



# TRUE BLUE

NEWSLETTER OF COLUMBUS / COLUMBUS NORTH HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

**PROMOTING & SUPPORTING EXCELLENCE AT COLUMBUS NORTH HIGH SCHOOL, ITS STUDENTS, FACULTY & ALUMNI**

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Peter Campbell King, Bull Dog Alumni Association President, Class of '72

**"A hero is who, in spite of weakness, doubt and not always knowing the answers, goes ahead and overcomes anyway." —Christopher Reeve**

**D**ear Bull Dog Nation,  
As we remain in the midst of a historic pandemic, the students, faculty and staff of our great high school have persevered and exceeded expectations in this academic year. Each and every one of them are heroes. Never before being faced with such an outbreak, teachers, administrators, staff and a host of others literally risked their lives in an attempt to keep our student's educations a priority.

Principal David Clark sums up everyone affiliated with CNHS in one word: resilience. Even though disappointment was experienced by many, their sacrifice meant our future would be in excellent hands. They are forever the pioneers. Teachers had to plan differently and prepare lessons and

conduct classes online. Students remained home at different times in an effort to stop the spread of the disease. They were, however, strong finishers. Mr. Clark went on to comment that resilience will be the defining memory of this class. They grew up in a traditional educational setting and finished as leaders who introduced us to new ways of learning.

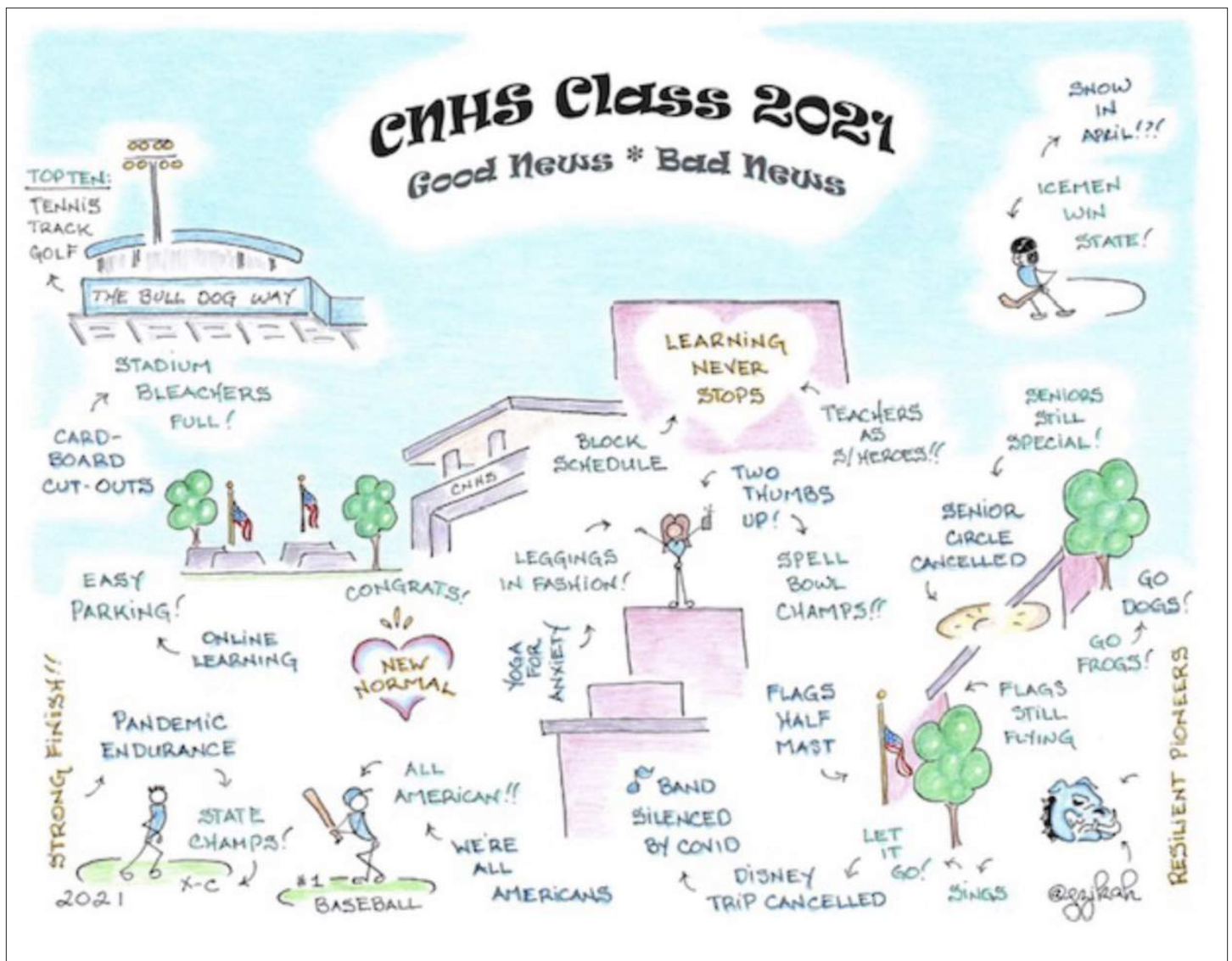
While the focus remained on education, extraordinary changes were felt by many in extracurricular activities. Athletic events were limited in attendance in accordance with social distancing guidelines. Cardboard fan cutouts filled the stands. It's not exactly what the athletes preferred, but teams were able to compete. Even the cheerleaders had to perform before sparse crowds. The Band,

unfortunately, had its trip to Disney World in Orlando, Florida, cancelled. The students missed their friends, dances, tailgating, athletic events and other school functions that play an important role in the social aspects of education.

As restrictions ease, we are beginning to see a return to a more normal educational environment. The class of 2021, who participated in graduation ceremonies on May 29, 2021, will be the class who paved a path to new ways of learning. Congratulations to our new Bull Dog alumni! As you forge your pathway in this world, please sign up for the Bull Dog Alumni Association. We'd be honored to have you join us!

Enjoy your summer,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "P. King", with a long, sweeping underline.



## ARTIST CREATES STORY-MAP TO HONOR CLASS OF 2021

### Graduation to the New Normal

Columbus North High School Seniors graduated this past weekend just as America comes together in the new normal. Alumni Jessica (Bottum) Hoagland puts the “Good News” and “Bad News” together into a new story-map to honor recent graduates.

The graduation map is a memento and reminder of the students’ resilience.

“It’s been a hard year, but the pandemic is not without its blessings,” says Hoagland, “the old way is going and the young people are our future. I sat in the parking lot and watched the students come to school on vaccination day, which was both hopeful and slightly sad.”

Hoagland lives in Saint Louis where artist Carole Wantz is her pandemic friend and mentor. Wantz currently has a major art exhibit at the Indiana State Art Museum. “We

both like to look for the poignant and the funny in our work,” says Hoagland, “and our art has a way of capturing stories.”

Both artists work collaboratively with their patrons, and CNHS parents, educators and students were involved with the CNHS story-map. Classmate Kim West, editor of True Blue, reached out to Hoagland via Facebook with a story-map request.

