



Columbus Public Schools Alumni News

Spring 2008



Teacher earns national honor

Mona Schoenrock was named the National Business Education Association Secondary Teacher of the Year.

Schoenrock has been a teacher at CHS for 29 years. She teaches Desktop Publishing, keyboarding and E-commerce/web page design. This recognition is given based on teaching performance, years

of experience and participation in professional associations.

“She makes class interesting and fun for everyone,” said one of her students on the nomination form. “Her teaching style helps me learn the material easily.”

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Foundation seeks to expand emphasis

**Foundation Board President Brian Christensen
Class of 1976**

Over the last couple of years, your Columbus Public Schools Foundation has endeavored to become more relevant in the lives of students, staff and alumni. The Board of Directors has developed a mission statement and a case statement to help sharpen our focus on the things that will bring the most value to our school system and the community. Our mission statement says the following:

“The mission of the Columbus Public Schools Foundation is to enhance student learning by working with the school district, businesses and community to provide financial support for innovative programs not covered by the school district’s funding sources.”

As you can see, this statement moves beyond what most people would assume is the reason for the foundation, to grant scholarships. Don’t misunderstand, scholarships are an important part of what we do, but there are so many other needs to be addressed. Take a look at our case statement, which is our succinct summary of where we wish to make a difference in the lives of students and staff:

“The Columbus Public Schools Foundation helps optimize the future of all Discoverers by creating a permanent fund whose interest will be used to invest in the school system through the following:”

- Innovation and enrichment grants for students, teachers and staff
- Funding for after school programs
- Funding for supporting staff positions not currently in the school budget
- Funding to provide alternative educational opportunities including online learning for students
- Scholarships for current and graduating students
- Teacher, staff and student recognitions

It is truly exciting to see the impact that the foundation has had on the lives of students and staff. It is equally exciting to see alumni become involved by using their foundation to give their time, talent and treasure. Many of your fellow alumni have given to the foundation to help further its efforts in supporting the school system. Since the foundation has 501(c)3 status, alumni and others are able to make tax-deductible contributions.

Please join us in optimizing the future of all Discoverers. Your involvement can leave an important legacy for the school and community that has played a vital role in the success you now enjoy. For more information, please visit our website at www.columbuspublicschools.org/foundation or call Michelle Cruise, Executive Director, at 402-563-7000 Ext. 1102.

CHS drops to Class B in football, some district competitions

Next year Columbus High School will drop to Class B in football.

The Nebraska School Activities Association sets the football schedule, and there is no option to move up to Class A. CHS will remain in Class B in football for at least two years because the schedules are set for two years at a time.

There will also be some changes in basketball, volleyball, soccer and cross country. People

participating in these sports will play a Class A schedule for regular season games, but at district competitions will be in Class B. The teams played during the regular season will change very little because games are contracted in advance for two years.

In the past, Columbus has opted to move up to Class A for district competitions, but after lengthy discussions, the administration has decided to stay in Class B for districts. There is no option to

move up to Class A in football.

The class a school falls in depends on the number of teams participating in that particular sport as well as its enrollment. When a school co-ops, the schools enrollment is added together. Columbus will stay in Class A in golf, swimming, baseball, track, wrestling, tennis and softball. Depending on enrollment, Columbus may be back in Class A next year in sports other than football.

Kluth wins top honor

Annie Slusarski Sokol `98 & Anne Cruickshank Hughes `90

The Nebraska State Association of Secondary School Principals named Columbus Middle School Principal Doug Kluth the 2008 Distinguished Middle School Principal of the Year.



Twenty-seven years ago, Doug started his career in education with Columbus Public Schools. Since that time, he has served many roles for the system.

Doug began his stint at Columbus Junior High School as a social sciences teacher, which he held for eight years. In the midst of the transition to a middle school, Doug became part of the high school staff. He then became Assistant Principal at Columbus High School for two years before becoming middle school principal in 2003.

