



Taft Alumni Newsletter

Vol. XLI, No. 3

Summer 2025

Congratulations to the Class of 2025

Commencement festivities for more than 930 graduates took place on Sunday, June 8 at the UIC Credit Union 1 Arena. A video of the entire ceremony can be viewed on <https://youtu.be/Z5qsUbD87W0>.



We also congratulate the eighth graders who graduated on Monday, June 9 at the Taft Freshman Academy, many of whom will continue their studies as Taft Freshmen.



Left to right: presenters Terry Iverson and Rachel Miner, award recipients Nicola Aleksic, Ava Novak, Edda Milosavljevic, and Mia Ivanc, and board members Steve White, Ted Groat, and Principal Ryan Glowacz.

Scholarship awards were presented at graduation practice on June 5. The two TAA recipients were Ava Novak who received the \$2,000 Dr. James L. Kepner Scholarship Award and Edda Milosavljevic who received the \$2,000 Dr. Michael C. Molay Scholarship Award. We are grateful to Bill Schalk (Jan '60), Janet (Clune) Klopp (Jan '65), James Kepner (Jun '61), Jerry (Beesley) Bloom-Stevenson (Jun '62), former faculty member Annette

Dluger, and many others for their generous contributions making these scholarships possible.

Additionally, Nikola Aleksic received the \$1000 Iverson Scholarship, presented by Terry Iverson, founder of ChampionNow! in honor of his father Jerry Iverson (Jun '54). Rachel Miner, faculty member and president of The Friends of Taft presented a \$1000 scholarship award to Mia Ivanc. All four winners, who received a rousing round of applause and cheers from their classmates, also received a four-year TAA membership and TAA baseball cap.

Cheers to Taft High School

Taft was recently recognized by the Board of Education for an incredible achievement—over 100 students earning the Seal of Biliteracy!

This milestone was reached through the leadership of Principal Dr. Glowacz, Assistant Principal Dr. Hess, ELPT Coordinators Ms. Moreno & Ms. Adame, and Language Acquisition Chair Ms. Alanis. Their dedication to language learning and student success is unmatched! Two standout seniors joined the celebration: Anna, who earned the Seal in Ukrainian with accommodations in Spanish and is headed to UIUC, and Reece, who earned the Seal in Spanish with accommodations in German and is off to UIC.



Principal Ryan Glowacz addresses the Board of Education meeting flanked by seniors Reece and Anna.

As the fourth largest IB World School in the world, Taft continues to lead the way in cultivating global citizens. The Seal of Biliteracy in so many languages is proof that Taft is living its mission and vision of educating global citizens to create a better world!



Chicago All-Class Picnic

Date: August 30, 2025, 7:00 am – 7:00 pm

Location: Robinson Woods South Grove #1, 9101 Lawrence Ave, just north of Schiller Woods around Lawrence and Cumberland

Arizona All-Class Picnic

Date: Saturday, November 1, 2025, 11:00 am – 2:00 pm

Location: Beardsley Recreation Center Ramada 10, 12755 W Beardsley Rd, Sun City West, AZ 85375

Contact: Fred Wordell (ftjawo@aol.com); Judy Jacobsen (gordonsdatter@gmail.com)

Details: \$5 per person (includes a raffle ticket for TAA gear), bring a dish to share, beverages in non-glass containers.

So-Cal All-Class Get-Together

Date: Saturday September 20, 2025, Noon – 4:00 pm

Location: "House of Savage," 2372 Recuervo Cove, Del Mar, CA

Details: \$10 (pizza and pop), bring a dish to share and BYOB.

Please RSVP! Jan (Ostromencki) Savage (janhelloworld@hotmail.com), 858-353-3559

Taft Class of June 1965 60 Year Reunion

Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025

Location: Moretti's Restaurant in Edison Park

Contact: Bonnie (Stewart) Jilek (taftjune65@gmail.com)

Taft Class of 1968 Reunion Pizza Party

Date: Friday, October 17, 2025, Noon till ?

Location: Beacon Tap, 1374 Lee St, Des Plaines

Details: \$20/person, appetizers, salad, pizza, soft drinks, cash bar; RSVP by October 3, 2025

Contact: carolyn.toerpe@gmail.com or nancywarz@sbcglobal.net

Taft Class of 1975 50 Year Reunion

Date: Saturday, September 13, 2025, 6:30 pm - 10:30 pm

Location: Moretti's Restaurant in Edison Park

Details: \$60 per person, dinner and soft drinks, cash bar; Zelle: 708-790-3730, Venmo: @Mary-OConnor-81

Contact: taftsclassof75@gmail.com RSVP by August 25

Taft Class of 1995 30 Year Reunion

Date: August 30, 2025, 7:00 am – 7:00 pm

Location: Robinson Woods South Grove #1, 9101 Lawrence Ave.

Cost: \$100 per person (Includes tent space, food, drinks, supplies, all class fees, entertainment, and a commemorative keepsake!)

Venmo: @Taft1995 or Zelle: mhumber76@yahoo.com.