“I’ve known Jessie since kindergarten days at Parkside. While I haven’t seen her in years, I keep up with her on Facebook. Her story-maps are genius and I always enjoy them. I was hoping she would agree to share that talent with the Alumni Association and she did!” The cartoon follows above. “In her continued support of us, she is providing two signed original copies to auction in the future. She’s a true Bull Dog with a huge heart,” West said.

Teachers are honored as heroes and “(s) heroes” on the map, for continuing online learning while shifting to a block schedule. The flags fly at half-mast, but flags are still flying; Senior Circle has been canceled, while Seniors still special. Many 2021 CNHS academic and sport achievements are captured on the map.

“What a generous gesture that Jessie has made for our Class of 2021,” said Alumni Executive Director Hedy George. “She’s such a talented artist and we could not be more appreciative of her effort. Of course, we’re proud to call her one of our own! Once a Bull Dog, always a Bull Dog!”

The story-map can also be viewed on the CNHS Alumni page at [columbusnorthalumni.org](http://columbusnorthalumni.org). Stay tuned for further information on how to win a signed original.



## CONGRATULATIONS SENIORS!

A Poem by Kim West, Class of 1979

**T**he Class of '21 of Bull Dog Nation  
...is now planning for graduation!  
This whole year has been like a coma  
...in a pandemic, they've earned their diploma!

Their senior year was far from mundane  
...their schedules were absolutely insane!  
Homecoming was empty on Max Andress Field  
...but our determined Bull Dogs would not yield!

2020 was such a bad year  
...as so many people lived in fear!  
Our vocabulary was filled with terms unheard  
...COVID was the very worst word!

Everyone masked up and did social distancing  
...and were kept apart with invisible fencing!  
Students were forced to learn online  
...and faculty members adapted just fine!

It's been a tough year but a good one too...  
...Everyone pitched in with tasks they could do!  
Just a few more days 'til the final bell rings...  
...and that Bull Dog Victory Bell once again sings

It's the end of May, time for graduation  
...our seniors are leaving with a great education!  
A brand new year begins in the Fall...  
...once a graduate, we are Bull Dogs all!

Congratulations to the Class of 2021!  
We are all proud of you!



## FIRST GRADUATION IN CNHS HISTORY HELD AT MAX ANDRESS FIELD

In what is believed to be the first-ever graduation ceremony to take place outdoors, the CNHS Class of 2021 set history as the chilly ceremony defied the pandemic in a beautiful ceremony. With COVID restrictions in place, students marched across the stage and exited as graduates. CNHS, CEHS and Hauser combined to graduate over 800 seniors in Bartholomew County this year.

Mother Nature provided one final challenge for our seniors who endured through the ceremony. In the week prior, the weather had been warm to borderline hot outside, giving hope that Mother Nature would cooperate. She had no intentions of being nice, however, and sent a massive cold front through our area, preceded by thunderstorms and rain. At 9 a.m. on the day of graduation, it was 46 degrees outside

A group of determined seniors, family and friends, though further chilled by the winds, braved the fury of the weather and accomplished the final task of their senior year. With the old graduation site, Memorial Gymnasium, standing in the background, the ceremony broke tradition. It was a complete success and minus the uncertainty of planning, one wonders if it will be the last one outside.

The graduates of the class of 2021 are all now welcomed members of the Bull Dog Alumni Association.

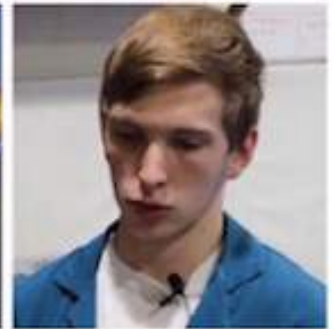
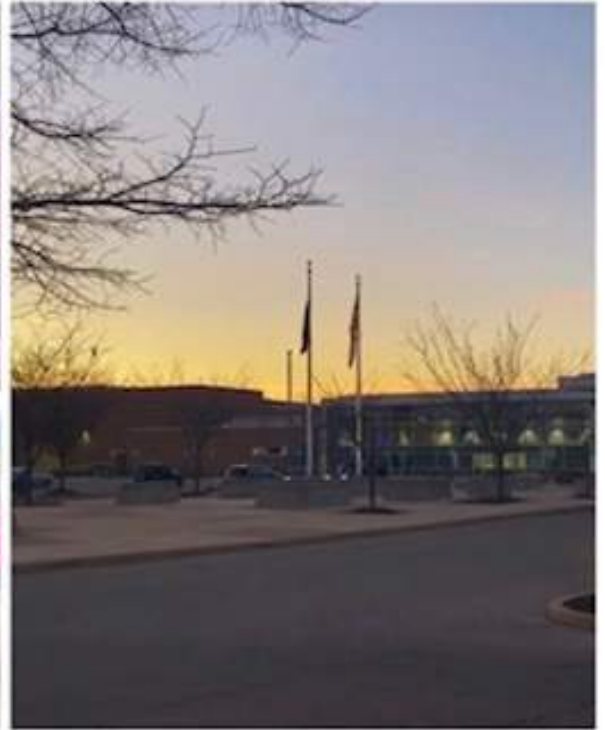




**YEAR IN REVIEW**







**EDITOR'S NOTE**

*Congratulations, Katie Long! Katie was named the recipient of the John Johnson Studio Productions Scholarship, sponsored by your Bull Dog Alumni Association! Here's to Katie and the Class of 2021!*

**365 - COVID 19 + 2021 = SENIORITIS**

Katie Long  
Class of 2021

**T**his time of year, an epidemic by a different name traditionally invades high schools all across America: senioritis. By May, seniors have usually been afforded all the rites and rituals associated with, in our case, the Top Dogs of the school. The only thing remaining in May is a walk across the stage to receive their diploma.

For Katie Long, Class of 2021, that walk will be bittersweet. It means no more high school and a goodbye to classmates she'll now likely see only at reunions. It also means she's walking towards new opportunities, however, as she plans on attending her mother's alma mater, Florida College, near Tampa, Florida.

It will feel a bit strange for Katie, the youngest of two daughters

of Steve and Betsy Long. Just two years ago, their oldest daughter, Hannah, became a Bull Dog graduate, and this Fall they will become empty nesters.

"There's always been people older than me at home and school," Katie said. "I'm ready for a change, ready to go to college and ready to meet new friends."

"It will certainly be different during the upcoming school year," said Steve. Betsy added, "But thanks to technologies like Zoom and FaceTime, we can see them every day. Hannah transferred to Western Kentucky, and with Katie in Florida, Steve and I will also get to do some traveling."

Coming into this school year, Katie knew things were going to be different. COVID-19 impacted every student in some way, and



while she doesn't feel cheated, as a band member, disappointment was particularly difficult. A trip to Orlando, Florida during Spring Break was cancelled, along with their plans to march in a parade at Walt Disney World.

Since the pandemic started in the previous school year, band members were not surprised by the decision. "We all could see it coming," Katie said. "While the trip will be taken next year, it meant, for the seniors, they wouldn't be participating. We were disappointed but since most of us anticipated the decision, we made backup plans. I was able to spend Spring Break with an old friend."

