

# Blue 'n' Gold

Winter 2022

HVRHS Alumni Association

Volume 24, Issue 2

## Baseball Field Named for Ed Kirby



Anne Kirby, left, class of 1971, was among the speakers at the dedication ceremony in June when the baseball field was named in honor of her father, Edward Kirby, class of 1945. She is chatting with classmate Clare Nutt Hotaling, class of 1971.

The spirit of Ed Kirby was felt deeply on June 4 as hundreds of guests came to pay tribute to the man of innumerable talents. The setting was the bucolic green expanse along the river behind the school, where Kirby spent his days as a student and coach. It is now the Ed Kirby baseball field.

The school's alumni association had been discussing the idea of naming the field for the beloved educator, coach, geologist, author and historian when he died in 2021 at the age of 92. Last spring a new scoreboard was named in his honor and over the past year a large project to upgrade all the fields was undertaken by the association, which raised more than \$152,000.

In his opening remarks, Richard Gustafson, class of '59 who primarily organized the event and led the fundraising efforts, spoke of the amazing generosity of the community in its support of Kirby and the project. He touched on Kirby's many interests and achievements, calling him "a man for all seasons." Patricia Allyn Mechare, class of '64 and chairwoman of the alumni association, looking around the manicured grounds with lush mountains as the backdrop, said Housatonic has one of the best athletic facilities in the Berkshire League. "While he had so many talents, Ed would have told you his greatest achievement was marrying Mary and having his family." Kirby, who was raised in Sharon, and Mary Tobin of Kent, graduated together in the class of 1945. Sadly, Mary Kirby died suddenly in October.

Current Housatonic Principal Ian Strever said one of Kirby's attributes was to lead when it was required and to step back and ask how he could help when he retired. He said Kirby, along with the school's first principal, Paul Stoddard, and devoted principal Jack Mahoney, left an indelible legacy at the school.

Alumnus Steve Blass, class of '60, who was coached by Kirby before becoming a major league baseball player for the Pittsburgh Pirates, remained very close to the Kirbys after graduating and they often would attend important events in his life. He said the number of donors who contributed to the field says much about the community and about Kirby.

Blass spoke about the great influence his coach had upon him. "He told me, 'You have a chance to do something special.' He taught me that if you fail—and you'll fail at times—make no excuses. I've carried that advice all through my baseball career. He taught me life lessons and I don't know if I'd have made it without them. No quitting. No excuses. He helped me live my dream. I loved Ed Kirby, I continue to love Ed Kirby and I will always continue to love Ed Kirby."

Wendy Gerstel, class of '76, had a geology class with Kirby and teacher David Lindsay back in 1975. She spoke about Kirby's unique way of teaching. "He taught us how to learn and nurtured our curiosity. It wasn't just about rocks. He had a masterful ability to make science palatable and enjoyable. He sent me on my life's path," said Gerstel, who pursued a successful career in geology.

Richard Paddock got to know Kirby as they worked together at Beckley Furnace State Park in East Canaan and spent two decades listening and learning from him about the iron industry and local history. Paddock said he always thought that when Kirby died it would be a bad day. "But today isn't a bad day because we can feel the depth and breadth of his talent. Knowing Ed was the most enriching experience of my life."

Kirby's daughter Anne Kirby, class of '71, talked about "Pop, the quintessential family man who was rich in imagination and creativity." He grew up on the Miles Sanctuary in Sharon where he was stimulated by the natural surroundings. He joined the military during World War II, but never saw combat, serving as an engineer surveying Japanese islands. Returning home, he went to college on the G.I. bill and became a teacher and coach at Cornwall Consolidated School (for a yearly salary of \$2,000, plus a \$200 stipend for coaching all three sports) before joining the high school staff. Retiring at the age of 55 as assistant superintendent, he kept busy up until his death; writing, lecturing and serving on a host of volunteer boards.

His wife, Mary, asked to say a few words at the end, took the opportunity to thank everyone for their support. She noted the beautiful weather, sure that her husband of 68 years, had something to do with it.

In keeping with the baseball theme, a lunch of hot dogs, burgers, pretzels, chips and popcorn was served.

