



Richard "Dick" Fisher
Class of 2020

Dick graduated from Oroville High School (OHS) in 1956 and was an outstanding student, winning a Bank of America Award as a senior and receiving a scholarship offer to the College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland. He also found time to work on the school yearbook, *The Nugget*, serving as its artist/designer and designing permanent art for the OHS boys' gymnasium (Tiger Mascot Mural/California Schools). Dick worked after school which prohibited him from school sports, but he was active in city leagues excelling in basketball and fast-pitch softball.

Upon graduating from OHS in 1956, Dick spent five years at Chico State College (CSC), graduating with a 3.8 GPA as a senior and earning his BA degree and teaching credential in secondary education. He was also a staff writer, who drew cartoons for the Chico Wildcat newspaper, and was a member of Delta Sigma Phi fraternity. While at CSC, Dick also participated in intramural basketball, swimming and diving, and pitched for his fraternity softball team.

While a senior art student at CSC, Dick, along with OHS friend Dave Cabitto, won First Prize at the California State Fair, hand painting a 8 x 26 foot mural that displayed the story of rice from 1915 to 1960 as the background for the illustration of the world-wide system of distributing rice from Butte County via miniature ships plying their way from continent to continent.

Dick's very first teaching experience came in 1959, while still a CSC student, when he returned to OHS and taught in the summer school program. It was a great experience for him to share his initial steps as a teacher with the people and in the place that encouraged him to use his abilities to influence students starting their high school years.

Dick's career in public education began in 1961 and spanned 37 years, all in the Lompoc Unified School District (LUSD). His initial teaching assignment was at the middle school, then eventually moving on to the district level where he was a master teacher, art coordinator and Visual and Performing Arts Chairman for the district. In this position, Dick wrote curriculum for the new middle and high schools and promoted elementary curriculum with many art shows in the district.

1965 saw the opening of Cabrillo High School in Vandenburg Village and the principal invited Dick to join him in opening the new school. Dick had helped design the campus building designs, and establish the school colors and mascot. He also helped design plans and artwork for the School Aquarium Program, along with art, logos and posters for the wrestling program. In addition to teaching, Dick served as yearbook advisor for two years and was presented an award for Yearbook Production Achievement. He was the school's first art teacher and department chairman and designed a mural depicting educational themes displayed at the Lompoc Unified School District office. Dick ended his distinguished career in LUSD, retiring in 1998.

Upon his retirement from LUSD, Dick received several awards, among them recognition for his many years of service, a medallion for being a founding member of the Lompoc Arts Guild and an award for Yearbook Production Achievement.

Dick has enjoyed his retirement over many years in the Lompoc and Santa Maria area. He remained very busy with his art and involvement with the Santa Maria Artist Guild and helped open the new Santa Maria library with the first "one-man" art exhibit. He was a founding member of the Lompoc Arts Guild and supervised student and faculty art exhibits. He was selected to be designer for four years for the Santa Barbara County Fair, held in Santa Maria, and designed a mural depicting the educational themes that is installed in the LUSD Administration Building.

Being a long time "Car Nut", Dick has also returned to old car restoration. He has owned literally hundreds of classics including 55 and 56 coupes, convertibles and nomads, 65 -68 Mustangs and a variety of old trucks. His first Classic Car restoration was a 1934 Ford Coupe and his last, 10 years in the making, was a 1955 Chevy that won First Prize in the 2004 car show in Santa Maria.

Carol Paplin, close friend and caregiver to Dick, writes in her letter of support, *"Richard has been blessed with many God given abilities in art, vocal music and creative writing. He's completed a movie script for a sequel to his favorite western movie, "Silverado"! So, in addition to promoting the sale of his artwork, he enjoys creative projects that utilize his talents."*

Dick makes his home in Santa Maria.