

### **2015 SAM URZETTA ALUMNI CLASSIC DRAWS RECORD NUMBER OF GOLFERS**

This year's tournament was held at Lima Country Club on Friday, Aug. 7. A record 215 golfers enjoyed a beautiful day on the course, with a total of 250 players and guests on hand for the post-tournament awards luncheon and presentation of this year's Distinguished Alumni Award. Proceeds from this event will, as always, be used to fund education-oriented grants for the benefit of East Rochester students across all grade levels. In addition to the very generous support of more than 150 individuals and businesses who donated cash, gifts, and prizes totaling more than \$16,000, the Foundation

raised more than \$2,000 by raffling off four Cleveland Browns vs. Oakland Raiders 'Club Tickets,' donated by ERHS Class of 1991 graduate and Browns Comptroller **David Jenkins**. This tournament is the Foundation's primary fundraiser. Since 2007, the event has raised more than \$105,000 in support of our mission.

The winning foursome on Island Oaks was captained by **Harry Mancuso** ('59). His fellow players were **Ron Krauppenbacher, Dr. Gary Kuhn, and Bob Wetzel**. Repeating as winners of the Charleston Pines course were **John Barnhardt, Patrick DiFlorio, and Eddie O'Hara**, captained by **Gary DiFlorio**. 'Proficiency awards' (such as most-accurate drives and closest to the pin) went to **Lori Arnold, Keith Checho, Tom Conners, Dave Essom, Jim Fee, Dick Johnson, John Quinzi, LeeAnn Riesenberger, and Eileen Seidel**. Collecting \$100 each for being closest to the pin on the two 'Mulligan Holes' were **John Checho and Tom Cole**.

During the awards luncheon, the Foundation's 2015 Distinguished Alumni Award was presented to **Mary Steigerwald Whittier**, a 1983 ER graduate and the current executive director of the Rochester-based Bivona Child Advocacy Center (please see story on opposite page).

In receiving this award, Mrs. Whittier joined a prestigious group of other ER alumni who have been so honored. DAA recipients from 2009 to 2014, respectively, were **Nick Verzella '44**, co-honorees **Brig. Gen. Richard McPhee '74** and **Rear Adm. Don Quinn '75**, **Sam Urzetta '44**, **Larry Weise '54**, **the Hon. Vicki Argento '80**, and **Tom Conners '44**.

Mark your calendar! Next year's Sam Urzetta Alumni Classic is set for Friday, Aug. 5, at Lima Country Club (for the ninth straight year). To preserve the 'local flavor' of this event, teams must include at least one ER alumnus, resident, or business person, a current or former employee of the ER School District, or a tournament sponsor.

Looking forward, we'd like to encourage **classes who are planning a reunion in 2016** to think about holding it the weekend of Aug. 5-7 so you can include the SUAC on your schedule of reunion events. Also, if you or someone you know would like to volunteer to help with the tournament, we'd love to hear from you. Please contact me at 526-6120 or [ctobin@frontiernet.net](mailto:ctobin@frontiernet.net) for more information.

– Carl Tobin



On Tuesday, Dec. 1, the Greater Rochester community will come together to ROC the Day, and the East Rochester Alumni Foundation hopes to help make it a huge success.

ROC the Day is a 24-hour giving opportunity to support all eligible not-for-profits, including ERAF, in the nine-county Rochester area. Community members are encouraged to visit [ROCtheDay.org](http://ROCtheDay.org), a secure online giving platform, to contribute to any participating non-profit organization. All money raised during ROC the Day stays

local. Donors have the ability to make a positive impact by giving to one or more organizations to support their personal philanthropic passions. Donors and not-for-profits can share their investment activity with friends, family, coworkers, and social networks to increase awareness of this community-wide effort.

This is our second year participating, and we're hoping to inspire lots of ROCstar donors to contribute to the Alumni Foundation this year. We wanted to alert the community to this activity and invite you to join us in supporting these 24 hours of unprecedented non-profit giving.

