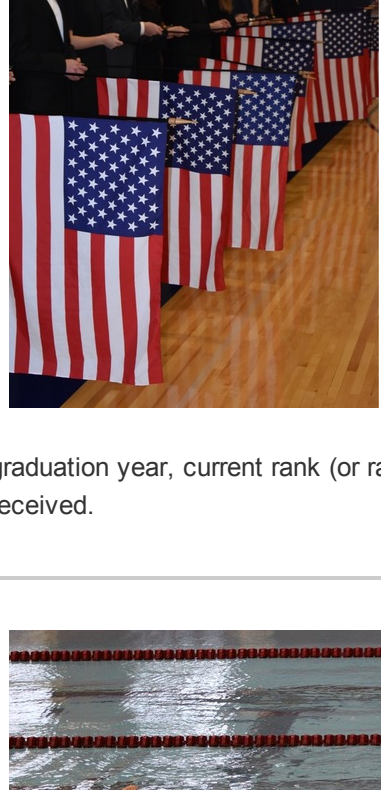


THE PIONEER POST

East Grand Rapids Alumni Newsletter

Winter 2022

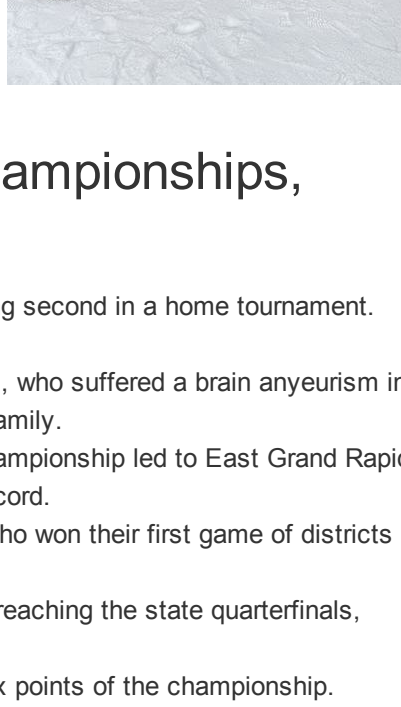
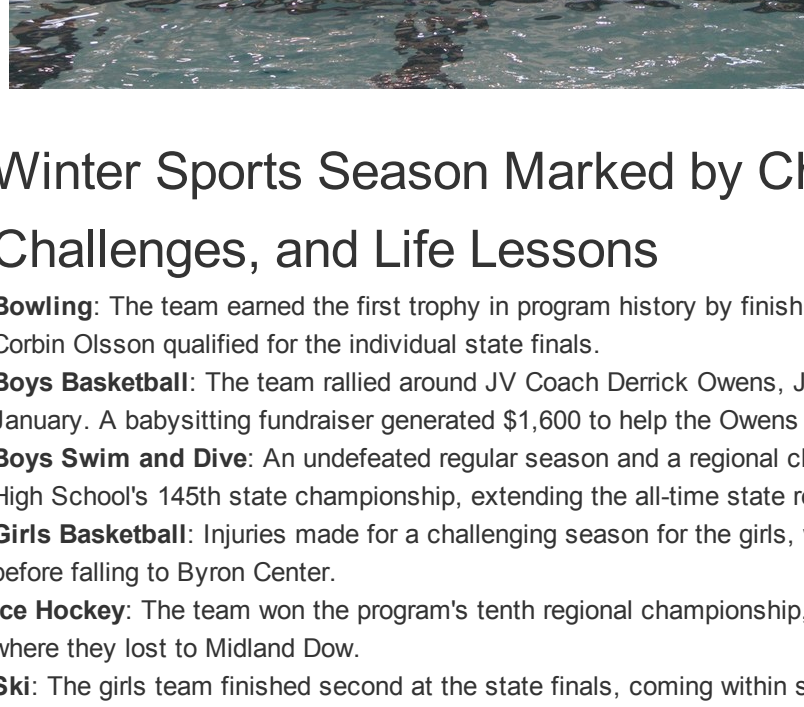


Attention Alumni Service Members and Veterans

Are you a veteran of the United States armed forces or an active-duty service member? Or do you know of any East alumni who are? East Grand Rapids High School is gathering this information in order to recognize the brave people who have served our country in the armed forces. The school plans to honor them permanently and remember the sacrifice each of them has given to help protect our country at a special place in the high school and every year on Veterans Day.

