaning."

Today the choral program flourishes under the direction of Paula Holmberg, earning top competition honors and countless personal bests. "We do this together and absolutely every person contributes, so the ownership of artistic success or achievement belongs to every student," says Paula Holmberg, MHS choir director since 1994.

Holmberg finds musical artistry in the nuances of singing and drives her students to perform at that level. "I love



Raymond Minkler (bottom left), with the "A" Choir in 1964, was Minnetonka High School's first and only choral director until he retired in 1976. He also directed the band program until 1963. Minkler was inducted in the Alumni Association Faculty Hall of Fame in 2009.



Under the direction of Paula Holmberg (bottom row left in 2011) the MHS Concert Choir has earned a Superior rating at the Minnesota State Music Competition for the past 18 years. Holmberg was named the Minnesota Music Educators Association Music Educator of the Year in 1999 and the American Choral Directors Association Choral Director of the Year in 2005.

the way they just impress my socks off year after year with what they can do and what they can achieve," says Holmberg.

There are currently about 230 students involved in the Minnetonka choral program. And this April they made an impressive showing at the 2012 state contests with the Concert Choir and Treble Choir earning unanimous "superior" scores from the three-judge panel. The Varsity Choir participated in the contest for the first time this year and received an "excellent" rating. Also of note, the Concert Choir's and Treble Choir's final scores were one point shy of perfect. "These students are producing really wonderful, top-notch artistic performances effective in a variety of venues, whether it is at our home concerts, adjudicated performances or traveling," says Holmberg.

Adding a level of adventure to the school year, the cornerstone Concert Choir takes students to New York one year, Chicago the next and abroad every three years or so. Over spring break this year, 56 members of the choir traveled 10 days through Galway, Killarney, Cork and Dublin, Ireland offering five performances at notable historic locations including St. Patrick's Cathedral. The students also attended a master class at the impressive Cork School of Music, part of the Cork Institute of Technology (CIT). For some the trip was their first time outside the U.S., for all it was an experience of a lifetime.

One of Holmberg's past students appreciates the relationships formed and forged through the choir. "For most of my years growing up I was a football player and was never involved with the arts or theatre or anything," says Dan Ventura '98, an attorney with Fafinski, Mark & Johnson in Eden Prairie, who participated in choir as a student. "But the choir pulls together a lot of different types of people, it's a spot to learn how to come together and push toward a common goal, even if you don't come from the same backgrounds or have the same interests outside of that class." Ventura also commented on how the program has grown, having been a chaperone on Concert Choir trips for three years. "The facilities are much nicer and upgraded since I was there. They do more concerts — they do seemingly more of everything — and that's all driven by Mrs. Holmberg. Without her there that program wouldn't exist as it does today."

Even with the additions and expansions over the years, Holmberg has been sure to ground the program in tradition. Anyone who has ever sung in an MHS choir is invited to stand with the choir for the singing of the Benediction at the close of each concert. "The kids who get up, their faces are just beaming and half of them are in tears. It's just such a heart-warming tradition that means so much to so many people," says Carol (Minkler) Traynor '78, Ray Minkler's daughter.

There is a tradition of commitment, hard work and reward that pervades the MHS choral program, but ultimately more important and memorable than stars and superior ratings are the life lessons learned and relationships forged.

VOCAL SUPPORT

The Vocal Support booster organization formed in 2009 to promote the choir programs. While its main goal is to keep participation numbers high, it also supports the choirs financially and administratively. Vocal Support also offers scholarships and awards for students. Vocal Support for Minnetonka Choir invites all choir alums to join their organization. Visit www.minnetonkachoir.org to learn how you can help ensure a bright future and continued success for today's Minnetonka choirs.



Minnetonka Drive-ins: *the* place to hang out

BY JOHN MUGFORD

Decades before the inception of texting, Facebook and Twitter, teenagers didn't require today's social media applications to find out where their friends would be meeting up for the night. Drive-in restaurants were the places to be.

Back in the 1950s, '60s and even into the '70s, the Minnetonka area was home to several drive-ins that were, in some respects, focal points and gathering places for the community. Patrons could pull into a parking space, order their food and remain in their car while dining on All-American fare such as burgers, French fries, and malts.

Among the drive-ins that dotted the local landscape were: The Smak at Vine Hill Road and Highway 7; Reed's on the west side of Highway 41 across from what is now Minnetonka Middle School West (then West Junior High); and Snuffy's on the northwest corner of Highway 7 and County Road 101, where Bremer Bank is now located.

Each had its niche with patrons.

Reed's, a rather small, family-run business with room for just a few cars, was not necessarily a teen hang out, even though students from West Junior High often stopped in after school for ice cream or a burger. Everything served by the owners, Guy and Jennie Reed — whose sons Gary ('57) and Roger ('53) graduated from MHS — was made from scratch.



"People who wanted really good homemade food headed out to Reed's," recalls Nancy (Palm) Countryman '59. "Mrs. Reed would bake the buns for the hamburgers and you could smell that fresh-baked bread when you pulled in."

As far as many former Minnetonka High School students can recall, The Smak had, at one time, been somewhat of a hang-out for teens and young people. But by the time Chris Bollis '65 was in high school, he recalls that it was no longer a "cool" place for teens. Instead, it had become a rather popular spot for adults to have dinner or chat over coffee.

"When I started working at Smak's, probably in 1966 or so, it was more of a highway café, a truck stop of sorts, with very good food," says Kathy (Kramer) Richardson '69.

"People loved it and local people would eat there and see friends. It was the first place I ever heard of with a Juicy Lucy hamburger, with the cheese stuffed in the middle of the meat."

She notes that a few years later The Smak was sold and became Gordy's.

Heart of the community

By the late '50s and into the '60s, the place to be, not only for teens but adults and families alike, was Snuffy's, which had more than 60 parking spots for drive-in diners. Open for business each year from about April to November, the lot was filled nearly every summer night at dinner time with families who filled their stomachs with good, inexpensive meals.

