

Generally Speaking...

NEWS FROM THE GRANT HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

WINTER 2021

U.S. GRANT HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
www.grantalumni.org

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WILLIAM T. FLETCHER MURALS by Doug Capps '61

Get ready to read a story of loss. Loss of a historic and generous gift of renowned murals in Grant's auditorium. Loss -through dramatic public art - of a message of education idealism to inspire today's and future generations of Grant students. Loss of constructive dialogue between stakeholders in the wider community. Loss of trust between an alumni group and school district leaders. Loss of opportunity to learn from powerful teachable moments, had mural retention options been implemented. As most of you have heard, Superintendent Guadalupe Guerrero decided to remove the Fletcher Memorial Murals from the auditorium at Grant High School. The removal will begin this spring by six trained restoration experts from the Cultural Heritage Group. None of the money raised by the Grant High School Alumni Association will be used for the removal. It is reported that removal will cost the District upwards of \$200,000. Most likely the murals will be put into storage; their size (20X25 ft. each) making display in another off-site location unlikely.

The decision was devastating news for an Alumni Assn representing many alums, along with many community members. It is counter to the initial and express approval given by the District to the alumni group to raise funds for the mural restoration. Relying on that approval, the Alumni Association Mural Committee spent valuable time and money to implement it. Raising over \$100,000 from over 600 former students and community members for restoration was a heavy lift for volunteers who love their school. The decision returns \$100,000 matching funds from the generosity of the Leo Lester Browne Fund. And Grant's Music Department loses funds left over from restoration costs.

A lot is missing from that decision. There was no determination of the right of any district employee - including a superintendent - to unilaterally decide to remove a donated or created piece of public art from a school; in this case, artwork dedicated to the memory of Grant High's beloved first principal. No willingness of a school board to assure that a policy is in place to guide deaccessioning works of art, particularly those of historical and high value. No reaching out for fair and transparent dialogue between students - particularly those of the Indigenous People's Student Union - Grant High and District staff, cultural and tribal representatives, and other stakeholders. No acknowledgement of State Historic Preservation determination that the murals were at the top of the list of historically significant elements to be retained, when Grant's modernization plans were developed and approved. Or mention that mural restoration was included in the Board-approved remodel plan.

And as Grant High students presented their mural removal demands, there was no fulfillment of the promise from District staff to implement an engagement plan for students and other stakeholders to come to a mutually agreeable determination of what had become a complicated and controversial issue. The student's demands over offending portions of the murals - thoughtfully and compellingly developed over considerable time - were no doubt amplified by the demands relating to racial equity and social justice sweeping the nation. That is a powerful and noteworthy context. But an opportunity here in Portland - within our local school district - was lost by not including the issue in the same decision framework established to address similar issues that emerged from those same national and local sources, like the renaming of schools. That framework promises -- in the District's words, a "shared analysis and an inclusive dialogue contending with multiple perspectives within an equity centered design."

WILLIAM T. FLETCHER MURALS (cont) by Doug Capps '61

Even before that framework was developed to respond to current demands, a District policy had been adopted “to support racial equity and social justice in its policies, people and practices in order to create a culturally responsive organization, ensuring that all students are guaranteed a comprehensive, rigorous, equitable, and inclusive education.”

Some School Board members pointed to this policy in support of the Superintendent’s decision to remove the murals, but failed to enforce a process to more fully meet those mandates than simply removing the entire murals.

What might have resulted had that process been applied to achieve those policy goals we all support?

- Exhibition of on-site art or other cultural elements to honor the indigenous peoples who were stewards of the land upon which Grant High was built, and resisting fictionalized and romanticized depictions of Native life found in older pieces.
- A curriculum that studies the negative impacts of western pioneer expansion on native populations and their lands, expanding awareness and understanding of a long history of broken promises.
- “masking” the offending part of the murals to blend into the murals leaving the majority of the murals intact, with adjacent information explaining what can be discovered under the mask.
- Teaching about the artist Carl Hoeckner, an artist who used large format murals to promote social ideals in the fashion of Mexican muralist Diego Rivera; and in this case depicting the challenge to Grant students to achieve the “Ideals of Education”, ascending the steps toward the enlightenment symbols of knowledge and wisdom; depicting Ulysses Grant and Susan B. Anthony to represent the goals of ending slavery and advancing women’s rights.
- And that process could even have identified ways to rebuild community strengths and resources to benefit Portland’s native student population with alumni support and engagement in that endeavor.

