



The Latest Buzz

SUMMER 09
PERRYSBURG SCHOOLS ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Things are buzzing (pun intended) here in Perrysburg.

This year our students have, once again, continued the rich tradition of Perrysburg Schools' academic excellence. Their success in the classroom has carried over into the performing arts as well as athletics. Yes, we are proud of our students, but this newsletter's mission is to recognize the success of our alumni.

In our first issue of *The Latest Buzz*, I wrote that we have over 10,000 Perrysburg High School graduates who live, study and work nearby and around the world. Our lead story in this issue focuses on three alumni who display the diversity of careers our graduates have pursued.

As a means of further reconnecting with you beyond this newsletter, we are in the process of establishing the Perrysburg Schools Alumni Association. In fact next year we plan to visit targeted cities where Perrysburg alumni live. We are also creating a program next fall that will offer you the opportunity to give back to your hometown school. Dr. Short's Chill & Chat program will bring together high school students and alumni over a relaxed lunch at the high school. Students can certainly benefit from your advice and career moves.

We hope you find this newsletter to be informative while possibly serving as a means to reconnect with old friends and teachers. Enjoy reading!

Thomas L. Hosler
Superintendent, Perrysburg Schools

Go Jackets!

www.perrysburgschools.net
alumni@mail.perrysburgschools.net

Where Are They Now?

One lives nearby and has become a renowned sculptor. A second one lives "up the road" and holds a prominent position at a major university. The third lives a long plane ride away in Hawaii, pursuing her passion for marine life and the environment. All three are graduates of Perrysburg High School, and each has continued the tradition of academic excellence instilled in them through our schools.

"We are always inspired by the performance of our current students in the classroom, on the stage and in sporting venues," says Tom Hosler, Perrysburg Schools Superintendent. "But we should also remember our 10,000-plus graduates who have gone on to do remarkable things at home and abroad."

Our first issue of *The Latest Buzz* had a "sports" theme and featured the athletic feats of Perrysburg alumni. This newsletter serves to focus on the artistic and academic side of Perrysburg alumni and how several graduates have pursued their own unique career paths.

George Carruth ('70)

Over the past 25 years, George Carruth has become one of America's most collected sculptors. It started in 1983 when Carruth began hand carving unique garden statues and sculptures from stones cast off from local quarries. Turning rough quarry stones into garden sculptures became his passion, and soon Carruth was winning awards at art shows and exhibits. He eventually was commissioned to sculpt pieces for the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., HGTV, L.L. Bean and the White House Christmas tree.

Carruth Studio, Inc. was born when demand led to the casting of his designs into stone so multiple images could be produced. He and his wife, Deborah, who serves as the promoter and manager of Carruth Studio, have since enjoyed national success. Carruth originals have appeared on the cover of over a dozen national catalogs. His products have been sold to over 3,000 art galleries, craft shops and nurseries from coast to coast. Internationally, Carruth sculptures have made their way to England, Italy, Japan, Germany and Australia. Carruth, along with his daughter/illustrator Libby Carruth Krock, have developed three children's picture books about nature, growing up and having big dreams. George Carruth's creations can be seen at: www.carruthstudio.com

(continued on Page 2)



George Carruth ('70)

Plan on attending the 40th Year Class Reunion for the 1969 on August 15, 2009 at The Carranor Hunt & Polo Club in Perrysburg later date. Classmate Rick Ritter requests that '69 graduates help ensure the

- 1) Updating contact information
- 2) Sharing contact information for other classmates
- 3) Offering suggestions for activities in addition to the dinner, da
- 4) Offering assistance

For more information contact: Rick Ritter, 22 Cherbourg Court, Potomac 301-983-5398; Cell: 240-994-6886; Fax: 301-983-8734; email: rickritter

Where Are They Now? (cont.)

Krista (Spencer) Graham ('94)

Krista (Spencer) Graham is a long way from Perrysburg. As a Marine Biologist for the National Marine Fisheries Service, Protected Resources Division of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Graham lives in Honolulu, Hawaii. She works under the Endangered Species Act to protect endangered and threatened species in Hawaii and in the U.S. Pacific territories. Graham has been based out of Hawaii since 2005.

