

TIGER TRACKS

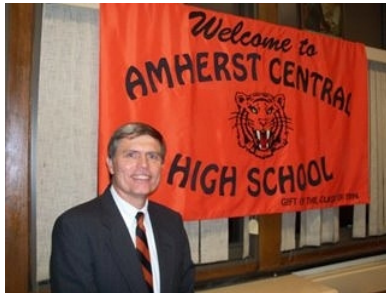


Official Newsletter of the Amherst Central Alumni Foundation, Inc
March 1st, 2012 - Mark Ahrens, President - www.AmherstAlumni.org

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Mark Ahrens '73 - President

Welcome to Tiger Tracks OnLine. I can personally report that after attending the annual Operetta "Oklahoma!" everything is up to date at Amherst High School. We



have a great team working not only to keep track of alumni all over the world and facilitate class reunions, but we have, due to the economy, had to focus on providing grants to give the students of today the same opportunities we had. We have made a difference in the lives of so many students over the years that we know we have to be more proactive in securing the dollars needed to continue.

In January, we added a new committee to your Alumni Board. It is the Alternative Funding Committee. It is made up of Alumni, School Administrators, Parents, Residents and Businesses. Our goal is to reach out to the community that makes up our Amherst School District. We must work together with one goal. This Committee will identify larger projects that are important to the foundation of our school.

I don't know about you, but, I am consistently solicited by the college I attended, claiming that my success is due to their programs. I always thought that my foundation for success came from the opportunities my parents exposed me to, along with my teachers in Elementary, Middle and High School. That was my foundation, how about you? We see what happens when parents are not involved and teachers are not given the tools they need to be effective. We will not let that happen at Amherst.

March 1st thru March 31st we are having our First Annual Amherst Alumni Class Challenge Fund Drive. Our goal is \$30,000, and we need your help! We are setting it up in a similar manner as the NCAA Basketball Tournament, with Brackets all leading to the Finals on March 31st. The next article provides more detail on the challenge. Please send what you can to make a difference.

My thanks to the Board and you, our members, for all you have done to make the Amherst Central Alumni Foundation, Inc., events a success! Let's keep the Amherst Alumni Family strong. Please let me know what you want to see us do. Contact me at ahrgraph2@aol.com

FIRST ANNUAL ALUMNI CHALLENGE

By Mark Ahrens '73 - President



The excitement is growing as we launch our first ever ALUMNI CLASS CHALLENGE Fund Drive. By making a gift to the Amherst Central Alumni Foundation Inc., you can make a difference in preserving the academic excellence and opportunities that the Amherst School District and your Alumni Foundation has worked so hard to maintain.

We will run this competition to coincide with the NCAA Basketball Tournament. Each decade will be pitted against one another. We will set it up similar to the Basketball Tournament, with brackets, all leading to the final winner on March 31st. Weekly updates, which will be found on our web site, and in emails, will be sent out starting the second week of March and will help keep you informed on how your Decade team stands.

The Winning Decade will receive a major story in the NEW Tiger Tracks ONLINE, which will debut March 1st at www.amherstalumni.org, along with a plaque with their Class year engraved, which will hang outside the Alumni office in the High School.

Funds raised in this year's Challenge will be used to fund Grants to provide opportunities for students that have been cut or drastically cut back due to budget limitations, support the Alumni office, and for operating the alumni initiatives that provide support for alumni, all over the world.

Let's go Amherst Alumni...Let's show the students of today, what we, the students of the past are made of. Thank you, in advance, for your support of this major fund drive.

There is a donation form at the end Tiger Tracks or you can visit us online.

ALUMNI NEWS

By Susan Fretz '73

Deaths

Elsa Jung Kreiner '38- 9/19/2010
Dorothy Schmitt Lehman '38- 6/1/2011
K. Joseph Sheedy '38- 11/2/2011
Robert D Flickinger '42- 5/5/2011
Janet Caudell Morgan '43- 4/11/2011
Richard H. Allenbach '45- 2/13/2011
Robert J. Spangenthal '46- 5/28/2011
William C. Morgan '47- 3/12/2011
Rebecca Jean Wesson Michalovic '47- 4/1/2011
Dennis Galvin '56- 9/27/2010
Robert G Schrader '62- 8/28/2011
Edward Seifert '63- 1/15/2010
Cynthia Leonard Weppner '68- 7/3/2009
Deborah Gilboy Ransom '68- 9/18/2010
James Kuttesch '69- 6/5/2010
David Jerge '72- 12/27/2011
Deborah Hamilton Domzalski '73- 5/27/2010
Casey Ronas '74- 12/26/2011
John Curran '75- 9/17/2011
Joseph R. Casarsa '84- 1/5/2012



