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**SAVE THE DATE:**  
**MAY 29, 2021**



Wisconsin's oldest active Alumni Association is preparing for its 150th celebration. All BHS Alumni are welcome to attend. The Board of Directors invites volunteers to plan and participate on this special committee. Please contact us if interested. Thank you!

**!!Help Wanted!!**  
 Pat Grahn is creating a book celebrating the Alumni Association's 150th and is in need of the following: pictures, memories, reunion books, Red 'n' Greens, etc.  
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**THE ECHO**



Spring 2020  
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**Berlin High School Alumni Association - "The Oldest in the State"**

**25-year speaker Louise Sloane '95 recalls lessons learned in Navy**

By Grace Hoffman, 2021

Louise (Erb) Sloane '95 has been chosen as this year's 25-year speaker. Her speech will revisit her life in the Navy as well as the important lessons she has learned after making the decision to become a full-time homemaker.

Sloane began her career in the Navy straight out of high school. She received a bachelor of science degree in honors English in 1999, and a master's degree in British literature from Marquette University in 2001. Shortly after, she began training as a naval flight officer.

From there she went on to serve many roles over her time from aviator to staff officer. Sloane made the decision, after 10 years of service, that her time in the active military had ended and she would focus on her family.

"After 10 years service, I left the active duty military to become a full-time homemaker and support system for my husband, Graham, and our children," Sloane said.

Her life outside the Navy has been one filled with volunteering and learning. Sloane has been an active member of her church, Cub Scouts, PTO, the Naval Academy, and the Michigan State University Extension Master Gardener Program.

"Military service imbues members with

a sense of serving a purpose larger than one's self," Sloane said.

Sloane also spent time teaching as a community college adjunct instructor, and then as a part-time teacher.

"I did work as a part-time teacher for 8-12 grade students; that year taught me as much as I taught the students. For one thing, I discovered I'm definitely not a middle school teacher. There's a special type of person who works with that age level, and I am not it!" Sloane said.

Through all these moments, Sloane still stands by her decision of becoming a homemaker. She regards the decision as the hardest, but the correct choice for her family.

Sloane looks back and remembers Berlin High School as a safe place full of opportunity. She was able to experience music, academics, acting and student government.

"These experiments in different arenas gave me a chance to sample the types of careers I could see myself doing in the future. Mock Trial proved to me that I'd have a long, up-hill battle to become a trial lawyer. It did show me, though, that I am able to use critical analysis to explore literature or assist in decision making," Sloane said.

Sloane currently lives with her family in Detroit, Michigan. She looks back on her



**Louise Sloane will be the 25-year speaker at the alumni banquet. She will speak about the important lessons she learned in the Navy, and in her time after.**

Photo Submitted  
 childhood in Poy Sippi and the relationships she formed. She recalls the valuable lesson that the rural town taught her.

"The lesson I've learned is that often the most valuable asset you have is the family you've been given or created," Sloane said.

These inspiring moments and life-long relationships will all relate back to Sloane's speech topic.

"It's not always about what we do, but rather about those with whom we share those experiences that brightly colors our lives," Sloane said.

## Endowment Fund rewards seniors

The BHS Alumni Association Endowment Fund continues to grow and to be used to give 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 2019 BHS Alumni Association Scholarship recipients, who received \$1,000.

### 2019 Scholarship Recipients

Mari Beltran  
Abbey Freimark  
Nathan Krall  
Camryn Reck  
Lane Sobieski  
Lukas Viars

Thanks to the **Farmers & Merchants Bank** and to the **Fortifi 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.

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-Glenn Gerth

## Trochinski named 50-year speaker at alumni banquet

By Lily Sonnentag, 2021

After obtaining a bachelor's degree in education and a master's degree in educational leadership to being an educator for 15 years and holding administrative positions for 25 years, alumni Gene Trochinski has been selected as the 50-year speaker.

"I know it will be easy to say

great things about the class of 1970. After all, our class was and still is 'legendary,'" Trochinski said. "I am collecting information and pictures from classmates that I will try to include in my speech."

Living in Florida for 46 years with his wife, Mary Jo Thull Trochinski, and visiting Berlin often, Trochinski recalls some memories that he

made at Berlin High School.

"The most memorable time for me was being a varsity wrestler all four years. Today, I still keep in contact with my teammates," Trochinski said. "I will always remember my math teacher Donald Frank, not only was he a great math teacher, but a terrific coach and as a principal I always tried to hire people like him."

