



[bethelhalloffame1.org](http://bethelhalloffame1.org)

*Hall of Fame*



**2025**  
Bethel School District Athletic Hall of Fame

# AWARDS CEREMONY

**September 20th • Spanaway Middle School**

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# *Congratulations*

*to all of the 2025 inductees into  
The Bethel School District Athletic Hall of Fame*

Call Mark if you have questions  
or need new equipment

**Mark Torgerson**

mtorgerson@bsnsports.com

**253-212-7381**



# WELCOME

## President's Message



I would like to welcome everyone to our 2025 Bethel School District Athletic Hall of Fame Luncheon. Our group began in 2015 when John Zurfluh's mother asked him why there was no organization that honored past athletes and coaches from the Bethel School District. Since he did not have a good answer to that question, he made few phone calls to people he thought would be interested in starting a group to create a hall of fame. A couple of months later we had the core members to begin our group.

Our committee is comprised of past Administrators, Coaches, Teachers, and Athletes that have all been active in a variety of activities at our schools. Each has the desire to bring the history of our district to life by honoring the teams and individuals that

rose to greatness in their careers. I would like to thank each one of them on the work they have put in to make this ceremony a success.

Whether you are here as an inductee, a proud family member or a friend, I hope you enjoy the ceremony that we have planned. Today is the day for these inductees to "Shine." We honor the great performances of each inductee during their athletic career at one of our three high schools. We cheered them on during their career and we are back today to show each of them that we still remember the joy they brought us.

Today we will induct one team, eleven individual athletes, and one contributor into our Hall of Fame. Today's inductees join the already inducted eleven athletic teams, fifty-one individual athletes, seven coaches and eleven contributors who are already members. Together they chronicle the long and impressive history of sports in the Bethel School District. Each inductee was an important part of this history

In the ten years of our existence, we have strived to identify the people who have had a positive impact on our sports history. We ask your help in our search for who should be in our next class of inductees. If you would like to nominate someone you think should be part of our Hall of Fame, we ask you to visit our webpage at [www.bethelhalloffame1.org](http://www.bethelhalloffame1.org) to obtain a nomination form. If you would like to be more involved, either as a member of our committee or a board member, we welcome your interest. You can find more information about becoming a member on our webpage.

I would like to thank you, again, for making this a special day for our new members of the Bethel School District Hall of Fame.

Bob Niehl  
President, Bethel School District Athletic Hall of Fame

## On The Cover...

Bethel High School 1987 graduate, Mark Macdonald, dunking the basketball. He was a three-sport athlete playing golf, basketball and track & field becoming a state winner in the 110 hurdles in 1987.

## Bethel School District Athletic Hall of Fame Members

### BOARD MEMBERS

Bob Niehl—President  
Corey Belser—Vice President  
Bryan Streleski—Vice President  
Debbi Caramandi—Secretary  
Kellie Ham—Treasurer

### DIRECTORS

Don Ash  
Corey Belser  
John Briehl  
Ed Burmester  
Kellie Ham  
Carolyn Jones  
Terry Leifson  
Bob Niehl  
Easter Springsteen  
Oscar Springsteen II  
Bryan Streleski  
Mark Torgerson  
John Zurfluh (BJ)  
John Zurfluh (LJ)

### LIFETIME MEMBERS

Ed Niehl  
Roxanne Assay  
Darren Borden  
Ed Burmester  
John Briehl  
Bob Niehl  
Bryan Streleski  
Ed Tingstad  
John Zurfluh (LJ)  
Corey Belser  
Mark Torgerson  
Jeff Gotcher  
Mike Mullen  
Terry Leifson  
Edie Hagen  
Don McNivern  
Bob Heskett  
Chase Chambers  
Travis Brock  
Easter Springsteen  
Oscar Springsteen II  
Carolyn Jones  
Carolyn Okfen

### 2023–24 MEMBERS

Kellie Ham  
Rick Ham  
Fred Selden



# BETHEL SCHOOL DISTRICTS ATHLETIC HALL OF FAME



## *About Us*

A group of community volunteers have formed the Bethel School District Athletic Hall of Fame. This group is a nonprofit organization that has partnered with the Bethel School District Foundation and the Greater Tacoma Community Foundation to better serve our purpose.

The Hall of Fame exists to ensure that the athletic history and traditions of the district are celebrated. If you are interested in becoming a member, click on the Membership link on our website [bethelhalloffame1.org](http://bethelhalloffame1.org).

## *Our Mission*

The mission of the Bethel School District Athletic Hall of Fame is to honor past athletes, coaches, families, contributors and teams of Bethel, Spanaway Lake and Graham-Kapowsin High Schools.

## *Our Goal*

The goal of this organization is to honor inductees at an award ceremony.

# Thank You

The Bethel School District Athletic Hall of Fame would like to thank our volunteers for helping us make this event a success. Your time, energy and inspiration are greatly appreciated.

## 2025 Bethel School District Athletic Hall of Fame Inductees

### **Athletes**

Mark Macdonald (BHS)  
Mike Leasure (SLHS)  
Monika (Lee) Aikins (BHS)

Joe Martin (SLHS)  
Rick Becker (BHS)

Bret Porter (BHS)  
Stan Adkins (BHS)

Robert Boyd (BHS)  
Kameko Wilson (BHS)

### **Coach**

Lloyd Alwert (BJH, BHS)

### **Contributors**

Dan Heltsley

### **Team**

#### **1989 Spanaway Lake High School Wrestling Team:**

Coach Bob Heskett, Assistant Coaches Rod Dean, Jeff Gotcher • Managers Dana Lay Munson, Tricia Crisostomo, Leilani Baloing  
• Team Members: John Shearer, Tom Humphrey Rodil Rodriguez, Doug Kipp, Jared Manning, Gaylord Thayer, Bryan Kipp, Travis Manning, Jason Wiklund, Brad Stellmon, Robb Johnson, Lanny Merritt, Travis McGee

# SCHEDULE, SPONSORS & VOLUNTEERS

## Schedule

**Welcome** — Oscar Springsteen II

**Lunch**

**Introduction of Directors** — Oscar Springsteen II

**Presidents Message** — Bob Niehl

**Contribution Inductee.....Presenter**

Dan Heltsley ..... Mark Torgeson

**Coach Inductee.....Presenter**

Lloyd Alwert ..... Bryan Streleski

**Individual Inductees.....Presenter**

Kameko Wilson ..... Kathy Christianson

Stan Adkins ..... Bryan Streleski

Rick Becker ..... Bryan Streleski

Robert Boyd ..... Mike Mullen

Mike Leasure ..... Russ Leslie

Monica (Lee) Aikins ..... Kevin Aoki

Mark Macdonald ..... Mom—Elois Macdonald

Joe Martin ..... John Robak

Bret Porter ..... Mark Torgeson

**Team Inductees .....Presenter**

**Wrestling Team** ..... Bob Heskett

Head Coach Bob Heskett, Assistant Coaches Rod Dean, Jeff Gotcher,  
Managers Dana Lay Munson, Tricia Crisostomo, Leilani Baloing

Team: John Shhearer, Tom Humphrey, Rodil Rodriguez, Doug Kipp,  
Jared Manning, Gaylord Thayer, Bryan Kipp, Travis Manning, Jason Wiklund,  
Brad Stellmon, Robb Johnson and Travis McGee

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## BECOME A MEMBER

We welcome anyone to become a member. Membership dues are \$40.00 a year and is renewable annually, August–July. Life-time Memberships are \$200.00. Meetings are scheduled monthly. It's easy! Just fill out the form and send in with your payment.

For more information contact Bob Niehl at [bobniehl@gmail.com](mailto:bobniehl@gmail.com)



## Bethel School District Athletic Hall of Fame Membership Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Send your one-year Membership \$40.00 or Lifetime Membership \$200.00 payment payable to: B.S.D.F. and send with this form to: Bethel School District Athletic Hall of Fame  
21818 38th Ave. E., Spanaway, WA 98387

You will receive your membership card within 14 days.



# MASTER OF CEREMONIES



## OSCAR SPRINGSTEEN II, (BHS '80)

Oscar Springsteen II attended Elk Plain Elementary, Bethel Junior High and then Bethel Senior High School where he was very active in sports and was a member of Bethel's Concert, Stage, and also Marching Band as a Drum Major. He lettered in football and wrestling. During his senior year in 1980, he won a Washington State Wrestling Championship at the 190 pound weight class.

This led to him earning an athletic scholarship to attend Eastern Washington University. While attending EWU he played football and wrestled. He was voted wrestling team captain in 1983. Having earned a degree in Criminal Justice Administration, he graduated in 1984.

In 1985, Oscar joined the Washington State Patrol. As a trooper, he served as a Safety Education Officer, Executive Protection Officer, and Diversity Instructor. In addition, his role as an Academy Self Defense Instructor continued after his promotion to Sergeant in 1999 and was also the supervisor of Pierce & Thurston Counties' commercial motor vehicle division. In 2007, he advanced to Lieutenant. After 25 years of service to the Washington State Patrol, he retired in 2010.

Oscar's extracurricular activities, beginning in 1986, included referee for the Western Washington Wrestling Referee Association. During this time, he has also coached wrestling, football, and track in the Bethel School District. Presently he is the Assistant Wrestling Coach for Eatonville High School.

Oscar was inducted into Bethel's Hall Of Fame in 2018. He lives in Graham with his wife Felesha and is the proud father of Oscar Phillip Springsteen III and Dante' Jourdan Springsteen.

# EZ AUTO

## LICENSE & TITLE

*Congratulations to all the athletes who are being inducted into the  
2025 Bethel School District Athletic Hall of Fame*

### Dick Zierman

Owner

Hours: 9am to 5:30pm (Monday–Saturday)

22225 Mountain Highway East, Suite F  
Spanaway, Washington 98387

**253-875-7732**  
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# NOMINATION FORM

## Bethel School District Athletic Hall of Fame Nomination Form (see nomination criteria)

**Category:**     Athlete    Team    Coach    Contributor    Family  
**High School:**    Bethel    Spanaway Lake    Graham Kapowsin    Other Bethel School \_\_\_\_\_  
**Year of Graduation:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Nominee:**

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Maiden Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Sports & Year Played/Coached/Contributed: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Achievements/Honors/Community or School Involvement: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

College/University/Professional Participation/Achievement: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Nominated by:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

For additional information see web page at [www.bethelhalloffame1.org](http://www.bethelhalloffame1.org)

----- **ALL NOMINATIONS WILL REMAIN ACTIVE** -----

***Attach supplementary material, i.e. newspaper articles, photos, etc.***

Submit to:  
Bethel School District Athletic Hall of Fame  
21818 38th Ave East • Spanaway, Washington 98387



# NOMINATION GUIDELINES



## Guidelines for Nomination and Selection to the Bethel School District Athletic Hall of Fame

- A. Anyone may nominate a candidate for the Hall of Fame. Additional nomination forms available at all Bethel School District high schools.
- B. The following items may be considered as a possible basis for nomination. These items are not meant to be inclusive nor does attainment make membership automatic.

### 1. Athletes:

- Shall be a graduate of a Bethel School District High School
- Shall exemplify characteristics of integrity, sportsmanship and citizenship before and after graduation

#### Additional considerations:

- Member of a state championship team
- Qualified for state playoffs at least twice
- An individual or member of a team winning a district or above tournament or meet
- An individual or member of a team placing in the top four in a state tournament
- Selected to an all-league, area, district, regional or all-state team
- Received multiple varsity letters and/or other team or school athletic awards
- Received six or more varsity letters
- Was a school record holder
- Participated in a school and/or community service outside of athletics
- Athletes will be eligible for nomination ten years after graduation

### 2. Coach

- Shall have coached in a Bethel District school for minimum of ten years
- Demonstrated an unusually high level of achievement which may include state, regional, district and league championships
- Coached one or more athletes who have received university scholarships or other high honors
- Has been positively involved in the school and/or community
- Coach will be eligible ten years after leaving the district

### 3. Team

- May include state, regionals, district and league championships
- Team will be eligible ten years after above competition

### 4. Contributor

Includes administrators, teachers, school staff, families and community members who have made outstanding contributions or offered extraordinary services to student athletes and the athletic programs of the Bethel School District

- C. All qualified nominees not selected will remain on the master nomination list

# ATHLETIC HALL OF FAME PAST INDUCTEES

## ATHLETES

Garrett Alwert  
Roxane Asay  
Yvette "Henry" Barnes  
Ryan Barrett  
Corey Belser  
Mark Belvin  
Mike Blowers  
Felix Brodigan  
Darin Borden  
Darrell Borden  
Travis Brock  
Shawn Butler  
Cal Christoph  
Gene Curbow  
Kim Stone (Cuzner)  
Jan Dempsey  
John Doyle  
Kim Leifson (Dickerson)  
Amanda DuRocher  
Johnny DuRocher Jr.  
Marjorie Goddard  
Jeff Gotcher  
Larry Gotcher  
Lisa Graber  
Gary Gregg  
Blain Guenther  
Ed "Eddie" Hagen  
Bill Harr  
Herb Jones  
Gene Ketter  
Larry Ladowski  
Mike Matheny  
Anthony Meray  
Jody Miller  
Susie Morehart  
Bob Niehl  
Loni Ainslie (Parks)  
Sadena Parks  
Dan Pitch  
Greg Powell  
Caesar Rayford  
Steve Reopelle  
Dave Rich  
Carl Schriver  
Bryan Strelski  
Oscar Springsteen II  
Brad Sweet  
Chris Tompkins  
Kim Georgia (Vargas)  
Kayla Reno (Waldauser)  
Jamie Walker (Fuller)

## COACHES

Kevin Aoki  
Bob Fincham  
Paul Greeley  
Jack Justice  
Ed Niehl  
Frank Pavia  
Doug Wisness

## CONTRIBUTORS

Jim Ball  
Beth Bardwell  
Sonny Beegle  
Ed Burmester

Dan Caramandi  
Art Crate  
Mike Macdonald  
Cody Miller  
Earl Platt  
Lavada Roy  
Tynne Swick