Retired Faculty

Arthur E. Pankow-HS Guidance- 5/11/2010
Carol McDonnell- Harlem Rd Elementary
Teacher- 6/1/2010
V. Roger Lalli-HS Art Teacher- 8/27/2010
Henry Czyz- HS Biology Teach- 9/2/2011

1970s

Duke McGuire '70, was inducted into the Buffalo Baseball Hall of Fame in 2010. Duke is the attendance office at ACHS and is the voice of the Amherst Tigers during sporting events.

Susan Richard Nelson '70, U.S. District Court judge in Minnesota, was the presiding judge over the 2011 NFL lockout. She is highly regarded in the legal community who has spent the past 33 years building a reputation as an excellent litigator, trial lawyer and judge.

Business First Buffalo presented the 2011 Women of Influence Awards on September 22, 2011. Joyce Steeg DeLong '73, Insty-Prints Business Printing, received the Inspiration Award that honors women leaders who, through their words, actions and attitude, inspire those who work with and around them.

David Miller '79, after spending the past 17 years in Mexico City, began a project "Bike 50 at 50" I November 2011, a 21,000 mile bicycle trek to all 50 states in 50 weeks with his dog. Visit his website: www.Bike50at50.com to see his progress. He is raising funds for 3 charities: American Heart Association, Cancer Research Institute and the Nature Conservancy) as well as an organization in Mexico called Kadima which offers assistance to handicapped children.

1980's

David Zapfel '81, executive director of Gerard Place, a Buffalo non-profit organization, oversaw their 10th Anniversary Celebration in November 2010. Two Amherst alumnus, Janice (Kujawa) and Anthony Ogorek, both from the class of 1972 received the "Commitment to Caring Award".

Cassandra (Cassie) Castonguay Dembosky '81 was appointed to the position of university registrar at Cornell University in 2010. She joined Cornell's Office of Alumni Affairs in 1985. Cassie then worked in the Undergraduate Admissions Office as an associate director/regional coordinator before joining Corning Inc. in October 1999 to work on its human resource information technology system. She returned to Cornell in 2003 as a member of the System for Tracking Administrative Records for the Students (STARS) project for which she served many important roles. She became associate university registrar in 2006.



The Amherst Central Alumni Office is opened
year-round on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from
9am-1pm!

REUNIONS SCHEDULED FOR 2012

By Christopher Byrd - Alumni Office

Class of 1952 - 60 Year Reunion
 Class of 1957 - 55 Year Reunion
 Class of 1962 - 50 Year Reunion
 Class of 1967 - 45 Year Reunion
 Class of 1972 - 40 Year Reunion
 Class of 1982 - 30 Year Reunion
 Class of 1987 - 25 Year Reunion
 Class of 1992 - 20 Year Reunion

More information is available on our website
<http://AmherstAlumni.org> about dates and contacts.

OUR GRANTS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

By Lynn Ramsey '79

The economy was difficult in 2011. Even so, the Amherst Central Alumni and friends were generous. Enough money was raised by the Foundation through various fundraisers such as Tigerfest and the annual Golf Outing to award \$ 4701.00 in grant money to assist in funding various projects in the districts.



Projects at each school in the district benefit from money through the ACAF, Inc. Grant Program. One highlight includes the Smallwood Drive School Garden. The First Lady would be so pleased with this garden and garden club. Students and parents built the garden and shed and students tend to the garden, engaging in curriculum on growing your own food, healthy eating, and recycling! Funds from the Schweitzer Family Fund helped pay for this project in addition to ACAF grants.

Another large project that received grant funds was The Tree Club, spearheaded by faculty member Gordon Crock. The inner courtyard at the high school was transformed by Mr. Crock along with a group of volunteer students. The courtyard was changed from a plain unused area into a beautiful, serene space. They planted trees, installed a brick walkway and patio and built a gazebo type structure that could be used by students to quietly read, study or for classes.

We also awarded grants to a high school math teacher for manipulatives and to the Concert Chorale to assist with a field trip to New York City. The Middle School was awarded a grant to cover costs on a school wide Multicultural Festival and the entire district benefited from a grant fund to help establish a TIPLINE to alert the district to bullying and help curb the potential issues that stem from this problem.

