

Victor Salvino '51 Continues to Give Back

By Gloria Kruzner
THE LOG EDITOR

Victor “Vic” Salvino describes his need to give back to Ballard High School, where he spent most of his high school years, in simple terms:

“I see something with my eyes, with need,” he said. “And here’s a way to get it done.”

Whether it was helping to inspire a Ballard High School Foundation fundraising golf tournament or transform a dark vacant room into a fully functional weight room, Salvino has brought in the funding and partnerships to benefit a variety of needs around campus.

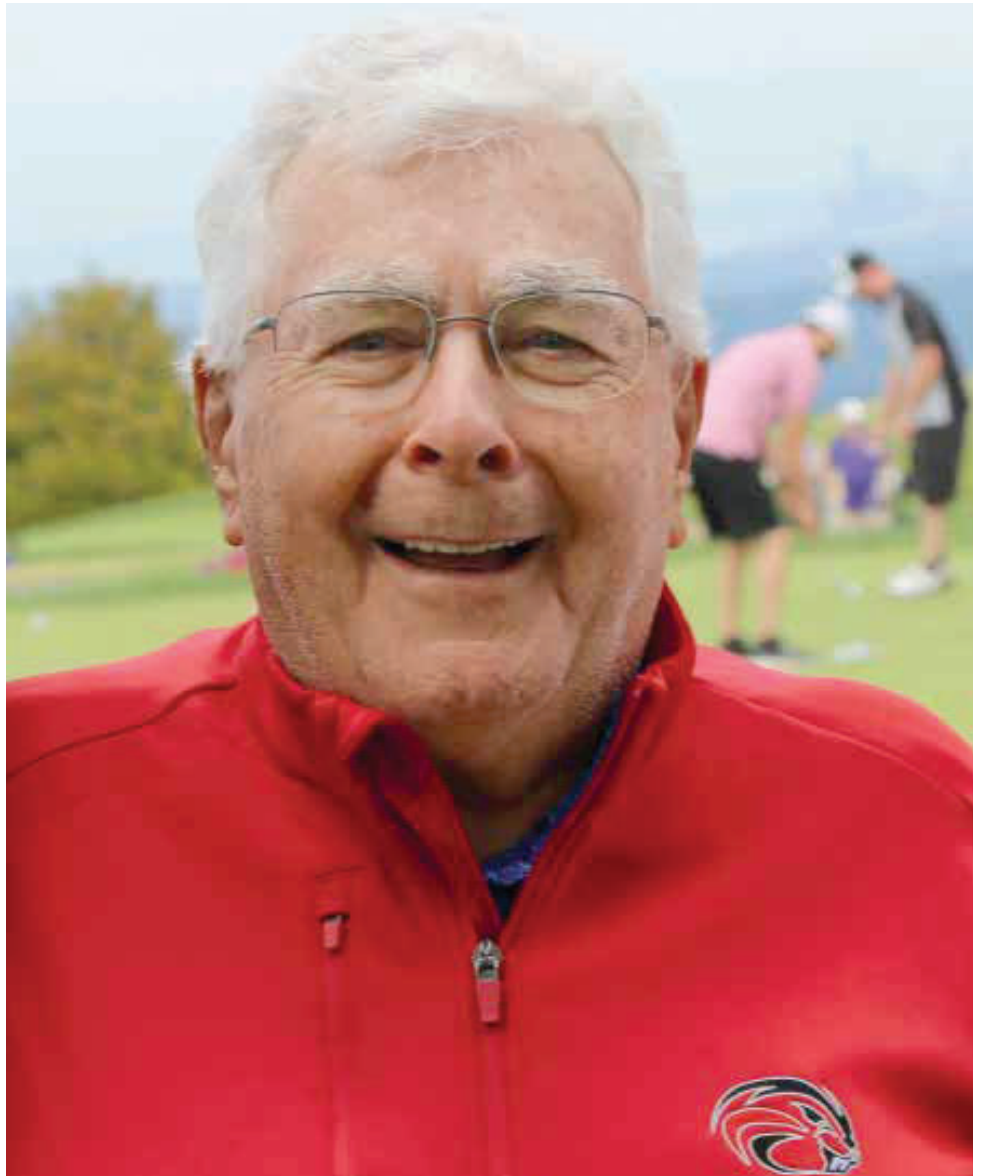
Born November 28, 1932, in Seattle, Salvino attended first grade at Loyal Heights Elementary, before his family moved up to Alderwood Manor for second through eighth grade.

