

Blossoms Forever

A Newsletter for Blooming Prairie School District Alumni & Friends • May, 2011



Pictured are Dick Anderson, Bob Ackerwold, Gene Trom, who accepted for Roger Ingvalson, Katie and Patrick Walsh, who accepted for Tom Walsh and Burton Magnuson and Glenda Magnuson Russell who accepted for Kelly Magnuson.

BLOSSOMS FOREVER HONOREES—2008 TO 2011

The well-respected history of Blooming Prairie School District and its graduates and friends was once again enhanced on January 29, 2011. More than 160 Blossom supporters gathered at the Servicemen's Club to honor and celebrate with **Distinctive Service, Athletic Hall of Fame and Educator** award winners. This year's group included Distinctive Service awardees Kelly Magnuson, Class of '82, and Roger Ingvalson, Class of '46, Athletic Hall of Fame winners Tom Walsh, Class of '73 and Dick Anderson, Class of '50, and Educator Bob Ackerwold. Tom Walsh's award was made posthumously.

As the list of honorees grows from year to year, it becomes more and more apparent that Alumni and Friends from our small town and school have made positive contributions to the lives of others at home, in Minnesota, in the United States, and across the world.

Perhaps that statement sounds bold and a little BP egotistical but when we become aware of the lives and accomplishments of our award winners it is easy to support the idea. Implicit also in learning about the lives of these women and men is the recognition deserved by Blooming Prairie parents, citizens, and particularly teachers and staff members of Blooming Prairie Public Schools. Evident in the life of every one of those honored from 2008-2011 is the support and encouragement from a parent, a teacher or administrator, a coach, or a citizen leader such as scout leaders or religious leaders.

Kelly Magnuson, Valedictorian of the **Class of '82**, after earning a Doctorate from The University of Illinois, has been a Researcher of Cancer and is now a "Scientist Project Manager" nationwide for Pfizer Pharmaceutical. **Lieutenant Colonel Roger Ingvalson**, served all of us via a career in the United States Air Force. His awards as a veteran are many and he also earned recognition for service to others in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Even though **Tom Walsh** has passed on, his athletic accomplishments are well remembered. Teammate Paul Morrison wrote "Tom exemplifies what a true team leader is. Because of his great determination, leadership and talent our track team was State Runner-up as a team in 1973." Tom earned many individual awards that were mentioned and honored by family and friends at the January Banquet. **Dick Anderson** was nominated by teammate David Oswald. David wrote that in Dick's senior year "while playing football he scored 118 points." Dick was Co-Captain of the team which won 7 games and lost just 1. In addition, Dick was a guard on the basketball teams and played second base on the baseball team. **Robert "Bob" Ackerwold** earned our first Educator/Staff

Member award. He was a teacher/counselor at BPHS from 1949 to 1962. Bob was honored for his excellent representation of what we would like all educators to be.

On a separate sheet in this mailing, you will find instructions for nominating others in each of the categories. **Fill it out and send it in. There are many others who deserve our attention and recognition.**

LETTER OF APPRECIATION

Dear Members of the Blossom Forever Alumni Committee,

Even though weeks have passed since the 2011 Education Foundation events of January 28th-29th, the after glow continues! What fun it was to meet with BPHS Seniors on Friday. What a polite, attentive group!

Then the basketball game on Saturday afternoon with LeMar Nelson handling half-time ceremonies. What a professional he is.

The final event on Saturday evening at the Servicemen's Club. A packed dining room with beautifully decorated tables added to the enjoyment of an absolutely delicious dinner.

Then a moving presentation of awards. How honored I am to have been given 2011 Distinguished Educator Award! Those years in Blooming Prairie (1949-1962) were absolutely wonderful years! Thank you all—it is with great pride to be a Blossom Forever!

Bob Ackerwold



BEST PARTY IN BLOOMING PRAIRIE

Pictured is a lineup of the many items donated for the Blooming Prairie Education Foundation's annual "Best Party in Blooming Prairie". The auction total of these and many other contributions was over \$61,000. The event is truly a Blooming Prairie team event that is of direct benefit to the current students of Blooming Prairie Public Schools. Every dollar spent at the auction comes back to students as all money is used to pay for items and activities that are not able to be included in the annual school district budget. Team players that deserve thanks include those that donated, those that bid and bought items, those that volunteered to conduct the auction, and members of Board of the Blooming Prairie Education Foundation.



2011 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 '43 will celebrate a reunion at noon on August 30, 2010 at the Pizza Ranch in Owatonna. Contact is Gladys Pechacek at 507-451-3570 or email pechacek@deskmedia.com

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

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

Class of '50 will meet Saturday, July 2nd at "Torey's", 685 Bridge St. in Owatonna at 11:15 a.m. RSVP to Barbara Kading Wesely at 507-451-6355.

