

May 2024

GRIZZLY CHRONICLES



The newsletter for and about alumni of Skyline High School

Grizzly alums to provide new entrance sign for SHS

A new sign will greet visitors and students when Skyline opens next fall, the first school-directed project organized and funded by the SGAA. Designed by a local firm and costing just over \$9,600, the structure will be made of steel and aluminum, anchored in concrete, and visible to people entering from Pancheri Drive.

SGAA Board member George Groberg, '70, has led planning for the project. "The sign will give a message to visitors, staff, students and administrators that Skyline is very much alive, vibrant, and not forgotten by us, its proud alumni," he said.

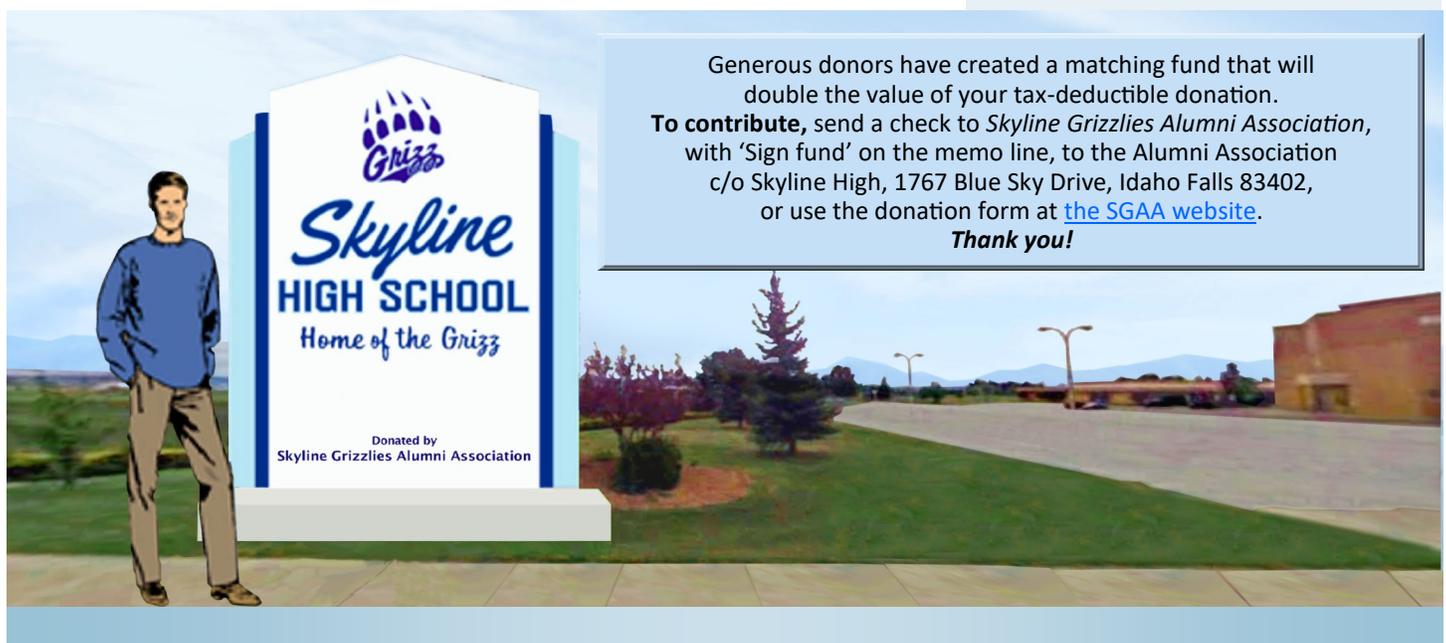
"Over the past year, we have asked the school how SGAA could help in the most effective way," Groberg added. "They have consistently said they want a sign on the northeast side of the school to identify the public entrance to Skyline's grounds."

With cuts in state funding and other critical problems, "they've done their best to prevent the school from appearing run down," Groberg said. "But they do not have the resources and saw SGAA as the avenue for solving that problem. Most of the

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Generous donors have created a matching fund that will double the value of your tax-deductible donation.

To contribute, send a check to *Skyline Grizzlies Alumni Association*, with 'Sign fund' on the memo line, to the Alumni Association c/o Skyline High, 1767 Blue Sky Drive, Idaho Falls 83402, or use the donation form at [the SGAA website](#).

Thank you!

Alumni Achiever

Architect Roxane Mitro, '71, designs landmark buildings in Idaho Falls

Next time you settle into a seat at the Colonial Theatre (formerly the Paramount Theatre) in the Willard Art Center or enjoy the light streaming into the glass entryway of the Museum of Idaho, you can thank a Skyline drafting class for the experience. It was there that architect Roxane Mitro, '71, first experienced the joys of design.

