

The Echo

BERLIN HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION "THE OLDEST IN THE STATE" SPRING 2000

It's
Payback
Time!

By Jack Butler ('54)

In this first of a series of articles written by members of the Berlin High School Alumni 2000 Committee, Jack Butler ('54) shares his heart-felt reasons for taking up the fund-raising cause for scholarships:

"When Mary Werch ('54) and I married in December 1954, we left Berlin for Georgia where I was stationed at Fort Benning. We had four things we took from Berlin: our faith in God; our faith in each other; a '46 Pontiac; and our education from the Berlin public schools. When we left town, we had no idea how educationally prepared we were – not only in the 3 Rs, but with the judgmental skills necessary to face the every day challenges of life. These skills were taught to us by our parents and teachers.

As I moved from soldier to college student and then on to educator, I benefited positively in both my personal life and professional life as a result of my experiences in the Berlin schools. I was blessed with good teachers, many of whom became life-long friends after graduation. My organizational skills were the lessons taught by Bob Dohr and George Doll, Berlin football coaches. When I was a senior, advice from history teacher Fritz Warnecke was to marry Mary Werch – 'it will be the best decision you make in your life.' Then, there was the 'Great One,' the best educator I ever met in my life! The man I have thought of every day since meeting him -- Mr. Arthur Flanigan taught us lessons for life. During my 35 years as an educator, when making difficult decisions affecting students, I'd always contemplate, 'What would Mr. Flanigan do in this situation?'

Now that our five children are raised, well-educated, pursuing their careers and raising our 15 grandchildren, Mary and I have returned to the Berlin area to live out our retirement years. It's '**Pay-Back Time**,' a time to help make an educational difference in the lives of Berlin graduates. When I graduated in '54, a high school

diploma was all one needed to succeed in life. Not true today. A college degree in today's society is the equivalent. That can be achieved at a vocational tech college, through an apprenticeship or a baccalaureate program. Many careers require a Masters or Doctoral degree as entry requirements taking from 2-10 years of schooling beyond high school.

Higher education is expensive, costing from \$5,000 to \$30,000 a year. Few families can afford to send their children beyond high school without help from scholarships. This 'greatest of all nations,' the USA, was built on our individual freedom and education. Our young people must be prepared to live in a global society.

Will you please join me in supporting the Berlin High School Alumni Association Scholarship Fund? Please consider an outright contribution or including the Scholarship Fund in your estate plan."

**"Remember:
'The only thing more
expensive than education
is ignorance.' "**