### MARY STEIGERWALD WHITTIER RECEIVES DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

*As part of our Sam Urzetta Alumni Classic awards banquet on Friday, Aug. 7, the Alumni Foundation proudly honored Mary E. Steigerwald Whittier, from the class of 1983, with its annual Distinguished Alumni Award. A brief biography follows....*

Mary Steigerwald Whittier, ERHS '83, is the founding executive director of the Bivona Child Advocacy Center, a non-profit organization that provides comprehensive services to children suspected of being physically or sexually abused. Bivona evaluated more than 1,500 children in 2014 and more than 13,000 children since its August 2004 inception.

Mrs. Whittier, who earned a bachelor's degree in social work from Buffalo State College and a master's, also in social work, from the University of Buffalo, has served children and families for more than 30 years. Her professional background includes working as a teacher's assistant at Hillside Children's Center, as a Child Protective Services caseworker, and as a social worker with Golisano Children's Hospital. She spearheaded the development and formation of Bivona in 2001.



She serves as a Board member with the Rochester Police Foundation and the NYS Children's Alliance, and on the Executive Committee for the Council of Agency Executives. Among her awards and accolades are: Social Worker of the Year for Program Innovation in 2000, Human Services Worker of the Year for the private sector in 2006, the Carl S. Hallauer Award in 2008, an ATHENA Award nomination in 2011, the Edward Mott Moore Award from the medical community in 2013, and a 2014 Woman of Distinction by the NYS Senate.

The daughter of Midge (Ferri) Steigerwald, she is married with two children.

We proudly claim Mrs. Whittier as a daughter of our community, a truly inspiring and devoted advocate for the children of Rochester and Monroe County, and an extremely deserving recipient of the Foundation's 2015 Distinguished Alumni Award.

– Katie Conners DeVito

*Please visit the Alumni Foundation's Website, at [www.erschools.org/alumni.cfm](http://www.erschools.org/alumni.cfm)!*

### ***Many Ways to Donate to the Foundation, and All Are Greatly Appreciated!***

Founded in 2005 and designated as a 501(c)(3) Public Charity by the IRS in 2007, the East Rochester Alumni Foundation Inc. has worked continuously to raise funds to "provide grants for programs critical to the educational system which are not funded in the school budget." Money used for this purpose is raised through donations and one or two annual fundraising events.

Donations take many forms. For example, in conjunction with the annual Sam Urzetta Alumni Classic, there are product donations (normally used as tournament or raffle prizes) and cash donations (typically used for business advertising signs or memorial tee signs which honor deceased ER alumni). All donors are recognized in our tournament program and on the 'Benefactors and Sponsors' page of our Website: <http://www.erschools.org/alumni.cfm>.

Non-tournament cash donations throughout the year are generally made in honor and memory of a recently deceased ERHS graduate. In addition to the donor being recognized on the 'Memorials and Obituaries' page of our site, the Alumni Foundation sends a thank-you note to him or her and advises a member of the deceased's family that a donation has been made, and by whom.

Please consider helping us in the coming year. Register to participate in the 2016 Sam Urzetta Alumni Classic, or become one of the tournament's many sponsors. Make a donation in honor of a recently deceased ER alumni, or perhaps designate ERAF as a possible recipient of memorial donations when preparing an obituary. Finally, please become familiar with the 'Benefactors and Sponsors' page mentioned above. If possible, please do business with companies and individuals who support our efforts, and remember to thank them for supporting the Foundation and our kids.

– Carl Tobin

*more ERAF information on next page....*

## ~ ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT ~

### Lisa Verzella, ERHS '87

As we began to look at East Rochester alumni to spotlight, we were amazed at the number who have been extremely successful in the field of music, and realized that ER has been home to many of the finest musicians locally, nationally, and internationally. These talented individuals remind us that it's possible to pursue even the greatest of dreams beginning in our own small hometown. With this in mind, we decided to focus on those talented graduates who have gone on to careers in music. Please feel free to write to [eralumnispotlight@gmail.com](mailto:eralumnispotlight@gmail.com) if you have any suggestions of musical alumni we can profile in the future! While we know we'll never be able to highlight all of them, we'd like to feature Lisa Verzella in this edition, and continue in the issues to follow.

