

The Alumni Link

A publication of the Sebring McKinley High School Alumni Association
P.O. Box 141, Sebring, Ohio 44672-0141

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Association honors Paula Elsass Wayt '64 and Donald Craig Andrews '70 at annual brunch

Sixty alumni, friends, and family members attended the 31st annual alumni brunch April 23 at Almost Home Event Center, formerly Heritage Oaks, in Sebring. The brunch, which most alumni who attend regularly prefer over a dinner, consisted of several delicious breakfast and lunch dishes.

The highlight of the brunch was the presentation of the Distinguished Alumni awards. **Paula Elsass Wayt '64** was one of two people honored with a Distinguished Alumni award. Following a highly successful high school career, Paula went to Capital University for four years, graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree with speech as a major and English as a minor. In 1971 she graduated with a Master's degree in Speech Pathology from Kent State University.

Paula began her career as a speech pathologist with the Kent City Schools, where she worked for five years until 1974. She continued to work as a speech pathologist at St. Paul's School in Salem from 1979-1990. Changing up her career a bit, she became a 10th grade English teacher at United Local Schools in 1990. Paula worked in the United district until 2000, where she directed 22 plays and musicals for 15 years, even after she left to become a speech pathologist for the Columbiana County Educational Service Center.

She retired from the ESC in 2011, but she continued to work in her chosen field in private practice with Dr. E.J. Witmer on Saturday mornings. Paula also provided speech pathology services in area nursing home facilities, including Copeland Oaks. In addition, she worked as a long-term speech pathology substitute from 2011-2015 at various schools in the area, including Salem, Leetonia, Crestview, and Canton City. For the 2012-13 academic year at the University of Mount Union, Paula supervised speech pathology student teachers.

A member of the American Speech Language and Hearing Association, Paula is a licensed speech pathologist in the State of Ohio. She has also obtained a certificate of Clinical Competence in Speech Pathology.

Paula served on the Sebring Local Board of Education for 27 years, using her knowledge of the educational systems in Ohio to help the students and staff in the district. Not only did she help as a board member, but she also volunteered many years to screen hearing for Sebring's incoming kindergarten students. She has also volunteered at B.L. Miller by packing weekend food backpacks for students.

As a member of the Pine Lake Christian Church, Paula has been a Sunday School and Bible School teacher as well as a youth group leader and choir member. She has also volunteered with Girl Scouts and Cub Scouts and at the Alliance Pregnancy Center. Paula is also a lifetime member of the Sebring Historical Society.

"I loved high school," Paula said about her years at SHS. "I won the district Prince of Peace contest three years, cheered for four years, was selected for Girls' State, and was selected to the 1963 Football Homecoming Court."

Paula married high school sweetheart Donald Wayne Wayt, also of the class of 1964, and they have been married for 52 years. All three of their children are Sebring graduates: Molly Wayt Malloy '92, Michael Wayt '94, and Matthew Wayt '99. They also have 10 grandchildren.

Paula and Donnie have traveled for leisure to Ireland, Italy, Germany, France, Canada and to many places in the United States, including Alaska. Paula enjoys snow skiing, pickleball, and golf.

Paula was nominated by her friend of many years Beth Fahnert Seavy '70, who had to hide the nomination since Paula is usually on the Distinguished Alumni selection committee.

The association also honored **Craig Andrews '70**. Voted Class Scholar along with Paula's sister Pam in 1970, Craig went on to a stellar academic career as he graduated from the University of Cincinnati in 1975 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering. Craig then received his Master of Science degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering from Texas A & M University in 1982.

A registered professional engineer in New Mexico and formerly in Montana, Craig's work arena was water and wastewater engineering and administration. His work took him around the world as he devised and implemented plans to supply people with safe, uncontaminated water.

From 1979-1989 Craig served the city of Las Cruces, New Mexico, as associate director of water resources and associate director of wastewater. In 1989 he joined Camp Dresser and McKee, a global engineering and construction firm, which, according to its web site, provides smart solutions in water and environment. During that time, he worked in Cairo, Egypt; Istanbul, Turkey; Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam; and several cities in China: Taiyuan, Shijiazhuang, Wuhan, and Shanghai.

Craig then began a career with a new company, CH2M Hill, where he worked from 2003-2005 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, serving as a civil engineer there. Following that service, he became an independent consultant to various cities in China.

"I really can't converse in a foreign language," Craig quipped, "but I can direct taxis in several."