## Celebration of Life for David Lindsay

The David B. Lindsay Track at Housatonic Valley Regional High School is just one of the reminders of the mark he left on the campus he loved. A celebration of life was held this past summer at Housatonic for the beloved teacher, coach, mentor, devoted family man and dear friend who died in Maine in October 2020. Hosted by his family, wife, Barbara, and daughters **Lori Lindsay**, class of '82, and **Kelly Lindsay Webster**, class of '89, the event had to be postponed due to the pandemic.

Lindsay came to Housatonic in 1966 as a science teacher after realizing a career in insurance wasn't for him. But as all those who spoke during the celebration pointed out, he took on roles that went well beyond the classroom over his more than 40-year tenure.

Speaker **Chris Heacox**, class of 1984, of Salisbury remembers struggling to achieve success in track competition back in the 1970s when he had a conversation with Lindsay, who coached the sport for 40 years. For two years, Heacox struggled to beat a Litchfield runner and twice he failed. "When I expressed my frustration, he said, 'So what are you going to do about it?' There was no consoling, just a simple question." He suggested Heacox attend a track camp, which he did, and something clicked. He received applause when he related he finally beat that rival in his senior year.

"As a coach, he was unparalleled," Heacox said. "He knew the nuance of every meet. He made us all run faster, jump higher and throw farther. He changed my life. If not for Coach, it would have been impossible for me to do the things I did."

Another former student, **Gary Davis**, class of '73 of Kent, said having Lindsay in his life meant so much to him. He lured Davis from the baseball field to track and the student had a successful run. Years later, Davis went on to become Housatonic's track coach, "which was an honor to carry on the tradition on the Lindsay track. Thanks to you, Coach Lindsay. You're always in my heart."

Retired teacher and athletic director David Bayersdorfer of Salisbury taught and coached with

Lindsay. He spoke of all the activities, other than sports, Lindsay took part in over his career. He accompanied students on geological trips around the country, chaperoned several international excursions, served as the White Oak yearbook adviser for 37 years and developed the Robotics team. He also stepped on stage for some student productions, such as "Cabaret" and "Guys & Dolls."

Bayersdorfer drew laughter describing how he and Lindsay worked summer custodial jobs at the school during their early teaching days. Dubbed the "Nunzio brothers," they would engage in memorable antics. At one point, they were tasked with cleaning out what had once been a bomb shelter in the school. Among the finds were a saxophone and trumpet along with some uniforms. "We put on the uniforms, played the instruments and marched around the school, inviting everyone to join us."

In closing, Bayersdorfer said he and Lindsay were best friends. "We both loved Housatonic, the teachers, the kids, the athletics. Today, there are tears in my eyes and love in my heart."

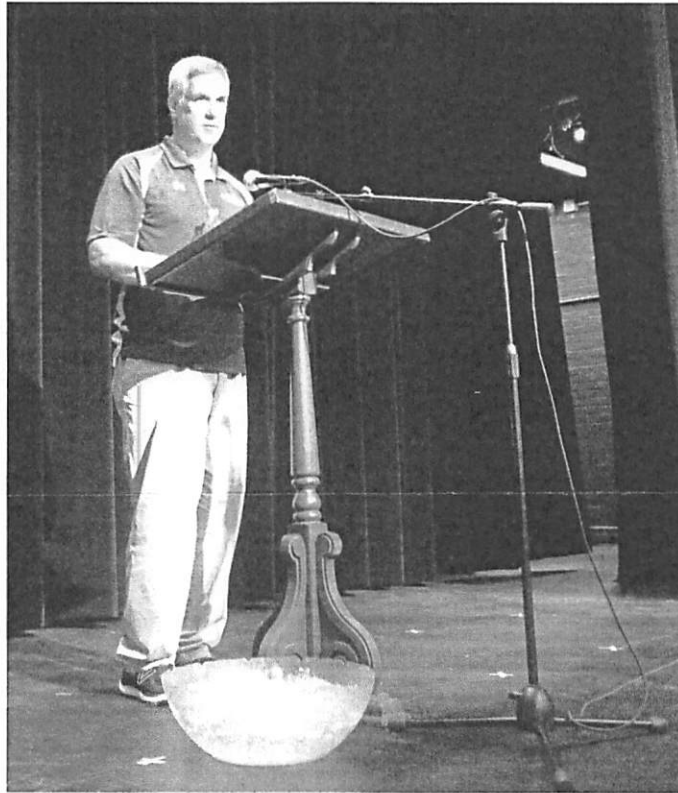
Engineer Andy Brockway was tapped by Lindsay to help with the Robotics team and he's been advising the

group now for 22 years. He spoke of Lindsay's constant goal to help students, noting "We invoke Dave's name every year."

