



# TOPEKA HIGH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## News from the Paul Fink Room

THS Historical Society/Alumni Association, 800 SW Tenth Ave, Topeka, KS 66612  
Website: thshistoricalociety.org Phone: 785-295-3200 Email: thshs2001@yahoo.com Vol.41 No.4 December 2022

### THS Graduate Hall of Fame

A museum director, McDonald's franchise founder, and Los Alamos laboratory fellow were inducted into the Topeka High School Graduate Hall of Fame on October 2, 2022 in the THS Hoehner Auditorium. Two former staff members will also be honored as Distinguished Staff.

This was the 41st Topeka High Hall of Fame ceremony, with 125 THS graduates having been inducted and 26 former staff & faculty honored with the Distinguished Staff designation.

The three honorees whose portraits will be added to the Hall of Fame Room and two former faculty members are:



#### **Dina M. Bennett**

Director of Collections & Curatorial Affairs, American Jazz Museum

After graduating from Topeka High in 1985, Dr. Dina Bennett received her B.A. in Communication Studies from Washburn University, completed her master's in College Student

Personnel from Kansas State University and a Ph. D. in Ethnomusicology with a minor in African American & African Diaspora Studies from Indiana University. Bennett has over 30 years of experience in the music field. In 2021, Dr. Bennett became the Director of Collections & Curatorial Affairs of the American Jazz Museum in Kansas City. She is also an accomplished pianist.



#### **James Wylie Gordon**

Retired, Laboratory Fellow, Los Alamos National Laboratory

A member of the Topeka High class of 1952, James Gordon attended the University of Chicago before his enlistment in the Navy from 1954-1957. Following his time serving his country, Mr. Gordon earned his B.S. and a Ph. D. in Physics at the University of Kansas. For 20 years, he worked at Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico, serving as a staff member, group leader, and laboratory fellow. Over his career, Mr. Gordon received several accolades, including the prestigious E.O. Lawrence Memorial Award presented by the Department of Energy. In his retirement, Mr. Gordon and his family moved back to Kansas, settling in Baldwin City. Mr. Gordon passed away in March of 2016.



#### **Ralph King**

Retired, Founder & Owner, Kings Management Company

Graduate of Topeka High in 1959, Ralph King was the founder and owner of King's Management Company. An award-winning organization that operated ten McDonald's restaurant locations in the Kansas City Metro for over 30 years. His work with McDonald's went beyond owning franchises, Mr. King was a brand ambassador, as well as served as Co-op President. Mr. King is also a passionate and active board member with the Ronald McDonald House Charities, including serving as the Director of Ronald McDonald Children's Charity. Before he embarked on his entrepreneurial career, Mr. King completed his degree in Political Science at Washburn University, while also working at Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company. Since his retirement in 2019, Mr. King continues to be involved within his community and serves as a board member of his church.



#### **Harley Becker**

Retired, Economic & Government Faculty, Topeka High Distinguished Staff

Harley Becker's military career brought him to Kansas in the late 1950s. While stationed at Fort Riley, Mr. Becker graduated from Kansas State University with both his bachelor's and master's degrees in economics. Soon after Mr. Becker and his family moved to Topeka when he was hired to teach by Topeka Public Schools, USD 501. For over 30 years, Mr. Becker taught economics and government classes at Topeka High School. He was also instrumental in the establishment of Topeka High's photography program, a favorite hobby of his. Mr. Becker retired from Topeka High and teaching in 1996.



#### **Patrick Ryan**

Retired, History & Social Studies Faculty, Topeka High Distinguished

As the only child of two traveling teachers, Patrick Ryan received a diverse education early on. Their work took him from the prairie of Kansas to the desert of Nevada and back. After high school, Mr. Ryan attended Rockhurst College, before enlisting in the Army. Once his service of duty was complete, Mr. Ryan worked toward his teaching career. Attending Washburn University and receiving his master's degree at the University of Kansas. In 1969, Mr. Ryan began his tenure at Topeka High. Teaching a multitude of history classes, including US and Kansas History, as well as Government. Since retiring in 1999, Mr. Ryan occupies his time traveling with his family and volunteering.

