



Homecoming Schedule Is Announced

Plans for a gala homecoming are pulling together. The big day is Oct. 23 when students and alumni will gather "high above the Housatonic" for a day of sports and nostalgia.

In the morning, the HVRHS Alumni Association is sponsoring two tours of the school building, introducing returning graduates to the many changes the school has undergone over the decades. Ninety-minute tours will be offered at 10:30 a.m. and noon, led by **Kevin Wheeler, '82**.

There will be plenty of time for visitors to reminisce and the memories will be captured on video. Classes that would like to hold a meeting should go to the cafeteria before the tours to choose a space. It is suggested that those attending wear blue and gold.

A video about the school will be set up in the lobby and old sweaters, uniforms, gym suits and the like are being sought to set up in a nostalgic display. In addition, there will be a table set up by the Robotics Club and an Adult Ed table.

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AFS Marks 60th Anniversary

FALLS VILLAGE—The post-World War II world was barely beginning to knit together again 60 years ago when the American Field Service chapter at Housatonic Valley Regional High School was formed. The regional high school, an innovative concept in its own right in New England—indeed, the first of its kind east of the Hudson River—was led by a progressive thinker, Dr. Paul W. Stoddard, who had no problem saying, "Yes," when he was approached by Stephen Galatti, for many years director general of the AFS.

Mr. Galatti, known to Dr. Stoddard from their college years, had transformed a volunteer medical corps from World Wars I and II into an international educational exchange service designed to build bridges between na-



Former AFS students gather for the 60th Anniversary celebration at the home of Michael and Katie Gannett.

Photograph courtesy of the Litchfield County Times

tions. In that spirit, many of the first exchanges were between Germany and America.

"It was that effort to mend fences," said **Katie Gannett** of Cornwall, a former guidance counselor at HVRHS and for many years a coordinator of the AFS exchange

program. "**Rebecca Foster** was the first to go from Housatonic, while the Calhoun and the Finn families hosted the first students from Germany."

Germany had barely started to recover from the ravages

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Tech Center Work Begins

Advocates for the proposed Science and Technology Center at Housatonic Valley Regional High School were delighted to learn that \$196,000 in federal stimulus dollars has been allocated to help support convert the former Clark B. Wood Vocational Agriculture Center at the school. The building, constructed in 1961, is being renovated for use as

what is believed to be the first such science and technology facility in the country at a comprehensive high school.

The \$196,000 grant for the center is drawn from \$1.2 million in block grant funding announced by Gov. M. Jodi Rell. It is part of the \$9.5 million in stimulus funds the state received from the U.S.

Department of Energy (DOE) to distribute to small cities and towns for a variety of energy efficiency and conservation programs. By the beginning of summer some 130 individual municipalities had been awarded nearly \$8.4 million in grants for energy projects. The DOE approved the state's plan for the re-

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Former AFS Students Attend Anniversary

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Paco Carajaville,
Spain

"At the end of the picnic, the American kids sang 'Auld Lang Syne' and there was not a dry eye at the picnic."



Russell Juds,
South Africa

of the war when the students arrived. Mrs. Gannett, at whose home the anniversary picnic was held this past Saturday, remembers that when **Gunter Kemper** arrived, he was wearing a shirt that his mother had fashioned from four or five other shirts. His host father took him to Bianchi's, then a men's clothier in Canaan, and outfitted the lad from head to toe for his year in America. "Which made his own son very jealous," Mrs. Gannett reported.

That first exchange student has since died, as have a number of other young people who spent their senior years in bucolic Falls Village, but others have remained in contact with their host families.

"It was wonderful," said Mrs. Gannett, referring to the 60th anniversary picnic held in the expansive gardens of their home. "We had 100 people. The kids from abroad were great. We had eight from abroad, including this year's students, **Berkay Alpagut** from Turkey, and **Tawasinchandeck Nichata** from Thailand.

Ag-science students join with Landscape and Arboretum Committee member Woods Sinclair in planting an AFS 60th Anniversary tree in the courtyard at the high school. The Winterking Hawthorne is just a small part of a comprehensive planting that will someday see an arboretum stretching across the campus to give students an opportunity to learn about different trees.

