



HIXSON HIGH SCHOOL  
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Madame Chair and Commissioners,

My name is Mike Kirk and I chair the HHSAA. I'm joined today by several other officers and members of our board to include:

and we appreciate the opportunity to recognize a former Commissioner and fellow alum today.

In 2009, a centennial celebration was held at HHS in recognition of our 100<sup>th</sup> graduating class. To remember this important milestone, the HHS Centennial Alumni Scholarship was established with seed money from the Class of 1959 and the first scholarship was presented. Several years later, the HHSAA was re-established with a primary goal of endowing this scholarship as well as providing financial support to HHS for various needs that just don't fall within the school systems budget. We also strive to be an encouragement to the staff, faculty, and students by providing things like coffee trucks and special-order biscuits just before the Christmas Break to hosting a breakfast for our senior students a few days before graduation.

Our desire is for these young people to see service in action, and that they might be encouraged to serve in the communities where they settle in the future.

We're here today to recognize a 1973 graduate of HHS that has demonstrated exceptional service not only to our Hixson community, but the City of Chattanooga and Hamilton County.

Madame Chair, if appropriate, I'd like to invite Commissioner Highlander a HHS alum, and Mayor Coppinger to join us on the floor as we present the Mayor a gift in honor of his service.

As they join us, in the sake of time I'll share a few highlights of the Mayors career:

After graduating from HHS in 1973, Mayor Jim Coppinger attended Chattanooga State and the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga.

In 1977, his public service began as a cadet with the Chattanooga Fire Department.

In 1997, Mayor Coppinger was appointed fire chief by then-Mayor Jon Kinsey, a position held until he retired concluding a career of service that spanned about 28 years.

In 2006, at the urging of many community leaders, family and friends, Mayor Coppinger ran for and was elected to the District 3 County Commission seat being vacated by Charlotte Vandergriff who chose not to seek re-election. District 3 includes the communities of Hixson, Middle Valley and the city of Lakesite.

In 2011, following the resignation of then-Mayor Claude Ramsey who left office to become deputy governor of the State of Tennessee, Mayor Coppinger was sworn in as Hamilton County mayor following a challenging but ultimately unanimous show of support from the Hamilton County Commission.

Mayor Coppinger earned the trust of the citizens of Hamilton County 3 more times before announcing last October that he would not seek re-election this year citing a desire to spend more time with his family.

The Hixson community has been blessed in recent years by exceptional leadership from both sides of the aisle in our community, the City of Chattanooga, Hamilton County and the Great State of Tennessee. Men and Women like, Dr Sam McConnell, Everett Fairchild, Howard Sompayrac, Buster Vandergriff, Charlotte Vandergriff and our associations own current Assessor of Property Marty Haynes and State Representative Greg Martin along with hundreds of leaders that volunteer their time in local civic groups and other service organizations. I would add Coach Anthony Martino who served HHS for over 4 decades and impacted so many young men and women including the Mayor.

Mayor Coppinger, we're grateful for your years of honorable service to our Hixson community, the City of Chattanooga and the citizens of Hamilton County.

On behalf of the HHSAA, we'd like to present you an ink pen that has been hand made by a Hixson resident out of wood that was removed from the gym floor at HHS where you surely travelled back in the day.