**Levi Langevin**, class of '00, was so inspired by Lindsay's freshman geology class, that it set him on his course in a career in environmental consulting. "He gave us all the tools to succeed," he said.

Lori Lindsay said they have learned the amazing impact her father had on others. "He had a positive can-do attitude." Douglas Webster, Kelly Lindsay's husband, said Lindsay influenced thousands of lives. "He became a teacher to inspire others. When armed with goals, he didn't adhere to lines others had drawn. He had a tenacious approach to loving life."

David Webster, Lindsay's grandson, spoke lovingly of the special relationship he had with his "Papa."



Chris Heacox, class of 1984, speaks at the celebration of life for teacher/coach David Lindsay this past summer. He said the coach had a great influence on him in many ways.

## Visiting with Some Graduates

### *Gary Davis, Class of 1973*

Gary Davis graduated nearly 50 years ago, but he is still very much connected to his alma mater.

Davis, who was raised and still lives in Kent with his wife, Bobbie, speaks highly of his days at Housatonic. "I met a lot of good people and several mentors there," he said. "And the best friends I have today I met there. I have better memories of high school than anywhere else."

Sports, he said, played an important role in his student days. He played basketball and ran track and cross country.

"For a kid with little confidence, sports were good for me," he said, adding his parents and several coaches and teachers provided much guidance. One of them was track coach David Lindsay who encouraged him to go beyond what he thought he could do, and he met with success. "I felt he pushed me to the next level and I found my niche," he said.

Davis was among the speakers at a celebration of life for the late coach this past summer. He also spoke highly of teachers Jack Mahoney, Bob Gutzman and Dave Shaffer.

Following graduation, Davis attended Siena College, where he ran indoor track and cross country. After his first year, his father, **Charlie Davis**, class of '48 and mother, Anne, had the opportunity to open Davis IGA in Kent. Upon completing his second year of college, he decided to stay and help them run the store, a decision he's never regretted.

"We've had a lot of ups and downs, but after 48 years we're still here," he said, looking around the store with pride. "I think we've done a good job. Our proudest part is the number of kids we've employed for their first job. We have high standards and they learn the right way to do things."

He and his sisters **Marie Roze**, '78, and Audrey Davis owned the market for years. Marie retired and now it's he and Audrey at the helm. Another sister **Elaine Pecora**, '88, works in the medical field.

In 2013, **Cindy Riley Dunleavy**, class of '79, another Kent resident, was track and field coach and asked him to assist. He took the 45-hour qualifying course and agreed to serve. He accompanied her for four years and then took on the head position for three years.



Gary Davis

"I really enjoyed it," he said. "I saw myself in a lot of the kids. I liked to encourage them, but not be a slave master. It was nice to see the results." He praised his staff for being flexible and allowing him to leave to pursue his coaching duties.

Today, Davis is a member of Housatonic's Standing Building Committee and the Athletic Hall of Fame committee.

With a large choice of private schools in Kent, many teens choose not to attend Housatonic. Davis said the distance to the school can be a disadvantage, but so many have had very successful and gratifying times at Housatonic. "The opportunities are there; it's what they make of them. Housatonic serves as a common denominator."

### *Barbara Sohl Carr, Class of 2000*

Many of us make a decision about our adult career sometime in our 20s. That was certainly not the case for **Barbara Sohl Carr**, class of 2000. She had it all figured out in fourth grade. As she tells it, "I helped a friend of mine with homework in fourth grade and I felt really good about it afterwards. That's when I decided to be an elementary teacher instead of trying for Broadway!" Before ever attending Housatonic or Elizabethtown College in Pennsylvania, Barbara formed a base for her future career by tutoring, working in day care and as a camp counselor during the summer. The students of Region 1, in general, and Salisbury Central School, specifically, are indeed fortunate for that early decision.