When asked about what impressed her with online learning, Katie quickly responded, "The total dedication of our



teachers and their efforts to make certain no one slipped through the cracks. Many people assume when they hear about online learning, it is self-study. That's far from the truth. Our teachers were impressive. Just the scheduling was a nightmare, they taught in-person, online and dealt with block scheduling while keeping students motivated!"

She continued, "Motivation was initially a problem for me but it's hard not to be when your teachers are so uplifting and eager to share their expertise in their subjects. Every single one of them went the extra mile for us and they are our unsung heroes."

Katie will miss spending time with everyone. Relationships are important in high school and Covid certainly had an impact. She also became tired of being in front of a computer. "A lot of time is spent by my generation using electronics as a recreation tool. Adding a school day to the mix often made me not want to see my laptop."

While a student at North, she was involved in band, theater, C4, Key Club, the Triangle school newspaper and a member of the National Honor Society. After spending her first year of college in Florida studying kinesiology, Katie plans to earn her undergrad in Kinesiology at Florida College. She plans to return instate to attend Indiana University, where

she will pursue a doctorate in physical therapy.

For her parents, it will begin a new chapter for them as well. They will miss their daughters but also miss the other students as well. They were band parents, helping members get ready for each performance. While their time playing at halftime was cut short, though, thanks to parents like Betsy and Steve, the show went on.

As Katie and the Class of 2021 reflect back, many will see the greatness that came with their senior year. They had to seek out new ways of doing things. While it could have been easier to feel buried by circumstances, they made it into an opportunity. They found new ways to do what was once accomplished by daily visits to a classroom. They were creative, determined and worked with their teachers to earn their diplomas. They will never allow the pandemic to be the defining event for the Class of 2021.

Instead, their graduation recognizes the collective body of achievement of those graduating. They are celebrating what brought them to this moment: classwork, jobs, homework, tests, practices and meets, debates, concerts, wins and losses, pep rallies, meetings, fundraisers, and studying. The pandemic cannot erase perseverance.

Here's to The Class of 2021! We



***Katie during a school day with her dog, Jack, in attendance.***



***Katie and parents Steve Long (L) and Betsy Long (R)***

are so proud of you and as a new graduate, you are now eligible to join the Bull Dog Alumni Association! It's free and a way to keep in the know of what's happening with old friends.

Once a Bull Dog, always a Bull Dog!

Congratulations!

## THE RISE AND FALL OF OUR SENIOR CIRCLE

**T**raditions evolve and change throughout the years. Some get stronger, new traditions develop from old ones and some just simply die due to a lack of interest. The Senior Circle, a tradition cherished by older classes of students, has died a slow death and while still in its original location, it no longer packs the powerful punch it once did.

After the year 2020, dictionary companies have been busy updating and adding definitions to their books. The pandemic brought on its own set of new definitions. Terms like "social distancing" and "coronavirus" entered our vocabulary with new meaning as we remained hostage to a historic pandemic.

After a class reunion tour of our newly-renovated building in 2019, the topic among us was shock that the Senior Circle no longer had the prominence, power and prestige for seniors and grads like it once did. Many of us could not imagine our senior years without it. I decided to do a bit of exploring.

Generations and circumstances change. What was important to the Class of 1960 may have been long forgotten by the year 2020. Was it cancelled or had it simply outlived its purpose? While it's sad to see traditions fall by the wayside, it doesn't diminish the effort it took to progress to its history.

According to an article written by Amy Schnapp in the 1983 Log, the late Judson Erne, former principal, designed the Senior Circle in hopes of it becoming a tradition for a new school building. It helped to replace lost traditions when the school was moved from its original building to its current location. Central Junior High School now has a beautiful campus on the old site.

When the move to the current 25th Street location was announced, students became upset. According to the Log, "students felt they would be losing part of themselves when they moved out of the old building." Judson Erne went to work.

Mr. Erne talked to art teacher Karl McCan about designing something for the entrance of the new school that would be special to the student body, yet represented all areas of education. After many weeks of work, they agreed upon an idea. It was to become a simple circle actually laid in the floor with various symbols of education for the different fields of learning.

They set a date for its introduction. The Circle was to be dedicated to seniors so they would have a place to call their own, a place to prove their power, as many underclassmen discovered through the years. Legend has it that the simple mistake of walking through the Circle by anyone other than a senior might result in hours of scrubbing it with a toothbrush.

As technology changed education, the Senior Circle began to lose its prominence among students. Tracy Lovins (Bull Dog Class of 1989) recently commented that the Senior Circle had already begun to lose its punch during her senior year. With an emphasis on inclusion becoming so



important, students and adults alike began to feel the Circle was there for just one small group and left out the majority of students. The symbols on the circle also became outdated to the point some were not recognized for their educational symbol at all.

The CNHS Senior Circle...she remains in her same location today, but now off the beaten path. She no longer sits at the entrance of the school (the old school front is now the back and the front is now located where the back was). Perhaps location had something to do with her decline. Maybe she just served her purpose and needed a break. For whatever reason, she is still there for anyone to reminisce and enjoy. You just won't find a member of today's student body scrubbing her with a toothbrush.

Rest easy, old friend. You'll always have a place in our hearts.



**DO YOU REMEMBER?**

## CNHS PREPARES MURPHY FAMILY FOR SUCCESSFUL CAREERS

Dr. Teal Murphy, CNHS Class of 2005

Thorn Murphy, CNHS Class of 2008

Tara Murphy (Haley), CNHS Class of 2009

**W**hen 2008 North grad Thorn Murphy asked 2009 North grad Tara Haley to marry him, his next question wasn't necessary. He didn't have to think about who his Best Man was going to be. The answer came as quickly as the question when 2005 CNHS grad, Dr. Teal Murphy, said yes. After all, the brothers, sons of Tony and Tammy Murphy, and Tara, the daughter of Bill and Teresa Haley, were already close and the guys had spent their lives as best friends. Tara, who had known Thorn since seventh grade, said yes and the Murphy family finally had their daughter.

The guys grew up competitive, yet best friends. They both shared an interest in athletics and loved sports. They played baseball and football together on several teams and by the time they reached high school, they were ready for the next level in sports. The CNHS Football and Baseball programs became the beneficiaries of their talents.

Teal (who was also an all-state baseball player for the Bull Dogs) was a member of the first North team to ever win the Sectional, Regional and go to the Final Four in football. He was Team Captain his senior year and along with Thorn, who dressed for varsity as a freshman, they enjoyed the first time that CNHS had gone as far into the state tournament as they ever had. The talent was certainly there but Teal and Thorn agreed the credit was due to the hard work and dedication of their parents and Coach Tim Bless.

According to Teal, the coach contributed to their maturity as young men. He instilled a strong

work ethic, taught them not to quit until they were proud and also was there as a father figure to team members. "When we played games representing CNHS, we felt the outcomes were a reflection of Coach Bless. We played as hard for him as we did for our school. He had a way to get the best out of every player and while we didn't win a state championship, we became better men for having the opportunity to play for him."