Find the link to submit information on our [Honoring Alumni Service Members page](#). Or you can send an email to Maria Allen, Alumni Relations Coordinator, at mallen@egrps.org. Be sure to include the following information: name (include name at graduation if different),

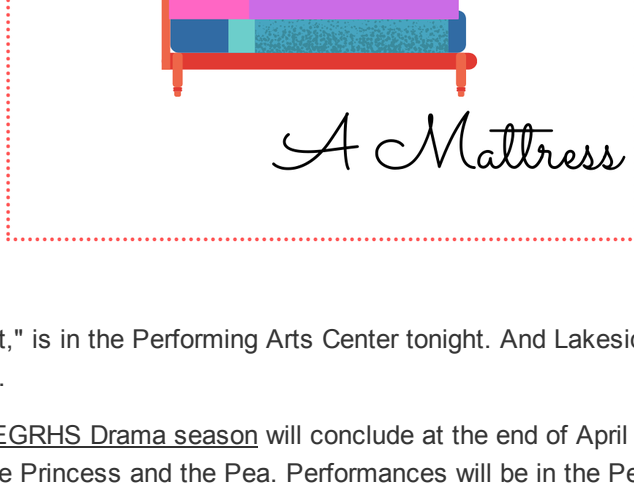
graduation year, current rank (or rank at retirement), locations of service, and any medals or commendations received.



Winter Sports Season Marked by Championships, Challenges, and Life Lessons

Bowling: The team earned the first trophy in program history by finishing second in a home tournament. Corbin Olsson qualified for the individual state finals.
Boys Basketball: The team rallied around JV Coach Derrick Owens, Jr., who suffered a brain aneurysm in January. A babysitting fundraiser generated \$1,600 to help the Owens family.
Boys Swim and Dive: An undefeated regular season and a regional championship led to East Grand Rapids High School's 145th state championship, extending the all-time state record.
Girls Basketball: Injuries made for a challenging season for the girls, who won their first game of districts before falling to Byron Center.
Ice Hockey: The team won the program's tenth regional championship, reaching the state quarterfinals, where they lost to Midland Dow.
Ski: The girls team finished second at the state finals, coming within six points of the championship.

Foundation Connection: On June 9, the Gerken Open golf outing raised funds to help restore the strength and conditioning program to help all our student athletes. The 2022 Gerken Open will be Wednesday, June 8 at Thousand Oaks Golf Club.



Full Crowds, Full Slate of Events Mark Winter Performing Arts Season

It's been a busy winter in the performing arts. From holiday concerts at the middle school and high school in December all the way up to last week's production of "Lion King, Jr." at Breton Downs, there's just about always been a show either in production or rehearsals.

Other productions during the winter included "Competition Piece" at the high school in January and "Wizard of Oz, Jr." at Wealthy Elementary. At the high school, the variety show, "EGR's Got Talent," is in the Performing Arts Center tonight. And Lakeside Elementary's musical, "Moana, Jr." is next week.

The EGRHS Drama season will conclude at the end of April with "Once Upon a Mattress," a musical retelling of The Princess and the Pea. Performances will be in the Performing Arts Center Thursday through Saturday, April 28-30.

Foundation Connection: The Foundation is underwriting the spring musical. Not only that, but a foundation grant is funding professional musicians to play along with the students in the orchestra. Thanks to our donors, we're contributing \$9,000 in funding for the production.

