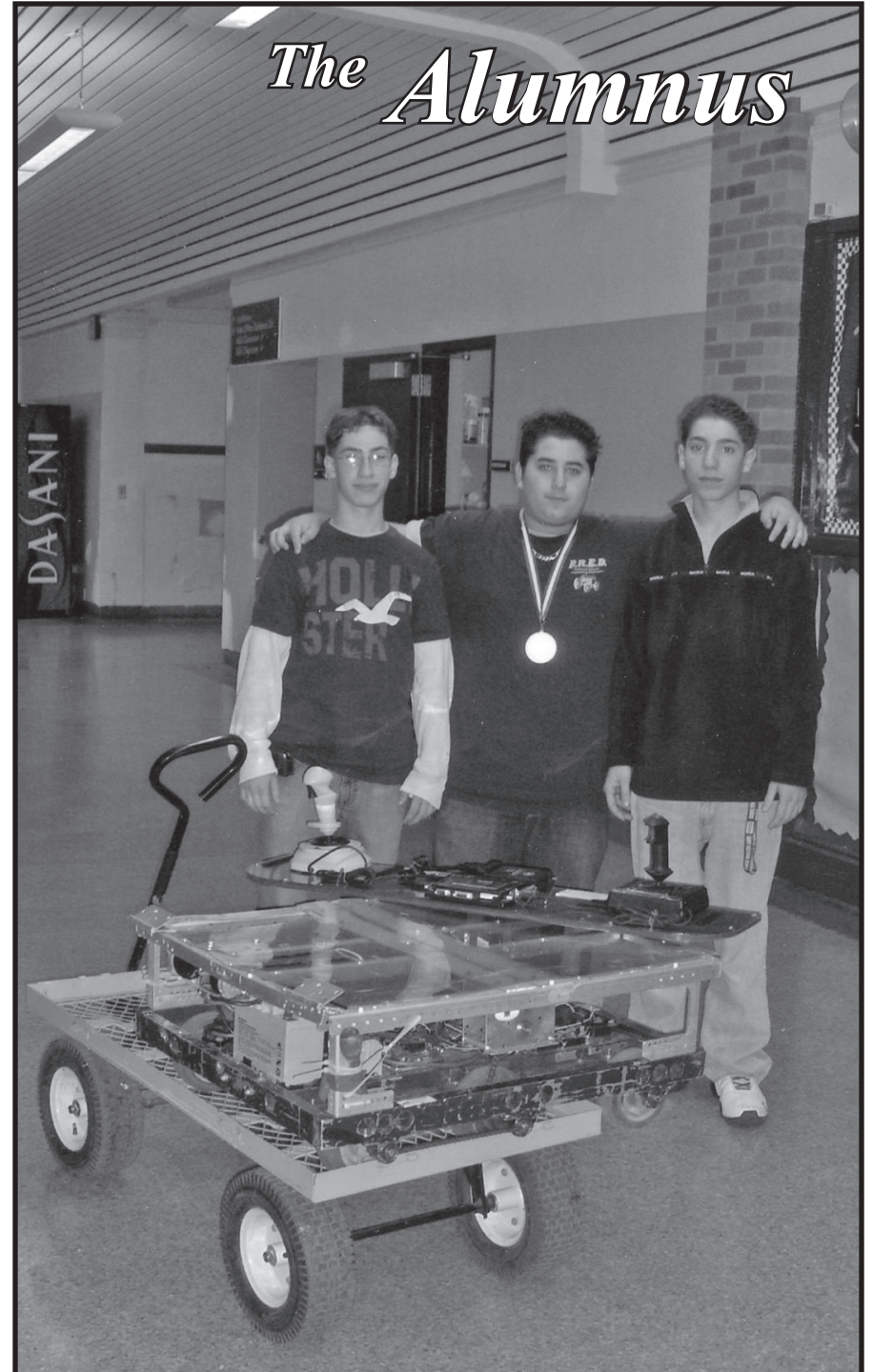




Alumni Association of
Fordson High School
P.O. Box 1382
Dearborn, MI 48121

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The Alumnus

Mostapha Bzeih, Ali Mokkaled and Mohamad Bzeih and the FIRST team robot



FORDSON ALUMNUS

Volume 20, Number 3, Fall, 2007

Alumni Association of Fordson High School
P.O. Box 1382
Dearborn, Michigan 48121

The Alumni Association of Fordson High School, founded November 12, 1987, is a nonprofit organization commemorating all Fordson High School alumni, faculty and students. The Board of Governors meets on a regular basis throughout the school year.

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The *Fordson Alumnus*, an official publication of the Alumni Association of Fordson High School, invites correspondence and suggestions from Fordson Alumni and friends.

Visit our website at: www.fordsonalumni.org

For an annual charge of \$25 per quarter page, your business card will be published in four bulletins.

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Printed in the Fordson Print Shop.

Our thanks to **Mr. Adrian Miclea** and the Fordson Advanced Graphic Arts students for the layout and design and **Mr. Darrel Shepherd** for the printing of *The Alumnus*.

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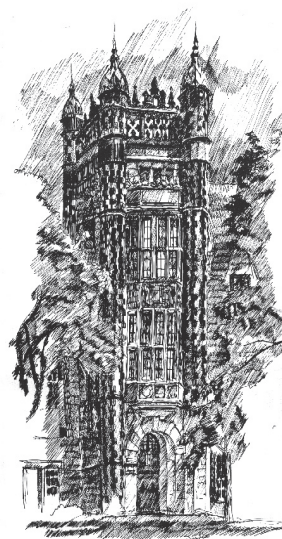


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NEWS FROM THE HIGH SCHOOL

Abbas Alawieh and **Mariam Baydoun** participated in the Generation of Promise program this past school year. Sixty students from eighteen school communities in the greater Detroit area participated in the program; Fordson was the only Dearborn school represented.

The goal of the Generation of Promise, established in 1987, is "... to provide cross-cultural experiences for students which will build bridges between urban and suburban youth," said Christine Geoghegan, program director. The program has students meet seven to eight times a year over a ten month period for a total of approximately 120 hours. Abbas