

Memory of the Crash On October 21st, 1972

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On October 21st, 1972, there was a terrible car crash at the intersection of Rybolt and Taylor, resulting in the death of five people and leaving one injured. In memory of this terrible accident, Shirley Herzog, an OHHS student at the time, came up with the idea to create a fountain in memory of the students. She wanted this fountain to be accessible to all, so it was determined that it would be put in the courtyard by the main office.



To the students at Oak Hills High School: do you remember when we held a moment of silence on October 21st, 2022? We did this in honor of the 5 people who died. These 5 people included Debbie Eckert, Cindy Kreuzeman, Linda May, Alan Surnbrock and Kim Wullenweber. We wanted to honor these people and never forget what happened to them.

Now let's get into the information provided by Mrs. Herzog.

One question I asked was, "What do you remember about the accident in 1972?" She said, "Total shock. To have 5 classmates killed at once was unbelievable." Just the thought of having 5 of your classmates being killed even though you just saw them at the dance is terrifying. "3 of them were from the Dulles/Springmyer/Bridgetown side of the district and 2 were from Delhi, so it affected the whole district." The Oak Hills

Local School District had to come together to help the grief that instantly spread throughout the district. This led to the decision of the fountain in the courtyard. Another question included, "What other things were done to honor and remember these students?" Mrs. Herzog came up with the idea because she wanted to "create a place of peace, beauty and respite to escape the ugliness of our loss." The total cost of the fountain was \$3000. \$1000 of this cost was paid for from the prize that the school won. The radio station WKRQ was giving away \$2000 to the school with the most "spirit." Oak Hills won this prize and gave half of the money to the fountain project. The rest of the money came from the whole school coming together to honor these people.

Mrs. Herzog also remembered something from this accident that was absolutely devastating. After the accident, when the students returned to school, there was an empty seat in front of her in one



class. The thought that Linda May would never return back to school or sit in that seat again was really alarming. Not only did it impact her, but it also impacted the class and all the other classes that had one of the five students in there.

Although most of this year was filled with grief and sorrow, some good things came out of this. The whole district and community came together to honor these people and also helped their families during this time. While their families went through a very difficult time, it was good for them to know that they had a whole community behind them supporting them.

So now everytime you walk past the fountain in the courtyard, instead of thinking of it as just a fountain, remember that this fountain was built to honor the lives that were lost in this tragic accident.