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Featuring a message from the 25 and 50-year classes!



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Spring 2014
www.bhsalumni.org

Berlin High School Alumni Association - "The Oldest in the State"

Polakowski sets goals, succeeds

By Melanie Haedt, 2015

1989 graduate of Berlin, Tricia Polakowski (Kollat), is the 25-year speaker for the alumni banquet this May. Her topics are encouragement and life lessons.

"This applies to my life with maintaining a positive attitude and goals" Polakowski said. "I have learned how to be strong, how to stand up for myself and to make everyone I meet feel like they are someone important by listening to them attentively."

Polakowski believes that setting goals has helped her become a more organized person. A positive attitude has also helped make her a better person.

"Having a positive attitude helps people want to be around you and happiness is a must," Polakowski said.

Polakowski began her business work at Kretzmann Insurance Agency in Berlin during high school.

"My business teacher suggested that I work at the Kretzmann Agency," Polakowski said. "I did secretarial work, typing and office tasks. It helped me get a feel for the business atmosphere."

After high school, she commuted to Moraine Park Technical College while keeping her job at Kretzmann Agency. At MPTC, Polakowski



Tricia Polakowski with daughters (left to right) Samantha and Haley and husband Dave Polakowski.

earned her associates degree in accounting.

She has worked as the Administrative Assistant for 16 years at Berlin Area School District's business office. Polakowski also belongs to the Wisconsin Association of School Superintendent Assistants and sits on the advisory board.

"I enjoy having a career that helps me give back to the community I was raised in," Polakowski said.

Polakowski serves on the Endowment Commission for All Saints Catholic School, also.

Polakowski has been married to Dave Polakowski for 22 years and they have two daughters, Samantha and Haley.

"I enjoy spending family time at Brewer games, helping coach the BHS girl's summer softball team and helping at high school sporting events," Polakowski said.

Endowment Fund rewards seniors

The BHS Alumni Association Endowment Fund continues to grow and to be used to give six graduating seniors a scholarship to assist with college tuition. In addition, it is used to fund The Echo newsletter. The Alumni Association would like to acknowledge that since 2009, our donations exceeded the costs for the scholarships and banquet. Thank you for helping to reward both past and present Berlin High School graduates.

The 2013 BHS Alumni Association Scholarship recipients, who received \$1,200 each, were

Kathryn Draves
Katelyn Marks
Emma Hargrave
Kristin Johnson
Bryce Pomplun
Tristan Szente

McMonigal selected as 50-year speaker

By Lindsey Vang, 2015

After living in Berlin most of his life, Mike McMonigal has been selected as the 2014 50-year speaker.

"I stay in Spring Lake, CA for around five to six months and come back to our Wisconsin cottage during the summer," McMonigal said.

McMonigal graduated

from Berlin in 1964 and also stayed in state for college.

"I attended Marquette University and received an undergrad in business administration in 1968," McMonigal said. "After that I graduated with a law degree in 1971."

In 1992, McMonigal achieved the position of the Green Lake County Circuit Judge and retired in 2011.

Since retirement, McMonigal has golfed, traveled and completed long delayed tasks.

"I now have three children and six grandchildren," McMonigal said. "Having and raising a family has been one of my greatest achievements."

McMonigal has been assigned the speech topic "How Times Have Changed."

Alumni Spotlight: Kujawa came home to find success

By Melanie Haedt, 2015

Catherine Kujawa, graduate of '85, always thought she would live somewhere warm. Instead, she found her success closer to home in the family banking business.

In high school, Kujawa was influenced by Margaret Guertler's knowledge of English, which for Kujawa, is used continuously in the business world.

"Any type of communication is an extension of you and in some cases, the first impression someone has of you," Kujawa said.

After high school, Kujawa went to Marquette University and graduated with a finance and marketing degree. Looking for a warmer climate, she packed her bags, moved to Clearwater, FL

"When I came back for the funeral of my Grandpa Harry and saw how many people he had touched with his way of helping people I knew I wanted to do the same thing," Kujawa said.