Contact: Taft199530th@gmail.com

Facebook: Taft Class of 1995: 30th Reunion Details

Class of January 1965 60-Year Reunion



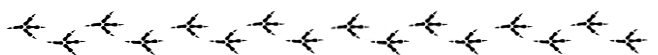
Back: Paula (Steen) Williams, Joan (Johnson) Walendy, Donna (Lambrecht) Lewandowski, Marcia (Bertweit) Jarecki, Louise (Andersen)-Handley, Dianne (Klinger) Hartman, Judith La Marche, Karen (Anderson)-Peterson. Seated: Barbara (Anderson)-Hardt, Janet (Billings) LeSage, Janet (Clune) Klopp, Adele (Freda)-Knicks, Cheryl (Miller) Dominowski, Alice (Lorang)-Freeman. Camera shy: Carol (Haen) Hurley; Leslie (Izban) Falco, Marge (Holt) Crowe.



Back: Thaddeus Adamczyk, Donald Hardt, Wayne Silldorf, Richard LeSage, Howard Knicks, Roger (Don) Olsen, Donald Janke, Ron Lillquist. Seated: Robert Johnson, Lee Marsh, Steven Golz, Ray Polina, John Klasen, Peter Ebner.

Some of our classmates took a tour of Taft where Principal Glowacz offered current state of Taft, various programs. Lots of changes in education since we attended. One example--no more blackboard but big touch screen monitor in classroom. I was surprised to hear little use of desktop computers (didn't see a computer room) but Chromebooks passed out to students in classroom. Here's some else...students not using lockers! Saturday night was the Reunion where we reminisced with 30+ of our classmates. Stephanie Mazon current teacher at Taft [and TAA board member] attended and provided a discussion of the school and mingled with our classmates. We missed seeing those of you who could not attend.

Bob Johnson, Jan '65



Thanks for all the hard work you do.

Micki (Bonnivier) & Ed Knight, 1970

I am so impressed with what you have done for putting up the Taft Newsletter. Thanks for highlighting me [in the Class Notes] and letting me know about some of my '63 classmates. I am now reading past issues. They bring back so many memories, but also inform me as to current issues for Taft. It is no longer the school I knew in 1959-1963. That is good! May it continue to evolve and be a leader in the Chicago Public Schools.

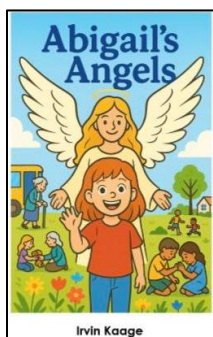
Robert Evensen, Jun '63

Hi! I'm wearing a Taft shirt today and a guy just shared the following with me. His mother was in the [January 1941] graduating class from Taft and she's still alive at 102!

Ted Groat, 1969



Retiring on July 15 after 32 years of service to the City of Chicago, Defonda Louie, 1988, (second on the left) took his final St. Jude Walk in honor of Chicago Police officers who paid the ultimate price protecting the citizen of Chicago.



Irv Kaage (1969) has published his second book, *Abigail's Angels*, written for children ages 4 to 10, about a little girl's quest to see if angels really exist. "I wrote it because I think it is important to instill faith in children at a young age," said Kaage. The book is available on Amazon.

I have many fond memories of my days at Taft. The teachers, friends, and students, activities, etc. Sometimes those days seem like yesterday. There are several "Taftites" residing here at Encore Village. Thank you all again for all

the time and hard work the alumni board does to keep us all connected.

Karen (Drinan) Johnson, Jan '58

I enjoy reading the newsletter, reading about classmates and seeing how Taft has changed over the years. Many thanks!

Linda Norris, Jan '62



Mel Ellingsen, Jan '67 (second from right) had the honor of assisting with the placing of a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Washington DC during the Lake County Honor Flight in April.

Thanks to all that put the newsletter together!

Sheryl (Schmidt) Pierce, 1971

Novelle Cunningham and I would like to hear from others in our class of June 1954. I'm on Facebook.

Claire (Roszowski) Papiewski, Jun '54



In April, Anne Lunde (1969), Susan J. Kroll, and Carmine Fantasia were recognized with a Best of Illinois History Award from the Illinois State Historical Society in the category of "Scholarly Books" for their book, *Norwood Park, A View from the Ridge*, presented at the annual meeting and award ceremony of the Illinois State Historical Society in Springfield, IL.



Rich Lindberg (center) says, "Our annual 1971 Taft High summer mini-reunion at Highway House last night has become one of life's enjoyable traditions."



Kaage Newsstand owner Mike Kaage (1974) stands with his brother Irvin III (1969), who bought the last newspaper sold by Kaage Newsstand just before it closed after 82 years in business. Kaage closed the iconic Edison Park stand on Northwest Highway at the end of June. The stand was opened in 1943 by his grandfather Irvin Kaage. and was run by Irv Kaage Jr (Feb '46), until Mike took over in the early 1990s. Photo: Amy Lee Sun-Times

Something to Sing About

Hi! I'm David Barth from the Class of January 1962 [and TAA Hall of Famer]. For the last 54 years, I have been both a church choir and concert choral director. In spring of 2023, I founded Voices Unlimited, a mixed voice concert chorus headquartered in Elgin. We sing two concerts a year, one in spring and one in December, both comprised of sacred and secular choral music. We also feature a guest instrumentalist who accompanies one of our anthems and then plays a solo.