## FAMILY

The DuRochers – John '81, Corrina '81, Johnny '03 and Amanda '05  
The Mullen Family (Mike, Pat, Molly and Nick)  
The Tingstad Family (Ed, Darlene, Eddie, Mark, David)

## TEAMS

### 1955 Bethel High School Football Team

Coach: Ed Niehl, Assistant Coach: Jack Justice  
Managers: Gregory Spivey, and Mickey Malcahey  
Roster: Robert Arends, Morris Bush, Wayne Bush, Phil Caldwell, Allen Cantrell, James Dean, Howard Funkhouser, Bob Huddleston, Dave Johnson, Don Jorgensen, Buck Lathrom, Jim Lyons, Larry McGee, Dan McGraw, Dennis McGraw, Tim McGraw, Ron Meadors, Gerald Plumb, Rodney Redford, Howard White, Terry Whittlesey, Gene Ressler, Charlie Parham, Gerald Crippen, George Bennett

### 1958 Bethel High School Football Team

Coach: Ed Niehl, Assistant Coach: Jack Justice,  
Managers: King Phelps, David Rennie, Don Leigh, Jim Nichols  
Roster: Farrell Ressler, Terry Whittlesey, Gary Justice, John Phelan, Bill Bell, Ed "Eddie" Hagen, Marcus Wickline, Clyde Baker, Don Raper, Rod Parham, Richard Dittbenner, Larry Gehring, Bill Scott, Lloyd Williams, Mike Wharton, Dale Curtiss, Gerald "Jerry" Crippen, Jim Metzener, Neil Lambertsen, Gary Gregg, Gary Pierce, Bayard Crate, Bruce Moore, Tom Jones, Miland Krumpo, Jay Brown, Carl Schriver, Larry Stearns, Dave Belvin, Doug Woods

### 1962 Bethel High School Wrestling Team

Coach: Frank Pavia  
Roster: Larry Bonnel, Larry Buster, Warren Butler, Gary Gray, Al Guthrie, Mike Sweaney, Mike Matheny, Bill Miles, Bill Harr, Vic Hugdahl, Rick Selden, Mike Sweaney, Wayne Wetherbee, Dave Williams

### 1970 Bethel High School Boys Basketball Team

Coach: Bob Fincham, Assistant Coach: Don Ash,  
Managers: Bob Nelson, Ray Feddersen  
Roster: Skip Thiel, Dick Platt, Mike Morehart, Doug Wilson, Bob Niehl, Jerry Connolly, Mark Belvin, Tom Bullion, Dennis Jasmer, Ken Krumpo, Chuck Brown, Ken Lightenwalter, Al Ketter

### 1980 Bethel High School Boys Basketball Team

Coach: Mike Mullen, Assistant Coach: Ed Burmester, Russ Leslie. Managers: Preston Loveless, Gregg Geoff  
Roster: Robert Boyd, Michael Butler, John DuRocher, Mark Martin, Jim Moore, Dave Morgan, Murph Nelson, Tom Pierce, Mark Stambaugh, Matt Piper, Jeff Valentine

### 1996 Bethel High School Volleyball Team

Coach: John Reopelle, Assistant Coaches: Monica Farley, Christine Nelson, Manager: Kalani, Vera Wright (scorekeeper)  
Roster: Malissa Reed, Valerie Lee, Katy Zurfluh, Donja Walker, Joanna Johnson, Heather Mayo, Rachele Gienger, Jordan Gienger, Corrin Breon, Michelle Barlow, Jennifer Ladwig, Dori Bratusch, Holly Hobbs

### 2000 Bethel High School Boys Basketball Team

Coach: Pat Mullen, Assistant Coaches Russ Leslie, Ken Iverson, Managers Denise Clements, Heather Coatney, Lacey Lindsay, and Earl Brothers.  
Roster: Virgil Matthews, Ron Hobbs, Jimmy Ball, Josh Allar, Dwayne Barnes, Jerrell Everson, Nate Gall, Corey Belser, Kevin Hill, Kaelen Moore, Duane Hill and Nick Moore.

### 2001 Spanaway Lake High School Wrestling Team

Coach: Paul Greeley, Assistant Coaches: Chris Shead, Scott Stirts, Managers: Sarah Johnson, Kay Cisneros, Kelly Hoosier, Olga Petrenko, Nathan Harper  
Roster: Jesus Maldonado, Micky Elliot, Casey Cox, Kurtis Giovannini, Chris Caseman, Mike Easterly, Brandon Stover, Muhammad Shamsid-Deen, Pat Pitsch, Rick Johnson, Dan Pitsch, Yuri Malamura, Gavin Winter, Jimmy Llyod, Ty Satiacum

### 2005 Bethel High School Boys Basketball Team

Coach: Pat Mullen, Assistant Coaches: Russ Leslie, Ken Iverson, Mike Mullen. Managers: Lance Nelson, Mike Herring, Chris Ball, Matt Wanderscheid, Earl Brothers  
Roster: Mike Vargas, Chuck Hogue, Jordan Sutton, Ryan Purugganan, Mike Yusko, Marquis Matthews, Jamil Turner, Scott Stanley, Alex Tiefenthaler, Kevin Cattage, Brandon Moore, Robbie Betschart, Scott Tiefenthaler

### 2005 Spanaway Lake High School Special Olympics Basketball team

Coach: Lawrence Reed, Marlene Hedgpeth  
Assistant Coaches: Ryan Kolowinski, Gary Milbradt  
Roster: Laura Bell, Katie Davis, Brandon Holguin, Nolan Lortz, Kyle Merritt, William Savole, Nick-ey Traylor, Anthony Canchola, Andrea Justin

### 2009 Spanaway Lake High School Special Olympics Basketball team

Coach: Lawrence Reed, Marlene Hedgpeth  
Assistant Coaches: Thomas Dill, Ryan Kolowinski, Gary Milbradt, Caroline Cohea, Tami Wooten, Amber Wiegard  
Roster: Jillian Almodovar, Sylvester Berry, Gregory Patengale, Phillip Rice, Sandra Simpson, Kyle Stoner, Michael Williams, Amber Class

Bethel Hall of Fame

# HALL OF FAME CONTRIBUTOR



## DAN HELTSLEY (Contributor)

Dan Heltsley has been a cornerstone of Washington state athletics for decades, with much of his distinguished career rooted in the Bethel School District. A Tacoma native, Dan attended the University of Puget Sound where he played football and earned his teaching degree. It was in 1977 he married his high school sweetheart, Katie, beginning a lifelong journey of dedication, athletics and family.

Dan spent a few years coaching and teaching at Bellarmine Prep, his alma mater, before his move to Bethel High School in 1979, where he spent two years on the football coaching staff. In 1981, he took on two historic roles as the first head football and softball coach at the newly opened Spanaway Lake High School, establishing a foundation for the Sentinels' athletic program. The softball team made multiple trips to the district playoffs and was one of the school's first teams to gain recognition.

His leadership extended beyond Bethel for a time, as he took on coaching roles in the Renton School District at Hazen and Lindbergh High Schools and later serves as the first Athletic Director at Kentlake High School. He then took the place of Dave Lutes after the first semester that the school was open. A strange deal changing jobs in the middle of the school year. From 1992 to 1994, Dan served as president of the Washington State Coaches Association and played a key role in organizing the East/West All-Star Football Game each summer.

In 2003, Dan returned to Bethel as District Athletic Director, a position in which he would leave a lasting impact. He was instrumental in the development of athletic programs in both Graham-Kapowsin High School and Liberty Middle School as they opened during his tenure. Dan's influence reached beyond the district level, serving on the West Central District III Executive Board and as President of the Washington Secondary Athletic Administrators Association.

Dan's contributions have been recognized at both state and national levels. He was named Washington State Athletic Director of the Year in 2006–2007 and was a national finalist representing the Western Region. In 2013, he was honored with the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association's Gareth Gile Memorial Recognition Award and inducted into the Washington State Secondary Athletic Administrators Association Hall of Fame.

Dan retired in 2013, leaving behind a powerful legacy of mentorship, leadership, and athletic excellence. His passion for sports lives on through his children—his daughter Melissa teaches at Liberty Middle School and coaches track and his son DJ serves as Athletic Director at Cascade Christian High School. He and Katie have enjoyed retirement and have spent numerous hours on the golf course with family and friends. Dan continued to serve in athletic leadership roles as his golf club president and has run the annual Anderson Island Junior Golf Tournament for the last decade.





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### **Congratulations to all the 2025 Inductees**

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**CLUB AND BUSINESS APPAREL**

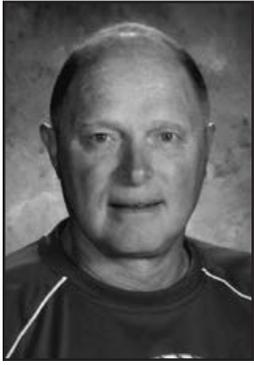
**ONLINE TEAM AND CLUB STORES**

PROUDLY SERVING THE BETHEL COMMUNITY SINCE 1982



Ed Niehl, BHS Athletic Director and Hall of Fame Inductee, standing in front of the Bethel High School Gymnasium that was named in his honor.

# HALL OF FAME COACH



## LLOYD ALWERT (Coach, BJH/BHS, 1978-2013)

Lloyd Alwert grew up in Tacoma, Washington and developed a love of all sports at a very early age. By the time he was in junior high, he decided he wanted to be a physical education teacher and a coach.

He started his coaching career at the early age of 18 by volunteering at the South End Boys' Club coaching boys' basketball. He continued to volunteer coach at Southeast Athletic Association, coaching boys' basketball, and soccer.

Lloyd entered Pacific Lutheran University in the fall of 1972 pursuing a degree in education. While at PLU he played basketball and soccer.

Lloyd graduated from PLU with a Bachelor of Arts in Education, majoring in physical education and minoring in coaching. Lloyd started his first coaching job in 1978 at Bethel Junior High as the JV baseball coach. For the next thirty-five years Lloyd coached baseball, football and basketball. Many years he coached all three in the same school year.

The long list of his coaching accomplishments include ten years of baseball at Bethel Junior High. All accomplishments were at Bethel Junior High unless otherwise noted.

- Two years JV 1978–1979, eight years varsity 1980–1987
- Two league championships 1981 and 1985
- One year Bethel High School girls' basketball head coach 1985–1986
- Thirty-one years boys' basketball coach
- Four years JV 1979–1982
- Twenty-seven years varsity 1985–2013
- Sixteen league championships in 1985, 1986, 1992, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2010, 2011, 2012
- Four years Bethel High School assistant football coach 1988–1991
- Thirty-one years School football coach
- Four years JV 1978–1981
- Twenty-seven years varsity 1982–1987 and 1992–2013
- Nine league championships 1985, 1992, 1995, 1996, 1997, 2000, 2002, 2009, 2010
- Fourteen years Athletic Coordinator, Bethel Junior High 1998–2013



Lloyd loved coaching and was heard many times during his coaching career saying "I can't believe I actually get paid to do this!" Lloyd retired in 2013, but continued to coach boys' basketball for two years and football for one year at Bethel Middle School.

During retirement Lloyd has continued to volunteer coach his grandchildren and has stayed in contact with many of his previous players and coaches.

He is often seen around the community watching sports at the junior high, high school and college levels.



# KeyBank

## *Congratulates*

all of the 2025 inductees into  
The Bethel School District  
Athletic Hall of Fame

**Congratulations**  
Inductee Dan Caramandi



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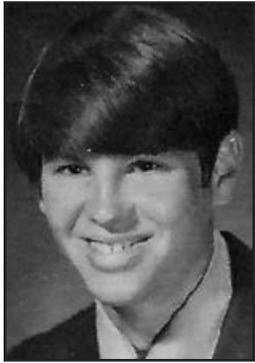
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**(253) 536-8221**

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# HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES



## STAN ADKINS, (BHS '71)

Stan Adkins moved into the Bethel School District in fourth grade. He is the oldest of three sons born to Ernie and Ileen Adkins. While attending Spanaway grade school Stan was coached by Jim Nylander, a teacher and coach at Bethel Junior High. In the summer Mr. Nylander would take a group of runners to Junior Olympic track meets held at the University of Puget Sound. During these early meets Stan learned that he was definitely not a sprinter but could outlast people in longer races. Fast-forward a few years and Coach Nylander would offer Stan some timely advice that proved valuable in sparking Stan's high school running career.

After participating in football, basketball and track in junior high, Stan was contacted the summer before tenth grade by Doug Wisness, the new cross country and track coach for Bethel High School. Coach Wisness encouraged Stan to try out for the cross country team. Stan did and he flourished under Doug's coaching. Coach Wisness held practices on Spanaway golf course and the whole team improved under his rugged interval workouts. The fall of his sophomore year Stan was the team's number two runner behind senior Mike Smithlin. That fall Stan finished second behind Smithlin in every dual meet except one and Bethel was the Seamount League Cross Country Co-Champs with Curtis and Enumclaw. Bethel became the outright league champion when the team won the league sub-district meet in Tumwater, Washington. Mike ended up sub-district champ and Stan placed third. Under Coach Wisness Bethel also qualified for the district and state meets.

Qualifying team members included Mike Smithlin, Stan, Terry Browning, Bob Nylander, Norm Cox, Jim Conant, Ricky Rich and Steve Brown.

Stan's sophomore track season was his best because he was injury-free. He mainly ran the two mile and either won each race or got out-sprinted by Smithlin. Enter Coach Nylander from elementary school. Before sub-districts Stan received a call from Coach Nylander who advised Stan to pick up the pace at the 1.5 mile point and put some distance between Mike and himself. Mr. Nylander's strategy worked and Stan won the sub-district two mile. The next week at the West Central District Tournament Stan placed 5th qualifying him for the state meet with a new school record time of 9:45. As a result Stan got to travel to Pullman with the eventual state high school high jump champion Bob Niehl.

