



Gary Van Koten Class of 1964

Gary grew up in Grants Pass and participated in a variety of sports throughout his grade school and junior high school years, including creating a pole vault set up in his back yard when he was in the 1st grade, and teaching himself to pole vault.

As a Caveman, Gary participated in football, basketball, and track, but he focused mainly on football and track. A 3-year Varsity letterman in football, the Medford Mail Tribune touted Gary's "shifty elusiveness" as a key component to the Caveman running game. His senior year, Gary was selected as a 1st Team All-Conference Halfback and 1st team All-State Running Back. In addition, Gary was chosen as Fullback on the State All-Star Shrine Team.

While competing for the Caveman track team, Gary was one of the top pole vaulters in the state of Oregon. Throughout his high school career, he often held the State Best marks and had record setting performances. Gary was the District Champion 2 years, 1962 and 1963, breaking the district record by vaulting 14'1 1/2", the best vault in the State. At the 1962 State Track Meet, Gary broke the State Record and then set a new state meet record in 1963- on his way to becoming the State Champion both years. Gary set the school record his sophomore year (1962), establishing the dominance of GPHS vaulters in the district and the state for years to come. His senior year, Gary was selected as a team captain, capping off his career by setting the *NATIONAL Indoor Pole Vault Record*, with a vault of 13'9 3/4".



Gary had offers from universities from all over the country for both track and football and ultimately, Gary chose to compete for the University of Washington in both football and track until injuries no longer allowed him to participate and enjoy the sports he loved.

Gary's next endeavor involved his love of music. He formed a band named "Truth". What started out as a fun hobby in the 60's became an exciting business adventure when they were signed by "General Entertainment Corporation". Their GEC manager had been a member of the band "The Kingsmen", providing connections that sent "Truth" touring in some of the top music venues throughout Washington, Oregon, California, Nevada, and Idaho.



After getting married, and having two sons, Gary stopped touring/traveling with the band to be with family. Gary got involved in the construction industry and became a project estimator. Gary worked to improve the estimator process within the construction industry, developing his own company "Quick Frame Inc".

"I'm very thankful to have been blessed this much, and have total, strong faith in God, and know he has us covered in our next life as well."