Returning back home to the middle school (junior high) has been a positive experience for Doug. He has enjoyed watching all the changes that have occurred since the days of the junior high.

Under his leadership, the middle school staff has expanded programs and made changes to the daily schedule that benefit the students. He is especially excited about the growth of the Career Technology program. Another highlight off his administrative

duties is bringing new staff aboard.

When asked if he misses the classroom, his response was "Absolutely!" He misses the daily interaction and discussion with kids. His proudest moments are when his former students have chosen education as a career due to his own influence on them.

Doug also wanted to acknowledge the alumni that have made class donations to the middle school. Your kindness and support is greatly appreciated.

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

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Winter sports round-up

Bob Markham
Class of 1976

The boys wrestling team put together a solid season finishing 6th at the state meet held in Omaha. Senior Austin Carmichael won his second consecutive state title. Coach Rick Benson announced his retirement after leading the Discoverers for the last 24 years. Seniors Louie Rambour, Dillon Greenlee and Zach Ridgeway also had outstanding seasons. Assistant Coach Tracy Dodson will lead the Discoverer matmen beginning next season.

The girls swim team was led by freshman Paige Theilen, qualifying in two individual events (50 and 100 meter freestyle) and two relays. Other qualifiers were seniors Kristen Menchaca and Shayla Werner along with junior

Taylor Kumpf with Theilen in the 200 relay and the 400 relay with sophomore Mary Boeding, Kumpf, Werner and Theilen. The Discoverer swimmers are coached by Jan Boeding.

The boys basketball team finished the season 4-18. They were involved in many close games that made their record a little deceiving. Coached by Dave Hiebner the Discoverers were led by juniors Brian Cleary and Kurt Farmer along with seniors Dustin Groteluschen, Adam Bouc, Devin Thomas and Dan Johnson.

The girls basketball team coached by Dave Licari finished the season 7-15. The team made great strides through the year being led by juniors Ashley Szelag, Molly Brown, Leah Stevens, Alisha Lange and senior Mindy Wood.

Spring sports round-up

Bob Markham
Class of 1976

The Discoverer Boys soccer team qualified for the state tournament for the third consecutive year under coach Jaime Bennett. The Discoverers beat Lincoln East in the first round 1-0 on a goal by senior Tony Linder. In a driving rain, the soccer team fell to Creighton Prep 2-1 in overtime to end their season at 14-4.

Seniors Linder, Dustin Groteluschen and Joe Jasper led the team. A good core of underclassmen led by Andy Christiansen, Mike Ziola and Parker Staroscik will return next year. The girls team coached by Kellie Wamsat finished their season 8-7, losing at districts to Kearney 1-0. Seniors Abbey Arlt, Anne Gates and Kelsey Bonwell, who was selected to play in the Shrine All-Star game, led the team.

The Discoverer golf team advanced to the Class A state tournament after a two-year absence to give retiring coach Rick Benson a proper send-off. They were led by district medalist senior Adam Bouc as well as seniors Andy Markham, Louie Rambour, Grant Gotschall and sophomore Jordan Williams. Hampered much of the spring by inclement weather, the Discoverer golfers peaked at the end of the year finishing strong at the Grand Island Invite and at districts.

The CHS track squads also had their share of success this spring despite the cold and rainy conditions. On the boys side, junior Zach Lindsley was the first boys track athlete in 31 years to win an event at the state meet, placing first in the discus with a throw of 160'8". Dean Shurter, also a junior, placed fifth. Senior Michael Gross placed 5th in the long jump and 7th in the triple jump and was a qualifier in the 100 M dash. Trevor Urkoski qualified in the 3200 meter run and Lindsley also qualified in the shot put. The boys finished tied for 10th in the team standings in Dan Steiner's second year

as coach. The girls team coached by Bob Hopp had many qualifiers this year at state led by the 3200 meter relay team consisting of juniors Jena Schwalenberg and Carrie Wiese, sophomore Bridgette Schneekloth and freshman Megan Weber finishing 8th. Other qualifiers were Schwalenberg - 3200 M run, senior Becky Seidel - 100 M. high hurdles, junior Lindsay Anderson - pole vault, freshman Brianna Downs - pole vault, junior Elizabeth Wheatley - high jump and junior Alecyia Watson - triple jump.