Kujawa then earned her MBA from St. Louis University, came home, and worked her way to executive vice president of Farmers and Merchants Bank. She works along side her father, John Kujawa, and her two brothers, Peter and Paul.

"We continue Grandpa Harry's vision by working to understand the unique needs of all our customers," Kujawa said.

Kujawa is also currently serving on the Education Commission at All Saints Catholic School and the



Photo Submitted
Catherine Kujawa with children (L-R) Elyse, Nya, Dane, Bria and husband Dave Osterberg.

Berlin School Board.

"Being on both school boards has given me a chance to truly understand our educational system and ways to make our schools even better," Kujawa said.

Kujawa is married with six children and one grandchild. She enjoys supporting her children at sporting events.

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Thanks to the **Farmers & Merchants Bank** and to the **First National Bank of Berlin** for underwriting the costs of postage for this newsletter. Also, thank you to the **Berlin Journal** for public relations support throughout the year.

Highlights from the Red 'n' Green

Forensic students achieve, return to nationals

by Lindsey Vang, 2015

Senior Lucas DeRuyter and sophomore Alesha Guenther will return to nationals for forensics in Chicago this weekend.

"I have one to one and a half months to prepare," DeRuyter said. "All of the topics are sent to the contestants in advance so we can be ready."

This type of forensics is congress which is the event that both Berlin contestants participate. In this mock setting, con-

testants debate multiple bills.

"They use Roberts Rules of Order and have the rules that are very similar to real congress," former coach Jodi Becker said. "They debate the bills with affirmative and negative speeches, then cast votes."

DeRuyter has submitted his bill and confirmed that it will be debated.

"My category at nationals will be the same as state," DeRuyter said. "That the electoral college should be eliminat-

ed." Guenther submitted three different bills and was assigned to argue in favor of granting statehood to the District of Columbia.

"I wrote three bills, a resolution to increase intelligence among American students, a bill to grant statehood to the District of Columbia and a bill to lift the Cuban embargo," Guenther said.

This will be Guenther's second year at nationals and DeRuyter's fourth year.



Photo: D. Fralish

Lucas DeRuyter
Event: Forensics

Topic This Year: Eliminating the Electoral college

Years at Nationals: Four



Photo: N. Speers

Alesha Guenther
Event: Forensics

Topic This Year: To be determined

Years at Nationals: Two

BHS wall designated 'Be proud, be inspired'

by Payton DeMaster, 2014

At BHS, one wall was currently covered with inspiration. The inspiration is not quotes or photos of famous people, but rather past Berlin graduates that once made an effective, inspirational difference.

The Historical Society put together a committee of five members to be in charge of the wall.

"The idea of the wall was a way to recognize and feature people from Berlin who have excelled in their chosen fields and who could be an inspiration," Historical Society member Bobbi Erdmann said.

The high school seemed like an appropriate spot for the wall, because they wanted to reach out to students.

"We chose the high school

to locate the wall because it has the highest concentration of students, and those students are preparing their own futures," Erdmann said.

Ten nominees were selected by the Historical Society to start the wall. Every year, at least two more people will be added and members of the community will have the chance to nominate people.

"It was difficult to decide who to put on the wall to start, so each of the five members brought a list of people they thought were eligible," Erdmann said. "We then narrowed it down until we had ten."

The project was then brought to school board members.

"The idea of honoring highly successful and inspirational former graduates of Berlin has been talked about



The inspiration wall, located next to the auditorium, displays multiple pictures and stories of inspiring Berlin graduates.

for a number of years," Superintendent Dr. Robert Eidahl said. "Bobbi Erdmann contacted me about the idea and the district agreed to help."

The school board helped with installing the plaques on the wall, and tech engineering teacher Marty Wenig made a large display sign. The board also held a ceremony on Dec.

4 that unveiled the Berlinites featured on the wall.

"The ceremony was attended by community members, and was short, nice and appreciated by all who attended," Eidahl said.

Money for the plaques and other materials the Historical Society needed were sponsored from the selectees

on the wall and their families.

The main goal of the wall is to inspire students to follow their dreams.

"We hope that these people and what they have been able to accomplish will inspire today's students to follow their own dreams and know that it can be done," Erdmann said.