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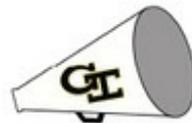
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# Rise Grand Island!



an **Alumni** e-publication of the GIPS**FOUNDATION**

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**Pure Gold**

## Welcome to Rise

Welcome to "Rise Grand Island," the alumni newsletter for Grand Island Senior High published every other month by the Grand Island Public Schools Foundation. We are excited to be connecting with thousands of Islanders across the globe, keeping you up to date on what's happening in Purple and Gold land, and reminiscing a little bit as well.

Joining me as a special correspondent is Mike Monk, Class of 1967. You can find a couple of pieces by Mike in his "Distant Mirror" section of "Rise." Mike and I have been friends for nearly 60 years, growing up together in a "Wonder Years" neighborhood where baseball was played in the street, you obeyed your friends' mothers as you did your own (or else) and life was lived face-to-face and, weather permitting, outdoors.



**George Ayoub**  
Class of 1968  
Alumni Liaison

Foundation Executive Director Traci Skalberg will update you each issue on the Foundation's work, and senior Emily Harders, the student representative from GISH on the Grand Island Public Schools Board of Education will give you a student's perspective from the halls of our alma mater.

You can reach us at [alumni@gips.org](mailto:alumni@gips.org). Enjoy this inaugural issue of "Rise" and keep pushing on.

George Ayoub, Class of 1968



**William W. Marshall III**

Class of 1962

[Biography](#)



**John Fickes**

Class of 1963

[Biography](#)



**Doug Frey**

Class of 1973

[Biography](#)

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## At the Top

### Marshall, Fickes, Frey Honored

The Grand Island Senior High Hall of Honor welcomed new members William Marshall III, John Fickes and Doug Frey during two days of ceremonies last fall. Full bios of Marshall (Class of 1962), Fickes (1963) and Frey (1973) are under their photos.

More than 300 family and friends gathered on October 8 at Riverside Golf Club to honor Marshall, Fickes and Frey at a formal dinner banquet. Each of them gave an acceptance speech before which his accomplishments were detailed and a video of his life ran on screens in the banquet hall. Among those in attendance were former Hall of Honor inductees Mike Monk (1967) and C. Dean McGrath (1971).

In addition to recognizing the Hall of Honor trio, the banquet honored two former Senior High staff members. Math teacher Dr. Stanley Urwiller and English teacher/counselor Rod Shada were given the distinguished Legendary Educator award.

The next day the trio was formally inducted at Senior High where they also had a chance to meet with current GISH students. They were recognized at halftime of the Islander football game at Memorial Stadium that evening. Their portraits will hang in the foyer in the 400 wing near the entrance of the newly remodeled Senior High Auditorium. (Click the photo in the text for a video of their day at Senior High.)



The Grand Island Public Schools Foundation conducts the Hall of Honor ceremonies and oversees the selection of new inductees every two years. A separate committee of alumni and community makes recommendations. Final selection is by a vote of Grand Island Public Schools Foundation Board of Directors. The primary criterion for selection into the Hall of Honor is a Senior High graduate who has made a significant contribution to the betterment of mankind.

The Foundation also conducts the selection of the Legendary Educator awards. Letters of nomination for both the Hall of Honor and Legendary Educator should be sent to the Grand Island Public Schools Foundation at [tskalberg@gips.org](mailto:tskalberg@gips.org).

[Hall of Honor Nomination Form](#)

[Legendary Educator Nomination Form](#)

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## Pushing On

Know an Islander who's reached a significant milestone? Email us at [alumni@gips.org](mailto:alumni@gips.org)

**STEPHANIE (LEIBERT) HANSEN**, Class of 1992, was appointed Douglas County District Judge on November 5, 2015 by Nebraska Governor Pete Ricketts. Prior to taking the bench, she was a deputy county attorney in Sarpy County for 15 years. Hansen graduated from Hastings College 1996 and the University of Nebraska Law School 2000.



### **THE REVEREND VERNL E. MATTSON,**

Class of 1968, has retired as Associate Regional Pastor from the American Baptist Churches of New Jersey where he had served since 2004. Rev. Mattson was part of the core staff that work with the 280 churches within New Jersey. Rev. Mattson served four associations with over 90 congregations across the state. He assisted pastors and search and call committees in finding a call to a church. In this work, he provided counsel, church administration, technology assistance, and preached each Sunday in one or more of these churches. In his retirement he will continue serving as a consultant for the technology and databases used by the denomination. He concludes over 45 years of pastoral and regional ministry.





