



The Brick & Mortar Board

the newsletter of the HHS Alumni Association, Inc.
www.hobartalumni.org

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November, 2013

BrickieFest Homecoming Picnic Brings Out Alums from Many Classes



*Alumni from 18 different classes attended the BrickieFest Homecoming Picnic on September 28.
(See the story and more pictures on Page 4)*

Alumni Spotlight

Michelle Lucas Ham, Trainer of Astronauts



Michelle Lucas Ham, HHS Class of 1988, has worked for NASA training astronauts for the International Space Station, started her own Aerospace Consulting Company, and created a non-profit called Higher Orbits to encourage students in the STEM areas (science, technology, engineering and math). She is married to retired astronaut Ken Ham. Her interview with us begins here.

Could you tell us a little about yourself and describe your path from Hobart High School to your current position?

From the time I was a very little girl I knew that I wanted to work at NASA. I was very lucky to have many teachers along the way who encouraged my interest and helped guide me into classes that would help me chase my dream.

Upon graduation from Hobart High School I went to Purdue University to study Engineering there. While at Purdue I got offered an opportunity to work at Space Camp in Florida (which was really neat because I had been to Space Camp as a kid) and while I was there I decided to

Alumni Spotlight (cont.)

transfer from Purdue to Embry Riddle Aeronautical University in Florida because it was an Aerospace specific school and I could watch space shuttle launches from "my back yard."

After graduation I went to work for a contractor at NASA's Johnson Space Center (JSC). I first worked on the Payload Safety Review Panel for the International Space Station (ISS). I then became a flight controller for ISS for a number of years before becoming an astronaut instructor for ISS. In addition to technical training for astronauts I also instructed other instructors and flight controllers not just within NASA but at all of the International Partners for ISS so I got the opportunity to do lots of travel to Germany, Japan and Russia. I also was part of the NASA Extreme Environment Mission Operations (NEEMO) team - we ran underwater missions in an underwater habitat in Florida as a way of training astronauts for their space mission. Being underwater is a great analogy, in some way, for spaceflight.

A few years ago I decided to start my own Aerospace Consulting Company and one of the things that I do a lot of (because I enjoy it so much) is outreach to promote Science Technology, Engineering & Math through the use of space. (I mean, let's face it, if you can't get excited and interested in space, I'm not sure what else I can entice someone with!) I've also recently undertaken the start-up of my own non-profit (called Higher Orbits) that will encourage students to excel in STEM fields as well as leadership and team-building by raising money to provide scholarships to students for experiences in these fields. My path has gone slightly differently than I originally might have thought it would in some ways, but it's gone in ways more amazing than I had originally thought it would! I've certainly learned that you should take advantage of opportunities that come your way even if you're not entirely sure you're a fan of that opportunity, because you just never know when you will land in the middle of something different that you really enjoy. I never thought I would instruct anyone on anything, but I took a leap outside of my comfort zone to become an astronaut instructor and that was one of the greatest career decisions I ever made!

What are some of your other most memorable experiences, accomplishments in working in design, teaching, or space travel with NASA?

One of my most memorable moments was my first trip to Star City, Russia in January of 2002. Let's be honest - I didn't do a whole lot of traveling while growing up in Hobart. Our idea of vacation was generally to go to Great America and if we were super lucky we got a

hotel room nearby (with a pool there) and used the Twicket for a second day at Great America. So, "exotic" travel was new to me. To say I was excited to go to Star City was an understatement, to say the least. I will never forget standing in the middle of Star City (which by the way is pretty much in the middle of nowhere even though it's an hour from Moscow), looking around and just being in awe of the fact that I was in a place that is the heart of the Russian space program and when I was younger it wasn't even on the maps because it was so secret. I absolutely loved all my travels to Russia but that first trip will always be special.

Another incredibly memorable experience was with the Expedition 14 ISS crew. I had spent the majority of 2.5 years as one of the lead technical instructors responsible for making sure that the crew of Expedition 14 was ready for their long expedition flight to the International Space Station. During that time I became close with not just the crew but also the training team. While I had seen other launches before this (I'd seen space shuttle launches in person and on TV and I'd seen Soyuz launches on TV), but when our team gathered to watch Expedition 14 launch on a Soyuz towards ISS, it was such an incredibly cool moment. To be part of something in a very tangible way that is so big was an amazing feeling.

I guess I would be completely remiss if I didn't mention that meeting my husband Ken Ham while working at NASA was a memorable experience!