We are currently planning our Christmas/Holiday concert which will be sung on Sunday, December 7 and Voices is looking for Taft alumni singers who might like to join us...and the best part is you don't need to read music or have a solo voice. You just want to have fun singing and meeting new friends. Our rehearsals are at Journey of Hope Methodist Church at the corner of Highland and Randall Roads in Elgin. That's about half a mile north of where

Randall crosses over Route 20. We rehearse on Tuesday evenings from 6:45-8:30 pm. Rehearsals begin on Tuesday, September 9 and run through Tuesday, December 2.



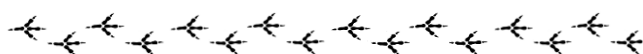
I'm sure you probably have a ton of questions, so please give me a call at 630-707-1221 or email me at davidabarh@comcast.net. I'll be happy to answer all your questions. Hope to hear from you and to seeing you in September.

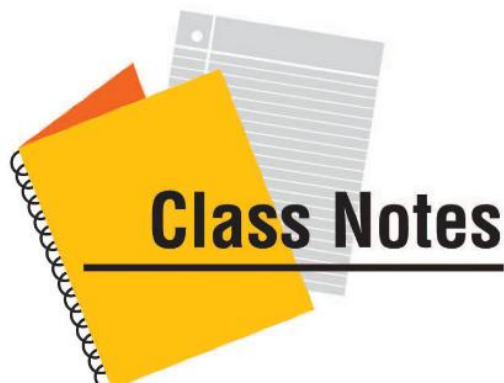
Class of '73 Birthday Party and Scholarship Fundraiser

A group of Taft '73 graduates recently gathered for a shared 70th birthday party as most would be turning that age in 2025. More importantly, it was also a fundraising event for the Phil Vierendeel Leadership Scholarship, awarded at the end of the season to a senior member of the Taft Eagles Football Team. The 2024/25 scholarship was awarded late last year to Kuba Wierzchowiak who will be attending Harper College beginning this autumn.



Phil Vierendeel was the captain of the 1972/73 Chicago Public League Championship Team, and the scholarship was established by his teammates in his memory. For further details of the award and an opportunity to contribute, please contact: Frank Klimala (klimala@sbcglobal.net) or Phil Tondelli (phil.tondelli@gmail.com).





1950s

Trudy (Strozewski) Gander (Jun 1942) has 2 children, 4 grandchildren, 6 great grandchildren, lives in Hoffman Estates, IL, CPS – Certified Professional Secretary, is retired since 2009 at age 85, resides in an independent facility and loves her life at Brookdale.

Sheldon Mehr (Jan 1949) has 1 child, 2 grandchildren, attended Locke, lives in Los Angeles, CA, UCLA BA Music, Educ, Cal State U MA '59, is a music educator, is 93 ½, in good health, and enjoying the LA musical scene.

Joan (Schwarek) Orr (Jun 1949) has 4 children, 5 grandchildren, attended Hitch, lives in Palm Desert, CA, is retired from Orr & Company, commercial and industrial real estate.

Jim Tortorelli (Jun 1952) has 6 children, 13 grandchildren, 11 great grandchildren, attended Prussing, lives in Lake Barrington, IL, Chicago State BA Ed '56; Loyola MA Ed '62, is retired from teaching industrial education at Lane Tech and Maine Twp.

Paul Rebscher (Jan 1953) has 1 child, 2 grandchildren, attended Ebinger, lives in Moriches, NY, Beloit College 1 year; US Navy 1955-57, is a retired Flying Tiger Airline pilot, plans to move permanently to Utah.

Phyllis (Geisert) Umphres (Jan 1953) has 3 children, 3 stepchildren, 4 grandchildren, 4 step grandchildren, 7 great grandchildren, attended Hitch, lives in Chatsworth, CA, RN, is a retired nurse.

Rich Albrecht (Jun 1953) has 3 children, 6 grandchildren, 10 great grandchildren, attended Ebinger, lives in Richmond, VA, Beloit College BA; Lt. N.G. US Navy, is the retired CEO of Federated Foods.

Bette (Oliver) Kash (Feb 1954) has 3 children, 12 grandchildren, 9 great grandchildren, attended Norwood Park, lives in Park Ridge, IL, Wright Jr College '56; Bradley U, is a retired wife, mother, grandmother and bank teller.

Lois (Fredrich) Christoffersen (Jun 1954) has 2 children, 4 grandchildren, 4 great grandchildren, attended Prussing, lives

in Chicago, IL, National Louis U BA Ed '58, is a retired Chicago elementary school teacher.

Verelle (Murphy) Leaton (Jun 1954) has 4 children, 7 grandchildren, 3 great grandchild, attended Edgebrook, lives in Carbondale, IL, Beloit College, UI BS '58, is a retired elementary teacher, taught two years in the US Virgin Islands (Charlotte Amalie) and was an American Airline stewardess for two years.

Claire (Roszkowski) Papiewski (Jun 1954) has 3 children, 1 grandchild, lives in Elgin, IL, is retired from accounting.