Class Reunion News

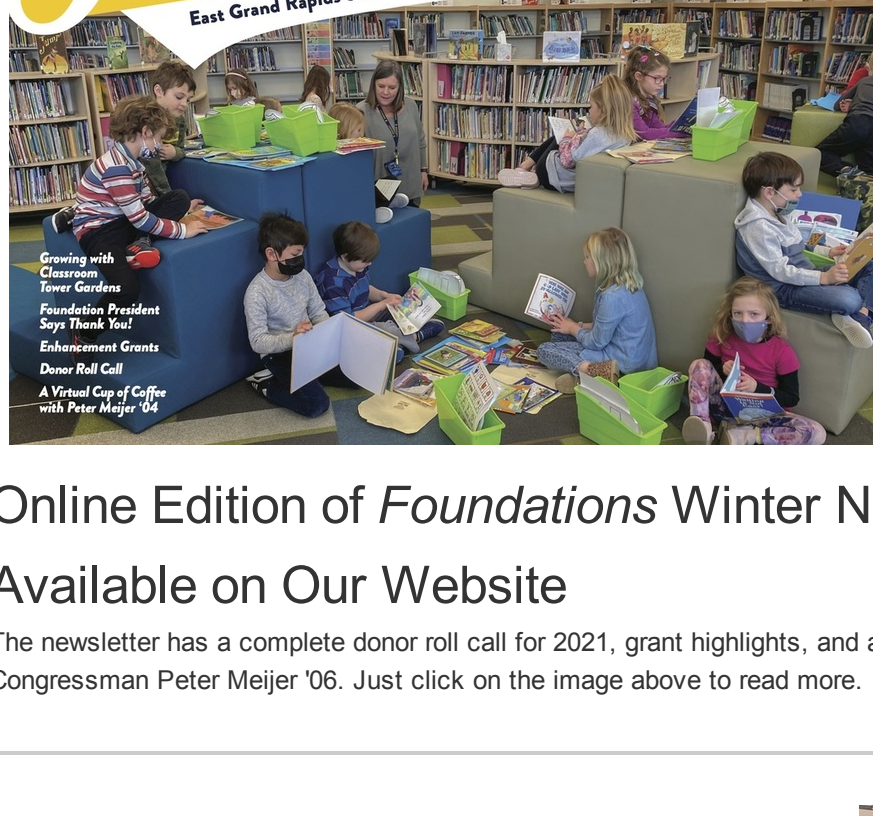


Reunions in 2022

Join the EGRHS classes who are already planning their 2022 reunion celebration. Additional information can be found on the [EGRSF Alumni Events page](#).

1952 - Sept. 8	1967 - Sept. 17	1971 - Aug. 12-13
1972 - Sept. 22	1977 - Sept. 3	1982 - June 25
1992 - Oct. 1	2012 - Dec. 23	2017 - Nov. 2022

The East Grand Rapids Schools Foundation and Alumni Association is your partner for your reunion planning needs. Maria Allen, Alumni Relations Coordinator, has supported numerous groups in the preparation of their class reunions over the years. If you need alumni contact information, a list of local venue options, activity ideas, invitations, technology help, decorations, then Maria is available to help your group. Go to the [EGRSF alumni page](#) for more information or contact Maria at mallen@egrps.org. And if 2023 is a reunion year for your class, now is a good time to start the planning process.

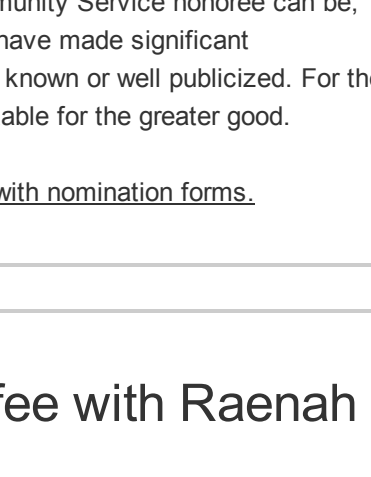


Online Edition of Foundations Winter Newsletter Is Available on Our Website

The newsletter has a complete donor roll call for 2021, grant highlights, and an interview with U.S. Congressman Peter Meijer '06. Just click on the image above to read more.

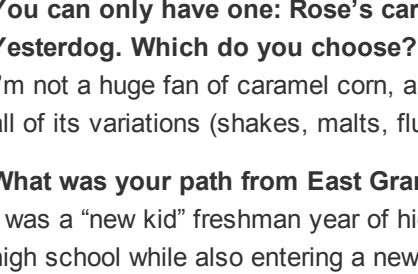
Do You Know Someone Who Has Changed the World? Even Our Little Corner of It?

