



ESQUIMALT HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI

ASSOCIATION

SPRING 2025 NEWSLETTER



EHS SCHOOL UPDATE

Hello Esquimalt Alumni!

As we turn the final pages of another busy school year, I want to take a moment to share some highlights. This year, our focus has been on Community, Connection and (school) Culture, prioritizing events and initiatives that help to build relationships, a sense of belonging, and reinforce those ideals and expectations that make Esquimalt High School such a special place to learn and work. Whether in the classroom, on the field, on the stage, or in the community, we continue to strive to create an inclusive, welcoming and safe environment for our students to excel.

While we have had many impressive accomplishments this year, I'd like to highlight the spirit of volunteerism and community service that I would suggest is at the very heart of our school. This begins early in the school year with individual students, teams, clubs and staff mobilizing to support the Esquimalt community tradition of RibFest. In support of the Esquimalt Fire Fighters Charitable Foundation, students and alumni come together to help create a fun filled event that ultimately raises money for a variety of school-based programs, and most importantly for our turf "field of dreams"!

This Esquimalt High spirit of giving back continues with fundraisers and community projects throughout the year with the support of our Music Programs, Leadership classes and extracurricular teams and clubs. Our Gingerbread Fundraiser for CFA Santa's Anonymous Society not only fills our halls with the sweet smell of gingerbread, but it makes a meaningful difference for many families in need.

We will be challenging our Grads of 2025 to continue to demonstrate this "Esquimalt spirit" as they venture into the next chapter of their lives, just as many of you, our Alumni, have!

Finally, a huge thank you to our Alumni group for their ongoing support this year. Your support, wisdom and guidance is invaluable. I look forward to our continued work together in the 2025-2026 school year!

Sarah Garr
Principal



Principal Sarah Garr and EHS mascot, Ollie the Otter, get ready for Easter.

EHS Turf Field Update

The fund for the proposed EHS all-weather turf field just grew by another \$65,000 thanks to a donation from the Esquimalt Firefighters' Charitable Foundation after another successful RibFest back in September.

Tony Trozzo from Victoria News (<https://www.vicnews.com/community/esquimalts-ribfest-forks-over-65000-towards-all-weather-turf-field-7849259#>) and Al Ferraby from CFX, interviewed Tom Woods, the long-time chairman of the Esquimalt RibFest Society and an Esquimalt Alumni member, about the generous donation and the plans for the turf field. The resulting news article (see above link) and radio feature were welcome publicity for this ongoing campaign.



There is now almost \$540,000 in the turf field fund at the school, thanks to the sizeable yearly RibFest donations, along with donations by alumni members and donations of leftover funds contributed from reunions. The all-weather turf field is the main fund-raising focus of the EHS Alumni Committee, especially because Esquimalt is the only municipality without such a facility. The project has the backing of the Esquimalt Municipality as well as Gorge Soccer and Songhees First Nation.

In the Victoria News (Tony Trozzo), Tom Woods was quoted as saying, "This is a part of our annual donation from the Esquimalt firefighters, through Ribfest. About 30 per cent of the kids that participate in Gorge Soccer are from Esquimalt, and those kids get moved out of the community when the fields get wet from rain."

Mark the dates of September 5, 6 and 7, 2025 on your calendar. RibFest can always use more volunteers and of course we hope that you will attend for one or more of the days. Great ribs, great entertainment and a great cause.

From the Archives – Curling at EHS

EHS grad Torrey Gillott (grad '68) recently donated his Esquimalt curling sweater to the EHS Archives. Thanks Torrey!

We welcome donations. If you have a treasured EHS keepsake that you would like to donate to the EHS Archives, please email us at ehsalumni1959@gmail.com.

Curling has a strong history in Esquimalt in general, and at EHS in particular.

Many of you will remember curling in an inter-school mixed league. It was competitive but also a lot of fun.

The games were after school at the Esquimalt Curling Rink and you might remember piling into the back of a fellow curler's pickup truck for a lift down to the curling rink for start time. (That might have been before seat belts were mandated.)

But, how many Alumni know that EHS hosted a Curling Academy for 5 years, from 2008 to 2013?

It was the result of a few fortuitous circumstances.



Victoria hosted the World's Curling Championships here in 2005, resulting in a profit to the curling community. The money was used to establish a curling performance centre for all ages at the Victoria Curling Club. Cindy Tucker was the head coach. From there, it was decided that Victoria should have a school-based curling academy, so the performance centre staff considered the various high schools and their proximity to a curling rink. It came down to EHS or Vic High, and that's where EHS teacher Trish Fortier came in. Not only was she a PE and Athletic Leadership teacher, but she was also an avid and accomplished curler herself, so it was a natural fit for her to oversee the school-based Curling Academy.