Classes of '52 and '53 will meet for a buffet meal at BP's Pizza Cellar on Sunday, July 3rd, 5:00 p.m. Classmates are asked to remind each other about this yearly event. Same place, same time, every year.

Class of '54 will be 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 '57 will meet annually on the 1st Saturday in August at the Pizza Cellar. Contact Margaret and Bill Noble for more information. 507-583-2992

Class of '60 will meet on Saturday, October 8th, 4:00 p.m. at the Pizza Cellar. Contact Elaine Hillson Trotman at 507-583-2704 for more information.

Class of '61 will celebrate 50 years of success after graduation on Saturday, September 17 at the Blooming Prairie Country Club. For more information, contact Carol Knutson Kruckeberg at 507-528-2122.

Class of '66 will hold their 45 year celebration August 20th at Treasure Island. Contact is John Sanders.

Class of '71 is scheduled for August 6 at the BP Serviceman's Club. Karen Beede, 507-583-2246 or Sue Zwiener, 507-456-1357 for more information.



WHAT BLOSSOMS LOOKED LIKE IN 1946 AND 1953

Bernice Lowe sent us this classic picture of Blooming Prairie School District students taken outside the old Grade School building at recess time in May of 1946. Bernice wrote, "At least 12 of them are BPHS Grads, Classes of '52 and '53." Pictured are the 5th and 6th grade girls of Miss Kathryn Bunn's class. Bernice said, "The old grade school building was torn down about 1961 and replaced with the one that stands there today".

Left to right are: Donna Mae Dahl (Carlson), Dorcas Milton (Carlson), Barbara Motle (Garber), Bonnie Jean Hansen, Bonnie Lou Trail, Donna Jean Berg, Bonnie Lou

Anderson(Dinkle), Rita Styndl (Mconnel), Jeanette Brudwick (Underwood), Nancy Treat, Pat Kading (Decker), Shirley Peterson (Kubat), Mary Jane Kiley, Carol Dennis (Holmes) Bernice Wurst (Loew), Sylvia Harms (Vavra)

Our thanks to Bernice for sending the picture and description. We intend to always highlight the past through "Blossoms Forever" and think there is no better way than showing how we all appeared in our younger Blossom days. For those that were fortunate enough to have Kathryn Bunn as their teacher, we are sorry to report that Miss Bunn passed away several years ago. She had retired from her profession of teaching and school administration in the Austin Public Schools and remained living in Austin until she died. She was highly regarded in both Blooming Prairie



By chance, George Myers also sent a picture that includes some of the young women in Bernice's picture and also others from the BPHS class of 1953. In the Senior Class Play "Here Comes Charlie" presented in November of '52 are in Row one: Bonnie Hanson, Geraldine Amundson, Connie Pirkl, Marilyn Wickler, and Nancy Treat. In Row two are: Clair Coughlin, Kenny Magnusson, Jim Srsen, George Myers, and Kenny Holm.

George said in an accompanying letter, "Many thought I should pursue an acting career- I chose accounting instead." We tried to locate some of the "Many" but were unable to do so.

BLOOMING PRAIRIE VETERANS--- WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

In past issues of "Blossoms Forever", we have provided brief comments about the lives of past BPHS graduates. Readers have responded with interest as they read life stories of their classmates and friends. In this issue, since many Blooming Prairie men and women have served our country in the Armed Forces, we will share information about veterans from each of the wars starting with WWII. We are aware that veterans of the Civil War and WWI also came from Blooming Prairie. However, they have all passed on. Blooming Prairie Civil War veterans pictured in Severson's 1980 "Blooming Prairie Update" included men with last names of Johnson, Zweiner, Page, Thimsen, Morton, Frost and Helvig. Frank Wanous is pictured in his Spanish American War uniform. Mentioned as serving WWI were George Day, Gus Popelak, and Bill Jansa. We know that others are unidentified and deserving of mention but our ability to research is limited. As we write about those below our intent is to honor and thank all Blooming Prairie veterans who served.