**By Gary Krohe 1971**

*One of the party guests was Sue Elliot, the 1971 Sunflower editor. I introduced her to Leighton Mark. A couple of years later I was best man at their wedding. Sadly, the marriage didn't last. Leighton graduated from WU, went on to work for the daily newspaper in Independence MO. UPI/AP noticed him and soon he was assigned to cover the embassy bombing in Beirut in 1984. Leighton was critically wounded and almost died. He lost the use of his right arm and hand. After two years of recovery AP/*

*National Geographic designed and built him a special camera that he could use one handed with his left hand only. Leighton went on to be the Chairman of the White House press Photographers Association for many years, shooting many front page photos of presidents from Reagan to Obama. He retired in 2016 and after a short stay in California retired in Topeka at Lexington Park. He passed away on 1/22/2019.*



1971 THS Graduation; pg. 296 1971 Sunflower

**2022 ANNUAL MEETING**  
**JANUARY 23, 12PM**



## Maintaining the Topeka High original furniture

### David Clark 1967

Five years ago I attended my 50th class reunion. It was great to see friends that I have not seen for many years and we all had a good time. During our dinner Joan Barker gave us a list of items the class could donate to the school. I learned that The Topeka High Historical Society was refinishing furniture to help preserve and maintain that special Topeka High beauty and charm. I reached out to Joan thinking I might be able to help in this endeavor. I started working on library chairs and cafeteria chairs. Since then, library tables, some office furniture, display units, drafting tables, art gallery benches, some hallway doors on the first floor have been shown attention. In total I have worked on over 130 items in the last 5 years.

Recently I started refinishing the main office counter that contains 104 teacher mailboxes. It has been joy to work with the THS staff and learn more about the current school environment.

Not many know there is a furniture graveyard in the lower level of the school. Broken chairs are stored there until someone is able to repair and refinish them. Not all chairs could be repaired but I have combined good pieces of various broken chairs to make a useable chair.

One of my bigger projects was refinishing the paneled walls in the Cavalier Room. When you have a tour of the school you must stop by that room. All the furniture has been restored, along with new lighting and fresh paint. It has become a mini Art Gallery with work by THS graduates Martha Herrick, Walter Hatke, Margaret Whittemore, and Thomas McCoy.

I want to thank all those that have contributed to THSHS in funding the many school projects including refinishing of the furniture. Most of the furniture goes back to the 1930's when the current building was built. It is my hope that much of the furniture will still be in use in another 90 years.

The processes I go through in refinishing includes:

- A. Tighten all screws and bolts.
- B. Strip the object of the old finish. (Yes, I remove all gum that has been left.)
- C. Light sanding. I leave any carvings unless they are not appropriate. I feel this is part of the history of the item, even though we prefer no carvings in general.
- D. Adding two coats of stain.
- E. I complete the project by adding three coats of polyurethane with light sanding between coats.

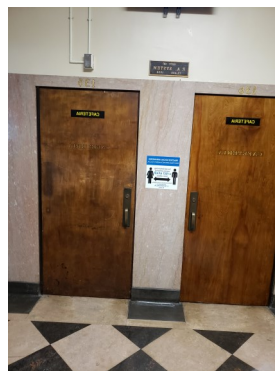
Besides the furniture refinishing, your contributions have helped fund many other projects. A major project started in October of this year is the refurbishing of the main foyer walls. We will unveil and provide more specific information about this project soon.

THS project plans in 2023 call for the restoration of the masonry of the front veranda wall, the west side gym entrance walls, and the four fireplaces in the building. This work will include cleaning the surfaces and repairing the grouting.

All the projects that the THSHS sponsors for Topeka High are due to the generosity of donors like you. Donations have come from former students and others that love our building and want to see it preserved. Should you want to help, your donations would be appreciated. Contact the office if you want to get involved in a certain project.