The EHS Curling Academy began in 2008. Cindy Tucker coached the students and Trish assisted with the coaching, at the same time handling the necessary administration and paperwork for the school-based program. The first year drew 8 students, increasing up to a high of 22 students one year. All ages, from grades 9 to 12, were welcome and a couple of international students even came to Esquimalt specifically for the curling academy. Trish said there was one from Japan and one from Hungary.

The Curling Academy students played in the inter-school curling league and they also participated in local bonspiels and junior bonspiels in Vancouver. The student from Hungary returned home after two years where she apparently continued to curl. Some of the students went on to play at the Canada Winter Games and the provincials, and one student went to the nationals.

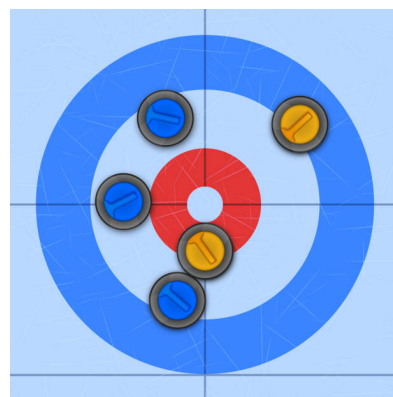
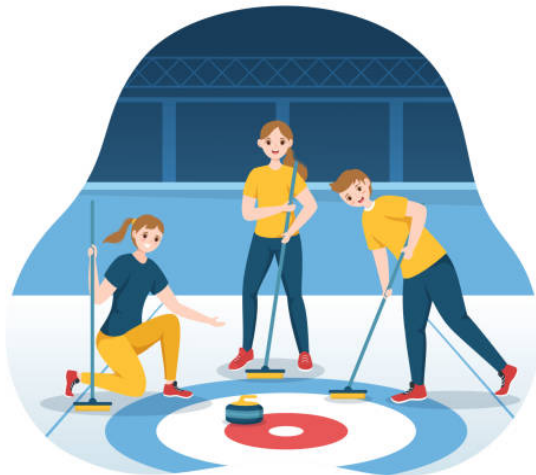
When Victoria hosted the World Men's Curling, the Curling Academy kids were the flag bearers – a very proud honour for the EHS students.

Trish retired from teaching in 2012, but she assisted with the Curling Academy for one more year in her retirement. A designated teacher lent her name to the league while Trish and Cindy continued to coach the students.

The Curling Academy has been gone since 2013.

Trish established some lifelong relationships with those young curlers, attending one student's wedding and her university graduation, where she finished with her teaching qualifications.

Perhaps there will be another Curling Academy down the road.



News from the EHS Docker



SHARING OUR STORIES OF SUCCESS

New Students to Represent Esquimalt!



Congratulations to **Shaye Walker** (Grade 11) and **Glory Wolstenhome** (Grade 10) on their selection to the **District Student Advisory Council**.

In this important role, they will represent Esquimalt High by meeting with student leaders from across SD61 and engaging in monthly discussions with the Superintendent on district-wide topics and initiatives. This is a wonderful opportunity to develop leadership skills, connect with peers from other schools, and contribute meaningfully to the future of our school community.

Challenge Olympics 2025



Esquimalt Challenge students grades 9-12 attended the annual Challenge Olympics hosted by Mount Douglas (PKOLS) Secondary.

The games are a unique blend of physical skill and intellectual prowess (like capture the flag dodgeball with trivia.) The two schools tied, with Esquimalt taking home the trophy for outstanding teamwork and commitment!



“Legally Blonde: The Musical”

An Esquimalt High Musical Theatre Company Production



The Cast and Crew

Esquimalt High School Musical Theatre students took to the stage this spring to present their version of *Legally Blonde: The Musical*, a story about Elle, a sorority sister who follows her boyfriend to Harvard law school. Although she has marriage on her mind, Elle ends up realizing that when she is true to herself, and believes in herself, a new world of possibilities opens up to her. Such a great message for young people.

It takes a very committed community hundreds of hours to mount such a performance. Over 60 students were involved, and they were backed up by a live band of community members. And, two adorable and well-behaved dogs – Booeey and Fergus – wrangled by Joey Kirk and Ernancy Latorre, obediently shared the stage with the actors. Black-costumed stage crew members efficiently moved the set pieces around between scenes.

Lead actors included Natalie Beilin as Elle, Malana Ilao as Paulette, Martha Pearman as Vivienne, and Amelia Sproule as Emmett. This talented foursome led the way on a stage full of young actors who could sing, dance and act – triple threats. Like most high school productions, the performance was enhanced by the young performers' sheer energy and enthusiasm, and obvious love of what they are doing. Many of the young actors displayed a natural flair for comedy combined with an exquisite sense of timing, much to the delight of the appreciative audience. The laughs and applause were well earned.

