



Issue 1

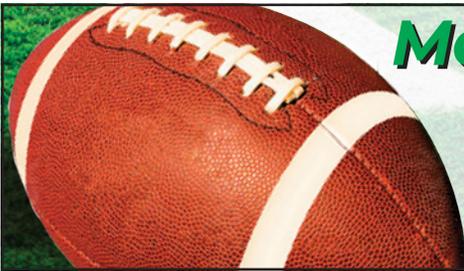
# AHS Alumni instaNEWS

Arlington High School Alumni Association  
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*In this Issue: Homecoming Schedule, Teacher of the Year, Alumni Art Donation*



## Make Homecoming Plans Now!

Call your friends and classmates and make plans to join us Sept. 11-12 as AHS prepares for their annual Pep Rally and Homecoming game. The yearly Alumni Association Open House will be held that same weekend from 10-noon on Saturday in the AHS Cafeteria. More details to come! Make plans to be there and celebrate the Colts! We'll save you a seat!



**THE NEW "HOME EC"** – AHS Teacher of the Year, Erica Capella, watches her students as ice cream delivery time approaches.

## Culinary Arts Teacher Recognized As AHS 2025-26 Teacher of the Year

By Rickie Windle  
Alumni Reporter

To elevate a student is a core value for a teacher.

It applies on multiple levels for Arlington High School 2025-26 Teacher of the Year Erica Capella.

Capella is a family and consumer sciences and introduction to culinary arts teacher. It's a place where students learn how to create a functioning household and begin learning not only how to make

foods, but "elevate" them to add to flavors and appeal.

"The new home ec," Capella translated.

She's popular with students, but it takes something different, something more to become Teacher of the Year. It also isn't an administrators' pet. The honor is given through AHS peer educator nominations and reviews. Each year, the faculty makes

**TEACHER** – Cont. on Pg. 2

## Alumni Art Donation Brings History to Legacy Room

Keisha Smith, Class of '80, donated an original piece of her artwork to the Alumni Board of Directors prior to their board meeting in February. Board Members Peggy Martin and Beth Anne Woodard, who have been appointed as curators of the Alumni Legacy Room, were there to receive the art on behalf of the entire board.

The colored pencil artwork entitled "How Sweet It Is To Be In Colt Country" was created by Smith last fall and a limited number were printed and sold to raise donations for their 45th reunion. The 1980 graduation class, including their T-shirt sales, raised \$430 which was presented to the Association to recognize and honor their classmates who had passed away.

"My first T-shirt design for our class, was class specific," Smith commented. "However, for our 45th reunion, I wanted to do something different." Smith said she's always loved drawing horses. "For this drawing, I was inspired by the sky and the

**ART DONATION** – Cont. on Pg. 4



**HOW SWEET IT IS** – Alumni Legacy Room curators and Board Members Peggy Martin (left) and Beth Anne Woodard (right), accept an art donation from Keisha Smith (center), Class of '80, prior to the recent Board of Directors meeting.

## TEACHER OF THE YEAR (cont. from Pg. 1)

nominations and explains them online. The teacher with the most nominations is named. Teachers sway one another with their commentaries throughout the process.

At Arlington High School, that means someone who takes an extra step, what they call contributing to the elusive, but critical culture.

"They are teachers who are great at their craft, but you need to add something to the culture," Principal Stacie Humbles said. "It's not even (just) our best work. There is a tradition with it."

Capella may have a leg up because she has access to the faculty's stomach. Her classes' cooking, from the "kitchen" classroom in the hallway adjacent to the cafeteria, is often available to that faculty.

Most notable may be the Arlie Ice Cream Shop that opens for faculty and staff. It's a doorway in that hall. One of the class assignments for culinary arts is making an ice cream, not just vanilla or chocolate, but once again something elevated with additional flavors, maybe unexpected ingredients like nuts or cookies. "Do something new," Capella coached a student anticipating the ice cream assignment.

And Capella, who has been teaching at AHS for six years, says the staff advises her on Colt requirements. She said several members have told her the class also has to perform the cinnamon rolls made famous decades ago in the school cafeteria. "That was never enough," Capella said of the ice cream. "It is building new traditions, picking up old ones."

On a recent late winter day, the assignment was pasta. Capella said she had to outlaw alfredo because "every kid wants to eat alfredo." With five "kitchens" and teams at work, Capella flitted from student to student, advising and questioning, but never actually doing. A white board advises the assignment specifics, "complete the recipe, plate, clean, then eat."

The students are proud to share their products, asking a

visitor to sample the cheese, tomato or even Cajun-style sauces they've come up with to season their pastas.

Along with the sciences classes, Capella says it is education masked in fun. "These are the skills they need to know, communication, teamwork," she said. "They see how to apply them to real life."

The students see more in their teacher than passing on recipes.

"She is my favorite teacher and I love cooking," said sophomore Shalomita Simanjuatak.

"She cares about us more," said sophomore Harlow Birdsong. "She's respectful."