Craig is currently retired and lives with his wife Konnie in New Mexico. They will have been married 45 years this October. Craig and Konnie have fostered multiple animals, while they also have four dogs and three cats of their own. As a retiree, Craig does some carpentry work, does a little fishing, and is completing a solar greenhouse at his home.

Craig was nominated as a Distinguished Alumnus by classmate Jennifer Muerth Ripley after she learned of his accomplishments at their 50th reunion.

The association also recognized the class of 1972 for its 50th anniversary as well as all other classes in attendance.

Janet May '55, her daughter **Tina May '89**, and Tina's sons **Allen Hanes '13** and **James Hanes '19** were again the only three-generation family at the event and were recognized by the association.

The next alumni brunch will be held on Saturday, April 29, 2023 at the Almost Home Event Center.

Seniors and underclassmen receive alumni awards

Congratulations to these students who received monetary awards for the 2021-22 school year:

\$1000 scholarships: Katie Perkins and Andrew Latham. Both will attend the University of Akron.

\$25 awards for Outstanding Eighth Graders: Brandon Bahler, Alayna Braham, Nikki Freet, Katelyn Garces

\$25 awards for Outstanding Fifth Graders: Kaydence Carver, Gracelynn Rumberger,

Hunter Shell, Quincy Taylor

\$25 award for Outstanding Fifth Grade Art Student: Brady Wynn

We'd love to hear from you!

Did you get a promotion at work? Publish a scholarly paper? Earn an advanced degree? Star in a community theater production? Run a marathon? Develop a new talent in your retirement? Or maybe you need to make an all-call regarding your upcoming reunion. Let *The Alumni Link* spread the word.

Here are three ways to send us your news item.

Regular mail: SHS Alumni Assn., P. O. Box 141, Sebring, OH 44672

Text / email:

JoAnn Warren Jones 330-428-1734 joann1954@sbcglobal.net

or

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Trojans Helping Trojans

Alumni Scholarship helped Kyle Billingsley '91 get a running start

Today, Kyle Billingsley is a highly regarded professional with the Ohio State Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections. A graduate of Youngstown State University's criminal justice program, Kyle is beginning his 26th year with the Department, serving these days as a top grant-writing specialist.

Kyle also has another job. One that serves his alma mater and Sebring community. He's head coach of the SHS track and cross-country teams. Kyle is married to SHS alumna, Becky Dennis, and the couple are parents to Lucas and Johnny.

Back in 1991, with college on the horizon, Kyle was looking for outside opportunities to fund his academics. A bright go-getter, Kyle applied for and received awards, including the Sebring McKinley High School Alumni Association Scholarship, the first one to ever be presented.

"The Alumni Scholarship helped with those first-year college expenses, like books," Kyle remembers.

Being able to cover required materials for coursework enabled Kyle to feel more confident with the whole college experience.

"The scholarship helped to ease the burden I was feeling," he said. "I didn't have to worry so much and could focus on my studies."

But there was something greater about winning this scholarship. To this day, Kyle feels the positive regard shown to him by alumni.

"It was extra special having alumni support my classroom efforts," he said. "The thought of those who came before me passing down a legacy made me very appreciative and motivated me to do my best."

Coach Kyle's track team was able to experience that same feeling a year ago, when Anthony Calderone qualified for state competition. While it's exciting to win a spot in the rarified air of Ohio athletics, attending these competitions in Columbus is costly. The Sebring School District has its role, but there are other meaningful encouragers to be had.

"I asked for help from the Alumni Association, and they came through," Kyle said.

JoAnn Jones, SHS Alumni Assn. President, sent out the call, and donations came in. Alumni paid for a specially designed hoodie to complement Anthony's uniform, matching T-shirts for all team members identifying them as proud Sebring Trojans, and tickets to the state meet for those teammates who could attend. Additionally, the whole team gathered for a send-off dinner.

"Anthony recognized we were all in his corner," Kyle beamed. "That means a lot to an athlete getting ready for one of the biggest events of his life."

And, in a very real sense, Kyle, back in 1991, was getting ready for one of the biggest events of his life – higher education. We were in Kyle’s corner, awarding him the Sebring McKinley High School Alumni Scholarship. We alumni can take pride in Kyle, and in offering scholarships to our best and brightest. With your help, we can continue this work.

Each year, the Scholarship Fund awards two \$1,000 scholarships to graduating seniors and smaller awards of recognition to outstanding elementary and junior high school students.

Please help by writing a check or money order. Use Venmo, PayPal, or CashApp. (All instructions are on the form that follows.)

