

Esquimalt High School Alumni Association

NEWSLETTER



SAVE THE DATE!

Save November 15th for our Annual General Meeting starting at 7:00 pm. The AGM will be a virtual Zoom meeting, so we can practice safe distancing and help prevent the spread of COVID-19. If you would like to participate in the Zoom meeting, either online or by phone, you **will need to register by emailing us at ehsalumni1959@gmail.com**. We will register your email and send out the log-in details closer to the meeting. All the meeting materials, such as previous AGM Minutes, will be on our webpage at <https://esquimalt.sd61.bc.ca/our-school/alumni/meetings-minutes/>.

Esquimalt High School Alumni Association AGM

Monday Nov. 15, 2021 – Virtual Meeting Via Zoom

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| 1. | Call to Order at 7:00 pm | Gary Moser, Moderator |
| 2. | Welcome from the School | Tina Pierik, Principal |
| 3. | Introduction of 2021 Scholarship winners | Lorna Reid/Dana Bjornsen |
| 4. | Approval of the Agenda | Gary Moser |
| 5. | Approval of Minutes from 2020 AGM | Marilyn McCrimmon |
| 6. | President's Report | Barry Scott |
| 7. | Treasurer's Report | Ryan Richard |
| | ➤ 2020/2021 Financial Statement & Review of Books | |
| | ➤ 2021/2022 Signing Officers & Person to do Review | |
| | ➤ Report on Scholarships | |
| 8. | Director's Reports | |
| | ➤ Membership | Ryan Richard |
| 9. | Elections of Officers | Marilyn McCrimmon |
| 10. | Closing Remarks/Adjournment (Next AGM is November 21, 2022) | |

Esquimalt High School Alumni Foundation AGM

(Immediately following Alumni Association AGM)

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| 1. | Call to Order | Gary Moser |
| 2. | Approval of the Agenda | Gary Moser |
| 3. | Approval of the Minutes from 2020 AGM | George Copley |
| 4. | President's Report | Dave Allen |
| 5. | Treasurer's Report | Ryan Richard |
| | ➤ 2020/2021 Financial Statement & Review of Books | |
| | ➤ 2021/2022 Signing Officers & Person to do Review | |
| | ➤ Report on Turf Field | |
| 6. | Fundraising Activities for 2021/2022 | Dave Allen |
| 7. | Elections of Officers | Marilyn McCrimmon |
| 8. | Adjournment (Next AGM is November 21, 2022) | |

The Theory of Relativity

A review by Marilyn McCrimmon

Esquimalt High School students, directed by music teacher Kaehlen Allison, put on a highly entertaining and at times, very moving, performance of the musical, *The Theory of Relativity* at the end of the 2020-21 school year. It's a clever show, and the EHS students made it their own, with lots of humour, some poignant moments, and superb singing throughout. This musical has been described as a collection of stories highlighting themes of reflection, resilience, growth and interconnectedness, a very timely theme.

"The show must go on," was never more true. While the show did take place in the EHS theatre, nothing else was business as usual. I emailed the director to ask about the challenges she faced mounting this production. Kaehlen responded, "The first challenge I faced was choosing a show that could be performed in a variety of different ways given the ever-changing nature of the health and safety protocols. Students learned how to sing and express themselves through masks, to maintain appropriate spacing at all times, and to build deep connections despite all of the physical barriers. As a way to ensure proper physical distancing, the students were split into four different groups of roughly 10 people that met once a week. We could only sing in each space for a maximum of 30 minutes, before needing to let the room air out. The whole cast would only come together about once a month on a Friday evening so that we could use multiple spaces in the school. One of the biggest challenges overall was deciding how to have everyone involved in the show when we could not fit the entire cast on the stage with enough distance to sing. The choice was between including everyone and not singing on stage, or only having small groups on stage. With the assistance of our videographers from Paper Heart Films, we decided to pre-record the large group vocals 10 days ahead of filming the show. Although the students were wearing masks they needed to learn how to express their character fully while not being able to sing in full voice during the show. Although this was extremely difficult, it provided a unique recording experience for our students."

Ticket holders had a choice of five nights at the end of May and early June to view the recorded production online. As I sat down at home to enjoy this unique and powerful performance on my computer screen, I quickly forgot that the students were masked and that I wasn't sitting in a theatre – I was truly captivated. The actors spoke clearly and passionately, and they sang with gusto and emotion, as if having a mask over their mouths was no big deal. I'm sure I wasn't the only viewer laughing out loud at times and applauding from my seat at home.

