Remembering Wathena High School buildings

Wathena High School alumni recently submitted photos of WHS buildings over the years. Wathena and Elwood School districts consolidated last year to become Riverside School District. This fall will mark the first year that students will share buildings. The present Wathena High School will be known as Riverside High School and the middle school will be located in Elwood.

This 3-story brick Wathena High School is believed to have been built in 1870 and was prestigious for its time. It was used from 1870 to 1910. By 1908 the school had become overcrowded and it was decided to build a new school.

Wathena High School built in 1910 was located on the land now known as Wathena Heights apartment complex along North Third Street. In 1908 construction began on the new high school which was built near the old school (shown at left). It housed the grade school students as well as the high school and opened in March 1910.

When the present day high school was built in 1930, the old high school/grade school (also shown above right) was used just for the grade school. In 1966 a new grade (still used today) opened.

The lawn at Wathena High School, at one time, had shrubs and pillars. A gymnasium and other additions were completed later. This structure is now being used as Riverside High School.
BRICK SCHOOL HOUSE, WATHENA, KANSAS

This black and white photograph shows the first brick school house used as a colored school in Wathena, Kansas. The one-story structure was built in 1870 by Alfred Larzelere at the cost of $10,000.
Class of 68
Senior Prom
Class of 68
Senior Prom
Class of 68
Junior Prom 1967

WHS Class of 1959

WHS Class of 1959


WHS Class of 1984

Members of the Winona High School 25-year class of 1984 who gathered at the annual alumni reunion June 13 are pictured above: Front row—Teresa Wiste; Oliver, Sue McKenna Willborn, Kim Kendall Kline, Laura Cook Ranger, Trudy Foye Venti, Renee Redwood Clark, Nancy Green Drake. Back row—Adam Booth, Mike Schultz, J.T. Wyatt, Rochelle Thomas Greenwood, John Horsel.
Take trip to Washington

Sixteen Wathena 8th grade students attended Washington Workshop May 10-15 in Washington, D.C.

Pictured are:
Front row: Rep. Lynn Jenkins, Kharenna Behrens, Chyran Thomas, Tyler Newton, Kyle Studer, Theresa Elder (sponsor), Mark Newton (sponsor).
Middle row: Allie Simonin, Corin Schult, Emily Elder, Brooke Pepper, Charlie Travis, Andrew Daugherty, Regan Bolls.
Back row: Ariel Digg, Savannah Davidson, Amanda Blak, Dominique McCabe, Mercedes Christman, Roxy Batts (sponsor), Shannon Digg (sponsor), Sherrill Dungan (sponsor).

Highlights of the trip included: Mount Vernon, several museums, the Capitol and time with Rep. Lynn Jenkins, Ford’s Theatre, Memorials, Library of Congress, Arlington Cemetery, and a river cruise on the Potomac.

The students would like to thank everyone for donations and support that made the trip possible.

Wathena School Honor Students

4th Quarter
High Honor Roll 4.0

7th Grade - Kimberly Euler, Erica Halter, Zachary Halter, Keira Juhl, Khadria Mccoy
8th Grade - Kharenna Behrens, Emily Elder, Dylan Gabriel, Corin Schult, Freshmen - Paden Halter, Derek Nold, Collin Studer
Sophomores - Andrew Elder, Christian Griffin, Jacob Singleton
Junior - Mary Nelson, Eliott Nold
Seniors - Cara Johnson, Brandon McCain, Hadley Manger, Sawyer Verin

Honors Roll 3.0-3.99
7th Grade - Caelan Blair, Christopher Booth, Jarek Deeken, Bree Hawkins, Drew Hoffman, Koboey Lawson, Kamden Waith, Brittny Wendt, Michelle Wilson

2nd Semester
High Honor Roll 4.0
7th Grade - Caelan Blair, Kimberly Euler, Erica Halter, Zachary Halter, Drew Hoffman, Keira Juhl, Kelsey Mccoy
8th Grade - Kharenna Behrens, Ariel Digg, Emily Elder, Brooke Pepper, Corin Schult
Freshmen - Sawyer Adkison, Paden Halter, Derek Nold, Collin Studer, Lauren West
Sophomores - Andrew Elder, Christian Griffin, Jacob Singleton
Junior - Mary Nelson, Eliott Nold
Seniors - Cara Johnson, Brandon McCain, Hadley Manger, Jill Serre, Sawyer Verin

Honors Roll 3.0-3.99
7th Grade - Christopher Booth, Jarek Deeken, Bree Hawkins, Koboey Lawson, Kamden Waith, Brittny Wendt, Michelle Wilson