WWII-Roger Anderson, Class of '41 With notes taken over the phone and with research noted in the May 19, 2009 issue of the "Decorah Public Opinion" newspaper, we are able to trace the BPHS and WWII career of Roger. Born in 1924 and living with his family in the Newry area, Roger graduated from BPHS at age 16. Encouraged by Superintendent Estenson, he enrolled at Luther College after graduation. Roger remembers BPHS teachers Lloyd Kelter, Ralph Summers, and Esther Sateren helping him along the way. After 2 years at Luther, he enlisted in the Army and reported for duty at Ft. Snelling. An appointment to West Point was offered but Roger's eyesight didn't pass the test. Instead, as a result of a high IQ test score, he was assigned to the Army's Specialized Training Program (ASTP) at Ft.

he found himself a 26th Division infantry member on a ship that eventually reached Cherbourg, France. Successively, Roger spent time in Normandy and Lorraine in France with action taking place at Battle Hill 310. Relief from two months of front-line duty came after being sent to Metz, France. During the Battle of the Bulge, trench foot and a hernia complicated his efforts in combating the enemy. After surgery in England, he was sent back to his former unit in Czechoslovakia and then to Austria where he looked after displaced persons from Yugoslavia, Romania and Poland. Retiring as a Corporal in 1946, Roger had earned a Combat Infantry Badge, Battle of the Bulge Stars, and later was awarded a Bronze Star.

Roger Anderson's life after Army service includes a family of wife Amme and two sons. His professional work began as a teacher in 1948 in Clara City, Minnesota and ended as he retired from his position of Registrar and Associate Dean at Luther College. He now resides in Decorah, Iowa.

Korean Conflict- Eugene Kaplan, Class of '49

After graduation from BPHS, Eugene began farming with his brother and his Dad. His life changed as he reported for Armed Service duty in 1952. Fort Gordon in Georgia was the destination as Eugene began training toward an Army career as a Military Policeman. In 1953 he was assigned overseas duties in Japan and then Korea. He served for 16 months in Pusan, Korea. He earned service awards of which he said "everyone gets them". Eugene was discharged honorably as Corporal Kaplan in 1954 and returned home to resume farming. Marriage and a family, wife DeeAnn, 2 daughters, and 3 sons soon followed. Eugene said Blooming Prairie provided "great education" and he especially remembers Sy Fritz as an especially good teacher.

Vietnam- Larry Rowe, Class of '69 The United States Army became the focus of Larry's life in 1970 as he began training for a service career as an infantryman. He was soon on the scene in Vietnam where over the course of one year he was twice wounded and subsequently was twice awarded a Purple Heart. Larry finished his Army service as Specialist, 4th class at Ft. Benning in

Georgia and soon returned home. He found employment at Wenger Corporation in Owatonna and years later retired and now resides in Owatonna with wife Luanne. His family now includes two daughters, a son and two grandchildren. Larry remembers this BPHS education very well and highlights John Whiting, Ken Benken, and Wallis Wilkie as teachers he admired.

Gulf War- Mike Hoffman, Class of '83 "Join the Navy and See the World" was a recruitment mantra for the U.S. Navy for many years. Mike Hoffman believed, joined, and during his time in the Navy, 1982 to 2006, his ships traveled to Spain, Greece, North Aleutian Islands, Hawaii, Philippines, Pango Pango, Australia, Sri Lanka, Hong Kong, Singapore and eventually to the Straits of Hormuz during the Gulf War. If you are a sharp reader, you might wonder how Mike graduated from BPHS in '83 and yet joined the Navy in '82. He enlisted and took his first training via a delayed entry program that began in the summer between his Junior and Senior years of high school. Mike's many years of service took him to many U.S. Cities and to service on the ships USS Butte and USS Reed. His rank changed over the years from E1 to E7 Chief Petty Officer. Five Navy Achievement Medals including Good Conduct were awarded to Mike and he still serves as a member of the Naval Reserve. He returned home to live on the family farm and his first civilian employment was with Severson Truck Center in Rochester. For the past 19 years he has been employed in Blooming Prairie by Viking Chemical and Arkema. Mike and wife Julie have two sons who in addition to also being BPHS grads also serve our country. Zach is in the Navy and is currently on a Destroyer in Japan. Ethan is in the Army and currently stationed at Ft. Hood in Texas. Mike continues his good service as a Volunteer Fireman and American Legion member in Blooming Prairie. Football and wrestling took up some of his time as a BPHS student and he also particularly enjoyed the teaching of John Whiting and Wallis Wilkie.

Iraq- Brian Hoveland, Class of '91 is still serving as a Staff Sergeant First Class in the National Guard. He also continues his good work as

Commander of 103 members of Veterans of Foreign Wars at the VFW in Blooming Prairie. Brian also enlisted and took his Basic Training in the summer between his BPHS Junior and Senior years. In '93 he reported for Army duty at Fort Riley, Kansas and subsequently was stationed in Korea, Ft. Hood, Texas, and Fort Carson, Colorado. Tours of duty over his still current service career in the Army and National Guard include time in Bosnia, Kosovo, Korea, Iraq and with the New Mexico Border Patrol. Brian said "Military experience has been good for me". His service has been good for us. We thank him for serving and continuing to serve. The mention of BPHS brought many memories of good experiences to him. He now resides in Owatonna and has a family that includes wife Sarah and three children.