In the BLM and BIPOC context, there are demands placed on many public entities across the land, stemming from protests against public depictions of harmful history and practices. Sometimes those protests have been expressed in violent acts, tearing down statutes and other works of art, or damaging or defacing cultural/historic buildings. And sometimes there are more subtle and quieter acts, removing harmful reminders by unilateral decision making. Either form can act as a denial of seeking collective trust, and finding thoughtful, creative opportunities for greater racial and cultural understanding, support, and good will.

This loss of constructive and inclusive community building, in the long run, is perhaps the ultimate loss here.

All donors will be contacted with information about the return of their contribution. See below.

DISTRIBUTION OF MURAL DONATION REFUNDS

The Alumni Association has initiated the process of refunding donations made for the Mural Restoration Project and is offering five options for your donation. (1) Full refund (2) Dues, (3) Scholarship fund, (4) Music Education fund, (5) General fund. You may split amount between the options.

Donors for whom there is an email address will be contacted by email. Please look for a message from muralrestoration@granthspportland.org

A form can be found on the Grant Alumni website where donors can select how they wish their donation to be applied: <https://www.grantalumni.org/information-for-mural-donors.html>

Donors not yet contacted or those without access to a computer, may mail the Alumni Association their options to: Grant High School Alumni Association, P.O. Box 13291, Portland OR 97213. Those requesting refunds must include their current mailing address.

FROM THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT



Bob Stayton '61

Glad to see 2021. Hopefully we have learned from last year. I am grateful to our Mural Committee who did outstanding work to organize and carry out the fund drive to restore the Fletcher Memorial Murals in the Auditorium over the last few years. I remain disappointed with the response by PPS and Superintendent Guererro to largely ignore our effort and elect to remove them. We have initiated a plan to offer refunds to donors and conclude this episode in the next few months. The Board is unanimous in our desire to continue to directly help Grant students through our scholarship fund and other avenues that directly benefit Grant students.

I want to honor the memory of Past President Gerry Spencer '59 who passed away last August. Gerry was a huge supporter of Grant Athletics and the Alumni Assn. He was nostalgic about the late 50's Grant Spirit; he had a great passion for the athletic history of Grant. Gerry kept the Pete Moore Scholarship Fund alive for many years organizing the annual golf tournament to raise money and personally interviewing candidates. He is missed.

Looking toward 2021 with anticipation that we will continue with the Alumni Assn Scholarship in the spring; resume the annual All Alumni Picnic in July if the COVID19 situation eases enough to safely resume gatherings; and return to in person meetings when it is safe to do so. In Sept. we met with Grant's new Principal James McGee. We met in the park, masked and socially distant. Mr. McGee comes from Lincoln where he was Vice Principal. Mr. McGee expressed interest and support of the Grant Alumni activity however, due to the absence of meetings at the school and the altered Pandemic protocols, we have had little contact with the staff at Grant so far this school year.

We welcome new Board Member Henry Breithaupt '66. Henry is a retired Judge and has also been inducted into the GHS Hall of Achievement. (See the Summer 2020 'Generally Speaking Newsletter') Among his many accomplishments is his role as a coach of the GHS Constitution Team.

I am looking forward to 2021 and the return to a new normal. We will resolve the Mural issue with transparency for our donors and move on to continue the support of Grant students and preserve the legacy of excellence that we are all part of at Grant.

LEO LESTER BROWNE CHARITABLE FUND

Leo Lester Browne was a music teacher in Portland schools with a lifetime of music education and performance. With the decision to have the Fletcher Memorial Murals removed, most of the generous \$100,000 donation by the Leo Lester Browne Charitable Fund is being returned to the donor. The donation is being redirected to the Portland Youth Philharmonic that will help support students from all of the Portland area schools. One bright spot remains. The donor has directed the Alumni Association to retain \$10,000 for Grant's instrumental music programs.