During Stan's junior year in cross country he won all but one dual meet. He continued to use Coach Nylander's tactic and with a focus on being a front runner, dared anyone to keep up with him. Stan won sub-districts at Spanaway Park by over twenty seconds and the next week he



won the West Central District AA title by a similar margin. Bethel failed to qualify for state as a team so Stan was the lone representative his junior year. At the state meet in Seattle Stan led for most of the 2.5 mile race but was passed in the last quarter mile to finish a close second behind a runner from Mariner High School.

Stan's junior season in track was going well until he developed a bad case of shin splints halfway through the season. Before the injuries he ran for school records in the mile (4:29) and the two mile (9:39) at the South Kitsap Invitational.

During Stan's senior cross country season he was undefeated in the Seamount League dual meets and Bethel won its second Seamount League Co-Championship with Enumclaw and Curtis. Stan

# HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE CONTINUED

won his second individual sub-district title at Spanaway Park by a large margin. As a team Bethel qualified for the district and state meets. Team members included Stan, Jim Conant, Bob Meyers, Rick Becker, Larry Ladowski, George Martinez, Howard Leibrand and Loren Adkins. At the West Central AA meet Stan repeated as champion on a tough 2.5 mile course at Evergreen High School. He was looking

team and competed in the Northern Division Championship in Pullman, WA. Stan's track seasons at Oregon were riddled with shin splints which greatly disappointed him. Stan graduated from the University of Oregon and later returned to Bethel serving 34 years as a teacher, coach and



| Top TEN |       |                         |
|---------|-------|-------------------------|
| Place   | Time  | Name                    |
| 1       | 13:52 | Stan Adkins Bethel      |
| 2       | 13:14 | Bob Johnson Fife        |
| 3       | 13:17 | Tom Hargodon Curtis     |
| 4       | 13:19 | Jim Ponant Bethel       |
| 5       | 13:27 | Mike Clark Curtis       |
| 6       | 13:31 | Don Myrick Founclaw     |
| 7       | 13:35 | Dave Chittin Sumner     |
| 8       | 13:35 | Bruce Bronson Peninsula |
| 9       | 13:42 | Rick Frech Curtis       |
| 10      | 13:44 | Dick Day Curtis         |

sub-district - 1970 Spanaway Park

forward to a rematch at the state meet against the previous year's champ but he was unfortunately spiked in the foot at the beginning of the race. Although Stan led for the first half of the race, he was running with a stress fracture and was unable to finish. This injury was slow to heal and negatively impacted his senior track season later in the school year.

Collegiatly, in the fall of 1973, Stan walked on at the University of Oregon and had the pleasure of training with some of the best distance runners in the country, including the late, great Steve Prefontaine. In the fall of 1974 Stan made the Oregon cross country

traffic safety instructor. He retired in 2016.

Stan has been happily married to his wife Susan for 42 years and they have three children—Luke, Haleigh and Drew. He spends his days reading, working out, mountain biking, walking in nature, shrimping, crabbing and fishing the waters of Hood Canal near his home in Port Ludlow.

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# HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES



## RICK BECKER (BHS '73)

It all began one February day in 1971. That is the day that Rick Becker realized that he had a gift to run. As a sophomore at Bethel High School Rick was getting the itch to turn out for a sport. Believing he was too small for football and basketball, he wondered if he had what it took to be a runner. So, one late February day, Rick thought that if he could run two or three miles, he would turn out for track. At the end of that day, without stopping, he ran ten miles in seventy minutes. He was hooked.

The following week, Rick became a member of the Bethel track team. By the end of that first track season, Rick ran a mile in less than five minutes. Something took place during that first season that made Rick realize how much he loved running. One day, because of an illness, Rick had to stay home from school. When his mom left the house, he snuck out and still ran. At the end of the season, Coach Doug Wisness, assuming Rick was going to run cross country in the fall, handed Rick a piece of paper. It was filled with summer workouts, but the thing that stuck out to Rick the most was the fact that Coach Wisness wanted the team to run 100 miles a week all summer. "What lunatic would run for 100 miles each week?" Rick thought. That fall Rick earned a varsity spot on the cross-country team. His brightest race that year was an invitational in which Rick won his first race, winning his flight. Little did he know that there would be countless victories in the future. Bethel had a good season tying for the Seamount League title as well as qualifying for the state championships. Rick notes that the team leader, Stan Adkins, who is also being inducted today, was very instrumental in guiding Rick to his running career.

Rick had his share of injuries. He was unable to compete in his junior year in track because of his injuries. His mom took him to the doctor about his chronic lower leg pain. The doctor told Rick that because of the way his legs were shaped, he would always have leg pain, and he should stop running. Rick walked out of the doctor's office saying to himself that he would prove the doctor wrong. When cross country began his senior season, Rick was in great shape. Running on the Fort Lewis Reservation was his favorite place to train. Sometimes Coach Wisness would pace the team on his motorcycle. Rick began winning races including winning the individual league championship title, breaking the course record at Spanaway



# HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE CONTINUED

Park. He was voted Athlete of the Month for October, with his picture being hung in the hall at Bethel. Unfortunately, he damaged a tendon in his foot shortly later and was unable to compete in the State Championships. The following track season, Rick set a mark that still ranks on Bethel's all-time top ten list.

Rick continued his running after high school enrolling at Green River College where he broke three school track and field records, two of which still stand today. He ran his last three years of college at Eastern Washington University in which he became a two-time All American. But his biggest prize at Eastern was meeting his wife, Patti who was also running track at Eastern. They have five children and four grandchildren.

Rick has and is still running competitively as a master runner. He has numerous national and world titles to his name. In 2022 he was inducted into the United States Track and Field Hall of Fame. Rick taught and coached cross country and track for many years at Selah High School. Many of his cross-country teams qualified for the state championships, and he has coached numerous athletes to state individual titles in both cross country and track. Rick also has written two books related to running.

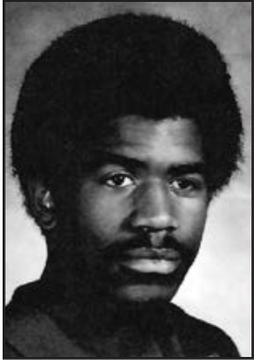
Rick continues with his passion to run. To think that it all started on one cold February day when Rick decided to go for a run as well as ignoring the advice from his doctor.



*Hall of Fame*



# HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES



**ROBERT BOYD**, (BHS '80)

Robert was born in Frankfurt, Germany in 1961 to Evans and Jewell Boyd. He was one of eight children, seven boys and one girl. Robert was the sixth son. From Germany, his family moved to the Hilltop area of Tacoma where he attended Hunt Junior High School and played football and basketball.

In 1976, the family moved to Spanaway. At Spanaway Junior High, he played basketball and track and met fellow athletes who also became life-long friends and he continued to play with them for the remainder of his high school career. While at Spanaway Junior High, Robert won the District Championship jumping 19' 6" in the long jump.

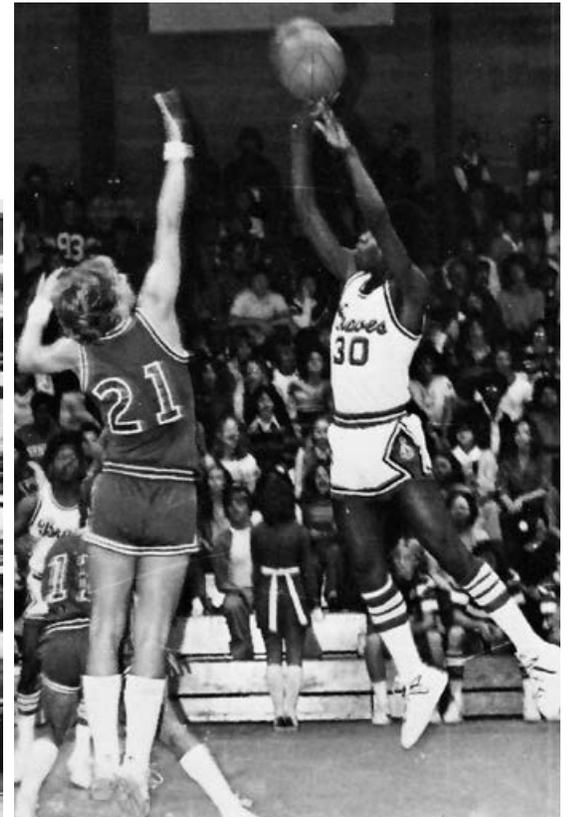
As a sophomore at Bethel High School, Robert played varsity football his junior and senior years. He was All-SPSL wide receiver twice and All-SPSL defensive back twice. He lettered in varsity basketball all three of his high school years. As a junior, he received an Honorable Mention in the SPSL League. In his senior year, he was All-SPSL First-Team. In 1980 the Bethel basketball team went to the state tournament and finished eighth place under Head Coach Mike Mullen and Assistant Coach Ed Burmester. This was Bethel's first time going to the AAA State Tournament. Robert was voted by the coaches to be Athlete of the Month five different times.

Robert earned a basketball scholarship to Tacoma Community College where he scored an average of 25 points per game. He earned the honor of Second-Team All-League.

After one year at TCC, Robert joined the Air Force. He was stationed at USAFB Lackland in San Antonio, Texas; Keesler AFB in Biloxi, Mississippi; Lowry AFB in Denver, Colorado; Yokota AFB in Tokyo, Japan; and McChord Air Force Base. In the Air Force, he played on elite basketball teams, traveling to many other bases to compete. He also met and married his wife Glenda in 1983 while in the Air

Force. She later died of a brain aneurysm and Robert never remarried. They had two sons, Robert Earl Boyd now 41 years old and Ronald Wilson Boyd, age 31.

After leaving the Air Force, Robert worked in the field of education in Puyallup for fourteen years where he was honored by Karshner Elementary School with the Golden Acorn Award in 1995. For the next fifteen years Robert worked in Health Care; he continues to work with impaired men who are home-bound and finds this work



# HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE CONTINUED

very rewarding and humbling. He lives in the greater Parkland-Spanaway area and spends time with his much-loved 94-year-old dad.

Assistant Coach Ed Burmester said, "When I first watched Robert practice as a freshman, I knew right away that he possessed all the skills necessary to be the point guard of the future."

Coach Mike Mullen remembers that Robert was dependable and determined. "He never took a day

off. He competed just as hard in daily practice as he did in competition. You could count on him to get fifteen

plus points per game, eight to nine assists per game, and have only have three turnovers," stated Mullen. "He was just a great competitor and teammate."



Bethel Hall of Fame



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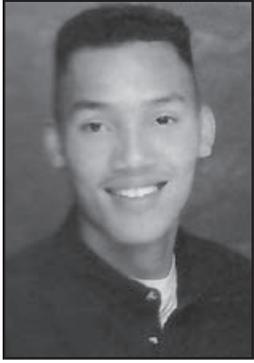
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**Congratulations to this year's inductees!**

# HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

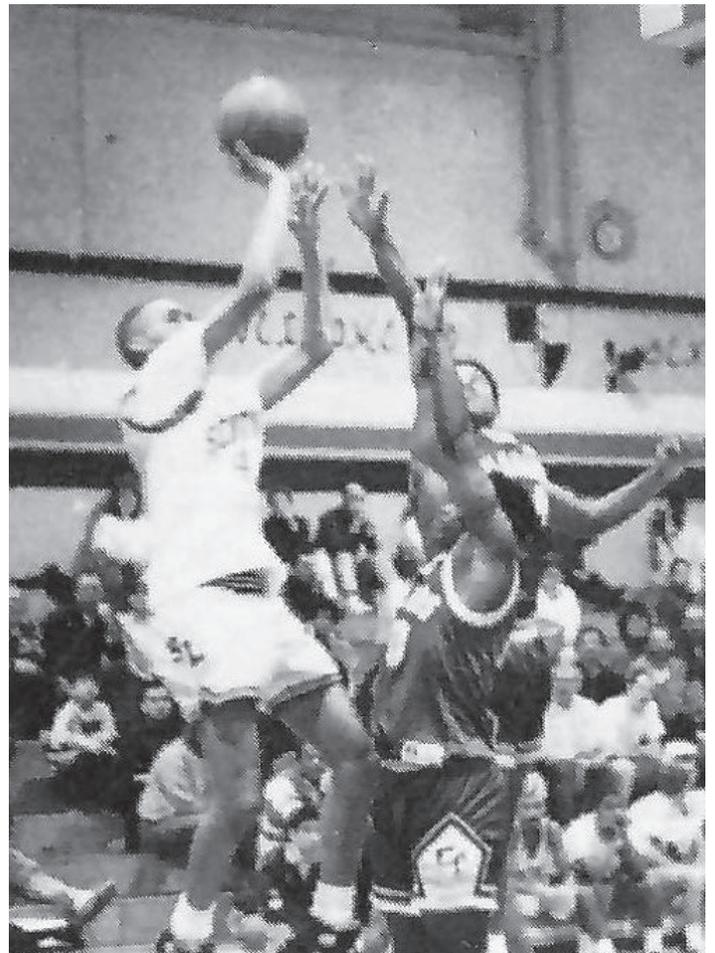
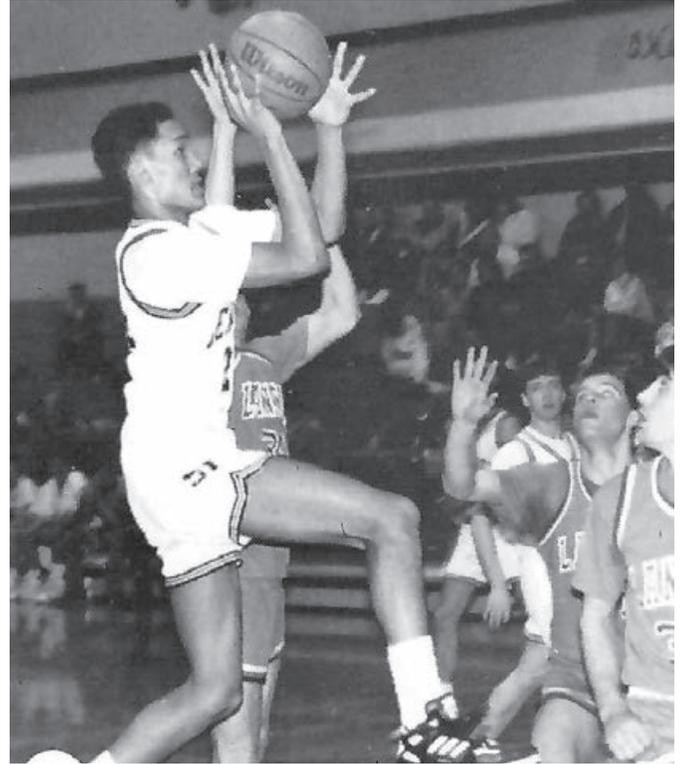


**MIKE LEASURE, (SLHS '93)**

Mike and his family John, Chong, and sister Mandy Leasure, moved to the Bethel School District, from Germany, for the 1989-90 school year. Mike played quarterback in football, and basketball on the military bases overseas. Mike was enthusiastic about playing QB for Cedarcrest in the ninth grade, but the word about the slim, quick, 6'4" freshman with soft shooting touch and slam dunks in junior high games was out. New Spanaway Lake coach, Russ Leslie was all in right away. After sophomore football season, Mike accepted the challenge of making the

varsity from Athletic Coordinator Terry Best. The basketball program had numerous seniors returning and Mike was inserted into the starting five as the only non-senior player on the team. "Mike had a very high ceiling, super work ethic, and willingness to learn," states Coach Leslie. "We had some big guys on the frontline, so we were able to play Mike mostly on the perimeter."

