



great graduates

BROKEN ARROW HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION



2012 HONOREES



great graduates

HISTORY OF THE GREAT GRADUATE HALL OF FAME PROGRAM

The Broken Arrow High School Alumni Association honors a select group of “Great Graduates” who have exhibited – throughout their adult lives – strong leadership and good citizenship, which the Broken Arrow Schools helped develop during their formative years of schooling.

The recipients are individuals who exhibit through a variety of activities a purposeful drive that helps them remain dedicated to service within their community and compassionate towards others. Each one has proven to have personal integrity, courage and has achieved in both his or her personal and professional life. As they continue to soar and live a commitment to excellence, they serve as role models to all of us. Nominations are solicited throughout the community of Broken Arrow and in the media for alumnae who have modeled a selfless life of achievement and service to others for at least 20 years.

The Broken Arrow High School Alumni Association was revived in 1999, starting the tradition of the Great Graduates. The very first Great Graduates class was formally honored as part of the Broken Arrow Public Schools Foundation Banquet festivities in the spring of 1999. In 2001, the Alumni Association began to host their own event, specifically honoring the Great Graduates and their guests. This tradition continues to the present.

Great Graduates 1999

Jim Brewer, Class of 1956 (Posthumously)
John Hudson, Class of 1966 (Posthumously)
Virginia Watts Johnson, Class of 1948
Dr. Alan Keller, Class of 1965
Millie Marshall, Class of 1955

Great Graduates 2000

Ed Cobb Jr., Class of 1943 (Posthumously)
Howard Fisher, Class of 1935
Carl Martin, Class of 1943
Max E. Smith, Class of 1950
Roy Sturgeon, Class of 1959

Great Graduates 2001

Robert Eskridge, Class of 1944
Herb Karner, Class of 1934
Doug Lanier, Class of 1968
Frances McNeely Leonard, Class of 1953
Dr. Jeff Lester, Class of 1964

Great Graduates 2002

Brad Gahm, Class of 1977
Richard Gilliland, Class of 1956
Letha Phillips Nichols, Class of 1931 (Posthumously)
Floy C. Pepper, Class of 1934
Bill Perry, Class of 1948

Great Graduates 2003

Max Brissey, Class of 1948
Larry Deonier, Class of 1964 (Posthumously)
Luke Garrett, Class of 1977
Dr. Gary Gerber, Class of 1968
Janice Worthington Lisko, Class of 1975
Rick Medlin, Class of 1963

Great Graduates 2004

William C. Chapman, Class of 1938
Arnold Kunze, Class of 1946
Major William H. (Hank) Miesner, Jr., Class of 1957 (Posthumously)
Lieutenant Colonel Rowdy Williams, Class of 1958
Johnnie Parks, Class of 1965

Great Graduates 2005

Dr. Jack L. Griffin, Class of 1940
Maxine Layton Dark, Class of 1944
Bob Henry, Class of 1948
H. Delbert Frieze, Esq., Class of 1961

Great Graduates 2006

Paul Hayes, Class of 1940
Onis Lemon, Class of 1956
Mitchell Wilson, Class of 1970
Rebecca Righter Bluestone, Class of 1972
Russ McKinnon, Class of 1977

Great Graduates 2008

Bert Kennard, Class of 1940
Nile Clark, Class of 1955
Elmo Johnston, Class of 1943



Broken Arrow High School
Alumni Association
GREAT GRADUATES OF 2012
Recognition Ceremony and Reception

Varsity Club, Broken Arrow High School
Friday, November 2, 2012, 5:30 p.m.

Master of Ceremonies

Justin Rosser
Broken Arrow High School Choir Director
Class of 1995

Welcome

Dr. Jarod Mendenhall
Superintendent of Schools

**Greetings from the Broken Arrow High School
Alumni Association**

Dale Bresee, Alumni Association President
Class of 1977

**Recognition of Former Great Graduates,
School Board Members and Special Guests**

**Introduction of Great Graduates
Class of 2012**

Kristin Chenoweth, Class of 1986
Presented by Billie Sue Hood Thompson
Class of 1961

Ivan Brown, Class of 1919
Presented by Max Smith
Class of 1950

Nick Aston, Class of 1963
Presented by Johnnie Lofton
Class of 1963

Dr. Amy Sturgis, Class of 1990
Presented by Karen Sturgis

Dennis Sagely, Class of 1992
Presented by Mike Jones

Closing Remarks
Justin Rosser

Invocation
Charles Gann
Class of 1955

Dinner

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Broken Arrow Public Schools

Dr. Jarod Mendenhall
Superintendent of Schools

BAPS Communications Department

Ken Ellett
Director of Athletics

Derek Blackburn
Broken Arrow High School Principal
Class of 1990

Bob Lewis
Writer and Editorial Consultant

Felix Degeyter
Vintage Automobiles for Homecoming Parade

Broken Arrow High School Honor Society

Broken Arrow High School Jazz Choir

Great Graduates Escorts
Jordan Bayer, Emily Beeman, Kaylonna Gill, Tiffany Hopp,
Haley Hopper, Caleb Monigold, Erick Payne, Jeremy Rector,
Evan Taylor and Andy Trac