Every two years, the Foundation honors worthy individuals with the Distinguished Alumni Award and the Community Service Award at our Awards Dinner. Last fall, CDR Bill Krissoff, MD, Medical Corps, United States Navy (Ret.) of the class of 1964 was our Distinguished Alumni honoree. Longtime EGRPS custodian Bruce Towne received the Community Service Award.



Now we're looking for nominees to be honored at our Awards Dinner in 2023. The Distinguished Alumni honoree must be an East alum. The Community Service honoree can be, but it's not required. Nominees for the Distinguished Alumni Award should have made significant contributions to their chosen field, but those contributions need not be well known or well publicized. For the Community Service Award, nominees should have done something remarkable for the greater good.

[On our website, you can find brief descriptions of previous winners, along with nomination forms.](#)



Virtual Cup of Coffee with Raenah Lindsey '20

Raenah Lindsey '20 blazed her own trail to East Grand Rapids Public Schools. At the end of middle school, she researched local school districts and chose to attend East through the School of Choice program. After four years of academic success at EGRHS, including two years as an East Grand Rapids Schools Foundation Student Board Member, Lindsey was accepted to Harvard as a member of the class of 2024, where she is studying Government and Classics.

You can only have one: Rose's caramel corn, an ice cream cone from Jersey Junction, or a Yeti dog. Which do you choose?

I'm not a huge fan of caramel corn, and you'll rarely see me eating a hot dog. However, I love ice cream and all of its variations (shakes, malts, flurries) so I'd probably opt for a Jersey cone!

What was your path from East Grand Rapids to where you are now in life?

I was a "new kid" freshman year of high school and the whole experience was daunting for me: I was starting high school while also entering a new environment. Some things were made abundantly clear to me: East was "the" school, most of its students grew up together, and similarly, very few students were new to the community so late in the game. I wasn't entirely sure what to expect, but I anticipated the adjustment being a challenging one. In many ways, it was. Thankfully, though, I began high school with a pretty clear vision of what I wanted to do and where I wanted to go, so I was able to keep myself relatively grounded while I navigated all the novelty. Fortunately, I was also able to meet a handful of amazing friends while making the most of many incredible opportunities. My academic experiences in East – along with the many lessons I learned outside of the classroom – have definitely helped me adapt to college and life beyond high school. All in all, I'm really grateful to have become a part of such a great community and I know that it has contributed greatly to where I am now and where I will go.

What specific thing did you learn in East that has enabled you to be successful?

I learned (and I'm continuing to learn) that success doesn't always manifest in the ways we expect or want, but that doesn't mean our efforts are worthless. Sometimes I would tirelessly study for a test or edit a paper to "perfection" only to receive a grade I didn't think properly "rewarded" my hard work. This obviously applied to more than academics, but in situations when I didn't get what I bargained for, I found that there are always lessons to be learned. East has taught me the value in looking for those lessons rather than just accepting the disappointments.

What were you like in school?

This definitely depends on who you ask! All throughout high school, and especially in the beginning years, I was on the shy side. I was really focused on doing as well as I could in school. Like most people, though, there was a really goofy and witty side to me that often took a certain person or situation to let out (thanks, Grace Griemsmann!). I would say that I started to open up more junior and senior year and many friendships grew as a result of that.

Did you have a favorite teacher or class?

I had so many incredible teachers and classroom experiences. However, now that I'm in college, I can say that my favorite classes were "We the People" with Mr. Horos (a classic) and AP Literature with Mr. Stable. Anybody could tell you that Mr. Stable's classes were notoriously difficult — and great prep for college — but I have since learned that I really like literature! His gusto and the works we read in the class are to thank for that. As for Weeple, I'm indebted to the program for a few of my closest friendships, for fond memories, and for a wealth of knowledge in political history and philosophy. Unsurprisingly, I'm studying government and classics and I'm considering pursuing both in graduate school. Thanks to Mr. Horos & Mr. Langholz (and to everybody who has and continues to make Weeple what it is).

