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LEGACY LEDGER

THE OFFICIAL MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER OF LEGACY NAFC



*A Message from the NAFC Education Foundation
Alumni Coordinator, Sherri McKeen*

As April approaches, our NAFC students, teachers, and staff head into the last quarter of the school year with spring break just around the corner. Our seniors are surely counting down the days until they walk across the graduation stage. Here in Floyd County, we are all enjoying the blooming daffodils and thinking about our own preparations for the coming season. It is a wonderful time to be a part of this special community, and we are so thankful that you continue to stay engaged with us and the NAFC schools. Great things are happening here, and we are glad you want to be apart of it!



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

The lyrics to John Lennon's "Imagine" are mesmerizing to millions... including...

"Imagine no possessions. I wonder if you can."

Come again? No possessions? No ownership of anything? Can you actually imagine a world with no ownership of land, no property rights, no orderly transfer between buyers and sellers? Those who work in real estate make up a clear-cut cornerstone of the real world, as most of us know it.

So... how does one pursue a real estate career? We present one Bulldog and one Highlander; each offers an intriguing look at the question and their own answers. In both cases, they've gone after other pursuits in life... enriching our community in lots of ways. Moreover, they're both "high energy" people whose reach goes way beyond their careers, following paths that will likely amaze you.

Introduction and profiles contributed by Rex Bickers, FCHS '70

DAVID RUCKMAN
NAHS '68



Try describing someone with David's many talents: surveyor, sculptor, writer and a serious student of history... local, regional and global. You could easily look right over his work in real estate development.

Lots of people view a real estate transaction as a rite of passage, one of the many stages of adulthood. Yet most of us never stop to ask, "what does a real estate developer do, anyway?" There's a lot of work needed before a home, or a place of business can be built. You need to know codes and regulations, along with a grasp of geology and physics... plus a certain creativity is involved. David has developed sites for both homes and commercial properties: The Oaks, Doe Creek, Bent Creek, Canyonlands, Fox Hunters Point and Lafollette Station (the location of Walgreens and Beef O'Brady's) to name just a few.

Now and again, David looks back at a lifetime of surveying and he feels good about what he sees. At its core, surveying is one of the "technical trades". But look closer: there's a similarity to the fine arts, telling a story in a pictorial language, done in pen and ink. He likes that part; in 54 years, he's drawn over 6000 maps. David also finds an element of the performing arts in his work. In the woods or crossing a field, he's on his "stage". The outdoors itself is his audience as he re-creates the roles of surveying's forefathers, marking lines on the land. Like the careers of other alumni

profiled here, his portfolio of work is highly regarded among his peers. He is active in the local (eight-county) chapter of the Indiana Society of Professional Land Surveyors and a contributor to their quarterly publication Hoosier Surveyor.

He's the author of two books. Each explores the yesteryears of surveying, blending history with imagination. His first, titled, Men of the Compass tells tales of the ancient world. The second, Men of the Compass: 1805 and the Legend of the Indian Hills Silver recounts the pioneer days of Indiana. Both books are on Amazon. In recent years, he's taken on sculpture at a very serious level, with projects that are larger than life: Lucy Higgs Nichols, at the Town Clock Church and the Buffalo Art Park on Summit Springs, (near the intersection of Daisy Lane and State Street). He's inspired to be a storyteller in stone, and he ponders just how long his works might last. An ancient Greek aphorism comes to mind: "Life is short, art is long". The words are well-suited to someone who thinks about the human experience, across decades and centuries.

I asked David to reflect on creativity and the legacy that any of us in the alumni community can leave for the future. He answered: "Finding the inspiration to do anything creatively may seem unpredictable. Sometimes, I've gone looking for inspiration, often it has found me... and it comes out in my work, in my writing and in my art. I'm optimistic that the alumni of my era will continue to inspire those who come after us. I hope that I'm one of many who inspire others."

DIANE BAUMANN THOMAS
FCHS '79



What's the best way to become a successful real estate professional? Most people would guess that it's all about helping others: the obvious example is someone who wants to sell or buy land, a house or a building... maybe even sell and buy. Diane is very good at that, but she also excels at this equally hard part: figuring out and fulfilling the needs of her clients. That means listening, being persistent and making results happen. She has delivered on this career slogan, time and time again: "building a community, one happy household at a time".