\*\*\*\*A note from the THSHS executive secretary. Dave Clark is retired. He is a master woodworker and loves Topeka High. The THS Historical Society appreciates this combination of his talent and passion. Go to Wood-ByDave.com for a look at Dave's unique creations.

### Finished projects, works in progress, and before and after images of recent THS wood projects.



**Student Cafeteria Entrance**



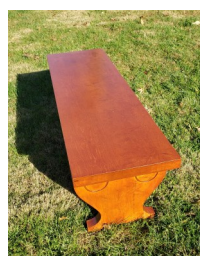
**Cavalier Room**



**Student Cafeteria Chairs**



**Staff mailboxes**



**Art Gallery bench**

## ~ 2023 CLASS REUNIONS ~

**Homecoming 2023 - September 29 - THS vs Wichita Northwest**

### Class

Class of 1958

Class of 1963

Class of 1973

### Dates

September 29,30

September 22

September 29

### For More Information

bwwjr7@gmail.com

carolvogelks@gmail.com

lclothier0@gmail.com, www.Topeka73.com

The THS Historical Society assists class reunions by: 1. providing classmate contact information 2. arranging THS tours 3. facilitating the use of the building 4. offering discounts for memberships during reunions. Go to **thshistoricalociety.org** for words to the school song, THS graphics, information for reunion coordinators and more. **Let the THSHS know if your class is having a reunion and we'll help you get the word out to your classmates.**

## Gift Suggestions

Looking for a way to help your school? Here are some suggestions.

Contact the THSHS, if you're interested.

**Sponsor a metal bench for the THS campus**

\$2,250 each

**Sponsor the refinishing of an original USD 501**

**Drafting Table** - 2 tables @ \$275 each.

**Sponsor the refinishing of THS hallway doors**

\$300 each

**Sponsoring the refinishing of an original Student Cafeteria Table**

3 tables @ \$250 each

**Conversion of vintage THS Video Tapes**

(sports, music), VHS to DVD

Can you us help take inventory of that collection?

## Black & Gold Report - Graduates in the Spotlight

- **Jeff Jacobsen 1969** was among the 1st group to be inducted in the Kansas Press Association's Kansas Photojournalism Hall of Fame. The special event was held in Topeka on November 19.
- **Julie Jacobsen Phillips 2001 and Kelly Rippel 2005** were selected by the Jayhawk Area Council, Boy Scouts in this year's class of Topeka's "20 Under 40". Selection is based on commitment and contributions both professionally and personally. Julie is currently the Director of Grants, Communities in Schools of Mid-American, Inc. Kelly is the Crop Claims Adjustor, Zurich North America, Rural Community Insurance Services.
- 1985 THS Hall of Fame honoree **Joe Anderson 1961** was profiled in the September 2021 issue of Car and Driver. He spoke about his experience in the military, in the auto industry, and as a black man in America. Anderson graduated from Topeka High in 1961 and from West Point in 1965, commanded troops in Vietnam, and rose to head of General Motors body hardware business unit, with 7,000 employees and \$1 billion in revenue, before starting his own holding company.
- **Betty Young Rosenwald 1960** released a collection of hymns called "In Awesome Majesty."
- **Frances Eckhardt Forgiione 1978** wrote a book titled "Sheine Like Stars - Daily Reflections to Discover Your Inner Light."
- **Marne Wasson Fischer 1987** was promoted to director of human resources of Sink, Gordon, and Associates LLP's Manhattan office

Your news, thoughts, and questions are important to us. Information about jobs, honors, and events are always welcome. Include your name, class year, mailing and email address to us at 785-295-3200, [thshs2001@yahoo.com](mailto:thshs2001@yahoo.com).

