SUMMER 2017

Yellow Jacket

ALUMNI MAGAZINE *of The* GILBERT SCHOOL



Susan Sojka appointed new Principal of The Gilbert School... *Page 4*

THIS ISSUE:

English teacher Maura Hurley was surprised and deeply moved to be named TGS 2017 Teacher of the Year... *Page 5*

Alice Bonhotel Lewis has the distinction of being Gilbert's oldest alumnus... *Page 14*

Inclement weather did not dampen spirits at the 16th Annual Blue & Gold Reunion one bit!... *Page 15*

YellowJacket

SUMMER 2017

Mission
The Gilbert School was founded in 1895 by William L. Gilbert "for the improvement of mankind by affording such assistance and means of educating the young as will help them to become good citizens." We are committed to assuring that each student is prepared to be a thoughtful, productive citizen in a complex, global society.

Share Your Stories
We want to hear from you! Did you get a new job? Earn a degree? Write a book? Welcome a child or grandchild? Win an award? Retire? We'll share the good news with our 8000 readers.

Interested in writing an article for the *YellowJacket?* Send your first-person story for consideration. Let your fellow alumni know where your path has led you since graduation and how your time at The Gilbert School has influenced your decisions.

This is *your* magazine.
Make your voices heard! Email us at:
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Dear Alumni and Friends,



The second half of the 2016 – 2017 school year brought continued contract negotiations. The tuition agreement made with the State Department of Education Receiver, in order to secure a two-year exclusive contract, equaled an overall budget reduction of $402,900. Three retirees, various faculty resignations, smaller than anticipated insurance increases, and the elimination of the community liaison position brought us to the necessary budget decrease.

Our 2017 – 2018 school year brings a change in leadership. Principal Alan Strauss has resigned to accept a position as principal of Weymouth High School in Weymouth, Massachusetts. Alan was the best instructional leader I had the pleasure to work with in my 45-year career in education. He facilitated changes at TGS that gained us award-winning status. He was very worthy of the honor bestowed on him by CAS as Principal of the Year for CT. We all wish him well in his new position and while we will all miss Alan, he leaves us with a strong foundation we are committed to build upon.

In the wake of Alan's resignation, the School Corporation appointed Sue Sojka as principal of The Gilbert School. She is the first woman principal in the history of TGS. We now have another award winning principal leading our school, as Mrs. Sojka received the A+ Administrator's Award from The New England League of Middle Schools at their Spring Conference. I know that TGS will continue to grow and prosper as a center of excellence in education under her leadership.
~ Dr. Anthony Serio, Head of School

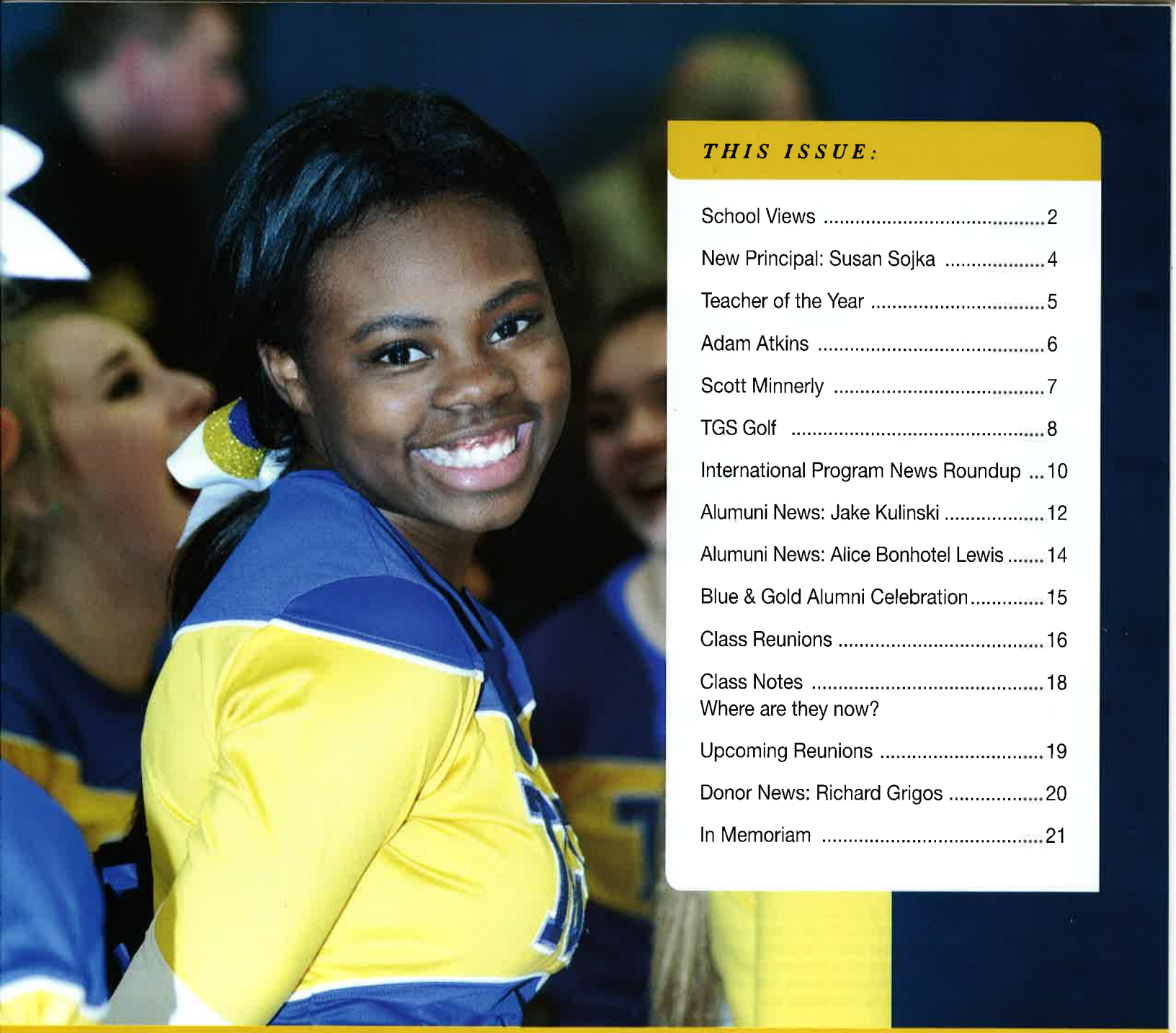


The Gilbert School is a unique school rich in tradition and spirit where we believe all students can be successful. This belief drives the work we do on a daily basis. Our administration, faculty, staff, parents, and students partner together motivating and empowering our students to reach their highest potential. We provide our students with a rigorous and student-centered education, that prepares them for the challenges of the 21st century. This is evidenced in our students' increased SAT/standardized test scores, increased enrollment in AP classes, and an overall higher degree of college and career readiness. Our commitment as an educational community is to continuously reflect upon what we are doing well, and implement any changes necessary for improvement. Technology is incorporated in daily classroom practices with iPads and Chromebooks, and our teachers are provided with ample Professional Development opportunities to illustrate their commitment to student success. Our School Counseling department has developed a new career center connecting students with job shadowing experiences, internships, and career exploration opportunities like never before since today's demanding job market calls for such an approach.

Through a building-wide effort, the faculty and administration here aim to prepare our students both inside and outside of the classroom to take on academic and life challenges. Our hope is to have our students thrive from a well-rounded educational program focusing on academics, leadership, athletics, and social/emotional growth, helping them to become good citizens long after they graduate.
~ Susan Sojka, Principal



It's hard to believe that the 2016 – 2017 school year has come to a close and we'll soon be starting the 2017 – 2018 session. For the Trust, one of the highlights of the school year is the awarding of scholarships to members of the senior class and alumni. This year, the Gilbert Trust awarded approximately $140,000 in scholarships. Our ability to do this is due to the generosity of our alumni and their family and friends who provide donations to establish our scholarships. We are grateful and appreciate their continued support! ***~ Thomas Botticelli, President, The W.L. Gilbert Trust***



THIS ISSUE:

School Views 2

New Principal: Susan Sojka 4

Teacher of the Year 5

Adam Atkins 6

Scott Minnerly 7

TGS Golf 8

International Program News Roundup ... 10

Alumuni News: Jake Kulinski 12

Alumuni News: Alice Bonhotel Lewis 14

Blue & Gold Alumni Celebration 15

Class Reunions 16

Class Notes 18
Where are they now?

