



Cardinal Chatter

Newsletter of the Whittier High School Alumni Association and Educational Foundation Winter 2020

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK:



WHSAAFE
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Points of Interest

- WHS Turns 120!!!
- Mark Gotts Retires
- 50's Lead in Decades Membership Drive
- WHS holds Virtual Homecoming
- Wally Leonard passes
- 2021 Reunions???
- Zooming Instruction
- What's in a Name: WHS Legacies

Mr. Mark Gotts, class of '75, recently retired after 21 years of teaching at Whittier High School. He was beloved by his students and will long be remembered for his "Great Books" course. It is said of him that he was able to bring literature alive in his classroom. While watching his retirement message on the Whittier High School Alumni Association Facebook page, I was reminded of another such English teacher from my senior year of '66-'67.

His name was Richard Newton and I was fortunate to be in his 5th period Modern Literature class upstairs in the Administration Building. I thought he was the most sophisticated man I had ever met. He was witty, passionate, brilliant, and he could teach. Like Mr. Gotts, literature came to life in his class-

room. During his lectures and our discussions which often took place in the Quad, he encouraged us to think critically and treated us with respect, like adults. He had us read books which were frowned upon by the Board of Education like Hesse's *Demian*, and Knowles' *A Separate Peace*. We had to buy these books on our own and we were told to always have them covered. He believed these novels had something to say to us and he was willing to risk possible reprimand by having us read them.

One day after class, he pulled me aside and asked if I would be going to college after high school. I told him I was and he said, "Good, we need men like you." I wasn't sure whether he said that to me because I was intelligent, ... doubtful, or because he saw the

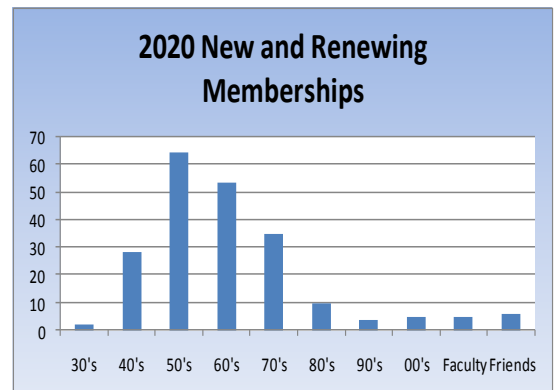
need for more Latinos to attend college. I was honored for whatever the reason. He recognized something in me and I thanked him.

I retired in 2014, after 40 years of teaching high school Government. Mr. Newton was always my guide and example and I always tried to conduct my classes with the same enthusiasm, passion, and love of learning that he shared with us so many years ago. He was my mentor and guiding light and I honor him for making a difference in my life. — Ben Meza

Decades Membership Drive

We gained 78 new members out of 212 memberships since August 2020. Our Decades Class Competition is currently led by the 50's with 64 memberships, followed closely by the 60's with 53. Please use the enclosed envelope to join and support WHSAAEF and your class decade, or join online at: www.whittierhighalumni.org

Visit our [Cardinal Store](#) while on our website for items that display your WHS spirit



120 YEARS OF WHITTIER HIGH SCHOOL



Bailey Street School the Home of WHS 1900-1905



1923 WHS Auditorium and namesakes of existing facilities. WHS Faculty/Whittier Mayors: Claxton, Mele, Lopez, and Alumnus Donor William C. Gordon

Buildings Come and Buildings Go - Once a Cardinal Always a Cardinal

Whittier High School has a storied history that can only be appreciated 120 years later by considering what we have lost and gained and retained. While only the bell of the Bailey Street School remains of the first home of WHS, the commitment of our community to build, preserve and protect our heritage is as strong as ever. WHS pays tribute to that heritage and its champions in the naming of its facilities. The Myron Claxton Science Building, the Jack Mele Baseball