During Mike's sophomore year, he shined on defense, rebounding, and accepted his role, scoring timely hoops. He spearheaded a long overdue late season win over the Bethel Braves and gave the school and basketball program momentum for the future. Along with several new talented sophomores, Mike catapulted the Sentinels into the first winning season in many years, averaging 16 ppg and 10 rebounds in the 4A SPSL League. Playing traveling



# HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE CONTINUED

team basketball in the summer, Mike's dedication, and talent paid dividends his senior year. Averaging 20 ppg, 13 rebounds, and most likely a triple-double for the season, Mike played a pivotal role in the Spanaway Lake Sentinels first 4A state basketball ranking, first 4A district playoff berth, making the WSCA All-League team, First-Team SPSL All-League. Mike was also an excellent student at school, always carrying a grade point average of 3.5 or above.



Mike initially accepted a scholarship to the University of Nevada-Reno, but due to a coaching change traded up to a full scholarship at Gonzaga University. While playing for coach Dan Fitzgerald and the Bulldogs, he became a starter and captain for his sophomore and junior seasons.

Before his senior season under coach Don Monson, Mike suffered a serious leg compartment syndrome injury and underwent surgery. Mike's determination and team leadership persisted as he still was able to play during his senior year. Helping the Bulldogs to their first elite 8 NCAA appearance in school history. Once again Leasure led the basketball program into a bright future but this time at the NCAA level.

Mike has been married to his college sweetheart, Stephanie, for twenty-five years. He is a longtime Portland City police officer and has risen to the rank of Assistant Chief. Mike and Stephanie have two daughters, Grace and Lucille, who are currently making their own marks as NCAA volleyball and basketball.

Congrats to Mike and family on being a huge Bethel School District success story, and proud member of the Bethel District Athletic Hall of Fame.

Bethel  
Hall of  
Fame



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# HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES



**MONICA LEE AIKINS,** (BHS '93)

Monica Lee is a Bethel graduate who, in the early 1990's, earned eight letters in three sports; softball, basketball and volleyball. Through her playing career and her coaching years she has shown herself to deserve her position in the Bethel School District Athletic Hall of Fame.



Bethel went to state in volleyball each of the three years Monica was a member. Monica, a setter, was a member of the 1991 fifth place state team and captain of the 1992 fourth place team. Along the way she received the Bethel High School's Captain's Award in 1991 and in 1992. She was named to the First-Team SPSL Volleyball in 1992, her senior year, and she was also named to the All-State East vs. West Team. That year Bethel presented her the MVP award. Coach Kevin Aoki remembers her as being great in a critical situations, making good decisions on the court and said, "She ran the show!"



Monica played guard and was known for having an impressive outside shot. On the court she was both liked and respected. She was a leader. In 1990-1991 Bethel went to state. In 1991-92 she was chosen as MVP. Her senior year, 1992-1993 she was Second-Team SPSL and chosen for Bethel High School's MVP and Captain's Awards.

Her sophomore and junior years she lettered in softball.

Monica is one of three children. Cary, the oldest by four years played basketball, and Valerie, five years younger than Monica played volleyball and basketball. These three children and their teams enjoyed a great deal of support from their parents. Coach Aoki mentioned of her father Gary, that when Monica's team was playing you couldn't determine which player was his child.

In 1996 to 2006 Monica coached JV volleyball at Bethel High School. She coached a handful of first place teams but of her proudest achievement as a coach was as JV coach she assisted the Bethel varsity to a 32-0 season.

Monica and her husband Luke now live in Shelton. They have one son, Logan.





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Hall of Fame Inductees*

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to all the Athletes, Coaches,  
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for being Inducted into the  
2025 Bethel Athletic Hall of Fame

*Kellie Ham*

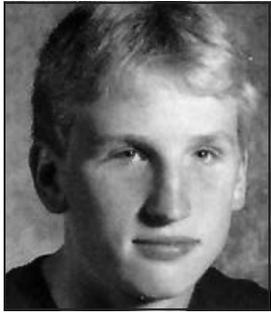
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# HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES



**MARK MACDONALD, (BHS '87)**

Mark Macdonald was born into a competitive and athletic family, led by mother, Elois, and father, Mike Macdonald, the latter a part of the inaugural Bethel School District Athletics Hall of Fame class. The middle of three boys, Tim, Mark, and Andy grew up playing all sorts of sports and watching their father as he coached and supported Bethel athletics. That same love of sport and competitiveness is still running strong in

the Macdonald family, as Mark helps to mentor the next generation of athletic success among his nephews.

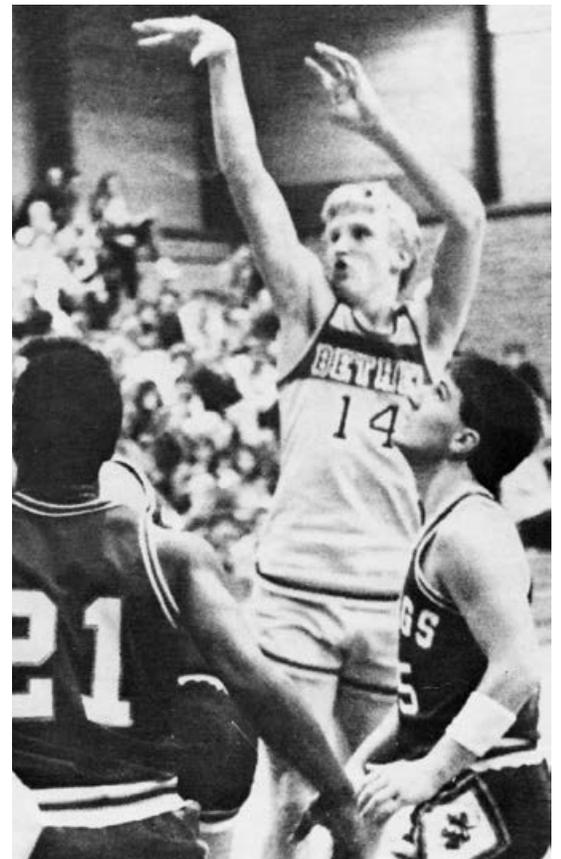
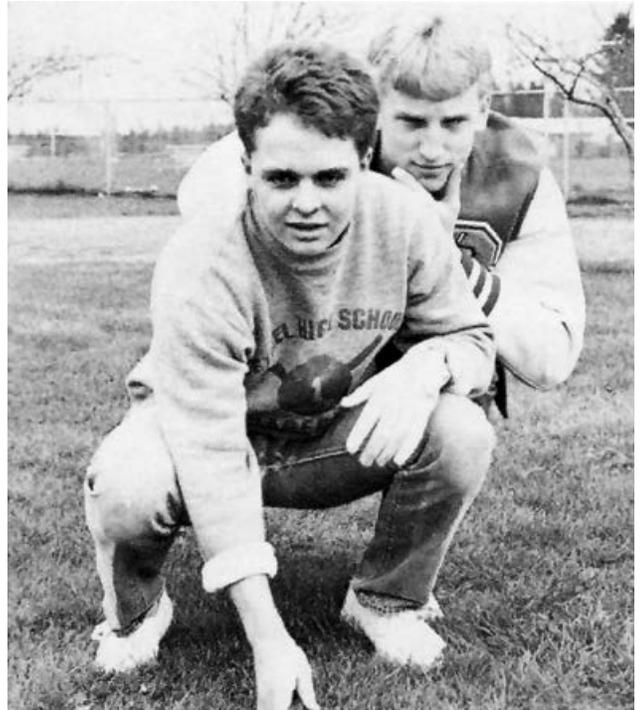
A proud Bulldog and Brave, Mark was a three-sport athlete at Bethel High School, playing golf, basketball, and track & field. A post-season qualifier in golf, it was Mark's love of basketball and track that highlighted his time as a Brave. Teammate and fellow Hall of Famer, Pat Mullen, described Mark as a "human highlight reel" for his athleticism on both ends of the floor, with his high-flying blocks and dunks energizing the crowd. As a senior, Mark earned Second-Team, All-League honors and qualified for state during his junior season, playing alongside his older brother, Tim.

Track is where Mark made his biggest impact as both a high school and collegiate athlete, jump starting his future career as an NCAA coach. Mentored by father Mike, Mark specialized in the hurdles and jumps, qualifying for state in the 300 hurdles, triple jump, and winning the 1987 State Championship in the 110 hurdles, a time that still stands as the Bethel High School record and was the sixth best time in state history in 1987. Runner-up in the 300 hurdles at state as a senior, Mark graduated as the school record holder in that event as well, and he still ranks in the top-5 in the triple jump.

Mark's high school accomplishments earned him a scholarship to attend Washington State University on a track & field scholarship, where he joined a star-studded team of athletes from all over the world. As a Cougar, Mark would make his impact felt immediately, scoring in the Pac-10 Championships on

eleven different occasions in the hurdles and relays, while helping the Cougs to a second place finish in the NCAA dual meet championships. Mark graduated as the second best 400 hurdler in WSU history (50.05) and still ranks in the top-10 all-time (having coached four of the five athletes that passed him). Mark capped off his WSU career by earning All-American honors in the 400 hurdles and earning a spot in the 1992 Olympic Trials in the hurdles.

Mark's proudest athletic accomplishments would come as a coach, where he became Coach Mac, and impacted the lives of hundreds of Cougar athletes, mentoring some of the best sprinters and hurdlers in WSU and collegiate history. Following his graduation, Coach Mac spent the next 20-plus years as one of the most successful hurdle coaches in the Pac-10, including mentoring Randi Smith to a school record and All-American career, Doninique



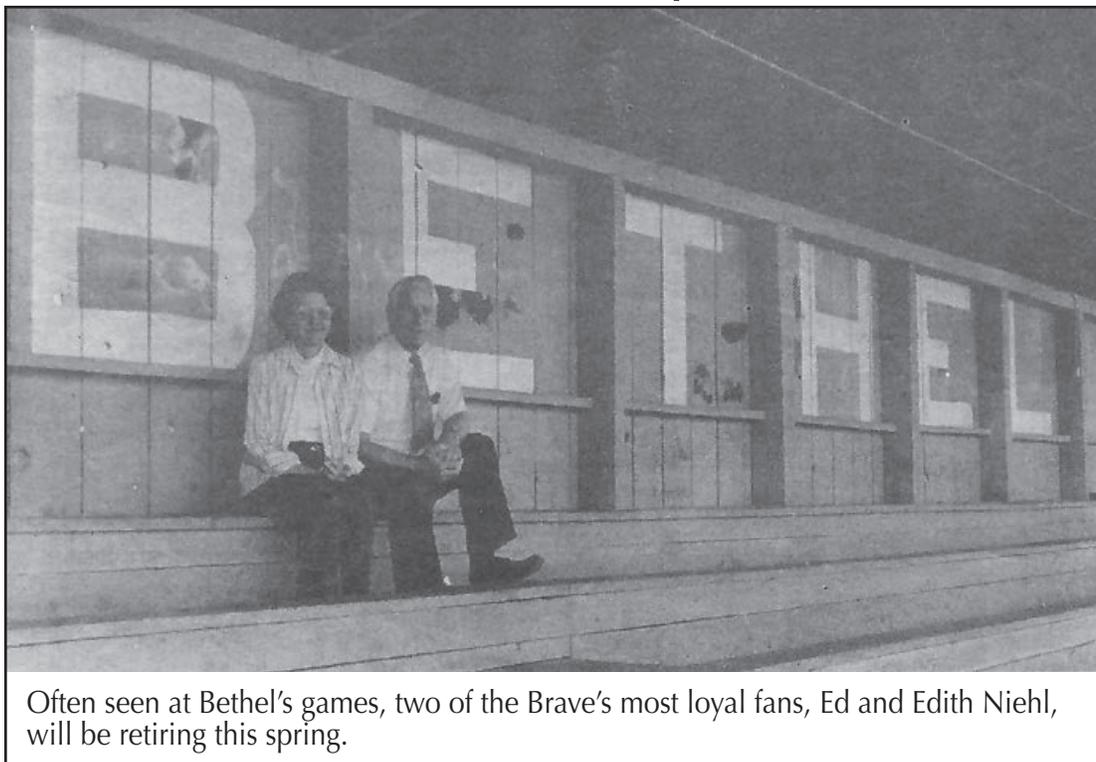
## HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE CONTINUED

Arnold to an NCAA Championship in the 110 hurdles, and Jeshua Anderson to an impressive three NCAA Championships and a #2 world-ranking in the 400 hurdles. Mac's success earned him 2008 West Region Coach of the Year honors and NCAA Assistant Coach of the Year. Following his stint at WSU, Mark would also spend time at Oregon State and the University of Washington, where he mentored All-Americans and school record holders in the long hurdles as well. Most recently, Coach Mac joined the staff at Curtis High School, where he guided athletes to state appearances, school records in both hurdles, and several marks in the top-20 in state history in a single season.