The girls tennis team coached by Dave Licari played their best tennis of the year going into the state tournament led by #2 singles junior Ashley Meyers winning her first two matches at the Class A state tournament before losing to Millard West, ending her chances of making the semifinals. Seniors Ellen Rambour (#1 doubles), Lauren Lemke (#1 doubles), Brittne Mahoney (#2 doubles) and Lindsay Cepel (#2 doubles) won during the first round at the state tournament before losing close second round matches. Lori Fehr at #1 singles rounded out the Discoverers squad.

The boys baseball team coached by Mark Mueller finished the season 12-15. Their season ended at districts losing to Bellevue East in the semifinals.

This year's team was led by seniors Zeb Massman, Andy Kohl, Josh Van Dyke and juniors Michael Blatchford, Chase Stanton and All-Stater Kurt Farmer.

Looking for lost classmates

Please help find the following 1959 classmates: Herbert Alpers, Linda Jones Garcia, Alfred Johnson, Gary Jouvenat, Sue Mikkelsen, Ralph Tolman, Paula Warner and Nadine Massey. If you know of the whereabouts of these people, please contact Mary Frauendorfer at 402-564-6738 or mdorfer@frontiernet.net.



What's Happening

Wayne A. Schild `48 – Wayne and his wife Darlene continued their world-wide travels in 2007. They have now visited all seven of the Central American countries, namely Panama, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Belize, Honduras, Nicaragua and Guatemala. In November and December, they visited 12 more countries – Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, all seven Emirates, Oman and Yemen. This trip encompassed over 18,000 miles. They have three new overseas trips contracted for 2008. Wayne now has visited 187 countries and island groups. He hopes to reach at least 200 before he slows down. Wayne wishes to thank the

people who make the Alumni News possible and also for the help they gave the people who published the latest Alumni Directory.

Hanson Elliott `51 – Had open-heart surgery Sept. 19, 2007 and by all accounts is doing fine.

Sandra (Drew) Keating `55 – Retired with three children and five grandchildren.

Vard Johnson `56 – Received an honorary doctorate from UNO in August 2007.

Jan Stonebraker `58 – Retired but not expired.

Gary Burmood `62 – Looking forward to another class reunion.

Columbus Alumni Association

Let's Keep in Touch

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 2008.

_____ 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



CHS students advance to nationals in autos

The dry spell is over.

Columbus High School seniors Andy Kohl and Zeb Massman captured the state title at the Ford/AAA Student Auto Skills Competition. Now Kohl and Massman will go on to represent Nebraska at the national finals to be held in Detroit, Michigan on June 24.

CHS has not advanced to the national competition since 2004. However, CHS still holds the title of the longest streak of first place finishes at state spanning six years from 1999-2004.

CHS automotives instructor Ron Haefner said he is surprised at how many former students follow the competition.

"It's kind of interesting the large number of former students who still

keep track of the contest," he said. "It shows the pride they have in their school."

In order to qualify for state, Kohl and Massman had to score among the highest in the state on an automotive technology exam. CHS also had another team qualify, Christopher Demers and Matthew Mundil.

At state, the competition is hands-on. The team races against the clock to correctly identify and fix the intentional bugs on the vehicles. After finding and repairing all the bugs, they must drive the car across the finish line.

Haefner said what gave Massman and Kohl the edge at state is they found one of the bugs that was not listed on the work order. He said these bugs are

placed in the car to make sure teams are not cheating.

