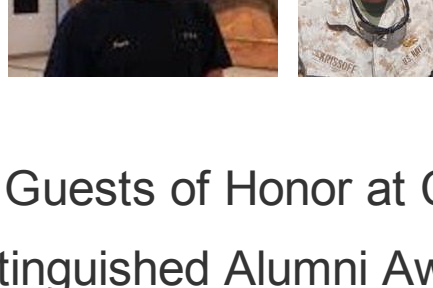


THE PIONEER POST

East Grand Rapids Alumni Newsletter

Summer 2021



Towne, Krissoff Guests of Honor at Community Service and Distinguished Alumni Awards Dinner

This year's Community Service and Distinguished Alumni Awards Dinner features two fascinating honorees with remarkable stories to tell. You won't want to miss it!

On Thursday, September 30, the East Grand Rapids Schools Foundation will honor former EGRPS Custodial Supervisor Bruce Towne and CDR. Bill Krissoff, MD, Medical Corps, United States Navy (Ret.). Towne and Krissoff will be the guests of honor at the Foundation's Community Service and Distinguished Alumni Awards Dinner.

Bruce Towne spent 23 years as an EGRPS custodian, but that doesn't begin to describe the difference he made in our community. Towne's enthusiasm, friendliness, energy, and passion made him among the most well-known and well-loved people in town. When he worked his last day for the schools in 2020, it was a bittersweet occasion that overflowed with gratitude and appreciation. Towne will be honored with the Community Service Award.

Commander Krissoff, who graduated from EGRHS in 1964, is an orthopedic surgeon who honored his fallen Marine son Nate in an extraordinary way. After Nate was killed in action in Iraq, Dr. Krissoff, at age 60, decided to walk away from his thriving medical practice to join the United States Navy Medical Corps. He served in both Iraq and Afghanistan, caring for injured soldiers. Major General Larry Nicholson, who had been Nate's regimental commander in Iraq, served as the top Marine general in southern Afghanistan during Krissoff's time there. "Bill made a difference for good every day," said Nicholson. "There can be no greater act of love by a father for his fallen son than to take his place in the ranks in the midst of war." Commander Krissoff will be presented with the Distinguished Alumni Award.

Tickets to attend the event either in person or virtually are available on the Foundation's website at egrsf.org.

Foundation Connection: Towne and Krissoff were scheduled to be honored at the Awards Dinner in 2020, but it was postponed due to COVID. Please join us in person or online as we gather to recognize these two amazing individuals.



Homecoming Set for October 1

Stop by the Alumni Tent at this year's Homecoming football game Friday, October 1. Connect with a classmate or meet someone new. You can visit the tent anytime before or during the game. There might even be a refreshment or some East alumni swag there for you. You'll never know unless you go!



Football Champions to Be Inducted This Fall

The Grand Rapids Sports Hall of Fame is inducting the East Grand Rapids football teams from 2006-2010 that earned five straight state championships. The teams matched the Michigan High School Athletic Association record for consecutive titles, posting a 67-3 record including 33 consecutive wins.

The Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony is planned for Tuesday, September 28, 2021 at VanAndel Arena. Event and ticket information may be found at the Grand Rapids Sports Hall of Fame website.



Excellence in Teaching Award Winners

This year's elementary and secondary Excellence in Teaching Awards and the James and Georgia Nicholas Endowed Award for a Teacher of Math, Science or Technology were presented at the EGRPS Opening Day ceremony August 17.

The 2021 elementary Excellence in Teaching honoree is Hannah Bailey, who teaches kindergarten at Lakeside. Katie RietKerk, who taught health at the high school and is now a guidance counselor there, was selected to receive the secondary school Excellence in Teaching Award.

This year's recipient of the James and Georgia Nicholas Endowed Award for a Teacher of Math, Science or Technology is Michelle Kirk, who teaches 3rd grade at Lakeside.

It's always difficult to single out teachers from the dozens of outstanding educators who teach in our district. Every year, we're inundated with nominations. Congratulations to these three for being chosen from numerous worthy nominees.