If you had to choose one moment in one location to serve as the signature moment of your East school experience, what would it be?

It's not one singular moment, but a lot of signature memories took place in the lunchroom. Most of my friends would stick around school during lunch time, so we'd spend that time studying for tests later in the day, playing games of Coup, or wishing for snow days.

What do you know now that you wish you'd known then?

This can be hard to do and I know it sounds cliché, but seizing the moment and living in the present is the way to go! I'll often drive by the high school and get a deep sense of nostalgia for when I would spend the majority of my time there. I enjoyed my time, but I wish I would've paid even more attention to that enjoyment because it all went by so fast (and ended so abruptly). Thanks to the pandemic, I had no idea that my last day of school was my last and that really taught me to make the most of every moment.

Do you stay in touch with many people from East Grand Rapids?

Even after making some incredible friends in college, I'm lucky and proud to say that my closest friendships from high school have continued to deepen. I've met so many amazing people who I know I can rely on for anything!

What advice do you have for young East alums who are just starting out?

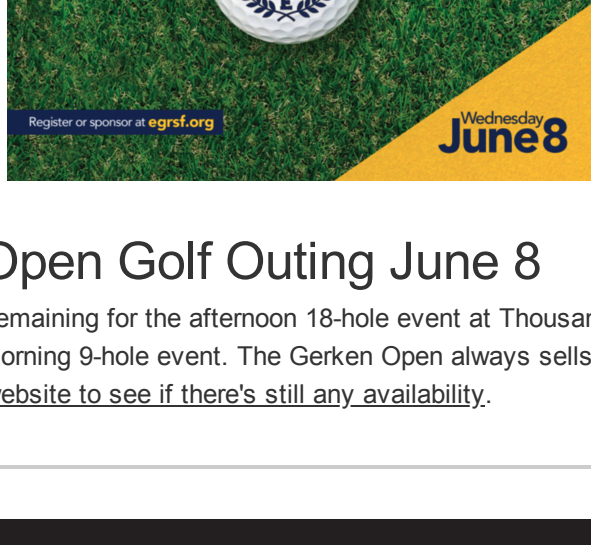
If it seems worthwhile, keep a diary or journal to document all the highs and lows of your experiences. I documented many of my experiences and emotions throughout high school and I continue to do so while in college. I love going back to read what I wrote! The angry moments are funny and the random commentaries on "cool" things happening in my life at the time allow me to reflect on how far I've come and how much (and in some cases, little) I've changed. Beyond photos, I'm glad I have something tangible to refer to whenever I want to reminisce.

Who else would you like us to have a virtual cup of coffee with?

Katie and Ashley McGraw! They were my very first friends in East and made the transition a whole lot easier for me. I love them a ton! We have a lot of inside jokes that we need to collectively revive.