GREAT GRADUATES COMMITTEE

Derek Blackburn, Class of 1990
Paula Showman Bridges, Class of 1955
Gwynta Blissit Buchanan, Class of 1970
Carla Dobbins Crow, Class of 1970
Charles Gann, Class of 1955
Carolyn Vaughan Hodges, Class of 1970
Steve Schwab, Class of 1982
Max Smith, Class of 1950
Rowdy Williams, Class of 1958
Glenne Wimpee, Class of 1990

Ivan BROWN

Class of 1919

By Dr. Clarence G. Oliver, Jr.

Old-timers tell the story that customers sometimes would remove their glasses, clean the lens, and take another look with disbelief at the large, artistic words, “Si’s Recreation Parlor,” on the plate glass window of Ivan D. Brown’s office at Arkansas Valley State Bank. The window which reached from floor to ceiling had been retrieved by Brown from the downtown pool hall when the business closed. Keeping it was an indicator of Brown’s wry wit.

The “Si’s” window was popular throughout the time Brown served in the bank leadership role until his death in 1972. During a later remodeling project, it was removed—but preserved by family members who had been well taught the need to “preserve history.” It is now on display at the Broken Arrow Historical Museum.

Brown was an old-fashioned banker who recognized that a handshake confirmed a deal, and who was known on busy days at the bank to speed up payroll check-cashing time by pulling cash from his pocket for customers who didn’t have time to wait in line for a teller. He broke traditions, and people loved it.

This Great Graduate representing the class of 1919, was a prankster for most of his life. An example came when he was an 11th grader and was “expelled” because of an end-of-school-year prank. He wasn’t really “expelled” but, he was suspended for a full week. The following year, he graduated with honors and headed off to the Roswell Military Institute, Harvard University and the



University of Oklahoma, continuing his family’s tradition of higher education. By attending Harvard, he became Broken Arrow High School’s first Ivy Leaguer.

In 1924, Brown was employed as an assistant cashier at the Citizens State Bank in Bixby. He eventually became the major stockholder of that institution as well as Broken Arrow’s Arkansas Valley State Bank (now AVB Bank). The rest of his life was devoted to serving the community and helping people.

Knowing that she is part of a bank that has been owned by the same family for more than 100 years underscores for Kelly Kimbrough Rash, Brown’s granddaughter and current Chairman of the Board, the family’s deep interest in and commitment to the community.

The close ties between the city and one of its leading bankers was seen during the time leading up to Broken Arrow’s 2002-2003 Centennial Celebration. Residents were asked to nominate current and former citizens to be named on the list of Broken Arrow’s “100 Outstanding Citizens of the Century (1902-2002).” Ivan Brown is on that list with multiple nominations.

Preserving the community’s history was a high priority for this Great Graduate. His office and home were filled with artifacts and writings, many which were donated to the Broken Arrow Historical Museum. A major exhibit there is the result of his early effort to save the Childers family log cabin that was built in 1836.

Brown’s life is too full to summarize in this brief write-up. Recognizing him posthumously as a Broken Arrow High School Great Graduate, even 93 years after his graduation, seems most appropriate.

Kristin CHENOWETH

Class of 1986



The international fame enjoyed by Kristin Chenoweth comes as no surprise to Broken Arrowans who were dazzled as far back as the 1980's by the "little girl with a big voice" who sang in church, was the featured artist at a number of community events and excelled in a variety of theatrical productions at Broken Arrow High School.

Recognized by colleagues with some of the entertainment industry's most coveted awards, Chenoweth's fans back home have honored her with induction into the Oklahoma Hall of Fame and recently gave her a standing ovation as she returned home to see the stage at Broken Arrow Public Schools' new Performing Arts Center named in her honor. Now an international star who still proudly tells reporters "I'm from Broken Arrow, Oklahoma," she represents the Class of 1986 as one of this year's Great Graduates.

If talent is Chenoweth's hallmark, versatility ranks a close second. Critics note she is one of the few entertainers today who can effortlessly transition between stage, television and film and achieve acclaim in all three venues.

For her work on the small screen, she received an Emmy Award for best supporting actress in the ABC series "Pushing Daisies." Her resume also includes highly praised roles in the Fox hit "Glee" and "West Wing." Additional credits range from playing Mrs. Noodle on "Sesame Street" to starring in her own series, "Kristin" on NBC.