Upcoming Reunions 19

Donor News: Richard Grigos 20

In Memoriam 21

Farewell and Best Wishes to Alan Strauss



We bid a fond farewell and wish Alan Strauss the best of luck in his new position as principal at Weymouth High School, Weymouth, Massachusetts.

Alan made some significant contributions during his time at Gilbert, including increasing rigor in the academic program, adding additional Advanced Placement classes, bringing the Nike store to the school, and substantially increasing the graduation and college-bound rates. Under his leadership TGS also earned two major national accolades: the *U.S. News & World Report* Silver Medal of Excellence and a place on *Newsweek's* "Beating the Odds" list as the Top School in Connecticut. His efforts did not go unrecognized, and Alan was named Connecticut Principal of the Year for 2016.

We thank you for all you have done, Alan, and know you will continue to succeed! Best wishes to you and stay in touch!

School Views!



Scholarship Night *The W. L. Gilbert Trust awarded approximately $140,000 to our deserving seniors and graduates to help further their educational dreams! June 12, 2017*



Peace Poster Prize Winners *All of the winners in the age 15 – 18 division of the Winsted Area Peace Action 7th annual Peace Poster Project were from The Gilbert School! The awards ceremony took place on June 14, 2017 in the NWCCC Library. Annalicia Fischer (3rd Place), Joy Lim (Honorable Mention), Rachel He (1st Place), Simon Jia (2nd Place)*



Lydia Bird *Congratulations to Lydia Bird for winning 2nd place in the Senior Individual Exhibit at the Torrington Regional History Day Contest! Lydia has also advanced to the State Competition!*



Student Volunteer Breakfast *Members of the W. L. Gilbert Trust serve breakfast to student volunteers, thanking them for their outstanding service to the community. May 19, 2017*



World Language Honor Society – Spanish *Congratulations to the new inductees into the Spanish National Honor Society. Tim O'Meara, Gus Pac, Aislinn Jamieson, Justin Bourgoin, Krystal Bagnaschi, Spanish Teacher Yarel Marshall.*



World Language Honor Society – Latin *Congratulations to the new inductees into the Latin National Honor Society. Bajram Gutic, Molly Jackson, Latin Teacher Sarah Frechette, Penelope Rein, Alex Smith.*



The Hive *Students painted an amazing new "Hive" mural at the entrance to the second floor. Brian Louis, Sean Cheever, Kevin Pang, Tony Liu, Tyler Duplin, Gary Wu, Emonee Dortch, Jessica Sherrod.*



Retiring Teachers *At a faculty luncheon given by The W. L. Gilbert Trust, our retiring teachers were honored. Best wishes to Karen Fredsall, Don Goetz, and Joe Dombrowski. You will be missed!*



Laurel Parade Award *The Gilbert School Yellowjacket Marching Band was awarded Best Walking Group in the 2017 Laurel Parade on June 11, 2017.*



Annual Career Fair *The Annual Career Fair was held on June 1, 2017. Open to both high school and middle school students, many companies throughout Northwestern Connecticut, as well as the Army and the Marines, participated to speak with students about potential career choices.*



Founder's Day *Senior, Lindsey Winn, plays taps at the Founder's Day assembly, May 19, 2017.*



American Mural Project *Students took part in a special project with artist Ellen Griesdieck of The American Mural Project. Ms. Griesdieck worked with the Gilbert art department to help students create tiles that will be used in the 3-D mural that is being created to honor America's work force.*



TGS Nike Store *At the 2017 Blue and Gold Reunion, TGS Nike Store student volunteers were there to offer Gilbert apparel for sale to our golden graduates. Michael Ma, Business Teacher and TGS Nike Store Supervisor Valeire Poirier, Tracy Yao, and Waleed Ansari.*

Sue Sojka: A+ Administrator
Appointed New Principal of Gilbert

Former TGS Associate Principal and new school Principal Sue Sojka, was honored when Deb Lewis, Director of Curriculum, told her she had nominated her for a New England League of Middle Schools A+ Administrator's Award. The award is given to administrators who "value, understand, and support effective middle level education that promotes learning for young adolescents."

"I appreciated the nomination so much," says Sue. "When I got the letter stating I had won, I was very humbled to be recognized for my work." Sue received her award at a special ceremony at the NELMS conference in Providence, Rhode Island, at the end of March. "I was very proud to be representing Gilbert at the biggest middle school conference in New England," Sue said.

More recently, another honor has been bestowed upon Sue as she has been named Gilbert's new Principal, replacing Alan Strauss, who submitted his resignation on June 26th. "I feel grateful and excited," says Sue. "I appreciate the support that the Gilbert School Board, the W.L. Gilbert Trust, and Head of School/Superintendent Dr. Tony Serio have given me, and the confidence and trust they have placed in me."

Sue's background and experience make her well equipped to carry out the responsibilities of her new role. She earned her bachelor's degree from the University of Hartford in Education, a Master's Degree from the University of Saint Joseph in Counseling, and a Sixth-year Educational Leadership/School Counseling degree from Central Connecticut State University. Before arriving at TGS, she was at Granby Memorial Middle School, where she served as a teacher and school counselor before getting into administration. "My experiences as a teacher, school counselor, and administrator give me the perspective to see the academic side as well as the social and emotional elements, and look at all angles of a situation to find a solution," Sue says. "It's helped me to be a better administrator, communicate with parents and teachers, and nurture students through their journey with respect."



"I am ready to take this step and to be able to help guide this new 'global' approach. It feels right, and I'm excited to keep moving forward!"

Sue is adept at transitions. She started her career at Gilbert in the 2011 – 2012 school year when the 7th and 8th grade came on campus, and was hired to help start the middle school program. When Dr. Cressy was superintendent, Dan Hatch was principal, and Joe Dombrowki was associate principal, Sue was appointed assistant principal. A few years later she was appointed associate principal, focusing on the middle school as well as 9th grade.

And now TGS is in the midst of a new transition. Sue is in the position to help the school navigate it and has the vision to help make it successful. "During this time of reorganization, the school is not removing the position of associate principal—it is in moratorium," says Sue. "As the new principal of 7 – 12, there will be consistency. I am ready to take this step and be a help to guide this new 'global' approach. It feels right, and I'm excited to keep moving forward!"

Sue believes that TGS has a strong and dedicated administrative team under the guidance and direction of Dr. Serio. "Julie McDougal, Director of Student Services, Deb Lewis, Director of Curriculum, and Maura Hurley, Dean of Students, are wonderful and talented and they are very supportive," Sue says. "Along with our strong administrators, we have enthusiastic and committed teachers, a devoted and hard-working staff, and involved parents and students – we couldn't ask for a better team."

There is another noteworthy aspect to Sue being appointed TGS principal. "After 122 years, there is a woman filling that office at the school," she says. "Being the first woman principal is the icing on the cake! As a mother of two daughters and one son, I am setting an example for them as well as the whole student body. I think as a role model it's important to show that if you are kind, work hard, and treat people well, good things will happen. It shows that doors can and will open."

Sue is grateful to be playing an integral role in the next phase of Gilbert's legacy of greatness. "There is so much history here," she says. I am excited to continue it, to participate in another transition, to be a part of its evolution."

Teacher of the Year ★ Maura Hurley

English teacher Maura Hurley was surprised and deeply moved to be named TGS 2017 Teacher of the Year. Surrounded by family, students, fellow teachers, and TGS administration, she was shocked to hear herself called up to the podium for the award. "I'm not one to cry, and tears were coming to my eyes," she said. "After the ceremony, one of my students said to me, 'You never show emotion! It choked me up to see you choked up!'"

A native of Westfield, Massachusetts, Maura has taught at The Gilbert School for the past 14 years. She earned her BA in English from Hartwick College in Oneonta, New York. But she did not start out on a teaching career path. "My first job was working at Mass Mutual on the mutual fund trading floor," Maura explains. "It was easy but very unsatisfying."

Maura was encouraged to leave the corporate world and get into teaching by Dr. Martha Owens, who was her education professor at Hartwick. It was the right move for Maura, who got her first teaching job at St. Mary's Parish School in Westfield—a school she had attended growing up—followed by a teaching position at Southwick-Tolland Regional High School in Southwick, Massachusetts. Maura found her calling, saying, "I haven't wanted to do anything other than be in education since I started teaching."