The closing number, which Kaehlen says describes intergenerational relationships and the interconnectedness of us as human being, offered a delightful surprise to viewers when a mosaic of the faces of Esquimalt alumni, previous music teachers, family members and staff members appeared on the viewing screen. Kaehlen explained, "I decided to create the ESQ Community Virtual Choir Project as a way to represent the connective tissue that supports our students, our program, and our school." From my vantage point as an audience member, I would say, "mission accomplished."

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Bravo to all the actors, to the director, and to the many support people who worked together to produce a memorable performance of *The Theory of Relativity*. Kaehlen called the cast and crew “humble, resilient and grateful students.” In spite of the ongoing challenges of health and safety protocols, as well as long rehearsals, she said they never complained. The musical was a true testament to the heroic efforts of EHS staff and the ongoing excellence of EHS students.

The EHS Alumni Association and Foundation lend a helping hand

In spite of valiant efforts to promote the show, the Musical Theatre production was left with a shortfall after the online showings of *The Theory of Relativity*.

The *Alumni Association* and the *Alumni Foundation* stepped in to lend a hand with a combined donation of \$1,400. Individual donations, held in trust by the school, rounded off the required amount to a total of \$2,000.

Alumni Association and the *Alumni Foundation* Directors were unanimous in voting for the donation. After all, “the show must go on.”

Capstone Project

by Tina Pierik, Principal

The Capstone Project is a culminating Career Education task for all our graduates at Esquimalt High School. It is an inquiry-based project where students can explore and investigate current and new passions, and/or career options and post-graduation plans. Every grade 12 student has a volunteer Capstone Coach that they meet with throughout their graduation year where they discuss project progress and future goals. There is a final event that takes place called the Gala (this year it is May 11) where each student can share their learning journey with their peers and community.

RibFest Returns

by Dave Allen

This past September we saw the return of the Esquimalt RibFest to Bullen Park. Although the weather was wet and windy on Friday and Saturday, it did not seem to deter the crowds or dampen the enthusiasm during this three-day family-friendly activity. The donations received at the front gate by the Esquimalt Fire Fighters for their Charitable Foundation were a clear indication that the over 40,000 patrons were very glad to see the return of RibFest. The money received by the Fire Fighters was just over \$60,000, making this the largest amount in the





nine-year history of the event. The great thing about these funds is that 100% of them go directly to a variety of groups in the community, many of which support programs for kids.

The Alumni Association was again part of RibFest, assisting with the set-up and take-down. As well, 15 Alumni

members were involved in the Langos booth over the three days. The Association, in partnership with the Rainbow Kitchen and the Esquimalt High Leadership Class, was able to make just over \$5400 through the sale of langos, pop and water. The sales on Friday and Saturday were steady with Sunday's numbers among the highest on record for RibFest. The 45 volunteers from the three groups provided the work force for the weekend. Each group was responsible for having 2 or 3 workers for three hour shifts during the three days. The interaction between the students from EHS, the volunteers from the Rainbow Kitchen and the members of the Alumni Association

again proved very rewarding for all those involved. Many of these people were participants in previous RibFests and voiced their willingness to return again next year. Any members of the Alumni Association who would like to volunteer for RibFest 2022 next September 9th-11th, please contact the Association through the website ehsalumni1959@gmail.com.



Donations Update

by Ryan Richard, Alumni Association/Foundation Treasurer

At our August Alumni Association Executive meeting, directors discussed how we could offer another method of payment for members to make donations to the Alumni Association in order to help with upcoming projects. We are pleased to offer the option to send funds directly to us by using your bank's Interac e-Transfer system. The email we are going to be using for it is: ehsalumniassociation.payments@gmail.com.

You will need to fill out the donation form and then send it to us by mail or by scanning, so that you can be issued an Income Tax receipt for donations over \$20. The form also allows you to inform us where you would like your donation directed.

For our 2020/2021 fiscal year, we would like to give thanks to all Alumni members with their generous donations of almost \$4,500 that supported school related activities (roughly \$500), the scholarship fund (roughly \$2,500, and the Turf Field fund (roughly \$1,500).