Photograph by Kathryn Boughton

Among the former foreign exchange students who attended were **Unal Zenginobuz** of Turkey, who was at HVRHS in 1977-'78; **Russell Juds**, South Africa, 1978-'79; **Paco Carajaville**, Spain, 1981-'82; **Fernando Lins**, Brazil, 1990-'91; **Giulia Facinelli**, Italy, 2008-'09; and a "pop-in" guest, **Geoffrey Lee** of Australia, 1983-'84. Mr. Lee, who went on to earn a Ph.D in horticulture, travels frequently and has been known to drop by without notice at other times. "He called the night before to say he would be here," said Mrs. Gannett. She said that the failure of invitees to RSVP for such events makes it hard to plan for food service, "but we always have a plate for him."

Also present were 19 American students who had traveled abroad between 1953 and 2008.

"At the end of the picnic, the American kids sang 'Auld Lang Syne' and there was not a dry eye at the picnic," Mrs. Gannett said.

The AFS chapter in Falls Village is one of the oldest continuing chapters in the United States and one of the most successful, thanks to the

continuing support of volunteers in the six-town district. Mrs. Gannett said Dr. Stoddard immediately established the standard of chapter financial support for students. That sum has risen from about \$500 in the early days to about \$2,200 per student today. Families must supply the remaining sum. Most of the American students who travel abroad do so in the summer because of the cost, currently about \$4,300. The students from abroad usually are here for the school year.

Money to support the program is realized through an annual appeal letter and chapter activities. The chapter also underwrites lunches for the students from abroad, their participation fees in school activities and for short-term travel. Host families receive no remuneration for the hospitality they extend.

It has been a successful formula in the area: over the past 60 years the HVRHS chapter has hosted 85 students from abroad and sent 154 HVRHS students to countries around the world.

She said that when the students return it is "like one of your own kids coming home—they are all just great kids."



Tech Center Gets Energy Grant

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gional block grants after the plan was authorized by the Legislature's Energy and Technology and Appropriations Committees.

Six regional energy projects were approved, specifically helping municipalities reduce energy costs, promote use of alternative and renewable fuel sources and provide education and job training in energy technology. Making the new science and technology center as "green" as possible has been a goal of its building committee since the start.

"We are thinking about transforming the shell of the building so it will be a net-zero user of electricity and heat," said former HVRHS principal John Mahoney, a driving force behind converting the old building to its new use.

Initially, the committee assumed that it could salvage the old vo-ag center, replaced several years ago by an \$8 million ag science wing at the school, for \$200,000. That sum would have been used to bring the building into compliance for heat and electricity. Fundraising was started and received a major boost in the summer 2009 when a \$100,000 donation was made in memory of Daniel Parsons, Class of '91. At the time, Mr. Mahoney, also a member of the advisory council of the 21st Century Fund for HVRHS, said strategies were in place to close the gap between available funds and the \$200,000 needed.

"Then came the cold, hard fact that we need to replace the roof," said Mr. Ma-

honey. "That expanded the work we needed to do to open the doors to around \$300,000." With the current funding in hand, work began on the building this summer. Transforming the old building to a new use is energy-efficient in more ways than one. Rather than razing the structure to make way for new construction, its materials will be "recycled" into a new and vital use. HVRHS has already made good use of another out-dated facility on its property. A former garage was converted to an ArtGarage, fully stocked with art supplies, where students can work independently four afternoons a week under the guidance of an adult volunteer artist from the community.

HVRHS Administrators Leave

Unhappy circumstances at HVRHS led to the abrupt resignation of the school's top administrators late this summer.

Principal **Gretchen Foster Mosca**, who had led the school for six years, and assistant principal **Mary Ann Buchanan**, who had been there for 16 years, submitted resignations one week apart in early August. Both women accepted positions in the Torrington School District, as a numeracy coach and assistant principal, respectively.

While neither administrator commented on the reason for her departure, the Regional School Board has since been embroiled in a series of special meetings where faculty, citizens and students made allegations of a "hostile" work environment at the school, perhaps perpetuated by central office personnel. A committee has been organized to investigate the allegations although an attorney for assistant Superintendent of Schools Diane Goncalves contended the school board had no power to investigate his client. The school's attor-

ney has taken an opposite point of view.