Troy School Honor Rolls

2nd Semester
4.0 GPA

12th Grade - Kimberly Clary, Jesse Marriott, Keri Wymer
11th Grade - Kate Grable, Hana Spore, Kenneth Thurman
10th Grade - Mackenzie Clary, Steven Clary, whistle Knoe, Peter Masters
9th Grade - Olivia Bennett, Katie Smith, Haley Whetstone
8th Grade - Paige Forely, Jayanna King, Tanae Meng, Renee Simpson, Tanner Weisheit, Jacob Windle
7th Grade - William Booth, Elizabeth Hale, Zachary Huff, Holly Stegal, Alecia Stock

3.5-3.99 GPA

12th Grade - Colin Greaser and Sarah Gray, Kendall Whetstone
11th Grade - Brittany Clary, Emily Cluck, Kayla Hanson, Jarek Meng, Ashley Miller, Cobb Miller, Bailey Morgan, Hannah Simpson
Longtime teacher has touched many lives

By JULI WILMANN

WATHENA, Kan. - If it's possible to rule with a relaxed fist, then Roselle Slaughter has mastered the technique.

Ms. Slaughter, who reached her 26th anniversary of teaching this year, commands the attention of a room of first-graders. With a gentle voice that spurs the students to action, her voice says sit in their seat or read from a book.

She starts each day by giving the students an opportunity to tell her what they have on their minds before quizzing them on numbers, days of the week and spelling.

"To see the kids advance, this is where they start to read, and by the end of the year you see you have some excellent readers," Ms. Slaughter said. "It kind of makes you feel happy that you've helped them get that far.

At a celebration for Ms. Slaughter on Wednesday evening, Wathena School District Superintendent Mike Newman said that after talking with the state department, he could find no other teacher working as a career as long as her.

"There have not been a person who has touched as many lives (in Wathena as Mrs. Slaughter)," he said.

About 30 people attended the festivities, including former students, co-workers, parents of students and family members.

When she first began teaching in 1948, it was at the country school located east of Wathena. She moved to the Wathena School District in 1956, where she went from teaching all eight grades to teaching just sixth grade.

She made the move to first grade three years ago, and recognizes the change in her country school days.

"You could meet the parents every day, you would always come to school—we had no such activities," Ms. Slaughter said. "Every year is different, every day is different.

"Teaching second generations of former students isn't uncommon for Ms. Slaughter, and many students and parents request her to stay on more year to ensure that will happen in their family.

"That makes you feel good," she said. "You kind of know that you're doing your job pretty well.

Before hitting the 60-year milepost even a breakup (which she said healed swiftly thanks to her doctor), a former student couldn't keep her from returning to her students' last fall.

Now that Ms. Slaughter has hit that mark—which is a real that has been in her mind for some time—she isn't sure how much longer she'll teach.

"Now you're to the point where what do you do if you quit," she said. "You have to have something to do to keep you going. Probably the only thing that's really kept me healthy is just being around the kids."

"Most kids have a teacher or two, and their friends stayed after school every day just to be around their teacher for a little longer."

"Ms. Slaughter had to tell them it's time to go home," Ms. Studer said.
Roselle Slaughter was presented a gift by USD 406 Superintendent Mike Newman and Elementary Principal Cindy Murphy during a special recognition ceremony for her 60 years of teaching.

Newman said that, in preparing the celebration of Slaughter's teaching career, the school had attempted to find out if anyone else in the state of K. had taught as many years. No information was able to be obtained from state records.

*The Chief* was able to sit down with Slaughter — and her family — last Friday, as she was answering telephone calls and opening sealed cards — offering congratulations on her teaching accomplishment.

Slaughter was quick to point out two specific things. "My goal has been 60 years of teaching. I wanted to record," she said. "I also frankly stated, 'I don't retire — yet!'"

Asked to look back on both her personal and professional career, she said she has been a lifelong teacher.

(See Slaughter, page 8)
Wathena ends its 121-year tradition graduating Wildcats

The baseball and the wrestling teams are already called Riverside. Some buses already have the same paint on their sides.

Tom Clark, a business teacher at Wathena High School who will retire this year after 26 years, said at first she didn't realize how close the school was to the river. It's close enough to make sense.

"You can see the river, there's a road right outside of town that runs right along side the river," she said. "I had no idea the river came that far back in here but it does."

The Wathena campus will have pre-kindergarten through second grade and high school grades nine through 12. Ethio will have pre-kindergarten through second grade students and third through eighth grades.

