



Columbus Public Schools Alumni News



Winter 2014

CHS grad crowned Miss Nebraska

Just being herself was all Amanda Soltero needed to be crowned Miss Nebraska USA.

"I haven't been raised to be a pageant girl," she said about her approach to the competition. "The most important thing is to be true to yourself. You can tell when someone is saying something that someone just wants to hear."

The only other pageant competition Soltero participated in was Miss Teen Nebraska USA, which she won her senior year in high school, and advanced to the national Miss Teen USA.

After winning that, the 2010 CHS graduate knew she eventually wanted to try for Miss Nebraska. She also felt this would be a great avenue to promote her cause, Sammy's Superheroes.

Soltero knows the inspiration behind Sammy's Superheroes, Sammy Nahorny. Sammy was diagnosed with Neuroblastoma in 2012, and the group was started to raise funds for childhood cancer.

"It is something that means so much to me. I knew if I wanted to make Sammy's Superheroes into something bigger a pageant would help," she said. "With a pageant, you get a little more credibility."

Although advised to take a semester off from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln after winning the pageant, Soltero politely told them no.

"I worked too hard not to graduate in four years, and I have it down to one semester," she said about her decision.

She will graduate in May with a degree in broadcasting.



Courtesy photo from Rachel Im-dieke Photography

However, the pageant has put some aspects of her life on hold.

The people involved in Miss Nebraska have been very accommodating, Soltero said in terms of working around her school schedule.

"It's been hard balancing everything," Soltero said.

Continued on page 6

Why a new high school?

By Dr. Troy Loeffelholz
Superintendent

For the past eighteen months, Columbus Public Schools has been conducting a comprehensive study of future growth in the community, facility needs, program needs, and facility options for the district. Throughout this process, we have engaged the community through 23 public meetings as to what the community will support for future facility needs.

After the fall of 2011, we were

asked to listen to the community. A group of citizens in Columbus were given a goal, and that was to determine a solution that would address all CPS Pre-kindergarten-12 facilities and program needs now and into the future. Since that time, this citizens committee has provided the board of education with these five recommendations:

1. The committee recommends that a correctly sized new High School be built at the Discoverer location with facilities for the STEM Program to be in-

cluded.

2. Existing High School to become a 5-8 Middle School.
3. That the increase in the levy be held to a maximum of 7 cents with DLR to begin designing a project that falls within that price structure.
4. That the pre-kindergarten education and a portion of Administration be moved to the 1965-1989 portion of the existing middle school.

Continued on page 2

Why a high school?

From front page

5. That the Bond Resolution be put on the May 2014 election such that the new High School could be occupied in Fall 2016.

The citizens committee then provided to the board their rationale and conclusions for their recommendations. These conclusions include:

1. The rationale for the recommendations is that this option is the best for CPS and is a true Pre-K-12 solution.
2. It resolves both present and future enrollment growth patterns at the elementary, middle, and high school levels, gaining additional elementary classrooms.
3. It provides for continued use of portions of the current middle school while accommodating growth in pre-K education programs.
4. The time is now (interest rates, construction firm availability, etc.).
5. Keeps middle school students in the center of town.

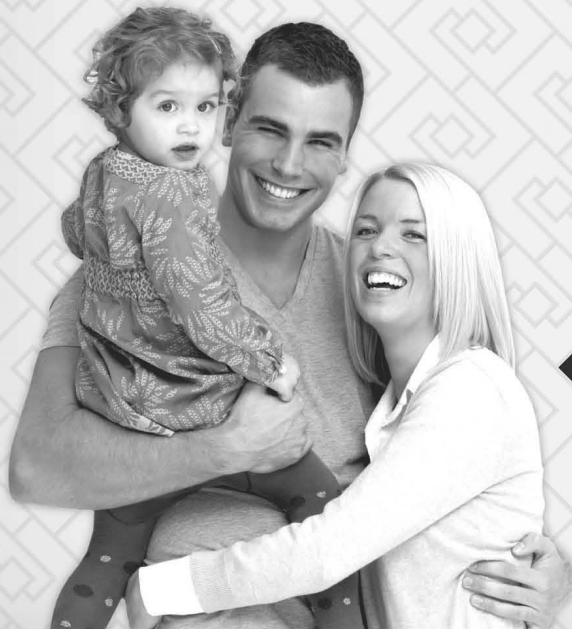
Since that December board meeting, the district and the board of education have been working with DLR architects to determine the scope of a new high school program. The work

