



Robert J. Powers Class of 2011

Bob Powers was born on Christmas Day, 1926 in Sacramento, CA and came to Oroville at age two. He attended Eastside School and was a student at Oroville High School (OHS) from 1940 to 1944. He played basketball and baseball all four years. Notable baseball teammates were Ted Tannehill, future USC football star and Oroville Union High School District (OUHSD) Hall of Famer, Dyke Richter. The team was coached by former college football standout and University of Nevada head coach Brick Mitchell. Bob was a Block O member for four years and served as secretary his last three years of school.

He was editor of the Nugget Yearbook his senior year and was his class representative to the Executive Committee as a sophomore, junior, and senior.

After graduating from Oroville High School, he enrolled at Saint Mary's College in Moraga, CA. During his freshman year, he was drafted into the United States Army. He served in the Philippines for two years and achieved the rank of Tech Sergeant.

Following his honorable discharge, he returned to Saint Mary's where he played baseball and received his Bachelor of Arts degree in history in 1950.

Bob's impact on the Oroville Community began in 1951 when he began his thirty-two year career in education on the OHS campus. During the next nine years, he taught, and served as attendance officer at OHS. In 1962, he was transferred to the new Las Plumas High School (LPHS) where he was Vice-Principal for ten years. While at LPHS, Bob wrote the lyrics for the school song, Fly High You T-Birds, and named the school newspaper, The Thundering Heard, a clever twist of words. In 1971, he returned to the OHS campus where he taught until illness forced his retirement in 1983.

Longtime retired Oroville educator, Jim Shelby, wrote, "Bob Powers was a skilled administrator, an adept classroom teacher, and an asset to the community." Bob's children wrote, "The foundation of his career was his experience as a student at OHS where he was inspired by educators and community leaders such OUHSD Hall of Fame charter member and former OHS principal Chester Nisbet who served as a role model for dad throughout his career".

Just after his retirement in 1983, Bob was honored as Teacher of the Year at OHS and in 1987, was the first recipient of the OHS Alumnus of the Year award. In 1995, the Robert J. Powers memorial scholarship was established, and to this day, the scholarship is given in alternate years to an outstanding graduating senior at OHS or LPHS.

Bob was a strong believer in giving back to his community. He was a member of the Butte Community College Board and a Founding Trustee. He also served as a Trustee on the Oroville Elementary School District Board, was a member of the Oroville City Library Board, and a member of the Oroville Planning Commission.

As a lifelong member of Saint Thomas Parish in Oroville, Bob participated in many leadership roles including a key role in fundraising for the original Saint Thomas Elementary School construction project in the early 1950's.

During his younger years, Bob played for the Oroville Olives baseball team and once led the Sacramento Valley League in doubles. As a result of his success playing high school, college and semi-pro baseball, he was inducted into the Northern California Sports Hall of Fame in 1988. In the year 2000, he was inducted into the Butte College Athletic Hall of Fame for his many years of distinguished service and dedication to the local community college.

According to Bob's four adult children, he once stated to them, "I strived to do the right thing and to help others do the same," a simple but profound life's mission.

Bob passed away on October 3, 1994.