Fine Arts Department Head Kaehlen Allison directed the musical. She was assisted by Technical Director Kristi Martinsen, and Assistant Director Kyra Kristmanson. Dyana Sonik-Henderson, Kaehlen Allison and Eleanor McKenty shared the choreography duties.



Long & McQuade and Irene's Bakery were both show sponsors.

Broken Rhythms Society Victoria, led by their Artistic Director Dyana Sonik-Henderson, donated many hours of dance and movement instruction to the cast.

While many in the audience were friends and family of the young actors, there were also plenty of community members who came to enjoy a very highly entertaining show.

If you missed this year's show, be sure to keep an eye on the school calendar (and this newsletter) for next year to get your tickets to the show. You are guaranteed an entertaining afternoon or evening.

EHS Reunions

Hi to EHS Class of '71 classmates:

It's time to have our annual EHS Class of '71 pub night. We had a great turnout last year so we have planned this year's pub night at the Log House Pub once again. We have made a reservation for Friday June 13, 2025 at 6:00 PM at the Log House Pub.

We need to let the pub know the approximate number, so we would appreciate it if you would let us know if you will be attending by Friday June 6, 2025 by emailing hollandhouse@shaw.ca.

Pass this message to our classmates and anyone else who would like to join us. We always have a great turnout so thanks for showing up. We hope to see you this year.

Party on!
EHS Class of '71 Reunion Committee



To the Class of 1975:

The EHS Class of 1975 is planning to hold their 50-year reunion in September. Anybody who knows people from that grad year or is interested in attending, please contact Gail Loucks at: Gail_Loucks@hotmail.com. Thanks. Hope to see you there.

EHS Distinguished Alumni Committee Update

A “Distinguished Alumni Consultation Committee” began work this spring in anticipation of formally recognizing some of Esquimalt High School’s accomplished alumni in the near future.

Committee members Gary Moser, George Copley, Bob Laidler, Sherri Robinson, and Mike Thompson came up with some Guiding Principles and Recognition Criteria for the EHS Alumni Association.

Guiding Principles

1. Nominees may be recognized posthumously (consider a minimum of two).
2. Nominees will/should have graduated 20 years prior to their consideration.
3. Nominees would be considered if they attended EHS even though they may not have graduated.
4. Nominations will recognize a balance of candidates.
5. Nominations should respect an alumni candidate from the Indigenous Community if possible.
6. Nominees will have demonstrated an honourable character supported by credible bio/background.
7. Nominees will be considered from a broad perspective (public service, academics, business, athletics, entertainment).

Recognition Criteria:

1. Contribution Category – Nominees will:

- a. Have demonstrated success/excellence in their field.
- b. Have established reputation and recognition by peers in their field.

2. Community Impact – Nominees will:

- a. Have contributed to EHS/Esquimalt/Victoria area post-graduation.
- b. Have contributed to the betterment/advancement of their specialty or discipline.



The committee also put forward a tentative list of names. Executive members were very grateful to these volunteers for their time and commitment, and the excellent work.

Using the list provided, the EHSAA executive will select a number of accomplished alumni members to formally recognize, and this first group of inductees will be announced this fall. The first ceremony to induct the first group will take place in the spring of 2026.

The alumni executive plans to hold these induction ceremonies every three years. And, we also plan to invite nominations for future inductees from all alumni as well.

Stay tuned for more information in future newsletters.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Esquimalt High School Alumni Association & Esquimalt High School Alumni Foundation
847 Colville Road
Victoria, BC V9A 4N9
ehsalumni1959@gmail.com

To become an active member of the Esquimalt High School Alumni Association & Alumni Foundation you must be a former student or staff member and make a **one-time** membership payment of **\$10**.

Payment Options:

1. **Cheque** - please make it out to ***Esquimalt High School Alumni Association*** and send to the address above and include the completed membership form.

OR

2. **Interac e-Transfer** - please use our email address: ehsalumniassociation.payments@gmail.com to send it. When you send your transfer, please also send us your security answer for us to secure the payment. Also, please print off the form and mail the completed form to the address above.

Full Name:

Maiden Name

(if different than above):

Years at Esquimalt:

(Example: 1998-2002)

Student/Staff:

Full Mailing Address:

Email:

Privacy Policy

Personal information provided to the Esquimalt High School Alumni Association and Esquimalt High School Alumni Foundation will be used and disclosed only to support the purposes of the societies; i.e., to provide financial and other support to the school and its students, to facilitate reunions and communications amongst Esquimalt High School Alumni and to document the history of the school. By giving your email address you will subscribe to our emailing of notices and information on events.