Karen (Kelley) Noble (Jan 1955) has 1 child, 2 grandchildren, attended Prussing, lives in Cranberry Twp, PA, Med, is a retired teacher.

Bill Herbst (Jun 1955) has 3 children, 1 grandchild, attended Headley, lives in Fountain Hills, AZ, ISU BS '59; NIU MA '64; TX A&M '65; U IL '67; St. Cloud State MN '68, is a retired Antioch IL (District 34) middle school principal.

John Beall (Jan 1956) has 2 children, 3 grandchildren, 2 great grandchildren, attended Norwood Park, lives in Newport, NC, Clemson U BS Math/Educ '60, is a retired personnel manager and training coordinator, spent the past 21 years living in an RV, traveling in the lower 48, working as a Christian volunteer helping build church facilities, youth camp maintenance, and disaster relief/rebuild.

Lou Knudtson (Jan 1956) has 3 children, 8 grandchildren, 4 great grandchildren, attended Goethe, lives in Hoffman Estates, IL, ASU MBA, is a semi-retired electronics representative, invented a few electronic products, plays golf, and works out daily.

Paul Neuhauser (Jan 1956) has 2 children, 5 grandchildren, attended Waters, lives in Franklin, TN, UI BS Bus '60, DePaul U MBA '67, US Army (Active and Reserves) 1960-1966, is a retired IRS criminal investigator and RTA audit manager.

Leon Kathan (Jun 1956) has 5 children, 9 grandchildren, 9 great grandchildren, 1 great great grandchild, attended Norwood Park, lives in Sebring, FL, Triton College AA '73; FSU MSW '76; USMC 1955-62, is retired.

Betty (Laseman) Sunagel (Jun 1956) has 4 children, 4 grandchildren, 1 great grandchild, attended Hitch, lives in Huntley, IL, Wright Jr. College, is a retired executive secretary, husband James Sunagel (deceased) was a '56 Schurz grad, USMC EGV firefighter, and Roselle Fire Chief.

Barbara (Walker) Lewis (Jun 1957) has 2 children, attended Edison, lives in Mountain Home, AR, CTC BS Ed Math '61; NEIU MS Ed Math '69, is a retired elementary teacher.

Karen (Drinan) Johnson (Jan 1958) has 3 children, 6 grandchildren, 5 great grandchildren, attended Norwood Park, lives in Schaumburg, IL, Triton College AAS '77; Harper College AA '84; Roosevelt U 2 years, is a retired x-ray technician, has

fun as a pom-pom girl (ages 77-97) at Encore Village in Schaumburg.

John Croll (Jun 1958) married **Nancy Novak (Jun 1960)**, has 1 child, 3 grandchildren, attended Our Saviour Lutheran, lives in Palatine, IL, UI BS Acct; US Marine Corp, Captain, Vietnam, is retired.

Judith (Edfeldt) Hartman (Jun 1958) has 3 children, 3 grandchildren, attended Oriole Park, lives in Mt Prospect, IL, is retired.

Barbara Peterson (Jan 1959) attended Oriole Park, lives in Palatine, IL, Wright Jr College AA '61, is a retired senior telecom engineer.

Larry Marsh (Jun 1959) attended Edison, lives in Front Royal, VA, US Naval Academy BS EE '63, Olmsted Military Scholar; advanced education American Univ at Univ of Munich, Germany; US Navy 35 years, is a retired US Naval submarine officer, remembers his Taft family fondly.

Barbara (Lynn) Templeman (Jun 1959) married **Glenn Templeman, deceased (Jan 1959)**, has 3 children, 7 grandchildren, lives in Arlington Hts, IL, ISU BS, is a retired teacher.

Carol (Lubinetz) Vix (Jun 1959) attended Onahan, lives in Chicago, IL, BS, JD '87, is a semi-retired attorney.

1960s

Frank Braun (Jan 1960) married **Charlotte Rizzo (Jan 1961)**, has 2 children, 3 grandchildren, attended Garvy, lives in Mt Prospect, IL, some college, is a retired police major, worked 35 years with Cook County Sheriff's Police.

Michael Kelly (Jan 1960) married **Sheryl Buerger (Jun 1963)**, has 3 children, 7 grandchildren, lives in Huntley, IL, North Park College BS '64; NIU MS Bus Adm '68, is a retired business manager.

Nancy (Novak) Croll (Jun 1960) married **John Croll (Jun 1958)**, has 1 child, 3 grandchildren, attended Norwood Park, lives in Palatine, IL, is retired.

Stuart Dunn (Jun 1960) has 1 child, 2 grandchildren, attended Garvy, lives in Deerfield, IL, UI BS '65, DDS '67; Captain US Airforce 1967-69, is a semi-retired dentist, lives half the year in Key West, Florida.

Dennis Dziak (Jun 1960) has 3 children, 1 grandchild, attended Nobel, lives in Boynton Beach, FL, DePaul U BSC Acct; CPA; US Air Force, is a retired director of pricing and contracts for Glaxo Smith Kline Pharmaceuticals.