The feeling was mutual for Coach Bless. He praised Teal and Thorn for their contributions to the program. "Those two guys were always the first ones at practice and the last to leave. They were leaders who understood the importance of playing hard for their school. They made my job easier by believing in the program and meeting the goals we set out to accomplish," said Coach Bless.

Thorn, the team MVP his senior season, loved playing for Coach Bless and agreed their success came as a reflection of their coach. "To me, he was invaluable. He was paternalistic and instilled many lifelong habits in all of us. He helped mold us for success on and off the football field. Playing for Coach Bless was a highlight of my high school years."

When Thorn was on the football field, one special gal was always on the sidelines cheering for the team: Tara Haley. She spent her high school years as a cheerleader and worked hard generating school spirit to represent the Bull Dogs. Her senior year, like Teal and Thorn before her, she was a teacher's assistant for Coach Bless. "All the things the guys said about Coach Bless are true. I was



**Thorn and Teal Murphy**

fortunate to be able to benefit from his wisdom just like they did."

Following graduation, Teal attended Indiana University, where he majored in Biology. He wanted to become a pilot but a summer job at Columbus Regional Hospital changed his career path. He loved the atmosphere at the hospital and enjoyed helping people. Upon graduating from IU, he chose to attend St. George's University in Grenada. Billed as the top Caribbean Medical School, the next chapter in Teal's life was very challenging.

"Medical School was hard," explained Teal. "Students are members of a University set in a tropical paradise. While the sand and surf were always tempting, becoming a doctor was his focus. He passed on the social scene to achieve his career goals. Last July, he returned home as the first anesthesiologist from Columbus to ever be hired at Columbus Regional Hospital. "I had such a great experience growing up in Columbus and realized there's no place I'd rather be. Everything about this city is top notch and I'm proud to be able to care for its residents."

Tara, who attended college at Ball State University in Muncie and was a cheerleader for the Cardinals,





**Teal Murphy, MD**

specializes in marketing and is employed by Cummins Engine Company. Her love of cheerleading brought her back to her roots at CNHS when she became the cheerleading coach for the junior varsity gals at football games. The past year with Covid was very difficult for cheerleaders because of restrictions on game attendance. "We adhered to safety protocols and still were able to enjoy the season," Tara explained. "Keeping the team motivated while cheering before empty bleachers was challenging, but everyone understood their roles and made the best of a bad situation."

Thorn headed to Butler University after high school where he remained a Bull Dog. After taking an elective course in Finance at North, he enjoyed the class so much that he decided to make it a career. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Finance and gained valuable experience in the field working as a Senior Financial Analyst for over five years at Cummins Engine Company.

An opportunity with Giesting Financial, headquartered in Batesville, presented itself and Thorn opened a new branch here in Columbus. Giesting Financial is a



**Tara Murphy (Haley)**

comprehensive financial planning firm, dealing in all aspects of finance including investments, cash flow planning, health care planning, estate planning and tax planning. "I love my work. I enjoy working with everyone and each client has unique needs. People value money differently, so based on what they want, we deliver custom plans to help them achieve their goals," he said. Located in downtown Columbus, they have a local presence with a boutique feel for customers, but they also have big firm capabilities. "It's the best of both worlds," Thorn explained.

He and Tara are the proud parents of two sons, Chase and Carson, who continue the Murphy athletics tradition by both playing baseball, football and soccer. They now visit a baseball diamond four days a week and keep Mom and Dad hopping. Playing baseball is a reminder of how far Carson has come since his birth. He was lifelined to Riley Children's Hospital in Indianapolis when he was born. Tara and Thorn were both so grateful and impressed with the care he received that they joined the South Central Board of Directors for Riley Philanthropy. "It's important for us to give back to the hospital that



**Thorn and Tara**

restored our son's health," said Tara.

Ironically, Uncle Teal was completing his residency in medical school and during his rotations, he happened to be assigned to Riley when Carson was a patient. He was there during a bad flu season, so visitors were restricted. It was reassuring to the family to know a special relative was there to look out for Carson.

It seems like yesterday when everyone was cheering at the football field. The Bull Dog Alumni Association is proud of the Murphy family for its many contributions to school success. This is just one family. Think of the impact our faculty and staff has had since its opening and it's easy to see why our alma mater is one of the best.

## CNHS GRAD A COUNTRY MUSIC LEGEND

Jeff "Hoot" Gibson

CNHS Class of 1981

If you live anywhere in the world, particularly the United States, chances are you've heard country music. Even Elvis, who helped bring rock and roll to the forefront, sang a little country music and gospel. Country music was considered the music of rural America, hence its name.

As it began to make its mark on the music industry, television shows like Hee Haw and The Johnny Cash Show emerged as favorites. Color televisions were also entering the scene. My Dad brought one home and The Johnny Cash show was on. He asked each of us to predict what color suit Cash would wear and we all made our guesses. I remember my Dad laughing when he came on stage in all black. Color television had no impact on his wardrobe.

Here in Columbus, it was the fascination with picking and family members who played various instruments that grabbed the attention of a seven-year-old Jeff "Hoot" Gibson. He was born with country music and today is one of the most sought after musicians in Nashville, Tennessee. Many great country artists describe him as legendary.

His Dad taught him the basics of guitar and Hoot was a natural. He'd visit friend's houses and at times spent more time entertaining parents than with his buddies. His

friends were into rock music and he stood firm in what he played until one day he heard an iconic band... the Eagles. He fell in love with their music at a time when country music was losing its appeal to the younger generation. But his first loves, though, remained Merle Haggard, Hank Williams and Johnny Cash. He wanted to keep their music alive.

The logical thing to do while he attended CNHS was form a band. Along with Bull Dogs Steve Bush, Andy Richards, David Bush, and Tim Zeller, they put their various talents together to form the Blackford Manor Band. They played at school functions, private parties and for friends just wanting to hang out.

According to Tim Zeller (CNHS Class of 1981), his career path surprised no one. "Hoot is a very caring person. He could play guitar and sing, yet it isn't surprising he left town playing bass." The Blackford Manor Band played mostly rock music but Zeller said Hoot would often inject some country music into their playlist. Zeller continued, "Hoot is just so versatile. He is a raw talent and music is his life."

At 17 years old and employed by Captain Ds, a co-worker familiar with his talents told him of a band in Indianapolis that played six nights a week at the Blue Flame Honkey Tonk in Indianapolis.

Southern Junction, the band, was looking for a bass player. He was a little apprehensive to audition because he had never played bass. The band knew talent when they heard it, though, and Hoot was hired on the spot. However, it left him in a precarious position. He didn't know how to play bass, he didn't even have one, and the band was ready to roll with him.

Like so many proud parents, his late mother and step-father made sure he could pursue his dreams. His stepfather asked him what he would do as he aged and he logically replied, "play music." They loved and believed in him so they decided to co-sign a loan for a bass guitar and an amp. Hoot, his voice and equipment, fresh out of high school, was ready to hit the road.

Even for young folks, life on the road was tough. At times, Hoot had to ask what city they were playing. They had an agent, played everywhere and ended up in Monterey, California for a couple of years. After that, they were all getting a little homesick and decided to come home.