was quoted about the importance of the program to his future goals that include attending the University of Michigan and becoming a medical doctor so that he might serve others. (Source: "FHS students participate in leadership program", by Elizabeth Schock, *Heritage Newspapers/Press & Guide*, July 29, 2007.

On Friday, October 7, the new football field was named in honor of longtime coach **Charles Jestic**. Coach Jestic cut the ribbon prior to the home game that the Tractors won, defeating Belleville 39-8. If you haven't visited the field, it is worth the trip just to see the beautiful renovation with the Fordson blue artificial turf and the school name and logos in bright gold.

Have you followed the Tractors this football season? They had an excellent record under new head coach **Fouad (Walker) Zaban**, finishing with an 8 and 3 record. They progressed to the second round of the regional playoffs where they were eliminated by losing that game to Livonia Franklin High.

In the 11/23/07 edition, Senior **Mohammed Moukdad**, defensive lineman, was named to the All West Defensive Team by *The Detroit Free Press*. **Hassen Amen**, defensive back, was named to the second team.

The following players were named to the 2007 All-City Football Team by the *Dearborn Press and Guide*: **Hassan Abdullah, Ali Alaboody, Hassan Amen, Ali Bazzi, Mohammed Bazy, Brendan Bringman, Mohamed Ghaith, Abdullah Homayed, Mohamad Moukdad**.

Congratulations to **Coach Phil Maher** and the boys' cross country team. The team qualified for state competition. Individual runners had competed at the state level in recent years, but this was the first time for the entire team in five years.

The Girls' Volleyball Team did well in recent competitions. The Varsity took first place in the Romulus Invitational; Junior Varsity took first place in the Taylor Invitational and third in the University of Michigan-Dearborn Invitational; freshmen took second place in the Taylor Invitational. Congratulations to the teams and to head coach and alumna **Maggie Porada**.