She graduated from Miami University in 1998 with a degree in Zoology and in 2003 from the University of Miami (Florida) with a master's in Marine Affairs and Policy. Prior to entering graduate school, she worked as a coral reef ecology intern for a nonprofit company in the U.S. Virgin Islands. She has also served as a coral reef intern researching juvenile coral recruitment and mortality in Bermuda and the Florida Keys. Graham's master's thesis was an eight-month effort to develop a comprehensive oil spill contingency plan for the entire British Virgin Islands archipelago. Reconnect with Krista at: krista.graham@yahoo.com



Krista (Spencer) Graham ('94)



Susan Pile ('93)

Susan Pile ('93)

Susan Pile is the Director of the Michigan Union and University Unions Arts & Programs (UUAP) at The University of Michigan. She joined the U of M staff in 2004 after having spent several years in student activities at the University of Illinois student union and in Greek life before that. Pile holds two master's degrees, one in elementary education from Indiana University, and a second degree in higher education administration from the University of Illinois. She attended Miami University (Ohio) where she studied elementary education.

Pile is responsible for the overall operations of the main student union on the U of M campus in addition to her team overseeing more than 300 events for students each year, including concerts, cultural events, educational forums, art exhibits, dances, major events, student performances and workshops. Her department's published mission is to "Believe in the value of art, performance and recreation as a means to enrich campus culture and the individual experience of students at the University of Michigan. By empowering students to plan, create and engage in dynamic activities, we act as a catalyst for student development and co-curricular learning." Pile says she enjoys working at the University of Michigan with its talented students, rich traditions and commitment to diversity. Contact Susan Pile at: susanpile@gmail.com

Want to Help?

Alumni Association Volunteer Needed

We are establishing the Perrysburg Schools Alumni Association and are seeking a volunteer coordinator. Next year we plan to visit targeted cities where Perrysburg alumni live, and we need a volunteer to help coordinate that effort. If you are interested in a position as a part-time volunteer to search for alumni and plan events, please contact Rachel Johnson at 419-874-9131 ext. 22156 or rjohnson@perrysburgschools.net.

Chill & Chat

Remember when you were a high school student and didn't have a clue what you wanted to do with your life? Perhaps you benefited from a mentor who provided some guidance. Here's your opportunity to give back to your hometown school. The Perrysburg Schools Alumni Association, with High School Principal Dr. Michael Short, will introduce its new Chill & Chat program in the upcoming school year. Chill & Chat will bring together high school students and alumni over a relaxed lunch at the high school. Students can benefit by learning about your career moves. To become a Chill & Chat alumni volunteer, contact Rachel Johnson at 419-874-9131 ext. 22156 or rjohnson@perrysburgschools.net.

ION - AUGUST 15, 2009
e Perrysburg High School Class of
g. Details will be advertised at a
e success of the reunion by:

Perrysburg Schools Foundation's Mission

ance and socializing

mac, MD 20854-3101, Phone:
er7@gmail.com

The Perrysburg Schools Foundation—in cooperation with the school faculty, students, administration, alumni and community—will be a leader in the promotion, support and recognition of academic achievement and innovative educational programs.

Enhancing Our Schools

There is an organization that works quietly behind the scenes to improve the quality of our educational programs. Most alumni are probably not aware of the impact made on their education by the Perrysburg Schools Foundation (PSF). This nonprofit group was formed in 1983 by Perrysburg Schools Superintendent Joe Bailey and Judge Wayne Leatherman to solicit contributions to supplement and enhance educational programs in Perrysburg Schools. The first project chosen for funding by the PSF board was the Mini-Grants Program. The grants were designed to assist teachers at all grade levels to bring innovative ideas, techniques and resources into the classroom using non-tax dollar funding. Since 1985 the Foundation has awarded over \$105,000 in mini-grants, impacting every student in the system – many of them several times.

The Perrysburg Schools Foundation has also given over \$125,000 in scholarships from endowments and/or memorial contributions. These include the: Michael J. Blackburn Memorial Scholarship, Charles Collins Scholarship, Tyler Benjamin Custer Scholarship, Hovland Book Scholarship, Perrysburg Schools Foundation Scholarship, Marjory E. and Herman F. Mizer Memorial Scholarship, Elizabeth M. Munger Scholarship, Robert William Nooney Memorial Scholarship, Mary Jo and Orville F. Schaller Memorial Scholarship and the Robert C. and Dorothy J. Welch Scholarship.