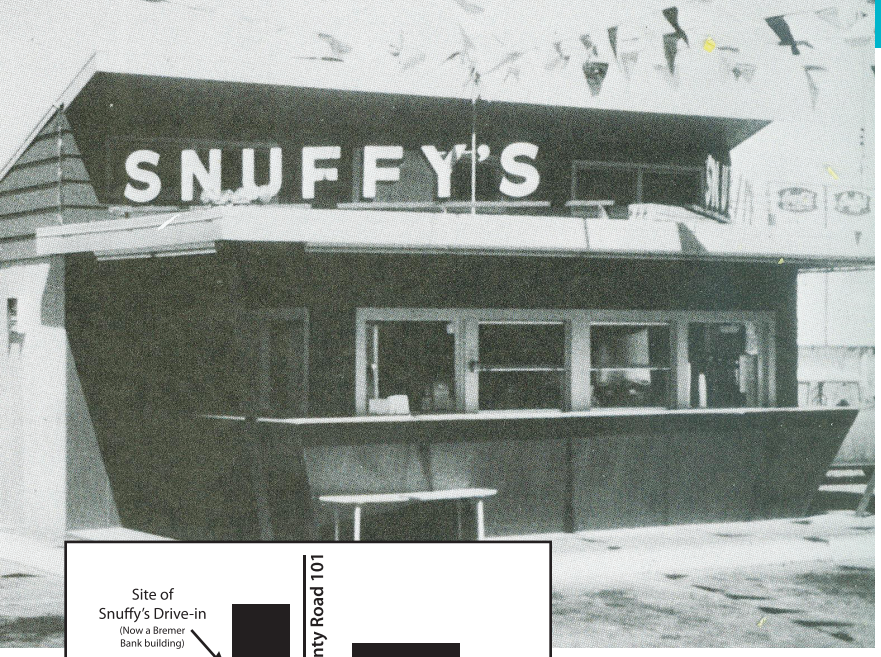
However, right after the final bell rang at MHS and then later in the evening, after the dinner rush had ended, Snuffy's was all about teenagers being teenagers.

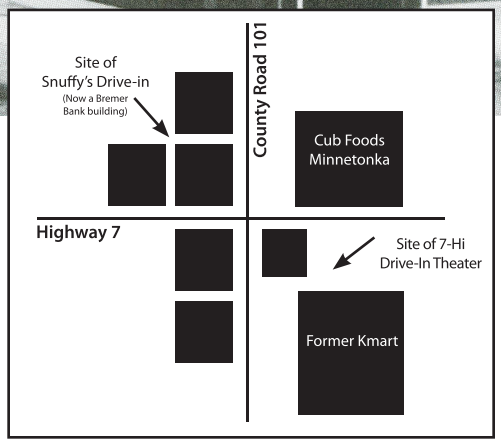
"On Friday and Saturday nights during the school year, and then on almost every night during the summer, if you were in high school you went to Snuffy's," says Richardson. "It was *the* place to be."

Her brother, John Kramer '68, adds: "If you were driving around and looking for something to do, you might drive by or pull into Snuffy's – if you could get in – three or four times a night. And if you did pull in, you'd back your car into the spot so you could see and talk to everyone."

Tom Wartman '69, recalls plenty of flirting going on.

"There were a lot of cute car hops," he says of the girls who took orders and delivered the food. "And if you had a nice car and wanted to show it off, you went to Snuffy's. I remember my friend Kurt Opheim '69 driving his blue Mustang into Snuffy's and how cool that was. And when I bought my 1967 Firebird, which I paid for with my own money and was really proud of, I made a point of cruising into Snuffy's."





Snuffy's Drive-in opened in the late '40s and was owned by Ernie Pivec.

A tight ship

Of course, some shenanigans took place among teenage couples who, after dark on warm summer nights, would make sure to park in the far back row of the Snuffy's lot. There, out of view, they might do a little "necking."

But for the most part, not much in the way of tomfoolery took place on the drive-in's grounds. There was one reason for that and one reason only: Owner Ernie Pivec, who still lives in the area.

The former Navy seaman, who named his restaurant after a pet skunk, prided himself on running a clean, ship-shape business with efficient car hops, quality food and a friendly atmosphere. As a businessman, however, the one thing Pivec didn't put up with were loitering teenagers.

"If it wasn't too crowded we would order food and sit on the hoods of our cars and talk and hang out for as long as we could," recalls Bollis, who often frequented Snuffy's with MHS classmates Chuck Rye '66, Tom Hendricks '66 and others right after school. "But when it got crowded, the owner, Ernie, made sure you stayed in your car and didn't hang around too long. He moved customers in and out when it was crowded."

Not only was Snuffy's itself a great place to hang out, it was at the heart of an intersection – 101 and 7 – that was not as rife with commercial properties as it is today. Families and groups of teens often made a night out of eating at Snuffy's and then heading over to the 7-Hi Drive-in movie theater across the road (at the site of the former Kmart store), or to play a round of mini-golf at Lilli Putt, located next to Snuffy's.

By the 1970s many of the country's drive-in restaurants were going by the wayside, including Snuffy's and the others nearby. Pivec eventually closed and sold the restaurant's name to the owners of Snuffy's Malt Shops, which includes a restaurant at Minnetonka Boulevard and County Road 101. Those restaurants are unrelated to his former drive-in.

So, just how strong of a place does the original Snuffy's hold in the hearts of former MHS students?

Nancy Countryman was an employee at the drive-in for 14 years before finally hanging up her apron when she had her first child. Working for Pivec all those years provided her with good money for college, an education on running a business, and a lifetime of memories.

"It was a wonderful place, the heart of this community," says Countryman. "It was Grand Central Station because everyone would go there to eat and visit with each other and talk about what was going on. I'm not too sure there's been a place like that in Minnetonka since it closed up."

Snuffy's holds a special place in Countryman's heart for another reason, as she met her husband, Jim, there while she was working and he was customer.

For John Kramer, Snuffy's was the place to show off his status as a newly married man after his wedding in 1969, just a week before he was heading off to serve his country.