NEWS FROM BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Our web-master, **Richard Abdullah**, has been working on a new website for the Association. He has now finished the construction, and we hope you access the site and enjoy the results of his efforts. Several of us were asked to check out the test site and made a few suggestions. Rich, Class of 1983, is also a new member of the Board. Rich is an employee of Cisco. He and his wife, Denise Berry Abdullah, Class of 1989, lived for some time in Switzerland.



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PROUD FORDSON ALUMNI

They are now residents of Dearborn. Denise was instrumental in organizing a local fundraiser for the fight against breast cancer. The couple has two sons, Adam and Assam.

In reviewing the new website, we saw that Rich has established a link to Wikipedia. You may want to go to Wikipedia and look at the information the site has on Fordson High.

We welcome another grad to the Board. **Daniel A. Bitar**, Class of '92 graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from U of M, Dearborn in 1996; he earned a J.D. from Wayne State University Law School in 2000. Dan is a partner in Bitar and Mehanna, PLLC, in Dearborn Heights. He is engaged to Kerry Seremak, Class of '94, who is currently studying for a degree in teaching science. Dan has taken on the responsibility of treasurer of the organization.

Amer Beydoun will continue as a member of the Board, but can no longer assume the responsibilities of treasurer due to the demands of a new job that has him traveling frequently. Congratulations to Amer and his wife on the birth of their third son.

Many of you responded quickly to the letter from President **Rudah Saghir** reminding you of 2007-2008 dues. The response has us rethinking our previous methods of notifying members of annual dues, and we will discuss the issue at our next meeting. Rudah has also been revising the records of the membership; with such a massive reorganization there have been some mistakes. We apologize for those errors.

If you know of members who have not yet renewed by sending their dues, regretfully we will be dropping them from the organization after December 1 of this year. They will no longer receive *The Alumnus*.

Because of the reorganization, we are unable to acknowledge those who made donations in addition to their \$15 dues, September 1, 2006 – August 31, 2007. Please be assured that we are most grateful for your generosity in helping us fund projects for Fordson students.

The following projects were awarded funds last year

January, 2007: First Team, \$2000. As described in previous issues, this science and technology team works with a business partner and competes in regional, state and national robotics competitions. The team sponsor and team members have worked diligently during the school year and the summer to raise funds for FIRST. Some entry fees plus transportation and housing are as much as \$10,000. We feature team members on the cover of this issue.

March, 2007: Trip to Autorama for advanced Auto Tech students, **\$650.**

May, 2007: \$200 for an ice machine for the nurse's office. This gift was acknowledged with a written note of thanks by Mrs. Mary Baker, the school nurse.

At the November, 2007 meeting of the Board of Directors, the Board heard requests for funding. Mrs. Roxanne Crabill of the Science Department requested **\$1200 for a DVD Physics course** for students with weaker math skills. This will supplement a new set of texts purchased by the school for use with some 700 plus students. Ms. Diane Prieur of the English Department asked for **\$500 for the purchase of costumes for a Renaissance Festival.** Both requests were approved, as was a request for **funding for the 25 member First team, 2007-2008 competitions.** The Board approved **\$1500.**



Mohamad Bzeih, Ali Mokkaled (wearing team shirt) and Mustapha Bzeih

Another notable grad: The name and biography of **John C. Kornblum**, U.S. Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany, can be found on the web site of the Department of State, United States of America. Following his graduation from Michigan State University, John Kornblum began his career in the United States Foreign Service in 1964. Between 1969 and 1981 he served primarily in Hamburg, Berlin and Washington. In 1987 he was chosen to be the U. S. Deputy Permanent Representative to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in Brussels. After his appointment as Ambassador to the Conference on Security and Cooperation (1991) by President Bush, he was instrumental in drafting the Declaration approved at the Helsinki Summit. He served as Ambassador to Germany from 1997-2001. In 1996 he received the highest award of an American foreign service officer from the Federal Republic of Germany. He has authored a book, *The German Element*. He is married to Helen Sen; the couple has two sons.