The Lodge became home to Hoot and his band for quite some time. Located at the truck stop in Taylorsville, they packed the house six nights per week. Had the owner of the business not set it on fire, who knows where Hoot



might be today. Still popular in Monterey, though, they headed west again for another stint.

Along the way, he was meeting country music legends and playing his bass and singing backup vocals. One of his fondest memories was at his band's opening act for the great Johnny Cash. Prior to the show, Johnny wasn't feeling well and stayed on the bus to rest. As Hoot was setting up his equipment, Johnny's wife, June Carter Cash (herself a country music legend) came out to the stage to visit. Jeff spent more than an hour talking with her. He couldn't believe a kid from Columbus was in the presence of these icons.

In 1988, Hoot realized the inevitable. He moved to Nashville, Tennessee, the home of country music. His only career regret was that he didn't do it sooner. Jeff was soon playing six nights a week at The Broken Spoke, a very popular honky tonk in Nashville at the time, with the late Country artist Daryle Singletary. In 1994 he set out on the road with Ken (The Jukebox Junkie) Mellons traveling again all across the country opening for all the top acts at the time like Alan Jackson, John Michael Montgomery, John Anderson, Tim McGraw and so many more.

Once settled, Hoot met his wife

(they are now divorced but remain close friends) and they started a family. His son, Greg, now 23, and daughter, Kenzie, now 22, are the pride of his life. The music industry, however, is not a family-friendly career. Working at least six nights per week, he missed a lot of family time.

His career took off and he is now known, himself, as a legend in the home of country music. He has played with many greats in Country Music such as Johnny Paycheck and Faron Young as well as newer artists like Craig Campbell. He wrote and cut several albums of his own and has played at the legendary Grand Old Opry. He now plays regularly with his band Organic Country and other artists.

Hoot will soon release a record of Hippy Country Music and he is very excited about this project.

This summer, Hoot's classmates at CNHS will gather for their 40th high school reunion. "Time sure flies when you're having fun," Hoot said. He's looking forward to seeing old classmates and reminiscing about the days of the Blackford Manor Band. "I can't believe I've now lived in Nashville longer than I lived in Columbus. But I'll always be a Hoosier and a Bull Dog and I'll always call Columbus my hometown."



***The Blackford Manor Band***



***Hoot and his band with legend Johnny Cash, the man in black. Hoot stands just to the right of Cash in the photo wearing sunglasses***



***Hoot with friend, pro wrestler and actor Stone Cold Steve Austin***

## THE PEOPLE YOU MEET ALONG THE WAY

by Kim West, Editor  
Class of 1979

**R**arely do I sleep these days because I don't want to miss anything. Throughout my career, I never would have imagined I'd have trouble sleeping. I worked for the Senate and was used to those marathon legislative sessions when rules were suspended at midnight for senators to remain working.

About ten years ago, working in Government Affairs for Cinergy, I met a gentleman at the Edison Electric Institute's annual conference in Florida. I was a speaker describing how to set up a corporate grassroots program. He looked like he hadn't slept in days, smelled worse and his hair just fell where the wind blew it. He actually looked like a homeless man and no matter how hard he tried to strike up a conversation, people didn't stick around to know who they were really speaking to that day.

He extended his hand to me and introduced himself as John Perry Barlow (JPB). He said he was a speaker for the conference too. I gave him the benefit of the doubt because like the rest of us, our planes flew into Miami and we had to make the long trek by car to Key West. We exchanged business cards and he said he'd see me at dinner. Little did I know who this man was either. He said he was going to tidy up and as he walked away, I read his business card: John Perry Barlow, Cognitive Dissident. Now my curiosity was in high gear.

His speech was so far out there that I couldn't imagine the world he wanted to redesign. His selling point was protecting our electrical grid from terrorists or rogue nations. He said once the power is offline, it is literally lights out and survival would be afforded only by preppers (those who planned for disaster by stockpiling food, water, etc.). He was a good speaker but never revealed his true

identity to the audience. He was simply described as a futurist.

I hung out with six other electric utility gurus so I talked them into inviting him to join us for dinner. If he had tidied up in his room, it didn't look or smell like it but he was interesting and had me at Cognitive Dissident.

Not one of us has had a more enjoyable experience for dinner. We were all a little younger than him but we knew of the band Grateful Dead and the lyrics to their songs. He stood up at our table and sang a few of their songs but he wasn't in the band. He was the head lyricist for the Grateful Dead! His stories kept us eating and drinking until almost 4 am when he picked up the tab and wanted to join us the next day for a sponsor's event, our only free day at the conference.

The man could talk. Here I was on a yacht in the middle of the ocean with the lyricist for the Grateful Dead, listening carefully to his every word. It was hot and he was still in the same black suit from when I first met him. We were all prepared for swimming but he had no clothes with him. He said he preferred to travel light. It really became too hot unless we went inside the cabin and since it was mid-summer, the heat and humidity was awful. Next thing I knew, he had stripped naked and dove into the saltwater with us. It was quite an experience for a conservative midwestern gal.

We were so far out that land had disappeared. Fearing I'd meet Jaws face-to-face, I wanted out of the water. JPB swam for two hours! He looked like a prune when he got out! On the way back to shore, he told us unbelievable stories about the years of using drugs and alcohol which carried him from concert to concert. He had been sober for seven years.



My favorite story was how he overdid it a bit with the LSD and went golfing in India. He bought a dozen golf balls and lost them all on the first tee. He said every time he teed off, a monkey ran onto the fairway and took his ball. By the time he used his last ball, he said 100 monkeys were on the fairway.

He headed back to the pro shop, unable to play without golf balls. He purchased another dozen and said the cashier just smiled at him. Back to the tee, no sign of monkeys, so he figured he was coming down from his LSD-induced high. Again, he teed off, and said one monkey stole his ball. In ten minutes he had lost his second dozen of balls. He went once again to the Pro Shop but was too embarrassed to mention the monkeys. He purchased his third dozen and once again went to the tee.

Same thing repeated and this time he knew monkeys were stealing his tee shots. The pro shop employee wasn't expecting him so quickly and was nowhere to be found. He walked around to the back of the shop and the employee was back there trading bananas to monkeys when they handed him a golf ball. I laughed so hard. He thought he had gotten some bad drugs but the monkeys were literally re-selling his balls to the golf pro!

We were all sunburned, thanked our gracious host, and were exhausted on only two hours sleep. He said he'd meet us in the hotel lobby in 30 minutes, giving us time to freshen up. Yes, we were hanging out with a little-known celebrity





### **John Perry Barlow**

outside the world of rock and roll, but we still had no idea who he really was and who his “adopted” son was.

After he had amassed his fortune and began collecting royalties for his songs, he decided to get involved in politics. He purchased a huge ranch in Montana and would escape there for months at a time. I almost fell out of my chair when he told us he became the Montana State Republican Chairman. I wondered if Jerry Garcia knew this! It wouldn’t sit well with the liberal Dead Heads.