The Foundation is also responsible for recognizing the efforts of teachers and staff by presenting these awards: Outstanding Educator, Outstanding Support Staff, The George C. Munger Outstanding Educator and The Elizabeth M. Munger Student Citizenship. PSF also provides funds for the National Honor Society induction ceremony and honor cords and hosts the annual "Breakfast of Champions" with the Perrysburg Kiwanis Club.

If you would like to give back to your hometown school, consider making a tax-deductible donation to the nonprofit Perrysburg Schools Foundation, P.O. Box 504, Perrysburg, OH, 43552. For more information, visit www.perrysburgschools.net, and click on the Perrysburg Schools Foundation logo in the lower right corner of the page.

The Perrysburg Schools Foundation Board, Front Row (l-r): Patti Jo Fantozz, President; Nancy Hart, Vice President and Reading Instructor at Woodland Elementary School; Betty Falkenstein, retired Administrative Assistant to Human Resources; and Amy Whitacre, 1st grade Teacher at Toth Elementary School.

Back Row (l-r): Tom Hosler, Superintendent; Rich Brundrett, Science Teacher at Perrysburg High School; Bob Phillips, Administrative Specialist; Amy Steele; Dave Dewey; Dean Ferguson, Social Studies Teacher at Perrysburg High School; and John Brown.

Not Pictured: Nick Camp; Jan Cellio; Marge Gallagher; Mary Harman, Treasurer; and Dwight Osterud.



In Memoriam

John K. "Joe" Bailey, 65, was Superintendent of Perrysburg Schools from 1979-1991. After retiring from school administration, Bailey became an Associate Professor in Educational Administration and Supervision at Bowling Green State University. He left BGSU to become a professor at Ashland University in 1995 where he taught and became Chairman of the Educational Administration Department. Bailey was responsible, along with former school board member Wayne Leatherman, for establishing the nonprofit Perrysburg Schools Foundation.

Bob Steinecker, 83, was a community leader and educator. He spent 31 years in the Perrysburg School District, serving as a teacher, coach, guidance counselor, athletic director and assistant principal. Steinecker encouraged the growth of the Perrysburg sports program from a small group of boys' sports to a full program for boys and girls. He started 11 girls' athletic programs and increased the number of boys' programs as well. In 1980 the Perrysburg High School football field was renamed Steinecker Field in his honor. He was inducted in 2006 as a charter member of the Perrysburg High School Athletic Hall of Fame. He also served his community as city treasurer for 14 years and as a member of city council for six years.

Jay Spreng, 68, taught in Perrysburg Schools from 1980-1996 and was a 1958 graduate of Perrysburg High School. Spreng taught in Toledo Public Schools from 1965-1980, serving as the Citywide Music Department Head while working at Toledo Rogers High School. While he was there, he established bands and orchestras of more than 100 performers each. Spreng began a large string orchestra program at Perrysburg and increased the overall number of students and music groups in the school system. He believed a stronger public school system and national economy would result from a closer association and more equal status among the various disciplines within the schools, especially between the arts and sciences.



Well-Traveled Grad Returns to Her Roots

The building was different. The faces had changed. But for Melissa Ledesma-Leese, it was the same old school. The 1991 Perrysburg High School graduate returned to her alma mater this school year as part of the U.S. State Department's Hometown Diplomat Program. Ledesma-Leese has been employed as a Consular Officer with the State Department for the past three years. The Hometown Diplomat Program sends State Department employees home to reconnect with their community and further recruiting efforts through their alumni networks. Ledesma-Leese spoke to Chris Lake's Social Studies and Lynda Fox's French classes at the high school. She also visited Bowling Green State University where she earned her undergraduate degree, and the University of Toledo where she received her law degree.

During her day at Perrysburg High School, Ledesma-Leese discussed her role in the Office of Fraud Prevention where she was selected for work in the Human Smuggling and Trafficking Center. Ledesma-Leese explained to students the career options available to them in the State Department, as well as internships and fellowships available to high school and college students.

