



# TOPEKA HIGH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## News from the Paul Fink Room

THS Historical Society, 800 SW Tenth Ave, Topeka, KS 66612  
Website: thshistoricalociety.org Phone: 785-295-3200 Email: thshs@thshistoricalociety.org, Vol.45 No.1

### 2025 was a good year thanks to these friends of the THSHS

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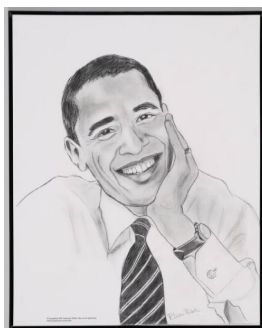
Wims-Campbell, Dan & Linda Woodland, Warren Woodruff, David G. Woods, Nancy Woodward, Mark W. Works, James H. Wright, Alice J. Wurtz, Linda K Wylie, Susie Zimmerman, Sharon Zimmerman, Topeka High Class of 1965, and Topeka High Class of 1975.

The THS Historical Society is grateful for our supporters listed above and on the front page. Their donations, given in 2025, were designated for various projects & accounts including the THSHS Endowment Fund, Tower Society, THSHS 40th Anniversary, and those trusting the THSHS to use their gift as needed. Any 40th Anniversary donations not used this year, will be added to an account for the 100th Celebration of the THS Building in 2031.

The THSHS says “thank you” to friends who gave generously of their time in 2025. Thank you to our volunteer board of directors, museum volunteers, tour guides, THS administration, staff, and students, and USD 501 administrators. If your name is missing from the list on page one or you have a question call us at 785-295-3200.

2025 was a great year for the THS Historical Society. We are looking forward to more greatness in 2026. As Ms. Paula Reilly, THS Associate Principal, reminds Topeka High at the end of every announcement, “It’s a great day to be a Trojan!”

## Print featured in Topeka High School art show now in Obama Library



A former Topeka High School special education paraprofessional, Rosemary Lister Rebek THS 1963, who now substitute teaches in USD 501 high schools, was surprised recently after a friend suggested she “google” her name.

When she did, a link to the National Archives popped up and she discovered a limited edition print of a portrait she had drawn of President Barack Obama in 2009 for a Topeka High School art show is now in the Barack Obama Presidential Library.

Rebek drew the portrait of the 44th president, who was the first African American U.S. president, for a student/staff art show at THS shortly after Obama was elected in 2008. She believed the historic election had been especially meaningful to students in a school as diverse as THS.

“In the weeks leading up to the election, students had shown a great deal of excitement, and I thought they would especially enjoy seeing this drawing of the

winning candidate,” Rebek said.

For reference, she used a photograph of Obama that appeared on the cover of Time magazine with the headline: “And the Winner Is...”

“I especially liked this informal pose because it seems to convey President Obama’s warmth, friendliness, keen intelligence, and delightful sense of humor,” Rebek said.

Five years later, when First Lady Michelle Obama visited Topeka to speak at the Topeka School District Senior Recognition Day, a special event honoring Topeka high schools held at the Expocentre, a framed print of the portrait was presented to her by former THS principal Dr. Linda Wiley as a gift to President Obama. According to information on the Archives website, the portrait then was maintained in the Office of the President until its transfer to the National Archives in January 2017, for deposit with the Obama Presidential Library.

The Obama Library is currently digital, awaiting completion of construction of the Obama Presidential Center on the South Side of Chicago. The grand opening is expected in 2026.

## Calling all history geeks!

Do you enjoy data entry? Do you love a treasure hunt?

The museum database of THSHS artifacts is moving to a web-based system, so more people will be able to access it to add information.

Starting this fall, THSHS will be needing volunteers to help organize its collections, get data entered into the museum database and sort through new acquisitions.

The big project will be sorting the hundreds of trophies stored in the tower. Each one will be photographed and logged. Some will be kept, some will be offered to people who earned them, and some will be donated for repurposing.

There will be a lot of “Wow!” and “I had no idea!” and “Look at this!” If that sounds like fun to you, let Joan Barker know by emailing her at [thshs@thshistoricalociety.org](mailto:thshs@thshistoricalociety.org) or calling 785- 295-3200.

## 2026 THS Sports Hall of Honor - February 5 & 6

Congratulations to the 2026 Class of Trojans inducted in the THS Sports Hall of Honor in February.