This fall, three additional grants were awarded. The high school math department received funds to continue their graphing calculator loan program and Windermere Boulevard Elementary School was awarded grants for two field trips. The fourth graders will participate in Fit Story, a combination of fitness and history. The fifth graders will venture out for an overnight at the Rochester Museum of Science.

The Amherst Central Alumni Foundation, Inc. is pleased to assist quality programs in the district that may suffer from budget cuts. The Alumni would like current students to experience the same opportunities from which they benefited while students. Help us continue the quality education that Amherst Central Schools offer to their families by supporting the Amherst Central Alumni Foundation, Inc. Please contact the ACAF, Inc. Board of Directors if you would like to donate funds, or give to the Foundation in your will. The Alumni Office is located on the first floor of the High School room 103. Our website is <http://AmherstAlumni.org> and our phone is 716-362-8259.

GOLF CLASSIC

By Christopher Byrd - Alumni Office



Stay tuned and visit us online for more information about the tournament.

WE WOULD LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU

By Christopher Byrd - Alumni Office

Do you have an Amherst story you would like to share with us? Or would you like us to profile someone? Do you have some information you would like to have published in Tiger Tracks? Our next publication will be May 1st, 2012.

You can contact the Alumni Office via email (alumni@amherstschoools.org) or phone (716.362.8259) and find out how.

FROM THE AMHERST CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL PERMANENT ART COLLECTION

By Christopher Byrd - Alumni Office

Hung throughout the first floor of the high school there are various artworks that were added to the permanent collection of ACHS over the years.

In Tiger Tracks, there will be at least one of these pieces of art featured in our publication going forward.

This issue features a work by Michael Jacobbi '75.



AMHERST ALUMNI HONOR EDUCATOR EMRITUS AWARDEES

By Ellen Marshall '69



Gary Runckel, left, Valerie McGovern, Ellwood Friedrich and Joseph Podgorski - Photo by Jim Smerecak - Amherst Bee

In 2004, the Amherst Central Alumni Foundation, Inc. and the Amherst Central School District embarked on an initiative to recognize retired Amherst Central educators. This recognition/award is titled "Distinguished Educator Emeritus". The honor is bestowed upon an educator (teacher/administrator/counselor/etc.) who is held in the highest regard for his or her contributions to students while in service at Amherst. It is designed to embrace all staff grades pre-K-12, whether it is at the High School, Middle School, Harlem Road School, Eggert Road School, Smallwood Drive School or Windermere Boulevard School.

Graduates of Amherst Central and current or retired faculty members may submit a nomination. The format requires a statement that outlines the attributes of the nominee to be considered for this recognition. It may focus on a single encounter of guidance or inspiration that affected a "student" or a series of efforts over the course of a year or years that exemplifies dedication to education at Amherst Central. The Alumni Foundation members greatly value the contributions of these educators at each grade level and every year we receive many letters, which is certainly a tribute to all of the former teachers and administrators who have served over the years in the Amherst Central School District.

The 1st Distinguished Educator Award was presented in 2004 to retired Amherst High School Principal, Donald Munson. Since then, we have recognized a total of 12 retired teachers and administrators. This year's recipients were honored at a cocktail/buffet reception at The Sonoma Grille on October 27th. Co-Chairs for

this year's event, Ginny Rusk '71 and Robert Laskie '57, along with ACAF President, Mark Ahrens '73, introduced the presenters and honorees.

The 2011 Educator Emeritus Awards recipients are:

Joseph Podgorski

The longest serving Principal of Amherst Central High School (1980-2005), Mr. Podgorski spent 3 years as Assistant Principal before being promoted to Principal upon the retirement of Don Munson. During his administrative tenure, Joe oversaw the merger of the 9th grade into the High School in 1984, the development of the BOSS (Building Opportunities for Student Success) Program and SAFE integrating the areas of Health, Physical Education and Guidance into one scheduled program for all students. By and large, his favorite extracurricular involvement was with the formation of the Italian Exchange Program. From its beginnings in 1987, hundreds of Amherst students have participated in this reciprocal home-stay trip to Bolzano, Italy and lifelong friendships lifelong friendships have been the outcome for students from both countries. When asked for his most important accomplishments, Joe states that two are closely intertwined: "maintaining high academic standards" and "hiring excellent teachers to replace the teachers who leave." Since retiring from Amherst in 2005, Joe works in the capacity of Teacher Education Associate at the University of Buffalo and also serves as the President of the Amherst Retired Teachers Association.

