

Columbus diploma leads to front row view of History

By John Carpenter
Gazette Staff

"Walks as a kid with my Granddad around his farm provided the stimuli that led me to a firsthand view of history," said Columbus Community's first distinguished graduate, Harold "Hal" Prior during a recent interview. Hal was born in Crawfordsville, and spent many days on his Grandfather's (F.E. Prior), farm when he was young observing birds, plants and other wonders of nature. The Louisa County Limestone Quarry was on the farm, and Hal would pick up various rocks and fossils. This led to a lifetime interest in geology. (The farm was owned by Frank Prior and was located south of Columbus City.)

After graduating from Columbus High School in 1954, Hal attended Cornell College on a track and cross-country scholarship. "My original plan was to become a chemical engineer," said Hal, "but one afternoon I was sitting in the lab surrounded by those smelly chemicals, and looked out the window and saw the geology students walking to the woods. That seemed like a lot more fun to me, so the next semester I was in the geology department."

Upon graduating from Cornell, Hal went to work for the Air Force Defense Mapping Agency in St. Louis. He recalls: "I had a high security classification. I remember one job where I was counting missiles on a photograph of a ship. I thought it was just a routine job at the time, and didn't realize that the missiles were headed to Cuba and were the ones involved in the Cuban missile crisis until I listened to President Kennedy's speech a couple days later."

With the completion of ten years in St. Louis, Hal received a call from the Johnson Space Center in Houston asking if he would be interested in coming to work for the space program at NASA. Hal's NASA memories are many. He recalls first working in the Science Operations Room of the Mission Operations Center on the Apollo 8 flight that circled the moon: "I remember it was Christmas Eve in 1968, and I stepped outside and looked up at the moon. I just couldn't convince myself that we actually had a craft up there and I was a part of it." Hal has a picture of the earth taken by the astronauts from the moon hanging in his business place. Hal said that these pic-



Pictured above is Hal Prior at the Kennedy Space Center mission countdown clock, 1 hour 20 minutes before the successful night launch of Space Shuttle Endeavour mission STS-123 to the International Space Station (ISS). The lighted Shuttle in launch configuration is seen in the right side distant background.

tures were given to the ground crew by the astronauts in appreciation of their work on that flight.

Hal also remembers being in the Mission Operations Center when Apollo 11 landed on the moon: "We were seconds away from running out of fuel as the craft descended to the moon. The situation was very tense, and I remember looking down at my hands and seeing the sweat run off. These were my friends and co-workers up there. I can still remember exactly where I was sitting and what direction I was facing during this landing thirty-nine years ago."

The words: "Houston, we have a problem," still rings in Hal's ears as he was on duty during the Apollo 13 mission. "This was probably one of my proudest moments at NASA," said Hal. "Everyone worked diligently to help get the crew home safely, and after I saw the damage to the craft, I just couldn't believe what had been accomplished."

Hal was also on duty during the Challenger explosion, "I lost a lot of friends in the Challenger tragedy. The memory will definitely always

stay with me."

"During all of my years at NASA I didn't realize at the time I was witnessing history," said Hal, "to me I was just doing my job. It was later that it began to dawn on me that I was actually a part of these events that would forever be part of world history." After twenty-five years at NASA, Hal took early retirement in 1985 and began working for McDonnell Douglas (later Boeing) in the Space Station Design area. He helped design today's space station, and also helped train astronauts.

In 1999 Hal "retired" from Boeing, and with his wife, Polly, returned to his hometown of Columbus Junction. Quotes have been purposely placed around the word retired because after his return to the community Hal and Polly opened H&P Minerals on Main Street where they sell and ship minerals and collector dolls throughout the world. Hal serves on the City Council, and helps with the Columbus track and cross country teams. Polly is very involved in numerous activities in town, including the Senior Center Board, was

instrumental in the restoration of the Swinging Bridge area, and forming the Farmers' Market.

But the Prior influence on the space program hasn't ended with Hal. Hal's son, Steve worked in the space program, and now does consulting work for American Airlines. A second son, Tom, works for NASA in the space program where he specializes in the effect of high velocity particles in space when they interact with spacecraft. On a side note, Tom and Hal share a similar experience as Tom was on duty during the Columbia accident.