The athletes awarded are:

### Trojan Award - Athletes

John "JB" Littlejohn 1956 Football  
 Nannette Lee Hicks 1975 Track & Field  
 Rosemary Burnett Patton 1982 Basketball  
 David Proctor 1986 Basketball & Baseball  
 Dan Wieser 1974 Football & Basketball  
 Beau Vest 1995 Wrestling

### Black & Gold Award - Post Graduate Achievement

Joe Douglas 1946 Softball & THS Ramblers  
 Ted Evans 1970 Basketball  
 Carmen Wright Rojas 1997 Track & Field  
 Anjanae Wilson Toney 2000 Track & Field

### 3 Cheers Award - Support Staff

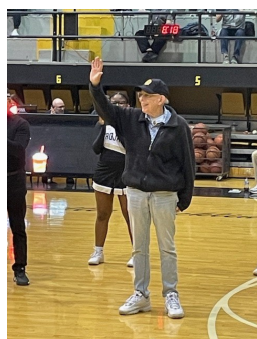
David H. Fisher, Jr 1958 Statistician  
 Jim Riggert 1972 Athletic Trainer

### Spirit Award - Team

1969-1970 Boys Gymnastics Team  
 Eric Napue, Andy Peters, Malcolm Copeland, Rick Rumsey, Ed Hunt, Court Canfield, Matt Copeland, Larry Wright, Steve Figgs, Jon O'Harra, Roger Crique, Mitch Mathy, Randy Carrier, Mark Schneider, Gary Edgington, Tom Jackson, Ed Goldsmith, David Lowther, Doug Duffy, Coach Richard Evans

### 1986 6A Boys State Basketball Championship Team

Tyrone Hudson, John Morgan, David Proctor, Teaser Broadnax, David Fillyaw, Tommy Ashley, Allen Greiner, Chris Barnes, Tony Jennings, Scott Stecklein, Devon Clark, Cecil Fillyaw, Eric Unrein  
 Coach Willie Nicklin; Assistant Coaches Brice Durbin, Rodney Johnson, David Chittenden; Trainer John Tabor; Managers Lyle Christensen, Mike Morris



Dave Fisher 1958



1986 Basketball State Champions



1969-70 Gymnastic Team



Ted Evans 1970



David Proctor 1986



Beau Vest 1995



Carmen Wright Rojas 1997



Anjanae Wilson Toney

## ~ 2026 CLASS REUNIONS ~

**Homecoming, September 25, 2026 vs Washburn Rural - Hummer Sports Park**  
**Homecoming parade - September 25, following 1 pm assembly.**

<u>Class</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>For More Information</u>
Class of 1964	October 10	80th birthday party, 785-766-4066
Class of 1966	June 20	Facebook
Class of 1971	May 30	Facebook
Class of 1976	September 25-26	TBA
Class of 1991	September 25-26	miguelcolon32@yahoo.com, 785-580-7045

The THS Historical Society assists class reunions by: 1. providing classmate contact information 2. arranging THS tours 3. facilitating the use of the building. Go to [thshistoricalsociety.org](http://thshistoricalsociety.org) for words to the school song, THS graphics, information for reunion coordinators, and more.

**If your graduation year ends in a 1 or 6 let the THSHS know if your class is having a reunion in 2026. We'll help you get the word out in our newsletter and website ([thshistoricalsociety.org](http://thshistoricalsociety.org)). Contact us at [thshs@thshistoricalsociety.org](mailto:thshs@thshistoricalsociety.org) or 785-295-3200.**

## Thanks to Matt and Patti Kennedy for the beautiful THS ornament

**Matt and Patti Kennedy**, THS alumni, recently reached out to the Topeka High School Historical Society with a generous offer. Patti created a unique THS ornament and set up selling it online. The Kennedy's are now generously donating \$5 to the THS Historical Society for each ornament sold.

**Patti Small 1989** was co-captain of the Flag Team her senior year and in Show Choir. **Matt Kennedy 1990** played football and was in a couple of theater shows, The Foreigner and Carousel. They met when she was a junior and he was a sophomore and started dating in May of 1988; they've been together ever since, marrying in October 1990. They had three children and then decided to go back to school. Matt earned a bachelor's in computer information systems and a master's in business administration. Patti got an associate's in legal studies, became a paralegal, and considered going to law school but their second child, Elizabeth, developed a brain tumor in 2003. In 2013 Patti left work to care for Elizabeth until she passed in 2020.