## Alumni Spotlight: LaBuda to be inducted into WFCAs Hall of Fame

By Joey Femali, 2021

As a graduate of the class of 1980, Joe LaBuda participated in football, basketball and baseball. He attended Concordia University St. Paul (CSP) and continued his success academically and athletically. He set the single-season sack record in football that stood for 38 years at CSP. In 2002, he found himself being inducted into the Concordia Golden Bear Athletic Hall of Fame.

On April 4, LaBuda will find himself once again being inducted into a hall of fame. LaBuda will be inducted into the Wisconsin Football Coaches Association (WFCAs). He will join 10 other coaches in the induction as part of the Menominee coaching staff.

"My favorite part of playing at Berlin was playing underneath Coach Steve Stellmacher. He made the game and practices fun," LaBuda said.

At Menominee he has earned the school 21 Big River Conference Championships, five state titles, two state runner ups, and also boasts the longest state playoff appearance streak with 30 appearances.

"My advice to kids that want to coach is that social media is a big influence on the job now, but you can't be phased by others' opinions," LaBuda said.

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# Highlights from the Red 'n' Green

## New class inspires community change

By Grace Hoffman, 2021

A new class called Social Issues Research was added to the list of options students have to choose from as electives.

The honors class, taught by English teacher Amy Wenig '86, is a course where students have the opportunity to impact the community by choosing a project they believe will bring a positive change.

"We have to do research on a topic we are passionate about, and do a project that will help others in our community," junior Josie Bartol said.

To begin her project, Bartol decided on a topic. For her, this was the easiest part. She chose to install specific swings for students with special needs at the Clay Lamberton playground.

The class not only requires students to do the research but also



Photo: G. Hoffman

**Junior Josie Bartol discusses plans for the installation of handicap swings with Superintendent Dr. Carl Cartwright and Director of Building and Grounds, Josh Youngbauer '99. "I hope that the project helps to include more students outside with their peers," Bartol said.**

the fundraising needed in order to make their ideas come to life. The students were instructed to spend the entire duration of the trimester on their one topic.

"The students spent the first week or so researching different ideas and then picked something they were passionate

expected to problem solve, create presentations and complete research.

Senior Josie Reich is an example of a student who took the opportunity to use the class as a way to bring awareness to an issue.

Reich planned a presentation for juniors and seniors led by a retired detective to help inform students about human trafficking.

"I hope that people will recognize that human trafficking can affect anyone, and that they can take precautions to keep themselves safe," Reich said.

Participants in the class hope to inspire a drive in the rest of the community to take on more in order to make a difference.

"I am excited for them to see the difference they can make, and I'm excited for them to take their passions and impact others with it," Wenig said.

about," Wenig said. "From there they read a book for more information on the topic. Then they found articles on similar projects, wrote a research paper then performed a service project"

The class is structured for students to be able to work independently. Students are

## Alumni foreign exchange student impacted by BHS

By Nya Osterberg, 2021

Berlin High School has had many foreign exchange students throughout the years. Each exchange student grows in their own way from their experience. German foreign exchange student Wiebke Peter '10 is one who has been impacted by BHS.

"People tell me often that I came back as a different 'Wiebke'. I was more self-confident, and less worried. It definitely formed me to be the person that I am today," Peter said.

Living in Berlin sprouted the idea that Peter wanted to work in a school setting.

"I finished my master's last year, and am now doing a postgraduate program in teaching English and German at a bilingual school in Germany," Peter said.

To this day, Peter still keeps in contact with her host family, and has come back to visit a few times.

"I know she has kept in contact with her

host family, and I am friends with her on social media. I see that she is still visiting her host family," former coordinator Beth Paskey said.

Peter, along with the other foreign exchange students at the time, were also able to experience things they have never seen before.

"Together with Wiebke and Natalie, I got to join in on field trips to some really cool and interesting places, like the Shakespeare show in Chicago and the Holocaust Museum in Milwaukee," German foreign exchange student Ane Ellefsen '10 said.

Berlin taught Peter a lesson that she will never forget.

"It taught me the meaning and importance of a community. I have never lived in such a small town before, but I also never felt so integrated in the community. I had a very special relationship with my neighbors, which I will never forget," Peter said.



Photo Submitted

**Foreign exchange student Wiebke Peter her graduating year in 2010 (left), and her now (right). "My high school year in the U.S. had a great impact on my life. I am very sure I wouldn't be the same person as I am today," Peter said.**