IN MEMORY



Frances Hulse Boly '38, was chosen to be the 1938 Rose Festival queen and nicknamed The Dust Bowl Queen to recognize her family's recent move to Portland from Kansas. At age 97, Frances played an important role in the Alumni Association's Grant's Last Stand when she walked on stage carrying her scepter to share stories of her reign. Frances died one month shy of her 101st birthday in her home where she had

lived for more than 50 years. Here is a link to The Last Stand program:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wbmcW8529eU>

Gerry Spencer '59, immediate past president of the Alumni Assn., chaired the athletic Hall of Fame, organized the alum basketball games for Grant's Last Stand and reopening celebration, assisted with alum picnics, and scholarship interviews. Gerry and four of his '59 classmates started scholarships to honor their friend **Pete Moore '59** funding them in part with a golf tournament.



GENERALS IN THE NEWS



Former Alumni Assn. president **Jack Cain '61** has been named as commissioner of the Mavericks Independent Baseball League. Jack has spent over four decades in baseball serving as Team Owner, Senior Advisor, General Manager and League President. 1981 Jack became the owner of the Central Oregon Phillies which he renamed the Bend Phillies. The team became the Bend Bucks and eventually the Bend Rockies until the franchise became the Portland Rockies. His teams won the Northwest League Championship in 1997 and Division Championship in 1999.

Jack served the Portland Beavers as Senior Advisor, Special Assistant, and twice as the interim General Manager. He was named Northwest League Executive of the Year on three different occasions and was elected as Northwest League President, a position he held from 1985-1990.

In 2002, Jack and his wife, **Mary '62**, were honored by the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation and the Portland Rose Festival for their exemplary dedication and commitment to children, family and community. Jack has always been an active part of the community, having served on the boards of Portland Youth for Christ, Salvation Army, Portland Rotary, on the Executive Board of the Old Timers Baseball Association of Portland, and was high school football official for over 30 years.



Tom Grant '64 offers Wednesday night concerts from his studio. See his facebook page for the schedule: <https://www.facebook.com/TomGrantPDX>

Ndamukong Suh '05 had two tackles (one solo) and 1.5 sacks during the Tampa Bay Buccaneers' 31-9 win over the Chiefs in Super Bowl LV. In 2013 he donated \$250,000 toward the turf field in Grant's Bowl.



MURAL PROJECT ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Alumni Association would like to acknowledge not only those who donated to the mural restoration project, but to others who provided their expertise and counsel:

Leo Lester Browne Charitable Fund
National Coalition Against Censorship
Bea Osgood Krauss '61 for concept paper
Nina Olsson, Art conservator
William Diebold, Reed College Professor of Art History and Humanities
Mark Humpal, Gallery owner, researcher, writer
Christopher Erickson, Attorney Tonkon Torp
Former PPS School Board Members
Doug Capps '61
Carol Turner
Pam Knowles
Ron Crosier, Retired PPS art teacher, PAM Native American Council
Jamie Hurd, PPS Capital Project Coordinator
Brian Oylear, Heery International, Senior Project Manager
Michael Scharf, IT consultant
William T. Fletcher's family:
Susan French and Tom Rowe
Willy and Linda Fletcher
Kathy Fletcher and Ken Weiner
Paul Fletcher and Sue Donaldson

DONATIONS IN HONOR OF AND IN MEMORY OF

Many donations were made to the mural project in memory or in honor of loved ones, friends, teachers. With the removal of the murals, those names will not be displayed. Below is a list of those honored and memorialized.

