

THE 2009 ANNUAL EDUCATION FOUNDATION AUCTION

On March 28, the 6th annual Education Foundation Auction was held at the Pizza Cellar/Cue Company in Blooming Prairie. This year, with all of the extra stresses of the Economy, there were many people that were skeptical. All of those fears were soon forgotten as the Auction approached and got underway. We received more donations than we have ever had and we had more bidders attend than the previous year. That makes us once again smile and be proud to be an "Awesome Blossom." It is with the help of many volunteers, alumni, business owners, and individuals of all ages that we were able to raise over \$46,000 in profit from the Auction. It was an exciting and fun evening for all that were able to attend. We had donations from children as young as 3 years old and as mature as 90 plus years old. It is so neat to see the range of both items and donors. This year, the largest ticket item was a one week stay at a cabin located near the Black Hills, SD. Another item that the 6th grade class put together was a dog project. It included a purebred white German Shepard puppy complete with vaccinations, training, doghouse, food, treats, and all you would need. The kids were really excited about the

whole project and they did a lot of brainstorming to make it all happen. It netted us about \$350 and taught the kids a lot about helping raise money for "their" school. We sold approximately 350 items. We raffled the chance to be the "face of the 2010" auction. This was won by Alena Salinas. She is sure to be a beauty on next year's posters and cards. All in all, we were VERY happy with the auction! It can again be viewed as the "Best Party in Blooming Prairie" for the 6th straight year. The money raised will definitely help the Education Foundation give the children of the Blooming Prairie Schools the opportunities that would not otherwise be possible. Over the years we have been able to provide in excess of \$360,000 in programs and activities to our kids. We want to thank you all for any part you have played in this success. Next year's auction will be held on March 27, 2010. Those of you that were able to help and attend this year, we hope you can come back. Those of you that had to miss it, mark your calendars now for next year! Anyone who has donations or ideas, please let us know. Thanks again to everyone.

Sue Zwiener and Board Members of The Blooming Prairie Education Foundation.

Blossoms Forever

A Newsletter for Blooming Prairie School District Alumni & Friends • May, 2009



Blossom Honorees
Marian Amundson Lehman, Bill Underwood,
Jeanne Kruckeberg Ide, and Allan Wold

2009 DISTINCTIVE SERVICE AND ATHLETIC HALL OF FAME HONOREES

Members of Blooming Prairie High School classes of '43, '49, '51 and '86 were well represented as graduates of those years were honored by the "Blossoms Forever" group this past January. Distinctive Service awards were given to Marian Amundson Lehman and Bill Underwood. Allan Wold and Jeanne Kruckeberg Ide were inducted into the BP Athletic Hall of Fame. Old times came alive again as we celebrated together on Friday, January 23 and Saturday, January 24.

The celebrants had a busy weekend as they shared life experiences with current BPHS students on Friday afternoon. At 6:00 p.m. that same day, relatives and Blossom friends greeted the recipients at a reception in the new BPHS Media Center. Stories, most of which were true, were heard throughout the room. During halftime of the Blossom girls basketball that evening, Marian, Bill, Allan, and Jeanne were introduced to the crowd and given a well decorated Blossom Forever shirt as a remembrance gift. The Blooming Prairie Education Foundation's annual banquet and celebration capped off the events as we gathered at the Servicemen's Club on

Saturday evening. Each award winner was presented with an engraved plaque and each shared stories and advice with those present.

The awards, Distinctive Service and Athletic Hall of Fame, are given each year to celebrate success and to remember and honor Blooming Prairie School District teachers and administrators. Bill Underwood talked about Coach Mike Anderson. Marian Amundson Lehman remembered the guidance and encouragement of Counselor Bob Ackerwold. Jeanne Kruckeberg Ide said that Coach Ken Benkhen made sure that she participated in track. Allan Wold stated that competing coaches, Ove Berven among them, had helped him to become a better coach. Each felt that Blooming Prairie was a good place in which to grow up.

We all became Blossoms again as we heard Bill, Marian, Jeanne, and Allan share their successes and life stories. We could imagine being with each of them as they traveled the world, served other people in the United States and beyond, won numerous State track titles, and coached many young boys to State Championships. We are proud of the accomplishments of these women and men and are also still proud to be Blossoms.