Matt has thrived in his career, starting with GE Capital in 2004 as a manager at a call center and after completing his masters moved into their finance division. GE's finance division is now a separate business, Synchrony Financial, and Matt is their Vice President, Finance Transformation Business Insights & Forecasting Leader.

It took Patti a while to move through the grieving process after losing Elizabeth. Knowing she didn't want to go back to being a paralegal, she explored being a travel agent and while she loved travel, her years of isolation while caring for Elizabeth didn't give her the network for success. In the meantime,

she started doing crafts and found she enjoyed it. Matt also got into 3D printing and they began creating things. Family members soon tired of receiving them as gifts, so they put their skills together and started a small business, Brigid's 3D Forge. They cater to the RPG (role-playing game) and cosplay (a performance art where participants wear outfits and accessories to embody characters from anime, video games, films, and comics) niche. Matt has loved Dungeons & Dragons since high school and he has slowly brought Patti into enjoying it too.

The ornament was Patti's idea. She got a laser in the fall of 2025 and remembering a small brass Topeka High ornament thought it would be a good test of her skills to create a new one to represent their high school and thought other alumni might enjoy it too. They posted it on Facebook and now all THS alumni and friends can get involved in their story. By purchasing their beautiful ornament, you will be supporting their business and the THSHS. For a description and order form go to:

<https://brigids3dforge.com/product/topeka-high-school-ornament/>



# WE REMEMBER OUR GRADUATES & FRIENDS

Betty Bolz Fenton 1944  
 Thomas R. McCue 1946  
 Alana Niles 1949  
 Nancy Fadely Peel 1949  
 Susan Forney Perry 1949  
 Donald E. Burlew 1950  
 Mary Jane Trulove-Heacock 1950  
 William P. Streeter 1950  
 Larry E. Lemon 1951  
 Robert L. Whitehead 1951  
 Philip L. Palmer 1951  
 Becky Griffy Mathers 1951  
 John E. Vausbinder 1951  
 Marcella "Mickey" Ecord Barrett 1952  
 Margaret Smith Arnold 1952  
 Steven Dominguez 1953  
 Aletha Leonard Watts Wheeler 1953  
 Virginia Vogel Wallace 1953  
 Ann Johnson Havenhill 1954  
 Nancy Swanstrom Vaughn  
 Lynne Gerlach Zoellner Stark 1954  
 Delbert E. Guthrie 1954  
 Richard T. Waters 1955  
 Robert "Lewy" Lewis 1955

Deanna Denton Dunaway Parker 1955  
 Gary L. Stewart 1955  
 James L. Hopkins Sr. 1956  
 Ernest Kent Hayes 1956  
 Shannon Brown 1956  
 Lorna Hayes Arrington 1956  
 Beatrice Wilson 1956  
 Robert M. Gardner 1956  
 Tad R. Estes 1957  
 Arthur "Art" L. Koehlar 1957  
 John Dayton 1957  
 Marion "Butch" Perry 1958  
 John Hiebert 1958  
 Roger Lund 1958  
 Cynthia Gibson Markula 1958  
 Stanley P. Thompson 1958  
 Arthur Ronald Rush 1958  
 Robert K. Tidwell 1958  
 Virginia Gabe Horton 1958  
 Neal K. Myrick 1959  
 Walter D. Cabbage 1959  
 Marilyn Bentz Johnson 1960  
 Clara Anderson Spencer Ward 1960  
 Charles L. Workman 1960  
 Thomas B. Deatrick 1960  
 Kenneth C. Frickey 1960

Robert H. Burke 1961  
 Elaine Janet O'Garra 1962  
 Mary Lou Woodward 1962  
 William F. Sheahan III 1963  
 Connie Haughey 1963, THS Faculty  
 Dixie Donnelly Wantoch 1963  
 Frederick Magerkurth 1965  
 Gabriel Ramirez 1965  
 Adeline Schuette Falk 1965  
 Sharon Sharkey Hawks 1966  
 Ruby Patterson Carson 1966  
 William E. Rogers 1966  
 Sharon Harden Scott 1967  
 Burnice Edward Hodison Sr 1967  
 David Harley 1967  
 Michael G. Ludwig 1968  
 Lizabeth Jan Nieman Smith 1968  
 Karen Mae Smith 1969  
 Stanley Wray 1970  
 Janet Barnes 1971  
 Jon Netson 1971  
 Janet Barnes Calvin 1972  
 Janice Holley Grisham 1973