conducted included: space for classrooms, gyms, auditoriums, food service, commons areas, hallways, etc. The program at this time calls for a new high school that is 257,625 sq. ft. at a cost of \$49,915,000. Our current high school has 238,000 sq. ft.

There is some confusion in the community as to why we are focusing on a new high school. A new high school is a means of keeping the middle school students in the center of town by moving this program to the existing high school. By moving fifth graders up to the middle school, there will be an additional 13 classrooms available at the elementary level for continued program and enrollment growth. In addition, it allows the district to pursue more space for preschool programs that are desperately needed.

It is no secret that serving our student population and offering a comprehensive curricular program takes time, money, and updated facilities to meet the needs of our children, technology, and changing culture. We need to find that compromise and look at what is reasonable, sensible, and responsible, to make a difference. We feel this plan is reasonable and responsible. It is up to the community to determine whether or not the recommendation is sensible and if it can make a difference. The CPS Board of Education passed a resolution on Feb. 27 to hold a high school bond election on May 13, 2014.

Providing financial options for all Discoverers and the community since 1949.



BankingWithYou.com



**Columbus United
Federal Credit Union**

Banking With You

*Federally Insured
By NCUA.*



Callans donate art to CHS

Ron Callan saw "Victorian Christmas" by Thomas Kinkadee some thirty years ago in a gallery and told his wife, Gayle, that some day he would like to donate it to CHS. On Tuesday, January 14, 2014, that dream came true. The beautiful painting is now prominently displayed in the IMC at Columbus High School, recognizing the Callans' contributions to Columbus Public Schools.

Ron and Gayle Callan served the CPS district for a combined total of 70 years. Ron started at CHS in 1961. He taught English three years, biology and English for two years and biology for 35 years. During his tenure at CHS, Callan also coached football, cross-country, track and wrestling. He retired from CPS in May 2001 after 40 years of service.

Gayle started with CPS in 1972 as the North Central Evaluation typist and worked in various positions at the district office for the next 10 years. In 1982, she moved to CHS to work as the English/social studies secretary, activities secretary, and bookkeeper. She retired in May 2002.

"Dedicated teachers and support staff make a difference in the lives of students," said Jessica Kuehler, CPS Foundation Executive Director. "This



BEAUTIFUL ARTWORK - CHS Principal Steven Woodside and CHS Media Specialist Carol Dostal accept the Victorian Christmas painting from Ron & Gayle Callan. The painting will be displayed in the CHS media center.

striking painting will add to the overall ambience of the Media Center, which is utilized by hundreds of students each day, and serves as an excellent reminder of the impact the Callans had at CHS. They are fondly remembered every year by many alumni who return for tours of the building."

If you would like to make a contribution to Columbus Public Schools, contact Jessica in the Foundation office, (402) 563-7000 Ext. 1103 or jessica@foundationforcps.org.



COLUMBUS BANK AND TRUST COMPANY
www.colbank.com
 402-564-1234 or 800-343-2282

MEMBER FDIC/EQUAL HOUSING LENDER



Columbus Public Schools FOUNDATION
"Optimizing the future of all Discoverers"

More than \$50,000 was given back to CPS in 2012-2013!



Get on the Bus!

Contact Jessica Kuehler at (402) 563-7000 x 1103

Visit www.foundationforcps.org today!

The School District of Columbus Foundation is a qualifying 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Contributions are deductible as allowed by law.