Lisa Verzella shines in the music world as an accomplished trumpeter, but what stood out when I recently spoke with her was not only her love for music, but her love for all things adventurous, all things good, and all things that demand an amazing work ethic.

Lisa credits the beginning of her love for trumpet to her brother, Jeff (ERHS class of '76), who taught her how to play her first scale, and her music teacher at ER, Mr. Daniel Lempert, who she said "ushered me into my career." She further developed her love for trumpet and trumpet music when she met famed jazz musician Wynton Marsalis at the age of 12. She attended some workshops with Marsalis and considers him an inspiration in her career. As Lisa entered high school, Mr. Lempert orchestrated her studying with Richard Jones, then principal trumpet with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra. Lisa flourished, and played in several all-county and all-state ensembles, and with the Rochester Philharmonic Youth Orchestra. She also played in several ER Memorial Day and Veterans Day ceremonies, and in 1997 performed at the ER Bicentennial Celebration with the RPO, conducted by Jeff Tyzik.

Lisa continued her education at Northwestern University, and earned bachelor's and master's degrees in orchestral performance from the Eastman School of Music and the Manhattan School of Music, respectively.

As an undergraduate, Lisa had the opportunity to attend the Aspen Music Festival during the summers. It was through this festival that she fell in love with the west and moved there, settling in Aspen for several years, then in Salt Lake City.

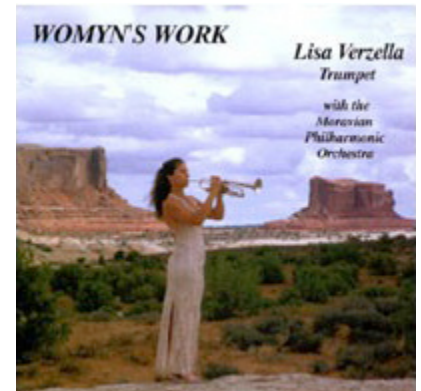
During her early years out west, Lisa earned a spot with the Utah Symphony and the Utah Chamber Orchestra. In addition to performing, her career also includes teaching trumpet at Snow College, Weber State College, and Utah State, and mentoring young musicians as a professional coach for the Utah Youth Orchestras and Ensembles.

While pursuing her undergraduate degree, Lisa often found herself watching hang gliders soar overhead as she left the music building each day. She was intrigued by what she saw, and knew she had to try it. As in all she does, Lisa excelled. As one of the world's top hang glider pilots, Lisa flew for the U.S. team in the Women's World Hang Gliding Championships in 1998 in Hungary and in 2008 in Italy. She's a four-time winner ('99, '01, '03, and '06) of the Utah Cup, a year-long cross-country soaring competition. In 2009 Lisa was the National Hang Gliding Champion, competing in King Mountain, Idaho. She continues to fly today, and is a frequent contributor to *Hang Gliding & Paragliding*, an international magazine.

As Lisa prepared for each hang gliding flight, she spent a great deal of time studying the weather and wind to help ensure her safety. She found herself extremely interested in weather and wind patterns and predictions, so she returned to school to earn a bachelor's degree in meteorology from the University of Utah. During her studies, Lisa interned with the U.S. National Weather Service. Upon her 2007 graduation she took a job as a hydrologist with the Bureau of Reclamation, and in '12 returned to the National Weather Service as a meteorologist.

Even as her interest and participation in hang gliding and meteorology grew, Lisa never lost her passion for music. She recorded two CDs: 'Twentieth Century Trumpet' in 1999 and 'Womyn's Work' three years later. 'Womyn's Work' is particularly special to Lisa, as she traveled with her dad, Nick Verzella, to the Czech Republic to record

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*photo: Sheila Newbery*

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it. All of this CD's songs are by female composers, including Lisa herself. It also includes three world premieres and features the Moravian Philharmonic Orchestra, among others.

