

ALL STAR GRADUATES—NEW BUFFALO HIGH SCHOOL

Charles (Ace) Barlow (Class of 1939)

Charles is a retired President of McDonnell Douglas Health Systems Company (sometimes known as McAuto) a computer service organization that automated hospital records and developed medical billing systems.

Richard Slater (Class of 1939)

Dick Slater was a student as well as a teacher for New Buffalo High School. While in high school, he participated in basketball, baseball, and student government. After completing his education at Western Michigan University, Dick served in the U.S. Marine Corps, and earned his Master's Degree from University of Michigan. Then he returned to New Buffalo serving as teacher, coach, and administrator during his 36 ½ year employment for New Buffalo Schools. He married fellow teacher, Marjorie Klinker who still resides in New Buffalo. Dick was a devoted fan of Bison athletics, rarely missing a game even after his retirement. Dick died in 2000.

Sharon Sandera (Class of 1958)

Sharon was a very talented Bison athlete for New Buffalo. She played on the interscholastic girls basketball team, and in one game alone scored 51 points. Unfortunately, during her senior year, it was decided there would be no girls team, because according to her coach Betty Turner, "the new principal decided we would not have a team...because girls do not do interscholastic athletics." Sharon has since served 42 years of government service beginning as a classified security custodian, serving as a volunteer interacting with loved ones of missing in action serviceman during the Vietnam War, and since working in the Department of Commerce, National Bureau of Standards in Boulder, Colorado. In 1996, Sharon received an EEO Diversity Award for "her outstanding promotion of diversity through her interactions with developmentally challenged persons." She plans to retire in 2001, and be involved in volunteer work.

Ronald Ferguson (Class of 1962)

While a student at NBHS, Ron excelled in many areas of the arts – band, drama, and art itself. After receiving his teaching degree, Ron returned to teach at New Buffalo. For almost 30 years, Ron encouraged students to do their best and helped many win area awards and recognition. He helped with school plays, Prom, and the Yearbook. Ron has also been active with the Miss New Buffalo committee, "March for Jesus", and he is currently serving on the Fine Arts Council and helping organize "The Last Dance" as a farewell to the old high school. The pictures of N.B.H.S. being sold are prints of an original watercolor Ron painted, a gift to the high school from the Class of 1999.

Jim Svejda (Class of 1964)

Jim has gone on to pursue a career with classical music. According to the Los Angeles Times Magazine, he is "the High Priest of Classical Music." Jim is a D.J. for KUSC-FM and has his own nationally syndicated Sunday program. He dispenses his broad knowledge of music as well a great sense of humor. All may not agree with his opinions, but most respect his classical know-how. Jim has degrees from both University of Michigan and Syracuse University.

Donna O'Donnahue Wilkinson (Class of 1967)

Donna, widow of Coach Bud Wilkinson, lives in St. Louis and is a philanthropist and well-known organizer of charity fundraisers, who has raised millions of dollars for benevolent and artistic organizations. She was profiled in *St. Louis Magazine* as "Queen of the Charity Ball" and now works semi-professionally as an events organizer.

Keith Killingbeck (Class of 1968)

Keith is currently a Professor in the Department of Biological Sciences at the University of Rhode Island. He received degrees from Purdue University and the University of North Dakota, and continued his postdoctoral studies at Kansas State University. Keith has been a member of the graduate research committees of 62 students and the major advisor for nine of these. He has also written many papers and published technical reports. Keith belongs to many academic committees and also many boards. He is a 1999-2000 Honorary Member of the Golden Key National Honor Society.

Karin (Sandstrom) Falkenstein (Class of 1968)

Karin is currently principal at Ottawa Elementary School in Buchanan, Michigan. She is a member of the Michigan Elementary and Middle School Principals Association and was a founding member of the Tri-County Council of Women in Educational Administration. Karin has received the Michigan State Alumni Service Award and also the National Distinguished Principals Award. She has served on the Miss Buchanan committee, is part of the Big Brothers/Big Sisters program, and is active in church activities. While at N.B.H.S., Karin was editor of the yearbook, President of the National Honor Society, Homecoming Queen, class officer, and student council representative. Karin received her Bachelor's and Master's Degrees from Michigan State and is currently working to complete her Ph.D. degree.

James Von Ehr (Class of 1968)

Jim was a National Merit Scholarship finalist and was involved in many clubs and band activities while at New Buffalo High School. He earned a Bachelor's degree in computer science from Michigan State and a Master's in mathematical sciences from University of Texas. Jim is the founder, President and CEO of Zyvex LLC, the first nanotechnology development company. Jim has shared his monetary success with New Buffalo Schools, and according to his nominator for this award, "he makes it very clear to all he meets and does business with that he graduated from New Buffalo and he is proud of it."

Jim Smitchger (Class of 1969)

Upon graduation, Jim was drafted and served in the Vietnam War, receiving two Army Commendation Medals and the Bronze Star. In 1971, he returned to Lake Michigan College and was active in athletics and student community service. He returned to military duty in 1975, continuing his education wherever the opportunities were available and finally receiving his Bachelor's Degree from University of New York. Jim rose to the rank of Master Chief Petty Officer and has served all over the world. He retired from the Navy in 1997 and has recently placed a website online (www.classof.newbuffalo.com) to encourage interaction among N.B.H.S. alumni.

