

Photo Courtesy
Dave Talton

ST. JOHNS REVIEW

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Local students hand build & launch boats

George Middle School in St. Johns is the site of a newly funded STEM program (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) that engages 7th grade math and science students in a practical application—hand building a full-size rowboat.

On August 2, the students formally christened, launched and rowed two hand-built boats at Cathedral Park as part of the annual Willamette River Revival. Event-goers, parents, teachers, and supporters assembled on the beach to witness the students' accomplishment.

George has been named a STEM transformation school and is starting a four-year process to increase hands-on learning in science and math. STEM teacher and grant writer, Michelle York, wrote a grant that allowed the school to join with the Wind & Oar Boat School to engage students in a "boat day" once a week and two days a week during the summer SUN school. The eventual goal of the STEM program



Above:
George Middle School students collaborating on their boat building.



Left:
The students and teachers ready the boat for launch at Cathedral Park beach. See their success on page 5.

is to support teachers in creating a permanent shift in culture at the school to make hands-on learning part of classrooms.

Wind & Oar Boat School's founder, Peter Crim and Jann Lane, the development director say the boat-building program is

about much more than the boat. The non-profit program engages students in problem solving, critical thinking, collaboration, creativity and communication—all real world skills. According to Michelle, Wind & Oar was chosen because it offers a high teacher to student ratio and steps to a tangible outcome.

George math teacher, Don Rossington says he reviews math skills while the students use concepts such as volume, ratios, scale, geometry, and accuracy to apply to boat building at two or three stations in the boat building room.

Science teacher, Darci Morgan, says students learn the importance of accuracy and apply the scientific inquiry process to activities such as a volume exercise where each group is given a single piece of foil and told to design a small boat that can carry as many golf balls as possible. Students start

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"Local Students"

Not Too Long Ago: The RHS 50th Year Reunion

The Roosevelt High School's class of 1965 recently had their 50th year reunion. There are so many things I want to say; so much reflection and emotion, it's difficult for me to know where to begin. I guess I'll start by admitting I'm becoming a hopeless romantic and as I age, find myself in a place of echoing ghosts and depending on the circumstances, that can be either good or bad. For now, I'll try and confine my thinking and processing to our RHS reunion.

At first, I was luke-warm about the whole affair. Maybe I feared what I knew was coming. I understood how I'd think, and I recognized how I process time and ponder things of the past. As the event approached, I felt an ever increasing tug of passionate gravity; it was if I were being sucked into a time warp, being drawn to spots and events I knew I couldn't avoid. It wasn't that I wanted to miss the affair; it was the knowledge of how I'd react and what I'd see. It wasn't the reunion I feared; but my personal reaction to the hugeness of what I was about to be a part of and the need to process what has been lost, gained, and experienced in the intervening fifty years. None of this is unique to me, but I'm certain not each person develops the same connection to time, space and sentiment that I do. It's my personal blessing or curse; I'm not sure which.

Before I arrived, (the event was at the Hyatt-Regency Airport,) I drove by our school. It's in the process of a huge remodel, but as I looked at the structure it saddened me to see bits and pieces of the grand old building being torn asunder. I wanted to go talk to the piles of rubble and somehow say I was sorry for the plight of the building that had given us kids so much memory and pleasure. I know the idea is stupid and I know there's no connection with inanimate objects, but I also know how I think and to me the site was a cause for reflection and a harbinger of things to come. For me, the reunion was not going to be a simple gathering of old friends, it was going to be a clash of wonder and light, mixed in with the subtle, yet obvious recognition

of lengthening shadows and our nearness to eternity.

The air was thick with the smoke of dozens of wild fires in the east. As

I drove to the airport, I thought it somehow prophetic that the bright, huge sun took on a hue seldom witnessed as the smoke obscured my vision. Stop it, I said to myself, it's just coincidence, but me being me I couldn't help but make parallels between the heavy clouds of smoke and the dense clouds of time and distance I was about to see as the class of 1965 gathered for what we all knew, for many of us, might be the last time. I sat in the parking lot; I cleared my head. I was envious of those classmates who could just meet, have a few drinks, laugh, reminisce and then go home. For me, it's never that simple. Why, I said aloud, why do I think this way? Why can't I just be normal? Alas, none of it mattered, our time was now and whatever was left deserved to be enjoyed.

At one point, I wanted to grab each person I knew and take them back to the hallways of RHS, walk with them to class and forever bask in the innocence of youth and camaraderie that was who we were. Not surprisingly, the name tags on shirts made connections easier and identities began to make sense, but still, the blur of limited time at the event and the specter of time itself made the reunion seem unfair... we should have been able to stay there for whatever period it took to capture our youth. But time is a thief and this night was not to be any different.

The event was done properly; it came off much smoother and better than I imagined. And it was FUN! Old friends came together in a crush of emotion, laughter and tears. The turnout was far greater than I expected and name identification caused

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By Jim Speirs

Between Our Rivers

By
Barbara
Quinn



SEND YOUR BRIDGE PICTURES

Send your unique
(and personally taken)
photos of the
St. Johns Bridge
to the Review.

You could win \$100.
See page two for full details

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This week's Masthead winner was sent in by Dave Talton. Even this small section of the Bridge is recognizable because of its beautiful originality.