The committee, which now terms itself a "review committee," has hired an independent attorney skilled in this area to conduct exit interviews with the administrators and to get to the bottom of what happened.

Meanwhile, veteran teacher **David Bayersdorfer**, who retired last June, has been drafted to act as interim assistant principal. Herbert Tedford was named interim principal started Monday, Oct. 18.

Class of '80 Will Gather For Reunion

The Class of '80 will hold its 30th reunion Oct. 23, the day of Homecoming.

Participants are urged to tour the school at 10 a.m. or noon, check out what's happening, and root for the Mountaineers at the home football game against Coventry at 2 p.m.

Other games are girls soccer against Litchfield, 1 p.m.; volleyball against Nonnewaug (JV), 11 a.m.; field hockey against Wamogo, 1 p.m.

After the game, the Class of '80 will go for some "pub and grub" to the New West Main Cafe. It is reserved for the Class of 1980 only.

Later in the evening there will be dinner, drinks, and dancing at the New West Main Café in Lakeville. Call to reserve for dinner, if you'd like. The Steve Dunn Band will be on by 9 or 10 p.m. There will be a \$5 cover.

Contact kry-sia_bibro@juno.com (cell phone 718-644-0227) with any questions.

Another reunion is planned as well for this Homecoming Day. The Class of '55 will hold its 55th reunion Oct. 23. at the Bridge Restaurant. Fifties dress is suggested.

The Class of '50 met Sept. 14 at the Interlaken Inn.

Alumni Seek More Support

The recession has hit the HVRHS alumni Association with the same effect it has had on the rest of the economy. Payment of annual dues and life memberships has shrunk to almost nothing, while the costs of printing and mailing the Blue 'n' Gold continue apace.

In addition, the Alumni Association provides annual \$1,000 scholarships and assists the high school in other projects. Some of these projects have been completion of the tennis courts at HVRHS, a contribution of \$5,000 toward the new technology center, and a \$1,165 donation to the Landscape and Arboretum Project.

One year, the statue of Abraham Lincoln was vandalized and, after its repair by a local artist, two alumni paid to have it enclosed in a glass case. The 50th anniversary of the school was commemorated by a quilt composed of squares created by each class, and was then framed and hung in the hall, again by alumni. This fall, the Alumni will be very active in the annual Homecoming, providing tours of the school and exhibit-

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Baldisseri Donates Record to Museum

Ray Baldisseri, '49, whose professional name is Ray Marco, was honored recently to perform the song, "Abilene," which he first recorded in 1956 for President Eisenhower's re-election campaign, during a Korean War 60th anniversary celebration at the Eisenhower Foundation in Gettysburg, MD. His 45 rpm recording of "Abilene" is now installed in the Eisenhower Presidential Library and Museum.

Mr. Baldisseri lived in East Canaan during his high school career in Falls Village, having moved to Northwest Connecticut from Albany, NY. He currently makes his home with his wife, Marie, at the Palm Aire Country Club in Pompano Beach, FL. Florida has been their home since 1959.

Ray said he is proud to have his recording of the campaign song included in the presidential library. He was a fan of Eisenhower in the '56 election because of his role as Supreme Commander of SHAEF during World War II. While his brother had been wounded during that global conflict, Ray's war came later, when he served in the Air Force during the Korean War. He was based at Brooks Air Force Base in San Antonio, where he taught recruits how to intercept and translate Chinese and Russian messages. Because he was an instructor, he avoided direct combat.

San Antonio brought two good things into Ray's life: First he met his future wife and, second, he became front man for a 14-piece band. He



Tim Rives, Ray Baldisseri and his wife, Marie.

Photograph courtesy of Ray Baldisseri

was also asked by the commander of the Fourth Army based in Fort Sam Houston, TX, to be the lead singer of a 50-piece band, performing big band music designed to improve morale. Performances were broadcast throughout the western United States.

When he separated from the Air Force in 1954, Ray worked at WTOR, a popular radio station in Torrington. While there he was introduced to a version of the song "Abilene," transformed to describe Eisenhower's simple roots and his role as leader on the world stage.