If a team finds all the bugs, they know there is something wrong, but the judges will award extra points if one of these extra bugs are found, which is somewhat confusing, Haefner said.

He said he would like to thank Gene Steffy Ford for allowing the CHS students to use one of their cars to practice on.

"Steffy has always been good about getting us a car," Haefner said.

In addition to getting to compete in the national competition, both Massman and Kohl received a full ride scholarship to Wyoming Technical Institute valued at \$24,000 each.

What's Happening

Virgene Schmit Kayser-Jones `52 – Received two national awards for her dedication to the care of older Americans. She received the Ceroria Johnson Memorial Advocacy Award for her research from the National Citizens' Coalition for Nursing Home Reform. She also received the first ever Nurse Leader in Aging Award from the American Academy of Nursing and John A. Hartford Foundation for her advancements in gerontological nursing. She is a professor of gerontological nursing and medical anthropology from the University of California, San Francisco School of Nursing. She wrote *Old, Alone and Neglected: Care of the Aged in the United States and Scotland* and is a founder and former director of the John A. Hartford Center of Geriatric Nursing Excellence at UCSF. Information was provided by California Nurse Week, the January 14, 2008 issue.

Doug Rae `66 – Retired from Western/Delta Airlines 1969-2001 and is currently employed by the Department of Homeland Security Transportation Security Administration as the Assistant Federal Security Director in Los Angeles, California.

Nancy Hegi-Cuba `69 – Retired from teaching in the Columbus Public Schools in May 2007.

Sharon Peppler `69 – Retired pharmacist. Does occasional relief work, enjoys traveling in the United States and Mexico.

Linda Rice Hanson `70 – Has five grandchildren. Worked at Appleton Electric for 21 years. My husband, David, passed away in September 2007. We were married 36 ½ years.

Jonathan Barnes `91 – Special thanks to Tom Nelson and staff for the CHS gym floor. Nice work everyone.

Carma Loontjer Rosen `92 – Married Don Rosen in May 2007 and works as a sales rep at Sysco Food Services. Lived in Colorado since 1999.

Tracy Kuehler Krepel `93 – Gave birth to a baby boy on Nov. 29, 2007. He joins his big brothers ages 6 and 4.

Michael Kimmel `96 – Recently completed PhD in biomedical engineering at the University of Minnesota. Working full-time as a design engineer at Medtronic. My wife Janice & I have a one-year-old and are expecting our second child later this year.

John S. Lohr `01 – Earned a graduate degree in international hotel management from the Glion Institute of Higher Learning in Montreux Switzerland. He has accepted a one-year manager trainee position with InterContinental Hotels on the island of Phi Phi Thailand.



Retirees say goodbye

There were ten people who retired from Columbus Public Schools this year.

B.J. Anderson worked in the district for 32 years and was the guidance counselor at Columbus Middle School. Rick Benson served the district for 27 years and taught industrial education at Columbus High School and was also the head wrestling and golf coaches. Mimi Ernst worked in CPS for 16 years and taught eighth grade language arts at CMS.

Karen Hoops served the

district for 31 years teaching health/fitness at CHS. Mel Janousek worked for CPS for 27 years and taught the gifted and German programs at CMS. Steve Klutman served as the vocation coordinator and worked in the district for 34 years.

Kay Lockman served the district for nine years and taught business at CHS. Jamey Price was the special education coordinator and worked for CPS for 31 years.

Paul Sanderson worked for the district 29 years and



SAYING GOODBYE - From left to right: Karen Hoops, Mel Janousek, B.J. Anderson, John Vyhldal, Steve Klutman, Paul Sanderson and Rick Benson were honored at the Employee Banquet in April. Not pictured are Mimi Ernst, Kay Lockman and Jamey Price.

taught health/fitness at CHS. John Vyhldal served as

the HVAC coordinator and worked for CPS for 24 years.