Thank you! The Sebring High School Alumni Association’s existence and its ability to serve would not be possible without you.

Sincerely, Your Alumni Committee Leadership Team

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Trojans Helping Trojans donation form

Name _____ Graduation Year _____

Address _____

Email or Cell/Text _____

(Providing contact information gives us the opportunity to send you a personal thank you and acknowledges receipt of your TAX-DEDUCTIBLE donation.)

Here’s my donation of \$ _____ made payable to SHS ALUMNI ASSN.

If you wish to give your donation “in honor of” or “in memory of” a person or persons, please note name(s) here: _____

Send your completed form with check or money order to:

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P.O. Box 141

Sebring, OH 44672

To donate electronically, send your contribution to vice-president Trista Evanitcka Bates:

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Questions? Need more information about contributions? Please feel free to contact:

JoAnn Warren Jones at 330-428-1734 or joann1954@sbcglobal.net

Jennifer Muerth Ripley at 330-524-5584 or jenniferannripley@gmail.com

Sebring McKinley High School Alumni Association is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization (Tax ID # 34-1681950).

Class News and Notes

Reunion News

The **class of 1960** will celebrate 62 years at Almost Home Event Center in Sebring on Friday, Aug. 12 beginning at 5:30. The group will meet for breakfast at Don Pancho's in Alliance at 9 on Saturday.

The **class of 1972** is sponsoring an all-70's (**other classes are absolutely welcome**) mixer at the Sebring American Legion at 7 p.m. on Friday, Aug. 19. The class will celebrate its 50th year on Saturday, August 20 at 6 p.m. at The Hidden Abbey in Homeworth. Classmates have received letters and reservation forms. Contact JoAnn Jones for more information.

The **class of 1982** will celebrate 40 years at the Sebring Mansion on Sept. 24. Contact Lori Conner Morris for more information.

The **class of 1992** will celebrate its 30th reunion at the Brickhouse in Sebring on August 6. Contact Amy Courtney O'Grady for more information.

The **class of 2002** will meet at 5 p.m. July 30 at Jerzees in Belden Village in Canton. Andy Beane is the contact person.

Class News

John Safkow '74 once again organized the Post Office Palooza and Downtown Stroll on Saturday, May 21. Twenty-eight alumni, representing classes from 1967 to 1980, hung out at the Sebring post office and then strolled through town. Highlights of the trip were a visit to Ashton's, lunch provided by the Log Cabin, and a tour of the Sebring Historical Society Strand, organized by **Nancy Allcorn Whinnery '74**. Several additional alumni were in the Log to enjoy lunch, bringing the number to about 35 participants. It's a fun day so keep it in mind for next May.

Always looking for a chance to get together, members of the **Class of '70** gathered on June 29 at Almost Home Event Center for one of their open-to-the-community lunches. On the menu? Grilled chicken atop a garden salad with citrus dressing on the side. Grilled pita bread accompanied the main course. Dessert was vanilla bread pudding drizzled with chocolate. Can't go wrong with great food and friends! Classmates in attendance: **Mary Braidic Thomas; Lonna Brotherton Roberts; Greg Buck and his wife, Marianne; Chuck Campbell and his wife, Terri; Sue Campbell Adair and her husband, Dave; Kathy Carli Owen; Beth Fahnert Seavy; John Finch; Jennifer Muerth Ripley; Sheila Strawser, and Dan Umbs.**

The **class of '72** has been meeting frequently to plan the 50th reunion and to enjoy lunch together. The next lunch is scheduled for Friday, July 29 at 12:30 at the Brickhouse, when they will welcome a guest from Florida. Along with regulars **Larry Pinkerton, Mike Baddeley, Debbi Lalu Sorge (all class officers), Evelyn Ferguson, Michele Conner, Mike Lepsesty, Kevin Hughes, Jim Brunt and JoAnn Warren Jones,** others in attendance over the past couple months have been **Lloyd Hutmacher, Chuck Lazear, Irene Warner Maurer, Cindy Eaton Hutmacher, and Kathy Graham LaNave.**

Mike Seidel '72 has been a major organizer of the 100th celebration of Sevakeen Lake Country Club. Over the Fourth of July weekend, activities included a dinner, fireworks, and a band. He is now announcing a dance on Aug. 6 from 7-10 at Sevakeen. The band is "In Like Flinn" which plays '60's and '70's music. The donation is \$10 per person that includes a ticket for door prizes. For more information, you can contact Mike at 330-284-3170.