Ray was later asked to sing the song as part of Ike's re-election bid in Connecticut and Young Republicans so liked how he performed it they asked for 250,000 copies of the record to distribute nationwide.

The production of the record was supposed to bring with it a chance to meet the president. "I thought, 'Oh, my gosh,'" Ray said. "I was so excited. When Eisenhower

was going to travel on the election train I was supposed to go with the president and sing the song when he was in Connecticut." But then Eisenhower had a heart attack and the whistle-stop campaign was cancelled.

More than 50 years passed before Ray watched a documentary on Eisenhower's presidential years and heard again about the 45 rpm record. He e-mailed Eisenhower Presidential Library and Museum executive director Tim Rives and told him he had been the singer featured on the recording during the campaign.

Ray produced a single copy of the recording still in his possession and newspaper clippings to prove the provenance of the record, confirming his story even though he no longer had any telegrams between WTOR officials and the election campaign staff. Mr. Rives mentioned the plans to mark the 60th anniversary of the Korean War and asked if Ray would be

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Alumni Need More Input, Financial Aid

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ing memorabilia from the school's past in the lobby.

All of these activities bite into Alumni Association's reserves, but the biggest continuing cost is the twice-yearly production of the Blue 'n' Gold. Each edition costs about \$1,500 with an additional \$900 expended for postage. This cost, at a time when more and more people are turning to the computer for communication, has raised an interesting question: Should the newsletter be distributed solely online and, if so, when should this transition take place?

It was observed in a recent Alumni Association meeting, that publishing online would save considerable sums of money that could then be used to enhance the school and its activities. At the same time, it was recognized that earlier graduates—those from the 1940s and '50s, for instance—are often not computer savvy and prefer to receive their newsletters through the mail.

The conclusion was that print media should be used in the immediate future but that after 2012, the newsletter

would be delivered to all classes after 1960 via the Internet. To that end, we are gathering e-mail addresses and would appreciate it if alumni would send contact cecchinato@sbcglobal.net or missbunny@snet.net.

In addition, a portion of our money for mailing the newsletter is wasted because we have incorrect addresses. Alumni are asked to notify us of known incorrect mailing addresses and to include their years of graduation in the communication. It is no small matter for the mailing committee to keep addresses up to date as there have been 8,424 graduates since 1940.

By reducing our mailing costs we will immediately improve the financial drain on the Alumni Association, but it is also necessary to replenish our coffers. Annual dues are \$10, while a life

membership is \$100. Dues may be sent to HVRHS Alumni Association, Housatonic Valley Regional High School, 246 Warren Turnpike Road, Falls Village, CT 06031.

There is one last pressing need. The newsletter is designed to keep alumni abreast of current happenings at the high school as well as the personal news of former graduates. We need committee members—particularly for the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s—to help us with keeping up with the comings and goings of our former classmates. Individuals may contact the editor, Kathryn Boughton, at k.boughton@sbcglobal.net to share their stories. Those who are interested in serving on the committee should contact Chairman **Jack Mahoney** at jackmahoney2@comcast.net.

Baldisseri Record in Museum

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interested in performing the song. Ray later donated his copy of the campaign song to the presidential library, but was

recently able to purchase another copy to keep in his personal collection.

Mr. Baldisseri's Web site is www.raymarco.com. His e-mail is baldis@bellsouth.net



Mary Perotti

Scholarship Winner

The Housatonic Alumni Association awarded its annual scholarship this spring to **Mary Perotti**. She is going to Green Mountain College and will major in Environmental Studies. As with so many students who have received the award, Mary comes from a multi-generational HVRHS family.

Her mother is **Dolores Schaefer, '83**, and her dad is **Francis (Champ) Perotti, '83**. Going back yet another generation, she is descended from three Housatonic alums: her grandmother **Jean Perotti, '57**, and her grandfathers, **Frank Perotti, '54**, and **George Schaefer, '50**.

Homecoming

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The annual sports events begin at 11 a.m. with volleyball, HVRHS vs. Nonnewaug. At 1 p.m. Housatonic goes up against Litchfield in girls soccer, and Housy will face Wamogo in field hockey, also at 1 p.m. At 2 the football team meets Coventry Windham.