In Honor of

Denny Sullivan, teacher	Floyd A. Frederickson '44	William L. Streukens
Sarah & Jay Wilson	Peggy Neville Chemnick '64	Keith Anderson, teacher
Lon Collier	Class of 1967	Class of 1951
Class of 1959 friends	Class of 1964	Muriel Simon '35
All 1963 grads	Elaine Wolfe Sobel '67	Carolyn J. McKean '69
Class of 1948	R. G. Birkinshaw '47	Class of 2003
Class of 1955	Class of 1947	The Fones Family
Class of 1958	Erin '99 & Megan '04 McCarthy	Future GHS Students
W. Karl Walker '65	George Galati, teacher	Class of 1966
	Class of 1960	

Trelstad family of past, current, and future Generals

Grandsons Rowan Hamilton '19 and Brook Hamilton '20

Rae Williams Richen '62 who was my first friend when I arrived from Peru in 10th grade

Sigrid Hystad Stavney '29, Elizabeth Stavney Capps '61, Sarah Capps Lorish '89

Eleven Generals and three generations: Whelan, Loback, Ballard, Trelstad

in Memory of

Hank Pond, teacher	Eileen Hickson Donnell, teacher	Ed Rooney, teacher
Jay Edwards '64	Dick Gray '52	Edward (Ted) Meeker '61
Charlotte Susanka Lissy '48	Sharon Shook Persinger '61	Betty Polen
Jean Vancil, teacher	Marilyn Leonard Doll '68	Albert Ouchi, teacher
Mrs. Tempest, teacher	Bill Campbell '60	Jean Webster McNutt '41
Elizabeth Corlett '63	Carol Robinson '67	Rocky Minch '64
M. O. Marsubian, teacher	Linda Closterman '67	J. Michael Carroll '62
Douglas Forncrook '57	Alvin Alexandre, teacher	Paul & Meyer Burton
Dorothy Nash Tunstall '39	Ralph Morris '65	Douglas Guthrie
Gary Hovis '73	John W. Failor Sr, teacher	Merry Decker '61
Happy Years at Grant High	Ruth Beacon, teacher	Cheryl Smith '61
Bill Irwin '63	Isabelle Curphey	Joan Murphy '61
Donald P. Fulmer	Harry J. Lamley '45	Larry Voth '67
Floyd Frederickson '44	Phyllis Swett	Ralph Baer '61
Dick Olmscheid '61	Dan Schrader '83	Jim Harrison '64
Steve Esh '63	Grant K. Robinson '80	Dick Hennessey, teacher
John R. Pachot '67	Dave & Dorothy Taylor	Carol Calkins '61
Gerry Jones Erickson '61	Robin McAllister '64	Kathy McKean '61
Tommy Hartley '62		Pat Farr '61
Harvey G. Borchers, teacher & father	Marian '32, Robert '56, William '65 Linstedt	
Robert O. '32 and Lucy Waterbury Brown '35	Mother and brother Elaine & Bernie Seidel '67	
Our Grantonian Lanfrom siblings	John '38 & Shirley Dutton Slocum '39	
Nancy Herman Vardenega '70	Dottie Rothrock, GHS office secretary	
Husband Robert G. McCullough '64	Susan Kinser Verdurmen '55	
The Art Department & Don Kunz, teacher	Ralf Thielen '64 & KBPS Sports	

A complete list of all mural restoration donors can be found on the association's website:

https://www.grantalumni.org/uploads/5/1/0/3/51038529/mural_donations.pdf

12th ANNUAL ALL ALUMNI PICNIC CANCELED DUE TO COVID RESTRICTIONS

Mark your calendar now next year - July 24, 2022.

STUDENTS HARASSMENT IS NEVER ACCEPTABLE

The Alumni Association was appalled to learn that Grant students had received hate mail for their opposition to the murals, and we are horrified that members of the Grant community would respond in such a manner. While we do not agree with the Superintendent's decision, we do not believe that hate mail is the way to deal with it or is ever an appropriate response to dealing with differences.

The Alumni Association mission statement includes being a support system to Grant students – all Grant students former and current. We will do whatever is needed to assist with damage control to ensure that everyone feels safe going forward. A first step has already been taken by posting on the alumni Facebook page a strong statement that this is not how disagreements should be dealt with.

We are all a part of the same community and wonder how we can get to know each other. Can this be an opportunity to learn more about each other without rehashing the decision? Those opportunities offered by the district for all stake holders to meet would have been a chance for students to learn that while we have different opinions about the murals, we have nothing but admiration for them and what they have accomplished.