Foundation Connection: Every year, thanks to our donors, the Foundation funds teacher awards, professional development for our teachers, and student scholarships, in addition to vital school programs and classroom enhancements.

Retirees Served Our Students for Decades

At the end of the 2020-2021 school year, several notable teachers and administrators retired from our schools. The list includes:

- High School Vocal Music Teacher Dr. James Borst
- High School English Teacher Jane Hazle
- Director of Technology and Assessment Doug Jenkins
- High School Guidance Counselor Lori Johnston
- Athletic Director Tim Johnston
- High School Special Education Teacher Lisa Menichino
- Middle School Math Teacher Dale Streeter
- High School Science Teacher Bill Trapp



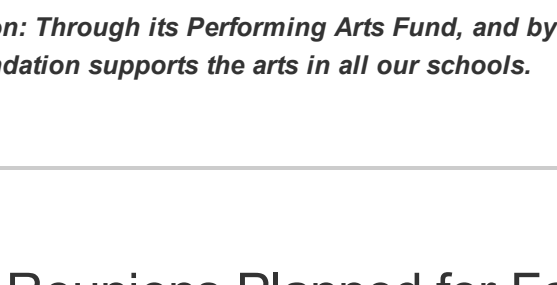
Fall Athletes Hope for Fans to Pack the Stands

Fall Friday nights are one of the things that make East Grand Rapids such a great place to live. Tailgate parties, the band, getting an olive burger or a brat from the sausage guy, and sitting up in the stands, looking out over the field at the twilight-tinged Reeds Lake. It's a special setting.

This year will be even more special, as fans return in force, and it's not just for football. The fall sports season is already well underway, with tennis matches at the Canepa Tennis Center, volleyball in Reed Waterman gymnasium, field hockey and soccer on Mehney Field, swimming in the Butch Briggs Natatorium, golf at Kent Country Club, crew on Reeds Lake, and cross country in Manhattan Park.

For a full schedule of all athletic competitions this fall, visit egrathletics.org.

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.



Miss Scarlett with the Candlestick in the PAC

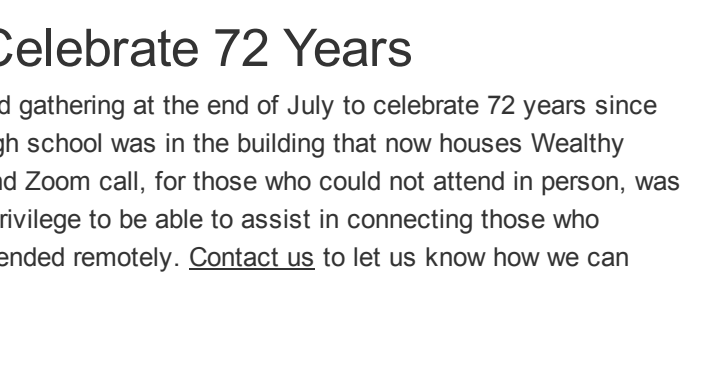
This year's fall play will be "Clue." Performances are scheduled for November 11-13 in the Performing Arts Center. To purchase tickets, and to see the full lineup of shows planned for this school year, visit egrsdrama.org.

Foundation Connection: Through its Performing Arts Fund, and by sponsoring productions, the Foundation supports the arts in all our schools.