Ellwood Friedrich

High School Math Teacher (1962-1996) as well as High School Math Department Chair (1984-1994) "Woody" is also an alumnus -- having graduated from Amherst High School in 1955. Moreover, all three of his children graduated from Amherst High: Susan '81, Chip '83 and Elizabeth '84. He was a pioneer in the area of computer instruction in the 1970's. Outside the classroom, Woody coached the Varsity Rifle Team, JV Soccer & JV Baseball; Student Council Advisor, and Band Co-Chair. In addition, he was the class advisor for the Classes of 1969, 1972, 1980, and co-advisor for the Class of 1993. With the Amherst Education Association, Woody served as school representative, Vice President for 2 years and Treasurer for 12 years. Mr. Friedrich has been inducted in the Amherst Athletic Hall of Fame and supports the Amherst Central Alumni Foundation, Inc. through his role as Class Director for his Class of 1955.

Gary Runckel

A 1954 graduate of Amherst High School, Mr. Runckel started his career in teaching in the Williamsville

Schools where he taught Industrial Arts before becoming a guidance counselor. He joined the staff at Amherst High School in 1972 where he served as both a counselor and Chairman of Student Services. Gary coached Boys JV soccer (1972-1982) and in 1979 established the Girls soccer program at the High School where he remained as coach until 1994. Gary is a member of the Amherst Athletic Hall of Fame and Amherst Retired Teachers Association. He & his wife Joan (Rindfleisch) Runckel are active members of ACAF, Inc. They serve as Co-Class Directors and reunion planners for the Class of 1954 and assist with the Annual ACAF Golf Classic.

Valerie McGovern

Mrs. McGovern began her teaching career in 1968 at the former Eggert Road Elementary School where she worked until it closed in 1982. She then transferred to Windermere Boulevard School and taught there until she retired in 2002 after a total of 33 years of teaching in the district. Outside the classroom, Val was a member of the the WBS Leadership Team and served on numerous Curriculum Councils and hiring committees. For 10 years, she was a building representative for the Amherst Education Association. Valerie is married to Amherst alum, Terry McGovern '62, who taught for 35 years at the Smallwood Drive School. Their children, Michael '93 and Geoffrey '98 are both graduates of Amherst. Since retiring, Valerie served for 5 years as Secretary of the Amherst Retired Teachers Association and currently is the Membership Chair for the Amherst Federal Credit Union.

Amherst Central Alumni Foundation, Inc.
 4301 Main Street - Room 103 HS
 Amherst, New York 14226
www.AmherstAlumni.org
 716.362.8259



This is *wild!* But, we need your help.

The excitement is growing as we launch our first ever **Alumni Class Challenge!**

By making a gift to the Amherst Central Alumni Foundation Inc., you can make a difference in preserving the academic excellence and opportunities that the Amherst School District and your Alumni Foundation has worked so hard to maintain.

We will run this competition to coincide with the NCAA March Basketball Tournament. Each decade will be pitted against one another. We will set it up similar to the Basketball Tournament, with brackets all leading to the final winner on March 31st. Weekly updates, which will be found on our website, and in emails, will be sent out starting the second week of March and will help keep you informed on how your Class and Decade team stands.

The Winning Decade will receive a major story in the **NEW Tiger Tracks ONLINE**, which will debut March 1st at amherstalumni.org, along with a plaque with their class year engraved. The plaque will hang outside the Alumni Office in the High School.

Funds raised in this year's Challenge will be used to fund Grants to provide opportunities for students that have been cut or drastically cut back due to budget limitations, support the Alumni Office, and for operating the alumni initiatives that provide support for alumni, all over the world.

How can I help?! Please send your tax deductible donation to: Amherst Central Alumni Foundation, Inc. Online donations can be made at our website, www.amherstalumni.org. Remember to include your Class Year!

Amherst Central Alumni Foundation, Inc.

4301 Main Street – Room 103

Amherst, NY 14226

716.362.8259

alumni@amherstschoools.org

AmherstAlumni.org



SEND FORM IN WITH DONATION

NAME: _____

CLASS YEAR: _____

ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL: _____

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE AND SEND TO:

AMHERST CENTRAL ALUMNI FOUNDATION, INC.
4301 MAIN STREET – ROOM 103
AMHERST, NEW YORK 14226

THANK YOU!