

3 Alumni Day articles written by Steve Short

Milan Alumni to highlight scholarships June 20 Nearly 300 reservations received for Alumni Day

By Steve Short

Scholarships will be the focus of the Milan High School Alumni Association when the organization holds its annual Alumni Day reunion Sat. June 20.

The association will present 25 scholarships to graduating high school seniors during a program at the high school at 6 p.m.

“We are going to be concentrating on our two new scholarships named in honor of Fred and Mary Collins and in memory of Thelma Seavers, along with the overall MHSAA Scholarship Program this year,” said alumni president Dana Ayers Marshall. “We want to emphasize to our members how important dues and contributions are to maintaining our scholarship program each year.”

Nearly 300 reservations for the reunion had been received last week and more are expected. “We’re sure this number will increase over the next week, and several people are expected to just ‘show up’ on Alumni Day, so we are hopeful for a good crowd of folks,” said Ms. Marshall.

“We will also be focusing on the MHSAA website and the new features it will soon have in order to keep all Milan High alumni connected with former classmates and MHSAA,” Marshall added. “We are looking forward to a better way to serve MHS alumni through our website.

“We’d like to encourage all Milan High School alumni to attend Alumni Day 2009,” she added. “It does not have to be your ‘special year!’”

New scholarship honors parents of Milan grad

By Steve Short

A new \$1,000 scholarship to be presented by the Milan High School Alumni Association June 20 will honor former graduates Mary and Fred Collins.

The Mary Moore Collins and Fred Collins Honorary Scholarship was created in 2009 by their son, McLean Collins, a 2000 Milan grad, “in celebration of their lifelong commitment to education and to honor their many years of service to the students and community of Milan.” The scholarship will be given annually.

“I established the scholarship to honor Mom and Dad and all that they have given to me and to the Milan community throughout the years,” said McLean Collins. “Beyond their selfless dedication to others, they are firm believers in education. It is my hope that their names and, more importantly, the commitment they have made to serving others will be carried on by and instilled in future graduates of MHS.

“The scholarship is not a large amount, but hopefully it will help defray the costs each year for what I consider one of the greatest treasures in life - an education,” added Collins.

Mary Moore Collins was previously recognized as the alumni honoree of the year and a scholarship established in her name will continue.

Parents honored

Mary Moore and Fred Collins, born and raised in Milan, are both graduates of Milan High. Mary, a member of the class of 1962 participated in numerous student activities and played in the Milan High marching band.

Fred, a member of the class of 1961, lettered in football, baseball, and basketball for the Bulldogs, and was voted Mr. Milan High School by his peers as a senior.

Upon graduation, Mary and Fred both attended the Univ. of Tennessee Martin, and each went on to obtain advanced degrees. Fred completed a Juris Doctorate at the Vanderbilt Univ. School of Law in 1969. Mary obtained her Master of Education at the Univ. of Tenn. Martin in 1976.

Since returning to Milan in 1970, Mary and Fred have enjoyed successful professional careers. Fred practiced with and later joined as partner the law firm of Flippin, Collins, Huey & Webb (now Flippin, Collins, & Hill). Mary taught in the Milan Special School District for 34 years, first in 3rd grade and later in 7th grade.

Beyond their professional achievements, Mary and Fred have served the Milan community in numerous roles, including membership in the Milan First United Methodist Church and countless hours of volunteering at the Milan Mustard Seed.

Mary and Fred each sacrificed in order to provide their son, McLean (MHS Class of 2000), with an opportunity to pursue higher learning at Vanderbilt University.

“This new scholarship was created to allow other Milan High School students to pursue similar educational goals and to spread the seeds of philanthropy that Mary and Fred cherish and that are so important to advancing our great community, state, and nation,” said McLean Collins.

Former Milan educator Thelma Seavers remembered with scholarship

By Steve Short

A new scholarship for \$3,000 will be presented during the Milan High School Alumni Association reunion celebration June 20 by the children of former Milan educator Thelma Seavers.

The Thelma Seavers Memorial Scholarship will be given to a deserving Milan High graduate who plans to enter a four year Tennessee college or university in preparation for a career in elementary education, said Carol Seavers Thomas.

This scholarship is given in recognition of Mrs. Seavers’ many years of service to Milan schools. Seavers began her career in Milan as an elementary teacher of fourth and fifth grade at Park Avenue

School from 1958 to 1967. In 1968 she began a 15-year tenure as Supervisor of Academic Instruction for Milan city schools. She retired in July 1982.

On November 1, 1985, Mrs. Seavers was awarded the prestigious Kathleen Wright Award for Dedicated and Outstanding Leadership in the Field of Instructional Supervision from the Tennessee Supervisor's Study Council.

Seavers began her teaching career as the only teacher in a one-room school house with all eight grades in that room. Prior to coming to Milan, she held various elementary teaching positions throughout Carroll County.

Mrs. Seavers received her B.A. from Bethel College in 1953 and Masters of Arts from Memphis State University in 1958. She did additional grade work at the University of Kansas.

“Her journey to acquire her education was financially a difficult one, and finding time with a growing family on a farm was also a struggle,” said Carol Thomas.

“She felt that teaching was the most rewarding of all careers. She believed that helping young people with education was a noble goal and that education was the key to a brighter future for all. She loved teaching.

“She enjoyed studying to further her own education as well as that of her students,” added Ms. Thomas about her mother. “She thoroughly enjoyed being a mentor and helper to younger teachers as they began their teaching careers and sought her guidance.”

Seavers spoke Spanish fluently and enjoyed helping members of the Milan migrant community as they struggled to understand English while working in Milan. Some grateful recipients of her lessons remained her friends until Seavers' death in 1988.

“It would give our mother great pleasure to feel she was making it easier for a young aspiring teacher to reach their goal,” said Ms. Thomas.