Field, and the Vic Lopez (Class of 46) Auditorium are noteworthy examples as all three are former faculty who also served as mayors of the City of Whittier. Another noteworthy namesake is alumnus Willie Gordon (Class of 55) whose generous donations of more than \$300,000 help to rehabili-

tate and restore the library and several campus murals. The Gordon Library Lobby is now the home of the WHS Hall of Fame where we honor many Cardinal Alumni whose achievements in the world are worthy of our praise and admiration. This year's honorees Ben Chu (Faculty 1966-2004), Arvle Dedmon '38 (deceased), Eleanor Bewley '65, Cindy Oeh Barbee '73, Colette Marcellin '77, and Thomas J. O'Hare '80 will be inducted on April, 11th, 2021

"Cardinal Alumni whose achievements in the world are worthy of our praise and admiration."

Principal's Update

Greetings, Cardinal Alumni!

I hope you are all staying safe and healthy during these challenging times. In this update, I wanted to give you an idea of what life is like for our students at WHS during the COVID-19 pandemic. As of this writing, our instruction continues 100% online with no instruction on campus, as with all high schools in LA County. In September, we hoped to have students back on campus by Thanksgiving. Instead, our students will complete the entire first semester online with hopes of in-person return in January at the earliest.

WHS has transitioned to a quarter system in which students are now taking three classes

at a time. In October, they completed Period 1-3-5 classes and are now halfway through Period 2-4-6 classes. A typical student attends three 70-minute Zoom classes from 8:30 AM to 12:30 PM. Many teachers instruct their classes from home, but 10-20 teachers may be working from their classrooms at WHS on any given day.

Our teachers have done an extraordinary job of converting their lessons for instruction on Zoom. They facilitate discussions, with students either speaking aloud or writing in the chat room system. And they distribute and collect assignments using Google Classroom. I have been consistently amazed at how much they resemble normal school.

Nothing can replace having students in a classroom. Their relationships are not as deep, interactions not as natural, and the level of accountability (to observe and urge students through their work) is not the same. Even so, I am proud of the entire WHS community for making the absolute best of a very difficult situation. I can say with confidence that you would be proud as well. As always, thank you for your ongoing love and support of Whittier High School.—Tim Liggett

Remembering Wally Leonard 1920-2020

Beloved teacher Frank "Wally" Leonard passed away on November 6 at the age of 100. A World War II veteran, Wally earned the Purple Heart and Bronze Star for European service. Returning to Southern California, he earned degrees from Pomona College and USC and served on the Whittier High faculty as a teacher, tennis coach and counselor from 1951-1981. In his later years, Wally was known for holding court at Steak 'n Stein. Wally lived independently until age 95, had his humor and grace up until the end, and was surrounded by love and care.



FRANK "WALLY" LEONARD

Wally's alumni friends are very interested in endowing a scholarship in his name and are accepting donations to that end.

To donate, either use the enclosed envelope and add a note along with your check, or visit whittierhighalumni.org/donate-form/, select "Scholarships to 12 graduating seniors" under "Where Should Your Donation Be Spent?" and write "Wally Leonard Scholarship Fund" in the Card Details section at the bottom.

You can also use the "Contact Us" function at whittierhighalumni.org/contact-us/ to let us know to direct your donation to the Wally Leonard Scholarship Fund.

Have you sent in your **WHSAAEF \$20.00 Membership Fee** celebrating **WHS's 120 Years?**

- Join the Decades Membership Drive Competition by joining today, or consider these other possibilities.
- Give a membership as a gift to a family member or a friend like **Danny Orr** ('68) did for **Suzie Moradian!**
- Sign up for automatic giving like **Frank McKenna** ('73), who donates \$20 every month!
- Donate seasonally like 42 other members who mail us a check with each Chatter they receive.

CLASS REUNION CONTACTS:

1961 Class Info Contact: Ed Keesling 760 365 8193 ededkeesling@aol.com

1970 Class Info 50 yr+1 Reunion Oct. 16, 2021 at Mission Square Italian Restaurant, 13033 Penn St #100, Whittier, CA 90602.

Updates on Facebook- "Whittier High School Class of 1970 50th Reunion".