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## Visiting with Some Graduates *from page 3*



Barbara Sohl Carr

Barbara grew up in Kent with her parents, Lee and Jim, and her brother Peter Sohl, class of 2002, where she attended Kent Center School. Of her years as an elementary and middle school student, she has many fond memories. She was part of the theater group at KCS and was also an active participant in musicals and the chorus. Barbara also was part of the Invention Convention, which gave her "confidence in public speaking" and sports—"I feel like I was part of everything that was offered." Barbara related that her time at KCS was influenced by all of her teachers and the support staff there. Most vivid are her memories of Therese Abbott, her kindergarten teacher, whom Barbara described as "kind," along with her middle school English teacher Ron Viafore, and Bruce Adams, who taught social studies. "Everyone there made school—and especially middle school—exciting ... I really looked forward to going there every day."

Her eighth-grade class at KCS was described by Barbara as "tricky" and hinted, with a smile in her voice, that she and her classmates might have been a cause of several teachers retiring. In a class of 20, however, only five attended Housatonic. "I have always been so happy with the K-8 schools in Region 1 and with Housatonic. The sense of belonging and sense of community are there for everyone to be a part of." But, the transition from middle school to Housatonic was not smooth her freshman year. "With only five of us from Kent, I really didn't know anyone—and then I didn't join a sport or any activities, which would have made me meet others." That all changed by her senior year and Barbara credits the many activities available to all students and recognizes the important contributions of certain teachers at Housatonic.

"I was very involved in the music program at Housatonic. I became part of the chorus, Jazz Choir and the Sweethearts, thanks to the encouragement of Kerri Morris. Our trip to Austria for competition is something I will never forget." She also said that Scott Fellows "helped me build my confidence in math; his

humor and his knowledge of math made me realize I was much more capable than I thought." Retired teacher Linda DiCorleto received praise from Barbara as head of the Rotary Club at the high school. She also noted that Peter Vermilyea, the current social studies department chair, "inspired me in all ways and helped give me direction while making me more sure that I wanted to teach."

After graduation from Housatonic in 2000, Barbara attended Elizabethtown where she earned her degrees in elementary education and special education, and met her future husband, Ryan, at a Penn State mixer. Following college, she went to Western Connecticut State in Danbury where she received her master's degree in education. Today, she lives with Ryan, who is part of the development office at Salisbury School, and their daughters Madeleine (11) and Elsie (8) in Salisbury. Barbara has been an elementary education teacher in fourth and fifth grade at Salisbury Central since 2004—with a two-year hiatus for child rearing.

Barbara credits Housatonic with assuring she would be well prepared for college and beyond. "I still tell people all the time that we are all so fortunate to have such a wonderful high school for our children. I encourage parents and students alike to take advantage of all that Housatonic has to offer—not only in the classroom, but in all the activities, clubs and sports." She emphasized that "I was always so happy as a student and now as a parent and teacher to live in an area where people form such close relationships at our schools."

Barbara continues to carry forth the best of Region 1—active participation in education and a gratitude for all that Region 1 offers. Her work as a teacher and member of the larger community are things we can all be grateful for today.

*by Mike DeMazza*



Through the efforts of the HVRHS Alumni Association, the portrait of Dr. Paul W. Stoddard was reinstalled in the library, along with a commemorative plaque noting that the library was named in his honor in 1964, the 25th anniversary of the school's opening. External signage for the Paul W. Stoddard Library will be installed soon.