Tom McKenzie (Jun 1960) has 2 children, 1 grandchild, attended St. Monica, lives in Colorado Springs, CO, UI 1960-62, U WI BS '64, UI grad work; LCDR US Naval Reserve active 1965-

69, reserve 1970-76, is a retired economist, is happily retired in the Black Forest of Colorado.

Norm Phoenix (Jun 1960) attended Oriole Park, lives in Chicago, IL, Wright College AA '63; IIT BSEE '67, MSEE '72; Nat'l Louis MAT '08, is a retired electrical engineer and educator, was presented the IEEE EAB Meritorious Achievement Award in Outreach and Informal Education in November 2023.

Paul Verisario (Jun 1960) has 3 children, 5 grandchildren, attended St. Vincent Depaul, lives in Lake Zurich, IL, NIU BA '64; Northwestern U BA '68, Corporal US Army, medic 1965-71, is the retired president of All-Security Corp.

Charlotte (Rizzo) Braun (Jan 1961) has 2 children, 3 grandchildren, attended Garvy, lives in Mt Prospect, IL, is retired.

Steve Regopoulos (Jan 1961) has 4 children, 13 grandchildren, attended Prussing, lives in Palatine, IL, UIC BS Phys ED/Soc '69; 2 years Arch Eng & Art; Real Estate Inst AA '75, is a semi-retired real estate developer, developed tolmission.com to spread "Serving God is our Mission" to others in the world.

Linda Norris (Jan 1962) has 2 children, 4 grandchildren, attended Edison, lives in Healy, AK, Northwestern U BA '66, is retired.

Louis Vassos (Jan 1962) married **Joanne Wemstrom, deceased (Jun 1962)**, has 3 children, 3 grandchildren, attended Ebinger, lives in Mt Prospect, IL, Northwestern BSEE '67, is a retired new product developer and engineering manager.

Leslee (Doubek) Lamp (Jun 1962) has 3 children, 3 grandchildren, attended Hitch, lives in Pewee Valley, KY, Evanston Hospital School of Nursing, is a retired RN.

Edward Parquette (Jun 1962) has 2 children, 4 grandchildren, attended St. Tarcissus, lives in Palatine, IL, is a retired repairman for Marriott Corp.

Susan Schmid (Jun 1962) has 3 children, 3 grandchildren, attended Hitch, lives in Downers Grove, IL, is retired, attended Taft for three years, graduated from Maine Township HS.

Bill Green (Jan 1963) has 2 children, 3 grandchildren, attended Garvy, lives in Sarasota, FL, UI BA Arch, Loyola U JD, is a retired writer, all his books may be found at www.wgreen.me.

Sheryl (Buerger) Kelly (Jan 1963) married **Michael Kelly (Jun 1960)**, has 3 children, 7 grandchildren, attended Edison, lives in Huntley, IL, EIU, is retired from banking.

Dlorah (Rud) Hayden (Jun 1963) has 2 children, 4 grandchildren, attended Oriole Park, lives in Sarasota, FL, is a retired business owner.

Carol (Thorson) Hildebrand (Jun 1963) has 2 children, attended Hitch, lives in Poinciana, FL, Gustavus Adolphus College BS '67, National U MS Med '80, is a retired Commander, US Navy Nurse Corps 20 years, received in May

2025 the "Excellence in Nursing Service Award" for achievements in academia while on active duty.

Diane (Peterson) Wilk (Jun 1963) married **Jeff Wilk, deceased (Jun 1963)**, has 2 children, 5 grandchildren, attended Edison, lives in Harwood Hts, IL, BS Elem Edu '67, is retired.

George Knickerbocker (Jun 1964) has 4 children, 11 grandchildren, attended Norwood Park, lives in Elk Grove Village, IL, DePauw U BS '68; UI JD '71, is an attorney.

Stuart Weinstein (Jun 1964) has 1 child, attended Wildwood, lives in Iowa City, IA, UI BA Pol Sci, U IA MD, is an orthopedic surgeon.

Cheryl (Miller) Dominowski (Jan 1965) has 2 children, 5 grandchildren, attended Norwood Park, lives in Lake Zurich, IL, is a retired visual merchandiser, has been dating Don Janke (Jan '65) since 2021.

Donna (Lambrecht) Lewandowski (Jan 1965) attended Edison, lives in Palatine, IL, is retired.

Butch Godlewski (Jun 1965) has 1 child, 1 grandchild, attended St. Juliana, lives in Louisburg, NC, US Navy 4 years, is retired, served aboard USS Essex CVS-9 for the Apollo 7 recovery, enjoys traveling.

Nancy (Wendt) Gunning (Jun 1965) has 4 children, 8 grandchildren, 1 great grandchild, attended Oriole Park, lives in Park Ridge, IL, Luther College BA French, is a human resources administrator.

Paul Perry (Jun 1965) has 2 children, 1 grandchild, attended Prussing, lives in Palmerston North, New Zealand, AZ State U BS '69, MA '71; U Hawaii PhD '76, is a semi-retired university academic and sociologist.

Brad Schnell (Jun 1965) attended Oriole Park, lives in Des Plaines, IL, UI BA '71; post-grad Year Abroad Program in Spain 1971-72; Loyola MBA '79; Peace Corp Ecuador 1987-89; IIT MS '91, is a retired rehab teacher with DHS/DRS.