While the times on the track speak for themselves, Mark's proudest moments as a coach happened in the margins, where athletes that other schools overlooked came to Pullman and thrived, when an athlete that other coaches were prepared to kick off the team became a conference champion, or when he insisted that an athlete stay in Pullman for one more summer to finish up their degree. In the middle of the wheat fields, in a place where many student-athletes struggled to connect, Coach Mac's legacy is that he built family, community, and success for hundreds of athletes that otherwise would have gone elsewhere, if they went to college at all. He became a father figure, psychologist, career counselor, and cheerleader for countless athletes who went on to do great things, and to be in his presence now is to hear a constant chime of texts from former athletes all over the world that still consider him a mentor and parental figure.



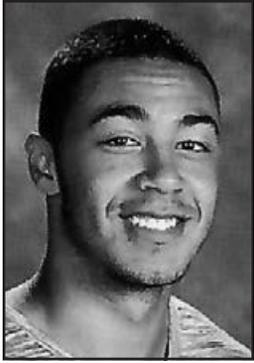
## Bethels Most Loyal Fans



Often seen at Bethel's games, two of the Brave's most loyal fans, Ed and Edith Niehl, will be retiring this spring.

*Hall of Fame*

# HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES



## JOE MARTIN, (SLHS '14)

Born and raised in Spanaway, Washington, Joe's journey began at Spanaway Lake High School, where he distinguished himself as a multi-sport athlete. He competed in football, basketball, baseball, and track, but it was football that captured his heart and became his primary focus. His dedication to the sport was evident in his commitment to training and leadership, both on and off the field. A consistent high-achiever in the classroom, Joe balanced academics and athletics with discipline and integrity.

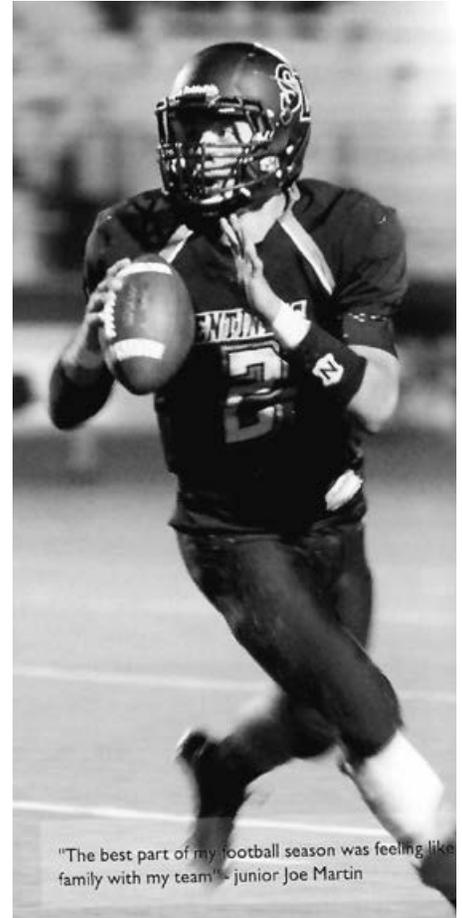
During his high school career, Joe earned varsity letters in four sports—three years each in football and basketball, two years in baseball, and one year in track. His leadership, character, and athletic ability made a lasting impact on the Spanaway Lake community.

Joe's athletic excellence earned him a full-ride Division I football scholarship to Idaho State University. After redshirting his freshman year, he went on to start in 23 games for the Bengals. As a junior, he became the only player in his class to be named team captain—a title he held again as a senior. He was also honored as the team's Most Inspirational Player in his final season. His talent drew the attention of professional organizations, earning him tryouts with the Seattle Seahawks and the BC Lions. Joe went on to play professional arena football in 2021, followed by a successful season in Mexico's SOY FAM League, a professional league modeled after the NFL.

After his time abroad, Joe returned home to Spanaway to invest in the next generation. He married his high school sweetheart, Kaila—his fellow Spanaway Lake "Athlete of the Year" recipient—and together they planted roots in their hometown.

Today, Joe continues to lead by example. He serves as a high school football and track coach, a certified personal trainer, and a licensed realtor. Whether he's guiding young athletes, training individuals to become stronger inside and out, or helping families build generational wealth, Joe's mission remains the same: to help others become the best version of themselves.

When asked what he does for a living, Joe humbly replies, "I'm in the business of helping others."



# Congratulations

to all the Athletes, Coaches,  
Contributors, Family and Teams  
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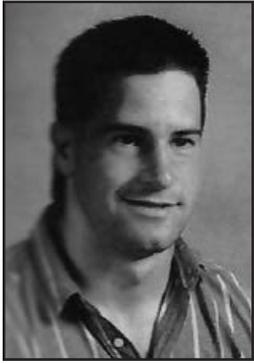
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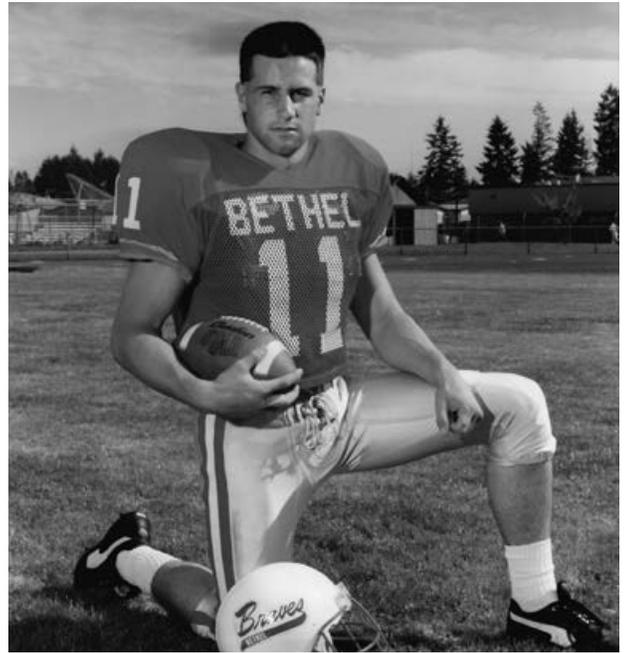
# HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES



## **BRET PORTER,** (BHS '92)

Bret attended school in the Bethel School District from kindergarten through his senior year, completing all thirteen years within the district. His passion for athletics began at an early age, participating in soccer, baseball, and wrestling starting at age five. As he grew older, his involvement expanded to include basketball and football. In high school, Bret chose to concentrate on football, wrestling, and baseball, excelling in all three sports. His dedication and performance earned him a total of nine varsity letters by the time he graduated.

Coach Torgeson, who coached Bret for three years, quickly recognized his talent and named him a starter early in his high school career. Bret went on to become a three-year, two-way starter—serving as the team's quarterback all three years. Defensively, he played strong safety as a sophomore and transitioned to inside linebacker during his junior and senior seasons. As a junior, Bret earned Second-Team All-SPSL honors at both quarterback and linebacker. In his senior year, he was named team captain and again received Second-Team All-SPSL recognition at quarterback, while earning First-Team All-SPSL honors as a linebacker. Capping off an impressive high school football career, Bret was selected as one of just sixty-eight players statewide to compete in the prestigious 1992 East/West All-State Football Game, which showcases top talent from nearly every county across Washington.



Bret began wrestling at a young age through the Bethel All Stars Wrestling program, laying the foundation for a successful athletic career. He continued to develop his skills through junior high and high school under the guidance of coaches Greeley, Allen, and Geller. As a sophomore competing in the 168-pound weight class, Bret placed third at Sub-Regionals, fourth at Regionals, and qualified for Mat Classic II. In his junior year, wrestling at 178 pounds, he earned second place at Sub-Regionals, third at Regionals, and finished seventh at Mat Classic III. During his senior season, also at 178 pounds, Bret captured first place at Sub-Regionals, second at Regionals, and placed sixth at Mat Classic IV. A respected leader on and off the mat, Bret served as team captain during both his junior and senior years at Bethel High School.

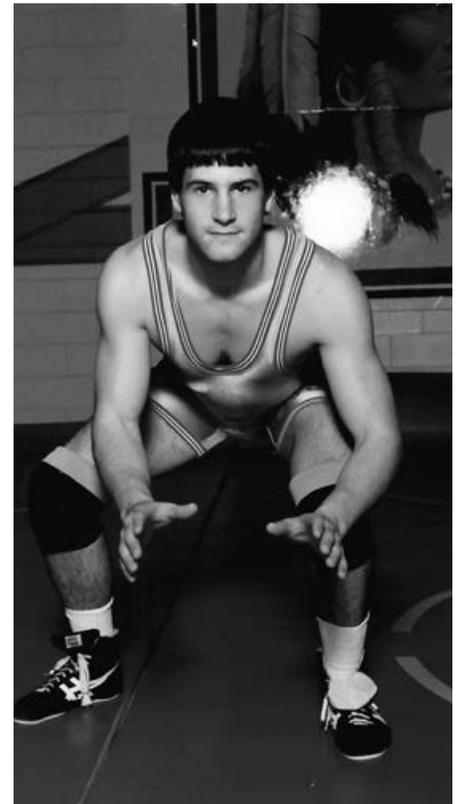
In baseball, Bret was coached by Terry Jenks and Jeff Wood, who played key roles in his development and success. He served as a catcher during his sophomore and senior seasons and played first base



as a junior. Bret earned Second-Team All-SPSL honors as a first baseman in his junior year and repeated that recognition as a catcher in his senior year. His leadership on the field was evident, as he was named team captain in both his junior and senior seasons.

As graduation approached, Bret was recognized by the Tacoma Athletic Commission as a "National Football Foundation and Hall of Fame Final Four" honoree, a prestigious acknowledgment of his athletic and academic excellence. A dedicated student as well as an athlete, Bret consistently earned Honor Roll distinction and was awarded the BEST and Bethel Boosters Scholarships.

He was named Athlete of the Month twice—once in the fall of 1990 and again in the fall of 1991—highlighting his consistent performance across seasons. In the spring of his senior year, Bret accepted a football scholarship to Boise State University, where he redshirted as a quarterback during the 1992 season. After completing the 1992–1993 academic year, Bret took a brief hiatus from college to pursue professional opportunities. In the spring of 1995, with a renewed focus on both academics and athletics, he reached out to Head Coach Jeff Zenisek at Central Washington



## HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE CONTINUED

University. Despite having been away from the game for two years, Bret was welcomed back to the collegiate football field and embraced the opportunity with determination.

That season, he made the transition to the tight end position, as the quarterback role was firmly held by future NFL standout Jon Kitna. Bret's adaptability and perseverance were instrumental in his successful return to the sport. Bret played a key role in the Wildcats' remarkable 1995 season, which culminated in a 10–3–1 record and a share of the NAIA Division II National Championship. His dedication, adaptability, and contributions to a championship-caliber team exemplify the excellence honored by this Hall of Fame.

In 1997, Bret married Gina Pallotta, a fellow Bethel High School graduate. Together, they have raised two outstanding children, Alex and Jake. Over the years, Bret and Gina have been a constant presence in the community, enthusiastically supporting their children and their peers—whether at Alex's dance activities or at Jake's wrestling matches and football games.

Bret has been a dedicated volunteer and supporter of Bethel's athletic programs, consistently giving his time and energy to enhance youth sports in the area.

Professionally, he has built a successful career with Absber Construction Company, where he has worked since graduating from college. He currently serves in a leadership role as a General Superintendent. Bret and Gina reside in the Graham area, where they continue to be active members of the community.

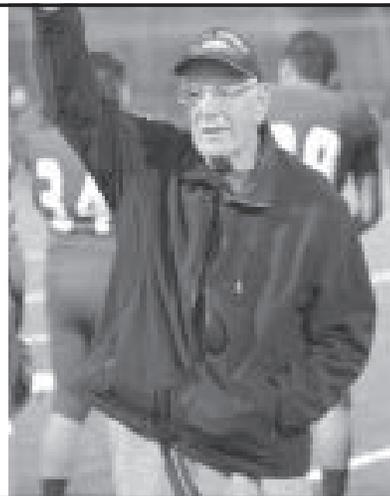


The Bethel School District  
Athletic Hall of Fame would like to wish

# Ed Niehl

## Happy 101th Birthday!!

Thank you for all the great things you have done for  
our school district!!



*Hall of Fame*

# HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES



## KAMEKO WILSON, (BHS '03)

Kameko Wilson, born on February 10, 1985, in Berlin, Germany, is a celebrated former track and field athlete and a distinguished graduate of Bethel High School in Spanaway, Washington. Her name is synonymous with excellence both on the track and in the classroom. Kameko was raised in a household that valued education and leadership. Kameko is the daughter of Harold, retired military and learning specialist, and Helen, teacher, counselor and assistant principal for several years at Bethel. Her brother Marcus, also a talented student-athlete at Bethel High School, is a special education teacher and track and field coach.

As a student-athlete at Bethel High School, she excelled in both track and basketball, earning varsity letters in each sport. On the track, she was a dominant sprinter, competing and often finishing first in her favorite event, the 400 meter dash. Kameko experienced similar success in the 200 meter dash, and as anchor in the 4x200 and 4x400 meter relays.

She was a track and field state qualifier for each year of her high school career. Kameko's crowning achievement came in her junior year, when she won the 2002 Washington Class 4A State Championship in the 400 meters with a time of 56.64 seconds. Her state championship experience was topped off by the 4x400m relay team's second place finish with a PR of 3:59.41. In 2003, she also made her mark by setting a school record in the 400 meter dash at the Washington Class 4A State Championship with a time of 56.04 seconds, a record that still stands today.