Maura was introduced to Gilbert through a contact who is now a colleague at TGS. "I was interviewed for the position by Scott Macomber, who was the English department chair, history teacher Gerry Hicks, and then-superintendent Dr. Robert Gazda," she says. She has always felt right at home at Gilbert, from the beginning. "Our school is similar to St. Mary's, but larger so it's big enough for diversity but small enough for real connectiveness," she says. "There truly is a 'Gilbert way,' a connection. We say that phrase, and it's real. Gilbert is community oriented and family oriented."

By way of example, Maura shares a story. "A student found some money on the stairs, and did not know who it belonged to," she says. "She went to Associate Principal Sue Sojka's office and turned it in as she figured it was a classmate's lunch money, and that the student would go hungry without it. And sure enough, another student went to Sue's office saying she'd lost her money. That's typical of our school spirit. Our kids are giving and caring."

Maura says "the Gilbert way" is embodied by her colleagues, as well. "We all share and offer advice, techniques, and other tools to make the educational experience better for teachers and the students," she says. "We bounce ideas off each other. It's a strong and supportive environment."

Maura is proud of her yearbook class, which produced a beautiful 128 page book that the students dedicated to Sandy O'Connor. "They ran the yearbook project as a business," she says. "They sell ads, plan, design, and execute the entire book over the course of the year. It's a long project with deadlines that are real. They take it very seriously and have pride of ownership of the finished product."

A Conversation of Essays, Volume 1 is the latest publication that Maura oversaw. "It's the first time my AP class has done a project like this," she says. "The book of student essays was composed based on their thoughts on the theme 'could we live without it.' Some of the topics written about include the earth, bees, the economy, government, racial issues, and gender." *A Conversation of Essays* was printed by Jody Pillar, TGS' library media specialist, and next year Maura's AP class will produce volume 2, which will focus on a new theme.

Maura is dedicated to being the best teacher she can be. She got her master's degree in school administration and is working on a second master's in special education, both from Westfield State University. "TGS is an inclusive school, so I'll use the degree every day," she says. "It will make me a better teacher, learning more best practices, from how the brain works to how disabilities impact everyone differently. It will be beneficial not just for kids in special ed but I can utilize the skills in every class, all the time."

When asked what she likes best about teaching, Maura says, "I like pushing students to go further than they think they can and finding what works to push themselves without your help. They feel supported but challenged to push through their blocks. There is that line, and you have to find where it is with every student."

At the ceremony, when he was about to announce that Maura was 2017 Teacher of the Year, Principal Alan Strauss read some comments made by her peers. "This person is everything that a Teacher of the Year should be…She goes above and beyond for everyone…Puts the interest of students first, and holds high expectations while giving them the tools they need to be successful." He then added his own thoughts. "Without question, this is well deserved!" Congratulations, Maura!

Sandra O'Connor Yearbook Dedication

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you for your kind words as you congratulated me on the yearbook dedication. To be recognized by the students was truly humbling. As a proud alumna of Gilbert (many moons ago), I thought my days of being in the Gilbert yearbook were finished. If I wasn't caught so off-guard and so microphone shy, I would have let you all know how fortunate I feel to be inspired everyday by such incredible, talented, hard-working, and caring people like yourselves. Everyone here, no matter what role they fill, comes together in their own unique way to make this such a remarkable place to come to everyday. In the private sector, it is about helping a business grow, in the education world it is helping the students grow and I can't think of anything more rewarding. Congratulations to Teacher of the Year, Mrs. Hurley....what a wonderful honor and proud moment. My thanks and my best to the Class of 2017. Have a great summer everyone!! ~ Sandy



Teacher and Choral Director
Adam Atkins: A Music Hero

Although students and staff at TGS already knew it, it's now officially on the record: music teacher and choral director Adam Atkins is a hero!

Adam received not one but two prestigious awards this past school year: a 2017 Connecticut Arts Hero Award and a Ronald McDonald House Charities Local Hero Award. In addition, he was also a finalist for a Connecticut Association of Schools Exemplary Educator Award.

Along with eight other recipients, Adam was honored with an Arts Hero Award on March 2, 2017. Held on "Connecticut Arts Day" the ceremony took place at the State Capital in Hartford to recognize dedicated individuals who are making significant contributions to the arts.



To celebrate his Arts Hero Award, the Laurel City Singers presented "A Sacred Spring" concert at First Church of Winsted on June 4th. A self-supporting, not-for-profit organization, Adam was a founding member of this town choir and has been its director for 19 years.

Adam was also honored to have received the Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) Local Hero Award for 2016 – 2017. He was one of 10 area teachers recognized for their hard work and commitment to shaping the futures of the region's children. "The selected teachers from Connecticut and Western Massachusetts have all exhibited tremendous dedication to their profession and outstanding efforts in servicing their schools and communities," the organization stated. To further recognize their contributions, RMHC also awarded a $1,000 grand to each teacher's school.

A graduate of TGS class of 1990, Adam studied music at University of Connecticut, Storrs, and came back to Gilbert in 1996 as a teacher. "I've been teaching here for 21 years now," he says. "I love our school, and cannot imagine being any place else." In addition, Adam sings professionally with two groups: CONCORA Connecticut Choral Artists, New Britain, and Voce Chamber Choir of Hartford.

In his position at Gilbert, Adam teaches Music, Music Theory, Music General, and Choir. He also is involved in the school's high school musicals, and for the last seven years has been music director for the pit orchestra. This past school year he served as conductor and vocal teacher for the songs and the soloists performing in the production of "Bye Bye Birdie." He also helps out with the middle school musical productions. "I love doing musicals," he says, "and will continue to do them until I'm kicked out!"

In addition, Adam is passionate about his work with the Gilbert concert choir and chamber choir. "The kids are very committed, and invest hours of their own time," he says. "I hope to expand the choirs next year. I'd love to see more singers."

This past school year, Adam was excited to have his concert choir perform a pop song, "Home," by Phillip Phillips. "The kids struggled because it was a different sound quality for them," he said. "Hearing it without instruments, the students did not think it was working and wanted to do the song as classical, not rock." Featured at the spring concert on May 16th, the choir performed with a band consisting of student Austin Hyatt on guitar, teacher Scott Minnerly on bass, and guidance counselor Gene Batan on percussion. "We had one rehearsal with the band," he says. "It was the evening of the performance, from 6:00 to 6:10, prior to the 7:00 pm show time. The song came alive for them, and the singers were able to access what I had been instructing. It was great to see that 'lightbulb' go off, and they did a phenomenal job!"

As a teacher, Adam loves that every day is different and that he has the opportunity to develop young talents. "I see kids struggling one day, and then knock it out of the ballpark the next," he says. "It's very gratifying to see the evolution of what the students can do. As an artist, my goal is to challenge the way that you perceive the world. I love to see students as they change their perspective and change the way they are able to listen deeply to music. It's a skill they will be able to use the rest of their lives."

Not every school is lucky enough to have a true "hero" on campus. So there's no doubt that students, teachers, and TGS administrators agree with Sue Sojka when she said, "We are fortunate to have such a dedicated and talented musician/teacher at The Gilbert School."

Scott Minnerly, Music Teacher and Band Director

Making Music, and Making it Relevant


Anhthy Pham, Drum Major

According to Scott Minnerly, TGS music teacher and band director for the middle and high school, "Band is the longest 'sports season' of the year. It has a very demanding, almost a double season." Happily, for the kids, it's a labor of love!

If a high school student is in band, he or she is in both the YellowJacket Marching Band and the symphonic band. "Between the two bands, a student will have performed over 20 pieces of music during the 2016 – 2017 school year," says Scott. "That's the equivalent of studying 20 books in English class. Our kids work really hard, and I'm very proud of them."



Gilbert also has a high school jazz ensemble that rehearses one night per week after school. Students audition to be in the ensemble, which plays all kinds of jazz, from standards to big band, and from Latin to funk, as well as rock, classic, and swing. "This year we also did 'Africa' by Toto, arranged as a jazz piece," says Scott. As part of the program, Gilbert brings in a guest artist to perform with the ensemble. "This year it was Jerrod Cattey on drum set," says Scott.

The middle school Junior Jacket Marching Band and concert band have a full schedule of performances as well, with parades and a concert in the spring. And this past season the middle school and high school students teamed up for a joint performance. "It was called 'Dinosaurs,' and included music students from 7th to 12th grade," Scott says. "Everyone was on stage all at once, which was very unique and exciting."