Rich Schutz (Jun 1965) attended Hitch, lives in Glenview, IL, Oakton Comm College AA '85; Roosevelt U BA Hist and paralegal studies '86, is a semi-retired deli clerk, collects records as a hobby.

Gary Andersen (Jun 1966) attended Oriole Park, lives in Palatine, IL, NEIU BA '77; USMC 1968-69 Vietnam with 4 combat citations, is a retired transportation manager, happily married.

Lynne (Lyle) Backer (Jan 1967) attended Oriole Park, lives in Barrington, IL, NIU BSE '70, MSE '72, is a retired author and educator.

Bob Elezian (Jan 1967) has 2 children, 1 grandchild, attended Edison, lives in Parker, CO, SIU BA Comp Sci/Math '76; US Navy Flight Engineer 1969-73, is a retired software engineer.

Dean Gritsonis (Jan 1967) has 3 children, 2 grandchildren, attended Garvy, lives in Carol Stream, IL, NIU BS Ed '71; US Army Reserves 1970-76, is retired.

Glenn Jensen (Jun 1967) has 1 child, 11 grandchildren, 2 great grandchildren, attended Hitch, lives in Sycamore, IL, Submariner US Navy 1970-75, is a retired computer tech.

Nikki (Neroy) Peterson (Jun 1967) has 2 children, 3 grandchildren, attended St. Robert Bellarmine, lives in Marlborough, MA, BA English, Journalism, is semi-retired freelance writer and communications.

Bob Royce (Jun 1967) married **Barbara Mac (1968)**, has 2 children, 1 grandchild, attended Lake Villa, lives in Schaumburg, IL, US Army, Vietnam 1969-70, is retired from Illinois Bell/SBC/AT&T.

Mary (Kemblowski) Berg (1968) attended St Philip's, lives in Frederick, MD, UI BSN '77; Washington U MS Healthcare Admin '80, is a retired healthcare administrator.

Judy Manning (1968) attended Onahan, lives in Glenview, IL, is a retired corporate secretary.

Gene Petrovits (1968) has 3 children, 8 grandchildren, attended St. Juliana, lives in Plainfield, IL, Bradley U BSME '73, Benedictine U MBA '99, is a retired mechanical engineer.

Barbara (Mac) Royce (1968) married **Robert Royce (Jun 1967)**, has 2 children, 1 grandchild, attended Onahan, lives in Schaumburg, IL, Dominican U MS Library Science, is a retired librarian, active in the National Alliance on Mental Illness, Meals on Wheels, and Lutheran Early Response Team.

Carolyn (Sykes) Toerpe (1968) has 1 child, 1 grandchild, attended Norwood Park, lives in Naperville, IL, BA Speech Therapy, MA HS Guidance and Counseling, is a retired middle school teacher and high school counselor.

Robert Cichowski (1969) has 2 children, attended St. Mary Of The Wood, lives in Brooksville, FL, DePaul U; DeVry U Electronics, is an IT business development manager, 20 years at IBM in Chicago hired from DeVry, still in the IT professional services business self-employed in the Tampa Bay area.

Bob Kanen (1969) has 3 children, attended Garvy, lives in Waldwick, NJ, NEIU BA Soc '74; BA Psych '75, Ill School of Prof Psychology PsyD '82, is a semi-retired clinical forensic psychologist.

Christine (Wirth) Maxwell (1969) has 2 children, 3 grandchildren, attended Ebinger, lives in Elgin, IL, ISU BS Ed, Concordia U Chicago MS Reading Ed, is a retired special ed teacher and reading specialist, winters in Naples, Florida.

Glenda (Hodgson) Vitek (1969) has 2 children, 1 grandchild, attended Edison, lives in Wichita Falls, TX, Amundson Mayfair AA RN, is a comptroller.

1970s

Edward Knight (1970) married **Michelle Bonnavier (1970)**, has 2 children, 3 grandchildren, attended Midwestern Christian, lives in Schaumburg, IL, BA Behavior, is retired from the sheriff's department, changed grade schools 13 times but luckily Taft was his only high school.

Micki (Bonnivier) Knight (1970) married **Edward Knight (1970)**, has 2 children, 3 grandchildren, attended Oriole Park, lives in Schaumburg, IL, is retired.

Jeri Luga (1970) attended Garvy, lives in Ponte Vedra, FL, Northwestern U, is retired.

Patricia (Hammang) Miller (1970) attended St. Paul Luth., lives in Chicago, IL, is a retired client service rep.

Kenneth Naatz (1970) has 3 children, 6 grandchildren, attended Ebinger, lives in Elmhurst, IL, UI Champaign BS Acct '74, DePaul U MBA '83, is a retired benefits director.

Diane Hansen (1971) has 3 children, 2 grandchildren, attended Mccleery, lives in New London, CT, Albertus Magnus Col BS Bus Adm '02, is a part time bookkeeper for St. Luke Lutheran Church in Gales Ferry, Connecticut.