Her leadership and performance on the track earned her the role of team captain and recognition through the Coaches Award, Most Valuable Runner Award, Iron Runner Award and the prestigious Tacoma Athletic Commission Award.

Not limited to the track, Kameko was also a skilled shooting guard on the Bethel High School basketball team. Her dual-sport dedication showcased her versatility and fierce competitive spirit.

In addition to her athletic achievements, Kameko was an honor roll student, embodying the ideal of a student-athlete. She graduated with aspirations of pursuing a career in science and went on to attend Washington State University with an academic and track scholarship.

At WSU, Kameko competed as a sprinter for the Cougars. She continued to make her mark in collegiate athletics with personal bests in the outdoor and indoor 400m, as well as an all time personal best of 25.86w in the outdoor 200m and 26.13i in the indoor 200m. Her performance earned her Pac-10 All-Academic Honorable Mention recognition, underscoring her continued commitment to balancing athletics with academics.

Following her graduation from WSU with a Bachelor of Science in Microbiology, Kameko launched a successful career in the biotechnology industry. She currently resides in The Netherlands, where she continues to thrive professionally while embracing her most important role—being a mother to her young son, Sean.



# BETHEL SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Bethel Public Schools

“Together We Can Develop Our Most Precious Resources”

### The History of Bethel School District

Washington State's 19th largest school district began life 132 years ago as a one-room school in Spanaway. In the years since 1855, thirty-four different school districts were formed, saw service, and ultimately consolidated with other districts until Bethel School District was created in 1949.

The first Kapowsin School was built in 1906–07. Kapowsin High School was one of the first big schools in all of Pierce County until the 1949 earthquake severely damaged it and led to its closure after Bethel High School opened in 1952.

Other schools consolidated into the Kapowsin district included schools in Thrift, Benston, and Graham. The one-room Graham school opened in the early 1900s and was followed by a two-room in 1918 that served until 1949. When it was closed, students were transferred to the present Kapowsin School.

Roy, the only incorporated town in the Bethel School District, was officially plotted in 1884. The founder of the town gave the land for the first new school—a one room, 20x30 foot building built in 1885. In 1904 a new school was erected on the east side of town near the present Roy Elementary School. In 1913 when Roy constructed and opened a high school, many of the small districts in that area consolidated with the Roy district. In 1937 the present Roy school was completed, and in 1942 Roy High School burned to the ground. High school students were taught in portables and other available buildings in town until Bethel High School opened in 1952.

For many years the Kapowsin and Roy High Schools were the only ones serving south Pierce County. Students were bused from as far as the Tacoma city limits and one-way bus runs of more than 50 miles were not unusual.

After several years spent studying the possible consolidation of the Roy and Kapowsin districts, along with the other districts in that area, consolidation was approved in 1949 and the construction of a high school became the first goal. On June 3, 1949 the new school board voted to name the district after Mrs. Ruth Bethel, the county superintendent of schools who had played a key role in the consolidation movement.

The district sprawls over 140,000 acres of land and extends some 33 miles from border to border in southeastern Pierce County. Besides the city of Roy, six additional community areas make up the balance of Bethel's estimated 49,000 population.

The district may be separated into two economic regions. The northern one-third is primarily a residential suburb of the city of Tacoma and the military installations (Fort Lewis Army Base and McChord Air Force Base) with some commercial and industrial development. The southern two-thirds is largely rural and undeveloped. Since the developed area of the school district is primarily suburban, commercial development is limited to those small service establishments needed to support a residential community. A recent Puget Sound Council of Government survey found that 17 percent of local wages and salary employment in the school district was provided by the retail trade sector; 11 and 9 percent were provided by the service and construction sectors, respectively.

Bethel School District has not supported an independent economy in the past and has functioned primarily as a suburban community to Tacoma and Seattle-King County. According to the 1980 census statistics, there were almost 9,000 more wage and salary employees than jobs in Bethel School District. The school district is the largest single employer within the district boundaries providing more than 1,000 jobs. Projected population increase of 25 percent during the next 10 years will be supported in part by renewed economic development, especially centered around the Frederickson Industrial Area and the southward extension of Canyon Road and associated sewer services.

Bethel School District is most commonly known outside the immediate area for its radical solution to the enrollment growth problem (year-round-schools) between 1974 and 1981. Ten years of bond issue failures resulted in severe overcrowding problems in elementary and junior high schools, and for seven years, the district operated a rotating year-round schedule which accommodated 30 percent more students in existing buildings. Passage of bond issues permitted a return to the traditional calendar in the 1981–82 school year. Since that time, bond issues have passed with sufficient regularity to keep pace with growth without resorting to double shifting or the “radical solution.”

Neufeld, Carol E. *Bethel School District #403 : an illustrated history.* Tacoma, Washington: Media Production Associates, 1999.



# HALL OF FAME TEAM INDUCTEE



**1998 Spanaway Lake High School Wrestling Team**—**Back Row:** Coach Bob Heskett, John Shearer, Coach Rod Dean, Rodil Rodriguez, Gaylord Thayer, Travis McGee, Lanny Merritt, Doug Barber, Travis Manning, Robb Johnson, Brad Stellman, Jason Wiklund, Bryan Kipp, Thomas Humphrey, Doug Kipp, Asst. Coach Jeff Gotcher. **Middle Row:** Ron Ellis, Mike Woods, Eric Colpitts, Ritchie Warmouth, Kevin McMichael, Mike Underwood, Jaren Manning, Robert Wilkinson, Don Green, Ki-Sung Kang, Art Hall, Jared Thomas. **Front Row:** Varsity Managers Dana Lay and Trix Crisostomo, Shawn O'Neal, Gaylen Lindsey, Eric Weaver, Adrian Linsay. JV Managers Lani Balaoing and Chris Hinson.

## 1998 SPANAWAY LAKE WRESTLING TEAM

The 1988 Spanaway Lake Wrestling team, coached by Bob Heskett was the first team to go undefeated in "AAA" League play 10-0 with an overall record of 18-2 to take first place in league. Wrestling is both a team and individual sport. The coaching staff placed a lot of emphasis on team involvement and support. Leadership by the three seniors on the team really helped both in practice and matches. The combination of win-loss records with these three was 69 wins and 17 losses. The junior class was an aggressive and confident group. The sophomore class was a work in progress. They improved a lot during the season and contributed to the teams success.

The most exciting league match that season was against Puyallup. Both teams were 8-0 with two matches left in the league season. Going into the heavyweight match, Spanaway Lake was ahead 26-22. Travis McGee was going against an undefeated wrestler. You could feel the tension in the gym. Travis lost the match 8-4, but gave his team the win 26-25. The crowd went crazy! The last league match was against Bethel. With the win (35-16), the wrestlers had their first league championship. Later in the district tournament, they beat Puyallup by four points and took first place. They really showed the team concept of being involved and supportive to each other.

The team had five wrestlers that made the Puget Sound League All-Star Team: John Shearer, Doug Kipp, Gaylord Thayer, Robb Johnson and Lanny Merritt. Travis Manning was an honorable mention.

Coach of the year was Bob Heskett (with help from assistants Rod Dean and Jeff Gotcher).

Eight wrestlers made it to regionals: John Shearer, Doug Kipp, Gaylord Thayer, Travis Manning, Jason Wiklund, Robb Johnson, Lanny Merritt and Travis McGee.

Out of the eight regional wrestlers four wrestlers qualified for state: Travis Manning (neck injury and could not wrestle), Travis McGee (13th Place), John Shearer (9th Place) and Lanny Merritt (3rd Place).

That season the team set many team records.

Best League Record 10-0

Best Overall Record 18-2 (1st in league)

Best District Finish 1st

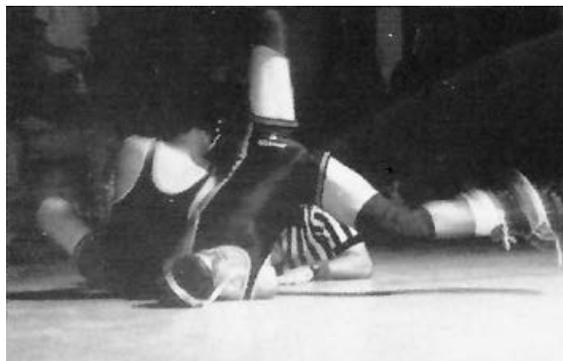
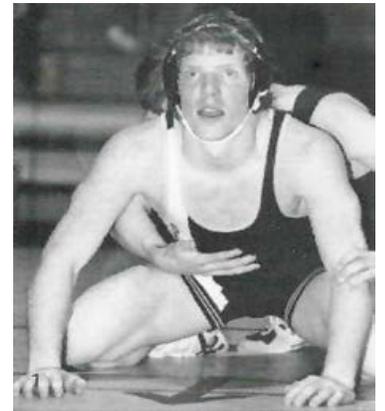
Best Team Pins 103

Best Regional Finish 4th

Most Take-downs 480

Average Match Score 44-18

The team had an outstanding season with many highlights. Below is the team roster and you will see the talent that was on this team.



# HALL OF FAME TEAM INDUCTEE CONTINUED

## The 1988 Spanaway Lake Wrestling Team

**Head Coach:** Bob Heskett, 7th year coaching at SLHS **Assistant Coaches:** Rod Dean 5th year coaching at SLHS, Jeff Gotcher, Volunteer Coach, 3x SLHS State Champ (101-0) **Managers** Dana Lay Munson, Tricia Crisotomo and Leilani Baloing.

### ROSTER

101 John Shearer—Senior, 27-5 record, three-year letterman, team captain, ninth in state as a junior and senior, three-year record 55-14.

108 Tom Humphrey—Sophomore, 5-17 record, three-year letterman, team captain senior year, All-American Academic Athlete, three year record 34-32.

115 Rodil Rodriguez—Sophomore, 10-11 record, improved during the season, unable to wrestle the next two years.

122 Doug Kipp, Senior, 20-5 record, two-year letterman, alternate to state, three-year record 29-19, one of the hardest workers on the team.

122 Jared Manning—Sophomore, 5-2 record. Won the JV tournament and that qualified him for the varsity tournament along with Doug Kipp. That gave SLHS two entries at the 122 weight class. This doesn't happen very often. He actually won a match, putting the team a couple of points ahead of Puyallup.

129 Gaylord Thayer—Junior, 22-7 record, three-year letterman, fourth in state as a senior, twenty-five pins, three-year record 62-21-2.

135 Bryan Kipp—Sophomore, 6-7 record, wrestled varsity the last half of the season, at the end of the year Bryan transferred to Washington High School to be in the ROTC program.

141 Travis Manning—Senior, 22-7 record, three-year letterman, team captain, coaches award, three-year record 45-12.

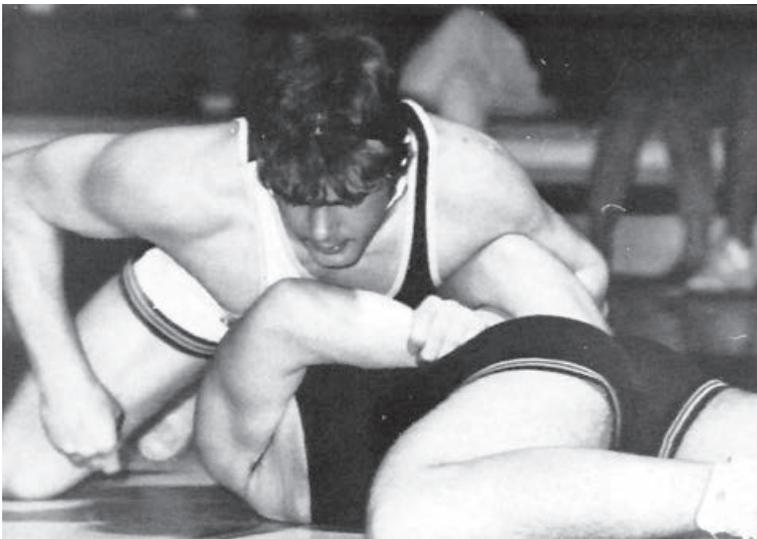
158 Jason Wiklund—Junior, 17-8 record, three-year letterman, qualified for regionals every year, missed state by one match, three-year record 55-19-2.

168 Brad Stellmon—Junior, 12-8 record, three-year letterman, big improvement this year, three-year record 35-19.

178 Robb Johnson—Junior, 19-3 record, three-year letterman, ninth in state as a sophomore, fourth in state as a senior, three year record 59-15-2, after graduating he attended Washington State University to play football.

190 Lanny Merritt—Junior, 30-4 record, three-year letterman, team captain senior year, ninth in state as a sophomore, third in state as a junior, fourth in state as a senior, three-year record 77-15, state and national champion in Freestyle and Greco-Roman wrestling.

Unl Travis McGee—Junior, 12-10 record, three-year letterman, thirteenth in state as a junior and senior, three year record 18-14, always impressed me how well he wrestled during the qualifying tournaments at the end of the season.



Hall of Fame

# HISTORY OF BETHEL SCHOOL DISTRICT

By C.J. Knaggs

The Bethel School District of Pierce County, Washington, is a geographic “monster.” It sprawls over 80,000 acres of land and extends some twenty-two miles from border to border in the south-eastern part of Pierce County. Eight definite communities, one an incorporated town, comprise its population

Economically, the district residents are primarily middle class. A large block of the population are members of the armed forces or are employed as a civilian workers at nearby Fort Lewis, Madigan Hospital and McChord Air Force Base. A second segment earn their livelihood in the mills and industrial plants in the City of Tacoma and in the major Boeing Aircraft plants in neighboring communities. The remainder are farmers, loggers, shopkeepers, or engaged in miscellaneous fields of employment.

Bethel District schools, dating back to the late 1800s, have seen the expansion of schools from a hit-or-miss operation to the present well-organized district that serves the educational needs of 3,600 children in five modern elementary schools, a junior high school and a high school.