OLD GRANTONIANS DIGITIZED

Char Darrow '70, had 103 Grantonians dating from September 1966 to May 1970 that she wanted saved. In October 2017 the project began when Char reached out to Sarah Seymore the Digital Collections Metadata Librarian Program Manager with the University of Oregon Digital Newspaper Program. The university is associated with the nationwide "Digital Newspaper Project" of the Library of Congress. Despite roadblocks and covid, Sarah completed the project! The collection can be read at <https://oregonnews.uoregon.edu/lccn/2019260087/> or <https://oregonnews.uoregon.edu/lccn/2019260087/issues>

John Mears '70, Kathleen Cormack Ames '67, Steve Payne '73, Lauree Golden Vance '70, Joe Stilwell '70, Randy Leonard '70, Daniel Witt '66, Stephen Johnson '70, and Char Darrow Berkham '70 financed the project. We thank them for their contributions and to Char for her accomplishment.

Other digitized Grantonians can be found at <http://www.granthigh1964.com/grantonian-1963-64.html> and <https://www.grant1963.com/the-grantonian-1963.html>.

BECOME A PAID MEMBER OF YOUR ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Your Board of Directors meets monthly devoting volunteer time to keep the association moving.

PLEASE SUPPORT US by sending your \$20 dues by mail or online www.grantalumni.org at the dues and donations page. We are a recognized 501(c) 3 charitable organization. The association also offers a Lifetime Membership for \$250.00. Please fill out and enclose the form below with your annual dues and mail to: US Grant Alumni Assn. PO Box 13291 Portland OR 97213-0291

Name(s) _____ Maiden name _____ Grad Year _____

Address _____

Email _____ Phone(s) _____

Enclosed Dues: \$20 Annual dues _____ \$30 per couple annual dues _____ \$250 Lifetime Membership _____

Enclosed Donation: Scholarship Fund _____ General Fund _____ Newsletter _____

I can help: Picnic _____ Newsletter _____ Other Interests _____

TO SUPERINTENDENT GUERRERO AND SEVEN BOARD MEMBERS

by Bob Erickson '62

The Grant High School Alumni Association Mission statement includes developing alumni interest and support for Grant High School. Moreover, a significant goal of the Association is to provide scholarships, help with student programs, and organize alumni service projects at the school. This has enabled both Grant High School and the Grant Alumni Association to work in partnership over the years in so many different ways. Trust between us developed as we both saw the benefit of this partnership to the school and its students. That trust has now been sadly broken by the actions of the former Grant principal, the Superintendent, his administration, and the PPS Board. The treatment received by the Grant Alumni Association in its efforts to restore the historic murals by the Superintendent, his administration and the School Board was unprecedented. The restoration of trust between former partners needs to happen but when and how is unknown.

As plans for the rebuilding of Grant High were being developed, the Alumni Association saw an opportunity to participate and we proposed to raise funds to restore the memorial murals in the auditorium. The murals were designated to be kept, but their restoration was unfunded. Carl Hoeckner, the artist who designed and painted *Ideals of Education* was an advocate of social justice. It is ironic that his paintings showing students striving toward knowledge and wisdom, Ulysses S. Grant and Susan B. Anthony speaking of ending slavery and women's rights, and Native Americans coming together with pioneers in peace, would be thought too repugnant. Even the title proclaims these as *Ideals*. Ideals connote excellence not yet achieved.

Both former principal Carol Campbell and PPS Administration initially welcomed our initiative to restore the murals. As an association, we were very proud to partner with Grant High and to demonstrate the sincerity of our commitment towards the school and its students. In less than six months, over 600 alumni and community members, including a matching grant from the Leo Lester Brown Fund, donated almost \$225,000. This is a significant reflection of the support and trust in the school administration and PPS for the completion of the mural restoration.