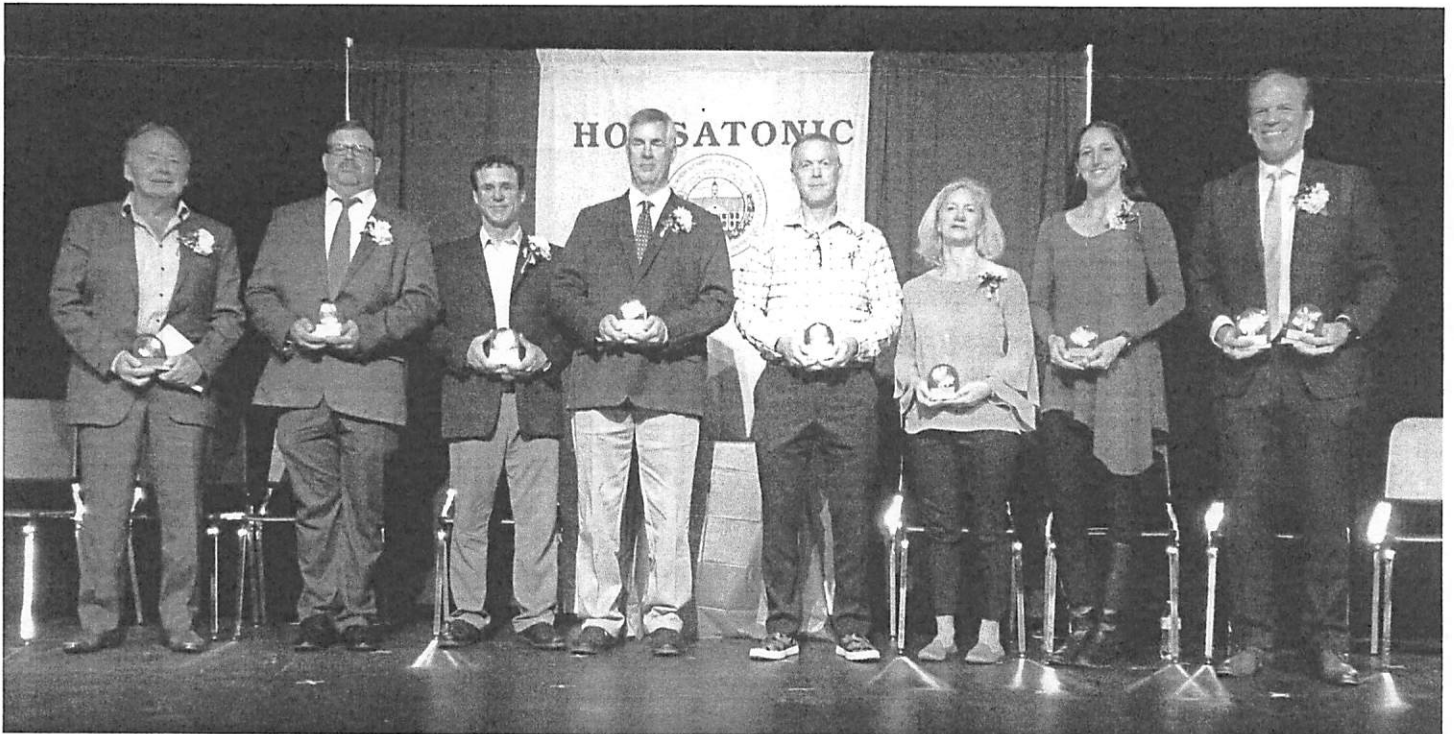
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### *Josie Marks, Class of 2022*



Josie Marks

Josie Marks of Salisbury is the recipient of the HVRHS Alumni Association Scholarship for 2022. She attends Northeastern University in Boston where she is majoring in architecture. Josie was an active scholar-athlete throughout her four years at HVRHS. Among her many achievements and honors were playing soccer, basketball and lacrosse, and winning the CIAC Scholar Athlete of the Year award in 2022. She was president of her class all four years and served for four years on the class council, while achieving highest honors every year. Josie was the valedictorian of the class of 2022 and was a member of the National Honor Society. She is the daughter of Keith Marks, class of 1988, and Kristen Neary Marks, class of 1990. Her grandparents are the late David Marks, class of 1962, and Linda Chase Marks-Scappini, class of 1962.



November 13 saw 10 alumni inducted into the prestigious Housatonic Athletic Hall of Fame. Athletic Director Anne MacNeil served as master of ceremonies for the event which drew a large crowd. The Housatonic Alumni Association, along with All-Star Transportation, provided the luncheon.