Linda (Cook) Castle (Class of 1970)

Linda's entire career and community service activities have focused on promoting education, life-long learning, and diversity. She is currently living in Colorado and is an Exhibit consultant with Laarhoven Design in Denver. She received her Bachelor of Science Degree from Purdue University and her MBA

from Western Michigan University. She served Lake Michigan College in many capacities—Director of Admissions, Director of Enrollment, and Director of Continuing Education. She was an Adjunct Faculty Member at Lake Michigan College and Purdue University, and taught college classes at Westville Correctional Center. She has planned church, community and PTO workshops on a variety of topics—cultural diversity, sex and violence on TV, casino gambling. While at New Buffalo High School, she was active in band, cheerleading, and was “Miss New Buffalo” in 1970.

Roseann (Krycka) Dudiak (Class of 1972)

A life-long resident of New Buffalo, Rose has been involved in many community activities. She served four years on the Board of Education, became an EMT (Emergency Medical Technician) with the Township/City Ambulance Service, and is in her eighth year on the City Council, having served for one year as mayor. When asked why she was interested in local politics, Rose said, “The council needs members who have a vested interest in attaining long term goals, members who care about the city their children are raised in.” Rose and her husband, Cliff, have a son and a daughter who have graduated from New Buffalo High School.

Marla (Kelsey) LaRue (Class of 1972)

Marla was recently hired as Associate Dean at the University of Phoenix, Phoenix, Arizona. She received her Bachelor’s Degree from Western Michigan University, her Master’s Degree in Education from the University of Michigan, her Doctoral Degree from Nova Southeastern University, Ft. Lauderdale, Fl, and her Master’s Degree in Business Administration from the University of Phoenix. She was Valedictorian of her class at New Buffalo High School.

Gary Ramberg (Class of 1973)

Gary has exhibited a true commitment to the community of New Buffalo from a very young age. He worked in his family’s bakery as a youth and adult, and went on to insurance, banking, real estate, and restaurateur. He is a Past President of the Harbor Country Chamber of Commerce and has served on the New Buffalo Planning Commission. Gary worked tirelessly and was very instrumental in the passing of the bond issue to build a new middle school/high school in New Buffalo. Gary now owns and operates, with his wife, Lisa, New Buffalo All-Suites Inn and Mrs. Whittaker’s Ice Cream and Coffee Shop in this place he is proud to call home. Their two children attend New Buffalo Elementary School

Dwayne M. Hogan (Class of 1975)

Dwayne completed his degree from Kentucky Western University and was appointed by Governor Bayh as an administrative law judge to hear all disputed OSHA cases for the state of Indiana. He went on to Washington D.C. to represent Indiana with testimony on the OSHA reform bill. He is now the lead judge for the state of Indiana. He belongs to the American Bar Association, is a Registered Environmental Manager, and a Certified Environmental Inspector. He serves the community as a volunteer fireman and volunteers for Parish Festival activities. While at New Buffalo, he played football, basketball, and baseball.

Ed Lijewski Jr. (Class of 1975)

Ed is the technology coordinator for the New Buffalo Area Schools, and in this capacity has started student technology teams that keep networks running, install new hardware, load software, and do general troubleshooting. He is also the Director of the CISCO Networking Academy at New Buffalo High School, the first academy in Michigan and the only Regional Academy in the state located in a high school. The

“CISCO Kids” he instructs have been involved from start to finish in designing an entire school network for the new middle school/high school, and, through Ed’s and his students’ efforts, have saved the New Buffalo Area Schools over \$100,000. Ed is a Past President of the New Buffalo Board of Education, a volunteer fire fighter, reserve police officer, and basketball official.

Chuck Heit (Class of 1987)

Chuck, currently the Chief of Police in New Buffalo, began his career in law enforcement by working for several different departments after attending college. While working for the Berrien County Sheriff’s Department, he was awarded the Marx Lifesaving Award. He is also the current President of the New Buffalo Board of Education, is active in Lion’s club (Past President), and active in his church. He has been involved in countless projects, and is very giving of his time for anything to help people, schools, church, or his community. While at New Buffalo High School, he played football, basketball, and baseball, was active in Student Senate, school plays, and was co-President of his Senior Class.

Al and Nadra Kissman Family
Nadra Kissman (Class of 1953)
Al Kissman (Class of 1954)

Together, Al and Nadra Kissman have been involved in many aspects of New Buffalo life. Their initial development of Orchard Acres, a subdivision in New Buffalo Township, helped spark the area as both a quality first-home community as well as a desired second-home destination. Together, they own Nadra K Real Estate, a very successful business in the area. They have been involved in Miss New Buffalo, Lion's Club, Service League, Chamber of Commerce, New Buffalo Railroad Museum, the Board of Education, and more. Both Nadra and Al have received Million Dollar Club recognitions by the Southwestern Michigan Board of Realtors. While students at New Buffalo High School, Nadra was Valedictorian of her graduating class and wrote the New Buffalo School fight song, and both were athletes for New Buffalo High School. Al and Nadra have graduated four children from the New Buffalo Area Schools that have gone on to serve their communities in addition to New Buffalo.