Celebrating with Allan Wold at the January Banquet are his wife Beverly, son Dan, and sisters Sonja, Class of '56, Lois, Class of '51, and Harriet, Class of '46.



Blooming Prairie Education Foundation
PO Box 521
Blooming Prairie, MN 55917



With their Mother in 1999 are the 14 Harms children. Front row left to right are Sonja, Mary, Mrs. Harms, Lois, Sylvania. Second row Judy, Sue, Sally, Thelma, Georgia Back row Darryl, Jim, Tom, Paul, Gaylen

SAM AND INEZ HARMS FAMILY AND BLOOMING PRAIRIE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

We have been reminded of late of the impact that our school has had on the lives of graduates and also of those who served on the staff of the school. The 2009 Blossom Distinctive Service and Athletic Hall of Fame honorees serve as good examples. Allan Wold, Bill Underwood, Marian Amundson Lehman, and Jeanne Kruckeberg Ide told us how much they appreciated the help and assistance of Blooming Prairie teachers and administrators. They also remembered community members who helped them as they grew up in our small town.

A world wide positive exponential factor can be applied to the lives of the honorees and to the life of every Blooming Prairie Public School graduate. The positive effect expands even more as we consider the good works of the more than 3,500 Blossom grads as they have spent and are spending their lives as good citizens and family members. To illustrate the many Blossom successes, consider the Sam and Inez Harms family. From 1953 to 1970, fourteen children of Mr. and Mrs. Harms graduated from Blooming Prairie High School. In addition, Mrs. Harms, then Inez Benson, was a 1927 graduate of BPHS. What a strong and good family. Sam and Inez were well known in Blooming Prairie as they worked together as

vegetable farmers and in raising 14 children. Good parents, good citizens, good church members, and supportive community members. Sam served on the Blooming Prairie Public School Board for 15 years. In addition, he and Inez were correctly regarded as pillars of the First Baptist Church. What follows is a brief summary of the life to date of each of the Harms' children. Their successes and positive contributions to the lives of others illustrate again to all of us the life-long benefit of good parents, good schools, and good community.

SYLVIA HARMS BURTON – CLASS OF '53- Sylvia's Father, Sam, was proud to present Sylvia with her diploma when she graduated from BPHS. Following graduation, she worked at the First National Bank in Blooming Prairie for five years. Sylvia married Ray Vavra in 1954 and they later moved to a farm near Cambridge. Sylvia and Ray raised potatoes for the "Old Dutch Potato Chip Company and were together for 42 years. Five children and 21 grandchildren have been born into this family. After Ray's death, Sylvia married Bill Burton and they now reside in Harris, Minnesota.

Sylvia said she had a "wonderful education" in Blooming Prairie and particularly enjoyed choir, marching band, and GAA at noon. She also fondly remembers the band presenting concerts on Summer Saturday nights on the corner of the First National Bank.

THELMA HARMS HOELDKTE – CLASS OF '55- After graduating from Wheaton College, Thelma's profession became that of Elementary School Teacher as she taught in Syracuse, New York. She later became a Librarian. She is married to David Hoeldtke and is the mother of 3 children and the Grandmother of 8.

Thelma said "Blooming Prairie teachers always encouraged us to do our best" and that "the school always had room for you in a group if you were interested." She, like many of the older Blossom graduates, remembers "the tunnel". Readers, if you remember "the tunnel" tell your grandchildren about it. Thelma's good memories of school include lunches in the balcony, GAA, band, choir, and just plain fun.

SONJA HARMS MYERS- CLASS OF '56- Sonja's direct comments reflect well the message of this article. A good family, a good school, and a supportive

BLOSSOMS IN TANZANIA??

Blooming Prairie Blossoms are reaching far and wide to spread small town hospitality and service internationally. Recently four Blossoms traveled to Tanzania, Africa to help bring electricity and new buildings to a Secondary School in Bomalang'ombe. Bomalang'ombe is a small village in rural Tanzania. It is approximately a 10 hour drive from the airport, in the capital city of Dar es Salaam, to the village with an overnight stay in Iringa. The school had no running water and no electricity until mission workers from the US arrived to work on these projects.