The new inductees are, from left: William Dufour, Jr., accepting for his father, **William Dufour**, class of '52; **Daniel Dubay**, class of '93; **Todd Baker**, class of '91; **Christopher Heacox**, class of '84; Daniel Kenny, accepting for his father, **Peter Kenny**, class of '52; **Andrea Perotti Heinze**, class of '88; **Nicole Geyselaers**, class of '91; and **Edward Tyburski, Jr.**, class of '76. Not present were **Richard Knutson**, class of '91 and **Jeffrey Tyburski**, class of '82, whose award was accepted by his brother Edward Tyburski, Jr.

## Alumni News by Class

### 1940s

**Dorothy (Dot) Winn Cecchinato**, class of '47, was unanimously elected as HVRHS Alumni Association Board Member, Emeritus at the May 25, 2022, meeting of the alumni board. Emeritus membership is conferred upon one who has served on the board for many years and has made significant contributions to the association. Dot showed amazing dedication as an alumna, and as a valued staff member at HVRHS. As an alumni association member, she shared her extraordinary institutional knowledge garnered from her many years at the school. Dot was one of the founding members of the association in 1987, along with Ed Kirby, Jack Mahoney, Bunny Cecchinato McGuire and Pat Allyn Mechare. Dot served as treasurer of the association for many years. A celebratory luncheon in her honor was held last spring.



In attendance were: **Bunny Cecchinato McGuire**, class of 1955, **Gertrude Winn Hunker**, class of 1953, **Dot**, **Patricia Allyn Mechare**, class of 1964 and **Maureen Kirby Dore**, class of 1976.

### 1950s

The class of '58 is planning a 65<sup>th</sup> reunion on July 14, 15 and 16. Friday evening will include a get-together cocktail party with hors d'oeuvres. Saturday evening will be a buffet dinner at the Canaan VFW, which will have its new elevator installed by then, making it easier for classmates to attend. Sunday's schedule is an outdoor picnic lunch prior to a return home. Contact **Pat Miller** at 860-824-7971 or 860-824-0804 (gottmd@yahoo.com), or **Jean Wells Reynolds** at 860-824-7488 or 703-525-5214 (lucia.reynolds1@verizon.net) for more information.

### 1960s



The class of 1961 held a reunion this past summer. Linda Rhoades Fitzgerald writes that it was a big success. Attending were, from left: Linda Rhoades Fitzgerald, Marty Whalen, Bill Streckas, Dave Godding, Charles Olsen, Chet Plonski, Mickey Riva, Tony Cantele, Dottie Fravezzi Swane, Jean Gustafson Brady, Doug McDowell, Gail Novak Larkin, Pauline Alquesta Carey, Terry Wilford, Betty Cortesi Knickerbocker, Joanne Walters Gustafson and Tom Segalla. Missing from photo are classmates Judy Riley Staknis, Sherry Spafford Johnson and Don Welsh, who also celebrated with us at the Land of Nod on Saturday, August 20.

### 1970s



Among those attending the 50<sup>th</sup> reunion of the class of 1971 this past summer were, from left: Tom Bartram, Sharman Bartram, Susie Bate Williamson, class of '73, Debbie Watts and her husband, Mary Jane Tutak and Susan Downey Gawel, a prime organizer of the event.

**Paul Schmitt**, class of 1976, reports his life has been full and rewarding. My family is the highlight of my life. I was lucky enough to meet a beautiful life partner who is also a great "tiger mom" who raised our three boys. They are certainly better versions of me, as they are uniquely (tongue-in-cheek) all very smart, handsome, have an excellent liberal arts education and are more social than I ever was. We now are



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blessed to have two beautiful daughters-in-law and five grandchildren. Our children are our best friends; my wife Facetimes them, and I Wordle with them most every day (with just numbers, no "shares" as we know each other's starting words.)

My professional life is my hobby, so you know what they say about working when this is the case. After high school, I went to Clarkson University, where I graduated with a bachelor's in science in electrical and computer engineering. I've held several engineering and management positions and continue to hone my craft. I've moved from hardware and chip design to software (sometimes both simultaneously). Fun highlights include a couple of startups during the .com boom, a three-year stint in China running Calix's Nanjing office, and three months in Portugal helping with some optics. You don't appreciate the United States until you live elsewhere, albeit Portugal was pretty nice. I find the people of other cultures are always nice, but in China, nobody is about to sue Xi Ping or put out a lawn sign calling him an idiot.

