

The Metz Cardinal

May 2005 Newsletter of the Metz School Alumni Association

Metz Alumni Assoc., c/o Margie Breneman, 1204 N. Elizabeth, Nevada, MO 64772. Phone (417) 667-9361

Dear Metz Alumni, Former Students,
Teachers, and Employees:

Welcome to the first issue of *The Metz Cardinal*. Because many of you do not live in the Vernon County area, we want to use this newsletter to communicate with you. The various articles on the Metz School and the Metz community will be of interest to you, and you are invited to submit articles or story ideas for next year's issue.

Additionally, we hope you will make a special effort to attend the upcoming Metz Alumni Dinner which will be held June 4 in Nevada, MO – **this is for all persons who ever attended, taught, or worked at the Metz School.**

This is the 150th anniversary of Vernon County! As we think of the history of the county and particularly the history of the Metz Community, it becomes important that we consider ways to help preserve the history of “our” part of the county -- Metz. Various ways in which each of us can help do this are contained within the newsletter. Most of us have items from our days as students at Metz, and it is important that we consider a future home for these items—it is sad that many personal items are sometimes cast aside by children or grandchildren who have no interest in them. We hope you will consider sharing photos, stories, and

yearbooks to help preserve this history – *your history* – of Metz and Metz School.

A full day of events has been planned for you on June 4. Please come visit with classmates and share remembrances of your days at Metz. Call a classmate you haven't seen in a long time, and encourage him or her to attend also!

As you will see from the newsletter, a lot of work is being done – we invite you to help support these projects. A donation jar will be available at the registration table.

We look forward to seeing you on the 4th of June.

Sincerely,

Linda Moore, President

And the Alumni Officers

Annual Reunion & Dinner June 4, 2005

The annual reunion and dinner of the Metz Alumni (former students, teachers, and employees) will be held Saturday, June 4, 2005, at the Nevada Community Center, 200 North Ash, Nevada, MO. The cost is \$10 per person. Please register for the dinner by completing and returning the form at the end of this newsletter along with your payment by May 25 to ensure a sufficient number of meals are ordered. There will be “open seating” for the dinner.

Check-in at the Community Center will begin at 4 p.m., and dinner will begin at 5:30 p.m.

At 5:00 p.m., a photographer will take an all-school group photo in which we invite you to participate. You may want to also get a group photo of your class members who attend.

This is an “all-school” reunion dinner for everyone who attended, taught, or worked at Metz School at anytime.

We hope to see you there!

Graduating Class Photos and Trophies

The graduating class photos and trophies which were previously displayed in the old Metz High School and Elementary School buildings are now located in two rooms at the Metz Bank at Metz and are being restored and preserved.

Bobby Seater has spent countless hours obtaining and refurbishing attractive, lighted display cases in which to display the school trophies and has done an outstanding



Lighted display cases in which to display the trophies are now available.

job! Several alumni have helped clean the trophies, and many trophies which had been damaged have been repaired.

Our thanks to Rodger Wikoff for storing the trophies in the old school building for several years.

If you know of trophies which were moved to another location for safekeeping and would like to now add them to the

display at the Metz Bank, please bring them to the Alumni dinner, take them directly to the bank and ask the bank manager to place them in the trophy room, or give them to



Metz School trophies and graduating class pictures were moved to the Metz Bank in Metz.

Bobby Seater or any Alumni officer. The Metz trophies once again have a good home of which we all can be proud and will be taken care of.

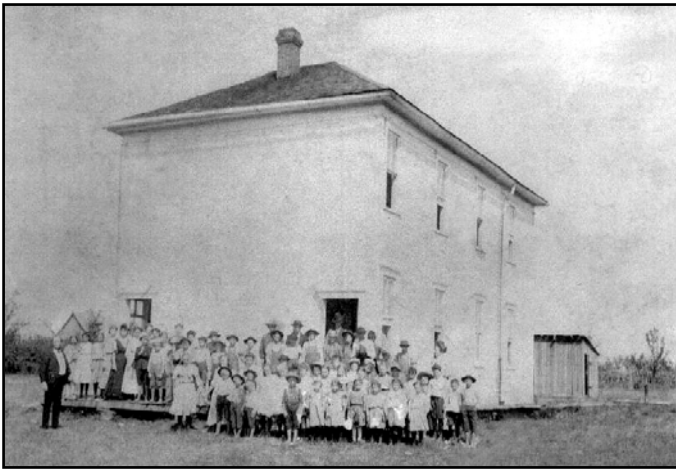
This restoration project is ongoing, and much additional preservation work is yet to be done.

An open house to view the photos, trophies, and new trophy cases will be held at the Metz Bank at Metz on Saturday afternoon, June 4, from 2 p.m. until 3 p.m., before the alumni dinner.

