

Bellevue  
Public  
Schools



Alumni  
Spotlight



# Barclay Knapp

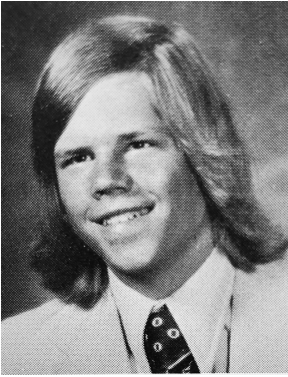
## Bellevue High, 1975

Welcome to our Alumni Spotlight series where we shine a light on some of the amazing alumni that have graduated from Bellevue Public Schools!

Know someone that should be in a future spotlight? Send us their name along with a brief explanation of why they should be in the spotlight. eMail: [bps.alumni@bpsne.net](mailto:bps.alumni@bpsne.net)

Barclay Knapp (Bellevue High, '75) has spent most of his post-graduate life as a serial entrepreneur - and a very successful one at that. One of his companies provided cable services to the country of England in the 90s. Articles about his success have been written in publications ranging from The Tom Tom to Market Watch to the Wall Street Journal.

Currently, he is working with his latest company, IOTA, on connecting "Things" over the Internet. Despite his demanding schedule, Barclay recently took time to answer a few questions.



**Barclay's Senior Picture. Barclay made the most of his time at Bellevue High - playing football, acting in the school play and serving as President of the Student Council**

What high school did you attend in Bellevue and when did you graduate?

Bellevue High, Class of 1975

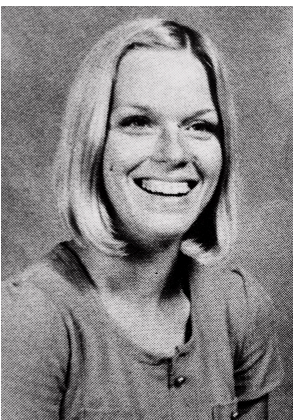
Could you name a few of your favorite teachers and share why they were your favorite?

**Mrs. Beckman**, because she was very tough on me, but fair. She had me do an "independent study" English paper that began my love for great literature.

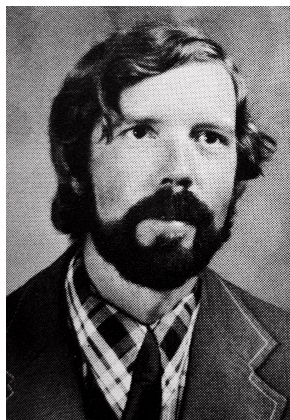
**Mr. Hanon**, for casting me in "The Man Who Came to Dinner" - looking back, it was one of the most important things I ever did. I learned how to handle stage fright and I also learned that I was terrible ham - I LOVED being on stage and showing off.

**Mr. Emrich**, for being just an all around great educator. He was my AP Bio teacher and he challenged us at a VERY high level and taught us how to work hard.

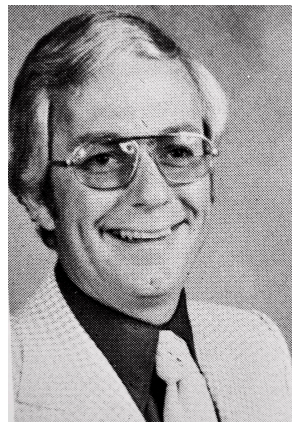
And of course **Mr. Bill James** - the best coach ever! Coach James taught me that one leads by expecting the best. He was never a yeller but he was good at calling us out if we weren't doing our best. No one wanted to disappoint him.



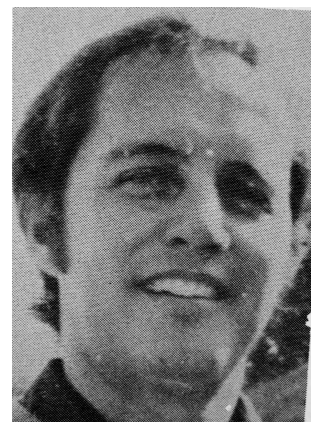
**Mrs. Beckman**



**Mr. Hanon**



**Mr. Emrich**



**Coach James**

### Did you have a favorite place to hang out?

We often hung out in the lobby outside the gym.

### Do you have a good memory you could share from your time in BPS?

Friday night football games in the fall of 1973, the year we won the State Championship, and being on stage opening night of "The Man Who Came to Dinner" in 1974.

### Do you have any siblings that graduated from BPS?

Two of my sisters: Meta Sue Knapp, and Mary Beth Knapp, are both graduates of Bellevue East, in 1959 and 1965, respectively.

### Please tell us a little about your family

I am married to Rebecca. My son William is a real estate developer and lives with his wife Julia in Philadelphia. My daughter Mary is a musician and actress living in New York with her husband Doug, and she just had our first grandchild, little Bettie!

### What did you want to be when you grew up?

A fighter pilot first, but then my eyes weren't good enough, so then I wanted to be a doctor. That eventually changed too....



**Barclay speaking to  
students at Bellevue East in  
2018**





## What do you do for a living?

I've been a serial entrepreneur my whole career, and have now started six public companies: the first three in cell phones, then cable tv, and the last two in the Internet. Bellevue was a terrific place to grow up and Bellevue High was terrific.

I had so many opportunities at Bellevue High to explore, experiment, learn - and do everything from great athletics, to advanced academics, to being an actor on stage. All of those things have been invaluable to me ever since.

## Is there anything you are working on now that you could share with us?

I am Executive Chairman of Iota Communications, Inc., my latest startup which is now a public company. We're developing a new nationwide wireless network - but to connect "things" like sensors, machines, and other devices to the Internet instead of people.

## Which accomplishment of yours are you most proud of?

It's been a great satisfaction to have been a pioneer in two of our most important new industries over the last 40 years - cellular telephones and the Internet.

## Where do you see yourself 5-10 years from now?

Probably still starting and building companies, but with time to engage in my now-favorite sport, which is Polo.



**Bellevue East Principal Dr Jeff Wagner (left), Barclay Knapp (center) and BPS Superintendent Dr. Jeff Rippe (right). Barclay recently returned to Bellevue to speak to students at both Bellevue East & Bellevue West about his life since graduating from Bellevue High**





**Barclay (#1 in Red)  
participating in one of his  
more recent passions - Polo!**

## What message would you like to give to current students in Bellevue Public Schools?

In school, I believe the most important thing is to "learn how to learn." It's not what you are taught in your classes today that will be valuable down the road, it's how well you can learn to keep "teaching yourself" the things you'll really need to know as you go through life.

## Links

1999 Wall Street Journal Article on Barclay. This is a very well written article titled, "How Nebraskan Barclay Knapp came to Dominate British Cable"

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB935707071452860636>

IOTA Communications Website

<https://www.iotacommunications.com/about/>



**Barclay (far right) in the Bellevue  
High production of  
"The Man Who Came to Dinner"**

## About Us

The Alumni Spotlight is a recurring feature on the Alumni Association Facebook Page. If you know of a Bellevue graduate that we should shine the spotlight on, please reach out to us and they will be considered for a future column. Continue to invite your friends and family to Like and Follow our Alumni Association page: <https://www.facebook.com/BPSAlumni>