Space Travel has always been fascinating. Can you tell us about bringing the Mission Discovery program to Valparaiso and how you became involved with this project?

I began working with ISSET several years ago while I was still at NASA. After leaving NASA to start my own business, I had the opportunity to work closely with the founder of ISSET to develop/refine new projects such as Mission Discovery. Mission Discovery is a project that I am incredibly fond of. It's a 5-day camp where we use space to get students of high school and university age interested in Science, Technology, Engineering & Math subjects. I'm not trying to get all of the students to become Rocket Scientists but space is a great way of opening peoples' eyes about how many STEM opportunities are out there that they may not have thought of. This 5-day camp obviously has space elements but additionally has major components that deal with Leadership, Team Building and Communication. Students work with an astronaut and NASA Scientists/leaders with the pinnacle of the week being that the students design an experiment within

Alumni Spotlight (cont.)

specific parameters that they want to test out in space. The teams all compete and the winning team's experiment actually will fly to space! I can tell you that I would absolutely have loved an opportunity like this when I was in school! Check it out at www.isset.org.

In what ways did Hobart High School help prepare you for your career, directly or indirectly, and were there any people in particular who helped start you on that path?

Wow, in some ways this is a tough one, because I think all the experiences we have in life prepare us for our careers if our career happens to be our passion (which it is for me). I certainly had teachers along the way who pushed me and supported me especially when times were tough.

To this day, when asked who my most significant mentors in life have been, many people are surprised that my first answer of a high school educator is not one who taught a STEM subject... it's Mrs. Cory. Mrs. Cory taught me that you yourself are the only one who can stand in the way of your ambitions. She taught me how to be an effective communicator and how to challenge "the norm" - these things served me well in my career path. Other teachers who had an incredibly big impact on me were Mr. Workman (History) and Mr. Sederberg (Chemistry). All 3 of these teachers exhibited such passion in their teaching and I think it was then that I realized how important it is to find a career you are passionate about. All 3 of them also demanded nothing but the best - I suppose that sometimes made some of them unpopular with some but let's face it: in life, you should expect people to demand the best from you so these teachers set my expectations for the professional world early. My experience of being part of the cheerleading squad taught me so much about teamwork and our travels to compete in Nationals fostered that competitive spirit to always do my best - and my cheerleading coach



Dona was always incredibly supportive of me and my dreams which is something I will always be grateful for.

And, of course, of the people who made a huge difference in my life my mom is at the top. She has always been my biggest supporter and always pushed me to follow my dreams.

Do you have any advice for today's high school students who are interested in Aeronautical Engineering and space travel?

My advice for students, irrespective of what they want to study, is that they need to find their passion. I happen to have been lucky that I found my passion - space - when I was quite young. Once you find your passion, you will be more willing to put in the long hours and hard work that you have to with school and your studies. You are just naturally going to be better at something you are passionate about, too! You have a long time to work in life so make sure it's doing something you enjoy!

I certainly do encourage all young people to take as many math, science and technology classes as they can, though. These subjects open doors for you that others just don't. Even if you decide to go into a non-science field you'll have left open options and opportunities for yourself since you took more science and math courses. And the bottom line is that, yes, it certainly is hard work, but I can tell you that great opportunities come from hard work and trust me... it's all worth it in the end!



Save the Date! Sweetheart Dance on February 15, 2014 at Rosser Hall

Take your sweetheart out to dinner next Valentine's, but on Saturday night, February 15, bring him or her to Rosser Hall to celebrate the holiday with your Hobart High School alumni friends.

The HHS Alumni Association is sponsoring a Sweetheart Dance for Brickies of all ages on Saturday, February 15, 2014. Save the date! More details will appear in these newsletters and on the HHSAA website, www.hobartalumni.org.

BrickieFest Homecoming Picnic Brings Out Alums from Many Classes

(continued from Page 1)



About 80 people attended the BrickieFest Homecoming Picnic at Deep River Park on Saturday, September 28, the weekend of the Hobart Brickies' Homecoming game. Alums from 18 different classes attended the bring-your-own-picnic event in wonderful 70-degree weather. The Classes of 1958 and 1973, who had their own reunions going on that weekend, boasted the most people attending the picnic.

A dozen people joined the HHS Alumni Association, helping to support scholarships for students, and professional development for teachers. Student board members Stephany Hill and Nathaniel Wilfong (Class of 2014) were introduced. The youngest Brickie attending was Tracy Estabrook McCullough's grandson Kane, HHS Class of 2026!