History of Metz School

The first school in this area (c. 1830s) was taught in the home of Jesse Summers by Mary Choates, who later became Mrs. Leonard Dodge. The first school house, a small log building, was built at the Summers graveyard, some time after the year 1840. Mrs. Eliza Summers was one of the first teachers, and Peter Weyand was another early teacher.

A square 2-story grade school building was erected in the northwest part of Metz



and was used until the schools of Metz Township were consolidated.

From school year 1911-12 till 1915-16, high school classes were taught on and off to tuition pupils at Metz.

In April 1916 Metz township voted to consolidate the elementary districts to form a public high school. Districts in the Township were Dell, Metz, Old Metz, Pryor Creek, Rinehart, Stoney Point, White Rock, and Whitfield. Classes began September 11, 1916 with 10 pupils. High school was held in the Irl Hudson house and the Town Hall until Aug. 1927 upon completion of the new



two-story Metz High School building, contracted by Walter W. Kelly at a cost of \$40,000.

The country grade schools of the township were discontinued in 1940, and three new rooms were added to the north end of the high school to house the grade pupils. Over the years our district took in more territory including other country schools in Lake, Washington, Osage and Henry townships.

Expansion became necessary so a new structure east of the high school was built, with rooms for the first six grades and a regulation size gymnasium. First classes



were held in the new building in the fall of 1953 and Metz became District R-2.

In May 1984 the Metz School Board members voted to discontinue Metz High School, and high school pupils attended school in adjoining districts. The 1984 graduating class had four pupils.

In 1992 Metz was annexed into the Nevada School District.

The school property has since been sold to private individuals, and the 2-story high school building torn down.

In Memoriam

Below is a listing of former Metz graduates who have passed away since the 2004 Alumni meeting. This information was taken from the Nevada and Rich Hill newspapers, and we would appreciate information on anyone who may have been inadvertently omitted.

- Ann Smith
- Mary Helen Rinehart Oyler
- Peggy Ann Tourtillott Westerhold
- Ralph Nation
- Deloris White Harris
- Lavern Compton
- George Liles
- Maurine Hartleader Spain
- Nellie Chrisenberry Braughton
- Helen Foreman Longabaugh
- Izetta Catherwood Owens

Metz Photos

We would like to assemble a “scrapbook” of Metz school and community photos. If you have photographs of businesses, homes, families, school activities, etc., which you would be willing to share, please bring them to the Alumni meeting so they can be copied. We would like to scan and return the photos to you that evening.

Many of the photos will be placed in a scrapbook at the Metz Bank at Metz with the display of class photos and trophies and will be used in future newsletters and other publications on the history of the Metz school and community. If known, please list the names of individuals in the photo on an



accompanying piece of paper (please do not write on the front or back of the photo). Perhaps someone will be able to help identify the people.

If you cannot attend the reunion this year and have photos you would like to have included in the scrapbook, please mail them to the Alumni and be sure to include your name, address, and phone number and also a small contribution to cover the cost of postage to return the photos to you.

Metz School Yearbooks

The first Metz School yearbook was printed in 1937, according to recollections of several older alumni. We would like to establish a collection of the Metz School Yearbooks to be on display with the class photos and trophies at the Metz Bank. If you have yearbooks which you are willing

to donate, please bring them to the Alumni meeting, mail them to Margie Breneman, 1204 N. Elizabeth, Nevada, MO 64772, or drop them off at the Bank.



The Metz Times Newspaper

J. D. Williams assumed management of *The Metz Times* from W. A. Logan on May 27, 1904. The first press of *The Metz Times* was turned by hand and printed one page at a time. Following the death of his uncle, J. D. Williams, it was edited and printed by Clay Dryden Baze, better known as “Bud.”

The *Metz Times* was the last hand set newspaper in Missouri.

In 1972, a stroke caused Bud’s retirement. *The Metz Times* was then printed by the Rich Hill Review and later by the Nevada News until it was discontinued in 1980.

Extant copies of the newspaper were microfilmed by the State Historical Society of Missouri; and a copy of that microfilm has recently been acquired by the Tri-County Genealogical Society (the local genealogy society), and will soon be catalogued and available for use in the Nevada Library’s Genealogy Department.

Update Mailing Address

If you are moving, please send a change of address notice to the Alumni Association.

Vernon County residents will be getting new addresses in the not-too-distant future. We will do our best to ensure that everyone’s address is correctly listed.

History of Metz (Pleasant Valley), Missouri

In 1829 when Jesse J., Moses, and Allen Summers and their families settled on the Osage River, this area was part of Jackson County; and the Osage Indians were their neighbors. Later the area became part of Van Buren County, and then it was Bates County. Finally, in 1855 Vernon County was officially organized.