"A friend of mine, Tom Mann '68, knew a local businessman, Benny the Bugman, who had this antique fire truck that could be rented out," Kramer recalls. "So the day after I got married the whole wedding party got on the truck and drove it all around the community. We were young and wanted everyone to see us having a good time. Well, back then if you wanted to see people and be seen by other people, you went to Snuffy's. So sure enough, we drove that old fire truck right to Snuffy's and circled the lot!"



Snuffy's as it looked before closing in 1974.

Fine Arts Endowment Fund



Fine Arts Endowment funds made it possible for musicians to visit Minnetonka middle school classrooms in the 2011-12 school year. Some of the visiting musicians were even Minnetonka alums, like Greg Lewis '67, shown above with students from Middle School West.

THANK YOU TO OUR ALUMNI DONORS!

Arthur H. Fredrickson '53
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Katie Thompson '68
Jeff Hedlund '78 and Amy Apperson
Robert King '78
Col John Ziegler III '82
Matthew Slaughter '86
John and Patricia Beithon
Miles and Cheri Cohen
Mary Jo and Walt Roberts
Reidar Soderholm

Add your name to this list using the enclosed envelope and help support the initiatives of the Minnetonka Alumni Association.

The Minnetonka Alumni Association Fine Arts Endowment Fund is a permanent legacy that will help ensure a vibrant future for fine arts education in the Minnetonka School District. The Fund, administered through the Minnetonka Public Schools Foundation, makes extraordinary opportunities possible for Minnetonka teachers and students in the visual, performing and literary arts — opportunities beyond and separate from a school's normal operating budget.

School districts, like Minnetonka, that value the arts, provide a full education in the deepest sense of the word — one that prepares students to appreciate the interconnectedness of humanity and thrive in the future.

Alumni Association Fine Arts Endowment Fund Grants:

2005
- Display cases for the Arts Center on 7 at MHS
- MHS Jazz Ensemble travel expenses to perform at National School Boards Convention *(partial funding)*
- Performance royalties for Theatre productions *(partial funding)*

2006
- Ethnic dance instruction at MHS
- Vocal specialist to work with MHS choirs

2007
- A negative scanner for MHS photography classes
- Woodworking tools for Minnetonka Theatre at MHS

2008
- Supplies for 4th graders to learn how to make paper
- Boomwhackers percussion tubes for middle school music
- *Cantus* chamber choir in-service at MHS *(partial funding)*

2009
- Art DVDs for all District elementary schools

2010
- Art posters for all District elementary schools

2011
- Art room library and resource center at Minnewashta Elementary
- Weaving loom at Excelsior Elementary
- Chinese music residency at Scenic Heights Elementary
- Guest musician clinics at Middle School East and West
- Drama rehearsal camera at MHS

2012
- Guest actor workshops at MHS
- Portable 'Smart' Light Board at MHS
- Musical instruments at Excelsior Elementary
- Virtual field trips at Middle School West *(partial funding)*





Above: In 2011, MAA board members Gail (Wartman) Bollis '67 (left) and Gail (Thacker) Ofstehage '68 (right) presented Scenic Heights teacher Mary Renz (center) with a grant for a Chinese Music Residency. Mary invited musician and Carleton College professor Gao Hong (right) to Scenic Heights where she introduced children to Chinese songs, instruments and culture.



Above: Board member Bonnie (Board) Niles '67 presented Minnewashta teacher Meghan Byram with a grant in 2011. Below: Skippers Hall of Famer, Kenni Holmen '76, was among those showcased in 2011-12 Master Musician series.



Minnetonka Public Schools Foundation

The mission of the Minnetonka Public Schools Foundation (MPSF), "to raise and allocate funds to initiate and support innovative educational programs that enrich the learning experiences of all students served by Minnetonka Public Schools," can be boiled down to one key word: innovation. Simply put, they strive to support new, unique and ground-breaking academic programs, materials, tools and technology that will equip Minnetonka students for the challenges they'll face in a complex and changing world.

Since its founding in 1986, the Foundation has partnered with the community, including parents, businesses, alumni and other supporters, to financially support innovation in Minnetonka schools. Their Endowment Fund, which reached the $1 million mark last year, supports multi-year projects, while the Teacher Grant Program funds projects in every Minnetonka school.

Endowment Fund Supports Long-term Initiatives

Unlike other education foundations, the MPSF has established an endowment that enables them to provide long-term support to important initiatives. Their first endowment project, The Writing Center at MHS, is an integral part of the high school's culture and supports the development of the writing skills students need to be successful across all areas of the curriculum.

In October, the Foundation paid a final installment on a 5-year, $250,000 commitment to The Writing Center and recently renewed their support through 2015 with an additional $80,000. The Writing Center is the envy of many public school foundations and it has made a significant impact at MHS.

Making a District-Wide Impact

The Foundation's Teacher Grant Program is another important source of innovation in Minnetonka schools. The fund recently awarded more than $65,000 for 35 grants for the 2012-13 school year, bringing the total value of grants to more than $600,000 since 1996.

Challenges Ahead

Despite the Foundation's impressive track record, they continue to receive Teacher Grant requests that exceed their funding abilities. Their vision of supporting another ground-breaking endowment project will require sustained, multi-year funding.

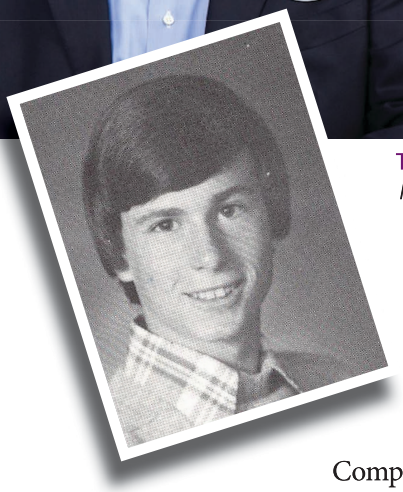
The Minnetonka Public Schools Foundation is committed to providing innovative learning opportunities for *all* Minnetonka students. We hope you share that goal and will support our mission.