Leonard Hensel (1971) has 2 children, attended Onahan, lives in Anderson, SC, Wright Jr College AA, UI Chicago BS ME, Northwestern Univ MS, is a retired engineer and investor.

Sheryl (Schmidt) Pierce (1971) attended Oriole Park, lives in Hot Springs Village, AR, Wright Jr College, is a retired administrative assistant, just returned from a tour to Amsterdam, Belgium, Paris and London.

Roger Slaboch (1971) has 2 children, 4 grandchildren, attended Ebinger, lives in Sacramento, CA, Monmouth College BA Bus Admin '75; UC Davis certified credit executive, is a retired certified credit executive.

Wally Symcak (1972) has 1 child, attended St. Juliana, lives in Lake Zurich, IL, Northwestern U BA Econ '75; CPA, is a retired CPA.

Richard Evans (1973) married **Donna Schaller (1974)**, has 2 children, 6 (almost) grandchildren, attended Edison, lives in Elgin, IL, AVP Information Technology, is a retired vice president in information technology.

Daniel Mason (1973) has 2 children, attended Ebinger, lives in Placida, FL, BS, is a retired United Airlines pilot, enjoying retirement in Florida and Michigan.

Pam (Borek) McDonald (1973) has 4 children, 12 grandchildren, attended St. Tarcissus, lives in Lakeville, MN, UI BS Elem Ed, U of St. Thomas MA CIGT, is a retired elementary teacher and children's book author, just released her second children's book entitled "Kate's Crow".

Marti Szramek (1973) has 1 child, attended Ebinger, lives in Naples, FL, U Albany BS Soc Sci, is a retired court clerk.

Donna (Schaller) Evans (1974) married **Richard Evans (1973)**, has 2 children, 5.5 grandchildren, attended Onahan, lives in Elgin, IL, is a semi-retired part time bookkeeper.

Daniel Clifford (1975) has 2 children, attended Our Lady Of Help, lives in Park Ridge, IL, DePaul U BS Commerce; University of Dallas MBA, is a retired business executive in electrical/industrial markets.

Sandi (Sanderson) Darnell (1976) has 2 children, 3 grandchildren, attended Onahan, lives in Lake Zurich, IL, is retired, loves spending time with her grandchildren and family.

Barbara (Borek) Littel (1976) has 4 children, 9 grandchildren, attended St. Tarcissus, lives in Hawthorn Woods, IL, UI BS, is semi-retired from ornamental horticulture.

Sandy (Marshall) Paik (1976) has 2 children, attended Garvy, lives in Chicago, IL, NEIU Spec Ed '80, National Louis M.Ed. Spec Ed '90, is a retired educator and flight attendant, winters in San Diego.

Phil Priest (1977) has 3 children, 1 grandchild, attended Edison, lives in Rolling Meadows, IL, UI AB '81; Nat'l Lewis MAT '92, is a retired elementary teacher, enjoys every moment of retirement.

1980s

Linda Pempek (1988) attended Portage Park, lives in Palatine, IL, is a customer service rep.

1990s

Lisa Woelke (1990) has 2 children, attended Belding, lives in Chicago, IL, studied criminal justice, is a senior personal banker, loves spending time with her family.

Nicole (Novak) Domico (1997) has 2 children, attended Hitch, lives in Chicago, IL, is employed by the Chicago Public Schools.

2000s

Tyler Woelke (2017) attended Prussing, lives in Chicago, IL, CDL, is a transit mix operator, loves to spend time outdoors and traveling, recently visited Hawaii.

Isabella Castro (2028) attended Hitch, lives in Chicago, IL, is student, loves helping animals and can't wait to become an alumna.

In Memoriam

Because you genuinely care about Taft High School, please consider a legacy gift to TAA in your estate planning. A planned gift is a lasting investment.

Edith (Mauch) Swanek of Anaheim, CA, Class of June 1944, died on July 27, 2024.

James Huffman Jacobsen of Peoria, IL, Class of June 1949, died on April 5, 2025.

Thomas Jerome Gutzman of Chicago, IL, Class of June 1950, died on December 12, 2024.

Arthur Fred Anderson of West Jordan UT, Class of January 1951, died on December 29, 2022. He was predeceased by his wife Diane (Gromke) Anderson, Class of June 1953.

Carrol Louise (Duty) McIntire of Charlotte, NC, Class of June 1951, died on April 17, 2025. She was predeceased by her husband Clifton McIntire, Class of June 1950.

Donna Jacqueline (Craumer) Gibbs of Alameda, CA, Class of June 1953, died on September 17, 2021. She is survived by her sister Susan (Craumer) Corrao, Class of June 1962.

Roger Warren McIntire of Columbia, MD, Class of June 1953, died on November 23, 2024. He was predeceased by his brother Clifton McIntire, Class of June 1950.

Diane Louise (Kath) Roginski of Chicago, IL, Class of June 1957, died on November 17, 2024.

John Michael Chious of Camarillo, CA, Class of June 1958, died on May 27, 2025. He is survived by his sister Angeline (Chious) Poulos, Class of January 1953.

Joseph Edward Petrussek of Arlington Heights, IL, Class of January 1959, died on February 15, 2025.