Mitro followed her muse from the high school classroom to a career in commercial architecture, and Idaho Falls has reaped the rewards.

Now president of AKM Architecture, P.A., in Idaho Falls, Mitro reluctantly admitted, "I should probably retire soon. But I feel proud and fortunate to be a part of Idaho Falls in this way, and I just love my clients."

Currently, she is at work on a major remodeling of the old Civic Auditorium, renamed the Frontier Performing Arts Center last fall. Her design will triple the size of the cramped lobby, add new restrooms in the lower lobby and improve other features such as accessibility and passenger drop-off areas. Construction will start this fall; completion is anticipated in 2026.

While Mitro attended college, drafting and design work at the Idaho National Laboratory (INL) provided income, but she was not inspired by "metal buildings and remodeling." So after graduation from the University of Idaho, Mitro landed a job with an established large architectural firm in Minneapolis.

The Twin Cities' many corporate headquarters provided rewarding projects, including Target stores, State Farm offices, and several hospitals including the University of Minnesota Medical Center.



Roxane Mitro returned to Idaho Falls after launching her design career in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Sharing a large lakeshore house with a group of young single professionals was "a blast." Ten years in, the work was still rewarding but by 1983, Idaho Falls seemed a much better place to raise her daughter than the big city. So she returned to work at various Idaho architectural firms and the INL for several years, rising to the position of unit manager, until in 1996 she joined the firm where she is now a partner.

Although she returned to Idaho Falls, Mitro is glad she left for at least a while. "I hope today's students can do that," she said. "People everywhere are nice, but the culture can be so different, even in places like Minneapolis or North Carolina, where my daughter works. You can't really appreciate Idaho until you have something to compare it to."

When she's not working, Mitro enjoys golfing, fishing, and socializing with fellow Skyline classmates in the Class of '71's monthly social Zoom meetings. Of alumni events and reunions, Mitro said: "You know how you have little groups in high school and don't really get to know many people well? You just see people as the jocks or the smart kids—that sort of thing. But as we get older and calmer, everyone gives up trying to be cool. That's when you can get to know each other. I so much enjoy hearing the different experiences people have had. What smart and interesting people they turned out to be!"

Mitro's designs will transform the Frontier Center, giving it a welcoming façade (left); improved access (below left); and an airy, gracious interior reception space (below). Construction is scheduled to begin this fall.

Architectural images courtesy AKM Architecture and Studio i



SGAA Activities

Homecoming 2024

Save the date! Plans are developing for homecoming, the weekend of September 13. SGAA will enter a decorated float in the annual homecoming parade. We plan to attend the football game and will recognize alumni athletes, cheerleaders, band members and others. A tailgating event is planned for alumni, and fundraising to support future SGAA initiatives and the scholarship fund. Watch our Facebook page and website for updates in the coming months.

SGAA again awards two scholarships

Teyah Turner and Trayven O’Ryan will each receive a \$1,000 scholarship when they graduate this year.

Both students “are very hard-working, with excellent GPAs,” Skyline’s College & Career Advisor Juliette Bruner told the SGAA. Turner will enroll at Idaho State University. O’Ryan will attend Boise State University.

The awards are the second pair of scholarships awarded by the SGAA. The first two were awarded last year. Bruner and her colleagues select the recipients, one male and one female, who attend any degree-granting institution. The association asks that the funds go to students for whom the support may make the difference in whether they can enroll.

Grizzly Chronicles

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Design and production: Kari McKim, '70

The SGAA is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization created by graduates of Skyline High School in Idaho Falls, Idaho, to recruit and organize the talents and resources of thousands of Skyline alumni in order to serve students, alumni, faculty, and administrators of Skyline High School.

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Entrance sign for SHS

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necessary renovation projects would be beyond the budget of SGAA and will require the use of public funds. The sign, on the other hand, is something we can do.”

For several months, school and district administrators have worked with SGAA board members to develop the specifications, decide the location, and get several bids from local firms.

“We are excited for the entry sign that will represent Skyline and the SGAA well,” Principal Josh Newell said. “It will serve as a reminder to all those who have been Grizzlies in the past that they can continue to be involved by joining the alumni association.”

Funding will come entirely from private donations through the SGAA. “We’ve set a goal to raise \$12,000,” said SGAA Treasurer Garth Blanchard, '71. “We figured we need to cover fundraising costs and to be able to meet any unanticipated expenses. Any funds remaining after the sign has been paid will be used for future school-supporting projects.”

The campaign’s target is to raise the full amount before July 31. A few generous donors have already contributed a total of \$6,000 to match future donations, doubling their value.

“This is an opportunity to spur greater interest in the SGAA among the thousands of people who attended Skyline High School,” said SGAA President Bob Schoch, '70. “The school has made it clear that it genuinely needs the support of its alumni. I’m very confident that alums will show Skyline’s students and teachers that we can deliver.”