Please visit our website to learn more about our work and how you can support innovation in Minnetonka schools.

THE MINNETONKA PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOUNDATION

www.MinnetonkaFoundation.com





Tom Staggs '78.
Photo courtesy of Walt Disney Parks and Resorts.

TOM STAGGS '78

CHAIRMAN, WALT DISNEY PARKS AND RESORTS

BY SARA SKALLE

Tom Staggs took a welcomed, creative turn from Wall Street investment banking when he joined the Walt Disney Company in 1990. Twenty years later, he's found himself as Chairman of Walt Disney Parks and Resorts, at the helm of the company's worldwide vacation and travel enterprise.

"Disney gave me a chance to be involved with a product that I could relate to and a creative process that was interesting," says the 1978 MHS graduate. First hired by Disney as manager of strategic planning, Staggs quickly rose through a series of impressive titles, including senior executive vice president and chief financial officer.

Staggs, who humbly describes the theme of his career as good luck, says his attitude could be summarized by some thoughts from Frank Wells, president of Disney until 1994. "He told me that he never had a grand scheme — which seemed awfully familiar to me — but that he focused on doing the best job he could at whatever job he was in. When the learning curve for that job might be flattening, someone would present him with an opportunity to do something exciting. He invariably took it and it led to other things," explains Staggs. "The key being that he focused on doing the job he was in to the best of his abilities instead of worrying about what the next thing might be. That's been my approach all along the way."

While Staggs makes his accomplishments sound easy, success like his requires focus and dedication. When asked if at some point he had to remind himself to also enjoy the ride, he says, "My personality is such that I tend to have fun along the way regardless. And with a company like this, it reinforces the notion of enjoyment along the way." Key highlights along the way for him were being a part of the ABC/Capital Cities, Pixar and Marvel acquisitions.

Reflecting on his years in Minnetonka, Staggs says the teacher that influenced him the most was Dan Geldert, MHS band director from 1962 to 1997. "He was probably one of my most demanding teachers in terms of excellence and

Tom Staggs will be recognized with a Minnetonka Distinguished Alumni Award on Saturday, September 29 at MHS. Nominate a classmate for an award or purchase tickets at www.minnetonkaalumni.com.



Tom Staggs (circled) in the 1978 Jazz Band yearbook picture.

dedication and focus, but at the same time, he ended up getting the best work out of students," says Staggs, who was and is a trumpet player. "He enjoyed what he did and clearly helped people realize that when they did focus, did well and excelled, that the rewards were commensurate with the effort."

Staggs, who holds a business degree from the University of Minnesota and an MBA from Stanford Graduate School of Business, began college with an intention to major in music, perhaps a sign of Dan Geldert's influence, though he quickly realized that for him it was to be more of an avocation than a vocation. While music did not end up being his life's calling, he says that the discipline has served him well. Not long ago, Geldert touched his life again, sending some old tapes from past band concerts. "It was pretty fun to hear [those performances] after so many years," says Staggs, "and my son decided to take up the trumpet as a result."

Family has always been important to Staggs. Growing up in Excelsior, near the Commons, the Staggs' back yard would always be filled with family and friends to celebrate and watch fireworks on the Fourth of July. Sailing was something Tom's step father really enjoyed, so Tom became involved as a judge for the local yacht club races. And cooking is something that his mom and the three brothers — Jeff '76, Rod '77, and Tom — have always loved doing together. (Their lucky spouses don't have to lift a finger on holidays!) "When Tom and I were going to the U," reminisces Jeff Staggs, "we figured out we could commute back together, team up and make an apple pie in a half hour, so it would be done right when our favorite TV show was over. We could watch M*A*S*H and then have apple pie."

Jeff Staggs, president of Business Coaching International in Mound, works with top executives like his brother. "I really admire what Tom's done with his kids, probably more so than his business accomplishments, because that's the harder thing to do," he says. "And that he's been able to do both is pretty amazing."

Tom admits it's different raising kids in Los Angeles than in Minnesota and a challenge balancing the demands of his job, but family is always a priority. "We spend a whole lot of time reinforcing the importance of family and a sense of personal humility," he says. When teased that it must be a challenge when his kids have unlimited access to Disney theme parks, he replies, "My kids know to be on their best behavior when they're at our parks because I've told everyone I run into to keep a close eye on them."

Thinking back to high school, Staggs says that MHS was a great place to start because of the relationships created and the sense of community around the school. "Having older brothers one and two years ahead of me was a huge help. I always had them around to learn from and look up to." He also says that there wasn't one thing that he learned or one subject that set him on a particular course. "As you can tell, I don't think having a clear blueprint for life when you graduate from high school is necessary, and for most people it's not even all that desirable," says Staggs. "Better to have a blueprint for being adaptable and resilient and to persevere on whatever path you choose. That will likely lead to a better outcome more often than having some notion of a dedicated direction."



Photo courtesy of Walt Disney Parks and Resorts.



MHS Class of 2012 (L to R): Maria Filsinger, Anna Benke, Daniel Wang, Sara Suppan and Beau Bates.

Photos by Chris Dillmann Photography.

FIVE TO WATCH

MHS 2012

BY MAGGIE SHEA



BEAU BATES

"Players can lead in two ways: with words and by example. Beau does both," says Skippers Defensive coordinator Greg Clough of the star senior linebacker and captain. "Players respect him for his leadership and tireless work ethic." An A honor roll student all four years of high school, Bates was named Academic All-State and won the 2012 National Football Foundation Scholar-Athlete Award. In the fall, he is heading to University of Minnesota-Duluth on a football scholarship, where he will major in exercise science. Post-college, he would love to work for a professional sports team.

His junior year, Beau lined up as outside linebacker. As a senior, Beau moved to the inside and recorded 145 tackles, earning All-Conference, Defensive MVP, and All-State honorable mention. The victories and the heartbreakers stand out for Bates, especially his last high school game, a 6-3 loss to Eden Prairie in sectionals. "Both defenses were playing great. We were up 3-0 most of the game, and they scored a late touchdown," he says. Clearly a physical powerhouse, Bates also acknowledges the role of mental toughness. "You have to recover quickly from bad plays, or a bad half. You can't let it get into your head," he says. He has great respect for the coaching staff and says that the camaraderie of his teammates has been one of the best parts of high school.