Columbus Alumni Association
 2508 27 St. ~ PO Box 947~ Columbus, NE 68602-0947
 Phone: 402-563-7000 Ext. 1102 ~ Fax: 402-563-7005

Alumni Association Board of Directors

Steve Anderson `68, President	Anne Cruickshank Hughes `90
Bob Markham `76, Vice President	Robert Jaeggi `47
Gayleen Oppliger Hingst `60, Treasurer	Sue Aermi Mares `71
Jim Schaefer `70, Past President	Shelly Nielsen-Schmidt `88
K.C. Belitz `86	Lynn Strehle Sjuts `80
Amy Busted Blaser `88	Annie Slusarski Sokol `98
	Steve Zaura `81



What's Happening

Gayle and Jeanetta (Swanson) Janssen '63 – 9 great grandchildren.

Patrick Burrows '78 – His son, Aaron, is a recent graduate from TCU with a degree in movement science.

Meredith Oakes Peterson '79 – Named court judge for the city of Laramie, Wyoming on April 1, 2013.

Chuck and Bridget Borer Potter '89 and '91 – Opened Inner City Automotive Repair LLC.

Colin Clayburn '94 – Current graduate student working on a master degree in physical education at Arizona State University in Tempe. He is the graduate student assistant equipment manager for the ASU football program.

FREE PARTY ROOM
For All Class Reunions

Maximus
Restaurant & Sports Bar



Grill Open
11 a.m. - 11 p.m. Daily
(Appetizers, Burgers, Sandwiches, Soups & Salads)

329 23rd Street • East Hwy. 30 • (402) 564-3636

THE
COMMUNITY MATTERS
SERIES

See the stories
OF NEBRASKA
WHYCOMMUNITYMATTERS.COM

COLUMBUS 210 East 23rd Street, 402.562.8936
2661 33rd Avenue, 402.562.8935

 **Pinnacle Bank**
THE WAY BANKING SHOULD BE

MEMBER FDIC 

Columbus Alumni Association

Please use this form for address corrections or changes, what's new information, or if you wish to pay dues.

First Name _____ Last Name _____ Class of _____
(Please include maiden if applicable.)

Spouse _____ Last Name _____ Class of _____

Address _____ City, State Zip _____

Telephone _____ E-mail _____

What's New (job, degrees, comments, suggestions etc.) _____

I/we would like to become an annual member(s) for the year 2014.

_____ Annual Single \$10 _____ Annual Couple \$15

or

I/we would like to become a lifetime member(s).

_____ Lifetime Single \$200 _____ Lifetime Couple \$300

Return to: Columbus Alumni Association * 2508 27 St. * PO Box 947 * Columbus, NE 68602-0947





Foundation Art Extravaganza A Success

By Jessica Kuehler
Executive Director of CPS Foundation

More than 70 people gathered on September 28, 2013, at the beautiful Elk's Country Club for the inaugural CPS Foundation Discover the Potential Art Extravaganza. The silent and live art auctions raised more than \$3,000 for CPS. The CMS and CHS art departments and the CHS industrial arts department will use the funds to develop a new art class and buy new equipment.

The Art Extravaganza boasted pieces of art from alumni including Julian Meyer (Class of 1940), Mary (Brewer) Hull (Class of 1957), Susan (Anderson) Bernstein (Class of 1972), Cyndi (Uhlmann) Jarecke (Class of 1979), MaryPat (Johnston) Kuehler (Class of 1981), Katie Brezina (Class of 2013), and Kaylene Downs (Class of 2013).

Current students who also generously gave their art were Molly Vetick (CHS 10th Grade), Alicia Garcia (CHS 11th Grade), and Jacque Watson (CHS 12th Grade).

Additional contributions of art came from notable former CPS teachers including Chris Dixon, Ruth Schlobohm, Jean Detlefsen, Jeanne Kiser Jensen, and the family of Robert Larsen. Jane Mlinar and Megan Danner, current CPS teachers, also donated their talent to the auction.

"We were very pleased with the positive response from the alumni, students, and current and former staff," remarked Shelly Nielsen-Schmidt (Class of 1988). "CPS has a strong history of providing an excellent education to its students. The Art Extravaganza was an opportunity for us as a

community to give back to the district in a very unique way."