George Walker Jr. 1973  
 Mark Allen Cavender 1973  
 Carol L. Williams 1975  
 Tina Esquibel Irvin 1977  
 Kimberly Krainbill Acker 1977  
 Theresa Ann Eagleman 1978  
 Cheryl Bruce Swopes 1979  
 Philip R. Brown 1979  
 John T. McCoy 1979  
 John E. Gonzalez 1980  
 Anna M. Jester 1980  
 James D. Wolfe 1981  
 Lori Mulligan Shelton 1981  
 Maurine "Tony" Cummings 1983  
 Brian L. Baker 1987  
 Cory M. Bornhoff 1989  
 Shepheny Minter Ambrose 1991  
 April Sanderson Benne 1996  
 Forrest L. Story 1996  
 Jason L. D. Hodison 1997  
 Edward Scarlett, THS Faculty

## Troy Today What's going on at THS?



**2026 Royalty of Courts**  
**King Octavian McFadden**  
**Queen Keimara Marshall**



**Congratulations Ahsieyrhuajh "Shy" Rayton**

- 1,000+ career points scored
- Broke the single game record (37 pts) previously held by Crystal Kemp
- Voted MVP of the Glaciers Edge Capital City Classic

Topeka High School educates students of all backgrounds and needs, including English Language Learners (ELLs). Our ELL students participated in an essay writing contest through Mid-TESOL. Mid-America Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (Mid-TESOL) is a professional organization of educators in Kansas, Missouri, Iowa, and Nebraska. Students were required to write an original essay in both English and their native language, in this case, Spanish, which was between 400 and 700 words. The essay's topic was about multilingual identities and experiences in the Midwest. Two Topeka High School students, Honey S. M. (Class of 2027) and Bryan G. (Class of 2027), were both selected to win a \$50.00 prize. **Congratulations, Honey and Bryan!**



## Support the THS Historical Society Now & After Your Lifetime

It's easy to continue your support of the THS Historical Society as you plan for "after your lifetime." The Historical Society offers multiple ways to give back to the school you remember attending in your teens. Your gift will continue to preserve, promote, and enhance the traditions and heritage of Topeka High School.

**To add a gift to Topeka High School Historical Society in your will**, share this simple sentence with your estate planning attorney:

*"I give to the THS Historical Society, a nonprofit corporation currently located at 800 SW Tenth Avenue, Topeka, Kansas 66612, or its successor thereto, \_\_\_\_\_ (write in amount or percentage of the estate) for its unrestricted charitable use and purpose."*

**To make the THS Historical Society a beneficiary** of your retirement account, savings account or CD, or life

insurance, contact the administrator of your account and share our tax ID number, as well as the amount or percentage you'd like THS Historical Society to receive after your lifetime.

You may designate your gift for one or more of THS Historical Society funds:

- Operations (for daily expenses and support)
- Tower Society (for preservation projects)
- Endowment (for long-term benefit)

**Tax ID Number: 48-1003353**

*Thank you for your generosity!*

If you have questions, call the THSHS office -

785-295-3200

## Other Opportunities To Help Your School

It's not too late to reserve a copy of the 2026 yearbook for a graduating senior. Email yearbook teacher at [amcelroy@tps501.org](mailto:amcelroy@tps501.org) today.



— SUPPORT —  
**THE SENIOR CLASS**  
DONATE A YEARBOOK TODAY!

1

Go to [jostensyearbooks.com](http://jostensyearbooks.com)  
Search for Topeka High School

**\$50+**  
tax

2

Find the "Donate a Yearbook" Option...

- To donate to a random senior, input **ABBY MCELROY** as the "student name".
- To donate to a specific student, type in their name.