To all Veterans, Thanks for your Service. You are Appreciated!



Dave with one of his many trophies

NOBLE FAMILY RACING

In the previous seven issues of "Blossoms Forever" we have made it a point to honor and celebrate successes of Blossom Alumni and Friends. Service to others, athletic achievements, professional accomplishments, Future Farmers 50 year history, worthy educators, and Blooming Prairie parent and citizen support have all been noted. In review, common threads in all of the recognition have been one person helping another

we would characterize as common goodness. We believe that these elements have been present in Blooming Prairie for generations and continue to this day. Consequently, what follows is to us one of the most interesting Blossom success stories encompassed in Blooming Prairie's Noble family, Dave, Class of '50 and Mark, Class of '74. Those of us that still reside in the area know well the accomplishments of these two men in the arena of auto racing. Primarily dirt track racers, Dave and Mark have earned recognition far beyond home. Association honors are many and trophies are innumerable. When asked about cumulative wins, Dave modestly said, "I don't remember". Mark had help in keeping track of his over 600 first place finishes. We are not at all expert in understanding and reporting the intricacies of modern auto racing even though we had some experience in being around Dave back in the '50's. Readers can better understand that experience by visualizing a '47 Buick parked in Dave's back yard with Dave and five or six Blossom teenagers getting it ready for racing. While working underneath the car, picture only 12 legs visible in the dim light. Dave was the only one who knew what to do but he tolerated the rest of us quite well. However, we do know something about the value of Dads and Sons doing things together. Consequently, we will report some of what we know about racing but will emphasize the strong Father/Son and racing bond that exists between Dave and Mark. A bond of strength that perhaps is still influencing other Blooming Prairie young men and women interested in racing.

Dave began his racing career in the early 1950's as he partnered with Lloyd Krell. Lloyd was a '46 graduate of BPHS and was the owner of the car of choice, a '37 Ford Coupe. Other Blooming Prairie racers at the time included Smokey Campbell, Laverne Pogones, Ernie Yentsch, and Neelan Ferrington. Dave said initial earnings were modest as his first win gained him \$2.50. Dave also said that parental support wasn't real strong as he remembers his Mother praying the Rosary throughout the first time she saw him race. Dave continued racing from the 50's until into the '90's. Improvements in cars, motors, tires, accessories, and safety enhanced his driving skills to the point that he was prominent among



Mark's son Adrian has also raced and has been a winner at least three times.

and regional drivers. He earned many racing awards which are noted later in this writing.

Son Mark grew up amongst the races, trophies, awards and hard work and actually raced and won for the first time in 1973. Arriving late for races in Morristown, he started last in a field of 24 cars and then won the B Feature which earned him \$15.00. There were other Blooming Prairie racers when Mark started his career. He said Doug Hillson, James Krejci, Bryan and Jesse Hernandez and Tommy Meyer were among his competition. Mark's daughter Elizabeth has also raced and has at least one win in her brief career.

Father and Son have earned many awards in addition their race victories. Dave's special recognition includes:

- 1965 Independence Raceway Champion**
- 1966 Elko Speedway Champion**
- Elko Speedway Top Ten Club**
- 2001 Independence Speedway Hall of Fame Track Champion in various years at Lansing, Kasson, St. Charles and Rochester**
- 1967 Hobby Stock Semi Feature Winner at Raceway Park in Shakopee**

Mark's career to date has been recognized in many ways including:

- 2010 Modified Hall of Fame**
- Many USMTS Wins**
- Three IMCA Super Nationals Championships Track Championships at Shakopee Raceway, Fairmont Fairgrounds, Independence Iowa Speedway and I35 Speedway in Mason City, Iowa**

Accomplishments are many between Dave and Mark, Father and Son. Their story to this date well illustrates the strength of family ties and also the benefits of small town living. Author Elizabeth Berg in a recent issue of the "Minneapolis Tribune" talked about the question of relationships and how she addressed them in her writing. Berg said, "I think it's difficult to navigate through the world at times and the things that keep us grounded and joyful are those relationships we have with other people." The relationship between Dave and Mark while it is centered on racing provides a fine example of navigating through the world together.