Please send updated contact info to John Lucero at 1970WhittierHS@gmail.com or Janice Lanham Zolnekoff at whittierhigh1970@aol.com or call her at 562-556-4000.

1971 Class Info Plans for 50th reunion in 2021 are in the works.

Please email whittierhigh1971@gmail.com or Jenelle Sparks Miller

at jenellemiller.edd@gmail.com to help or make suggestions.

Check out Facebook (Whittier High Class of 1971)

1981 Class Info Contact Alfonso.R.Luna@hotmail.com, 775-505-4561 or contact

Darlene Acosta, 626-343-0048, acostads@yahoo.com or Darlene Galindo

dhankinsonsavon@gmail.com about reunion coming up Spring 2021 at the

Doubletree Hotel in Uptown Whittier. Check us out on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/groups/108460449234850/, or on Reunion Manager:

http://reunionmanager.net/reunion_registration_mobile.php?class_id=10348

1991 Class Info Contact Tatia Tokunaga Oshidari senior class president

at tatia33@yahoo.com

2001 Class Info Facebook "WHS 2001 reunion". Contact Jerri Robinson-

Garcia 909-242-9933, jerrigarcia33@gmail.com

2011 Class Info Contact Cindy Ontiveros, your senior class president.

Lost and Enduring Legacies of our Alma Mater: Whittier High School 1906, Tunnel Construction 1935, Marian Wilson Hodge Fountain Dedicated 1949



WHSAAEF

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WHITTER HIGH SCHOOL CELEBRATES 120 YEARS

In conjunction with Whittier High's virtual homecoming, in October, WHS's ASB collaborated with WHSAAEF Historian Charles Bennett ('07, seen below) and more than 40 other alumni to create a series of videos highlighting the history of WHS on its 120th anniversary. View them on our Alumni Association Facebook Page at:

www.facebook.com/whittierhighalumni

or on the Whittier High School Facebook Page at:

www.facebook.com/whs1900

Look for postings in late October (19-25) to find them.

Among them is series of "Once a Cardinal, Always a Cardinal" videos sharing greetings spanning nearly 70 years of WHS alumni grouped by decade.



Historical videos cover a wide range of topics including:

- [The Bailey School Bell](#): A remnant of WHS's first home.
- [William C Gordon Library Lobby](#): Home of WHS Alumni Hall of Fame with inductee photos and displays for notables such as Richard Nixon, John Lasseter, and George Buehler.
- [Construction of the Philadelphia Street tunnel](#) under the tracks of Pacific Electric railcars.
- [35th Anniversary of Back to the Future Day](#): a synopsis of locations featured in the *Back to the Future* movies.
- [WHS Namesakes](#): featuring drone footage of WHS facilities named after notable Cardinals and Faculty.

Join these Lifetime Alumni Association Members:

Tom August ('45), Brian & Patricia Beck ('61), Cathie (Moon) Brown ('49), Elizabeth (Snyder) Carroll ('48), Stephanie Cuevas (2009), Richard and Billie Deihl ('46), John & Robin Dewitt ('53), Ray & Joan Dezember ('52), Billy Eordekian ('75), Walter Garrett ('51), Marjorie Johana (Moon) Garrison ('48), Stu Gothhold ('52), Roderick Hills ('48), Don Jenkins ('49), Louise Kempf ('54), Stephen Koelle ('70), Alan & Sylvia Lippincott ('79), Dr. Joan Meister ('60), Jack & Erlene Mele (Faculty), Jerome Montgomery ('52), Dr. Daniel Orr ('68), Louise (Johnson) Pascale ('60), John and Laurie Welsh Peel ('74 &'80), William Prentiss ('72), Dr. Francine Rippy ('56), Judge Carlos Rodriguez ('55), Joyce (Wall) Schilling ('56), Ivannia Soto ('94), Sandy (Sanchez) Thorstenson ('73), Richard Welsh ('74), Bill Welsh ('70), Bill & Jan (Slater) Lopez Wood ('41 &'47)