Sharon Holly (Gallaher) Lichter of Phoenix, AZ, Class of January 1960, died on July 5, 2025.

Kathleen Judith (McAllister) Schramm of McHenry, IL, Class of January 1967, died on April 8, 2025. She is survived by her brother Terry McAllister, Class of 1968.

Daniel Louis Popp of Arlington Hts., IL, Class of 1968, died on April 24, 2025. He is survived by his sister Gloria (Popp) Meier, Class of January 1963, and his brother Joe Popp, Class of June 1966.

Michaeline Anne (Tworek) Wong of Silver Spring, MD, Class of 1968, died on January 24, 2024.

Randolph Lyle Witek of Arlington Heights, IL, Class of 1969, died on May 24, 2025. He is survived by his wife Holly (Roschman) Witek, Class of 1969.

Gayle Marie (Balik) Fietze of Gilbert, AZ, Class of 1970, died on September 19, 2024.

Randolph Hucke of Green Bay, WI, Class of 1970, died on May 4, 2025. He is survived by his wife Denise (Nalepa) Huckle, Class of 1970, and his brother Michael Huckle, Class of 1970.

Thomas Robert Lease of Mesquite, TX, Class of 1970, died in March 2022. He was predeceased by his father Robert Lease, Class of June 1940. He is survived by his sister Linda (Lease) Dustin, Class of 1968.

John "Jack" Thomas Wydra of Hoffman Estates, IL, Class of 1970, died on May 22, 2025. He is survived by his brother Richard Wydra, Class of June 1967.

Jack Wersching of Park Ridge, IL, Class of 1973, died on June 20, 2025. He is survived by his wife Jean (Peroni) Wersching, Class of 1973.

Barbara Jean Kunz of Park Ridge, IL, Class of 1974, died on May 8, 2025.

Steven Raymond LaMantia of Schaumburg, IL, Class of 1974, died on February 29, 2024. He is survived by his brother Gary LaMantia, Class of 1976, and Ray LaMantia.

Harold Gordon Gray of Lake Forest, CA, Class of 1975, died on August 17, 2021. He is survived by his sister Elisabeth (Gray) Goodwin, Class of 1974.

Richard David Jayko of Woodstock, IL, Class of 1979, died on June 1, 2025. He is survived by his wife Gina (Ornstead) Jayko, Class of 1980, and by his siblings Larry Jayko, Class of 1975, Cathy (Jayko) Sullivan, Class of 1977, Julie (Jayko) Bush, Class of 1980, Jeff Jayko, Class of 1981, Paul Jayko, Class of 1983, and Mike Jayko.



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www.taftalumni.org



www.tafthighschool.org

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2024-2025 Taft Alumni Association Board of Directors

Paulette (Zemaitis) English	1967	President, Editor	Arthur Kay	1961	Director
John Prochaska	1961	Vice President, Treasurer Emeritus	Richard Lindberg	1971	Director
Paul Madsen	1971	2 nd Vice President	Barbara (Borek) Littell	1976	Director
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The Taft Alumni Newsletter is a quarterly publication of the Taft Alumni Association.

Please send news, photos, and general correspondence to:

Taft Alumni Association, 6530 W Bryn Mawr Ave, Chicago IL 60631-3185 or eagleemail@taftalumni.org

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Taft Alumni Association

Membership Application or Renewal

Please tell us as much about yourself as you like so that we can share your news in the *Class Notes*.

Only fields marked with an asterisk (*) are required for membership. We will not publish your address or phone number.

About You

☐ My information has not changed

☐ Do not publish my information in Class Notes

*First Name (PRINT CLEARLY)	* Last Name at Graduation	* Current Last Name (if different)	
*Home Street Address	*City	*State	*ZIP
Primary Phone	Email Address	List in Email Directory? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
*Month/Year You Graduated	Number of Children _____ Children _____ Grandchildren _____ Great Grandchildren _____ Great Greats? _____		

Additional Education, Degrees, Military Service, Years

Occupation	Retired? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Semi	Elementary School Graduated From
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Other news you'd like to share?

About Your Taft Graduate Spouse

*First Name	* Last Name at Graduation	* Current Last Name (if different)
Primary Phone	Email Address	List in Email Directory? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
*Month/Year Spouse Graduated	Higher Education, Degrees, Military Service, Years	

Additional Education, Degrees, Military Service, Years

Occupation	Retired <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Semi	Elementary School Graduated From
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Other news you'd like to share?

Your Choices for a 2-Year Membership

* Receive Your Newsletter <input type="checkbox"/> Online <input type="checkbox"/> By mail <input type="checkbox"/> Both online and by mail	TAA Use Only
<input type="checkbox"/> \$20 (2-year individual) <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 (2-year Taft alumni couples) <input type="checkbox"/> Donation \$ _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Scholarship \$ _____	Total Remitted \$ _____

- ☐ Mail a **check** with completed membership form
- ☐ Use your bank's online **bill pay** (note year of graduation) and email the downloadable membership form
- ☐ Pay **online** at www.taftalumni.org and email the downloadable membership form
- ☐ Send **Zelle** payment to paytaa@taftalumni.org and email the downloadable membership form

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