Licensed in Indiana and Kentucky for 28 years, Diane has tallied up some seriously staggering real estate metrics: listings and closings, measured in millions year after year. Her consistent top positions in SIRA (Southern Indiana Realtor Association) speak just as clearly:

Realtor of the Year (2010), Realtor Hall of Fame (2012) and president of the Association (2014). Diane is a tireless self-starter and a proven entrepreneur: co-owner of a real estate firm, as well as founder and owner of Smart Designs Building Company along with Rent Quick, Inc. She has helped to assess housing needs, in affiliation with IAR (Indiana Association of Realtors) and worked to boost economic development (Floyd, Clark, Harrison County) through the private sector consulting firm Strategic Development Group, based in Bloomington. At the local level, she has served on the Grievance Panel and chaired the Professional Standards committee, two separate terms in 1996 and 2003.

For some, career satisfaction can be the springboard to another passion. Diane's discovery has been not just one, but three, at a level of extraordinary involvement. In 1995, Diane plunged into Human Resource Management. Step one: she secured her own SHRM certification. In step two, through an affiliation at U of L, she taught others, 1996-1999, preparing them for their own PHR/SPHR SHRM designations. She was influential at IUS, pushing the HRM concentration field of study ahead, offered now as a post-baccalaureate certificate program in the School of Business.

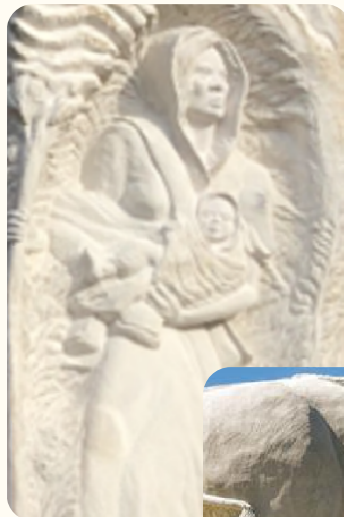
She's also made a major commitment to the Tri Kappa Philanthropic Organization, a uniquely Indiana service sorority founded in 1901, with 46 charter chapters and 96 associate chapters across the state. Tri Kappa gives \$1.5 million per year to charities. She served two terms on the statewide committee that chooses college students to receive Tri Kappa academic and fine arts scholarships. She's a past president of the Floyd County chapter, which provides scholarships to NAHS, FCHS and OLPHS seniors. In a parallel fashion, her third passion repeatedly brings her to serve in leadership positions for programs with a focus on youth and education. It includes serving on the Board of Directors for Big Brothers and Sisters Kentuckiana. She has served on the YMCA Board of Directors and also chaired the YMCA's "Strong Kids" campaigns in 2010 and 2011.

Diane and her husband Mark (NAHS '74) live in Floyds Knobs. Their adult children Stuart and Karlyn are both FCHS graduates.

I asked Diane to reflect on finding the motivation and the energy to pursue the passions that fall outside her work in real estate. She answered: "helping the lives of others is what makes your life count. It's what gives your life meaning beyond your career".



Diane Thomas (third from left) at an event commemorating the establishment of Human Resources as a field of study at IUS



Lucy Higgs Nichols
Sculpture created by David Ruckman
(Town Clock Church, New Albany)

Buffalo sculptures at Buffalo Art Park
Created by David Ruckman
(Summit Springs, New Albany)



Education CELEBRATION

MILLION DOLLAR BASH

\$222,000 SUCCESS

We are so grateful to everyone who made the 2023 Education Celebration! Million Dollar Bash a huge success. With over 600 generous guests in attendance and many more participating in the silent auction off site, the New Albany Floyd County Education Foundation raised over \$222,000 in proceeds after expenses. These funds will benefit our NAFC students, teachers, and schools through Great Classroom Grants, Dolly Parton Imagination Library Project, Blessings in a Backpack, Junior Achievement, and so much more.



Find more pictures online: <https://www.facebook.com/NAFCedFoundation>.

We hope to see you there next year!

LEGACY NAFC

When alumni donate to the New Albany Floyd County Education Foundation, you are investing in the success of all NAFCS students and educators. Alumni donors become Legacy NAFC members through an annual donation. **Make your impact today and become a Legacy NAFC Alumni Member.**

JOIN NOW

The New Albany Floyd County Education Foundation is a not-for-profit organization that works in conjunction with NAFC Schools to provide privately funded supplemental resources and programs to students, teachers, and schools. Legacy NAFC is the official alumni support group of the NAFC Education Foundation and New Albany Floyd County Schools.

www.NAFCEdFoundation.org/alumni

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