He is finishing his senior year strong, taking both AP Statistics and AP Psychology. "Psychology is my favorite class," he says. "I like learning about the brain." This summer, Bates will continue to train and also tackle his new job: security detail at Lord Fletcher's. His family includes father Alan, mother Penny Perrault '78, three siblings and four dogs.

Anna Benke sets the bar high—and vaults right over it, both in school as a straight-A student and on the field as track captain and champion pole vaulter. As a sophomore she was vaulting 8'1"; at sectionals in May, she broke the MHS record with an 11'10" vault."It is amazing to see so much growth in just a few short years," says her track coach Nicole Snedden. "Others see her determination, and it is contagious." Ironically, her growth-in inches-is what led her to track. After six years of competing in gymnastics at the Junior Olympics level, Benke says she peaked: "Pole vaulting is a great fit for those who outgrew gymnastics; both involve muscle, air awareness, and athleticism." As a sophomore she went out for track just for fun, and found a home for her natural talents.

Benke's honors include trips to the state track meet, All-American in gymnastics and the Athena Award, given to top-tier female athletes. She's heading to North Dakota State University on a track scholarship, where she will major in nursing. After years of balancing gymnastics and track with a rigorous course load, including both IB and AP classes, Benke is well-prepared. Competition has honed her focus and mental drive. "Coaches tell you to have confidence in yourself, but you need to find it out for yourself. Your own mind tells you what you can or cannot do," she says. Summer plans include spending time with friends and at her family's cabin in Perham, Minnesota. "I would rather be outside than inside any day," she says.

Benke explains that vaulters know how good the vault will be in the last step before planting the pole. As she finishes a stellar high school career with a strong step, she's ready to soar.



MARIA FILSINGER

Maria Filsinger is meeting the President in June, and plasmids helped her earn this honor. Her perfect score of 36 on the ACT qualified her as a potential Presidential Scholar; as part of the application, Filsinger was asked to upload a photo of something important to her, and write an essay explaining why. "I sent a picture of a plasmid and wrote about how it symbolized my desire to make a difference in the world, and my excitement for synthetic biology," she says. It worked. In May, she was awarded the U.S. Presidential Scholarship, which comes with a trip to Washington D.C. "With science, the potential to impact lives is so big," Filsinger says. "Genetic engineering, for example, has far-reaching applications, from energy issues to curing cancer." This fall, she will study biology or bioengineering at Stanford University.

As a top student and nationally-ranked show horse rider, Filsinger began studying math at the University of Minnesota as part of the Talented Youth Program in 7th grade. She took synthetic biology there this year. She enrolled in AP classes as a 9th grader, and earned the National AP Scholar designation as a sophomore. "She was delightful as a freshman, not afraid to speak up and ask questions in a class that was almost entirely seniors," says social studies teacher Cheryl Duncan. "As a senior, she retains a joyfulness and openness that I hope she never loses."

An IB Diploma student, Filsinger is also co-captain of the Math and Science Olympiad teams. Her hours of volunteering at the Minnesota Zoo, U of MN research labs, and tutoring young kids have earned her the gold level Presidential Volunteer Service Award. She credits her high test scores to taking rigorous courses and listening in class, and she recently signed a contract to write an ACT prep book.



SARA SUPPAN

"Sara is an artist, not an art student," says Sarah Young, MHS art teacher. "She creates unique compositions from her own mind." As a senior, Suppan has already made her mark as an artist: she paints on commission, has a home studio brimming with creations and designed the set and playbill for the student-created production, *We All Fall Down*. "We spent a lot of time together, immersed in an idea," Suppan says of her collaboration with the playwright and composer. She has won Scholastic Art Awards throughout high school and one of only two prestigious scholarships awarded by Minneapolis College of Art and Design, where she will study next year. Suppan looks forward to being surrounded by creative people and growing as an artist; she feels at home in the city, inspired by its energy and diversity. "I want to be involved in the local art scene as a painter, and give back to this state," she says.

Suppan's subjects range from cityscapes to surprising compositions of the human body, merged with images of roses or the planets. "I like the shapes the body makes," she says. "I want people to view the body as home or safe space." Though she has always loved drawing, her father, an amateur art historian, nurtured her creativity early on by signing her up for art classes. The surrealists Rene Magritte and Valerio Carruba inspire her. She is working on larger canvases these days, and for this artist, a perfect Saturday consists of eight uninterrupted hours to paint.



ANNA BENKE



DANIEL WANG

Daniel Wang has earned many titles at MHS: Co-captain of the Debate, Math and Science Olympiad Teams, and member of the 2012 Physics Bowl Champion team; National AP Scholar and National Merit Scholar; *Breezes* editor; writing coach; All-State Band and First Chair clarinet in the Wind Ensemble and Enrichment Scholar Student of the Year.

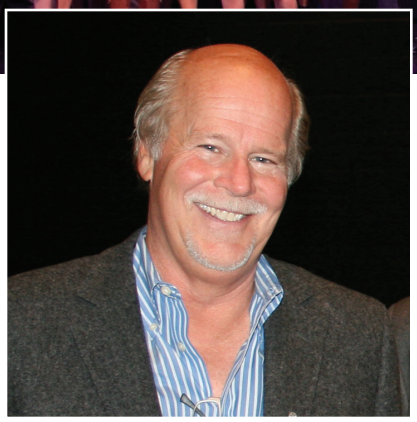
Despite the accolades, Wang remains humble, and his peers and teachers love him for his wit and character. His *Breezes* commentaries include a satirical Homecoming advice column offering nerdy ways to get a date, and the highlight of his senior-year spring break was running down hills in Austria with fellow Wind Ensemble members, singing *Sound of Music* songs. He just wrapped up his second stint in the pit orchestra for *Legally Blonde*. Wang's AP Composition teacher, Sonja Saunders, says, "Daniel is unassuming in class, but he is laser-precise with his observations about a text. He sees himself as a math/science scholar, but he is a fantastic English student."