Questions? Email [amcelroy@tps501.org](mailto:amcelroy@tps501.org)

Wondering what to do with your used car, truck or motorcycle that has been taking up space in your garage? Donating your old vehicle to the Topeka High School Historical Society is convenient, easy, and may qualify you for a tax deduction. And best of all, your donation of that used vehicle will make a big difference in supporting Topeka High projects. All you need to do is to complete the Vehicles for Charity simple form on the THSHS website or call 866-628-2277. Vehicles for Charity will take care of the rest. They will pick up your vehicle, arrange to have your donation towed, and provide you with a tax-deductible receipt, all at no charge to you. Call 866-628-2277 or online at [www.thshistoricalociety.org/support-2/vehicles-for-charity](http://www.thshistoricalociety.org/support-2/vehicles-for-charity).



## A note about the THS Chimes

If your heart jumps a beat when you hear the THS Chimes play the school song you might want to take the lead from the Class of 1975 and contribute to the new Chimes Maintenance Fund. The THS Historical Society has accepted the general maintenance responsibility for the only working Deagan Chimes system in a public high school in the world. Interested in donating to the Chimes Fund? Go to [thshistoricalociety.org](http://thshistoricalociety.org) 'Giving Opportunities' or give us a call at 785-295-3200.



Support your favorite non-profit, the THS Historical Society, every time you shop at Dillons. The Kroger Stores sponsors the Community Rewards Program of Dillons. Go to [www.kroger.com/i/community/community-rewards](http://www.kroger.com/i/community/community-rewards) to sign up to shop for the THS Historical Society. **The THSHS received \$471.28 from the Kroger-Dillon's Reward Program in 2025. Thanks to Trojan Shoppers!**

# THS Historical Society Supporters (On a Mission for THS)

Graduation Year \_\_\_\_\_

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name (as student) \_\_\_\_\_ Current Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse First Name (THS grads) \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name (as student) \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse Graduation Year \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**ANNUAL SUPPORT** – (for operational expenses & THSHS special events)

	Amount
Yearly Donation (\$25) .....	\$ _____
Extra annual donation of \$1 for each year since my graduation (i.e. Class of 1976, 50 years since graduation=\$50)	\$ _____
Bonus gift honoring 40th Anniversary of the THS Historical Society (\$40)	\$ _____

**I want to sponsor an annual contribution for a friend (\$25):**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Graduation year \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Check enclosed:  (payable to THS Historical Society or THSHS)      TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Charge account:  Visa  Master Card  American Express  Discover (**\$50 minimum requested**)

Name on Card: \_\_\_\_\_

Number: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ CV # (required) \_\_\_\_\_

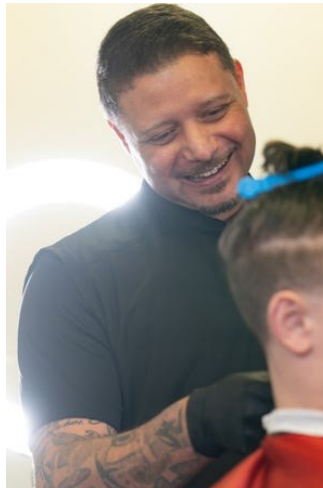
Expiration Date: Month \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: THSHS, 800 SW Tenth Ave., Topeka, KS 66612, or pay online at: [thshistoricalociety.org](http://thshistoricalociety.org)

## Black & Gold Report - Graduates in the Spotlight



**Nate Ericson 1942** recently celebrated his 102nd birthday in Lawrence, Kansas. An army veteran of the World War II Battle of the Bulge, Mr. Ericson is a retired architect, model airplane creator, and artist.



**Brandon McDonnell 2000** was not only a fine basketball player at THS and current boys coach at Rossville High, but he gives a great hair cut.



**Duane Pomeroy 1970** was recognized as USTA Kansas District Tennis Coach of the Year. With him are, from left: Coach Terry Blackwell, Co-Captains Madeline Deters & Ava Ritter, and Captain Christian Sink.

News about THS graduates is important to us. We want to know about your careers, honors, and THS memories. Drop us a note at [thshs@thshistoricalociety.org](mailto:thshs@thshistoricalociety.org).



800 SW Tenth Ave  
Topeka, KS 66612

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**Upcoming Dates in 2026**

**Tuesday, April 7, Friends of THS Lunch, watch Facebook for more information**  
**July 5, 6 pm, Patriotic Chimes Concert on the Topeka High lawn**  
**Friday, September 25, THS Homecoming**  
**THS Graduate Hall of Fame, Sunday, October 4, 2 pm, Hoehner Auditorium**  
**Tuesday, December 7, Friends of THS Lunch**