The Gilbert School has the only competitive marching band in the northwest corner of Connecticut. Next year, the band is participating in three competitions, which require months of preparation. "Gilbert is typically competitive with the top groups," says Scott. "That's great, and something to be proud of. But the focus is not on winning or what place we come in. There is no such thing as failure, it's about the experience and having the opportunity to showcase what we do."

A highlight of the year was when nearly 60 high school and middle school band and choir students hopped on a bus for a field trip to see *Wicked* on Broadway. "The kids were very impressed," says Scott. "Many of them did not realize that Broadway was not just one theatre but a section in Manhattan with multiple theatres. They were blown away! It was great to expose them to that."

There are exciting developments on the horizon for the TGS music department in 2017 – 2018. The new Guitar Class will start in September and run through December. Then in January, students can sign up for Beginner Rock/Pop Ensemble, where they will study, learn, and perform rock and pop music, featuring guitar, bass, lead vocal, drum, and keyboard. "These will be very relevant courses that should attract more students to participate in our program," says Scott. "They are viable ways of reaching kids and teaching music. I hope to hold a new spring concert, like a 'battle of the bands' kind of event."

Scott loves exposing students to all kinds of music. "Music is music," he says. "I teach them that Beethoven is relevant—though music reflects the time period, subject matter does not change. Composers write about love, hearts getting broken, doing someone wrong and trying to make it up. It's about the human experience. This makes all music relevant, and helps students appreciate it."

A Banner Year for TGS Golf Team





It was a big year for the YellowJacket golf team, who pulled together to win the school's first Berkshire League golf championship since 1995. "The boys talked all year about raising the championship banner in the gym," says Head Coach Bob Sparks, TGS class of '83, who's been coaching the team for the past two years, "They love the game and enjoy playing golf together. They make a great team because they really gel."

Patrick Cooke, TGS Athletic Director and physical education teacher, agrees that a team's chemistry is a huge factor in its success. "Talent has a lot to do with it—you have to have athletes who can play," he says, "but these guys also love being out there, and love being around each other."

Patrick also gives credit to the coaches for nurturing the team's talent. "Bob Sparks is a PGA pro at Harwinton's Fairview Farm Golf Course, and I've known him for years," he says. "Coach Mary Ellen Vaccari also has an extensive background in coaching and golf. The two together are a great combination."

Gilbert has had some competitive golfers and teams in the past, but during the past five or six years the school has not been as competitive. Once again, TGS is enjoying an upswing.

In order to attract the young athletes, Patrick and Bob brought "SNAG Golf" to phys ed classes before the start of 2016 season. SNAG—which stands for "Starting New at Golf"—is the world's leading entry-level golf introductory program designed to increase interest and participation in the sport. "The initiative worked," says Patrick. "It was great to see new talent come through the door."

The golf program ended with eight dedicated golfers. "They pulled together for an incredible season," says Patrick. "The boys finished in a tie for 5th place overall in the state for Division IV. Just to have one team member in the All-Stars is great. Gilbert has three of seven, which is topnotch!"

Golf Scrapbook

The Team's Athletes Are:

- **Dylan Keith,** a freshman who started playing golf when he was 10 years old, and is a Berkshire League Golf All-Star.
- **Jake Royer,** a senior transfer student in his first year at Gilbert, who started golfing when he was 12.
- **Conor Bailey,** a sophomore and Berkshire League Golf All-Star who has been golfing with his father and grandfather since he was a toddler. Patrick Cooke says, "Conor Bailey carded an 83 (+12) which was good for 20th overall in the state."
- **Hillson Liu,** a sophomore who's played golf since he was in primary school, has earned his place on the Berkshire League Golf All-Stars.
- **Jeremy Huber,** a junior, who switched to golf from baseball.
- **Nick Gao,** a junior who joined the TGS golf team last year.
- **Colin Dou,** a sophomore, who has been golfing for two years and joined the team last year.
- **Cameron Merritt,** a freshman. *(Missing from photo on left.)*









The boys were excited to compete in the Berkshire League All-Star Tournament. "This is the greatest team I've ever been with," says Bob. "They hoped to go undefeated, but you learn as much from losing a match as you do from winning." Patrick agrees. "Overall success is reflective in so many ways, not just wins and titles," he says.

"The team had a great season and a strong finish. We couldn't be prouder of them."

Besides nurturing their athletic ability, the golf program has also instilled a sense of focus and self-awareness. "You can't get too high or too low," says Dylan Keith. "You can't get too excited after a birdie and can't get too mad after a bogey. You gotta be chill."

"You have to get in rhythm, and can't be emotional," explains Conor Bailey. "You need to be steady and linear. You need to 'see' the play in your mind's eye, to visualize the outcome you want."

The team appreciates the focus they get from the "affirmation" cards handed out before matches by Coach Vaccari. They're told to pick the card that "speaks" to them, read it out loud, and say what it means to them. "The card you pick just always seems like the right message for you," says Hillson Liu. Taking one out of his backpack, it read "We know nothing of tomorrow. Our business is to be good and happy today."

With the dedication to the game and spirit they show day by day, the YellowJacket golf team is destined for continued success.



The Terry Tirrell Open

The "Gilbert Open" as it was originally called, started in 1973 as a golf tournament at Green Woods Country Club for a little bit of end of the year fun and enjoyment. Upon the passing of Terry Tirrell, beloved math teacher and graduate of the Class of '73, the tournament was renamed "The Terry Tirrell Open". A large trophy inscribed with over 76 winner's names is housed in the athletics department. Each year Gilbert faculty and their friends and family members vie for a spot on that trophy and a place in Gilbert history. The proceeds from each tournament are donated to the Terrence Hastings Tirrell Memorial Scholarship Fund.

THE W.L. GILBERT TRUST

International Program: *News Roundup*



The last semester of the 2016 – 2017 school year at TGS has been a rigorous and fun whirlwind for the International Program students and staff. It was a year to celebrate, with 17 graduates heading for such impressive colleges and universities as: American University; Bentley University; Brandeis University; University of Colorado Boulder; Gettysburg College; Michigan State University; Pace University; Penn State; Purdue University; Stony Brook University; University of Connecticut; University of Hartford; University of Pittsburg; and Virginia Tech. The class of '17 also celebrated the graduation of the first international students who were at TGS for all four years of high school. They are Casper Jiang, Michael Shu, Ricky Wang, Jim Wang, and Taurus Wu.



Roy Huang, Michael Shu, Abel Lu, Oliver Sun



Cristina Rutherford, Residential Coordinator, Lily Li, Michelle Cundiff, Assistant Director of Student Life

Here are some highlights from second semester.

Students had a great weekend getaway at Ski Butternut in Great Barrington, Massachusetts. Those who had never skied before took beginner lessons and were helped on the slopes by more experienced students—a great example of team work on the mountain!

It was an exciting time on **Chinese Heritage Night at Barclays Center watching the Brooklyn Nets play**—even though NBA Asian star Jeremy Lin was injured prior to the game and did not compete. Team spirit ran high as the kids received hats that read "Brooklyn Nets" in Chinese, and by far one of the greatest thrills was seeing themselves projected on the Jumbotron!

During spring break, cars, trains, and subways shuttled students to a favorite destination: **China Town in Flushing, New York!**

On March 3rd, 21 students shared their talents of **singing, dancing, and poetry reading** with a standing room crowd in the library at the first-ever **Tea House Talent night!**

Students from the English as a Second Language (ESL) program took a **field trip to the American Museum of Tort Law** on May 19th—especially noteworthy because it was **developed by TGS alumnus Ralph Nader.**

Our students marched in the 81st Annual Rotary Pet Parade on May 20th. This is the oldest and longest-running parade of this type in the United States.

Six exemplary students were honored at a special dinner at Mario's Tuscany Grill on June 15th, along with their host families and residential coordinators. The students received an etched crystal plaque presented by Dr. Serio. These student leaders had to meet the scholastic and attendance requirements for all four quarters.