Class of '43 to Meet Oct. 26 at Geer

The Class of '43 met Sept 15 and will meet again on Oct. 26 for lunch at Geer Village.

Attending in September were **Evelyn (Dorizzi) Cornelio, Doris Cunningham, Martha (Dickinson) Bergenty, Lorraine (LaBoudy) Platt, Betty**

(Mazur) Sojka, Lucille (Whitney) Marston, Dick Deneen and his wife, **Christine**, and **Julie (DelTenno) Segalla**.

Conversation ranged over "aches and pains," reminiscences about children and updates about grandchildren and great-

grandchildren and their families. The members read their Class Will and Class Prophecies.

Julie, Evelyn and Martha will be wintering in Florida and probably attending the Connecticut Northwest Picnic in Venice, FL, in February.

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Alumni News By Class and Decade

1950s

Gunnar Jansen, '51, died Jan., 17, 2010 after a courageous battle with cancer at his home in Boulder, CO.

He was 76 and is survived by his wife of 49 years, Grete and his son Eric, daughter, Heidi, and their families. The family hopes to have his ashes buried in Salisbury with the rest of his family.

He was born in Canaan, April 8, 1933 to Martin and Karine (Saetre) Jansen. After graduating from HVRHS he moved to Colorado where he graduated from Denver University with a degree in Business. He was on their ski team for four years and later inducted into their Ski Hall of Fame for having been on his school's first team to win an NCAA championship. After graduation he served in the Army's Mountain Cold Weather Training Command (10th Mt. Division) and represented the Army in the World Championship in Salzfelden, Austria, in 1958 on their eight-man Biathlon Team.

He worked in the ski industry until retirement, residing in Boulder, CO. and skied every season until he died.

Judith (Harvey) Brown, '52, now of Napa, CA, writes that after two careers she is launching a third. First, she worked for several years in management for several companies before leaving to act as a full-time volunteer in musical theater. Now she is exploring the world of ceramic art and becoming a crafter. "I have my shop up and run-

ning," she says, adding, "Hooray to the Class of '52!"

Dr. John O. Kopf, '56, passed away March 2, 2010, at the age of 72. He is survived by his wife of 48 years, Peggy Rutherford Kopf, son Eric, and grandchildren, Terra and Milo. After graduating from HVRHS, John went on to earn both his BS and MS degrees at UConn, and his PhD at Michigan State University. From there the family moved west to Berkeley, CA, where John worked at the Lawrence Radiation Lab for many years. The family then moved to Cupertino, CA in 1972, where they participated in the "birth" of Silicon Valley.

John was forced to retire several years ago due to ill health, but continued his many hobbies of ship modeling, wood working and wood carving, model steam engines, painting, and fiddling with his beloved 1929 Model A Coupe. "His family and many friends miss him,"

1960s

Thomas F. Segalla, '61, was recently elected for the fifth year in a row as one of the top 50 New York Super Lawyers. He practices law with the firm of Goldberg Segalla LLP and lives with his wife, Mary Lou, in Buffalo, NY. The firm has 10 offices in four states—New York, Connecticut, Pennsylvania and New Jersey. They also have a home in Naples, Fla., where Mary Lou and her 93-year-old mom escape from Buffalo winters. For Tom, retirement is still a question mark.

An update from **Iris Reymers Buchmiller, '67**, was received at Christmas and here's what she wrote: "Our small family is suddenly starting to grow. Our oldest son, Chris, and his wife, Karen, are expecting their first child in April. Our middle son, Adam, has a rambunctious 15-month-old son who never sleeps and our youngest son, at age 27, is a dentist and will be married in August. We are so proud of all of them."

Bruce Vanicky, '67, has been selected Assistant Coach of the Year in the volleyball category by the Connecticut High School Coaches Association (CHSCA). For the past 17 years, Bruce has been coaching girls volleyball on the staff of the Haddam-Killingworth High School. He was assistant coach of the varsity team for the first nine years and has been coaching the junior varsity team for the balance with an impressive 125-21 record. Bruce received his award at a banquet held Dec. 9 in Southington at the AquaTurf Facility. Congrats, Bruce.