He worked the ranch himself and became a pilot but was not skilled with flight instrumentation. He used the plane to keep watch over his 14,000 acres. One night, after landing in a pasture, a ranch hand told him he had an important call and he needed to take it now. He wasn’t the type to be told what to do, but he followed his employee into the barn. When he answered the call, none other than Jackie Kennedy Onassis was on the line asking her GOP friend for a favor.

She told him that John F. Kennedy Jr., now 17 years old, needed a father figure in his life to show him what real work was about. She asked if she could send him to the ranch for the summer and told JPB he had total authority while Junior was in his custody. He said absolutely and described the phone call as the moment he became a Dad.

He said the first thing he noticed when Junior arrived was his hands. They were soft and manicured, probably never ever



### **John Perry Barlow (L) with JFK Jr. and wife Carolyn Bessette-Kennedy**

touched a pitchfork. But JPB was a free spirit and the youngest Kennedy loved that he treated him like another ranch hand. They became close and Junior wanted to learn how to fly the plane in the pasture. When JPB agreed to teach him, little did anyone know this was the beginning of the end of a son of an assassinated President.

All of a sudden, JPB ended his story, stood up, stripped that same smelly suit off and asked us to join him under the stars in the ocean. For some reason, I couldn’t shake the image of Jaws from my mind so I refrained and stayed on the beach with a few others. We were all at the point of exhaustion, couldn’t believe this man was a Kennedy mentor and we all headed to our rooms, our heads full of stories that were so far out there they had to be true.

We said our goodbyes the next afternoon, agreed to stay in touch, and headed to Miami for our flights home. I never really told anyone about much about my career, not even my family. When my flight arrived in Indy at 3 am, I decided to drive to my parent’s house in Columbus.

I could smell fresh coffee and Mom was watching the Today Show. She called for me to join her, saying I wouldn’t believe what had happened. John F. Kennedy, Jr. and his wife, Carolyn Bessette-Kennedy, were missing with their plane



### **John Perry Barlow and Carolyn Bessette-Kennedy**

over the Atlantic. I was in total shock because the plane went down in bad weather. I recalled how JPB told Junior to never rely on just the visual flight rule of navigation...he had to master the instrument flight rule for bad weather situations and he never did. Goose bumps were all over my body. I told Mom I had just spent three days with the man being interviewed by Katie Couric on The Today Show. She was astounded.

JPB became the go-to guy for networks seeking the inside scoop on Junior. Caroline Kennedy (Junior’s sister), who values privacy like her late mother did, became enraged about his television appearances and banned him from attending the funeral. This was, I believe, the beginning of the end of another great man who became the central father figure to the son of an assassinated President. He was heartbroken and began writing about Junior.

Today, I still can’t believe I spent three days with the head lyricist of the Grateful Dead, the Montana State GOP chair and JFK Jr.’s father figure. In the books he wrote prior to his death, JPB included photos of the monkeys in India and another with Junior at his wedding. The homeless-looking man I befriended at a conference continued to stay in touch with us and I still have his business card. I hope he is flying high with Junior. He was the real deal and from that time forward I knew to never judge a book by its cover.

## BULL DOG GRAD A BESTSELLING AUTHOR, DOCUMENTARY PRODUCER

Mason Engel

CNHS Class of 2013

**S**ummer is almost here and reading books for pleasure will soon replace books of learning from the school year. If you are searching for a book with exciting twists and turns on nearly every page, Bull Dog graduate Mason Engel, in his first try at the Amazon Bestseller's List, made it with 2084, The Novel. Check it out!

Mason has always loved books. As a child, he had one with him everywhere he went. Being an Indiana kid, he grew up with a passion for basketball and soccer. On the way to practices and games, he read. On family vacations, he read. At the beach, he read. If he was a passenger of any kind of vehicle, he read.

In elementary school, he finished every single book in his school's library. His passion for reading and writing was forging a path to lifelong learning. We are living in a knowledge economy and he realized this at a very young age. He became so obsessed with reading and learning that it did cause obstacles along the way. When he turned 16, it was time to get his driver's license. He studied the material, was ready to take the test and exercise his independence as a young man. He quickly realized a problem going to the license branch. He spent so much time in the car reading that he didn't know his way there!

It's no surprise to those who know him that he became an author, editor and film producer.

During his senior year at North, he wanted to come up with a creative way to ask his girlfriend to the Prom. He also wanted his invitation to be a reflection of himself so he did what came natural: he wrote a book to invite her to the Prom! Had she said no, it might have made for a bestseller!

His fondest memory of CNHS came as a member of the soccer team. His Junior year, the team made it to the state finals only to lose in a close match. On the bus ride home, Mason decided to do something about that awful feeling in his gut. The next day, and every day until the next season began, he went to the soccer field and practiced through rain, snow, heat and humidity. His example caught the attention of his teammates and they began to join him. Soon they were enjoying voluntary team practices in the offseason. Their efforts paid sweet dividends. The Bull Dogs were crowned state champions in Mason's final year at North.

After finishing his senior year at CNHS, he decided to attend Purdue University. Surprisingly he majored in Math! While at Purdue completing his studies, he continued to write. Like any other college student, he pinched pennies and for transportation, his grandfather found a used car at a garage sale and gave it to Mason. He named it Thunder. It was a 1995 Mercury Tracer and while it wouldn't exactly be the choice of a lot of fellows Mason's age, he fell in love with it and plans to keep it forever.



Mason had written several books before and during college. He was anxious to get his career going and with a few personal belongings, he headed to New York City in July of 2017. The major publishing houses were located there and if he was going to make it as an author, he believed he'd get his big break there.

While visiting publishing houses, he continued his writing. One evening, the rumors of how tough New York City could be rang true when he watched while the police and paramedics removed a gunned down body from his neighborhood street. Mason wrote and produced a rap song about the chilling incident.

Not long after, a serious back injury brought him back to Indiana, where he had surgery and could recover at his parent's house. Rehab was difficult but he never stopped creating.

Once he was well, he knew it was time to take Thunder on the road. His mission? Visit 50 bookstores in 50 days. He promoted his book, 2084, The Novel, and took lots of photos and videos with future projects in mind. After his 50-day trip, he returned to Columbus to pursue those projects.

Mason decided to hit the skies this time and visited London, England. His cousin and wife had just moved there





so it was an opportunity to explore. While there, he was able to attend a book conference in Ireland, where he was able to promote his work internationally. For the last couple of weeks of the trip, his parents, Denise Engle and Lisa Elkins, (both 1979 CNHS grads) were able to join him for a memorable family adventure.

In July of 2020, he packed up for another Thunder-type trip to the East Coast where he visited every Indie bookstore he could find. Thunder stayed behind for this trip. He took his Mom's car and a cameraman to assist in shooting video. He spoke with customers, talked to the owners and got to see first hand the other side of being an author: selling books.

Since Indie bookstores are closing their businesses in record numbers, Mason wanted to do something to help. He produced [a music video](#) and in the first two verses of his song, he used the names of all 50 bookstores he visited to show his gratitude for their hospitality. He writes, "I'm determined to spread the importance of local bookstores—the community and love of literature they promote—and the music video is the first step in doing that."