If you have a story you'd like to share, please send it to the editor at the organization address, P.O. Box 1382, Dearborn, MI 48128 or email *Baeob@aol.com*. Be sure to note that it is information for the Alumnus or it will be deleted as spam.

IN MEMORIAM

Paul Pearsall, noted author and clinical neuropsychologist, died July 13, 2007 in Honolulu, Hawaii. He received numerous awards for his research on the relationship between the brain, heart and immune system and his ground-breaking research on heart transplant recipients receiving the memories of their donor led to the formation of the Cleveland Clinic's new Heart/Mind Program." (Source: www.PaulPearsall.com) Dr. Pearsall authored nineteen books, received numerous awards for his research and for his commitment to helping people solve serious problems in their lives. He was a popular lecturer having served in many capacities, including Professor of Psychology at Henry Ford Community College.

Joan Shoemaker Abbot

Faculty:

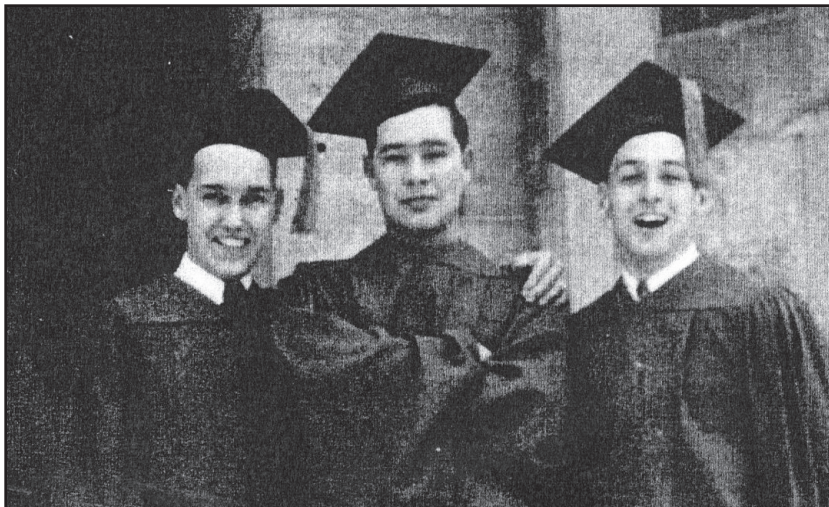
Verlyn Beardslee, Counselor

Richard Cicero, Art

Norm Cramer, Music and English

1942 grad, Ornell J. (O.J.) Nori, has authored *Ford: An Era Remembered*. “ His career was packed with unexpected and fascinating experiences. He hired on in the midst of World War II, and resumed his employment at Ford in 1946 after a short stint in the United States Army. After a distinguished career, O.J. retired in 1984 and now lives in Farmington Hills, Michigan with his wife, Marge.” (Source: the Press Release) Interested? Call Nelson Publishing and Marketing at (248) 735-0418 or O.J. Nori at (248) 488-2122.

We received this note from 1937 grad **Bob Bennett** along with a graduation day picture with two friends, Harold Lance and Albert Catalo. “May 19, 2007: Harold Lance was the brain of the bunch and was soon involved in design work. I went to Fords. My dad Bert Bennett was the painter boss in the powerhouse. I don’t remember where Al Catalo worked. We were both members of the Michigan Air National Guard and we both (were) called to duty Oct. 15, 1940. Al went to another unit and I remained in the photo section. We were sent to Alexandria, LA to map all the camp that was being built. I stayed with the 107th National Guard until Sept 1942 when I went to pilot training. I continued in training until I went to B24 Bomb training. My training was completed. I was promoted to First Lieutenant and was given a new B24 Liberator. I flew 31 missions and returned home. I went to flight instructor school and finish(ed) my military career. I worked 31 years for Western Electric Company and retired.” Thanks for sharing your story, Bob.