If you have any questions please feel free to email me at our main alumni email address.

"Ode to Bill Knowles"

by Dennis Fea, Class of 1959



Bill Knowles and I met in kindergarten at Vic West Elementary School in 1946 and reconnected a few years later at Lampson St. Elementary School.

Bill and his sister Valerie grew up in the family home on Park Terrace by Memorial Park.

From early days we both enjoyed a friendship with Grant McFarland and Angus Mitchell, a friendship that lasted through multi years - the Esquimalt folk are more than special.

I thought I would share some stories and events, since our class of '59 and other mates seem to be retiring.

Bill enjoyed lacrosse, basketball and hockey among other sports and activities.

Our friend Dick Lowen was the manager of the Dockers basketball team in 58, and Bill took over the team duty the following year. Even then he was a great organizer.

Bill's parents, Jim and Hazel, purchased some property way out in North Saanich where they built a lovely home in the late fifties. Bill attended grade twelve at North Saanich High School which is now North Saanich Middle School.

In 1960 or 1961 Bill, Dick Lowen and Malcolm Mitchell moved over to Vancouver. I moved over a few months later and was lucky enough to move into their apartment. Bill was attending Sure Pass College to complete his grade twelve. His mother thought his grades were suffering due to the social graces of our group. He moved to a room and board location.

I am sure he missed our Kraft dinner and beans, but we missed his little Austin car since none of us had vehicles. I don't know if he ever got his French 20. He would not be the only one.

Bill's early employment in Sidney was at Slegg Lumber. From there, he got into real estate sales. He moved to Dom Hanley and Associates and then had a Century 21 Franchise for many years.

He married Sharon Hanon in the mid-sixties and they had a son, Jim, and a daughter, Regan, who have always been close to our family. They still call us uncle and aunt. Bill always had a free spirit. One of their first purchases for a young family was going to be a chesterfield set. Upon arriving at the sellers, somehow Bill came home with a Houston boat instead. This became Mr. Green, as did the pickup truck. Sharon and Bill built a beautiful home next to his parents' property. This became known as the farm. When I moved back to Victoria in the late 70's, my wife and later our girls, had wonderful times there, especially chasing our pigs and sheep which they were raising for us. The ones that escaped or passed away were never his? Guess where the city pigs came from - Dr. Dan B? Over the years, Gus, Grant, Bill and I enjoyed many fishing trips together, as well as the stories which stretched over 40 years.

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In 2010 or so Bill suffered a massive heart attack while out walking his dog, and he was lucky to be saved by a neighbour who performed CPR. It was really touch and go, but Bill pulled through. We had planned a Panama Canal Cruise with some friends and Bill wanted to come, but was concerned about the insurance. He asked his doctor what he would do and was told, "Bill it is up to you". Because we were such good friends, we told him that if he died on board, we would bury him at sea. In the end, we had a great time and the group even went para sailing behind a speed boat in Mexico. Bill said this was on his bucket list. He passed away a few years later.

Bill ended his real estate career with D.F.H. He formed many friends in the industry and he was thought of highly. He was on the Real Estate Board for many years, a job he thoroughly enjoyed. Some of the early group members had a gourmet cooking club. Bill was a great cook and loved to tell stories and the odd joke.

He withdrew from sales after 50 years of continual service, one of the longest serving agents in B.C. His good friend Judy and some associates arranged a retirement drive by at his home which he really enjoyed. This was great. Bill knew he had inoperable lung cancer, but somehow kept an open mind and loved life, his family, and friends. He was still helping me on my boat project up until the very end last spring.



Reunions

by Robert Laidler, Director of Reunions
(Class of 1969)

Bill Knowles front and center holding Grad '59 Sign

Are you planning a reunion for your grad class? If so you should know that the EHS Alumni Association is ready and able to assist you in the promotion of your event. We can list the date and details of reunions on the Esquimalt High School Alumni Association Facebook page and aid in reserving school venues, such as the gym, cafeteria, or theatre, if required. We also can provide organizational details from past reunions that may assist you in planning your own event. In addition, we can loan out display panels, EHS signs, school annuals and items from the Heritage Registry for use at your reunion. As we move past the current pandemic, we expect more grad year groups will be eager to organize reunions. So let us know about yours. We'd love to help you out. Please email us at ehsalumni1959@gmail.com.