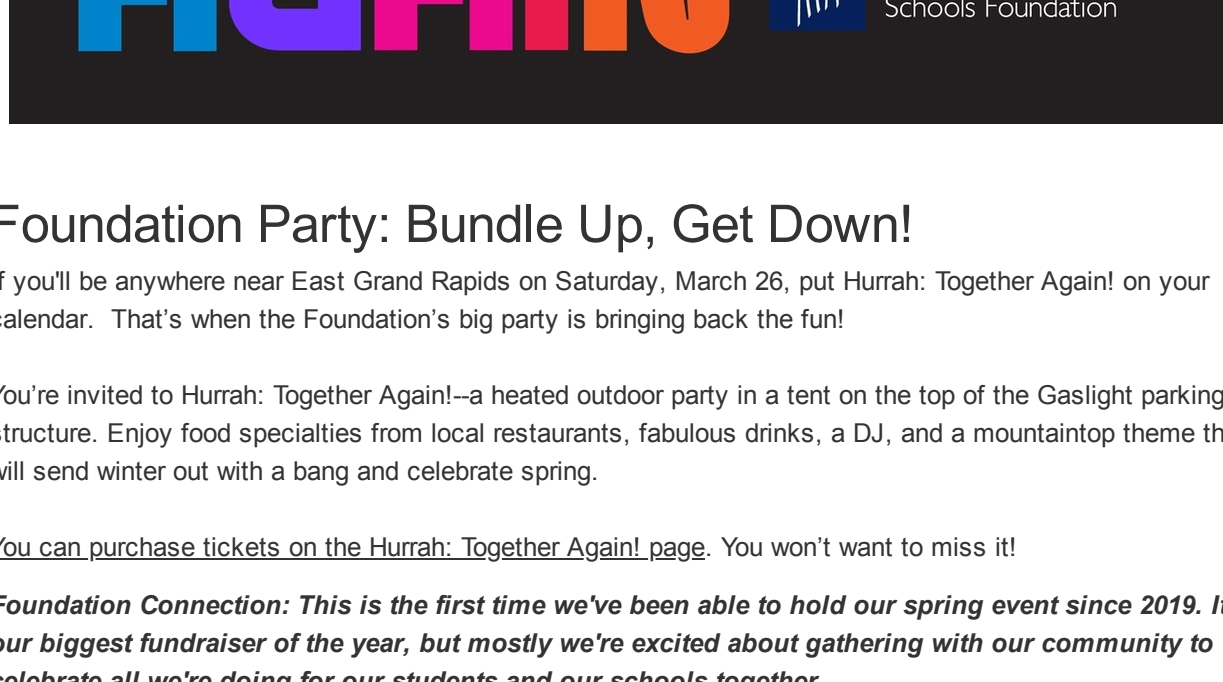
Bonus question: What are you glad we didn't ask you about?

What finding a spot in the senior lot was like (especially during winter).



2022 Gerken Open Golf Outing June 8

There are only a few spots remaining for the afternoon 18-hole event at Thousand Oaks Golf Club, but there are many available for the morning 9-hole event. The Gerken Open always sells out quickly, but you can check on the [Foundation's website](#) to see if there's still any availability.



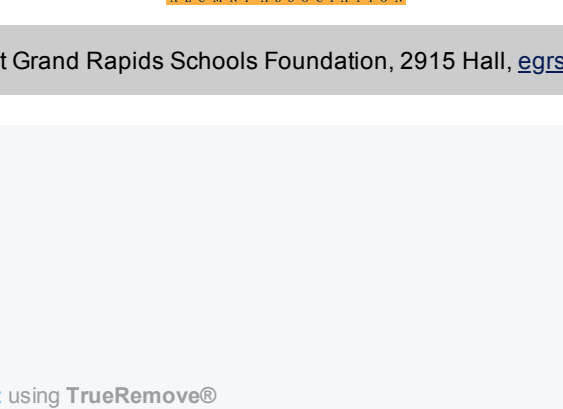
Foundation Party: Bundle Up, Get Down!

If you'll be anywhere near East Grand Rapids on Saturday, March 26, put Hurrah: Together Again! on your calendar. That's when the Foundation's big party is bringing back the fun!

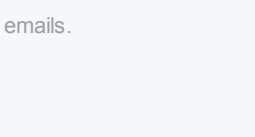
You're invited to Hurrah: Together Again!—a heated outdoor party in a tent on the top of the Gaslight Village parking structure. Enjoy food specialties from local restaurants, fabulous tunes, a DJ, and a mountaintop theme that will send winter out with a bang and celebrate spring.

[You can purchase tickets on the Hurrah: Together Again! page.](#) You won't want to miss it!

Foundation Connection: This is the first time we've been able to hold our spring event since 2019. It's our biggest fundraiser of the year, but mostly we're excited about gathering with our community to celebrate all we're doing for our students and our schools together.

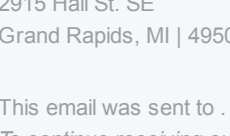


Hurrah: Together Again! will take place in a heated tent on the top deck of the Gaslight Village parking structure. This photo is from our last event there in the spring of 2017.



East Grand Rapids Schools Foundation, 2915 Hall, egrfsf.org

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