Marlene (Tollefson) Harty (BPHS class of 1962) from Stillwater, Daryl Prihoda (BPHS class of 1978), and his wife, Jane (Tollefson) Prihoda (BPHS class of 1979) from Austin, and Merrisa Kittelson (2008 graduate) from Blooming Prairie, were all part of a team that traveled over 9,000 miles one way to help in true Blossom style.

In June of 2007 a water line was installed 1 1/2 miles from a local development corporations factory site to the school, this was Marlene's first trip to Tanzania. She returned home to MN and asked her brother-in-law, Daryl Prihoda and her son, Ted Harty to consider helping with an electrical project which they started in Sept. of 2007 along with 8 others. Thirty poles were set and the basic infrastructure was built, without the aid of any modern equipment. The summer of 2008, Marlene and Daryl returned with Jane Prihoda, and Merissa Kittelson along with 26 others. This trip was spent stringing wire and making final connections to provide long term, dependable electricity to the school of 300 students and staff for the first time. Much progress was also made in the completion of a new boy's dormitory and a new kitchen.

Many lessons have been learned and relationships begun as a result of these mission trips. The missions group from Trinity Lutheran in Stillwater (Marlene's church), which organizes the trips, believes in personal interaction with all of the people they meet in Africa. "We may be the only Americans and Christians many of these people ever see. We need to be good examples

of people willing to serve and expect nothing in return," is a common phrase shared among the teams traveling to Bomalang'ombe.

An August 2009 trip is being planned and all four are hoping to return.

For more information on the Tanzania Mission contact Daryl Prihoda at dwprihoda@myclear-wave.net



Retired Blossom uniforms were taken over to the school, pictured are students and staff at the Secondary School in Tanzania along with a few of the mission workers after a football (soccer) game. Merissa Kittelson is pictured lying in the front.

JULY 4TH AND 5TH BLOSSOMS AND FRIENDS IN THE PARK

We expect to see everyone at the Blossoms Forever tent in the park on Saturday and Sunday July 4th and 5th. Yours may be the story we haven't yet heard. Be there.

career has served me well all these years. Largely, because of the nursing shortage, I've never had to worry about a job. Its always been "When can you start?" Now I'm retiring this June to spend a more leisure life. I'll be enjoying more time with our 10 grandchildren. We (Jim Burns is Judy's husband) have 4 children and their spouses, whom we enjoy camping, fishing, and just plain being with. We're active in our church and neighborhood. We live a few blocks from Lake Harriet, so we enjoy the nightly summer concerts, the Rose Garden, and the 3 mile walking path that surrounds the lake.

Blooming will always be a big part of me. I try to make the fall "Lutefisk" dinner at the Lutheran Church every year, so if you want to see me, you'll come. I'd love to see you."

SUE HARMS- CLASS OF '62- After graduation, Sue moved to Minneapolis for training as an X-Ray Technologist but the majority of her professional work has been in the manufacturing of medical devices. She has retired after finishing her career as an airport TSA. Two children and two grandchildren are now part of Sue's life in Richfield, Minnesota. Sue also wrote well of life in Blooming Prairie. "I've always felt thankful that I grew up in B.P. where I could run around freely, as I was growing up, and felt safe. One felt a part of a community. I enjoyed having the same classmates throughout my entire schooling. While in school, I especially liked chorus, band, and sports. We have lots of close relatives living in B.P. so I grew up spending lots of good times and special occasions with them that left such warm memories for me now. Church life under the pastorship of Rev. Farrington helped shape my spiritual foundation for my life. We had so many good times in Youth Group activities and summer camp."

MARY HARMS GRACE '63- St. Cloud State University, Pillsbury College, and Minneapolis General Hospital School of Nursing prepared Mary for a career in nursing. She has served others while working as a Nurse in Ft. Eustice, Virginia, Rawlins, Wyoming, Saratoga, Wyoming, and in California and in Cambridge, Minnesota. A special and exciting experience was to travel to Russia with the Billy Graham Crusade as a Private Duty Nurse for George Wilson who was in a wheelchair at that time. Mary remembers Blooming Prairie as where she started her roots

and loves coming home to visit family and friends. She has great memories of home life, school, and church functions. She said, "B.P. is a good place to grow up." She has retired and now lives in South Carolina with her husband Jeff. Their family includes three sons and one grandson. Family, church work, and sewing have been and continue to be lifelong enjoyments.