“Harold Lance deceased 2006, Albert Catalo deceased 2000, Robert Bennett, still here”



Back of FIRST team shirt; note Gold Sponsor

FIRST team members **Mohamad Bzeih, Mostapha Bzeih and Ali Mokkaled** brought their competition robot to the Board meeting in November and demonstrated its use. We were impressed by the skills the boys demonstrated. Unlike most competitors, the team has done its own work and is one of the few, if not the only team, whose robot is student designed and built. Mohamad built the circuit board and Ali programmed the robot. The boys attended a six week programming class at Fordson this past summer. The course was taught by **Bob Kale**, a Ford Motor Company Engineer and attracted students from many school districts. Now the Fordson team needs volunteers to assist them as they prepare for their first competition next March 13,14,15 at Wayne State University. If you are an electrical or mechanical engineer and would like to help, please contact Roxanne Crabill at Fordson.



ceiling and lights in lower B hall

Our efforts to influence the renovation of the ceilings in A and B Halls have fallen short. We are disappointed in the choices of ceiling material and lighting and do not find the renovation in keeping with the classical style of Fordson. The renovation was awarded to the architectural firm that did such an outstanding job with the recent addition to the school. The A halls have dropped ceilings with acoustical tile. The work in the main B halls is even more disappointing. We understand that the district had two goals for the halls, to reduce noise and to improve lighting. The B hall ceilings were dropped about four to six inches; sound insulation was installed between the old ceilings and the new. The curvature of the original ceiling was followed, but aluminum strips run the full length of the halls. The strips are separated by small spaces. Light fixtures hang by wires from the ceilings (see above). They are also visible on the cover picture. Some members describe the hallways as resembling subway stations. We are including pictures of lower B hall near the intersection of the main gym/ swimming pool hall. We invite you to stop by the school and judge for yourselves. We hope to ask central administration to consider replacing the lighting fixtures with some that are more in keeping with the building's architecture.

ALUMNI NEWS

Homecoming: Reunion classes met on Sunday, August 5 at Ford Field. Unfortunately, an all day rain greeted those who braved the weather. We heard lots of laughter as people shared memories of high school days. Members of the board worked the Association booth, selling tee shirts and other memorabilia. The Tractor Stop Shop, located in the first floor of the new addition to the school, now sells alumni shirts, etc.

Ismael Ahmed was recently appointed Director of the State of Michigan Department of Human Services by Governor Jennifer Granholm. Following graduation from Fordson, Ish continued his education at Henry Ford Community College, then the University of Michigan where he earned a bachelor's degree. He has long been a community activist, instrumental in the founding ACCESS, a private non-profit agency that helps thousands of people each year. He has served as executive director of that agency as well as being involved in the establishment of the Arab American Museum located on Michigan Avenue just west of Schaefer Road in Dearborn. His background includes service in the U.S. Army, assembly line work and managing a rock band! He credits his maternal grandmother, Haji Aliya Hassen, with his commitment to bettering the lives of others. "It was she, he said, who taught him that going to protest rallies was fine but what really mattered was helping people in practical ways." Ismael has taken over an agency that has the challenge of helping even more people due to the poor economy of the state. We wish him well, and congratulate the governor on making such a fine choice of leader.

Source: "Out to Make a Difference", by Jack Kresnak, *The Detroit Free Press*, Section 1B, September 16, 2007.

Earlier in this issue we mentioned that the Wikipedia web site has information about the school. It also has a listing of notable grads, an incomplete list at best. One name on the web site is that of **Dr. Alex Anckounie**. Dr. Anckounie received a doctorate in nuclear physics and engineering and was instrumental in the development of nuclear submarines. He was commanding officer of the U.S.S. Nautilus, the first sub to complete the submerged transit across the North Pole! He became a Professor of Economics at George Washington University and Georgetown. We continue to be impressed by the accomplishments of many graduates of our high school.