



The Bluebird

A Publication for the Alumni of Goessel High School

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Teachers: The Heart of the Educational System

Teachers can make a lasting impact on students. You may have had a teacher who noticed you were a quiet, insecure student and then provided input to help build your confidence. Another teacher may have noticed how you learned and provided ways to help you engage in learning. Simply said, most teachers teach because they care about kids.

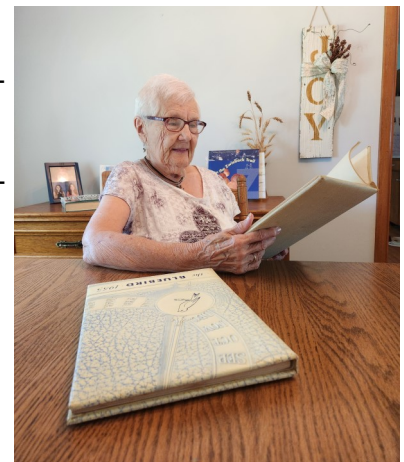
A rough estimate indicates there are 325 teachers who have passed through or are still teaching at USD 411. At least six of those have taught in excess of 30 years at Goessel. Whether a teacher taught for one year or 40 years many of them left a positive impact on your life.

This summer I had the privilege of visiting with Virginia Neufeld, Elizabeth McBride, Delmar Kaufman, and Norman Galle. Records indicate that Virginia, Elizabeth, Delmar, and Norman are four of the oldest living teachers who have taught at Goessel High School. There may be several others. If there are and someone has contact information for them I would appreciate hearing who they are.

Virginia attended Hesston and Goshen College and graduated from Bethel College with a major in business. In 1954, at the age of 22 she was hired to teach commerce at Goessel High School. She also served as a junior class sponsor as well as yearbook sponsor.

In late summer, Virginia was invited to attend a Y-Teen event. Upon arrival she began to mix and mingle with the girls who were attending. Shortly after arriving, a student introduced herself and asked Virginia whether she would be attending Goessel as a freshmen that year. Flattered by this comment, Virginia somewhat reluctantly informed the student she would actually be her teacher!

Virginia enjoyed teaching at Goessel for two years leaving in 1956.



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The alumni newsletter is
also posted on the
alumni page of the USD
411 website.

Teachers: Continued

Elizabeth graduated from Bethel College with a B.A. degree in English. She was hired to teach English for grades 9-11 in 1954 and taught through 1956. There was no English class offered for grade 12. She was also the high school librarian and directed three, three act plays each year—junior, senior, and all school. And she was the senior class sponsor.

Elizabeth enjoyed her years in Goessel and said that it was a good place to begin teaching and get experience because the students were well-behaved and respectful, and discipline was not difficult. Prof Waldo Schmidt, principal, was helpful, professional, and considerate of her inexperience.

In one of her English classes they were working on public speaking with book reports and other speeches of various kinds. While emphasizing good diction and articulation, her assignment was to come to class with tongue twisters to practice and have fun with. Only in Goessel would one of them come back to class with a Low German twister. Since Elizabeth could understand Low German, she gave him credit for doing his homework. Elizabeth remembered the tongue twister and shared it with me. The German version is; Friedach fief und fieftig fatta Fruus foare fescha. In English it loosely translates to, Friday fifty-five fat women drove (to go) fishing.

After leaving Goessel, Elizabeth taught two years in Henderson, NE High School, followed by one year in Lincoln Junior High, Mankato, MN. In 1959, she married and became a farmer's wife and never returned to teaching.

Delmar came to teach at Goessel in 1959, moving to Goessel with his wife and small child. He was hired to teach science, drivers ed, and to coach all of the sports played at Goessel. Those sports included soft ball, basketball and track. Delmar had played basketball and run track in high school and college but he had never played soft ball. So he learned the rules along with the boys.

To encourage the boys to do their best, Delmar created messages on old advertising posters that had been laying around in the school. This summer his daughter donated these posters.

Some years ago, three similar posters sponsored by 7-Up were donated to the alumni archives. These particular advertising posters were sponsored by Guys Potato Chips. In the photo you see one of the posters and a message that was used to encourage the boys.