Wang will attend the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena this fall, where he plans to major in engineering. "Math is fun," he says, musing that being at Cal Tech might feel like doing multi-variable calculus all day with like-minded people. He attributes his test-taking prowess to reading the textbook, working through many practice problems and getting to the ideas behind the concepts. Wang is nostalgic about leaving Minnetonka. "I'm sad that we are all going our separate ways," he says. This summer, he will continue his volunteer work at the Emergency Room at Ridgeview Clinic, and read. A current favorite book is *The Hidden Reality*, by physicist Brian Greene, though he also enjoys *The Onion*.

R. KENT KNUTSON - 10 YEARS OF...

Minnetonka Theatre





Kent Knutson has been the Artistic Director for Minnetonka Theatre since 2002.

"I've heard it said, that people come into our lives for a reason, bringing something we must learn and we are led to those who help us most to grow..."

These lyrics from *Wicked*, sung by more than 60 Minnetonka High School and Minnetonka Theatre Alumni, paid tribute to R. Kent Knutson earlier this summer, at a celebration to honor his 10 years of artistic direction for Minnetonka Theatre.

Minnetonka Theatre has a long and distinguished history under such directors as Joseph Szarke, Brian Halleen, Maggie Pistner, and now R. Kent Knutson (known as "Knut" to students and friends). Each director has left their mark and helped students grow.

Under Knutson's direction, Minnetonka Theatre has earned eight state titles in Competition One Act and 94 SpotLight Awards from the Hennepin Theatre Trust. Six students have been named Minnesota State Scholars of Distinction in Theater; one was even honored as a U.S. Presidential Scholar in Fine Arts and went on to earn the 2011 Jimmy Award for best performance by a high school actor.

Perhaps most memorable was Minnetonka's international debut at the 2007 Edinburgh Fringe Festival in Scotland with *Les Miserables*, about which local writer Peter Shaw wrote at the time, "I left the theatre literally shaking – an emotional wreck – having watched the most magnificent Edinburgh musical I had seen in more than a decade... When Knut dreams, he dreams big." Thank you, Knut, for 10 years of big dreams.

MINNETONKA THEATRE'S MINNESOTA PREMIERE PRODUCTIONS



The Drowsey Chaperone 2010



The Phantom of the Opera 2011



Legally Blonde 2012



Photos courtesy of Heidi Bohnenkamp '08, www.heidibphoto.com.



Jessica Chung '07



Lauren Drasler '04, Kristin Kvam '03 and Anne Reason '05

Alumni, many from the original 2006 cast, perform a song from *Les Miserables*.





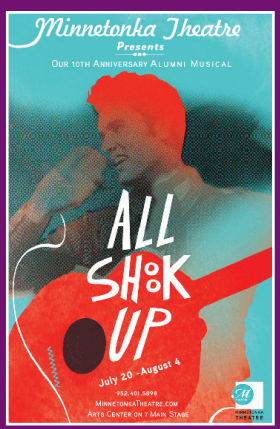
Nathaniel Irvin '10 and Kari Marie Nelson '09



Steven Frankenfield '07, Lauren Bartelt '08 and Ben Henschel '07



Kelsey Peterjohn '11



DON'T MISS *ALL SHOOK UP*

Minnetonka Theatre's 10-year anniversary season continues through the summer when they will remount their production of *All Shook Up*. Alumni cast members have been invited back to be a part of this Elvis-inspired musical, first presented by Minnetonka High School in 2009. The show will run from July 20 to August 4 on the Arts Center on 7 Main Stage. Tickets are available now at www.minnetonkatheatre.com or by calling 952-401-5898.

Dan Geldert
CELEBRATES 50 YEARS OF CONDUCTING



Dan Geldert was the band director for Minnetonka High School for 35 years. In fact, it was the only place he taught. He did his student teaching in Minnetonka Schools starting in 1962, while pursuing his degree from Augsburg College. Dan only took a one-year leave of absence from Minnetonka to pursue a Masters degree at the University of Colorado. He retired in 1997.

In 2002, Dan started an adult Concert Band with the Minnetonka Music Association. He commutes eight times each year from his home in Ft. Collins, Colorado to lead rehearsals for two performances for the Minnetonka community.

Many of the band's members are former Minnetonka High School musicians and the group practices and holds concerts in the MHS Arts Center on 7, so 2012 marks the 50th year Dan Geldert has conducted concerts on the same stage.



Dan Geldert was inducted into the Minnetonka Alumni Association Faculty Hall of Fame in 2009.

To celebrate this achievement **the Minnetonka Music Association will hold a concert in Dan's honor on Sunday, September 23 at 3 p.m.** The concert is free of charge and will be held at MHS.

Learn more at www.musicassociation.org. Friends, colleagues and former students are encouraged to attend! Those unable to attend may send messages to 5151 Boardwalk Dr., Unit S-1, Ft. Collins, CO 80525.

Become a Class Representative!

The Minnetonka Alumni Association is looking for one or two individuals from each graduation year to volunteer to be the representative of their class. By acting as your class' contact and link to the Alumni Association, you will help to broaden and sustain friendships among alumni, spread school pride and strengthen alumni communication. If you are interested in being a class representative or would like to recommend a classmate, please contact us or visit www.minnetonkaalumni.com.