When we became aware of the opposition to the restoration, we had expected as a partner and significant stakeholder in Grant High School to be able to sit with the Superintendent and his staff to discuss the project. We could have discussed concerns of the IPSU as well as several possible options, including masking the portion of the mural that was deemed offensive to blend into the rest of the mural. We could have discussed the potential loss of significant funds to the Grant music department as well. Alas, that was not to happen. Our request to meet with the Superintendent was met with silence. Our initiatives to meet with school board members was only partially successful with only three members responding. We felt locked out of the discussion. We were ignored. Our thoughts were not wanted.

Our trust in the current administration and board is broken. The trust of those supporting the restoration from the community and alumni in the current administration and board is broken. As a non-profit association we were overwhelmed with the financial support received for the purpose of helping Grant High School. We now have the unfortunate task of telling those supporting the *Ideals of Education* that this theme is no longer wanted by Portland Public Schools. The Alumni Association is now faced with the task of returning the contributions to the donors. The \$100,000 donated by our primary benefactor, the Leo Lester Browne Charitable Fund, in a matching fund challenge will be lost. Any excess funds not needed for the restoration of the murals was ear-marked to be used for scholarships, grants, or purchases of equipment to enhance the music program at Grant High School. The Alumni Association fears that future contributions will not come with the same enthusiasm in the future.

NEWS FROM GRANT

Springtasia. 7pm; April for livestream or any time afterwards. Performing Arts dance and music collaboration, all recording and filming in isolation from their homes. On Grant Performing Arts YouTube channel. Search Grant Performing Arts on YouTube.

Choir Concert: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YpdQOIe01rw>

Congratulations to Grant's Constitutional Team on winning the 2021 We the People State Championship.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Class of 1960 - 61st REUNION

Class of 1961 – 60th REUNION

COVID permitting

Class of 60 celebrating their 61st with the Class of 61 celebrating their 60th
Thursday, September 23, 2021; Time and place TBD

Please update your contact info!

1960 contact: Gary and Suzanne Lindberg Nelson: nelsuza@gmail.com

1961 contact: usgrant61@msn.com

Class of 1966 – 55TH REUNION

Rescheduled

Saturday, September 24, **2022** McMenamin's Kennedy School

Contact: Randi Carlson Black

Class of 1970 – 50TH REUNION

Saturday, August 21, 2021 German American Society

6:00-11:00 Drinks & Hors d'oeuvres for Classmates Only

Sunday, August 22, 2021, 10:00-1:00 Open House at Grant

Contact: Joe Stilwell stilwelljoe@comcast.net; Facebook: GrantHighSchoolClassof1970 Reunion

Class of 1971 - 50TH REUNION

Friday, August 20, 2021 Red Lion Hotel on the River, 909 N Hayden Island Dr

6:00-11:30 No Host Bar, Dinner & Dancing

\$60 per person/\$115 per couple before June 1 more after

Refunds will be issued if Covid prevents the event

Contact: Sharon Bushby Henifin sharonhenifin@gmail.com for more details

Class of 1975 – 45TH REUNION

No plans underway for a 45th but ALL Grantonians invited to Rouge Eastside Pub (928 SE 9)
any first Saturday of the month (7:00 p.m.) for an all Grant Alumni gathering!

Contact: Sara Wiedmaier Gonzalez gonzalez.sara90@gmail.com

Class of 1980 - 40TH REUNION August 6-8

A possible reunion depends on Covid-19.

Contact: Ann Nelson Kruger annkruger@yahoo.com; Facebook: Grant High School/Class of 1980

Class of 1991 – 30TH REUNION

A committee is trying to make it work for this year but the reunion might have to be postponed until next year. For updates, follow Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/grant1991>

CLASS OF 2000 – 20TH REUNION

A possible reunion could take place toward the end of the year.

Contact: grantclassof2000@gmail.com or <https://www.facebook.com/events/476308416371522>

Class of 2001 – 20TH REUNION

Postponed until 2022

30th ANNUAL MACMILLAN JONES GOLF TOURNEY

Planning underway, details to follow

Contact: Steve MacMillan stevemacmillan@comcast.net

All proceeds benefit the Kevin MacMillan Tom Jones Scholarship at Grant

12TH ANNUAL ALL-ALUMNI PICNIC

Canceled due to Covid-19