And Andrew Fitch will have his memories as the school's last class of students.

"It's a real honor to be able to achieve that and have the school and the class that we start," he said. "There will be more to come, but not from Wathena."

The last day of school at Wathena High School will be next Wednesday. At Thursday, seniors spend the most part of Thursday morning cleaning out their lockers, loading up their cars and checking out of the office.

"It's the same as what we've done for the past eight years since I've been principal," Mr. Riehl said. "It's the last day. They're excited, it's their last day. We're going to have our senior picnic after our graduation practice is over."

A steady flow of seniors flood into the school office just in position in front of school secretary Doris Schweber's desk ready to check out for the day. Ms. Schweber has been in this role since 1986 when she came to work at the school. She remembers being just as excited when she graduated from the school in 1976. She said she'll miss the Wildcats but is excited about the change.

"The Wildcats is the main thing. I know about the Gators. I know about the Rivets. I know about the Ethio. I know about the stock cars."

"I want more rivalry, a lot more rivalry," she said.

"We had more rivalry with Troy sports-wise," she said. "It's rivalry almost as old as the school. Wathena High School was organized in 1889 under Principal E. J. Matheis, according to a history of the school written by teacher and historian Glen Reid Hartman. The first class graduated in 1899. By 1911 the school had grown from an enrollment of 23 to 53 students. The school moved into its present building in 1919. Additions were made in the 1990s."

Looking at the flip board of graduating classes in the school cafeteria, custodian Don Kirkland shares his own history. He graduated from the school in 1962 and has worked in maintenance there for more than 30 years. His children went here, too.

Mr. Kirkland said 1963 was the largest graduating class at the school with 88 seniors. He remembers undefeated football seasons in 1962, 1944 and 1970. He'll miss the school but he also thinks the consolidation is progress.

"I think it can be a good thing if it's handled right," he said.

Jacqueline Singleton, class salutatorian, said it's pretty overwhelming for him to be in the last Wildcat class. He's kept a few things like Wildcats caps and other items for keepsakes. He's been at Wathena schools since kindergarten.

"It's kind of a shame. I'm going to miss it," he said.

Miss Weber can be reached at alison.weber@newstribune.com.
School & Youth

WHS Alumni Reunion
Saturday

The annual Watneha High School Alumni reunion will be held Saturday, June 4 at the Raintree Inn, St. Joseph. Social hour begins at 6:00 with dinner served at 7:00.

A business meeting will be held in the afternoon at 1:00 at the high school.

Honored classes this year will be the 50-year class of 1955, the 25-year class of 1980 and the graduating class of 2005.

Members of the class of 1955 are pictured at the right.

Members of the class of 1980 are pictured below.

Top row: Larry Clark, Amy Estrander, Daniel Embry, Joel Edler, Kenneth Everett, Laura Flesk, Anthony Gabson.


3rd row: Gale Recob-Higdon, Melvin Hoffman, Mary Theresa Irish, Jerry Jasmin, Gary Jasmin, Elena Kwant.

4th row: Julie Lepp, Leroy LeFebre, Jerry Livingam, Tommy Mattioli, Kimberly McCollum, Denise McCourt Jr., Kelly McKee.

5th row: Cherry McKernan, Kimberly McMillan, Deanna Miller, Robert Miller, Thomas Miller, Angela Nold.


Bottom row: Janet Slatoff, Kevin Aust, Blaine Aust, Kathy Stinegar, Lawrence Stinegar, Wayne Ward, Mark Wedder.
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Wathena High School Alumni Reunion June 2

This year's honored classes at the Wathena High School reunion will be the 50-year class of 1957, 25-year class of 1982 and the 2007 graduating class. (See 50-year and 25-year photos on this page).


The event will be held Saturday, June 2 at the Holiday Inn in St. Joseph. Social hour begins at 6:00 with supper served at 7:00. Entertainment will be musical selections and arrangements by Ken Hiltke. A business meeting will be held June 2 afternoon in the school cafeteria at 1:00.

Two HCC Track Athletes Named All-Americans

Highland Community College track coach James White and Tom Bond took five track athletes to qualified for the national meet to Texas last weekend. Two of those athletes returned as All-Americans based on the quality of their performances.

Kristen Bloch, sophomore from Hisawatha, broke her own school record and placed 5th in the heptathlon. The heptathlon consists of the 100 hurdles, high jump, shot put, 200 meter run, long jump, javelin, and the 800 meter run. Ken's mother is Lu Olson.