Katha (Kissman) Farsoun (1973): Katha is the co-founder of the New Buffalo Railroad Museum and the Wilkinson Museum in Lakeside. She has served as vice-president of the Harbor Country Chamber of Commerce and the Berrien County Economic Corporation. Katha is President/CEO of Leadership America, has written a book, Through My Eyes, about her time as an American working woman in a Muslim culture. She lives with her husband, Dr. Samih Farsoun in Washington, D.C.

Brian Kissman (1975): Brian is currently the Director of Curriculum and School Development in Chelsea, Michigan. He has taught in New Buffalo (St. Mary's), Liberia, West Africa, Tokyo, Paris, Geneva and the Canary Islands. Brian's other activities include professional theatre work, heading the New Buffalo Community Student Work Program (1982), volunteer coach, drama instructor and mentoring students. Brian and his wife, Simendea, live in Manchester, Michigan with daughters, Ashley and Amanda.

David Kissman (1977): In 1999, David was nominated by employees and received Southwest Airlines' President Award, given to only 15 employees each year from a workforce of 30,000. David is currently the Regional Director of Ground Operations for Arizona and Southern California for Southwest. He previously served in the capacity of Ground Manager in Chicago, Columbus, OH and Baltimore, MD. David has volunteered with youth groups in Arizona and Ohio. He lives with his wife, Tammie, in Phoenix with sons, Andy and Aaron.

Karla (Kissman) Madison (1982): Karla has been very involved with the development of the New Buffalo Railroad Museum and serves as treasurer and member of the Board of Directors. Karla and her husband, Dr. Paul Madison, own Gold's Gym and she is also co-owner of Salon 530 at Gold's Gym. She is active in community affairs, serving as a volunteer at St. Mary of the Lake and for Lake Michigan College's annual auction event. Karla and Paul live in Long Beach, IN with daughters, Lena and Jade. Karla and Paul are very generous with donations for several NBHS activities.

The Al and Nadra Kissman family are certainly All Star Graduates as well as being outstanding ambassadors for the New Buffalo community.

Paul & Elsie Oselka Family
Paul F. Oselka (Class of 1935)
Elsie (Herrbach) Oselka (Class of 1935)

After graduation Paul bought a pick-up truck, and began his own business, Oselka Construction, which exists to this day. Using the equipment of Oselka Construction, he founded and developed Oselka Marina. The marina brought in many boaters and tourists and was a catalyst in drawing attention to New Buffalo as a desirable resort destination. Paul graciously gave of his resources to many local people and businesses, as well as the school, donating time and equipment for snow removal during many emergency situations. In 1968, Paul and Oselka Construction, with financial support from Robert Thorn, built Slater Gym at no cost to New Buffalo Area Schools. Paul died in 1997.

Elsie worked with Paul in several of the family businesses, was an active life-long member of St. John United Church of Christ and a member of the Women's Club in New Buffalo. Elsie was Vice-President of the Class of 1935 and sang in the School Operetta. She died in 1998.

Four of Elsie and Paul's five children graduated from New Buffalo High School—Ronald, Rolland, Nancy (Oselka) Idkowiak, and Paul David. They all graduated from college, with Ron going on to earn his Law Degree from University of Michigan and Rol earning his MBA from Michigan State University. All four, with their families, have continued the community involvement and generosity that their father and mother began. Ron, Rol, and Paul have volunteered their time coaching, Ron served on the New Buffalo Board of Education, and Rol on the New Buffalo City Council, including a term as mayor and 13 years on the Berrien County Board of Commissioners. Nancy is a long-time member of New Buffalo Service League. Sue (Oselka) Keller received most of her education at New Buffalo Schools, but finished her schooling elsewhere.

Nine of the fifteen grandchildren have graduated from New Buffalo High School, and all have received college degrees -- Paul Keller, Beth (Keller) Stroup, Jim Oselka, Mark Oselka, Matthew Oselka, Jean (Oselka) Haskins, Kathie (Oselka) Butler, Karla Oselka, and Keri (Oselka) Haskins. Among the nine there are gold tassel honor roll graduates, thespians, class officers, athletes, musicians, a valedictorian, a salutatorian, a Miss New Buffalo, all students who were very involved in school activities while at New Buffalo High. The remaining six are still students. Adam Idkowiak is a sophomore at Western Michigan University, Bridget Idkowiak is in the eighth grade at New Buffalo Middle School, and Kelly Oselka is a junior at New Buffalo High School. Kayla and Paulie Oselka attend St. Mary of the Lake School, and Paige is 3 years old.

There are five great-grandchildren of Paul and Elsie—Jonathan (in kindergarten at New Buffalo Elementary School), Andrew, and Emily Keller, and Hailey and Ryan Butler. As the family legacy continues, the fourth generation begins in the New Buffalo Area Schools.

Fifteen members of this family have graduated from New Buffalo High. The Oselka family was nominated by a graduate of the Class of 1944 as "a family I believe has devoted itself to the New Buffalo school and community."