Columbus Alumni Reunion Plans for 2008 & Beyond

1932 - Contacts: Caroline Siebler Siefken, 2880 29 Ave., 564-8223.

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.).

1943 - 65th Reunion, July 19 and 20, 2008. July 19, 2 p.m. tour of Columbus' new buildings; 6-7:15 p.m. cocktails and dinner at 7:30 p.m. all at New World Inn. July 20, brunch from 9:30-11:30 a.m. at New World Inn, family is welcome.

1945 - Meets the last Monday of the month at Picket Fence at noon.

1946 - '46 locals meet the first Friday of each month for lunch. All classmates welcome. Contact: Regina Giersdorf Gondringer, 402-564-7000 or Laura Eller Stuefer, 402-564-2057.

1948 - 60th Reunion, August 2, 2008, cocktails at 5 p.m. and dinner at 6 p.m. all at Country Shadows. August 3, 2008, brunch. Contacts: Bill and Betty Grant, 402-564-2040, 402-563-1003, or cjcsey@megavision.com.

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.

1953 - 55th Reunion, June 20, 21 & 22, 2008. June 20 - reacquainted party 6:30 p.m. VFW club room (classes of 1952 and 1954 are invited). June 21 - 10 a.m. tour of CHS; 7 p.m. dinner at Elks Country Club. June 22 - farewell brunch at 11 a.m. at Dusters. For additional information, contact Phil Hockenberger or Gerald Karlin in Omaha.

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.

1958 - 50th Reunion - Labor Day Weekend - August 29 and 30, 2008. Friday - Wunderlich's; Saturday - VFW. Please note the correct phone number for Marva should be 402-562-7831 not as on the information sheet. Please send in your reservations and check please. The checks need to be made out to Class of 1958 Reunion. Contacts: Marva Eckmann VanVelkinburgh, 402-562-7831, Shari (Sharon) Welch Lehr,

402-465-4610 or email slehr@windstream.net.

1959 - 50th Reunion, Friday, May 22, 2009 and Saturday, May 23, 2009. More information will be mailed. Contact: Mary Frauendorfer at 402-564-6738 or mdorfer@frontiernet.net.

1960 - 50th Reunion in 2010. Details to follow later.

1961 - 50th Reunion planned for September 2011. Details to follow later.

1963 - 45th Reunion, June 28, 2008. More details later.

1964 - 45th Reunion, Memorial Day Weekend 2009. Details later. Contact: Suzy Viergutz Engel at 402-564-0948, Carolyn Hasek Fitzke, Gary Fouraker, Jim Hellbusch, Randy Krumland at 800-467-0244 or John and Bonnie Knight Kennedy at bonjohnken@msn.com.

1968 - 40th Reunion, August 8 & 9, 2008. Friday - Tailgate and horse races; Saturday - School tours; social and dance at VFW. Details to follow. Contact: Diane Schwank, 402-910-1539 or Steve Anderson, 402-563-1347.

1978 - 30th Reunion, August 1 & 2, 2008 August 1 - Meeting at Glurs Tavern. August 2 - Progressive dinner, which is meeting in CHS parking lot to arrange reservations; bike ride; tour of CHS at 1 p.m.; and driving tour of Columbus. If you did not receive the flyer, please contact Ann Grant Graham at aegraham@appliedrisksolutions.com.

1988 - 20th Reunion, July 25 & 26, 2008. July 25 - 6:30 p.m. casual night at Columbus Races at Ag Park (cash bar, snacks, kids optional/welcome); July 26 - 8:30 a.m. golf at Elks Country Club; 1-3:30 p.m. tour of CHS and ice cream sundaes (kids welcome); 6:30 p.m. dinner, social and cash bar at Elks. Contacts: Amy Busted-Blaser at cablaser@frontiernet.net, Steve Hughes at shughes@neb.rr.com or Shelly Nielsen-Schmidt at shellynielsen@hotmail.com.

1993 - 15th Reunion - July 5, 2008 at 7 p.m. at Twisters.