Class of 1953	June (Jepson) Hibbard	**Class of 1973**	Open	**Class of 1992**	Open
Class of 1954	Open	**Class of 1974**	Open	**Class of 1993**	Open
Class of 1955	Open	**Class of 1975**	Open	**Class of 1994**	Elizabeth Wright
Class of 1956	John & Sandra Cunningham	**Class of 1976**	Open	**Class of 1995**	Rebecca (Pike) Pluth
Class of 1957	Open	**Class of 1977**	Open	**Class of 1996**	Tina Bernett
Class of 1958	Sharon (Hennek) Jerabek	**Class of 1978**	Open	**Class of 1997**	Open
Class of 1959	Todd Knutson	**Class of 1979**	Open	**Class of 1998**	Jake Sturgis
Class of 1960	Bill Naegele, Dick Caswell	**Class of 1980**	Lauri (Miville) Margeson	**Class of 1999**	Open
Class of 1961	Open	**Class of 1981**	Open	**Class of 2000**	Open
Class of 1962	Mark Scholle	**Class of 1982**	Open	**Class of 2001**	Open
Class of 1963	Bruce Triden	**Class of 1983**	Alan Tollefson	**Class of 2002**	Open
Class of 1964	Joe Mullen	**Class of 1984**	Todd Allard	**Class of 2003**	Chris Zielinski
Class of 1965	Sharon (Haley) Hermel	**Class of 1985**	Laura (McGlasson) Hotvet	**Class of 2004**	Open
Class of 1966	Pat Mullen	**Class of 1986**	Brenda (Brown) Boime	**Class of 2005**	Open
Class of 1967	Open	**Class of 1987**	Open	**Class of 2006**	Open
Class of 1968	Open	**Class of 1988**	Heather Osborne	**Class of 2007**	Jordan Rossman
Class of 1969	Open	**Class of 1989**	Open	**Class of 2008**	Open
Class of 1970	Marietta Jacobsen	**Class of 1990**	Carol (Jenkins) Koyonen, Angie (VanBuren) Pankoff	**Class of 2009**	Open
Class of 1971	Joy (Davis) Fruen			**Class of 2010**	JJ Schlangen
Class of 1972	Open	**Class of 1991**	Open	**Class of 2011**	Open

ALUMNI NOTES

2010

Haley O'Brien won the Miss Colligate America pageant in Texas.

2005

Erica (Peterson) Ludovina and her husband welcomed their first daughter, Austin Kate, on December 15, 2011.

Matthew Low earned a Master of Science in Computer Graphics degree from Cornell University. He currently works as a software engineer in research and development at DreamWorks Animation in California.

2007

Peter Atwood has been hired as an architectural intern by The RLE Group in Fargo, North Dakota.

2004

Molly (Allen) and Chris Hagen, welcomed their first child in May 2012.

2002

Megan Engmark married **Brian Liebl** On September 25, 2010. The couple lives in Chanhassen.

2000

Carly Sanko married Mitchell Baker on June 9, 2012.

Bethany Stevens married Matt Esse in October 2011.

1997

Chris Fenwick is working as the musical director for the Los Angeles production of *Los Otros*, a historical play set in Southern California.

1995

Brian Cristofono released his debut solo album titled *Before You Go*.

1994

Jessica (Totsch) Mommaerts and her husband, Matthew, welcomed a daughter, Sage Katherine, on December 10, 2011.

1993

Heather (Duggan) Anderson, owner of Adi Shakti Studio, received a grant to serve as Artist in Residence at Knight Elementary School in Canby, Oregon. During the residency she worked with students to create a mosaic mural for the school.

Lexi Daley-Clark and her husband, Denis, welcomed their first child, Calhan Fenwick, on March 22, 2012. The family lives in Maine.

Richard R. Lindquist was named Executive Director and Complex Manager of U.S. Wealth Management for Morgan Stanley Smith Barney in St. Louis, Missouri. Richard is also pursuing an Executive MBA at Washington University.

THANK YOU!

The following Minnetonka teachers and staff members retired this school year. Please join the MAA in thanking them for their service and dedication to children in Minnetonka Schools.

Kathy Barga	19 years	MHS
Patti Berger	21 years	Groveland
Theresa Blakeborough	32 years	Community Education
Susan Brzezinski	35 years	Middle School West
Mary Jo Clapp '57	15 years	MHS
Anita Conrad	16 years	Middle School East
Nancy Ellsworth	16 years	Excelsior
Malcolm Fenwick	35 years	Middle School West
Mary Fenwick	35 years	Middle School East
Bev Ginther	28 years	Teaching and Learning
Laura Hanson	24 years	Nutrition Services
Ann Haugh	7½ years	Nurse
Helen Herzog	47 years	Excelsior
Gerald Klein	9 years	Middle School West
Debra Marston	26 years	Special Education
Jan Nelson	24 years	MHS
Lynn Owens '62	46 years	Deephaven
Jane Reimer-Morgan	27 years	MHS
Cherryl Sigler	17 years	MHS
Jeanne Strauss	14 years	Community Education
Boyd Thomas	27 years	MME

ALUMNI NOTES

IN MEMORIAM

Please remember in your prayers these and all Minnetonka, Excelsior and Deephaven graduates who passed away over the past year (May 2011-June 2012).

Danielle Renninger '11
Mathew "Jamie" Pierre '91
Daniel D. Fish Jr. '90
Brett Boomer '87
Candyce Elin Smith '74
Patricia Opheen Redmond '73
James "Jim" Shoberg '73
Edward Allen Walton '69
Mike Wolfe '66
Stephen Collins Foster Jr. '63
Kenneth Oelschlager '59
Margaret "Maggie" Boone Sloss '58
Robert M. "Bob" Kleven '56
Robert E. "Bob" Hullsiek (Deephaven)
Kay (Nelson) Undis '51 (Excelsior)
Donald Wells Miller '45 (Excelsior)
William Bruce Chisholm (English Teacher)
John Thomas Huber (School Board)
Richard Peterson (MHS Math Teacher)
Edward Robinson (Equipment Manager)
William John Slowter (School Board)
Walter "Doc" West (Athletic Director)

ARIZONA ALUMNI GATHERING

Each year on the third Wednesday in February a group of Minnetonka Alumni meet for an annual Excelsior Picnic at Pioneer Park in Mesa, Ariz. All are invited to attend, just bring a dish to share! Contact Kay (Hanson) Fritsche '61 at khf7807A25@yahoo.com or 602-743-2541 for more details.

DO YOU HAVE NEWS?

Send your update to alumni@minnetonka.k12.mn.us! Tell us about your promotion, move back to Minnetonka, the birth of a child or recent marriage.