As more settlers arrived in this area following the Civil War, a small town called Pleasant Valley was laid out on Reeds Creek, 1½ miles east of the present day Metz. In 1870 a Post Office was established; however, the name had to be changed because Pleasant Valley was already in use. D. P. Swearingen, whom many knew as “Uncle Dave” and who operated a general merchandise store there, was chosen as postmaster. He suggested the name “Metz” after reading about Metz, France, in the Franco-Prussian War news, and the name was accepted.

A fine steam-planing mill operated on Reeds Creek at that time and gave the village of Pleasant Valley some notoriety and attracted much business.

On the 1870 Federal Population Census, the following occupations are listed for persons living in this area: farmer, farm hand, harness maker, painter, merchant, carpenter, school teacher, physician, miller, blacksmith, and cabinet maker.

By 1880, Metz Township listed the following occupations in addition to those in the 1870 census: hotel clerk, laborer, stonemason, druggist, grocer, store clerk, engineer, and stock dealer.

In 1890 the Missouri Pacific Rail Road was built and bypassed Metz about 1½ miles to the west. Dr. G. W. Petty was the first to

move his store building to the railroad, and the new town of Metz was soon laid out.

In 1907, Metz was incorporated as a town.

The 1911 History of Vernon County says the following about what Metz has: The Metz “Times” published by J. D. Williams; one bank, two mills, two hotels, one garage, no saloons, an ice man, one railroad, a newspaper, a brass band, one drug store, three painters, a harness shop, three churches, an opera house, four carpenters, good sidewalks, one undertaker, six secret orders, one lumber yard, one barber shop, three physicians, one butcher shop, no booze-fighters, a good town well, four stock buyers, good mail service, hospitable people, night mail service, one machine shop, two livery stables, a commercial club, no dependent poor, two grocery stores, two paper-hangers, two photographers, three general stores, well improved streets, good roads diverging, one express company, two blacksmith shops, three Sunday schools, one implement dealer, three hardware stores, an active W.C.T.U., a good baseball team, one water-filter factory, three insurance agents, almost 500 population, best farming community, three real estate dealers, one exclusive millinery store, three contractors and builders, two church ladies’ aid societies, one job printing office—the “Times,” no empty business or resident houses, no debts, money in town treasury, beautiful modern and comfortable homes, Christian Endeavor Society and Epworth League, one telephone company with a list of 250 subscribers, a good school building with an addition to be built soon, no more gentlemanly nor accommodating merchants anywhere.

Memorabilia

There will be space for some school memorabilia in the new trophy case display at the Metz Bank. If you have items which you would like to donate, please bring or send them to the upcoming meeting. Suggested items are sports letter, band medals, etc.

Bushwhacker Museum and Jail

While in town for the Metz Alumni reunion, plan to visit the Bushwhacker Museum and Jail in Nevada.

The Museum is located on the lower level of the Finis Moss Building (the Nevada



Library), next

to the Community Center. The Bushwhacker Museum and Jail are open from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m., Monday-Saturday. Admission is \$3 per person. Visitors begin their tour in the museum and are then taken to the old Jail building, at the other end of the block, to conclude the tour. The Jail has



been almost completely restored and furnished according to its late 19th-century

use as a jail and living quarters. Many new permanent and temporary exhibits may be seen in the Museum. For questions call the Museum at 667-9602 or 667-8425.

Metz Bank 100 Years Old in 2006

Metz Banking Company is making plans for a super celebration in 2006, to celebrate its charter centennial. Special activities will be scheduled throughout 2006 to celebrate their customers, new and old, and to commemorate 100 years in banking.

Be looking through your attics for memorabilia from Metz, MO, and Metz Bank to display at the bank to help celebrate.

The Metz School Alumni Association appreciates the generosity of the Metz Bank in providing a place to display the school pictures and trophies which are an important part of the history of this area. All Alumni are invited to join in the 2006 centennial celebration of the chartering of the Metz Banking Company and its being a vital part of our community.

METZ ALL-SCHOOL REUNION SATURDAY, JUNE 4, 2005

Schedule of Events

- 2-3 p.m. Open House at Metz Bank at Metz to view Graduating Class Photos & Trophies**
- 4 p.m. Doors Open at Community Center, 200 North Ash St, Nevada, MO**
- 5 p.m. Group Photos**
- 5:30 p.m. Dinner**

Please return the form below by May 25 to make your reservation.

Metz Alumni Association
c/o Margie Breneman
1204 N. Elizabeth
Nevada, MO 64772

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Please complete and return this form with payment by May 25, 2005

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (_____) _____

Year graduated or attended school at Metz _____

Number of attendees _____ X \$10 each = _____ enclosed.

Please make check payable to Metz Alumni Association and
mail to Margie Breneman, 1204 N. Elizabeth, Nevada, MO 64772