Some alumni may remember the rivalry between Lehigh and Goessel High School. In one of the first away games of the basketball season in 1959, Delmar's first year of teaching, the rivalry between the two schools became very apparent. Delmar remembers the first half being very physical. At halftime he and the Lehigh coach visited and decided to tell the refs to get a handle on the game and start making more calls. They did visit with the refs, but apparently it didn't make a difference. In an article in the student newspaper, *The Bluebird*, dated December 18, 1959, it mentions the injuries received during the second half of the game. "Ronnie Schmidt, Goessel's guard, was rushed to the Hillsboro hospital by ambulance suffering from a fractured skull and fractured vertebra, while Stanley Bartel, Goessel's forward, was sped to the Goessel Clinic for treatment of a broken rib." Stanley made a fairly rapid recovery but Ronnie's injuries were more serious and he required a longer hospitalization.

As the school year ended in 1962 Delmar and his family decided to move to Bennet, Colorado. He taught there for an additional 31 years.

Teachers: Continued

Nelson Galle came to Goessel for the 1958-1959 school year. He came with a farm background and had recently graduated from Kansas State University. He was hired to teach Vo-Ag and followed in the footsteps of Gerald S. Deckert, who had helped establish the program in 1953. Nelson shared that teaching at Goessel High School was the best job he had in his almost 40 year career. Under Nelson's leadership the program continued to develop as more students actively participated in contests and took on leadership roles.

Nelson commented it may have been a good thing that girls were not allowed to participate in Vo-Ag. Being a young teacher fresh out of college, he was pretty sure if they had smiled at him, he would have folded and given all of them A's.

Nelson left Goessel in 1964 to become Employment Manager at Hesston Corporation. He was with Hesston 22 years in many management positions until 1986. He also worked at Farmland Industries and then in 1987, he and his wife purchased and ran Central Kansas Turkey Hatchery, until selling the business in 1995.

In 2021 the Goessel Community Foundation established the Nelson Galle Endowed Scholarship specifically for Goessel High graduates majoring in agriculture. Community support of this scholarship has been outstanding. A \$1,000 scholarship has been awarded for three consecutive years.

Administrative Changes in 2024

In January of 2024, the Goessel School Board spent time discussing a possible realignment of the superintendent/K-5 principal position. Mr. Mark Crawford, was hired in 2021 for the superintendent-K-5 principal position. Mr. Crawford suggested the board consider a half-time superintendent position and a full-time K-5 principal.

In June the board approved Mr. Crawford's contract of .5 for the 2024-2025 year. The .5 position allows Mr. Crawford to focus one day each week on the high school/middle school and the elementary school, and also allows more time to efficiently fill the role of Superintendent of Schools.

In March the school board met and noted that four candidates had been interviewed for the ten month, K-5 principal position. Mrs. Jody Schmidt was chosen as the new principal. Mrs. Schmidt has worked for Marion County Special Education Cooperative at Goessel Elementary School since 2001. Previously, she worked at Halstead Middle School and Chisholm Middle School in Newton. She is a graduate of Tabor College and earned her Master's Degree in Educational Administration from Emporia State University.

No changes have been made to the Goessel Junior High/High School principal position, currently held by Mr. Scott Boden. Earlier in 2024 Mr. Boden was recognized for being named the Area 2 High School Principal of the year nominee, noting his positive impact on students.

The Galloping Goose From Goessel

Information below shared by Greg Peters

“Randolph Woelk, he was quite the miler,” classmate Eldon Woelk recalled in a 2016 conversation with the Goessel High School Alumni Association. “He was so fast that by the time the mile was over, he was usually a round ahead of everybody.”

Randy Woelk, was the school’s first state track champion in 1939. Nicknamed “The Galloping Goose from Goessel” (also known as “The Goessel Galloper”), Randy earned his place in the pantheon of Kansas distance runners back in the day by breaking Glenn Cunningham’s KU Relays mile record for high schoolers. In addition to winning the state meet his senior year after being runner-up as a junior, Randy also had a distinguished life off the track. He served as an officer in the Army Signal Corps during WWII, and later received a Fulbright Grant that allowed him the opportunity to teach for a year at a high school in Kenya.

The book, *The Galloping Goose From Goessel*, written by Greg Peters, was released in May, 2024. It chronicles the life of alumni, Randolph Woelk. If you are interested in buying a copy, you can purchase it online through Amazon using the following link [The Galloping Goose](#)

Celebrating 100 Years in 2026

2026

*Goessel High School
will celebrate 100
years in 2026.
If you are interested
in being part of a
planning committee
for this event, please
let me know.*

Goessel Rural High School was established in 1926. Nine years later in 1935, the community voted to build a new brick building. In the picture below the boarding school building, behind and to the left, is being prepared to be moved to Bethel College Campus where it was used as a boy’s dormitory. After the removal of the boarding school, the Preparatory School was moved to the west and was used as the manual training shop.