TURNER JOINS 1,000 CLUB

LeMar Nelson

There is no doubt that BPHS has produced some great teams in various sports since the school was established way back in the 1880's. The football history, especially, is a storied one, with some of the early teams competing with and defeating neighboring big school Austin in a few of those years. Again in the 60's, football teams and basketball teams made the state playoffs in several years, and the 1966 basketball team became the only one to earn a trip to the state tournament (and that was before the schools were divided into the many classes that we now enjoy). Girls' basketball joined the boys with a trip to the state tournament in the only year in which the quarterfinals games were played at outstate locations. BP played their game in Mankato and lost to Morris Area.

In the last few years the football team has advanced to the state playoffs in the Minneapolis Metrodome, (losing to Minneota just two years ago), and last year the softball team joined the elite team list by playing at the state softball tournament in Mankato as Section 1A champions. The school has also had its share of outstanding individuals, almost too many to mention in one article. But, if one had to choose one athlete who could represent the greatest all-around contribution to the local high school sports, a logical choice may well be Ronald "Laddie" Turner. Turner set a record in three sports and he recently was verified to join a very select group of athletes

“BLOSSOMS FOREVER” RECOGNITION NOMINATION FORM

Each year, the “Blossoms Forever” group recognizes and honors people in three different categories. Distinguished Service, Hall of Fame Athletes, Teacher/Administrator/Staff Member. Honorees are recognized in January at BPHS events at an Annual Banquet of the Blooming Prairie Education Foundation, in the BP 4th of July Parade and especially at the “Blossoms Forever” Tent in the park after the parade. We encourage all readers to nominate someone for honors as outlined below. POSTHUMOUS AWARDS CAN BE MADE IN EACH

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE: Candidates must have graduated from BPHS at least ten years prior to this date. This person is known to have made a positive contribution to the benefit of mankind and has achieved success in one or more of the following areas: A profession, business, the arts, humanitarian efforts, or community service.

ATHLETICS HALL OF FAME: Candidates must have graduated from BPHS at least 15 years prior to this date. Accomplishments must have been achieved in a manner that exemplifies that of student athlete. Outstanding athletic achievements may include setting school conference and state records, recognition at school, conference and state levels, unusual distinction in one sport for two seasons or consistent distinction in several sports for more than one season.

HONORED TEACHER/ADMINISTRATOR/STAFF MEMBER: Candidates must have been an employee of Blooming Prairie School District for at least ten years. Honorees must have served students in a manner that exceeded what is normally expected and many students should have gained positively from this service. The person may have earned awards at the state and national level. The life of this person away from school had a positive effect on Blooming Prairie School District students.

Supplying detailed information about a nominated person will greatly increase the possibility of being chosen. Please attach supportive information to this form and mail to:

“Blossoms Forever”
Box 521
Blooming Prairie, Minnesota 55917

I nominate _____ for the award of _____. My name, address, telephone number and email address is _____
_____.

The address, telephone number, and email address of my nominee is _____

ADD ADDITIONAL SHEET(S) WITH MORE INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR NOMINEE

who scored over 1,000 points in basketball at BPHS. In a career that began as an eighth grader, Turner tallied 1,079 points to rank third in the 1,000 point club. Matt Zellmer has the all-time record with 1,297 points, followed by Todd Kruckeberg with 1,208, and then Turner. Kraig Olson stands fourth on the list with 1,064, Tony Lea has 1,060 for fifth, and Roger "Moose" Johnson is next with 1,042 and then Denny Kruckeberg with 1,012. The seven boys are joined by the only girl in that elite club when Andrea Banton finished her high school basketball career with 1,021 points. Will we ever see another girl reach that high plateau?

Turner counted 406 points his senior year, after scoring 400 as a junior, 196 as a sophomore, and 77 while a freshman. As an example of his scoring ability, he tallied 77 points in two sub-district and a district game in 1952. He had 26, 31, and 20 points in three contests. But basketball was not the only sport in which Turner shone. He was the team MVP in both basketball and football his senior year, and received a Josten's Company award as the area's best athlete. In football he scored 29 touchdowns in his four year starting position, with

them coming in his junior and senior years (9 and 14). The third sport in which he led the team was baseball and he was one of the captains his senior year. His four-year batting average from his freshman year on was .333, .500, .600, and .333.

Those marks are all enviable marks in one sport, but to compile that outstanding record in three sports has rarely, if ever been duplicated. Turner attended college at Winona State University and was a leading scorer on one of the rare occasions in which the basketball team defeated the regional power at that time, St. Mary's University, also in Winona.

Sadly, Turner's life was cut short when he became the lone fatality in a car-truck crash involving eight people on Highway 30 west of Blooming Prairie. No one knows what athletic heights Turner could have attained. The only thing for certain is that he will go down in BPHS history as one of those wonderful athletes who rarely comes along and excels at several sports with equal ability and results.



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