

TAA 43rd Annual Reunion

Bringing Friends Back Together

Another large turnout of Thorp High School alumni attended the 43rd edition of the annual reunion held at the Quonset Hall east of Thorp. The memorabilia display was open at 1 p.m. along with the opportunity for early registration. The social hour began at 4 p.m. followed by a traditional family-style dinner.

The event began with the annual meeting of the Thorp Alumni Association at 10 a.m. on Saturday morning, June 24, 2017 at the Thorp Public Library. Officers for the 2017-2018 year elected at the meeting are: President – Paula Teclaw Paskert '68; Vice President – Brian Hendricks '58; Secretary – Bettie Butek Valek '61; Treasurer – J. Peter Bartl '61. Gerri Dudansky '58 was appointed as assistant secretary. The Newsletter contributors will be the officers and Jacqueline Glasshof '81.

A change to the date of future TAA reunions was enacted in 2016. The TAA reunion will be held on the Saturday of the last full weekend in June. Since this weekend is the same weekend as Country Fest in Cadott, it is suggested that you make your motel reservations early. Our next reunion will be held on Saturday, June 23, 2018.

The TAA began funding “structured class trips” for the freshmen, sophomores, and juniors during the 2015-16 school year in addition to the five \$1,000 scholarships. The School District of Thorp asked the TAA to consider extending those trips to the lower grades as well which began during the 2016-17 school year. This opened an exciting new chapter in the administration of the TAA Scholarship Fund. This year the 7th grade class visited CVTC in Eau Claire accompanied by TAA Board Vice President Brian Hendricks. His assessment of the trip was positive. He has asked the school administrators to track the impact these class trips have had on the students when they graduate from THS and make plans for their futures. The TAA's goal is to encourage Thorp students to consider future education.

This year the Class of 1942 celebrated the 75th anniversary of their graduation. None of the members were able to attend, however, their interviews were published in the TAA Newsletter. Other classes celebrating their reunions were: 1947 – 70 years; 1952 – 65 years; 1957 – 60 years; 1962 – 55 years, and 1967 – 50 years. The class of 1957 had a large and lively attendance followed closely by the class of 1961.

Peter Bartl '61 acknowledged those alumni who passed away since the last reunion.

Speaker for the evening was Jeff Frenette of the 1978 class of Thorp High School. As a retired captain of the Wisconsin State Patrol, he relayed his story – from his beginnings in Thorp as a child, the encouragement he received from teachers, Mr. Hanley and Miss Czerwinski to attend college, and his steps through life to accomplish his lifelong goal of working in law enforcement. He acknowledged those people who helped, taught, and guided him in his experiences and choices along the way. Jeff pointed out the students from a small town in Wisconsin and Thorp High School can go a long way.

Paula Teclaw Paskert '68 introduced two of the five TAA scholarship winners this year, Morgan Boie and Brady Wisniewski, who relayed their plans for college. They and the other three winners, Aeysha Paskert, Abby Quinnell, and CJ Pawlak, have lofty goals and are well equipped to attain them with the help of the TAA scholarships. The Tom Hempelman Scholarship was awarded to Zachary Edwards this year. Keep your eye on these young people!

Fifty years ago on October 9, 1967, Ron Sandel '64 gave his life for his country in South Vietnam. On Memorial Day, family, friends and community members gathered to remember Ron and his sacrifice for his country. The TAA observed a moment of silence in his memory.

The group sang God Bless America with Katarina Petranovich, this year's Lions Choral Arion choir scholarship winner leading the way, and the traditional Thorp High loyalty song. Bob Verkuilen '52 asked if he could lead his favorite song – You're A Grand Old Flag? What a beautiful voice! He has already been asked to come back and sing at TAA reunions.

The lively song started something, and, along with the egging on by our MC, Paula Teclaw Paskert, the stories started flowing about the class of 1957 who were celebrating their 60th. Do you remember the Sadie Hawkens dances, the Girl's Proms, and first boy THS cheerleader, Frank Andruszkiewicz? This is what it is all about – having more fun with friends and classmates.

A disk with pictures of the event is available for purchase from Sue Fisher DeBauch '75 for \$10. Contact Sue directly at 715-669-5287.

Reunions are held to reconnect with old friends and enjoy each other's company. Plan now to attend the 44th annual TAA reunion to be held on Saturday, June 23, 2018.