Students in the French class learned the State Department requires knowledge of a second language. "While they will teach you, someone who is already proficient in another language has an edge when it comes to hiring," said Ledesma-Leese.

The diplomat spoke of her travels to foreign countries and noted she has been posted to 10 countries in Africa, her area of expertise. Ledesma-Leese shared how people in other countries follow American politics. "They are watching us, and they want to know everything they can about the United States – our clothes, our television programs," she said. The Hometown Diplomat recalled how a cab driver in Africa and a woman in the marketplace knew specifics about the presidential primaries and could talk in detail about a speech given by Hillary Clinton.

Accompanying Ledesma-Leese to the high school were her parents, Abraham and Marty Ledesma of Perrysburg. The new high school had not been built when Ledesma-Leese attended, so she was quite interested in touring the facility and expressed envy at the new music wing. "Having been a Jazz Singer under Pam Williams, I was excited to go back and visit her and to watch the Jazz Singers rehearse. They are amazing!" she commented. "The facility for rehearsals and performances is leaps and bounds above what we had! But old building or new, it's still the same PHS that I remember... even if the walls and faces have changed."

Ledesma-Leese currently lives in the Washington, D.C. area. Her husband, Rob Leese, is a Captain in the U.S. Air Force. They met in Spain when she was studying abroad during her college years at Bowling Green State University. The couple has a six-year-old son, Ben.

Teachers in the News

Energy Hogs Rule!

Two Perrysburg teachers have won \$10,000 grants from BP's A+ for Energy program. Lisa Caswell, a Junior High Technology Instructor and Nathan Ash, a Perrysburg High School Physics Teacher, were among 1,400 nationwide applicants.



*Junior High
Technology Instructor
Lisa Caswell*

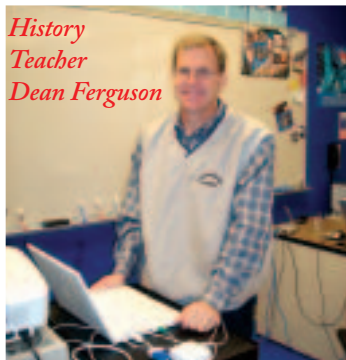
Caswell received a grant for her "Energy Hog Patrol" project. The project allowed Caswell's sixth grade students to promote energy conservation at the junior high facility and within the community. The students formed "Energy Hog Patrols," producing videos on energy use and conservation. The videos were broadcast weekly to the entire student body and shared with the elementary schools and the community. School electric bills were recorded on a monthly graph and analyzed. The sixth graders worked in a paperless classroom using online Moodle courses, a class web site, a class blog and individual email accounts. "My goal is to have students discover how energy is used in everyday activities by combining research with their youthful ingenuity and creativity," says Caswell.

Physics Teacher Nathan Ash's project was designed for junior and senior level physics and Advanced Placement physics classes. Through demonstrations and classroom discussions, Ash's students developed an operational definition of energy. They then used that definition to investigate different forms of energy. The second part of the project involved investigating, researching and designing equipment used in wind energy. Students incorporated computer technology and programming using NXT MindStorms robotics kits to design control features used in wind energy.

He Makes History Class Fun

Perrysburg High School History Teacher Dean Ferguson received the 2008 Ohio American Legion Educator of the Year Award. Mr. Ferguson was invited by the Ohio American Legion to be a distinguished guest at the 2008 State Convention. At that time he was recognized as the Educator of the Year and given a special plaque.

Ferguson has taught at Perrysburg Schools for 22 years. Last year he received the George and Elizabeth Munger Outstanding Educator Award from the Perrysburg Schools Foundation. "Dean Ferguson is a consummate professional and a caring, compassionate and dedicated teacher," said Foundation Board Member Donna Eaton at his presentation ceremony. "He has a true passion for teaching history."



*History
Teacher
Dean Ferguson*

*Physics Teacher
Nathan Ash
with students.*



Programs In The News

THEATRE PROGRAM RECEIVES NATIONAL NOMINATION

Perrysburg alumni already know of the quality and talent in the school's theatre department. Now, word has spread. The Perrysburg High School Theatre Program has been nominated to represent the United States at the 2010 American High School Theatre Festival (AHSTF) in Edinburgh, Scotland. AHSTF is a collaboration of the finest American high school drama programs, showcasing the nation's best at the world's largest performing arts festival. Directors from state, regional and national theatre organizations, university theatre professors and AHSTF alumni directors make nominations in recognition of superior theatre programs.