## IN MEMORY OF OUR GRADUATES & FRIENDS

Raymond E.T. Dennis 1937  
 Thelma Keller Grace 1940  
 Mary Ehrlich Urban 1941  
 Phyllis E. Sieve-Cowan 1942  
 Sam A. Crow 1944  
 Lois Headley Walters 1945  
 Mary Lou Martin Metzger 1946  
 Adrian J. Allen 1946  
 Marvin A. Carlson 1946  
 Don Q. Franzen 1947  
 Donna M. "Maggie" Kelley 1947  
 Donna Simmons Hinshaw 1947  
 Mary Ann Cottrell Earp 1947  
 Ann Beelman Knowlton 1948  
 Dorothy Greene Hanger 1948  
 Dean Owens 1949  
 Donna Laird Johnson 1949  
 Paul H. Lynch 1949  
 Barbara 'Bobbie' Lewis Herl 1949  
 Roy L. Myers 1949  
 Dorothy Simmons Harrison 1949  
 Charles R. Harrison 1949  
 D. Gene Davenport 1949  
 George Schrader 1949  
 Clyde Coriell 1949  
 Robert L. Schaeffer 1949  
 Richard Anderson 1949  
 Nancy Farrish Anderson 1949  
 Patricia A. Wilderman Jennings 1950  
 Nancy Patton Montgomery 1950  
 Dan L. Robison 1952

Collette Peterman Coolidge 1953  
 Norma Alfrey Falk 1953  
 Marcia K. Stingley 1953  
 Ethel Davis 1953  
 William B. Carter 1953  
 Donna Pagel Velasquez 1954  
 Patty M. Davis Mason 1954  
 Curt M. Rulon 1955  
 Phillip L. Snook 1955  
 Donna Lamb Simmons 1956  
 P. Nadine Yenkey 1956  
 Virginia Wilson Neeley 1957  
 Sandra Hopkins Berger 1957  
 Jack D. Keim 1957  
 Roger Larson 1958  
 Larry E. Mumford 1958  
 Mary Gayle Schuster 1958  
 Janet Carlson Miller 1959  
 Elgin O. Woody III 1959  
 Robert L. (Bob) Reed 1959  
 Mark Erickson 1959  
 Peggy Edelblute Ables 1960  
 Pete Barham 1960  
 Sara Sanders Deshazer 1960  
 Mervin L. Bartell 1960  
 Betty Tharp White 1961  
 Anita Riley Frank 1961  
 Douglas Bass 1963  
 Lois Lewis Bethea-Thompson 1963  
 Arthur L. Brice 1963  
 Frank (Bill) Huffman 1963

JoAnn Mader Hudson 1965  
 Gayle Garretson 1965  
 Patty Lou Kelly Ceballos 1966  
 Linda Arens Martin 1966  
 Marla Parker Rimel 1966  
 Earl Busey, Jr. 1967  
 Rhetta Hoppock Lira 1967  
 Penny Hartner Nelson 1968  
 Mary Ann Sachs 1968  
 Michael Westfall 1969  
 Barbara Pimentol Calvillo 1969  
 Rebecca Jones Siple 1971  
 Debra Wyre Cain 1971  
 David W. Metzenthin 1972  
 Jill Alberg Lewis 1973  
 Gary D. Hawkins 1973  
 William E. Gatchell 1973  
 Mark E. Stubbs 1973  
 Robert M. Frost 1975  
 Randy Perez 1975  
 Michele A. Smith 1976  
 Lisa Dixon Bevens 1979  
 Kari Lee Kelly 1984  
 Daniel R. Brickei 1984  
 Brandy Boatright McGranahan 1991  
 Chad E. States 1993  
 Emily Swain 1997  
 Ryan J. Ceballos 1999  
 John Keller, THS faculty  
 Annette Kresie, THS faculty



Duane Pomeroy, THS 1970,  
 THS tennis coach, and substitute teacher would say,  
 "It's a GOODYEAR at  
 Topeka High!"

**A limited number of bricks on the THS Constitution Plaza (east side of campus) are remaining for sponsorship.  
 Go to: <https://www.thshistoricalsociety.org/product/th-constitution-plaza-brick/>  
 for an order form and directions.**



The Topeka High foyer is experiencing a "blast into the past." You might not recognize the entrance the next time you come to 800 SW 10th.