So, from the halls of Columbus High School, to the Cuban Missile crisis, to man's landing on the moon, to the present Space Station in outer space, and now back to serving his hometown of Columbus Junction, Hal Prior certainly epitomizes the qualities of a distinguished graduate. Hal, your unwavering commitment to your country and your fellow man makes you both a deserving recipient of this award, and also an exemplary role model for the Columbus Community Class of 2008.

69 years of commitment

By Deb Bean
Gazette Staff

This year, as the doors of Columbus Community Schools close for the summer break, Mike and Marcia Pavey will take a deep breath and reflect back on the years that they have spent teaching, mentoring, and making memories at Columbus Community Schools.

As they walk away from their classrooms for the last time, they can be assured that they will be missed by all of their fellow co-workers and can be proud of the respect they have gained for their dedication and commitment to the kids and to Columbus Schools. Retirement begins a new chapter in the Paveys' life. At Columbus Community Schools we have been honored to have this couple as role models for our children for a combined total of 69 years. Mike Pavey is ending a 36-year career and Marcia Pavey is ending a 33-year career.

Marcia began teaching elementary physical education at Cotter and Conesville. After a year she moved to the high school, but still taught K-3 Phys Ed 2 days a week. She now has taught 9-12 Phys Ed exclusively for the past 10 years. "The last students I had as elementary students are now freshman," smiles Mrs. Pavey. Mrs. Pavey also coached for 20 years.

Mike Pavey began teaching Reading, English, and History in Jr. High and was study hall monitor in the high school. For many years he taught history and world geography. He also taught Language Arts, Speech, Skills for Adolescence,



Mike and Marcia Pavey at Columbus Community School

Hunter Safety and Careers. He assisted with the football and basketball programs.

I have told former teachers before, it's hard to call you by your first name, because to me they will always be Mr./Mrs. That is just one of the many respects we were taught by the Paveys as students at CCHS.

Marcia grew up in Marcus, a town in Northwest Iowa, and graduated from Marcus Community High School in 1970.

Mike grew up in Webster City, a Central Iowa town, and graduated from Webster City High School in 1968.

The couple met in 1970 when they were both students at Westmar College in LeMars, Iowa and married in

June of 1972.

As newly weds they made the move to Columbus Junction in 1972 so Mike could begin his teaching career. Marcia transferred to Iowa Wesleyan College, graduating in 1974 with a Physical Education degree. Mike graduated from Westmar College in 1972 and earned a Masters Degree in Social Studies Education from the University of Iowa in 1992.

In August of 1972, a few weeks before Mike began teaching at Columbus, the couple first resided in a small mobile home and then made the move to Fulton apartments for 5 years and for the past 31 years have resided at their current address in Columbus Junction. "Initially, we had planned

to stay at Columbus for a few years and then move closer to our families. But we found the people in the community were friendly, helpful and kind, and since the opportunity came for both of us to teach here, we've stayed," agrees the couple.

Both Paveys admit that a big reason they stayed are the people they have both worked with. "For many years the staff was very stable and we were like a big family, and as we became active in the community, we put down roots here. It is a good community and a good school to raise a family," agrees the couple.

Paveys...

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Briefly -

2008 Summer Reading Program

Kickoff: Friday, June 6th - 9-10 a.m. (All contest work can begin on this date). First Week: Monday, June 9th - 9-10:15 a.m.; Wednesday, June 11th - 9-10:15 a.m.; Friday, June 13th - 9-10:15 a.m. Second Week: Monday, June 16th - 9-10:15 a.m.; Wednesday, June 18th - 9-10:15 a.m.; Friday, June 20th - 9-10:15 a.m. Please turn in all entries for the different contests before July 18th, so the materials can be judged and ready for the ending party. Ending Party: Friday, July 18th - 9-10:15 a.m. All contest work will be judged and distributed. Prizes will be given.

Junior golf lessons at Cedarcrest

Cedarcrest is once again offering Junior golf lessons this year starting on Monday, June 9th. Please call the Pro-Shop at 319-728-8461 and ask for details. These lessons are for kids ages 5-17.

City to flush water hydrants

The City of Columbus Junction will be flushing water hydrants during the next several weeks.