The present school district is the product of a consolidation of 34 school districts. Consolidation of the small schools that once dotted the area is not a new thing. Back in 1904, the citizens of the school districts in the Roy area voted to combine their districts in an attempt to provide a more stable education for their children. From time to time other consolidations of small districts were voted upon until the number of separate districts in the area had been reduced to seven. In 1949, the Spanaway, Roy, Kapowsin, Elk Plain, and Rocky Ridge districts were consolidated into forming the Bethel School District. Later on, the Clover Creek District and the Lacamas District voted to join the Bethel Schools, giving the District its present size.

All kinds of problems faced the founders of the early schools in the area. In 1855, Captain Mallory of the U.S. Army led his troops against the Indians. After scouting along the Puyallup River, the Army withdrew to set up camp two miles east of Spanaway Lake at Montgomery’s Farm. Later on, this post became a general supply center for the Army and was renamed Fort Hicks. A supply road was built to Olympia by way of the Roy and Yelm Prairies. During this period of Indian uprising, schools in the area were closed for a two-year period to protect the children from danger.

Other problems the schools could not cope with were floods that closed the school in the Clover Creek area and a fire in a one-room school in the Spanaway area. This fire is noteworthy as many residents claimed it had been set by citizens in the community in order to run the teacher “out.” The teacher actually owned the school building and was not popular with the local patrons.

Each school operated independently during the late 1800s with the one-room schools being built by local citizens and staffed by anyone that the residents could find to teach their children “readin’, ‘ritin’, and ‘righmetik.”

Little is known of these schools. Records were not kept of their operation. Pioneer tales of the early schools are colorful, as may be noted by a trip to the library in the Washington State Historical Society Museum in Tacoma. One tale tells of the type of teachers that were hired to teach children. In one of these areas schools, a teacher was hired but loved his “chewing’ tobacco.” When a student gave the right answer to a question, “the teacher would show his approval by spitting a wad of tobacco into a metal spittoon so that it would ring loud and clear—like a bell.”

In 1953–54, the Territorial Legislature tried to improve the quality of education being offered the children by establishing the Office of County Superintendent of Schools and requiring a yearly inspection of the schools by this office. Even though the law required a written report on the Superintendent’s inspection each year, it was not rigidly followed by the appointed superintendents. In 1872, the Rev. Nelson Rounds was appointed as the first Territorial Superintendent of Schools, and he

began the process of improving the system of education.

As far as Pierce County Schools were concerned, the first official school was founded in Steilacoom in 1854. Mrs. Sherwood Bonney was the first teacher and she instructed her students in the front room of her own home during the summer of 1854. It was the custom in the late 1800s to have a school term of 30 to 60 days during the summer months as transportation was nearly impossible during the winter months. Dusty summer roads became huge mud baths during the winter months of rain and snow.

The first school organized in this Bethel area, according to available records, was in 1855 when the Spanaway School District was organized. A small one-room school was built by the men in the area and staffed by a teacher. In 1864 the school mysteriously caught fire and burned to the ground. No school was held in this district until 1867, when a new building was erected. At that time, funds were raised by parents to finance the construction of the school house. The cost of erecting the building was \$108.00.

About the same time, James P. Stewart moved “back to the prairie and got a school near Spanaway Lake where (he) taught for about 6 months.” Stewart later moved into Tacoma and founded a school.

In 1896, according to the Tacoma *News Tribune* file, another school was built in the Spanaway area. The school was financed by private subscription and was located on the southwest shore of Spanaway Lake.

In 1897, another school was built in Spanaway. This school was located about two blocks across Pacific Avenue away from the present school site. It was a two-story frame structure that operated until 1928. The present brick building at Spanaway replaced this structure, and the Spanaway Elementary School has had a number of additions since that time to house 610 students at the present time. The biggest growth of enrollment in the Spanaway school was during World War II when a wave of students entered the school due to the expansion of the military installations at McChord Air Base and Fort Lewis. This area never had a school that offered education to the students above the eighth grade until the present Bethel High School opened in 1952. An attempt by the citizens of Spanaway to set up a high school failed in the 1940s even though the School Board purchased some old prisoner of war barracks after World War II and attempted to form a Union High School District.

In 1866, James P. Stewart again opened a school in this area. According to original manuscripts, he built a school house and taught for Clover Creek District #4 in that year. In 1867 this school was closed as a flood destroyed his home on December 17, 1867, and he converted the school house into a home for his family.

The County Land Purchase records note that on January 3, 1893, the residents in the Clover Creek area purchased 1 acre of land from Frederick Meyer to erect a school. In 1908 the district purchased another acre for \$1.00 from Meyer.

The original school in the Clover Creek area was a one-room log cabin, located on the Spanaway Prairie, just off the Old Military Road. The next school was a two-room school that housed 60 students, divided into upper and lower grades. The heat in the building was by means of a wood burning stove which the janitor and the older boy students kept filled with logs. In the lower grade room, the students enjoyed their old stove, as it gave them a place to make hot toasted sandwiches for lunch. The heater in the upper grade room had the outstanding feature of a curved piece of metal that helped circulate warm air around the room.

In 1935 the two-room school became overcrowded as the Clover Creek area was settled by a number of people from the mid-west who had been forced out of their homes by violent wind storms. Soon there were 125 students at the crowded school,

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*bethelhalloffame1.org*

# HISTORY OF BETHEL SCHOOL DISTRICT CONTINUED

and the students were housed in a third room made by converting parts of a play shed into a classroom. Following this, part of the students were moved into a deserted gas station.

The WPA, in 1938, began construction on the present colonial style frame building that still houses a number of the Clover Creek students. Two recent brick additions to the school have made the school the present size. The district provided students with education only to the eighth grade until it joined the Bethel School District.

According to Mrs. Ross Plumb, daughter of pioneer Martin Vosnek who was a member of the Kirby School Board, the grade school of Kirby was opened in 1895 at a site across the road from the McGee Guest Home. It was a one room school.

In 1901–1902 the school was moved across the road to the present site of the McGee Guest Home. A three-room addition was built in 1920 after plans for consolidating the Clover Creek, Elk Plain, Graham and Kirby schools was defeated. The location for the combined 1 through 10 grade school could not be determined causing the voter rejection. This proposed site was near the present site of Bethel Junior High School.

During World War II, the Kirby School was gradually closed and the building sold to the McGee Guest home. A fire destroyed the old building after the Kirby school was opened as a guest home, and the Kirby District was officially annexed to the Elk Plain District in 1947.

Mr. E. L. Bower recalled the early days of the Elk Plain School. Late in the 1800s a one-room school was erected on property purchased from the Northern Pacific Railroad at \$2.50 per acre. A short time later another room was added to the original building.

In 1935, faced by an increasing population caused by people from the Midwest who migrated into the area as the violent wind storms had driven them west to get a better life, the Elk Plain School District added two more rooms to the original school. WPA built the rooms for \$800.00.

The present brick building was erected in 1937 by the combination of WPA funds and local taxes for a price of \$19,000. Since that time portables were brought in to ease overcrowded conditions, and two additions erected by the Bethel School District recently have given the school its present size. No high school education was offered by the Elk Plain School District until Bethel High School was opened.

One interesting consolidation occurred in the Elk Plain District as the Greendale school was closed (near the East Gate of Fort Lewis) by the U.S. Army in the period just before World War II. High School was opened. In 1942 the Greendale property was given to Elk Plain, but the school did not get any students, as the Greendale school had been closed and students transferred to other schools before the school district was closed.

According to the original writings by Bonney, available at the Washington State Historical Library, the Kapowsin township was founded in 1901, but not incorporated as a city. The town grew because of its lumber industry until it reached a population of 896 before World War II.

The school was first held for the youngsters in the baggage room of the depot until a school could be built. The children were later transported

to an old building near Electron for their schooling.

In 1906–1907 the citizens of Kapowsin built a combination grade school, high school to serve the needs of their youngsters. It is interesting to note Kapowsin High School was one of the earliest high schools in Pierce County.

In 1923 Kapowsin High School added a gymnasium that was considered to be the most complete gym in Pierce County. It had showers, basketball courts and a swimming pool. In April of 1949 a severe earthquake hit Pierce County and made the high school building unsafe for schooling purposes. To quote a news story in the TNT printed on June 3, 1951, the sturdy two-story frame structure was so badly damaged by the quake that “today if anyone jumps up and down on the second floor, northwest room, it shakes the entire building, students report. The adjoining gymnasium, once the best in the county, was also badly damaged.” The building was used to house high school students until the Bethel High School opened in 1952. The old high school was sold by the district and was dismantled.

During its operation as a school district, the Kapowsin District went through a number of consolidations, attracting many neighboring districts, since it had a high school. All-in-all there were six separate districts consolidated to form the Kapowsin District.

In 1949 the Kapowsin District opened the present grade school building and closed small grade schools operating in the Thrift, Graham, Benston and Electron areas. The grade school students who had attended the Kapowsin High-Grade School building were transferred to the new building at the same time.

The schools consolidated by Kapowsin were old pioneer schools that dated back to the late 1800s and early 1900s. About the only records available on these schools are the land purchased records in the County Office. They show that land was purchased for a school at Thrift in 1916; at Benston in 1892, 1907, and 1912; and Graham in 1907 and 1911.

The Graham Grade School was originally opened in the early 1900s as a one-room school. In 1918 a two-room school was constructed, and later on a basement was dug to be used as a play room and a lunch room. The school was closed in 1949 when the students were transferred to the present Kapowsin Elementary School.

Recent additions to the Kapowsin Grade School have made it the present size school, housing over 450 students.

## Roy Founded in 1884

The only incorporated town in the Bethel District was officially plotted in 1884 when Mr. and Mrs. James McNaught filed for the plot. In 1908 the town of Roy was officially incorporated as a 4th class town and Allmon W. West elected as Mayor. Early population count showed 315 residents. The town was located on the old military supply road from Olympia to Puyallup.

The founders of the town, the McNaught family, also gave the land for the first school in Roy. A small building was constructed in 1885 that was one-room and 20x30 feet. In 1890 another room was added to the school.

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# HISTORY OF BETHEL SCHOOL DISTRICT CONTINUED

In 1904 a school was built on the east side of town near the present site of the Roy Grade School.

Two elections were held in 1912 to establish a high school in Roy and, after a battle at the polls, the voters approved the construction. In 1913 Roy High School was built and opened. Students from the small schools around Roy enrolled to get their high school education. A number of school districts at that time joined the district, since it had a high school.

In 1924 the citizens in the Roy area voted for \$12,000 in bonds to build a gym and auditorium that was completed a short time later.

In 1937 the present Roy Grade school building was completed on the high school site. Federal funds under the PWA law provided for the major expenses. Beginning in 1938, a number of meetings were held to determine if a new high school should be built, but state opposition to the building and a start of World War II stopped these plans. Early on a morning in October 1942, the Roy High School caught on fire and burned to the ground. Temporary portables were brought to the site, and the high school students sued them for their high school until Bethel High School opened in 1952. To quote a June 3, 1951 article in the TNT, "at Roy the high school students today are put up in portables, the old garage and any building that is available in town."

## Transportation Creates Bethel

Transportation for students to school in early 1900s was a major problem. A contract in the files of the Bethel School District signed in 1914 provided for transportation for children by horse and buggy from Electron to Kapowsin.

World War I changed the idea of transporting children to school and helped vacate the widely scattered one or two-room schools located in this area. With the war came the development of trucks for the military and this, in turn, led to the use of school buses.

Through the 1920s it was common for children to walk one and one-half miles to meet a bus. It was usually a ton and a half Model T Ford truck with winged wooden seats along the side and a bench down the middle. Pupils rode facing each other. Sides of the bus were covered with oiled canvas and the door was open. In the winter it was cold!

The driver of the bus was often a local grocer or farmer. After the children were taken to school, the seats were swung out of the way and the bus was used to haul groceries or milk or cow feed.

In the late 1920s, the 1930s and the 1940s the superintendents of the Roy and Kapowsin districts made trips to the perimeter communities by their districts to enroll more students. Mr. Earl Platt, Principal of Bethel Senior High, recalls that as late as 1949, he drove a bus that started its run on the city limits of Tacoma, weaved in and out of the present Bethel District to take high school students to Kapowsin. Mr. Francis Olson, Assistant Superintendent of the Bethel schools, recalls he had the same experience when he drove a Roy High School bus. The long bus runs were made economically sound, as the State allowed additional funds for each student registered from outside the high school districts.

Since Franklin Pierce High School was a long way from opening, the two high schools' board of directors in the southern part of Pierce County (Kapowsin and Roy) were eager to go into Parkland to get any high schools students they could. This was necessary, as in the 1930s the depression made the financial support from these outside students important. Bus runs of over 50 miles one-way were not unusual.

To show the wide area that the Roy buses covered in 1946, below are the figures showing the number of student attending Roy High School and where they lived:

| <u>Area</u>    | <u>Number</u> |
|----------------|---------------|
| Spanaway       | 38            |
| Elk Plain      | 12            |
| Roy            | 40            |
| Collins        | 24            |
| Rocky Ridge    | 1             |
| Woodland       | 1             |
| Parkland       | 11            |
| Lacamas        | 7             |
| Central Avenue | 2             |
| Midland        | 1             |



## Roy and Kapowsin Unite

As early as 1941, the Pierce County School Office began to conduct surveys to determine the possible consolidation of districts in the county. On April 15, 1941, a group was picked to study consolidation due to increased population caused by Fort Lewis and McChord Field activity.

On April 22, 1941, the TNT reported that a County Reorganization committee had been selected with three people named to serve South Central Pierce County. They were: Mable Crate, Rocky Ridge; Bert Witehead, Roy; and Bertha Johnston, Kapowsin.

A short time later, July 1941, the TNT reported that a survey taken by the committee may show that a high school of 400 students could be built at Loveland and serve the needs of this area. To show how close this estimate was, Bethel High School was built in 1952 for 400 students!!

With the coming of World War II, the plans for consolidating the districts and combining the Roy and Kapowsin High Schools were dropped. Following the war, plans began again and were speeded by the loss of the schools at Roy by fire and the damage of the Kapowsin High School by an earthquake.