Nielsen-Schmidt serves as a member of the CPS Foundation Board of Directors and helped to coordinate the Extravaganza.

The highlights of the evening's activities included the lively interaction between emcee K.C. Belitz (Class of 1986) and auctioneer Dr. Jim Kramer and the beautiful sounds of the Columbus Jazz Orchestra. Members of the Foundation Board of Directors look forward to organizing a similar fundraiser event in February 2015 for CPS needs.

Let us fix your tax problems

Don't get burned by a big national IRS representation firm. Contact someone with strong Nebraska values.



- End wage garnishments
- Stop property seizure
- Reduce what you owe
- Remove penalties

Call Cruise & Associates today for a free consultation!

402-564-5827 or 800-401-4284
www.cruise-associates.com

President Robert Cruise, CHS Class of 1986



Foundation seeks nominations

By Jessica Kuehler
Executive Director of CPS Foundation

This spring, the CPS Foundation will award the third annual Columbus Public Schools Operations Employee of the Year and Educator of the Year awards.

The Operations Employee of the Year Award is available to all district employees who are not certificated teachers. Sponsored by Bob Markham (Class of 1976) and wife Chris, a prize of \$500 will be presented to the individual selected to be the Operations Employee of the Year.

All CPS teachers are eligible to become Educator of the Year. Sponsored by the Columbus United Federal Credit Union, the award recipient will receive a prize of \$1,000. The runner-up will receive a \$500 award.

CPS staff, students, parents, and other members of the public are welcome to provide nominations for the awards. All

nominees will be recognized at the April meeting of the Board of Education. Winners will be announced at the CPS Employee Recognition Banquet in May.

To submit a nomination or learn about past honorees, visit www.foundationforcps.org.

Soltero

From Front

Now is usually the time people go out and start marketing themselves for jobs, but not Soltero. There have been a few news stations express an interest, but she has been up front with them.

Soltero told them she can't start work until after August because of her commitment to participate in the Miss USA Pageant. Although the day of the Miss USA Pageant hasn't been announced, Soltero said it is a three-week commitment.

"I can't accept a job and then say I need three weeks of vacation," she said about finding a job.

Soltero said a lot more goes into competing than people imagine. The Miss Nebraska competition lasts three days.

On the first day, photos are taken in swim suits and evening gowns along with a cocktail banquet where family can attend as well. The second day is rehearsal all day and being interviewed by the judges. On the third day, the competition takes place, and the contestants are narrowed down to the top 11 based off the photos and interview questions from earlier. From there, the group is narrowed down to the top five who must answer additional questions.

By the end of the (last day), I couldn't feel my toes," she joked about being in high heels for a long period of time. "My feet also went numb for a couple of days."

Soltero said the Miss USA pageant will be different because it is a live production. She feels competing in the national Miss Teen USA will help. However, in the previous competition, the focus was more on just being a teen, and this time the winner is expected to be more-well versed.

She does not have any expectations about the Miss USA Pageant. She hopes she can make the first cut (the top 15), which is something that she didn't do when she competed in Miss Teen USA.

"I'm excited to see where this takes me," Soltero said.

She also appreciates all the support from the people of Columbus.

**Making precision
parts since 1965**



**Torin
Products Inc.**

**Proud supporter of the
CHS Alumni Association!**

Learn more about us, by visiting
our website at www.torin.com.

Family Owned & Operated

Over 800 Jobs Available + Come Home To... AFFORDABLE Living

COLUMBUS +

www.workincolumbus.com

Outstanding Schools + Great Entertainment + Excellent Healthcare

Class of '88 claims title

By Shelly Nielsen-Schmidt
Class of 1988 (could you tell?)

The biennial Columbus Alumni Volleyball tournament is in the books as a success – no one needed an ambulance! Eight teams of ladies, ranging from the young'uns of 2013 to the old'uns of 1988+, enjoyed hours of fun and camaraderie on November 30 and days of sore muscles after that. In the morning, two round-robin tournaments were played to seat the teams for the double elimination tournament that followed in the early afternoon.