Kyle Hammer, freshman from Wathena, placed 4th in the discus throw with a toss of 155 feet and 1 inch. Kyle is the son of Mark and Terri Hammer.
WHS Alumni Reunion this Saturday

Over 200 have announced plans to attend the Wathena High School Alumni reunion at the high school Saturday, June 13 with social hour beginning at 6:00 p.m. Dinner and program will follow beginning at 7:00.

This year’s honored classes will be the 50-year class of 1959; the 25-year class of 1984 and the 2003 graduating class. Speaking for the class of 1959 will be Virginia Schiltz Shue. Speaking for the class of 1984 will be J.T. Wyatt.

A business meeting will be held at the high school beginning at 1:00 in the multi-purpose room. Refreshments will be served.


Class members pictured are:

WHS Class of 1984

Members of the WHS class of ’84 include Margaret Alper, Amanda Booth, Tracey Chambers,
WHS reunion Saturday

The annual Wathena High School alumni reunion will be held Saturday, June 11 at the Ramada Inn in St. Joseph. Social hour begins at 6:00 with supper at 7:00. This year’s honored classes will be the 50-year class of 1961 and the 25-year of 1986, along with the recent graduating class of 2011. A business meeting will also be held Saturday at 1:00 at the high school.
Washington, D.C.

Lieutenant Governor

Teacher - 1st Grade

Washington, D.C.
Pam Thompson
Carol Hartman (Goin)
Debbie Herring - Ramona Gabriel
Jo Ellen Hewins

1965 - 1968
Debi Petitt
End of an era in Wathena

The last class of graduates from Wathena USD 486 wrap up their graduation practice on Thursday morning during their final day of classes. Next year the school merges with Eudora USD 486 and will be known as the Riverside High School Cyclones.

Priest faces child porn charges

Former St. Joseph clergyman served at St. Mary Church

By KIM NORVELL
St. Joseph News Press

A priest who formerly worked in St. Joseph has been charged in Kansas City with three counts of possession of child pornography after detectives found pornographic images on his church and personal computers.

According to court documents, the Rev. Shawn F. Ratigan, who formerly served as a priest at St. Mary Church in St. Joseph, was arrested at the Sisters of St. Francis of the Holy Eucharist in Independence, Mo., on Wednesday. Ratagan allegedly possessed multiple pornographic images.
Sunday marks final group of 34 to graduate as Wildcats

It's a real honor to be able to achieve that and have the school end after that and re-start. There will be more to come, but not from Wathena.

— MARK MILLER, commentator, on his achievement as the last Wildcat welder.

By ALONZO WESTON
St. Joseph News-Press

WATHENA, Kan. — Principal Bob Blair stood at the microphone inside the Wathena High School gymnasium Thursday morning giving graduation ceremony instructions. The 34 students were already dressed for summer vacation and wearing gold tassels draped around their neck, listened intently.

"When I say class of 2011, we're all going to stand in unison at exactly the same time," Mr. Blair ordered his charges.

When the order came, a few heads popped up sooner than others. But it was graduation practice. The students have a few more tries to get it right.

"In my 10 years as principal, I've only had one class do this right the first time," Mr. Blair informed the class.

On Sunday at 5 p.m., it will be for real. And for the 34 seniors who make up the Wathena High School graduating class of 2011, it will be the last time anyone will graduate as a Wathena Wildcat. No more red and blue painted hallways "No more Wildcat pride."

Next year, Wathena USD 405 will consolidate with Edgwing USD 486 and become the Riverside Unified School District 114 High School. The two schools will merge to become the Riverside Cyclones. The school colors will be Co-lumbia blue and black.

See WATHENA/Page A3

Students, faculty reflect on Morris' life at Western

By KRISTEN HOPPA
St. Joseph News-Press

The day after a 22-year-old Missouri Western State University student died on campus, students and faculty members reflected on the life lost and plans for the future.

DeReco Morris, 22, of St. Louis, died Wednesday following a swimming pool incident at the Looney Complex on Missouri Western's campus.

"He was always going around the world," said Charlene Bloy, a sophomore Accounting major from Missouri Western. "We need more people like him in this world."

Mr. Bogeman said Mr. Morris was determined, faithful and excelled to graduate college.

"He was always a believer," she said of the fellow sophomore, who she had known over the past year.

A small group of people swam recreationally in the pool Wednesday afternoon, said friend and fellow swimmer Ryan Smith, 23, a sophomore and co-worker with Mr. Morris at Missouri Western. The pair met while working as maintenance staff at the college in January.