Theatergoers will long remember her Tony winning performances in "You're A Good Man Charlie Brown" and the role she originated

as Glinda the Good Witch in "Wicked." Also on her list of credits is the musical "Steel Pier," which earned her a Theatre World award.

On the silver screen, Chenoweth recently completed production on the movie, "Ed Zwick's Family Weekend." She has also been seen in the Disney movie "You Again" alongside Jamie Lee Curtis and Kristen Bell and provided the voice of Rosetta in Disney's "Tinker Bell and the Lost Treasure" and "The Great Fairy Rescue."

Never straying far from the music she loves, Chenoweth has released three albums and four CDs and continues to captivate sell-out crowds in London and across the nation.

On top of all that, she is now a published author, making a national splash with "A Little Bit Wicked," a book she wrote that chronicles her life to date.

But no matter how many books she may write, sold-out concerts she may play or awards she may earn, family members insist she will always be a home-town girl who is quick to recognize grade school music teacher Clydia Forehand who was the first to recognize her talent; Max Smith who gave her the opportunity and encouragement to showcase her talent; intermediate high school music teacher Larry Thompson who connected her with Oklahoma City University; and her professional mentor and vocal coach, Florence Birdwell.

What's ahead for this Great Graduate is anybody's guess. But should a producer want to create a television program, Broadway musical or movie entitled "Local Girl Makes Good," Kristin Chenoweth is a shoo-in for the lead role.



Nick ASTON

Class of 1963

During his years at Broken Arrow High School, Great Graduate Nick Aston earned a reputation for being quite an artist. It was well-earned recognition.

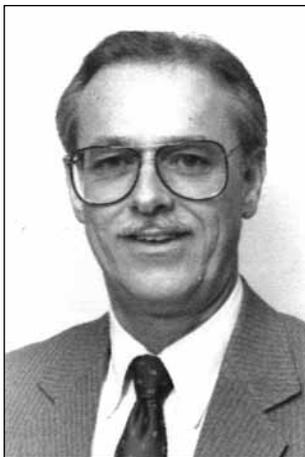
Before graduating in 1963 with a 3.19 grade point average, he served as art editor of "Tiger Tales" and is credited with designing most of the programs and posters used for school events during the three years he was a BAHS student. In recognition of his talent, he carried home the school's coveted Class Night Art Award in 1963.

At the University of Arkansas where he earned BS, BSE and Med degrees, this Great Graduate used his talent to instruct and inspire students eager to learn how to draw and design. A share of his fame came from being the first student at that institution to have one of his pieces purchased for the permanent exhibit at the Arkansas Arts Center.

Aston launched his professional graphics career at the Broken Arrow Ledger where he applied his artistic talents in the newspaper's advertising department. From there, his career path led to 20 years of service with the U.S. Air Force before retiring as a master sergeant with 17 ribbons and nine medals. His "second career" included positions in graphic design at the National Center for Toxicological Research in Arkansas and with the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, Georgia.

This Great Graduate's resume of community service involves a large number of activities in a variety of states. For example:

- From 1986-1989, he served as managing editor and a member of the board of directors of the Arkansas Association of Instructional Media.



- In 1987, he served as a volunteer in the emergency room of the Arkansas Children's Hospital in Little Rock.
- From 1990-95 he was managing editor and a member of the board of directors of the Georgia Association of Instructional Media.
- From 1998-2002, he was a member of the Georgia Military Historical Society's board of directors.
- In 1996 he was security officer at the International Horse Park for equestrian events and Army liaison during the Olympic Games.
- From 2003-05, he was a Community Development Council volunteer in Mexico Beach, Florida.
- Those same years, he volunteered for the Humane Society of Port St. Joe, Florida.

Throughout those years, classmate and friend Larry Pennington notes Aston stayed in contact with his high school pals, and played important roles in class reunions and other functions.

Now retired, he has returned to Broken Arrow and is a frequent attendee at assorted alumni events in addition to volunteering as an entertainer at six area senior centers. His top priority now is to do everything he can to make Broken Arrow's new Military Museum a rousing success.

Aston's spare time is occupied by writing, photography and, as one might expect, artwork that includes painting, drawing, sculpting and graphic design. Travel, both nationally and internationally, is also high on his to-do list with Singapore, Okinawa, England, Germany, France, Italy, Israel, Denmark, Switzerland, Canada, Mexico and most of the continental United States among his ports of call.

Amy STURGIS

Class of 1990

Look up the term “high levels of academic achievement” in most any dictionary and you may well find it illustrated with a picture of Great Graduate Dr. Amy H. Sturgis.

The beginnings of her glowing national reputation began in 1990 when she graduated from Broken Arrow High School With Distinction, an Academic All-Stater and National Merit Scholar.