## The Trojan Bell was returned to its home during Homecoming 2022 festivities



Jon O'Harra 1972 and Tom Jones 1971 assembling the bell before a home football game at Washburn's Moore Bowl. Photo from the 1971 THS yearbook.



The Class of 1972 float is lined up for the 2022 Homecoming Parade.



The mystery of the missing THS Bell was solved when the Class of 1972 confessed that it had been 'lost' in a parent's garage for the past 50 years. The class thought their 50th reunion during Homecoming 2022 was an appropriate time to return the bell. The class shined and painted the bell before it was featured on their homecoming parade float. A clear note from the bell could be heard by the crowd cheering on the several blocks long Topeka High parade. The THS Class of 1972 was assisted in lifting the mighty bell by the 2022 Football Team. Topeka High is home for two significant bells. Do you know where the other bell is located on the THS campus?

# THS Historical Society Supporters (On a mission for THS)

Graduation Year \_\_\_\_\_

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name (at graduation) \_\_\_\_\_ Current Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

THS Spouse's First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse Graduation Year \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

## MEMBERSHIP DUES – (for operational expenses & THSHS special events)

	Amount
Yearly (\$25) .....	\$ _____
Extra annual payment of \$1 for each year since my graduation (i.e. Class of 1966, 50 years since graduation=\$50)	\$ _____

### I want to give a membership to:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Graduation year \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Membership: \_\_\_\_ Yearly (\$25)

Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Check enclosed: ☐ (payable to THS Historical Society or THSHS) TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Charge account: ☐ Visa ☐ Master Card ☐ American Express ☐ Discover (**\$50 minimum requested**)

Name on Card: \_\_\_\_\_

Number: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ CV # (required) \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date: Month \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: THSHS, 800 SW 10<sup>th</sup>, Topeka, KS 66612, or pay dues online at: [thshistoricalociety.org/](http://thshistoricalociety.org/)

**Keep track of your THSHS membership easily by creating a recurring payment online at [thshistoricalociety.org](http://thshistoricalociety.org). Find the option at the checkout.**

## Troy Today - What's happening at THS?

- Isaiah Kincade was selected 1st team, Centennial League, defensive back
- Elijah Kincade was selected honorable mention, Centennial League, tight end - Isaiah and Elijah are sons of Moshe' and Chad Kincade 1999.
- Jayden Norman, selected 2nd team, Centennial League, wide receiver
- Payton Wheat, selected Honorable Mention, Centennial League, quarterback
- A record number (90) of boys and girls are out for THS wrestling, led by coaches Michael Canacari, Roger Laubengayer-Mena, and Andrew Bradshaw
- The THS yearbook staff received an All Kansas rating for the 2022 yearbook. It was a back to back win from the Kansas Scholastic Press Association which ranks the best yearbooks in the state annually.
- Garrett Jones (THS Band Director) and Alex Piazza (THS Choral Music Director) were recently named Outstanding Young Educators at the KMEA regional event held in Topeka.



**THS Historical Society**  
**800 W Tenth Ave**  
**Topeka, KS 66612**

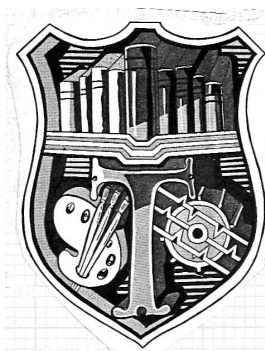
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### **The THS Historical Society Needs You!**

Thank you for renewing your annual support payment. It's only \$25.

Go to [thshistorysociety.org](http://thshistorysociety.org) to make a payment and find previous newsletters in full color.



### **THSHS ACCOUNTS**

**THSHS ENDOWMENT** - Established in 2019 to sustain the operations of the THSHS and encourage building preservation - administered by the Topeka Community Foundation.

**THSHS TOWER SOCIETY**— established in 2009 to be used for building projects - list of donors is included once a year in the THSHS newsletter and on the THSHS website.

**MEMBERSHIP DUES AND YEAR END APPEAL**— These funds are used for operating expenses of the THSHS.