In the end, the youth of 2013 was barely overcome by the powerhouse class of 1988 (which had nothing to do with the fact that '88 combined their two teams for the championship game) to take home the theoretical gold medal. Those players who were still able to walk somewhat normally joined together in the evening at Maximus for prizes and to "relive" the good 'ol days.

As someone who lives in the Columbus area and did not play varsity volleyball but has participated in many of the alumni volleyball tournaments, I strongly encourage you to contact your classmates and get a team together for the next tourney in 2015. It is a terrific way to have fun while raising funds to support the current high school girls' athletic programs.



Our Principles and Values:

Do what is right.
Do the best you can.
Treat others the way you want to be treated.

Community involvement & neighborhood friendly
Caring for the environment

Follow us to www.GreatAgCareer.com
and start your agribusiness career today.



Yes I wish to support the schools with a **tax deductible** gift to the Foundation.
Here is my donation in the amount of \$

First Name _____ Last Name _____ Class of _____

Address _____ City, State, Zip _____

If you would like someone to contact you about including the CPS Foundation in your estate plans, please call Jessica Kuehler at 402-563-7000 Ext. 1103 to set up an appointment. The role of the Foundation is to provide the students of CPS with as many educational opportunities as possible by filling gaps created in the regular school district budget from funding shortfalls or regulatory constraints. The Foundation helps optimize the future of all Discoverers by creating funding for grants, after school programs, alternative educational opportunities, scholarships for current and graduating students, and recognition awards.

Please make checks payable to the CPS Foundation.

Return to: CPS Foundation * 2508 27 St. * PO Box 947 * Columbus NE 68602-0947.

The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization.





CPS Alumni News
Columbus Public Schools
2508 27 St.
PO Box 947
Columbus NE 68602-0947

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Columbus, Nebraska
Permit No. 72

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Columbus Alumni Reunion Plans for 2014 & Beyond

1935 - Local class members meet every 4 months for lunch (Oct., Feb., Jun.). All '35 grads welcome.

1937 - Meets 1st Wed., every 4 months (March, July, Nov.).

1946 - '46 locals meet the first Friday of each month for lunch. All classmates welcome. Contact: Ruth Olson Babka, 402-564-5991 or Laura Eller Stuefer, 402-564-2057.

1949 - Locals meet the first Monday of the month for breakfast at Picket Fence Cafe. All classmates welcome. Contact: Rosella (Blaser) Norris for info. 402-564-7498.

1954 - 60th reunion. April 25-26, 2014. Tour of CMS at 10 a.m. April 26. Contact: Colleen Willman.

1956 - Meets at 10 a.m. the first Wed. of every month at Stack & Steak for morning coffee. All classmates welcome.

1958 - Class lunch the first Wednesday of every month at noon at Maximus. All classmates and spouses welcome.

1959 - Meets the second Thursday quarterly (January, April, July and October) at Stack n' Steak at 11:30 a.m. for lunch and conversation. Classmates and spouses are welcome.

1962 - Meets the first Friday of every month at 8:30 a.m. at Stack 'n Steak. All classmates and spouses are welcome.

1964 - 50th Class Reunion, Memorial weekend 2014. May 23 - ice-breaker at Husker Bar; May 24 - dinner at VFW; May 25- Picnic at Vi-ergutz Cabin. Notices will be sent. Contact Carloyn Hasek at cf93924@

windstream.net.

1965 -50th Class Reunion - Save the date. June 5-7, 2015. For more information or to make a suggestion, please look us up on Facebook at Columbus Nebraska High School Class of 1965. More information at a later date.

Let us help you plan your reunion!

What we can do for you:

- Class list and mailing labels
- Nonprofit Bulk rate for qualifying mailings
 - Tours of CHS or CMS
 - Tips for planning reunions

Contact Michelle Cruise: PO Box 947, Columbus NE 68602-0947; Phone: 402-563-7000 Ext. 1102;

E-mail: cruisem@discoverers.org.