TOM HARMS- CLASS OF '65- Tom remembers lots of wonderful events in Blooming Prairie. While enjoying all of his classes, Tom especially appreciated great classmates and his service as CoCaptain of the football team and participation on the wrestling team. He also singled out singing in the church choir as a great memory. Tom earned a Bachelor of Science Degree from Tulsa University and then worked for Blue Cross/Blue Shield. He now works as a Branch Manager for American Heritage Bank specializing in Commercial Loans. Tom and his wife Becky have three children including twin sons. They reside in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma.

SALLY HARMS CHAPMAN- CLASS OF '66- Sally's life after BPHS graduation has centered on family, church, and career. She earned a BS degree in Elementary Education from Tulsa University and then taught kindergarten for 2 years. Sally also has served as a Missionary to the Bahamas and is now employed as a Bail Bondsman. She and her husband David have two sons. She and David now reside in Oklahoma and both are still involved in the good works of their Church.

JIM HARMS- CLASS OF '67- Jim and his wife Kim are dentists in Minnesota and have owned and operated their clinic for 25 years. Jim's reflections in his own words, "I was born and raised in Blooming Prairie under the nurturing and guidance of loving, kind and supportive parents, teachers, and lots of relatives. I was active in music, theatre, sports, and church while in school. I felt I obtained a very adequate general education. A special memory was going to State in Basketball. After graduation, I attended the U of Tulsa for 4 yrs. After serving in the army for 3 yrs., I went to the U of Maryland for 4 yrs. of Dental school where I met my wife, Kim. We started out in Public Health Service in Illinois and then came back to Mn. We have two daughters, the oldest is a Lawyer and the youngest is in Law School. We sadly lost our one and

only son, recently. That's why I say you should never pass up the opportunity to say "I love you" to those that you care about, each day, for you don't know when you won't be able to. My favorite pastimes are reading, travel, spending time with family, friends, going to church, and time up north to the cabin. I love the idea of "seizing the day".

LOIS HARMS DURFEY- CLASS OF '69-Lois has special memories of BPHS and her role as the female lead in the school musical production of "Carousel". Her interest in music is still with her as she sings in her church choir and also plays the flute at church. Lois and husband John live in Minnesota and have a family that includes 6 children and 6 grandchildren. She will complete training as a registered nurse in May. Lois offers this quote for our readers, "The 40's are the old age of youth, the 50's are the youth of old age".

PAUL HARMS- CLASS OF '70- Paul's favorite class at BPHS was Social Studies which has served him well as he now says, "I've loved traveling and learning how others live and work". After high school graduation, Paul attended Pipestone Vocational School and took Meat Cutting. He then worked at Blooming Prairie Super Value for a short time. Air Craft Mechanics became his next profession as he enlisted in the Air Force. Four years later Paul became employed in Electronics at Control Data. He finished his career at McGlynn Bakeries and is now retired.

Again, good parents, good Blooming Prairie Public School teachers and administrators, and a good community have in the past and continue today to positively affect the world and the people of the world. Sam and Inez Harms and their children, Sylvia, Thelma, Sonja, Darryl, Gaylen, Georgia, Judy, Sue, Mary, Tom, Sally, Jim, Lois, and Paul exemplify and prove the point.



Sam and Inez Harms

2009 Blossom Class Reunions

Class of '39 meets every year at noon on the first Friday in August at Jerry's Other Place in Austin. Contact Merten Hansen for further information.

Class of '41 planned to meet every five years but did not meet as planned last summer. Jeanne Mack Hansen would like to meet. Contact her for further information.

Class of '44 meets every year at the Pizza Cellar on the first Friday in October. Yvonne Walsh is the class contact.

Class of '47 meets annually at the Blooming Prairie Pizza Cellar on the second Saturday of August.