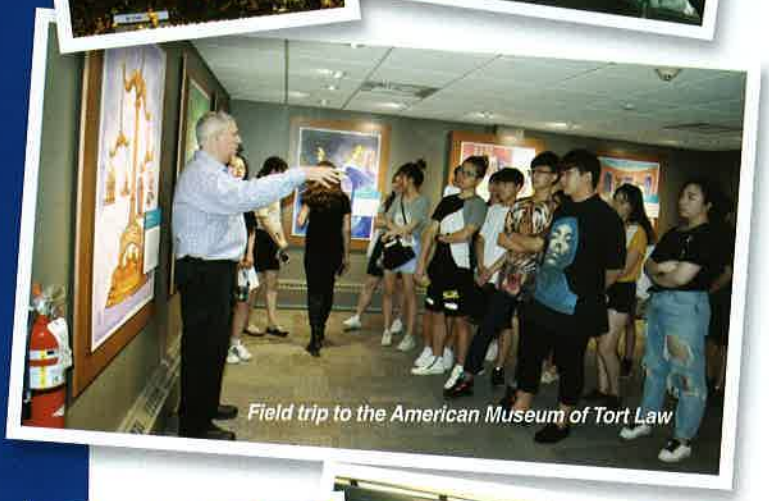
On June 22nd, the Trust threw a **graduation party in the TGS library for seniors, their parents, and other family members.** At the send-off celebration each student received a t-shirt from the college or university he or she will be attending in the fall.

The **final end-of-year celebration, called "Taco'bout a Party,"** took place on Sunday, June 18th, at Michelle Cundiff's dorm home. From playing tug-of-war to striking a pose in the photo booth, **everyone had a great time during the Mexican-themed festivities!** ***Olé!***

Come September, the International Program will have 24 new students, including an 11th grade girl from Como, Italy.




NBA Game


Field trip to the American Museum of Tort Law




Trust graduation party for international students


"Taco'Bout a Party"


Skiing at Butternut



Jake Kulinski: At the Top of His Game

In the international world of video gaming, most know Jack Kulinski, TGS Class of 2006, as "SolidJake." That's the handle he uses as a professional eSports commentator, content creator, and event producer—a career that has taken him to the far reaches of the globe and into the homes of thousands of viewers.

Jake is the second oldest of four brothers, who all attended TGS. He loved his days at Gilbert, and found a lot of support and encouragement there to explore the various things he was interested in. "From sports to band to art, the options were there," he says. "I had the opportunity to do what I wanted to do and follow my interests. I was on the varsity football team and played percussion in the band. I was a big nerd—and proud of it!"

One of his fond TGS memories was a trip to Florida with the YellowJacket Marching Band during his sophomore year. "We got to perform at Disney World, and it was amazing!" he says. "My parents came too, and it was the best family vacation."

Jake entered the world of gaming during his senior year at Gilbert—a remarkable turn of events that has played a big role in his life. "It was great because most of my high school friends were in the senior class ahead of me," he says. "When they graduated and I entered my senior year, it was difficult. I felt kind of lost until I found the video game culture. That changed everything."

Because of his new-found passion for gaming, Jake approached then TGS Principal Hatch to propose holding a video tournament on the school campus. "I had my pitch all ready, and was super nervous," he said. "But right away Principal Hatch said he thought it sounded like a great after-school activity and gave me his approval. The school was always willing to listen and give you a chance. So I organized it and hosted it in the auditorium. It went really well and a lot of kids turned out for it."

Jake walked away from his event a winner. Afterward, his classmate Greg Burke introduced him to Super Smash Bros., a big gamer website. "Two weeks later I ended up on location at a tournament, which was an hour away," he says. "I got destroyed! They crushed me! It was a real eye-opener."

By now gaming was in Jake's blood and he continued to pursue it, creating his first public Super Smash Brothers tournament in Torrington when he was 18 years old. "I worked on it with two of my friends, partnering with a guy who owned a video game center," he says. "We called it Viva La Smashclysm. It was my first real-time running an event and 200 people showed up from all over the country—at least 20 states, including California. It was awesome."

Jake regularly attended gaming events, playing with other enthusiastic friends who were scattered around New England. "My best friend and partner, who I met playing

the game, lived in Spencer, Massachussetts, which was almost two-and-a-half hours away. We were committed to gaming, and got together regularly."

While he was a good student, Jake decided not to go to college right after high school. "I wanted to run video game tournaments," he said. "My parents were like, 'are you sure this is a good idea?' but they were super supportive. There's pressure on kids to head to college immediately, but it worked out in my favor to wait a few years."

While there is big money in the world of professional gaming, initially that is not the case. "I worked at the local Big Y for six years before I was able to make a real go of it," Jake says. "Fortunately, some of my Super Smash Brothers teammates worked in the eSports industry, so I was able to network pretty easily."



Jack Kulinski, Class of 2006

Jake went to college when he was 21, attending the Art Institute of New York. "I had taken the time to mature and really think about what I wanted to do, what I wanted to experience," he says. "I was ready to commit to my studies, and got honors every quarter."

Another happy turn of events took place when Jake attended ConnectiCon, a massively popular annual convention in Hartford that celebrates everything pop culture—including eSports. "It's where I met my wife, Allison," he says. "I was 18, and we started dating when I was 20. She is the one who convinced me to travel outside my 'bubble' and expand my horizons, so I organized leagues from Maine to Virginia. I ended up creating five events a year that were meaningful to me and very popular."

Jake then plunged full time into Major League Gaming (MLG)—the biggest name in the eSports world. He initially worked behind the scenes, in production and organizing events, and then jumped into eSports reporting. "They invited me in on their daily news show "The eSports Report" to talk about gaming," says Jake. "I liked being on air, and so I went to the next level and got into commentating. I really enjoyed being an eSports caster."

Jake's eSports career has taken him virtually all over the country and all over the world. "I've travelled a lot, from LA to Seattle, to Austin and New York City," he says. "I've also been as far away as Prague in the Czech Republic and to Katowice, Poland."

According to the MyGaming website there are now 1.8 billion gamers worldwide, and eSports Big Biz claims the global audience in 2015 was 226 million and that the industry generated $325 million of revenue. Jake has made quite a name for himself in the profession. He's worked at nearly every major Heroes of the Storm event in the western world, was involved with the production of Heroes of the Dorm, and transitioned to commentary for the America's Championship, Europe Championship, and World Championship in 2015.

Jake and Allison lived in Manhattan for a while before coming back to Connecticut. "It was a crazy life! I am glad I did it and now it's over and we're back home," he says. Since he's settled in, Jake took another leap of faith and struck out on his own, establishing Arcane8. "Arcane8 is a professional broadcast studio that specializes in executing online broadcasts and competitions for Blizzard Entertainment's Heroes of the Storm. The company also worked alongside Blizzard Entertainment to produce the Heroes Global Championship Open Division 2017. It's great having a career in an industry I love, doing my own thing!"

Arcane8 also launched and produced "Blood Lust," its first big online event, in September 2016. "It featured the best of the best top players in North America," says Jake. "We raised $11,336 through kickstarter, as prize incentive. It was a very relaxed, chill event and a great success."

For the past two years, Jake has been a lead anchor at BlizzCon, an annual video game convention held by Blizzard Entertainment at the Anaheim Convention Center in Anaheim, California. "I will be announcing at BlizzCon again this year, in November," says Jake. "I get to work in a big hall that holds 10,000 people and attracts more than 100,000 viewers. It's a huge thrill, and the coolest thing ever!"

Earlier this year Jake was invited back to Gilbert to organize and host a gaming event in the computer lab for the international students. It was the first time he had been back on campus since his graduation. "I was contacted by Zachary Griffin, who was my best friend at school and is now one of the international program's house parents," says Jake. "There may be another eSports event in the future for the entire student body. I'd really enjoy doing that!"

Jake believes that TGS was a pivotal force in his life. "If Principal Hatch hadn't allowed me to run my first video event, I never would have found out about Super Smash Bros., and never would have gotten involved with eSports. And so I never would have gone to ConnnectiCon and never would have met my wife," says Jake. "Gilbert made it all happen, made it all possible."

If you love gaming, and want to catch Jake, he currently hosts TownHall Heroes and TownHall Overwatch on his own channel SolidJakeGG. You can follow him on Twitter and catch him on YouTube and Twitch.TV.

Alice Bonhotel Lewis

TGS' Most Senior Alumnus is an Inspiration

Alice Bonhotel Lewis has the distinction of being Gilbert's oldest alumnus, and is one of the school's biggest fans. A graduate of the Class of 1930, she recalls her Gilbert days with great love and affection, and never misses a Blue & Gold Reunion celebration.