Today finds Lisa as the principal trumpet for Ballet West, an orchestra she's been a member of since 1997 and principal since '06. In addition, she plays with the American Festival Orchestra, conducted by Frank Jessop, former conductor of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. Lisa, as mentioned previously, also holds a position as a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Salt Lake City. Even with her busy schedule, she still finds time to teach music privately, freelance as a performer and mentor, and do studio work, in addition to hang gliding and paragliding. Her newest adventures include mountain biking and backcountry snowboarding.

Lisa grew up in ER with her dad (a former ER teacher, principal, and superintendent), her mom, Dorothy, and her brother, and she continues to visit when she can. She truly is grateful to her dad for always being there to support her with enthusiasm, passion, and excitement for all she does, and for passing those amazing qualities on to her. Because Lisa Verzella truly exemplifies the best attributes of a highly successful East Rochester graduate, the Alumni Foundation is proud to feature her, and hopes you will visit [www.cdbaby.com](http://www.cdbaby.com) to view her CDs.

– Helen Urzetta Tortorici

### **SAVE THE DATE! FIFTH-ANNUAL EAST ROCHESTER CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL** **9 am - 6 pm Saturday, Dec. 12**

*Much more info to come as the date approaches – Please check [www.erchamber.org](http://www.erchamber.org) for updates!*

The East Rochester Christmas Festival will be held at several locations in and around the village, including the school campus, Eyer Park, and the Town/Village Hall. The Festival is sponsored by the ER Chamber of Commerce, with assistance from the ER Alumni Foundation, the Town/Village of ER, the ER Association of Churches, the ER Rotary, and the ER School District. For the past four years, it has provided visitors with activities such as music and caroling, children's stories, food and item vendors, games and crafts for all ages, visits with Santa and Mrs. Claus, sales and giveaways by local merchants, and horse-drawn carriage rides.

*Organizers are working to make our fifth-annual holiday celebration even bigger and better!  
We look forward to making this an event everyone will enjoy and we can all be proud of.*

### **INDIVIDUAL HOLIDAY DECORATION CONTEST!**

Have your displays up by Saturday, Dec. 12; voting (on the Chamber's Website – [www.erchamber.org](http://www.erchamber.org)) runs through Thursday, Dec. 24. The three best-decorated houses will receive prizes from Salvatore's!

### **CONGRATULATIONS NEW BOMBER WALL OF FAME MEMBERS!**

Alumni **Jean Raschiatore Berry '65, Ron Whitcomb Sr. '72, Chris Bourne '75, Joe Bock '77, and Bob Pietrosanto '80** have been inducted into the Bomber Wall of Fame. They were presented/introduced by Fred Ricci, Ron Rucker, Ron Ricotta, Don Quinn, and Mike Kuhn, respectively. Photos from the induction ceremony, held Wednesday, July 22, at The Country Club of Rochester, are available at [www.tinyurl.com/oghazlv](http://www.tinyurl.com/oghazlv).

### **ERAF BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Board members:** Chris Argento '86, the Hon. Vicki Argento '80, Denise Litzenberger Ash '86, John Baynes '71, Jerry Cilento '57, Mary Hopkins Cooney '56, Katie Connors DeVito '86, Mary Burton Estey '56, Linda Forbes '75, John Griffith '87, Marilyn Tuttle Lopez '63, Anita Mance '65, Dina Marcoccia '86, Sam Morabito '61, Pam Narsisian, Peter Obourn '59, Patty Pullano '63, Tom Quinzi '80, Carl Tobin '59, Helen Urzetta Tortorici, and Dr. Mark Linton (ex-officio)

**Former members:** Terry Brown-Steiner, Jim Burlingame '54, Tim Henry '79, Dr. Howard Maffucci, David Morabito '72, Peter Nicolucci '50, Fred Ricci '65, Barb Pierce Stoner '45, Patrick Tobin '58, Sam Urzetta '44, Nick Verzella '44, and Richard Stutzman