



HE'S DONE IT ALL!

Interesting & Unexpected Aspects to a 41 Year Career at VLHS

In **recognition** and **celebration** of Dr. John Brandt's 41 years with VLHS, we asked him to reflect on some of the unexpected, and often unnoticed, things he has done in his time at Valley.

While this is not an exhaustive list, it serves as a glimpse into his life at Valley.

We thank you, Dr. Brandt, for your **dedication, leadership, and guidance** in following God's call to lead VLHS!

The remainder of this article is written by Dr. Brandt.

Bus Driver - I have always had a bit of truck driver in me. My father was the school principal and drove bus. Before I came to VL I drove a bus route and then taught all day. Here, I soon discovered it was easier to drive the bus for my teams than find drivers, so I got my license. I coached fall and winter, but in the spring I made it a point to drive to one spring sports game each week. As AD (Athletic Director), it kept me involved with all of the teams and actually generated some very interesting stories.

Coach - I coached soccer for 9 years and one year of baseball. After coaching soccer for 8 years, I moved to girls basketball when it was a fall sport. A few years later I coached one year of JV soccer with Steve Zill as the head coach. It was then that I truly understood how little I really knew about soccer. The same is true in baseball. I always loved the sport but working with Doug Guenther I discovered there was a whole lot more to learn.

Sue as Spouse and Co-Worker - Sue saved plenty of students and teachers from me over the years, and saved me from myself. She was the voice of reason

when my emotions took charge. This was especially evident when I coached girls basketball. As it turned out, many of those lessons worked just as well with the boys too. She supported me in

all these various roles, which took time from her and the kids. We have always been co-workers even when we have not been at the same school. However, our first two years teaching at Atonement Lutheran School in Florissant, MO were especially meaningful. We learned what it meant to be married and to be teachers together.



Time Magazine Covers as Classroom Wallpaper - This began as an idea to give students a visual that history is happening right now and this was a "time" line. (I'm easily entertained). It then became an obsession and I was within 2 years of completely covering the walls of my classroom when I got moved to a different room. Former students tend to have several covers that were memorable to them. A couple of years ago, I got a call from an early 80s alum who wanted to know if I still had the cover which was about the "Coming Ice Age"! How about that! I always thought it funny that the Ayatollah Khomeini from the Iranian hostage crisis looked over my shoulder when I stood at the podium lecturing.

Custodian - All I can say is it is better to

be the planned custodian and clean floors after school, rather than the un-planned custodian when someone gets sick.

Seinfeld and Cheers Recaps at Faculty Meetings - Great shows. Not much more to say. Until recently I had a Kramer cut out hiding in my office. It might still be hiding - I can't find it.

Ulysses S. Grant Reenactment - U.S. Grant and H.S. Truman were regulars each year. The point was to talk about their experiences in the first person. It was intended to be a change of pace for the regular guy who was up front talking. I am significantly taller than either of these individuals. U.S. Grant always had a cigar in his mouth and so I did too on that day. By the end of the day I was so light headed that I probably shouldn't have driven home. He was known for winning no matter what it might cost. Winning was necessary, it was war, but he understood the cost and it troubled him greatly. Ultimately that was the point of that lesson. Truman was a very practical guy - he mowed his own lawn back in Missouri while he was president. He was also a very colorful speaker. Wrestling with the decision to use the Atomic Bomb was the point of that lesson.



Snow Shoveler - Dave Schlesselman is a great man, mentor, and friend. He



always shoveled the walk. When he left VL, Jerry Boehm and I grabbed the snow shovels. There have been others who have joined in the fun - Steve Zill, Tom Roekle, Barry Wittig. The job needs to be done.

Flood Restoration - (or does this fall under custodian?) It falls under custodian but I really think this problem has been solved for Mr. Petzold!

Potentially Hazardous Early Morning Drives to Determine Snow Days - Don't tell anyone, but when the alarm goes off at 5:30 and I think it may be a snow day, I check the news and see what's happening. And we



have gotten a lot weaker in this regard over the years. Why I remember when we got 12 inches of snow on May 15 and came to school, cleared off the baseball field and

played that afternoon. (Just kidding, old guy joke)

Rock Pickin' - When VL moved to McCarty, the building was in the middle of a corn field. For the first several years, physical education classes and sports teams dedicated a bit of their time to picking up rocks. It should be noted that David Mammel found an arrowhead in the process. It is ironic that after all that work I was asked to purchase a certain kind of dirt for the baseball field.

Apparently I purchased the wrong kind, and all of our work picking up rocks was ruined because the dirt was full of rocks. Thank goodness that Mr. Hofmeister, our Varsity baseball coach, knows what he is doing!

Chapel Leader - In the 1980s there was a popular contemporary Christian group called Newsong. I had the bright idea that I could lip-synch it in chapel. Lip-synching was kind of a thing at that

point. However, to make it really good I needed a couple of back up lip-synchers. I recruited 2 guys (maybe 3 but I forgot the third, if I had one) and they took it to a whole other level. Not only did they lip-synch the chorus and other vocals, they choreographed dance steps. I have no idea if anyone got the message that day, but we had fun. The rest of the story - one of the back-ups was Gary Fehn father of current student Ryan, the other was Brian Altevogt, professor and choir director at Concordia Ann Arbor.

Do YOU have a memory, story or photo to share with Dr. Brandt on his retirement? We encourage you to [Submit your Message for Dr. Brandt](#).

Valley asks that you do this before July 1st so we can compile these stories/memories/well-wishes for Dr. Brandt this summer.

This June, we ask that you join Valley in prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank you for bringing us to the completion of this 2019-2020 school year. Thank you for teachers and staff, who have worked diligently to teach your children. Thank you for Christian parents who are raising children to know and love you. Thank you for students who have endured many changes this school year.

Bless these individuals as they head into summer break, and continue to be with VL's administration as they monitor and make decisions for the 2020-2021 school year. Please bless the construction project at VLHS and the many people involved in bringing it to completion.

Thank you, Lord, for the support of family and friends who continue to make the ministry and education of VLHS possible for so many. Grant protection and safety, peace and hope to us in the midst of this pandemic. Finally, Lord, thank you for sending your son to the cross in our place that we may have forgiveness of our sins and the security of eternal life with you forever. Amen.

What about Summer Camps?

VLHS is unable to run summer camps as originally scheduled in June, but we are hopeful to run a modified schedule in July!

Please check www.vlhs.com/camps after July 1 for full details!

Have a question or want to sign up to receive emails about this summer's programs? Please contact Amy Cooper at acooper@vlhs.com. We hope we get to see you soon!

Valley Announces Julian Petzold as new Executive Director



Julian (VL '89) and Jennifer (VL '90) pose with their three children in a recent family photo. From left, Logan, Julian, Jennifer, Alaina, & Evan.

Valley Lutheran High School is pleased to announce Mr. Julian Petzold as the Executive Director of VLHS effective August 1, 2020. Mr. Petzold replaces Dr. John Brandt, who has faithfully led Valley for 41 years and announced his retirement earlier this school year.

Mr. Petzold is no stranger to Valley and the Saginaw area. He attended Valley Lutheran for high school where he was involved in cross country, basketball, baseball. Some of his fondest memories of his days as a student at Valley are a direct result of the relationships developed with friends and classmates doing fun things together.

Read more about Julian on our website at vlhs.com/newdirector.