Class of '53 will come together at the Pizza Cellar on the first Saturday of August each year. Contact Dick Miller at 507-437-1600 for more information.

Class of '55 plans to meet at the Pizza Cellar on the third Saturday in September each year. Marilyn Robinson Tollefson will provide more information. 507-753-7553

Class of '58 yearly class reunion will be at the Pizza Cellar on Saturday, September 26, 5:00 p.m. Doris Rasmussen (507-583-2280) and Judy Wencil (507-583-7570) are contacts for the class.

Class of '59 will celebrate at a "50 years since graduation" reunion at the BP Pizza Cellar on September 12. Joyce (Nichols) Fawver 507-433-4020 and Eileen (Dalager) Sheedy 507-437-2579 are contacts.

We would like to advertise your class reunions. Contact Doug Myers at 507-433-6262 or e-mail dmyers@smig.net.

For information about the Blooming Prairie Education Foundation go to blossoms.k12.mn.us

www.bloomingprairie.com contains current information about the City of Blooming Prairie.

MATT ZELLMER- NEW BOYS BASKETBALL SCORING LEADER

LeMar Nelson

A lot of good athletes have distinguished themselves in one sport or another at Blooming Prairie High School, but the school has seen some extraordinary accomplishments from senior Matt Zellmer in 2008-09 which may be talked about for years to come. The list gets pretty long in three sports, but it is his basketball success for which he will be most remembered.

Zellmer became the career leader in total points when he finished the year with 1, 297 points . Todd Kruckeberg, Kraig Olson, Dennis Kruckeberg, Roger "Moose" Johnson, and Tony Lea are the only other male athletes to accomplish this feat. (Andrea Banton is the only girl to achieve that elite goal).

In his year of monumental accomplishments, Zellmer picked off many awards. He was the team's MVP, A Gopher All-conference selection for the second straight year, an All-State Honorable Mention, an "Owatonna Daily Press" Area Athlete, and a KRFO Athlete of the Week. Besides his career scoring title, Zellmer set a single season scoring mark with 603 points made the most free throws in a single season, and led the team in rebounds, steals, and assists.

Away from the basketball floor, he made the All-State Academic Team, was picked as the BPHS Triple AAA winner, and also represented the subsection for that honor. He ranks at the top of his class academically over his high school years and was an active member of the local National Honor Society chapter.

His exploits don't end with basketball either. He was an All-Area football player in the 2008 season, and he has been a stalwart on a Blossom baseball team that has compiled a winning record the last two seasons. We could easily argue that his accomplishments rival or surpass almost all of the great athletes who have walked the halls of BPHS.

Zellmer is not totally decided yet as to his college

career, but Luther College seems to have the inside track at this time. Matt's parents are Randy and Kay Zellmer of Blooming Prairie.

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE/ATHLETIC HALL OF FAME AWARDS

We now have honored eight Blossoms by recognizing their service to others and for athletic accomplishments. In 2008, Millie and Bud Hansen and LeMar Nelson received Distinguished Service Awards and Dean Brudwick and Margaret Zwiener Hogan were recognized as athletes. 2009 honorees are Bill Underwood and Marian Amundson Lehman for Distinguished Service and Jeanne Kruckeberg Ide and Allan Wold for athletic accomplishments. We are very proud of each of those now honored.

Send us your nominations for the group to be honored in 2010. DEADLINE IS AUGUST 1. Criteria for Distinguished Service recognition are:

Graduating from or having served Blooming Prairie Public School students at least 10 years prior to the current date

Candidates must have made a positive contribution for the benefit of mankind

Candidates must have achieved outstanding success in one or more of the following areas: A profession, business, the arts, humanitarian efforts, or community service.

Criteria for ATHLETIC HALL OF FAME are:

Accomplishments in athletics at BPHS which may include setting School, Conference, and State records. Recognition at School, Conference, or State levels. Unusual distinction in one sport for two or more seasons or consistent distinction in several sports for more than one season.

All accomplishments shall have been achieved in a manner which exemplifies the concept of student athlete.