# A Couple of Guys from the Neighborhood

## I've Been Thinking

### Behind Every Successful Student ...

The list to end that sentence can be long. Somewhere near the top, however, is a posse of gifted teachers, professional educators who have changed a life and in turn changed the world.

Go ahead, do your own research, but I can save you some time. Check out the studies here <http://is.gd/8JF91O> and here <http://is.gd/zJA3fQ>.

If you like a good story, however, I have some anecdotal evidence from last October's Senior Hall of Honor Induction Banquet. Each of the three honorees – Bill Marshall, John Fickes and Doug Frey – underscored the power of a teacher in the life of a student ... not just in high school but years after that.



**George Ayoub**  
Class of 1968  
Alumni Liaison

That evening we also feted two “Legendary Educators” from Senior High: Math teacher Dr. Stanley Urwiller and teacher/counselor/coach Mr. Rod Shada. Those who had nominated this impressive pair recalled plenty of their own life-changing evidence to support the selection of Urwiller and Shada as truly “legendary.”

We all probably had some high school teachers who fired our imaginations, broadened our perspectives or actually touched our hearts and minds.

I don't know about you, but I also had a few who surely dropped to their knees and thanked the Almighty above when I graduated in 1968. Sound familiar? Hey, you can't win them all.



[Go to full article](#)



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## A Distant Mirror

Memorial Day - May 1961

Introduction: In the late 1950's and early 1960's, Memorial Day was a major event in Grand Island. Many families would visit the local cemeteries, in my case three generations at once, spending time at the graves of family members, and awaiting the formal ceremonies, which always ended with rifle salutes. In our family the excitement for the children was to get one of the shell casings that fell to the ground after the rifle salute. Memorial Day was also honored with festivities and speeches at Howard Elementary School. In 1961, Howard School was a relatively new, simply beautiful school, with a wonderful layout and gorgeous amenities. It seemed normal to those of us who attended. What follows is my recollection of the 1961 Memorial Day convocation.



**Michael Monk**  
Class of 1967  
Rise Contributor

## Chapter 1

While the rest of the students at Howard Elementary School proceeded at their usual pace — some rooms buzzing with activity and some quiet with concentration — Sixth graders Julia Dunham, Peggy Burger, and I walked quietly down the halls together at the Howard Elementary School. The giggling, pinching and teasing normally observed among grammar school children, or as they were called in Nebraska, “grade school” children, were noticeably absent. There were several reasons for the reserved demeanor. First the three of us were sixth graders, the oldest class at Howard, composed mostly of eleven and twelve year olds. In addition, we were definitely on the more studious and “goody-goody” end of the sixth grade spectrum. But our serious and even nervous manner was primarily due to the gravity of our mission. We three sixth graders were the finalists among all sixth graders for the honor of delivering the “I am an American” speech, traditionally part of the school’s Memorial Day convocation, in front of the entire school, parents, military representatives, and other guests. This day we were each to audition by reading the speech to the three sixth grade teachers, Mrs. Severson, Mrs. Weidner, and Mrs. Walker, who would then select the winner.

Despite the nervous tension, we each could not resist looking into the other classrooms as they passed. Inside the strange classrooms we saw different teachers, students, wall decorations, and ultimately the different realities of each classroom’s little world.

As we approached the foyer of the school, where the school gathered for Christmas caroling and other major events, we saw two other sixth graders, Steve Schroeder and Mike Parmley, who were similarly liberated from the classroom, and apparently enjoying it much more. As



the two boys passed the door of the last classroom before the foyer, they walked properly and noiselessly. Once past the door, they began laughing and throwing at each other bits of rubber torn off from a rubber eraser. The two boys were dressed in blue jeans, "Schro" with a plain white t-shirt, and "Parm" with a blue cotton short-sleeve shirt. Parm and Schro both carried cases containing their coronets, which they had begun playing almost two years previously, at the start of Fifth grade.

At the sight of my two friends, I carefully whispered, "Schro, Parm what are you doing out of class?"

"We're playing "Taps" for the Memorial Day deal," said Parm. Julia and Peggy both said nothing, but looked reproachfully at the two boys.

Just then a group of teachers approached the group, and we three auditioning students quickly proceeded to the front of the foyer, while the two boys with their horns went outside with the band teacher. Parm and Schro were selected to play "Taps" during the final climactic portion of the oration, to provide the solemn and poignant background appropriate for the speech on patriotism and devotion to country. In fact, as the three potential orators were set to begin their auditions the sound of "Taps" could be faintly heard outside. The teachers remarked on the nice effect of playing the horns out of sight, so the audience hearing them would be both surprised by the horns, and moved by the faint sounds seemingly coming from nowhere.