After 35 years with Travelers Insurance, **Bob Palmer, '67**, has retired from under the 'Red Umbrella' effective Jan. 29, 2010. He has just purchased a home in Storrs, CT, and is now looking forward to some fishing and "quiet time" after spending the last several years living in East Hartford. Once he has settled, Bob also wants to volunteer his time as a reading teacher to dyslexic adults. He has done this in the past and found it quite rewarding.

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Alumni News By Class and Decade

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Sergio Ronzani, '67, and wife, **Phyllis Blaikie Ronzani, '65**, have put a new spin on "home entertainment" at their place in West Plains, MO. Last June they installed a music system in their barn, set up chairs and opened "Sarg's Music Barn." Every Saturday night the public is invited to hear Sergio and his friends perform a three-hour show of bluegrass, rockabilly and country music. A CD may be coming soon.

1970s

Mary (Harson) Reeves, '70, is now living in "lovely Clearwater, FL," where she is a counselor at the Church of Scientology. She moved to Florida after retiring from 25 years working as a nurse practitioner in Maine. She says she misses the winter snows but loves the Florida beaches and her work as a Scientology counselor. She has two children and a grandchild.

1980s

Jennifer (Epstein) Rudnick, '89, has been named Education Specialist in the Interpretation and Education Division of the National Mall in Washington, D.C. A park ranger in several national parks, she worked seasonally at Adams National Historical Park in Quincy, MA., Gettysburg National Military Park in Pennsylvania and Colonial National Historical Park in Jamestown, Va., before com-

ing to the National Mall in 1998.

For the past seven years she has developed relationships with schools within the greater Washington, D.C. area and expanded participation in the park Services' formal educational programs from 3,000 students in 2003 to more than 16,000 in 2009.

1990s

Julie (Kircher) Olmstead, '94, graduated from Northwestern Technical Community College in 1997 with an Early Childhood Degree and an In-home Childcare Certificate. She has also studied under Dr. Michael Powers, well-known for his work with autism. Julie was previously employed at a private school as a reading specialist and is working towards earning her Speech Certificate; however, today she is a stay-at-home mom with an energetic 3-year-old son, Sam, and was expecting the arrival of a daughter in August of 2010.

Husband Ryan is an alumnus of Arizona State University and works as a music therapist. Julie writes that she still loves baseball and follows the Red Sox, but having lived in Arizona for the past 10 years, has also become a Diamondbacks fan. Among her other interests, she enjoys competing in Chinese Kenpo Martial Arts tournaments where she has earned her purple stripe.

2000s

Marci Perotti, '00, received a degree in physical



Peter Barrett, David Bayersdorfer and Don Looney listen to a speaker during retirement festivities last June. Also retiring were Linda DiCorleto, Denise Dower and John Zola.

education from Eastern Connecticut State University. She is pursuing a master's degree in the same field at CCSU and is currently employed at Kent Center School. She plans to marry in July 2011.

Karianna Skinner and Thomas Sherwood, '04, plan a fall 2010 wedding. They will live in Canaan.

Molly Toomey, '05, of Canaan recently received a Bachelor's degree in sociology from Amherst College in Amherst, MA.

Alex Dunleavy, '08, was named to the dean's list for the 2009 fall semester at UConn School of Business in Storrs. His major is business management.

Hannah L. Lovejoy, '08, of Falls Village was on the Dean's List for academic achievement during the spring semester at St. Lawrence University in Canton, NY. To be eligible for the Dean's List at St. Lawrence, a student must have completed at least four semester units and have an academic average of 3.6

(based on a perfect 4.0 scale) for the semester. Hannah is majoring in psychology and Spanish and participates in the Lacrosse Club, Amnesty International and the Anthropology Club.

Evelyn Stryzynski, '09, named to the dean's list for the 2009 fall semester at the University of Florida in Gainesville, is currently a sophomore with a double major in French and political science.

Alex Gustafson, '09, inducted in the Marines in October 2009, was recently graduated from a Marine Corps Basic Combat Engineering Course at Camp Lejeune, NC.

Kara Riley, '10, of Sharon is enrolled at Central Connecticut State University in New Britain. She plans to major in music education.

Dylan Vadakin, '10, was accepted at five schools and has chosen Central Connecticut State University in New Britain for the 2010 falls semester. He plans to major in music composition.