The next project had already started. He wanted to produce a documentary about his travels with

Thunder and began writing and pouring over footage. He knew, though, with limited opportunities here, he needed to again follow his dream and move to Los Angeles, where he resides today. His documentary is now finished and ready for promotion. Being in Los Angeles and around people in the film industry has left Mason with a newfound passion: acting. He's a go-getter and in the right place. Who knows what his future holds!

With several books, including trilogies, already written to publish, he will always consider writing as his first love. The documentary timeline was sidelined for a bit when he returned to Columbus for the holidays. Covid 19 had reared its ugly head at his parent's household and it didn't spare him, delaying a return to LA. It didn't stop him, though. He has also developed a website called Climbwrite to help writers and is always looking for a great story idea.

Growing up in Columbus and being a student at CNHS gave Mason the blueprint for success. He isn't afraid to pursue his passions and has traveled all over our great country chasing them. One thing is certain: he will always return home. Once a Bull Dog, always a Bull Dog. When Mason succeeds, his teachers and the staff at CNHS can forever take great pride.

### ***2084, The Novel Amazon Bestseller's List By Mason Engel***

***The world wears computerized contact lenses that control technology with the blink of an eye. Consumers are thrilled as they are surveilled.***

***Newsight Incorporated became a household name when it released its debut product: Lenses Now. Newsight is more than a household name...its in the household. It sees everything its customers see, both in the real world and in the simulated one. But not everyone is content to be watched. A teenage boy named Vincent, a Senator's son, and his friend Jessica, a Newsight developer's daughter, flee into the ranks of a clandestine protest group. With the group's help, Vincent and Jessica disable their Lenses and see the world clearly for the first time. The sight that awaits them, however, may have better remained unseen.***



## MAKE ROOM IN THE TROPHY CASE...

Icemen Win State Championship!

**D**espite being the smallest community in the State to participate in the Indiana High School Athletic Association's Hockey State Tournament, our Icemen proved that a big population doesn't equate to success. Just prior to the Bartholomew Consolidation School Corporation's start to Spring Break, our champions

played their hearts out and began celebrating their vacations early by being crowned State Champions! Our players represented Bartholomew County as CNHS and CEHS students teamed together to become the envy of high school hockey.

Winning the state championship twice in four years is an incredible accomplishment. Our champs

skated like the pros, defeating the Central Indiana Knights by a score of 4-2.

Congratulations to this incredible bunch of dedicated coaches, players, friends and family who are working hard to keep the program on top. We are Bull Dog...and for this team Olympian...proud!





## CNHS BOWLING TEAM ENJOYING EARLY SUCCESS

**B**owling is thought to be one of the oldest sports known to mankind, dating back as far as 5200 B.C. The CNHS Bowling Teams, however, are in their infancy, as rosters were filled for both men and women on varsity and junior varsity squads.

The Bull Dog Association provided the bowling teams with a grant to help with the developmental process for the teams. Coached by CNHS school nurse, Sonya Harrison, they have exceeded expectations and thus another CNHS athletic team has been born!



## ALUMNI ASSOCIATION HOSTS TEACHER APPRECIATION LUNCH

In appreciation for their hard work and efforts during perhaps the most difficult school year, your Bull Dog Alumni Association sponsored an appreciation lunch for all teachers and staff.

Catered by McAlister's Deli, teachers were able to choose their lunch, including dessert and beverage. The luncheon was held on May 18, a particularly busy day for all teachers, as they broke into groups that afternoon to hear the seniors deliver presentations for their Senior Projects.

This was one small way of showing our appreciation to a group that never wavered in support of our students. They were incredible in overcoming challenges and finding new ways to teach their subject matter.

Thank you, teachers and staff, for a job well done!



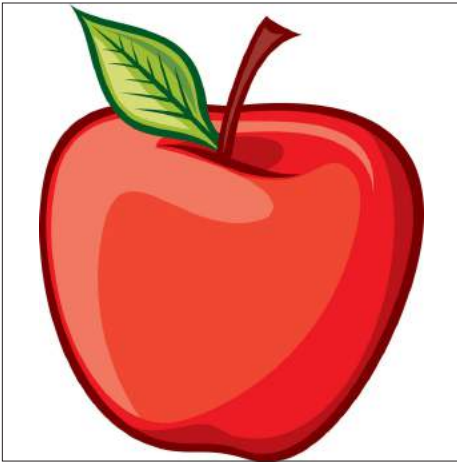
***Board Member Paula Lynch prepares food for the teacher's luncheon.***



***Alumni Association Executive Director Hedy George (L), and Board members Jo Ann Greenlee (center) and Asst. Principal John Green (R) prepare lunches for our teachers.***



## ALUMNI ASSOCIATION NEWS



### Outstanding Teacher of the Year

Congratulations to CNHS Math Teacher Jason Perry, winner of the 2020-21 CNHS Outstanding Teacher of the Year award. Presented by the Bull Dog Alumni Association, he will receive a \$1,000 stipend.

This award is special because students had the opportunity to nominate teachers. Perry is extremely popular in a most difficult subject. He is always willing to go the extra mile to help students and this was recognized by his nomination.

Thank you, Jason, for always working to keep our students' best interests in mind. You've worked hard this year and it shows. Enjoy your summer. You've earned it!



### 2021 Scholarship Winners

#### **Samuel P. Simmermaker Journalism and Communications Scholarship**

*\$1,000 non-renewable*  
Margaret Mowrer

#### **John Johnson Studio Productions Scholarship**

*\$1,000 non-renewable*  
Katie Long

#### **Michael P. Garber Memorial Scholarship**

*\$500 non-renewable*  
Curtis Abendroth

#### **John Carmichael "True Blue" Scholarship (Basketball)**

*\$500 non-renewable*  
Ding Diing  
Maxwell Wilson



### Quote of the Month

Clare Conoley Bozell, CNHS Class of 1979, gets the nod for quote of the month. What was your favorite cafeteria food that you now miss?

Here's Clare's quote:

"Some days I wish I could just get my hands on those giant cinnamon rolls we used to get at Columbus North."



### *IN MEMORIAM*

## **MARIAN CALLON — A BEAUTIFUL LIFE**

CNHS Dean of Women

June 16, 1927 — April 26, 2021

**T**he Bull Dog Alumni Association and those affiliated with CHS/CNHS lost a wonderful friend in Marian Dolorus Callon. She was a noted Johnson County historian, Dean of Women at CNHS, philanthropist, author, community servant-leader, and an award-winning educator. She died in Greenwood on April 26, 2021 after a long battle with Alzheimer's disease. She was 93.

As our Dean of Women, she played a significant role in the education and development of students for 22 years. Prior to that, she taught English, Math and Special Education classes. She was firm but fair, the type of leader who produced results.

Students felt comfortable working with her to solve issues, but as Hedy George (retired teacher, coach and current executive director of the Alumni

Association) said, "Teachers knew she had their backs too. Her ability to see all sides of an issue was welcoming as no one was afraid to approach her. Everyone experienced a comfort level with Marian and she was genuine throughout her life."

