

Hail pounds roof during GHS alumni banquet

Written by Elizabeth Barrett
Thursday, 30 May 2013 14:02 -



Difficult to hear presenters during event.

Edythe (Lauer) Bartak was overwhelmed when she traveled into Gothenburg to attend high school in 1935.

The Dust Bowl on the plains was drawing to a close and ending and folks the economy was still reeling from the Great Depression.

“I thought the building (high school) was huge,” Bartak said.

And she was only 12 years old when she showed up for classes after attending country school and living 10 miles northeast of Gothenburg.

Bartak lived with several other girls in a local home during the weekend and returned home on weekends.

“I was very thankful to have the opportunity to go to high school,” she said. “Many of my friends didn’t because of the Great Depression.

“It wasn’t an easy time for parents.”

After graduating at age 16, Bartak taught school in Custer County where she had three pupils her first year.

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Another graduate, a 92-year-old woman, didn't attend the banquet but she visited the principal's office earlier last week.

GHS guidance counselor Jerry Wiggins said she gave principal Randy Evans a letter telling of a math contest in which she competed against Hugh Ralston and Paul Potter and won.



She admitted to Evans she'd cheated and wanted to make amends after those years, Wiggins said.

"Reunions provide the opportunity to reminisce and make amends," he said.

As golf-ball-sized, and larger, hail clattered on the roof, it was difficult to hear master-of-ceremonies Josh Clark at times.

Clark sang the national anthem and shared interesting information about the honor classes—1943, 1953, 1963, 1973, 1983, 1993 and 2003.

Wiggins, Mayor Joyce Hudson and 2013 student council president Logan Sheets welcomed those in attendance.

Local seventh grader Jonah Taylor sang for classmates and spouses.

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The Rev. Gloria (Keiser) Dovre, Class of 1981, was the speaker.

Dovre is director for evangelical mission and assistant to the bishop for southeastern Iowa Synod.

She said the key to education is learning from the past, predicting what's needed in the future and living fully in the moment.

Education should match the gifts of the student with what they need, Dovre said.

"The key is to find the gift each person brings and connect it with what the world needs," she said.

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