Alice has lived in the same lovely garden apartment since 1981, where her son, Gary, has been her next-door neighbor for the past 30 years. Her cozy home is filled with special mementos and photos of family and friends. And among her precious possessions are three Gilbert School report cards she keeps in her desk, from 1927 – 1928, 1928 – 1929, and 1929 – 1930.



Alice and her two younger sisters went to live at the W. L. Gilbert Home for Children after her mother died, and their older brother would come to visit them every Sunday. Alice also went to the home's summer camp. The first year, she went for a few weeks, and then in the following years she would stay for the entire month of August, sleeping in a tent and enjoying nature and the camaraderie of other campers. "I learned to swim, and we played lots of games," she said. "It was so much fun!"

Alice lived at the W.L. Gilbert Home for Children from 1925 until she graduated from TGS. "Eugene Van Why was the home's superintendent, and there were a lot of kids," she said. "It was a great time, and I loved being there. I was sad when it ended." After leaving, Alice stayed involved with the home. And every year, she and her best friend, Freada DeMars, would host Christmas parties for the children at Freada's house on Coe Street.

A few years after Alice graduated, Freada was working at Desi's Drug Store in Winsted, next to *The Winsted Evening Citizen*—which was the local paper for close to 100 years, until it merged with *The Torrington Register* in 1982. The newspaper foreman asked Freada if she knew anyone who wanted to be trained on the linotype machine, and Alice landed the job. She would type the lines of the new stories on the big machine as the letters dropped down. They were then slid over to form words and sentences. "I learned typing at The Gilbert School, and was good at spelling," explains Alice. After advances in technology, the paper and Alice made the transition to offset printing.

In 1933, when she was 21, Alice married George E. Lewis. She continued to work at the paper fulltime until 1943, when Gary was born, and then worked part-time until he started school. Then the busy working mom stepped up her schedule and was back on the job five days a week, Monday through Friday, and half a day on Saturday. Gary recalls, "With mom working at the paper, we got to hear all the news first!"

Gary was also employed by *The Winsted Evening Citizen* after he was released from the Air Force. He arrived back home on a Saturday and on Monday morning went to work in the paper's composing room. Like mother, like son!

Alice will be 106 in November, and bears a striking resemblance to England's Queen Elizabeth II! She has a large, loving family that includes three grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, and two great-great-grandchildren. Alice is also like a "magnet" for the little ones in her apartment complex who come by to visit her on a regular basis. One of her neighbors, Gilbert alumna Joy Navin Calhoun, class of 1965, says, "If someone is looking for their son or daughter, there's a good chance they're with Alice!"

Alice stays busy and embraces new experiences. She plays bingo every Monday, has enjoyed her son Gary's "Karaoke Junkies" events, and—when she was only 95 years old—Alice rode around as a passenger in a motorcycle sidecar. Gary said, "She was smiling nonstop for the next three days!"

Alice had a wonderful time at the May 2017 Blue & Gold Reunion. And—just like Queen Elizabeth II—was "holding court" as everyone came over to pay homage to the lovely grande dame of Gilbert!

THE SIXTEENTH ANNUAL

BLUE & GOLD *Reunion*

A *Festive* Celebration

Inclement weather did not dampen spirits at the 16th Annual Blue & Gold Reunion one bit! Held on an unseasonably cool, rainy evening, the May 5th celebration was attended by more than 190 umbrella-wielding TGS alumni and their spouses, who filled the cheerfully-decorated cafeteria to celebrate each other and the school.







For the past 16 years, the W. L. Gilbert Trust and The Gilbert School have hosted the event to honor the important role alumni have played in the illustrious history of Gilbert, and how they embody the spirit and vision of founder William L. Gilbert. The class of the hour graduated in 1967, and received special recognition for reaching the 50-year mark, joining former classmates who had graduated earlier.

A familiar face at Gilbert, Mr. Craig Schroeder served as the emcee of the evening. He commented that he started out at TGS as a chemistry teacher in 1972, and evolved into a trustee and doing community relations. He said, "I taught my first class at Gilbert 48 years ago. In two years I will be seeing my first students here at the Blue & Gold Reunion!"

Next, Mr. Thomas J. Botticelli, President of the W.L. Gilbert Trust, welcomed guests on behalf of the Trust and commended the alumni for keeping the traditions of The Gilbert School alive. He also recognized the trustees in attendance, announced Elaine A. Fortuna's appointment as emeritus trustee, and congratulated Associate Principal Susan Sojka for being named New England Middle School Principal of the Year.

TGS Superintendent/Head of School Dr. Anthony Serio addressed the crowd, commenting on how wonderful it was to see a roomful of friendly faces. After congratulating the alumni, Dr. Serio commended the hardworking staff and administrative team for their sterling efforts, and thanked the students and their families for making TGS strong. "I will continue to persevere on behalf of the school," he promised. "Leave the battles to me. Your job is nurturing the kids in the classroom."

Fifteen people from the class of 1967 were welcomed to the "50 year+ club" by Mr. Steven A. Sedlack, Chairman of The W.L. Gilbert School Corporation, member of the Trust, and graduate of TGS class of 1960. "Gilbert is a special school, and good memories of the things that happened here are great to share with one another," he said. Steven then called each member of the class of 1967 up to the podium one by one, conferring on them an official alumni pin and certificate. The recipients were: Donna (Bongiovanni) Alfano, Diana (Radocchio) Beebe, Gail (Fritz) Blackwood, Tom Bordonaro, Linda (Olszanski) Calkins, Mary Lou Cassotto Sandra (Brentnall) Cummiskey, Margaret (Santoro) Mobilia, Laurie (Winn) Nash, Judy (Giannatasio) Perotti, A. Kate Robertson, Dale (Benedict) Salmonsen, Lynn Pedersen Smith, Linda (Bascetta) Sorrentino, and Lorainne (Thibault) Tatar.

A special shout-out was also given to Mrs. Alice Bonhotel Lewis, TGS class of 1930. At 105, she is the most senior TGS alumnus and happily attends the Blue & Gold Reunion annually with her son, Gary.

Mr. Kenneth Healy, Director of Development of The W.L. Gilbert Trust, also addressed the crowd. "What a fabulous turnout, thank you for braving the elements," he said. After thanking Lynn Metcalf and her staff in the cafeteria, alumni associate Sandi Lynn Scherer, and the student volunteers for all their efforts in making the evening a success, Ken invited the alumni to join the Gilbert Legacy Society to make a planned giving arrangement. He announced, "We have two inaugural members who will be remembering The Gilbert School by leaving a gift—Mr. Tom

Botticelli and Mr. Steven Sedlack. We invite you to join them and receive your membership pin in The Gilbert Legacy Society."

The tables were set beautifully, balloons and flowers decorated the cafeteria, and everyone commented on how delicious the food was. For the first time, honor society and student council members volunteered to serve and clean up—making it a great opportunity for the youngsters to meet and mingle with alumni.

Entertainment was provided by the musical duo "Sapphire," featuring Tommy D and Gilbert's own Debra LaRoche, Dean of Admissions for TGS' International Program. The talented pair are renowned throughout the state, having performed together for 25 years from Foxwoods Atrium Lounge to The Gilbert School. At the reunion, they regaled attendees with a mixed medley of hit songs, from "At Last" to "The Way You Look Tonight" to "Sweet Caroline".

All in all, the 16th Annual Blue & Gold Reunion celebration provided a warm and wonderful opportunity for alumni to reminisce and catch up. It's a great tradition that will carry on in the future.





Reunion Celebration, Class of 1951

The Class of 1951 enjoyed a reunion celebration with dinner in May at Crystal Peak in Winsted.

Front to Back, Left to Right: *Alice (Ferris) Fixer, Jane (Burwell) Gustafson, Jean Hayes, Mary Ann (Belladella) Holmes, Helen (Mellas) Fulop, George Centrella, Cathy (Gangi) Sommaruga, Dorothy (Thompson) Centrella, Nancy (MacCallum) Hudon, Andrew Grinvalsky, Ramona Cook, Dianne Silverio, F. Robert Cook, Joseph Bender, Fred Silverio, Genevieve (Nichols) Hill, Evelyn (Gaber) Markowitz, Gretel (Barreuther) Eddy, LaVerne (Dietlin) Horne, John Bushnell*

55th Reunion, Classes of 1961 & 1962

The Classes of 1961 and 1962 held a combined 55th reunion in May at Indian Meadow Estates, formerly the Knights of Columbus Hall in Winsted. The classmates and their guests enjoyed a social hour with appetizers, a buffet dinner, a short program, and dancing.