1998 - 10th Reunion - August 1 & 2, 2008. The planning process is still going on. If you haven't been contacted, please e-mail Michelle Svoboda at svoboda-michelle@yahoo.com or Annie (Slusarski) Sokol at aslusarski2@hotmail.com, so they can get your information updated. Please visit the class website at <http://chs1998.ning.com>.



Schoenrock receives national honor

From front page

Schoenrock has provided leadership in the business department resulting in continuous growth and regularly revises curriculum to meet her students' needs.

She has also led efforts to improve instruction and assessment. Schoenrock has assisted colleagues improve students' reading comprehension, which is a school improvement goal, as well as develop activities to enhance reading strategies.

She has helped create a career education class. As an outgrowth of this project, she assisted the

Chamber of Commerce with student-mentor lunches, which allow students to visit one-on-one with professionals in their chosen career.

Schoenrock is always doing research and study and then shares what she learns by contributing articles to professional journals, delivering presentations at national conferences, and serving as an adjunct instructor at the local community college.

She co-wrote, with a community college instructor from California, an article, "Teaching Strategies for the



KUDOS - Mona Schoenrock received her award at a conference in San Antonio, Texas.

NBEA Communication Standards." The article was published in the April issue of the NBEA Journal, The Forum.

Schoenrock's community service

includes serving as a lector at church and being previous co-chair of United Way's Public Service Division and the National Heart Association.

School District of Columbus Foundation Inc. Endowment Fund Contribution

**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 estate planning, please call Michelle Cruise at 402-563-7000 Ext. 1102 to set up an appointment. The Foundation provides money for Columbus Public Schools programs that cannot be funded from tax dollars. The organization sponsors scholarships, guest speakers and various other activities.

**Please make checks payable to the Foundation Endowment Fund. Return to: CPS Foundation * 2508
27 St. * PO Box 947 * Columbus NE 68602-0947.**

The Foundation is a 501 (c) 3 organization.





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CMS band premieres song

After three years in the making, the Columbus Middle School eighth grade band premiered the song “Synergies.”

The song was commissioned to be written for the CMS bands and citizens of Columbus. Synergies means cooperative energies working together to create a positive result.

“Every four years the high school band goes on a trip,” said Jeff Peabody the current high school band director. “When I started at the middle school, I wanted an event that would only happen every few years.”

He thought finding a composer may be difficult. He decided to see if well known composer Robert Sheldon, who he met in South Dakota, could recommend someone to write the piece.

“I never dreamed (Sheldon) would do it,” Peabody said. “I just about fell out of my chair when he said he would be willing to do it.”

Peabody said the intent was to have the then sixth graders play the piece when they were eighth graders. He admits when Sheldon came to work with the students for the premier of the piece he was a little apprehensive.

Peabody accepted the position at the high school, and Amy Keilblock was the middle school band director. He said he hadn’t worked with the students for a year and wasn’t sure what level they were at.

Peabody said Sheldon is also an extremely talented composer and goes to many places, so he was hoping the students would make a good impression.

“It is hard to open yourself up like that,” Peabody said.



WORLD PREMIER – Composer Robert Sheldon came to direct the CMS eighth grade band as they premiered the song.

“Those kids definitely out performed any expectations I had. They worked hard all day.”

Keilblock also did a good job preparing them, he said.

Peabody said CMS was lucky because the piece was published. He said just because a song is commissioned doesn’t mean it will get published.

“We were very fortunate to get such a great piece,” Peabody said. “It is educationally challenging for eighth graders.”

The piece was also chosen as an editor’s choice for J.W. Pepper, which is the largest music distributor in the country. Peabody said he will be able to track how many schools play the piece and if it is performed at any events.

Peabody said he will work with Keilblock to see if this is something the middle school may want to do again. He said he has several other titles for songs in mind such as Discoverers, Midshipmen and a few others.