[Go to full article](#)



## Age 66 – A Sonnet

As youth and thoughts invincible do wane  
And lifelong friends begin to suffer ills,  
I wonder will my own health still remain?  
Or am I tilting at age old windmills?  
I now am blessed and surfeited with joys  
That many close companions ne'er will see.  
My grandchildren provide such rapturous noise

With travel and a comfort palpable  
My bride and I do share a life as  
Resources now are mine to use  
For this I often thank the stars  
And while this bliss could last for  
In time the reaper knocks on every door.



**New & Newsy**

By Michael W. Monk

# Shaking the World

**Your Legacy. Their Opportunity.**

At the Grand Island Public Schools Foundation we use the tagline “Your Legacy. Their Opportunity.” This is an intentional description of what we do and who we are.

Humankind has pondered legacy for centuries. We know that the Greek Statesman Pericles was interested in legacy, “What you leave behind is not what is engraved in stone monuments, but what is woven into the lives of others.” – Pericles

So what is legacy? What do you leave behind? We at the Grand Island Public Schools Foundation contend that legacy is not created by money alone, legacy is a value system. Sure you can leave money behind (you can’t take it with you!) ... but a legacy is built by the intentional investment of that money and the value system (fund guideline) that directs it. This is one reason why our work at the Grand Island Public Schools Foundation is so gratifying. We help people define their legacies by investing in today’s students and future generations of students. Students, of course, are the opportunity part of the equation.

Legacy funds can be endowed as well ... which means that they are invested in a manner that will offer grants or scholarships designed around the donor’s value system, every year, FOREVER. Now that is impact! Just think of the thousands of students who will benefit from just one endowed legacy fund. At the Grand Island Public Schools Foundation we are committed to the legacies created by our donors. Every fund has a story and a value system. It is our intention to highlight at least one of these stories in each publication of this Rise newsletter. We hope that you will enjoy reading about alumni, parents, educators and friends who have shared their legacies with our students.

“It’s about the journey, mine and yours, and the lives we can touch, the legacy we can leave, and the world we can change for the better.” – Tony Dungy



**Traci Skalberg**  
Executive Director  
GIPSFOUNDATION



The **GIPS Foundation** is a participating charity in Grand Island's annual day of giving, **Go Big Give**, May 3, 2016

## Your Legacy. Their Opportunity.

**Art and Education, Sculpting Dreams**



Photo courtesy of the Grand Island Independent, photographer Jeff Bokermann.

The Spring of 2016 will mark the first award of the David and Helen Young Scholarship. David Young is an Art Teacher and a sculptor. Before retiring in 1991, Mr. Young taught Art for 33 years at Grand Island Senior High. His wife Helen, is a 1948 graduate of Grand Island Senior High. The connection to the purple and gold and all things Grand Island is strong for the Youngs. This connection is also tangible. David's public art sculptures include bronzes of Grace and Edith Abbott at the Grand Island Public Library, the sculpture of a cougar at Knickrehm Elementary, and a bust of Bud Wolbach at the Stuhr Museum. While David Young has left more behind than some through his art, he considers his greatest contribution to be his investment in young people and their goals and dreams throughout his teaching career. It is in this spirit that the couple created this legacy scholarship fund. The annual scholarship will be awarded to a Grand Island Senior High Student who is pursuing a degree in Education with preference to a student who wants to become an art teacher.

David and Helen Young, your legacy IS their opportunity.

For more information about how to set up a legacy fund, call or e-mail Traci Skalberg, 308-385-5900 ext. 1170; [tskalberg@gips.org](mailto:tskalberg@gips.org)

For the **second year in a row**, the Grand Island Public Schools Foundation has earned the 4-star rating from America's largest national independent charity evaluator, Charity Navigator. The **four-star rating is the highest award** for sound fiscal management practices and commitment to accountability and transparency.

A group of diverse children and adults are smiling and holding up white signs with yellow stars. Some signs also feature the GIPS Foundation logo. The children are of various ethnicities and ages, ranging from young children to teenagers.

**GIPS FOUNDATION**  
Your legacy. Their opportunity.

**Call today to Invest in Students!**

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## On the Island

## Senior High Current Events



**GIPS facebook album**

[The Little Mermaid - 1](#)

[The Little Mermaid - 2](#)



**GIPS facebook album**

[GISH Football - 1](#)

[GISH Football - 2](#)



**GIPS facebook album**

[GISH Softball](#)

- **SENIOR HIGH** is always innovating to keep us at the cutting edge of technology. With 12 brand new flat screen televisions installed throughout the hallways, students have information on how to get involved at a glance.