Right to left: *Jackie Dutil Weare, Martha Barrett Sevigny, Connie Consiglio Fogarty, Janice Lossin Bacon, Kathy Filli LaPlante, Douglas Ryan, Bunny Giannatasio Dziedzic, Joan Peetz Corkery, Bob Ellsworth, Paula Stewart Guildford, Norman Newfield, Marjorie Simmons, Ivan Marquis, Donna Stevens Piretti, Lorraine Rosati Meehan, James Sterpka, Eugene Joyner, Louis Roy, Carol Dewey Kniep, Midge Lefebvre Dayton, Steve Vaill, Holly Connole Clapps*



Right to left: *Skip (Arnold) Travaglin, Allan Risedorf, Bill Dillon, Charles Ferrante, Marianne Lemelin Sobol, Gail Hoxie, Gordon Dayton, Bob McKie, Susan Dodds-Ackley, Barbara Sesko, Jo-Ann Showl, Ellen Barrett Cunha, Norman Chamberlin, Ginny Bazzano Rogala, Jim DiVita, Sandy Cappellina, Steve Meehan, Janice Gabelmann Southworth, Kathy Alexander Willis – Missing from photo Dave Fancher and Jeanne Davis Kent*

50th Reunion, Class of 1965

The Class of 1965 celebrated their 50th Class Reunion with the Class of 1964 on September 26, 2015 at the Cornucopia Banquet Hall in Torrington, Connecticut. Some members came for the first time, others have been coming since we started our reunions. Members of the Reunion Committee included Sal Correnti, Paulette (Pare) Izumi, Mary (Colavecchio) Finn, and Barb Hawley. Everyone enjoyed themselves visiting and catching up on the past 50 years



First row: *Neil Roberts, Mary (Colavecchio) Finn, Al Woodworth, Sharon (Provencher) Zuzgo, Rich Gregoire, Grace "Cookie" Fracasso, Paula Ryan-Richard, Alan Gossett.* **Row 2:** *Cynthia (Johnson) St. John, Bob Forster, Barb Hawley.* **Row 3:** *Judy (Goodenough) McCloud, Sandy (Angus) Partelow, Shirley (Samuelsen) Pedersen, Paul Amenta.* **Row 4:** *Nancy (Boyle) Chamberlin, Linda Groppo, Jeanne (Bjorbekk) Hoidalen, Loreen (DiGiovanni) Sellitto, Joy (Navin) Calhoun.* **Row 4:** *Nancy (Clark) Geller, Edith (Salling) Sturm, Angelina "Teta" DiMartino, Larry Marolda.* **Row 5:** *Alfred Towle, Sal Correnti, David Leshay, Paulette (Pare) Izumi, Adele (Groppo) Kellogg, Lynne (Sedlak) Vincunas, Lorraine (Horton) Lewandowski, Anthony "Ant" Nero, Fran "Gus" Griswold, Jack Doherty, Tom Wheeler, Charlie Fritz, Bob Young.*

50th Reunion, Class of 1966

The Class of 1966 held their 50th Class Reunion at the Green Woods Country Club in Torrington. The classmates and their guests enjoyed a wonderful evening with delicious food and music by Rick Hall.



First row: *David Bettigole, Gary Fradette* **Second row:** *Neil Walsh, George Felgate, Doug Werner* **Third row:** *Robert Cote, Peter Fracasso, Mary Ann (Duyser) Kalwat, Ann (Battistoni) Centrella, Liza (Connole) Turbarg, Jeanne (Poole) DiVita, Judy Lemelin, Susan (Connole) Gaignat, Cheryl (Fasciano) Carriere, Bonnie (Failla) Richard, Margarite Chatfield, Donna (Bordonaro) Closson, Sylvia (LePage) Forster, Janice (Mazzochi) Howells* **Fourth row:** *Sheila Tartaglia, Maureen (Stevens) Butterworth, Kathleen (Pinter) Walsh, Martha (Bascetta) Picard, Frank Nanni, Jeff Leighton, Sandra (DiVita) Lemelin, Paul Vaccari, Marilyn (Carlson) Calkins, Betsy (McKie) MacDonald, Melissa (Houlihan) Zeller, Donna (Audia) Cyr, Tom Kelley, Marilyn (Swensen) Hawley, Judy (Jones) Mar, Craig Centrella* **Fifth row:** *Chris Seidor, Peter Winn, John Nero, Steve Passini, Charles Bunel, Robert Picard, Phil Prelli, Dick Pedersen, Peter Lovely, Joe Godenzi, John DiCara*

ClassNotes Where are they *now?*

1971

A dinner honoring **Vincent Ferrante** for all of his volunteer work was given at the Winsted Elks Lodge on May 20, 2017. Vinny has dedicated his time to a local boy scout troop, co-chaired the Elks Fishing Derby for over 30 years, installed flag poles at the Soldier's Monument and at other locations around Winsted, placed American flags along Main Street for many years, volunteered with the Antlers Youth Group, and has been a member of both the Elks and Lions clubs. We appreciate you, Vinny!

1972

Dennis Marolda and his band DenMar Jamz performed at The Gilbert Music Booster's second annual wine and beer tasting. The event was a rousing success! Money was raised for both the band and choir. You can reach Dennis and learn more about his band at www.dennismarolda.com.

1999

Kimberly Hamm has been hired as the Director of Development and Alumni Relations at Manor College in Jenkintown, PA. Before working at Manor College, Kimberly was the Associate Director of Development and Alumni Relations for Temple University's Fox School of Business, where she increased alumni engagement by 100 percent and lead a $2M annual fund effort on behalf of the Fox School of Business. Kimberly earned her B.A. from Drexel University and is pursuing an M.B.A. at Temple University.

2003



Ensign **Peter Hutchison,** son of James Hutchison of Norfolk and Joanna and Tom Berger of Torrington, graduated from Officer Candidate School at The Coast Guard Academy in New London, CT. A 2003 graduate of Gilbert, Ensign Hutchison enlisted in the Coast Guard and worked his way up to the rank of Petty Officer First Class before being selected for Officer Candidate School. He lives in Miami with his wife Christy, a Corporal working traffic homicide with the Florida Highway Patrol. Ensign Hutchison is currently stationed at United States Coast Guard Sector Key West, Florida.

2003

Peter Hugel writes to let us know that he was married to his wife Melissa (Traglia) Hugel in 2015 and they just welcomed their first child, a daughter, Ava Catherine Hugel on December 22, 2016. Best wishes to the Hugel family!

2004

Katie Serafini, an English teacher at TGS, married her long-time love Zach Wood on May 20, 2017. After an almost 10-year history, Katie and Zach finally tied the knot among family and friends, proving the Gilbert/Regional rivalry can result in the best love stories!



2009

Nick Battista is participating in the Pacific Crest Trail Thru Hike for Hike for Mental Health, an organization that provides grants that enable scientific research and funding for programs aimed at alleviating suffering from mental illness. 80% of their donations go to fund mental health programs and 20% to support preservation of wilderness trails. Nick says, "whether you are yourself a thru-hiker, an occasional day-hiker, or have never spent a night in the woods, I am sure that everyone at some point in their lives has experienced the transcendence delivered in a little sunshine and a breath of fresh air". Happy Trails Nick!



2012

Congratulations to **Justin Morhardt!** Morhardt, a catcher on the Bryan College Lions Baseball team, earned the title of 2017 AAC Player of the Year and All-Conference First Team honors. Following in the footsteps of his baseball family, Justin has been drafted in the 22nd round of the MLB draft by the Atlanta Braves.



2013

Isabella Panagakos was awarded a Bachelor of Arts degree in global studies during Salve Regina University's 67th commencement on May 21, 2017.

2014

Ian Wilson is completing his Music and Sound Production degree at the University of New Haven. Ian has been accepted for an internship at the prestigious Blackbird Studios in Nashville for Spring 2017.

2016

U.S. Airforce Airman **Austin Stoeke** graduated from basic military training at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, San Antonio, Texas. The airman completed an intensive, eight-week program that included training in military discipline and studies, Air Force core values, physical fitness, and basic warfare principles and skills. Airmen who complete basic training also earn four credits toward an Associate in Applied Science degree through the community College of the Air Force.