Send the name, current address, telephone number, and e-mail address of nominees to Blooming Prairie School District Alumni and Friends, Box 512, Blooming Prairie, Minnesota, 55917. Information to support the nomination is very important. Send your nomination now. NOMINATION DEADLINE IS AUGUST 1, 2009

community. She wrote, "I got a good education and have worked at a few different jobs. I have never felt anyone else has gotten a better education than we did in B.P. Because we were in a small town we felt safe. We had the freedom to come and go without harm. For me, growing up in B.P. couldn't have been better.

Sonja's fond memories of Blooming Prairie Schools include, wood desks with fancy cast iron supports, slate blackboards, cloakrooms, learning Christmas Carols in our public school, a back yard for recess, lyceums, one hour lunch periods, shop classes in the basement, and "the tunnel". Sonja said, "I loved the tunnel".

DARRYL HARMS- CLASS OF '57- Darryl was also fortunate to receive his BPHS diploma from his Dad. He characterized Sam with the well known quote, "The greatest gift a Father can give his children is to love their Mother". Darryl gave back to Sam and Inez and the rest of the family by returning to Blooming Prairie to work the farm after not quite finishing a degree in pharmacology. He later graduated from the University of Minnesota with a degree in Business and Economics.

Darryl worked in California for several years but returned to Minnesota in 1975 and established an irrigation business which he still owns. Darryl is married and has 2 children and 3 grandchildren. He remembers teachers, Mrs. Fulbrook and Mr. Schriever as favorite teachers, has good memories of classmates and appreciates the core values taught and the wholesome living while growing up in Blooming Prairie.

GAYLEN HARMS- CLASS OF '59- Gaylen said, "I never had a bad teacher in Blooming" and he especially appreciated Mr. Schriever. Father of 5 children and Grandfather of 9, Gaylen and his wife Betty have now retired to Florida. Their oldest daughter serves as a Missionary. Gaylen and Betty also are foster parents to 2 Vietnamese children and have also sponsored an AFS student. After attending the University of Minnesota and Pillsbury College, Gaylen worked professionally as a Banker and Businessman. He also owned a business selling plastic tanks for liquid products. He is active in Church and volunteer work but also enjoys golf and fishing. He said, "Retirement is great, doing fine, life is good."

GEORGIA HARMS MCDUGAL- CLASS OF '60- Georgia was then and is now a busy person. Her career(s) included the professions of nursing, teaching, children's day care, and is still active as a clerk in a surgeon's office. As those of us who knew her in Blooming Prairie expected, Georgia has lived to serve others. The quotes beside pictures in "Prairie Schooner" Annuals are not often good forecasts of the future, but Georgia's was right on target. "In her tongue is the law of kindness" was an accurate prognostication of her life. Georgia and her late husband, Jim McDougal, had two children. She now resides in Indiana near her daughter and 3 grandchildren. Another daughter and two grandsons live in Texas.

Of Blooming Prairie schools, Georgia wrote, "BPHS provided teachers who kept to a high standard of academics and arts with some fun and good discipline. I am very thankful that Robert Becker made us do a term paper abiding by the rules of "something I can't remember now!" In my first semester of college a teacher tells us to write a term paper abiding by those same rules. That was only the beginning of many term papers. Lloyd Swenson kept Math at a good pace and challenged my mind to think. Howard Schriever made Science alive. LeMar Nelson helped literature make more sense. Clifford Jones made Band a time I looked forward to playing the trumpet because we had a variety of songs that were challenging, serious, and fun. These are just a few of the teachers that were good examples to me."

JUDY HARMS BURNS- CLASS OF '61- No better words could be found than those that Judy wrote about Blooming Prairie and its schools. "Our family led a very sheltered life while growing up in Blooming Prairie. I guess that's why "BLOSSOMS" was the most ferocious name we could come up with for our teams. School was a wonderful, pleasant experience for me. I enjoyed being with mostly the same classmates for 12 straight years. They are dear people in my memories. I loved it when we got the new school. The gymnasium was so huge as well as the music room. We really had it nice. We were blessed with professional, caring teachers whom I loved and respected. They were good role models for us.

Following graduation, I went to the General Hospital Nursing School where I earned my RN. My nursing