**Emily Harders**  
Student Representative  
to Board of Education

- The fall season was filled with the **PERFORMING ARTS** production of "The Little Mermaid," fall sports such as girls golf, boys tennis, softball, volleyball, cross country and football. As usual, the Islanders put their best foot, club or racket forward as they competed around the state in athletic competitions.
- The **FOOTBALL TEAM** compiled an 8-2 record, losing to eventual state semi-finalist Omaha North in the first round of the playoffs.
- The Islander **SOFTBALL TEAM** went 25-16, losing in the district championship game to Lincoln Southwest.
- In **CROSS COUNTRY**, junior Longis Kouri placed fourth in districts for the Islander boys. He then was 32nd out of 97 runners at the State Meet.
- The **VOLLEYBALL TEAM** went 14-18, in **TENNIS** #1 singles player Brennen Root made it into the second round at State, and sophomore golfer Faith Harris tied for third at State out of 69 competitors.
- Finally, GISH welcomed **HALL OF HONOR** inductees William W. Marshall III, John Fickes, and Doug Frey and congratulates them for making a positive difference in the community, as well as proving what an Islander can do.

## In Memoriam

**JERRY ARENT**, Class of 1963, died November 1, 2015 in Kearney. He was 70.

**LENORA (NIETFELD) CORNELIUS**, Class of 1940, died November 7, 2015 in Grand Island. She was 93.

**JACQUE EVANS** died November 15, 2015, in Atkinson. He was 92. Evans was a long time teacher and coach at Senior High.

**BILL FARRER**, Class of 1960, died December 28, 2014 in Lincoln. He

was 72.

**STAN FARRER**, Class of 1962, died April 10, 2015, in Omaha. He was 70.

**FLORENCE (CAMBELL) HARVEY**, Class of 1946, died December 9, 2015 in Grand Island. She was 87.

**JANE (BOST) HORNING**, Class of 1957, died November 22, 2015, in St. Louis, Mo. She was 76.

**BOB JOHNSEN**, Class of 1967, died August 7, 2015, in Fallbrook, Calif. He was 66.

**LEWIS KENT**, Class of 1951, died November 8, 2015 in Grand Island. He was 84.

**DALE KOKES**, Class of 1978, dies December 23, 2015 in Grand Island. He was 58.

**ALBERTA (ELSTERMEIER) LARKOWSKI**, Class of 1956, died December 25, 2015, in Central City. She was 77.

**BOB LESSIG**, Class of 1945, died November 23, 2015 in Grand Island. He was 87.

**TIMOTHY "TIM" LOCKHART**, Class of 1974, died November 2, 2015 in Elmwood. He was 60.

**GALE METTENBRINK**, Class of 1966, died December 17, 2015 in Chandler, Ariz. He was 67.

**EDITH (NOFFKE) MOORE**, Class of 1942, died November 30, 2015, in McAllen, Texas. She was 91.

**GINGER (TRUEBLOOD) OLINGER**, Class of 1951, died December 13, 2015, in St. Paul. She was 81.

**ROBERT E. "BOB" PETERSEN**, Class of 1957, died December 21, 2015 in Omaha. He was 78.

**GAYLORD "PETE" PETERSON**, Class of 1951, died December 23, 2015 in Grand Island. He was 79.

**SHARLEEN (MCMULLEN) RATHMAN**, Class of 1950, died November 11, 2015 in Grand Island. She was 83.

**MARK SALDECKI**, Class of 1982, died November 18, 2015 in Grand Island. He was 51.

**JEFF SCHMAHL**, Class of 1974, died in West New York, N.J., on July 14, 2015. He was 58.

**CHARLES "CHARLIE" SHEFFIELD**, Class of 1957, died December 11, 2015, in Brownsville, Texas. He was 76.

**JACK SORENSON**, Class of 1947, died November 26, 2015 in Grand Island. He was 87.

**JUDY (BACON) TJADEN**, Class of 1972, died December 17, 2015, in Grand Island. She was 62.

**JACK TORPEY**, died December 2, 2015, in Santa Cruz, Calif. He was

96.

**RICHARD H. "DICK" URBACH**, Class of 1941, died November 28, 2015 in Mount Vernon, Mo. He was 92.

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**Grand Island Public Schools Foundation**



**@GIPSFoundation**

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