Thanks to all who came!

HHS Alumni Association Board

The Hobart High School Alumni Association was officially incorporated on July 17, 2010. The members of the Board of Directors whose terms end in July 2014 are:

OFFICERS

Paul Addison, Class of 1970.....	<i>President</i>
Holli Smith Kostbade, Class of 1998.....	<i>Vice-President</i>
Debra Broker Opolski, Class of 1970	<i>Treasurer</i>
Lynn Hasza-Heintz, Class of 1967	<i>Recording Secretary</i>
Tracy Estabrook McCullough, Class of 1978	<i>Corresponding Secretary</i>

AT-LARGE MEMBERS

Brent Martinson, *Principal, Hobart High School*
 Lynn Sheets Kostbade, Class of 1966
 Dawn Briney Krull, Class of 1968
 Sherry Oswald Peterson, Class of 1965
 Michael Trammel, Class of 1967
 Rod Warren, Class of 1971

STUDENT MEMBERS

Stephany Hill, Class of 2014
 Nathaniel Wilfong, Class of 2014

Welcome to our newest HHSAA board member, Rod Warren!

Mission Statement

The mission of the Hobart High School Alumni Association is to develop and maintain a close relationship between Hobart High School, its constituents, and its alumni for their mutual benefit. The Association is committed to, and involved in the support and well-being of Hobart High School and its alumni.

OUR GOALS

- To assist Hobart High School in communication with its alumni
- To convey to Hobart High School the views, attitudes, and needs of the alumni in seeking to preserve, advocate, and promote alumni interests
- To strengthen alumni activities and programs
- To support educational programs through teacher grants and student scholarships

Our Supporters

The HHS Alumni Association is a not-for-profit, 501(c)(3) corporation, and our entire financial support comes from membership dues and contributions. We recognize our supporters by listing the names (not the amounts) of those who have contributed to HHSAA, including memorials, donations, and new and renewed members.

Membership in the HHS Alumni Association is \$10 per year, and life memberships are \$100. If you join now, your membership is extended until December 2014. Thank you!

LIFE MEMBERS

Lawrence Hopkins, Class of 1962

NEW AND RENEWED MEMBERS

Larry Barrasas

Paul Bartz, Class of 1958

Margie Blanchard Lindsey, Class of 1956

John Blanchard, Class of 1958

Suzanna Bolla Enslin, Class of 1991

Thomas Bowman, Class of 1973

Lori Cook Anderson

Lyle Hatten, Class of 1958

Jim Moore, Class of 1958

Thomas Parry, Class of 1971

Alex Ramos, Class of 2000

Barb Rusnak Kaiser, Class of 1967

Dennis Schuman, Class of 1963

Ralph Sisco, Class of 1966

Nancy Teer Snider, Class of 1985

Fall 2013 Hall of Fame Members Inducted

On September 13 at the Hobart-Kankakee Valley football game, new members were inducted into the HHS Hall of Fame. They are: the 1987 State Championship Football Team, Dr. Carter, Dr. Koscielniak, Dr. Krsek, & Dr. Wylie. Pictures can be seen on the [Hobart High School website](#). Congratulations!

*The Brick & Mortar Board is a publication of the Hobart High School Alumni Association, Inc., a non-profit, 501(c)(3) corporation. It is an electronic publication, delivered by email to members of the Association. Membership is \$10 per year, or \$100 for a Life Membership, and donations are tax-deductible. Make your check payable to: **HHS Alumni Association**, and mail it to: HHSAA, PO Box 68, Hobart, IN 46342. Our website is: www.hobartalumni.org. The editor of The Brick & Mortar Board is Paul Addison.*



Membership Application Hobart High School Alumni Association, Inc.

Check one: New member ____ Renewal ____

Check one: 1-year membership (\$10) ____ Lifetime membership (\$100) ____

First Name _____

Last Name (in high school) _____

Married Last Name _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email address _____

Home phone _____

Cell phone _____

Work phone _____

Your class graduating year at HHS _____

"Once a Brickie, Always a Brickie!"

Thank you for your support!

Membership is \$10 per year, or \$100 for a Life Membership
(proceeds go towards scholarships and teacher grants)

Make your check out to: HHS Alumni Association

Mail to: HHSAA, P.O. Box 68, Hobart, IN 46342

Our website is: www.hobartalumni.org