Salvino’s high school years were marked by tragedy, as his dad took his own life when Salvino was 14 and an eighth grader at Alderwood Manor. His mom moved the family back to Ballard in 1948, following his freshman year at Edmonds High School.

“That was a big heartbreak for me,” he said.

After joining Ballard High School, however, Salvino soon made friends, playing basketball for the junior varsity team. He described with pride the game in January 1949 where he got to suit up and play with the varsity squad.

But he also recalled lonely weekends when he would shag basketballs down at the Downtown YMCA with no money and preoccupied by grief.



Bruce Johnson/Rowland Studios

Victor Salvino '51 is all smiles at the 2022 Victor Salvino Golf Classic at Newcastle as golfers practice on the putting green.

“I faced a lot of depression over the death of my father,” he said. He worked summer jobs to earn money to buy school clothes.

“My depression worsened. I was missing a lot of school,” Salvino said. He finally dropped out in April 1951,

just a few months short of graduation, getting work with Boeing.

Another summer job soon found him courting the owner’s daughter, Gladie Jo.

The 19-year-old’s charm must have worked, as the two were married soon after.

Salvino started working in the mail room for Kenworth Motor Truck Corporation in September 1951, earning \$190 per month, and telling his boss, "I'm not here for money, but for an opportunity."

One year later he was promoted to the credit department. In 1955, he was elected treasurer of the Kenworth Employee's Credit Union, where he was convinced by the State Examiner to ask the board for an increase as his work far outpaced that of an older, more experienced colleague. More pressing, that he and Gladie Jo had three young children at that point.

In 1959 he transferred to Dallas to serve as credit manager of Texas Kenworth Co., a factory branch that had been formed four years earlier. A promotion to branch manager came in 1966 and, a year later, Salvino became Vice President and General Manager.

In 1974 he became President, and in 1979 he purchased Texas Kenworth Co. and served as dealer principal until he sold the company in 1998.

He recalls being honored as the National Truck Dealer of the Year in 1980 in the Columbia Business School-judged competition sponsored by *Businessweek*

magazine. He was also active in several Texas statewide associations and served as chairman for National Kenworth Truck Dealers, Sand and Gravel Motor Carriers, and Texas Truck Dealers, to name just a few.

Pretty incredible for a kid with no high school diploma. Yet.

Just starting his retirement years with Gladie Jo in 1998, he received a call from 1951 classmate Kathy Hodge, asking if he'd be interested in joining Ballard High School's Millennium Club, formed by C. David Hughbanks '54 in 1997 (and inspired by a 13,000 alumni reunion, as the lights were turned off and they said goodbye to the old Ballard High School building).

In celebration of the new building, Hughbanks sought a hundred people to write a check for \$1,000 to raise money for the new campus, highlighting areas where public schools don't have enough money. This effort helped form what would become the Ballard High School Foundation.

Salvino agreed to write a check and soon after attended the school's grand reopening, catching a glimpse of that under utilized dark room after the long ceremony.

He engaged both Foundation Co-Founder Dick Lee and Baseball Coach Mick McDonald to see if there would be interest in updating the empty space into a strength and training facility. Soon after he was meeting with Lee, then-Foundation Executive Director Janet Rogers, Head Football Coach Doug Trainor, and Principal Chuck Chinn to envision what would become



Ballard Shingle, 1950
Victor Salvino, shown in his junior year in the Ballard High School yearbook.

the Henry Bendele Fitness Center, named after the same coach who offered Salvino that special moment on the court his junior year.

Salvino donated \$50,000 for the effort. And although 2,000 miles from his high school campus, he said he kept abreast of the state of things, with concern that the school had lost local camaraderie through Seattle Public Schools' bussing program.

