



Cleveland High School is the only high school in the universe that has a memorial forest dedicated to alumni who died while serving in the armed forces during World War II.

BACKGROUND

At the height of World War II, the students of Cleveland High School (CHS) in Seattle Washington sought a way to memorialize classmates who died in service to our country; to this end, they collected \$300, including gifts from the graduating classes of 1943 and 1944, to purchase land for a memorial forest. At a county tax auction in July 1944, Vice Principal Ray Imus bid on a quarter section of logged-off land east of Issaquah, Washington (about 18 miles east of Seattle). When other bidders learned that the students hoped to create a memorial forest to commemorate their fallen classmates, no one bid against Imus and the clear-cut land was acquired for \$300. The deed was issued to Principal Kenneth Selby. When Selby retired in December 1944 it was determined that the high school couldn't own property so ownership of the memorial forest was transferred to the Seattle School District

“as a perpetual memorial to the Cleveland boys who lost their lives in the war.”

The memorial forest, off the Issaquah Fall City Road, consists of 131.52 acres of second-growth timber, including Sitka Spruce, Douglas fir, and Western Red cedar – the result of CHS students and staff planting over 10,000 trees. This beautiful memorial to fallen classmates serves as a striking contrast to the horrific war that inspired its origin. Today, the property is worth millions of dollars.

OUR OBJECTIVE

For years, CHS alumni have been concerned about the CHS Memorial Forest being sold or developed for some use other than being a memorial. The best way to protect the forest is to sell the development rights of the property to the King County Parks Department. This would

result in a conservation easement being placed on the property to prevent development by Seattle Public Schools (SPS) or any future buyer of the property. King County (KC) Parks is very much interested in purchasing the development rights as part of their conservation program. The school district and park department are working on an agreement to make this happen, but the idea still needs to be approved by the Seattle School Board. This is where you may be able to help.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

We need the names and contact information of patriotic organizations from across the nation who would likely support our struggle. We want to request letters of support from these organizations so we can present them to the school board at the appropriate time. To each organization, we will send the following:

1. A letter requesting support for our effort to protect the Cleveland High School Memorial Forest.
2. A pamphlet telling the story of the CHS Memorial Forest.
3. A description of the plan to sell the development rights.
4. A stamped return addressed envelope to the CHS Alumni Association.

PLEASE DO THE FOLLOWING

If you are willing to help:

1. **Make a list of patriotic organizations that you know of (with their contact information) and email to me at: barzar3x@comcast.net**
2. **Send your own letter of support to my Covington address below.**
3. **Please call if you have questions: 425-432-9592**

Thank you for any help you can provide.

CHS Alumni Association
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