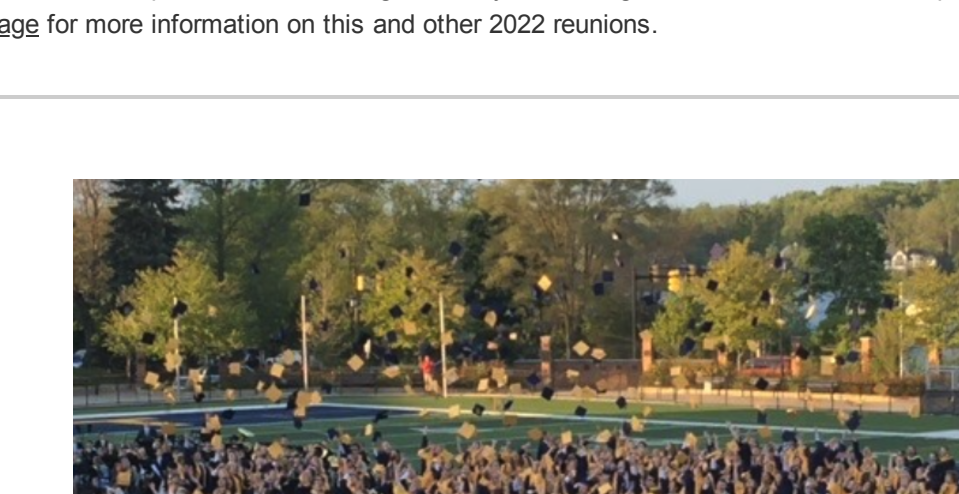
Class Reunions Planned for Fall

For the list of class reunions and updated reunion information please go to our [Upcoming Alumni Events page](#). You can also contact [Alumni Relations Coordinator, Maria Allen](#) to request or share reunion information.



Together Again to Celebrate 72 Years

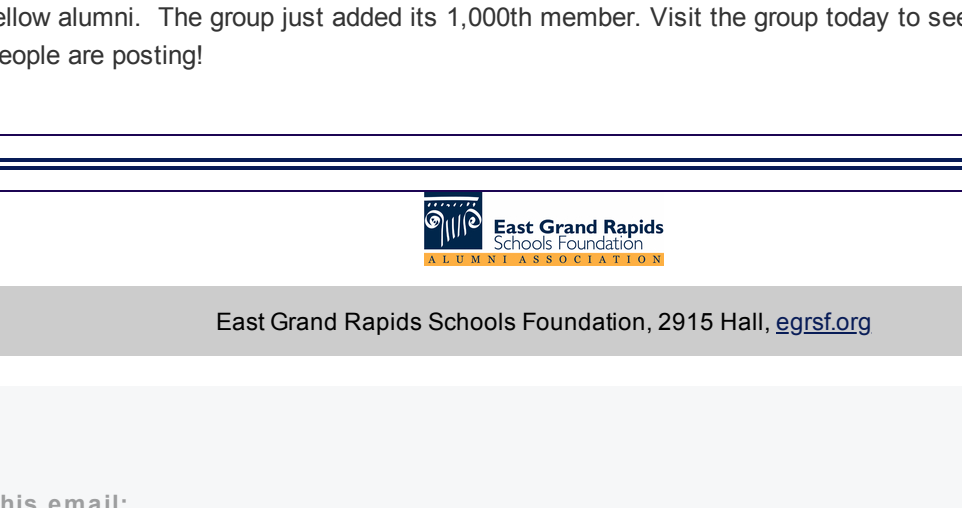
Members of the Class of 1949 enjoyed gathering at the end of July to celebrate 72 years since graduating from EGRHS (when the high school was in the building that now houses Wealthy Elementary). The reunion luncheon and Zoom call, for those who could not attend in person, was held at the University Club. It was a privilege to be able to assist in connecting those who attended in person with those who attended remotely. [Contact us](#) to let us know how we can support your reunion planning.



A Golden Reunion for '71

The weather was perfect for the morning gathering on Gerken Plaza and walk around Reeds Lake on August 14. In addition, members of the class enjoyed a

reunion dinner to commemorate 50 years since they graduated from East. Don't worry if you missed it—the Class of 1971 plans to celebrate again next year on August 13, 2022. Check our [Upcoming Alumni Events page](#) for more information on this and other 2022 reunions.



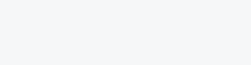
Group by East Grand Rapids Schools Foundation and Alumni Association

East Grand Rapids Alumni Group

Private group · 1.0K members

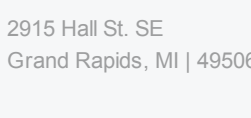
Connect with Other Pioneers on Facebook

The [East Grand Rapids Alumni Group](#) on Facebook is a great place to stay in touch with your fellow alumni. The group just added its 1,000th member. Visit the group today to see what people are posting!



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

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