One of the most focused students is a freshman, Andreas Dominguez. He is with the team that made the Cajun flavored pasta, using the shrimp shells to flavor a broth before straining it and adding the shrimp meat and other ingredients. His father is a chef and Dominguez hopes to follow in the footsteps.

"She is really helpful with the ingredients, helps to elevate it," Dominguez said. "She's one of the most helpful teachers I've ever had even through all the core classes. She is showing cooking is a natural skill."

Although she was unaware of Dominguez's comments, Capella pictured her version of the best student as some of the traits he portrayed.

"It's one that is receptive, that's accountable even for their mistakes," she said. "One that will accept a 'nice try' and keep working."

Capella said the opportunity to create contributing members of society drives her to teach.

"So it can help the next generation, helping them find their path while they're still malleable."

And then, there's the rewards. Capella noted working on a board trying to pass along something complicated when she heard the voice behind her say I get it now. "I was about to cry," the teacher said.

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*This lab wasn't just about learning how to make ice cream and waffle cones,"*

*Capella said.*

*"We also have a pick up location where teachers come to pick up the ice cream with students in charge of the area. Here they get to work on their customer service skills as well.*

”



## Class Reunions

### CLASS OF 1966

We are planning our 60th high school reunion! It is going to be easy and basically free. We would love to have you meet with us and help organize the event at 6:00 p.m., Tuesday, March 17 at David's Barbecue, 2224 West Park Row in Pantego.

Please add your name if you would like to help. We have the two places reserved: Gilligan's and Springcreek BBQ for the weekend of AHS Homecoming, September 11-12. We will be looking to contact friends who attended the 50th reunion.

If you are in the classes around ours you are also welcome to come!

### CLASS OF 1967

Mark S. Fulton posted that the Class of '67 will be meeting at 8:30 a.m. the first Thursday of every month at JR's Grill and Cafe, 2406 W. Park Row. The group was previously meeting weekly, however dwindling attendance made the change to monthly gatherings necessary. The next meeting will be April 2.

**Stay in touch with your Classmates and your Alumni Association!**

**Send your reunion dates for 2026 to:**

**[AHSColtsforever@gmail.com](mailto:AHSColtsforever@gmail.com)**

## Alumni Association's Oldest Member Demonstrates Legacy of Pride, Tradition

*It was a strange feeling as I looked over the roster of the AHS Alumni Association - all those Colts who have gone before - some graduating decades before I was even born - fast-forwarding to those who recently graduated. What was it that united each of these high school students together?*

*The feeling of history, pride and tradition in our Alma Mater. That sense of wanting to give back to future generations in the same way that previous generations before us have done. It's that "kick 'em" sign that was always displayed at the pep rallies and football games. It was the rivalries that took place between the Colts and the Texans, and later as the city grew, the Vikings, Warriors,*

*Volunteers and Cougars.*

*This tribute is dedicated to one of those AHS Alumni who led the way. Graduating in 1940, Doland Carlton Maner, was the oldest living member of the Alumni Association prior to his passing in December. He was active in AHS athletics and following graduation, stayed involved in the community and served four terms on the City Council - giving back to the citizens of Arlington.*

*I had the pleasure of meeting him and his wife, Betty, at Open House in Oct. 2024, and was instantly touched by his humility and his love for Arlington and the entire Colts family. He was a blessing to all whose lives he touched.*

- Patti Schimpf, Class of '74



**DOLAND MANER** and his wife, **Bettie Mae McQuay Maner**, in attendance at the **AHS Alumni Open House** in September 2024.

## Doland Maner Remembered for Longevity, Service to Community

Doland Carlton Maner, Class of '40, and an Arlington High School Alumni Association board member and a faithful life member for many years, passed away Dec. 23, 2025 at the age of 103. He is survived by his wife Bettie Mae McQuay Maner, and two sons, Doland, Jr. and Douglas. His first wife, Dorothy, preceded him in death.

"Doland was just a cheerfully solid and genuinely good man - really a special guy," Cathy Brown, founder of the Alumni Association said.

During his time at AHS, Doland was manager of the 1939 AHS District Football Championship team. Doland's class of 99 students graduated from the original AHS on Cooper and Abram.

After graduation, Doland worked for Southern Ornamental Iron Works, (currently Southern Ornamental Steel Fabrication Company), before doing four years in the U.S. Navy, where he received several medals including the World War II Victory Medal, American Campaign Medal, Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal, and the Navy Good Conduct Medal - honors that reflected both his courage and character.

After returning to Arlington in 1946, Doland rejoined his former company

and stayed until his retirement in 1984, working his way up to President and Chairman of the Board.

In 1967, Doland began his four terms on the Arlington City Council where he worked with another Distinguished Colt, Mayor Tom Vandergriff, Class of '43, to bring the Texas Rangers baseball team to Arlington.



**CEREMONIAL FIRST PITCH - At 100 years old, Doland became the oldest person to throw out the Rangers' first pitch on opening day.**

One of his proudest moments came when he was 100 years old and became the oldest person to throw out the ceremonial first pitch at a Rangers game.