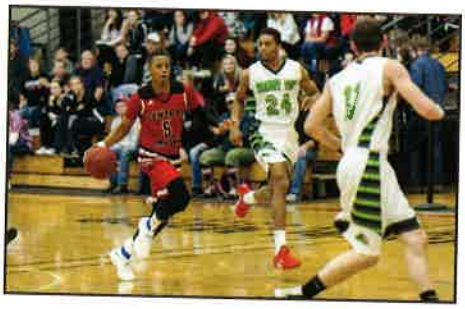
TGS Class 2013
Robert Skinner's Basketball Adventure "Down Under"

Robert Skinner, an All-State basketball selection while at Gilbert, and second-team junior college All-American at Central Maine Community College, will be taking his basketball skills Down Under. Skinner will be starting his professional basketball career in July with Australia's Darwin Basketball Association. This is an eight-team league whose season runs from July to December. Past players in the league have gone on to play in Australia's top-tier National Basketball League. Each DBA team is allowed two international players on its roster and Skinner will take a place on the Ansett team, which won the league championship last season. Besides playing in the senior league, Skinner anticipates coaching for one of the junior-level teams in the DBA.

It's a 41-hour trip from Connecticut to Darwin—which is the capital of Australia's Northern Territory—and named after naturalist Charles Darwin. Considered by some to be the gateway to the Outback, the region resembles the wild countryside of the movie "Crocodile Dundee." Since Robert has never been out of the United States, it should be a very exciting time for him, doing what he loves to do in an exotic foreign location!

Best wishes on your Outback adventure, Robert!





>> ***For the next YellowJacket, send your good news to: gilbertalumni@gilbertschool.org***

Upcoming Reunions...

50th Reunion
Class of 1967

October 21, 2017
Green Woods Country Club

This reunion is planned on the same day as TGS Homecoming so that classmates can enjoy a whole day of exciting events together!

For More Information,
Please Contact:
A. Kate Robertson at:
gilberthighschool1967@gmail.com

Alumni! Are you planning a reunion, do you want to? Please let us know and we can help! Contact us at: gilbertalumni@gilbertschool.org!

SAVE THE DATE! OCTOBER 21, 2017
GILBERT HOMECOMING

There is so much to do on this exciting day! Meet and speak with our ***Distinguished Alumni Award*** winners • Watch a TGS football game and the marching band half time show • Participate in or watch the alumni cross country race • Watch or participate in the alumni volleyball game • Visit with your friends and fellow graduates over a delicious brunch in the cafeteria. ***We hope to see all of you there!***





Richard Grigos: *Supporting a School that Adapts to Change and Challenges*



Richard Grigos, TGS class of 1965, has fond memories of growing up in Winsted. "I love the small-town atmosphere," he says. "It's a great place to grow up, make friends, and enjoy community activities, like the Pet Parade."

Rich also has wonderful memories of his school days, and credits Gilbert for giving him a solid foundation of education and good grounding for the future. "My economics teacher, Hamilton Pitt, had a big influence on me," he says. "Mrs. Deming, my English teacher, was strict about being clear in written presentation. And special ed teacher Richard Ackerman was my track coach. I admired the work he did with his students. These and other Gilbert School experiences were a big benefit to me growing up and working in my occupation."

After graduation, Rich attended the University of Connecticut in Torrington for two years and finished up at Storrs, where he earned his economics degree in 1969. Because he was drawn to social work, Rich received his Masters of Social Work from UCONN in 1973.

Rich, who retired in 2000, first worked in community development in New Britain. He then began his career with the United Way in Stamford, Connecticut, and later served as the nonprofit's executive director in St. Joseph, Michigan, and Princeton, New Jersey. When his wife, Lauren Segal, got a job in Minnesota, he was involved with the community's Boys & Girls Club. In 2016, Lauren retired, and the couple moved to Cape Elizabeth, Maine, a place where they frequently vacationed. Once they retired they began estate planning and decided to leave a portion of their estate to various organization that had touched their lives. Rich knew that Winsted faced the trials of a changing economy. "Educational institutions like Gilbert are vital to helping young people to prepare for the future," he says. "On my return visits to the area I learned that Gilbert had made significant moves to meet the challenges of changing times. I was most impressed with the International Program. We live in a global community and this program gives students the opportunity to interact with, learn about, and appreciate different cultures. This is beneficial to their development."

We are grateful to Rich and Lauren for their generosity and honored by their legacy gift.

Paying It *Forward*

Annual Fund and Scholarships

Donations to the annual fund benefit students directly by enhancing academic, athletic, and arts programs, providing technology upgrades, and giving teachers an opportunity to request materials and advanced training. This fund is used for continued growth and improvement in instruction and equipment not covered by The Gilbert School's operating budget.

The W. L. Gilbert Trust Scholarships are also more important than ever as the cost of college continues to climb. Please consider helping graduating seniors and alumni realize their dreams.

Giving is easy.

You may contribute online at www.gilbertschool.org (click on "Support TGS" in the right-hand column) or by mail using the enclosed envelope.

For all donations, please make checks payable to: **The W. L. Gilbert Trust** with "Annual Fund" or "Scholarship" (or the name of a particular scholarship) in the subject line. Every gift makes a difference in a student's life. Thank you!

The W. L. Gilbert Legacy Society

The philanthropic spirit of our founder, William L. Gilbert, lives on in the generous alumni and friends who have become part of The W. L. Gilbert Legacy Society by leaving something to the school in their wills. Designating a specified sum or percentage of your estate, life insurance policy, or real estate property does not affect your cash flow during your lifetime. If your situation changes, you can modify or revoke it at any time, so there is no financial risk. ***To find out more about planned gifts, call Sandi Lynn Scherer in the Trust Office at 860-379-1245 or email scherers@gilbertschool.org.***

Legacy Society Members

Thomas J. Botticelli
JoAnn and Harry Briggs
Richard Grigos, 1965
Concetto Marino, 1982
Ellen (Cormier) Marino, 1983
Jean (Woodward) Partridge, 1950
James A. Pettit, 1971
Steven A. Sedlack, 1960

In Memoriam

1929
Pauline Fancher
April 28, 2017

1935
Angela (Speziale) Charron
March 20, 2016

1936
Lorraine (Patton) Davis
May 18, 2017

Helen (Bruno) Simmons
March 17, 2017

1939
John B. DiBiasi
March 10, 2014

Alice (Williams) DiMartino
January 31, 2017

1940
William Bernard Brady
April 3, 2015

Joseph S. Coco
March 6, 2015

1942
Fredrick F. Leeney
January 17, 2017

1944
Joseph Benedict, Sr.
May 4, 2017

1945
Martha (Baker) Hills
October 29, 2016

Robert Lowe
July 12, 2017

1947
Rita (Lachat) King
October 18, 2016

Zita (Darcey) Olson
September 3, 2016

1948
William E. Benbow
March 24, 2017

1949
Henry Castonguay
July 16, 2015

Francis Lambour
December 8, 2016

Charles Useforge
March 15, 2017

1950
William Anstett, Sr.
March 21, 2017

Andre (Green) Carey
November 23, 2016

Frederick J.S. Humphrey
April 15, 2017

Janet (Anderson) Miller
November 2, 2016

1951
Margaret (Lalime) Smith
December 5, 2016

1953
Anthony Veneziano
March 20, 2017

1955
Richard Lee Capocefalo
October 20, 2016

Richard M. Dings
August 7, 2016

Ronald E. Royer
January 24, 2017



1956
Pasquale S. Bazzano
March 4, 2017

Marion (Kucineski) Kelley
July 9, 2017

1957
Phyllis (Johnson) Case
March 30, 2017

William Ostrowsey
August 6, 2016

1960
Patricia (Hrobak) Stinehour
March 21, 2017

1961
Clifford "Kip" Crossman
February 21, 2015

Carol Mary (Zimmerman) Dodge
January 16, 2016

Maurice J. Dulude
July 23, 2016

Dennis DuPont
August 26, 2009

1962
Porter "Skip" Griffin, III
December 7, 2016

Judith Van Alstyne
November 17, 2016

1963
Wesley A. Davis, Sr.
February 16, 2016

1965
David Battistoni
June 19, 2017

1967
Belinda (Sobol) Mosher
May 29, 2017

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How Can We Help?

Questions? Comments?
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Reunion? Contact us!

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