See MORRIS/Page A7

Committee strives to convert tax doubters

By CLINTON THOMAS
St. Joseph News-Press

The job of conversion and motivation is a group in favor of a local hotel tax increase busy.

Members of the hotel/motel tax citizens committee have spent time in front of any service group or social club that would listen to rally support for a measure to raise St. Joseph's hotel/motel tax from 3 percent to 5 percent.

An effort to increase the tax from 5 percent failed in November, which the group with lots of voters to convert, will while motivating supporters to go to the polls.

Alan Clark, co-chairman of the committee, knows first-hand why the previous effort failed. As assistant general manager at Stoney Creek Inn, he

See COMMITTEE/Page A8

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Mrs. Warren
Charles Sullivan
Clifton Israel
John Swails

Front Row
Patay Burgess
Phyllis Haupt
Linda Young
Linda Ramsel
Linda Absher
Karen Sue Miller
Jeane Miller retires from Wathena School

A reception was held after school on May 13th to honor Jeane Miller as she retires from the teaching profession. Jeane has served in the Wathena community for the past 22 years teaching our youth the vital skill of reading.

Jeane graduated from Central High School and St. Joseph Junior College. She went on to complete a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education at NWMSU in Maryville. She attended Kearney State in Nebraska and later completed her Master of Science in Education for Special Education at CMSU. Jeane completed a reading specialist's degree from CMSU and a post graduate degree from NWMSU in Elementary School Supervision. She was also certified in Brain Gym, Orton-Gillingham reading instruction, and the Orton method of reading.

Before coming to Wathena, Jeane taught in the following schools: Todd School in Savannah, Lake County School, John Glenn School and the Woodson Academy at the St. Joseph State Hospital.

Jeane has devoted her life to helping people learn to read, serving a total of forty-seven years in education. In addition to teaching students to read, she also served as a mentor to fellow teachers in the Wathena School District. Jeane is a wonderful asset to our school district and will certainly be missed by faculty and students.

Dodgeball Champions

Eleven teams competed in the dodgeball tournament sponsored by St. Joseph Catholic Church youth group at the Wathena gym Saturday, Jan. 14. The champions (pictured above) were undefeated 5-0 in pool play and then won the championship game over the pool B winners. Pictured from left are Chris Koelliker, Alan Stewart, David Dowlen, Zach Gaedel, Colbin Quillian and Roger Dowlen.

The second place team went undefeated in pool play and took the championship match in three games before falling. Pictured below left to right: Zach Eber, Danny Wyatt, Eric Wodzinski, Greg Smith, Ray Mungar, Nick Bursatte.
WHS Class of ‘65 Reunites

Washena High School Class of 1965 Reunion was held June 3 at the Washena Community Center. Class members attending are shown. Kneeling: Left: Vonda Utz, Janet Jeffers, Karol Bernbreck, Joyce Botting, Ronald Schultz, Barbara Cardwell, Glenda Poirier, Charley Studer. Second Row: Left: Sandra Wade, Judy Studer, Glenn Arment, Pam Carlson, Sandra Graf, Linda Coddidge, Jane Shaltz, Dan Dehning, Lewis Meyers, Jan Laprise, Patrick Wolkamer. Back Row: Patty Harsh, Justin Sparks, Bill Christopher, Nick Embry, David Deeken, Keith Bauman, Ronald Bertz, Russell Moore, Dennis Juhl, Richard Hewitt, Lynn Knizer, Joseph Daniel Studer. (Deceased Members: John Fulcher, Dennis Goin, Elizabeth Sauer, Donald Schultz, and Phillip Thomas)

WHS State Football Champs of 1965


Former WHS Teachers

Former Washena High School Teachers gathering with the WHS Class of ‘65 and 1964 State Championship Football Team for a reunion June 3 are pictured--Sitting: Left: Leah Thomas, Lucy Shifflett, Karen Brown. Standing: Left: Jerry McClusky, Robert McKenzie, Lyle Moddelmog, Carl Druet, Jim Draudt.
Photo top: A copy of the high school paper, The Wathenian, highlights the "new" school which was dedicated on September 26, 1930. School chairman L. A. Libel hosted the event along with Charles Fotrier, chairman of the building committee. Arguably "the best planned and arranged" high school in the state, the Italian-style architecture featured red mottle brick, terra-cotta decoration, and a red tile roof. At this time 129 students were enrolled. Photo left: The Italianate-style building with mansard roof served as the first high school facility in Wathena in 1880.