1982

Bill Carrothers released a solo jazz CD titled *Excelsior*.

1978

Pam Hensel Kearney joined the new Long Lake Rowing Club.

1976

Julie Conklin is living in Seattle, Washington with her husband, Tim Noonan. She currently works as a physician assistant at a community clinic.

1975

Cheryl (Smythe) Fischer published her first novel, *Falling into Green*.

1974

Steve Hamrick's painting was chosen to be featured on the 2012 Minnesota Migratory Waterfowl Stamp.

1972

Kathy McMillen retired from Davenport Public Schools on May 24, 2012 after 36 years as a music teacher.

1969

Kathy (West) Baltuff is celebrating 25 years as an employee of Minnetonka Schools. She is married to Terry Baltuff '67.

Craig Olson published a book, *The Casual Christian*, in 2011.

1966

Donna (Cousins) Vos published a novel, *Waiting for Bones*.

1963

Judy (Hempel) Aronson, a parent/child specialist, retired from Intermediate School District 287 in June 2011.

1959

Alan Tollefson and his son Adam ('87) published the first three children's books in the *Adventures of Wilson McPuff* twelve-book series in February 2012.

1950 – Deephaven

Jean (Penney) Tavonatti and her husband, Gino, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary in November 2011.



Alums out and about! Kaye (Simons) Knutson, Nancy (Palm) Countryman and Mary (Peterson) Hokainson, all Class of '59, introduced their classmate Judy (Tilton) Kennedy (far left) to the delights of a Waffle House breakfast this past spring while vacationing in the southern U.S.



Britta Anderson

CATCHING UP WITH BRITTA ANDERSON '68

Olympic Operations Consultant

While an estimated four billion people across the globe are watching the London Olympic Games this summer, Operations Consultant Britta Anderson '68 will be right at the heart of the excitement, hard at work behind the scenes as a project manager for a major Olympic sponsor.

For more than 15 years Anderson has coordinated ground-level travel logistics for major companies that sponsor the Olympics. Large corporations hire her as the liaison between their organization and the International Olympic Committee. Starting approximately two years prior, Anderson plans logistics (hotels, event access, meals, transportation and more) for the sponsor's employees and guests who will travel to the Games. She is also on site during the Olympics to handle day-to-day details.

Anderson has worked seven Olympics, two Goodwill Games and throughout her career she has perfected the art of following her instincts. In fact, that is how she got her start in travel and event planning after graduating from the University of Minnesota. She wasn't looking for the job, but while tagging along on her sister's interview, Anderson was hired by Carlson Companies as a travel director to accompany tour groups overseas.

At first Anderson says she was simply a "human arrow" directing tourists to destinations. As she gained more responsibilities on each trip, however, Anderson knew she had found her niche.

Anderson credits her years as a travel director with helping her develop creative problem– solving skills and to trust her intuition. Most trips were completed without incident, but she remembers finding herself in interesting situations over the years. Needless to say, she is the person you want with you if you ever need to navigate a foreign country's hospital system or customs office.

Anderson eventually left Carlson, spent a year in Paris working and 2½ years in Rome before heading to New York City. Her travel planning background landed her a position with NBC, coordinating the broadcaster's sponsorship of the 1988 Olympic Games in Seoul, South Korea. Since then she has worked for CBS, Sony and back to NBC managing operations for the Olympic Games in Barcelona, Spain (1992); Atlanta, Georgia (1996); Nagano, Japan (1998); Sydney, Australia (2000); Salt Lake City, Utah (2002); and Beijing, China (2008).

Though enjoyable, Anderson says her job is not always as glamorous as it may seem. While in a host city, she says her days start at 6 a.m. and don't end until 12 or 1 a.m. And even the most carefully laid plans can't anticipate the unimaginable. Sometimes her entire day is spent, "putting out fires."

Her favorite Olympics were in Barcelona. Another highlight was at the Beijing Olympics when she was able to get away from her office to attend the Opening Ceremonies.

In 2010 Anderson was hired by Minneapolis-based BI Worldwide to work with UPS for the 2012 London Olympics. Although the Games don't start until the end of July, Anderson has been in England since May, familiarizing herself with the city and the Olympic venues.

When she returns to the United States this fall Britta plans to move to the East Coast and pursue a new career in the healthcare field. And just as she has in the past, Britta will approach this new adventure with the same "be bold and follow your instincts" attitude that has always served her so well.

"I always figure, if I have enough money for a return ticket [to Minnesota] and a few months living expenses," she says. "It doesn't matter if I fail. At least I pursued my dream."

The 2012 Olympic Games will be held July 27–August 12 in London, England.

MINNETONKA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Minnetonka Public Schools
Dennis Peterson, Superintendent
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Minnetonka, MN 55345
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Nominate a Classmate or Former Teacher! Attend the Brunch!

4TH ANNUAL

MINNETONKA Alumni Awards

BRUNCH & ANNUAL MEETING



Janis Nelson, Nancy (White) Herfert '64 and Jerry Marquardt '65 at the 2011 Alumni Awards brunch.



2011 Faculty Hall of Fame inductee Joe Lane and former Minnetonka teacher and coach Bill Josephson.



Former Minnetonka School Board member Bob Quam and current Minnetonka School Board Vice Chair Lisa Wagner.



Steve Cady '82, Liz (Holcomb) Norton '82 and Beth (Klinger) Fahning '82 at the 2011 Alumni Awards ceremony.

Saturday, September 29, 2012

MHS Homecoming Weekend

10 a.m.-Noon

Minnetonka High School

Award Categories:

- **Distinguished Alumni Award**
  2012 Recipient: Tom Staggs '78, Learn more on pages 12 & 13
- **Distinguished Service Award**
- **Young Alum Achievement Award**
- **MHS Skippers Hall of Fame** (Arts, Activities, Athletics)
- **Minnetonka Faculty Hall of Fame**

Purchase tickets or make a nomination at www.minnetonkaalumni.com!

Nomination deadline: July 15