He also saw that band students were playing unusable pitchy instruments from the 1960s and the library had dated titles. For both fundraisers, and teaming with the Foundation, he agreed to a sizeable donation, \$25,000 for the band instruments alone, if the community would step forward and match his donations. He also helped fund the BHS Greenhouse and improve the Library.

Continued on page 19

Victor Salvino has proven himself to be a loyal Beaver tried and true. **His love of Ballard High School** has been steadfast from the first day I met him to where we are today. His generosity to the school and foundation are truly inspiring.

~ Chuck Chinn,
Former BHS Principal

Salvino: Giving Spirit Abounds on BHS Campus

Continued from Page 13

“Victor’s support and enthusiasm made this campaign a huge success,” said Foundation Vice President Gretchen Stroh Scheumann ’53 of the library fundraising effort.

And about that golf tournament. Salvino, Gary Seefried ’64, and (brother-in-law) Don Prindle founded the Golf Classic in cooperation with the Foundation in 2001 to raise critical money for the school. Originally held at Fort Lewis Golf Course, Salvino said he wanted to make it something more for both golfers and as an impactful fundraiser.

The Ballard Golf Classic was originally named after three-sport star Beaver athlete John Boitano ’41 who served in World War II. The lifelong Ballard resident went on to graduate from the University of Washington, teach at Garfield, and coach the Bulldog football team from 1957-68, including two State Championships and four Metro Championships.

After moving the event to Echo Falls Golf Course and later Mill Creek, Salvino was persuaded by the mayor Newcastle, whom he met on a fishing trip, to try a more challenging test for golfers at Newcastle Golf Course. He also worked connections with then Southern Methodist University Football Coach June Jones to have former NFL Rams quarterback/

vintner Vince Ferragamo present two bottles of wine for bidding at the tournament dinner one year.

“It raised more than \$7,000,” he said. “The ladies liked it.”

The Golf Classic has had Salvino’s name and funding for two years, which will continue into next year’s event, reflecting his massive \$150,000 donation to underwrite the tournament. To date the event and accompanying auction dinner have raised almost \$2 million for the Ballard High School athletics and music programs.

More recently Salvino gifted \$25,000 to the Foundation in memory of his “good personal friend” and classmate, Dick Mitchell ’51.

Salvino said parents often introduce themselves to him to express appreciation for his many donations that support extracurricular activities at Ballard High School.

With connections ranging from George W. Bush to stories about a young Clint Eastwood, there’s plenty to remember about Victor Salvino.

Gladie Jo passed in Feb. 2010, and since then, he’s been remarried twice, most recently in early October. He loves

to talk about his five adult children, 16 grandchildren and 24 great-grandchildren (with a 25th on the way in January).



Victor Salvino presents Gary Seefried ’64 with the 2019 Golf Classic Beaver Benefactor Honoree certificate. Salvino and Seefried, with Don Prindle, founded the Golf Classic in 2001.

Photo: Bruce Johnson

And with his gifts to the Ballard High School community, there’s a lot for Beaver supporters to be grateful for too.

“I could see a special need to provide funding in many different areas of the school,” he said. “That was the energy I had, so to speak.”

Victor’s donations have changed the lives of countless students, but I am even more grateful for the way that he has motivated and inspired others to celebrate our community.

~ Keven Wynkoop ’94,
Former BHS Principal

As a one-time high school dropout, Salvino takes special pride in the Foundation’s

GAINS program, which works to support at-risk Ballard students and helps them graduate.

In honor for all that Salvino has done for Ballard High School, former principal Chuck Chinn finally awarded Salvino in 2002 with an honorary high school diploma. The Alumni Room and a banner in the gym also bear his name, recognizing his decades of giving back.

Salvino is not only proud to call himself a Beaver, he’s proud of all that the Ballard High School Foundation has accomplished over its 25-plus years. “The Foundation still remains a force for all the activities at school,” he said. □

Victor has supported Ballard High School in all aspects of the school that includes academic support, technology needs and athletic enhancements for both women and men’s sports. His generosity is and has been highly appreciated. Victor is a true Beaver and friend to the entire Ballard High Community.

~ Phil Brockman ’76,
**Former BHS Principal,
Foundation Co-President**