Colonial Manor Remembrance Service

You are invited to attend a Remembrance Service today, Wednesday, May 28th, 2008, at 3:00 p.m. in the Colonial Manor Activity Room. We will be remembering: Jim Allen, Lucille Bailey, Frances Burns, Don Curtis, Gomer Davis, Thomas Gipple, Roy Hauenstein, Polly Morse, Lloyd Prior, Ethel Schwab, Evelyn Sojka, Arthur Thomas, Helen Todd, Craig Slight, Mable Wilson, Jerry Williams. Please R.S.V.P. to the office 728-2276, by May 23rd if you plan to attend.

Columbus Alumni Banquet

The Alumni Banquet for graduates of high schools in Columbus Junction, Cotter, and Conesville will take place on Saturday, June 14th at the Roundy Elementary School in C.J. Registration begins at 5:30 PM and dinner will be served at 6:30 PM. Tickets or reservations for the event are available from Carol Ann Howell at the Community Bank (319-728-2226) and Sherry Pine at the State Bank (319-728-2436). Ticket price is still \$10.00, and includes the delicious meal prepared by the Presbyterian Women. A limited number of walk-ins can be managed, but to assure yourself a seat and a meal, please buy your tickets or make your reservations in advance. All classes will be recognized, with special attention to the 50-year Class of 1958 and the 25-year Class of 1983.

Wyman School reunion

The Annual Reunion and get-together for all former Wyman School students and teachers will be held July 12, 2008. The school was started in 1912 when 3 one-room school buildings were moved into town. Classes continued there until the school was closed in 1978. The Reunion and Banquet will be at the United Church of Crawfordsville, doors open at 5:30 P.M.; Banquet and entertainment at 6:30. For more information or to make reservations please call Lorraine Frame at 319-257-3401 or John Wittrig at 319-257-3377.

Empowerment Board to meet

The Des Moines/Louisa County Caring Community Empowerment Board will be meeting at the First Presbyterian Church, 801 Middle Street, Mediapolis, IA on Wednesday, June 11, 2008 at 10:00 a.m.

Great Beginnings taking applications

Great Beginnings is taking applications for next year. Please stop by the church office or call 319-728-2669 for an application or questions.

Adult programs at the Library

Summer reading isn't just for kids! Stop in the Library to sign up for the Adult Reading Contest. For every book you read from June 1 to July 2, you get a chance to win an apple pie and basket for your 4th of July picnic.

News from the Senior Center

The Columbus Community Senior Center will be hosting a coffee, Thursday, May 29, 2008 at 8 a.m. for friends and volunteers of the Senior Center. We would to see everyone come out and share the morning coffee at the Senior Center. Come and have coffee and cookies with us.

Open House scheduled for Mike and Marcia Pavey

There will be an open house for Mike and Marcia Pavey on Sunday, June 1, 2008 at 2:00 p.m. in the High School Student Center. The public is invited to come and help Mike and Marcia celebrate their retirement.

"Catch the Reading Bug" at the Library this summer

Join "Catch the Reading Bug!" this summer at the Columbus Junction Public Library and discover the amazing world of insects. The 2008 Summer Reading Program is open to young people (4 to 12 of age) preschool through young adult, with programs, prize drawings, story hours and more. Come by the library to register at any time before the program begins. Please join us at the kickoff on June 6th at 9:00 a.m. For more information call the library at 319-728-7972 or visit the website at www.columbusjct.lib.ia.us. All programs free of charge.

La Biblioteca Publica de Columbus Junction Lanza el Programa de Lectura de Verano

Unete al programa "Atrapa el insecto de la lectura!" este verano en la Biblioteca Publica de Columbus Junction y descubre el asombroso mundo de los insectos. El Programa de Lectura de Verano 2008 esta abierto para los ninos (4 a 12 anos) en edad preescolar hasta los jvenes, y tiene programas, sorteo de premios, hora de lectura, y mucho mas. Vengan a la biblioteca para registrarse a cualquier hora antes de que el programa empezar. Por favor vengan el Junio 6 a las 9 de la manana. Para mas informacion, pueden llamar a la biblioteca al telefono 319-728-7972 o visita nuestra sitio Web en www.columbusjct.lib.ia.us. Todos los programas son gratuitos.