After Calix, I did some fun freelance work and then took a job with Real-time Innovations as a field applications engineer. I basically got paid to learn and play with some pretty cool technology and give presentations to prospective and current customers. The best part is that I worked with people that are both brilliant and nice (a rare combination in life).

A fun sidebar while working at Calix and traveling extensively to Petaluma, located in wine country, I made wine hobby number two. My wife says I drink too much, but I claim I collect too much. While in Nanjing, I studied wine and picked up my Court of Master Sommeliers (CMS) Intro level certification in Shanghai.

HVRHS, with its setting in southern Berkshires and the roar of Lime Rock racetrack in the distance, is breathtaking, and the care teachers took with me was incredibly amazing. One could not ask for a better high school, public or private. I now appreciate how wonderful the school is and how it prepared me for life. As my classmates know, I was pretty shy and introverted in high school. So, like "making sausage," the result is perhaps better than all of the awkwardness I went through getting there. My one regret in high school is not being mature enough to "stop and smell the roses." I missed a great opportunity to get to know more of you.

**1980s**

Jennifer Ocif Love (left) with her sister, Melissa Ocif Erdtmann.

**Jennifer Ocif Love**, class of 1989, recently received a doctorate in education. An engineer, Love's dissertation was a case study involving two Massachusetts public school districts, their teachers, their leadership team and their perspectives and experiences about elementary science, technology and engineering education before, during and after COVID-19.

Remembering her high school days, Love writes that she played soccer, basketball and softball. She went on to study mechanical engineering at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, graduating in 1993. She worked as a professional engineer for a medical device company in Massachusetts before earning a master of science degree in biomedical engineering at the University of Iowa. The Kent native then worked for eight years at Reebok International until joining the faculty in the College of Engineering at Northeastern University, where she currently teaches undergraduate project-based engineering courses that integrate engineering design, ethics, computer programming, prototyping and product development. She shared that she also designs educational sundials.

She and her husband, Ricker Love, and their two children Cooper and Kailyn, live in Marshfield, Mass. She is pictured here on the left, with her sister **Melissa Ocif Erdtmann**, class of 1991.

## *In Memoriam*

Doris Cunningham Carberry, '43  
Mary Tobin Kirby, '45  
Juliet Lydia Johnson, '46  
L. Aurelia Graham Blodgett, '47  
Clara Schumann, '48  
John "Jack" Kling, '49  
Kathleen Tobin Marcon, '49  
Elinor Noble Martinez, '49  
Phyllis Bishop Phelen, '49  
Patricia Stapleton Gertsch, '51  
Irene Eglin Whitman, '51  
William L. Blaaww, '52  
Mary Eagan Frattarola, '53  
Henry Prause, '53  
Belle (Betty) Johnson Becker, '54  
Elisabeth Posselt Barker, '55

Tony Barker, '55  
Jane Ellen Canfield, '56  
William Blass, '57  
Nancy Dodge Jacobs, '57  
Edna O'Dell Solesky, '57  
Susan Gawel Church, '58  
Jayne Peterson Larsen, '58  
Gary Platt, '60  
Jeffrey Siena, '62  
Cheryl Cortesi Downey, '63  
Robert Harris, '63  
Marcus Rapp, '63  
Tomassina Nania Panepinto, '64  
Lauren MacNeil Welsh, '64  
Stephanie Ostrom Yeaton, '65  
Marietta Gatti Guidone, '66

Norman Jasmine, '67  
Margaret "Susie" Goodsell Rundall, '67  
Helen Giansiracusa Starwalker, '67  
Jill Blodgett Polito, '70  
George Pollard, '73  
John Allyn, '74  
Cindy Labshere, '75  
Susan Lloyd, '75  
Ralph Scoville, '76  
Thomas Miller, '81  
John Bolelaus Scieपुरa, '81  
Jeannette Wright, '81  
Dorinda Pedersen Truax, '84

### *Faculty*

Katherine Gannett

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To reach the Editor: Ruth Epstein  
Telephone: 860-927-4057; Email: KCSRuthe@aol.com

**HVRS Alumni Association**  
c/o HVRS  
246 Warren Turnpike, Falls Village, CT 06031