The sign has been designed by Mike Cawley of Twizted Customz of Idaho Falls, who will build it.

SGAA Activities

Can a Skyline senior interview you?

Conversations with Skyline faculty have identified a new way for alums to support current students.

Each senior is required to complete a research project that includes an interview with someone who has expertise in the topic. The SGAA is compiling a list of alumni and their areas of expertise to facilitate matching seniors with people to interview.

If you’re willing to give an hour of your time to help a senior in this way, please respond to [this online survey](#) to tell us about your area(s) of expertise and provide your contact information.

Alumni Achievers

Athletic Director Gregg Baczuk has asked for content for the school’s Jumbotron (shown below), to provide interest and build school pride during lulls in the sports action.

In response, SGAA is compiling a series of spots highlighting the accomplishments of “alumni achievers.”

If you know someone who might enjoy being featured in this way, please email their name and contact information to the SGAA at SkylineGrizzliesAlums@gmail.com, with a note about their accomplishments.



Student reporting

Teodor Ripka named 'Best Delegate' at Model UN conference in Boise

By Jenna Singleton, WestSide Story

Skyline's Teodor Ripka was named the "Best Delegate" on the United Nationals Human Rights Committee at the annual Model UN Conference staged at Boise State University.

The Skyline team of four students, Chloe Dashnaw, Cheveyah Day, Jenna Singleton, and Ripka, made the February trip to Boise. The team represented the country of Gabon in the simulation of UN debates and committee meetings.

"I wanted to join Model UN because I wanted to get a better understanding of the geography of countries," Dashnaw said. "Something that Model UN helped me improve on in school is the understanding of which countries are allies. ... (It was a) great opportunity to learn more about countries' political issues."

Ripka said he joined the Model UN club "because I like politics, debating, and it was a free trip to Boise. Something Model UN helped me improve on in school is becoming more aware of global issues."

Social studies teacher James McCubbin, the Model UN club advisor, said recruiting students to join the club was difficult but ultimately succeeded. "My favorite part of this experience was getting to know the students better and watching Teodor win the Outstanding Delegate award."

"I enjoyed supervising the Model UN club for Skyline, getting to see the kids working together, and seeing them getting more familiar with the United Nations," McCubbin told WestSide Story.

New Skyline Advisory Council studies possible solutions to troubling data

Skyline High School has established an advisory council to help the school analyze performance indicators and identify opportunities to improve school performance and raise the graduation rate.

Garth Blanchard, '71, represents the SGAA on the committee, which also includes five teachers, three administrators, a staff member, five parents, and a district patron.

Of greatest current concern is the graduation rate, which fell to 75.3 percent in 2022, below both the state's targeted graduation rate of 94.9 percent and the statewide average, 79.9 percent. Other performance indicators tracked by the Idaho Department of Education include student competency in science, mathematics, and English; readiness for college or a non-college career; teacher experience; chronic absenteeism; and finance.

"The advisory council is looking at the metrics to come up with ideas for improving these numbers," Blanchard said. "If you look at these basic school areas, the state in general is not doing well."

Skyline spent about \$9,700 per student in 2022, below both the state average of \$9,832 and the 2021 US average of \$15,293 per elementary and secondary student. According to the Urban Institute, only Idaho, Utah, and Arizona spent less than \$10,000 per student.

Skyline's performance indicators can be found on [the website of the Department of Education](#).



Skyline Principal Joshua Newell

Principal's message

Skyline Principal Joshua Newell

As we near the end of another academic year, I am delighted with the tremendous accomplishments and growth we've experienced together. This year has been nothing short of fantastic, filled with achievements and milestones that make us proud to be part of the Skyline family.

I'm thrilled with our remarkable progress in the ISAT scores and participation, showcasing our commitment to academic excellence. Our students' dedication and hard work led to significant improvements, a testament to their determination and the unwavering support of our faculty and staff. Additionally, I am pleased to announce a notable increase in attendance, reflecting our collective efforts to foster a positive and engaging learning environment for all students.

Our Advanced Placement program continues to flourish, with an impressive 191 students undertaking 293 exams across 19 different courses. This remarkable participation underscores our students' eagerness to challenge themselves academically and the dedication of our educators in preparing them for success.

Furthermore, our athletic teams have shone brightly this year, demonstrating resilience, sportsmanship, and a commitment to excellence in every competition. Their achievements reflect the spirit of teamwork and dedication that defines Skyline High School.

Let us also acknowledge the hard work, dedication, and unwavering support of our entire community – students, parents, teachers, staff, and administrators. I look forward to continuing our journey of growth and excellence in the coming year, guided by our shared values and commitment to empowering every student to reach their fullest potential.