Doland served on the Board of the Alumni Association, as member-at-large for several years and was a Board member of the Arlington Historical Society for 16 years. He received the Distinguished Colt Award in 2011.

## 2026 Alumni Association Board of Directors

### OFFICERS:

- President:** Chris Hightower, '90
- Vice-President:** David Keal, '78
- Secretary:** Meghan Woodard, '15
- Treasurer:** Chris Wade, '79

### CHAIRPERSONS:

- Membership:** Judy Whitenight Northup, '69
- Membership Assistant:** Kim Counts Cathro, '78
- Parliamentarian:** Mary Poston Gunn, '67
- Scholarship:** Peggy Wood Martin, '66
- NTGD:** Mike & Nicky Austin, '90
- NTGD Advisor:** Debbie Koehl Ericson, '68
- Distinguished Colts:** Jerrell Womble, '71
- DCA Assistant:** Karen Cherry Cox, '76
- Reunions:** Jo Colliflower McGovern, '66
- Reunions Co-Chair:** Beth Anne McGovern Woodard, '88
- Publications:** Patti Schimpf, '74
- Reporter:** Rickie Windle, '75
- Webmaster:** Mac Martin, '61
- Product Sales:** Kristina De La Rosa Randerson, '99
- Special Events:** Erin Hawkes Chaney, '64
- July 4th Parade:** Kathy Einhaus, '68
- Alumni Band:** Tanya Terrell-Weidemann, '81
- Colt Volunteer Corral:** Michelle Barlen, CBC
- Corresponding Sec.:** Bonnie Beebe Watkins, '62
- Members-at-Large:** Mike Enger, '74;
- Campus Liaison:** Natasha Newsome, CBC



**GREATER BAND OPPORTUNITIES** – Several members of the Alumni Association, including (left to right) Kathy Einhaus, Debbie Ericson, Beth Anne Woodard, Ella Jo McGovern, Peggy and Mac Martin participated as Band Director Nathan Burum was presented with the Community Impact Grant check.

## Association Presents Check to Prepare Band Students for UIL Solo Competitions

Last fall, the Alumni Association board of directors approved funding a \$1,994 Community Impact Grant for band students. In February, the Community Impact Grant committee presented the grants to the recipients.

Speaking to the band students after accepting the award, Band Director Naathan Burum, who originally applied for the grant money, said the funds would be used to provide band students with access to instrumental solo music from the UIL Prescribed Music List through the school music library's check-out system. By making these selections readily available, students will have greater opportunities to prepare for UIL solo competitions, develop performance skills and build confidence, Burum added.

### ART DONATION (cont. from Pg. 1)

typography on the Led Zeppelin "Houses of the Holy" album cover, she added.

Smith, who has created T-shirt art, as well as her own personalized annual Christmas cards, has had a passion for art since childhood. Her calling is portraits; however, she has found a niche in other areas - specifically vintage cars, historic houses and pets. Her medium of choice: colored pencils on off-white canvas.

Her studio is located on the second floor of The Fielder House Museum, where she has family ties. "My dad actually built a scale railroad model which is housed in the basement," she commented.

Her latest project is a poster commemorating Arlington's 150th birthday. It depicts several of the city's more famous historical events.

"Arlington is celebrating its sesquicentennial this year," Smith said, adding that while there is no symbolic skyline, there are plenty of representations of the city's rich history.

150 signed prints will be produced and available for purchase through the Fielder House Museum.

## Alumni Membership Fees Due

For the month of February, the first month of annual AHS Alumni Association renewals, Membership Committee Chairperson Judy Northup has stated that 34% of the outstanding annual member renewals have been received.

If you received an invoice by mail or email in February, please get your renewal in soon. Your dues help us to provide scholarships for students, appreciation luncheons for teachers and so much more!

As an option for this yearly reminder, switching to a Lifetime membership, will make sure you're never late. More information can be found on the website: [ahscolts-alumni.org](http://ahscolts-alumni.org).

**Published Author and Professor Cheryl Taylor West, Class of '74, will be speaking on "Having Healthy Relationships in a Dysfunctional World" from 1:00-2:30 p.m., Tuesday, March 24.**



Everyone is invited to join in this presentation and book signing to be held at CWJC, 1417 W. Arkansas Lane, Ste 100, Arlington TX 76013.

### REMINDER!

May 1 is the deadline to submit nominations for 2026 Distinguished Colts Awards.

See the nomination form on our website: [www.ahscolts-alumni.org](http://www.ahscolts-alumni.org).

### Correction

An article on Lil' Arlie's 75th birthday in the previous InstaNEWS newsletter, incorrectly stated the history and status of live mascots in Texas high schools.

Lil' Arlie continued to lead the football team onto the playing field well into the 1960s. Today, the University

Interscholastic League outlaws live mascots. Section 1208 (m) of the UIL Constitution and Contest Rules states "Live animal mascots, cannons, firearms, fireworks, etc. are prohibited at UIL athletic contests."

We apologize for the error.



**SURROUNDED BY HER ARTWORK** – Keisha Smith shows her latest project - a poster honoring the city's 150th birthday.