She attended Belmont University as a Presidential Scholar and graduated as Valedictorian and Summa Cum Laude in 1993. She then earned M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in history from Vanderbilt University and today specializes in science fiction/fantasy and Native American studies, teaching at both the undergraduate and graduate levels at Lenoir-Rhyne University and the innovative Mythgard Institute.

Outside the classroom, this Great Graduate serves on the advisory board of Mythopoeic Press and various committees for the Prometheus Awards in Literature. She is a member of the Mont Pelerin Society and the Liberty and Power group blog based at George Mason University. She has appeared as an expert in various television programs and films, and is featured in a series of online short historical documentaries that she wrote, which were produced by Ozymandius Media for the Institute for Humane Studies in 2012. Sturgis is the author of four books on U.S. political and Native American history (Tecumseh: A Biography, The Trail of Tears and Indian Removal, Presidents from Hayes through McKinley: 1877-1901 and Presidents from Washington through Monroe:



1789-1825), the editor of five books on science fiction and fantasy subjects (The Intersection of Fantasy and Native America: From H.P. Lovecraft to Leslie Marmon Silko, Past Watchful Dragons: Fantasy and Faith in the Worlds of C.S. Lewis, The Magic Goblet, The Magic Ring, and The LockeSmith Review: Great Thinkers in Classical Liberalism), and the writer of more than 40 published scholarly and mainstream essays and articles.

A well-known and popular public speaker at universities, schools, conferences and genre conventions, she has more than 200 presentations to her credit.

In 2006, Sturgis was honored with the Imperishable Flame Award for Achievement in Tolkien/Inklings Scholarship. In 2008, she was presented a 50th Annual Southern California Journalism Award for her essay “Florida’s Forgotten Rebels: Rediscovering the Most Successful Slave Revolt in American History.” As if that were not enough, she also contributes regular “History of the Genre” features to and narrates contemporary science fiction stories for the UK-based podcast StarShipSofa. In both 2009 and 2011, she was honored with the Sofanaut Award in Podcasting for Best Fact Article Contributor. In 2010, StarShipSofa became the first podcast in history to win the prestigious Hugo Award. With her husband of 17 years, Dr. Larry M. Hall, and their very best friend, The Shire’s Virginia Lórien (a.k.a. Virginia the Boston terrier), Sturgis lives in the foothills of North Carolina. Her official website is amyhsturgis.com.

Dennis SAGELY

Class of 1992



Dennis Sagely's close friends – a group that seems to include a majority of the residents in Broken Arrow and eastern Oklahoma – describe him as “a wonderfully honest, open, humble man with a passion for helping others.”

To that description can now be added the distinction of being a Great Graduate representing the Broken Arrow High School class of 1992.

Sagely always had his sights set on being an attorney and the best at everything he undertook. That was obvious in the classroom where he ranked in the top one percent in his graduating class and in competitive athletics where he was a four-year letterman in wrestling and played football and baseball. His senior year, his classmates elected him Student Council President.

Athletics and academics led Sagely to become an Ivy Leaguer. At Cornell University, he wrestled, played lightweight football and was a member of Sigma Nu Fraternity. His senior year, he was inducted into the Sphinx Head Senior Honor Society, an organization created to recognize a few select individuals who displayed outstanding strength of character along with a dedication to leadership and service. Induction is one of the highest non-scholastic honors within reach of Cornell undergraduate students.

After earning his degree in 1996, Sagely returned to Oklahoma to attend the University of Oklahoma College of Law. There, he served on the American Indian Law Review and participated in intramural sports. In 1997, he married his BAHS classmate and sweetheart, Andrea Wiley.



After receiving his law degree in 1999, the Sagelys returned to Broken Arrow where she began teaching in the Broken Arrow Public School system and he spent four years getting his feet wet in family law and litigation before opening his own practice in 2003. It didn't take him long to expand his volunteer commitments from helping his wife with school activities to becoming a charter member of the Broken Arrow Noon Lion's Club and a member of the board of directors of A New Leaf.

In 2006, the year his twin daughters were born, he added the Broken Arrow Relay for Life Committee to his repertoire. In addition, he serves as district vice president for the Oklahoma Municipal Judges Association and is an active member of First United Methodist Church.

In 2005, the City of Broken Arrow and City of Coweta picked one of the busiest guys in town to serve as their alternate municipal judge. Six years later, Sagely took over as Presiding Municipal Judge in Coweta, maintained his Broken Arrow duties and added responsibility as alternate municipal judge for the City of Bixby. Serving with distinction in all three roles while maintaining his own private practice earned him recognition as Best Attorney of 2012 by readers of the Broken Arrow Ledger.

Despite a demanding schedule, friends say they would be shocked not to find this Great Graduate helping his kids sell sno-cones for the Lion's Club at Tuesdays in the Park; setting up tents and chairs for Relay for Life; or squeezing in a few rounds of golf or a game of softball between engagements.

That's the kind of commitment that makes this Tiger roar.