The AHSTF's Board of Advisors, consisting of prominent collegiate theatre professionals, will rank the nominated programs. Top high school programs are identified based on their most recent bodies of work, awards, community involvement, philosophies and recommendations.

"It's a tribute to the talent and hard work of our students to be nominated for the Scotland Festival," says Robert Gentry, Perrysburg High School English Instructor and Theatre Director. If selected, Perrysburg High School students will participate in a two-week adventure in August 2010. The program includes two days in London to experience world-renowned theatre on the West End and historical sights. After a train trip along Britain's coast, groups will attend and perform (four times) at the Fringe Festival in Edinburgh, Scotland.

If Perrysburg's program is selected, the school will also participate in the 2009 Familiarization (FAM) Trip, an all-expense-paid one-week tour to Edinburgh in August 2009. The trip allows students to experience firsthand AHSTF and the Fringe Festival during the summer prior to their schools' participation.



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Perrysburg High School students presented "Grease" in this year's spring musical. The Music Education program has been ranked, for three consecutive years, as one of the top 100 music education programs in the country.



MUSICIANS SHINE

In early April the Perrysburg High School Concert Band and Wind Ensemble participated in the Dixie Classic National Adjudicators Invitational held in the Performing Arts Center of Harper College, Chicago, Illinois. The competition included nine bands, one string orchestra, two jazz bands and four choirs from Arlington, Tennessee; Arlington, Texas; Celina, Texas; Hartford, Wisconsin; Manlius, New York; Oakdale, Minnesota; Perrysburg, Ohio; Tulsa, Oklahoma and Omaha, Nebraska.

The Wind Ensemble was named overall Grand Champion, earning the highest score of the fifteen performing ensembles. The Wind Ensemble percussionists also won the judge's award for the festival's outstanding percussion section. Senior flutist Elizabeth Leimkuehler received one of four outstanding soloist citations. The Concert Band earned an Excellent rating for their performance and the Wind Ensemble earned a Superior rating for their performance. "We're very proud of the performance of our students at the festival," says Scott Schleuter, Perrysburg High School Director of Bands. "They represent a long line of talented individuals who have participated in the musical arts at Perrysburg High School over the years."

MUSIC EDUCATION AMONG BEST IN NATION

For the third year in a row Perrysburg Schools has placed among the "Best 100 communities for Music Education" in the 10th annual survey conducted by the NAMM Foundation. This year's web-based survey involved teachers and school district administrators across the country. Participants answered detailed questions about funding, graduation requirements, music class participation, instruction time, facilities, support for the music program, and other relevant factors. The responses were verified with district officials, and advisory organizations reviewed the data. High School Band Director Scott Schleuter completed the survey for the Perrysburg School District, which covered all areas of music education K-12.

THE CELLAR WINS BIG

It may be called *The Cellar*, but it's anything but a bargain basement communication tool. The online newspaper, produced by the Technical Writing class of Kathy Housepian, has received a \$5,000 Teach Award from the Best Buy Company, Inc. The award was given for the integration of interactive technology into the classroom curriculum. Housepian applied for

the award for her class, where she focuses on artistic expression, community service, video production and web writing. Her class was chosen for its creative use of interactive technology to make learning fun. Housepian says the money will be used to purchase camera equipment and possibly a computer. Visit *The Cellar* at: cellarkids.com

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Perrysburg Schools Administration - 419-874-9131

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Perrysburg Schools Principals

High School – Dr. Michael Short
Junior High – Dale Wiltse
Fort Meigs Elementary – Scott Best
Frank Elementary – Brent Swartzmiller
Toth Elementary – Dr. Beth Johnson-Christoff
Woodland Elementary – Dan Creps

For Address Updates, Click on Alumni at www.perrysburgschools.net or Call 419-874-9131.

For Advertising Information, Contact Rachel Johnson at: rjohnson@perrysburgschools.net