In 1949 the districts in this area voted to consolidate and set the building of a high school to be their major goal. On June 3, 1949, the School Board of District 403 voted to name the district after Mrs. Ruth Bethel, County Superintendent, who had been instrumental in consolidating the district. The name was suggested by Leonard Goodwin, a student at Roy.

On March 14, 1950, the Bethel District voters voted in favor of two financial issues to construct a high school in the Loveland area, but rejected the location suggested by the School Board. In June of 1950 the voters were given their choice of sites for the school and voted in favor of the Castle property (the present site of the Junior and Senior High Schools).

Plans were revealed in September of 1951 for the present Bethel High School to be built on the 60 acre site and house 400 students. On December 7, 1951, the ground-breaking ceremony was held with Senator Warren G. Magnuson as guest speaker.

Delayed slightly by building problems, Bethel High School opened its doors for the first time in September 1952 and held its official dedication on November 9 with Dr. George D. Strayer as guest speaker.

The school opened in 1952 with 385 students in the four-year school. By 1958 over 540 students were receiving an education in the building. A two-room brick building was constructed to help ease the crowded conditions at the high school. In 1958 the junior high opened and the high school's enrollment dropped to below 400, as the ninth grade students were now being housed in the junior high

*continued on next page*  
*[bethelhalloffame1.org](http://bethelhalloffame1.org)*

# HISTORY OF BETHEL SCHOOL DISTRICT CONTINUED

facility. The two-room addition to the high school was converted into an administration building for the District during the summer of 1958.

## Addition to Senior High

Within five years as the senior high's enrollment again skyrocketed, and the District began a construction project to house over 600 tenth through twelfth grade students. The addition opened in the fall of 1963 and gave the high school students more complete shops, a band room and larger P.E. facilities.

By the fall of 1965 the senior high and its neighboring junior high had reached over-capacity enrollments. The Board of Directors decided, with the approval of the State Department, that the most logical step would be to place another addition on to the senior high building and transfer the ninth grade back into the high school, making it a four-year high school again.

This was accomplished last fall (1966) after a 16-room addition was completed. The new wing on the high school includes science lab, office space for teachers, conference rooms for students, a three-in-one team teaching area and nine more classrooms. Current enrollment at the high school was 940 students and predictions are being made that over 1,000 students will be in the four-year high school next fall.

## Bethel Junior High School Opens

The Bethel School Board, in the fall of 1957, began to formulate plans for the solution of the crowded conditions in the high school and most of the District's elementary schools. The solution, the Board felt, was to ease the load in all schools by constructing a junior high. The voters in November of 1957 approved the necessary funds, and work on the largest single building in the Bethel School District began in December of 1957.

In November of 1958, after double-shifting the senior high and junior high students since the start of school that fall, Bethel Junior High opened its doors to over 500 students.

On March 23, 1959, the school was dedicated with Mr. Lloyd Andrews, State Superintendent of Instruction, as the keynote speaker.

By the fall of 1963, the junior high had reached its capacity of 724 students and within the next two years, reached an enrollment of over 800 students. At the present time, only two grades are enrolled in the junior high, the 7th and 8th grades, and the school had over 600 students.

The newest annexation to the Bethel School District occurred on July 1, 1963, when the Pioneer School District, Lacamas District #324, was annexed to the Bethel School District.

The Lacamas area and its schools have one of the most colorful histories of any schools in the State of Washington. Actually two school districts were founded in its area, School District #5 and School District #324.

County school records show that funds were allocated to the Muck District #5 in 1860, the earliest records kept. Angie Bowden in her book, *Early Schools of Washington Territory*, notes that the Muck Creek School was considered "to be part of the Nisqually Station.

This school, District #5, in 1863, had a school population of 43 and maintained a 90-day term. The teacher received \$40 a month."

Pioneer historian William Bonney wrote that in 1872 the Muck District was divided and part of its area was annexed to District #12.

District #85 was founded in 1897, according to records in the Pierce County School Office in Tacoma. Due to the rugged travel conditions on extremely poor roads in the late 1800s, the teachers in both Districts #5 and #85 were provided with housing as part of their pay. The teachers stayed with families near the schools and were expected to do the custodian work at the school building, along with teaching up to 40 students in the 1st through 8th grade school.

Following the consolidation of the Muck and Lacamas Districts into District #34 in June of 1920, the new school board took its first action by having the Clerk of the Board H. N. Svinth, draw up a resolution to bond the District for \$5,500 to construct and furnish a new classroom and a teacher's cottage. The architect, in submitting the final plans, changed the addition to include a domestic science room, a classroom and a teacher cottage to be built all under one roof. This new addition caused some concern for the school board, as the architect had failed to plan for doors in the partitions, but after being refused pay for the blue prints, the architect promptly drew doorways on his blue prints and was paid \$195.60 for his plans. Construction began immediately on the building, and on November 26, 1920, the building was opened and the contractor was paid \$4,890.00 for his work.

The first school year for District #324 was 1920-21 school year. Two teachers were hired at \$145 each per month, including janitor work, and 43 students reported to school the first day to begin the nine-month term. One year later, the school's enrollment took a dip with only 20 pupils showing up on the first day of school.

Transportation at Lacamas presented problems for the school board in the 1920s as the bus service was provided by local residents who bid on both providing a bus and driving it. At one time the district actually "bought" the bus and then sold it back to the owner-driver for a \$1 charge the district paid for the bus.

Plans to build a new schoolhouse failed in the depression years, as the district could not get the necessary support from both the State and the Federal WPA funds.

It appears that full use of the school property was made by the Lacamas School Board as the Board minutes revealed that at one time the school property was leased at a small charge to a local resident to keep livestock during the summer months. Shortly before World War II the Board worked out an agreement with the U.S. Army to allow the Army to use the property for maneuverer during the summer months.

After its annexation in 1963 to the Bethel District, the Lacamas School changed from 1st to 8th grade school to a 1st to 6th grade organization. The kindergarten children were transported to Roy Elementary School and the 7th and 8th graders entered the Bethel Junior High.

In the fall of 1965, the 42 Lacamas students were transferred to the school at Roy and the Lacamas building was closed. According to former Bethel Superintendent

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# HISTORY OF BETHEL SCHOOL DISTRICT CONTINUED

John Milroy, this was done to “give both Roy and Lacamas school children a better education by eliminating combination classes. The joining of the two student bodies at one school has made it possible to provide a complete service program to these students, the same as those offered in all other Bethel schools. These programs include a library, remedial reading, speech, music and health services.”

## What the Future Holds for Bethel Schools

Planning is now underway for additional construction of buildings on all grade levels to keep up with the increasing enrollment in the Bethel area. Population surveys taken in the Seattle-Tacoma areas indicate that the increase of manufacturing and industrial projects will double the school enrollment in this area within the next few years.



In November of 1981 at a ceremony headlined by Washington State Senator Henry Jackson, Spanaway Lake High School opened its doors and became the second high school of the Bethel School District. The district had been looking for a location of a second high school and found it in the heart of the Spanaway community on 13th Avenue East and 168th St. East. The school started with just two grade levels, sophomores and juniors, allowing the seniors to graduate from the school they had been attending for the previous two years, Bethel High School. The first graduat-

ing class from Spanaway Lake came in June 1983.

The boundaries established that identified Spanaway Lake's student population contained a populace rich in diverse ethnic backgrounds and cultural differences. From its very beginnings, it was the goal of the schools administration to recognize and honor these diversities. Numerous ASB clubs were formed (Heritage, Native American) which helped to serve the purpose of educating the student body with the message that cultural and ethnic differences did exist, but that all clubs and students deserved respect. The success of this idea did not happen overnight, but over the years the students at Spanaway Lake learned to celebrate their differences while still remaining fiercely loyal to each other and their school. For many students, Spanaway Lake became the best place to go each day.

The opening of a school comes with many challenges, some more significant than others. Selecting school colors and its mascot were two of those decisions. A committee of community members was formed to complete the challenge. The colors came down to a decision between the colors of the relatively new Seattle Seahawk football franchise, or those of the more established Oakland Raiders. At the time, the Raiders were enjoying more success while the young Seahawks were still finding their way. In the end, the committee selected black, silver, and white. The mascot decision took on a more local approach. Some of the committee members recalled a newspaper that had its circulation in an area known as the prairie, the Roy area. The newspaper had an armored knight, a sentinel, as its header. After some discussion and knowing that this was an opportunity to preserve some of the area's history, the decision was made to make the sentinel the school's mascot.

Over the past 35 years there have been many success stories to come from Spanaway Lake. These stories cover a wide variety of areas which is further evidence that opportunities exist for everyone who attended the school. With grace and eloquence, Tami Forman became the school's first Daffodil Princess in 1982–83 with Emily Oliver becoming the 2015–16 princess and the Daffodil Pageant's current Queen. Judy Gillespie, a classified employee, successfully managed the Spanaway Lake Craft Fair for years raising thousands of dollars for the school's ASB Clubs and athletic department and thereby changing the school forever. Barnard Crouse's development of the Spanaway Lake Music Company set the vocal and performance standards for choir programs across the state. Lawrence Reed had tremendous success

working with students with special needs and entering them into the state's Special Olympics competition where his students won two state titles in basketball, 2005 and 2009, and over an eight year period (2005–2013) finished six times in the top three positions. Paul Greeley developed a dominant wrestling program in the late 90's which culminated in a hard fought state wrestling title in 2001 and continued to place in the top five in subsequent years. And, there were others who gained national recognition after graduating from Spanaway Lake. Jerry Cantrell, a former president of the choir club at SLHS, formed and became the lead guitarist, co-lead vocalist and main song writer for the rock band Alice in Chains. Derrike Cope, former baseball player at SLHS, became a professional race car driver and winner of the 1990 Daytona 500.

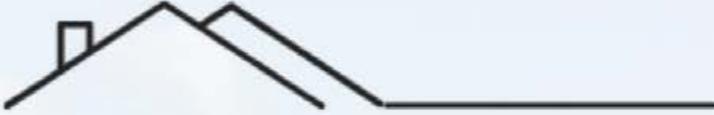
There are certainly many more success stories that have not been mentioned. As well, there are many more yet to come. Perhaps the most important success stories are those of the numerous graduates of Spanaway Lake High School that are solid, productive citizens working every day in their local communities.

Go Sentinels!!



Graham-Kapowsin High School opened its doors in the fall of 2005 with Jennifer Bethman as the principal and Mark Conrad as the Athletic Coordinator. Graham-Kapowsin began its tenure in the SPSL 4A where it continues to compete today. The school mascot for GKHS is the Eagles with Orange, Blue and White school colors. GKHS gained some of the history of the Kapowsin area as community members donated pictures, letterman jackets and awards from Kapowsin High School that closed doors in 1952 in a merge with Bethel High School. The mission of the building was to increase Advance Placement courses, college readiness and increase student attendance through meaningful relationships between staff and students.

Graham-Kapowsin opened its doors with many strong programs with state appearances in year one from the girl's swim team, the wrestling team and boys track. In year two, GK crowned their first individual state champions in wrestling (Brad Sweet) and boys track (Relay Team—Ryan Barrett, Ryan Ancheta, Matt Smith, Evan Schwantner & Nick Smith). The girl's basketball team was in the state playoffs in third year as two more individuals state champions were crowned in wrestling leading them to a second place finish as a team at state. The football team has been in playoffs for 10 years in a row playing in the semi-finals in the fall of 2014 and the volleyball team has made 5 appearances in the state tournament with the high of a 6th place finish in 2009. The girl's soccer team made the playoffs in the fall of 2008, representing the Bethel School District in the soccer playoffs for the first time in district history. With all the athletic success came several team and individual state academic champions from cheerleading to wrestling.



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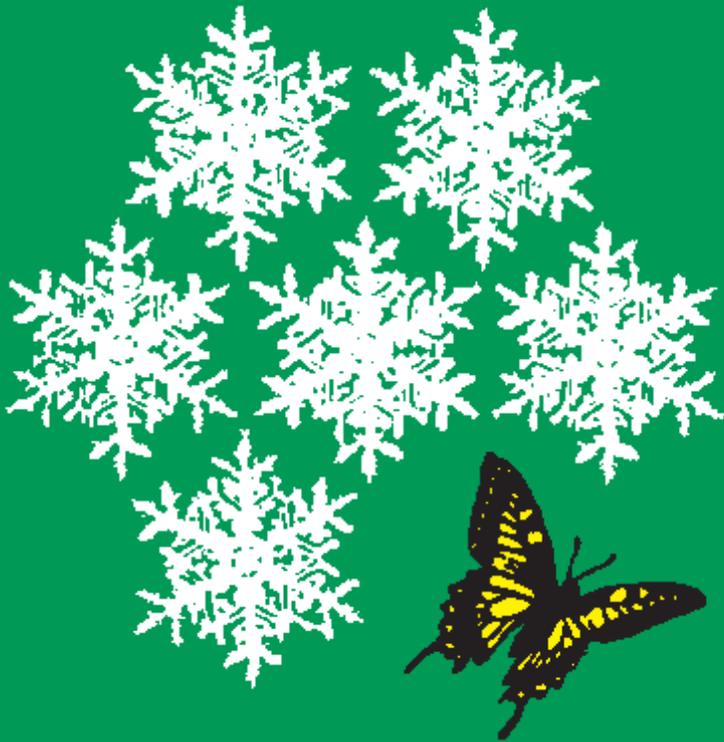


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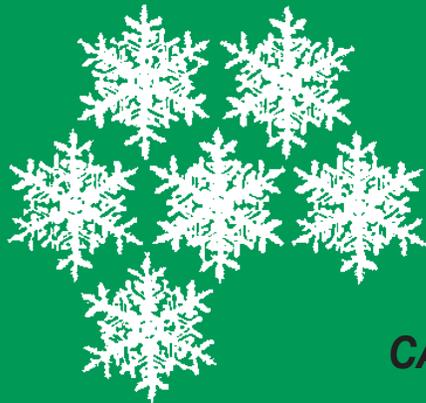
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