She regularly volunteered to work at sporting events, dances, and musical productions to further support the students. She remained until the end of an event to offer congratulations to the Bull Dogs on a job well done. She was truly one of a kind and remembering her always brings back positive thoughts.

She was inducted into the Bartholomew County School Corporation Education Hall of Fame in 2002. Upon retirement, she established endowed scholarship funds at Franklin College for students from Indian



Creek and Columbus, and at the Johnson County Community Foundation to benefit Trafalgar. She co-founded the Callon-Doub Professional Development Fellowship in Mathematics at Franklin College.

She leaves behind a legacy of loving service, hard work, and devotion to family, friends and community. Expressions of caring and kindness may be received by the family at [www.flinnmaguire.com](http://www.flinnmaguire.com) or via a contribution to the Marian Callon Endowment Fund through the Bull Dog Alumni Association in Columbus.



## BULL DOG ALUMNI: MEMBERSHIP DRIVE!

If you're an alum of Columbus North or Columbus High School, sign up to stay connected to the Bull Dog Alumni Association. You'll receive periodic news and event announcements.

We have a lot of exciting things planned for the Bull Dog Alumni Association and we want you to be a part of it. Membership is free, open to all CNHS and CHS grads and we'll send you our newsletter with alumni information from all classes.

We are starting a membership drive to help in our recruiting efforts. What a great way to break the boredom of being at home than to help your alma mater recruit classmates, coaches, teammates, class officers, etc. and say hello to your friends, catch up on old times, and get them signed up. We have some great prizes for our super recruiters!

During our membership drive, those recruiting the most new members are eligible for some great prizes:

**GRAND PRIZE** An 8" x 8" engraved brick (\$100 value)

**2ND PLACE** A 4" x 8" engraved brick (\$60 value)

*\*\*Just north of the main entrance to Columbus North, there is a brick plaza surrounding the flag poles. Engraved bricks are placed in the plaza to commemorate special events, special classes, special people, etc.*

**3RD PLACE** The book "The Story of CNHS 150 Years" (\$30 value)

**4TH PLACE** A Bull Dog Alumni t-shirt (\$20 value)

**5TH PLACE** A piece of the original floor of Memorial Gymnasium (\$10 value)

We just need the following information which is available on our [website](#):

FIRST NAME

LAST NAME

E-MAIL ADDRESS

YEAR OF GRADUATION \_\_\_\_\_

If you don't like contests but want to purchase a brick, you may also do that. What a great way to help, receive a tax deduction, and get a brick to remember your legacy in the future!

Stay tuned for all your Bull Dog news! If you have information or stories of interest, or want to submit the names of your recruits, please contact Kim West at [kim.west1979@icloud.com](mailto:kim.west1979@icloud.com).

**BULL DOG CONNECTIONS**

- [Check out the website for the CNHS Media department and students](#)
- [Check out the school newspaper \(Yep, it's still called The Triangle, even if it might look a little different!\)](#)
- [You can see and listen to the school's videos & daily announcements given by the students](#)
- [Twitter account for CNHS Media](#)
- [Columbus North Athletics Page – Great page with all the Bull Dog athletic teams](#)
- [Twitter Account for Bull Dog Athletics](#)
- [Erne Auditorium Instagram Account page](#)

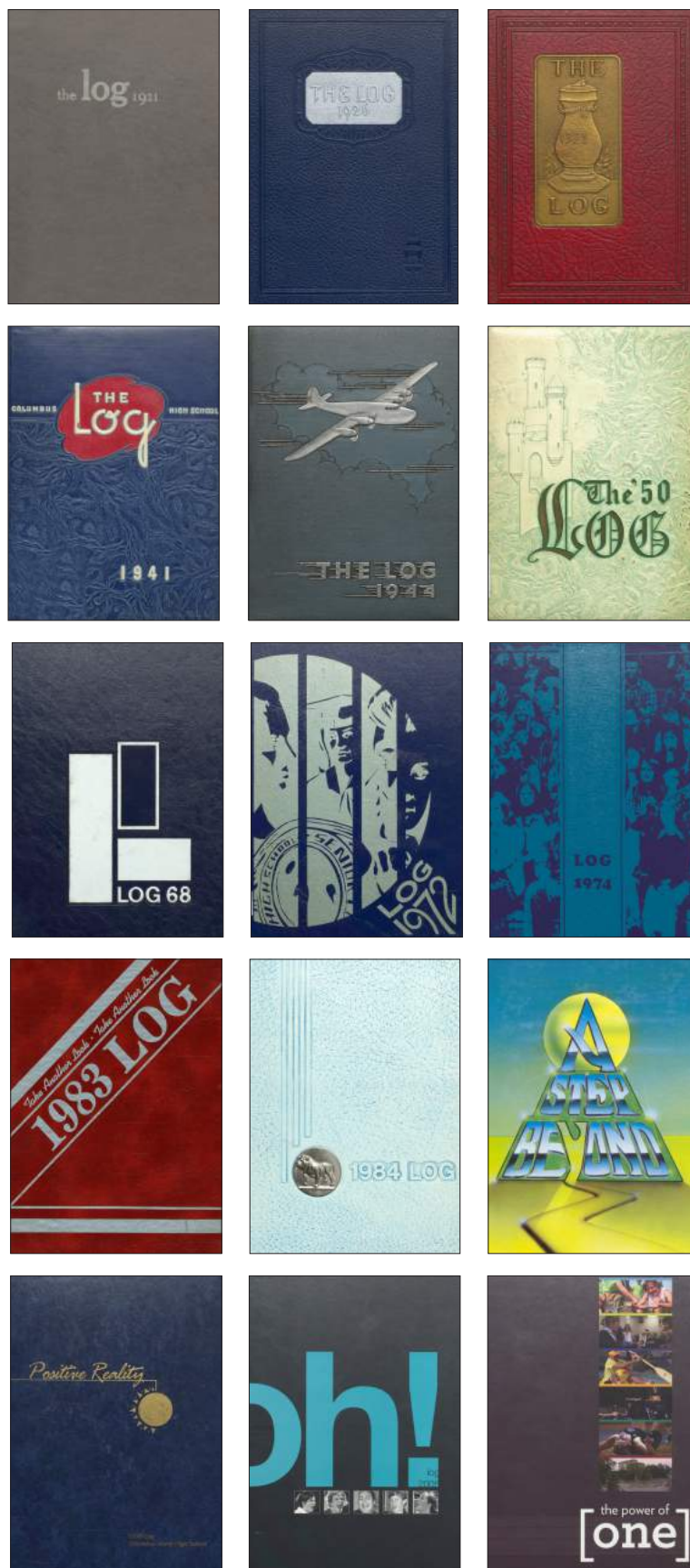
**BULL DOG CONNECTIONS**

Bull Dog Alumni Association on the web

- [Website](#)
- [Join us on Facebook](#)
- [Email](#)

**WHAT ARTICLES WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN OUR NEXT TRUE BLUE?**

[Please let us know!](#)

**SEND US STORIES ABOUT AN ALUMNUS FOR OUR NEXT ISSUE**

**ABOVE: LOG COVERS THROUGH THE YEARS**