

Naming the New K-5 Elementary School on Kaiser Road

Historical Survey and Recommendations

February 7, 2017

Introduction

The Swiss and German immigrants who first made Bethany their home beginning in the 1850s were a tight knit community. They depended on one another to assimilate to their new life. It was not an easy life. Much of the land was forestland that had to be cleared for farming. Felled trees were used to build family log homes, milled at area sawmills for barns and other building purposes, or as fuel for heating.

Fast forward to 2017, some of that same farmland will become Beaverton's 34th elementary school opening in September 2017. It will provide enrollment relief to nearby Springville K-8. This new school's construction was fast-tracked by one year to address Springville's overcrowding. The North Bethany area continues to grow at a record pace. The District recently concluded an elementary boundary process to determine the attendance area for the new Kaiser Road K-5 school.

In May 2014, the Beaverton community passed a record \$680 million bond measure to relieve over-crowding in schools by building three new schools (a new high school, a new middle school, and a new elementary school), demolishing and rebuilding four existing schools (Vose, Hazeldale, William Walker elementaries, and the Arts & Communication Magnet Academy), making repairs and improvements to current schools facilities, and investing in technology infrastructure and learning tools over an eight-year period.

The Beaverton School District acquired ten acres for this elementary school in March 2006 from Sharon and Bruce Hosford. The purchase price was \$4,000,000.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful for the resources former Beaverton School Board Member Sally Bunnell created in developing other school naming reports over the years. The staff at the Washington County Historical Museum were very helpful in locating research materials and maps. Donald R. Nelson, the author of two Bethany history books, **The Bethany Community: As It Was...As Is Today** and **Bethany: A Community in Transition** provided two wonderful resources to draw from for this report.



Architectural rendering of new K-5 school in the North Bethany area.

Historical Overview of the Bethany Area and the Early Settlers

There were many immigrant families who first settled in the North Bethany area over 160 years ago. Three early settler families are noted here as they lived in proximity to the property where the new K-5 elementary school is being constructed, and they were leaders who helped build and support the new community.

Jacob Brugger

Jacob Brugger and his brothers John and Peter came to Oregon from Switzerland and settled significant donation land claims dating back to the 1850s. In order to settle their land claims, they had to become U.S citizens. All three were leaders in the early Bethany community. They were farmers, and in addition, John ran a flour mill and Peter worked as a "sawyer" cutting logs into lumber at a local sawmill. According to records, Jacob Brugger bought most of the original Archibald Bull donation land claim.

In 1876, Jacob Brugger resold much of his land to families who had arrived from Switzerland as part of the Samuel Siegenthaler migration. The Siegenthaler group was comprised of 72 people from 10 families. Siegenthaler is said to have helped several of the families finance the journey. They began their journey in search of religious freedom and greater economic opportunity. It was a five-week journey across the Atlantic Ocean to New York, continuing by land and rail to Philadelphia, then Omaha, Nebraska before the group boarded a train to San Francisco, and finally arrived in Portland to begin their new life. Siegenthaler also helped some of these same families finance land purchases to establish homes and farms in the area.

Bethany Presbyterian Church served many of the Swiss and German immigrants new to the area. Jacob Brugger donated the land on Kaiser Road that would become the first church. He also donated land for the cemetery behind the church. The original church no longer exists, however, the cemetery site is located across from the new K-5 elementary school. Many area pioneer families are buried in the cemetery. A second church to accommodate growth was built in 1904 on Kaiser and Springville Roads, on land also donated by Jacob Brugger. Rev. Henry Dickman served as minister from 1925 to 1950. It was a much larger church and featured stained glass windows. A third building was built in 1958. Bethany Presbyterian Church has now served the Bethany community for over 144 years.

Two of the immigrant families buying land from Jacob Brugger were **Ulrich Gerber and Johann Graf**.

Ulrich Gerber

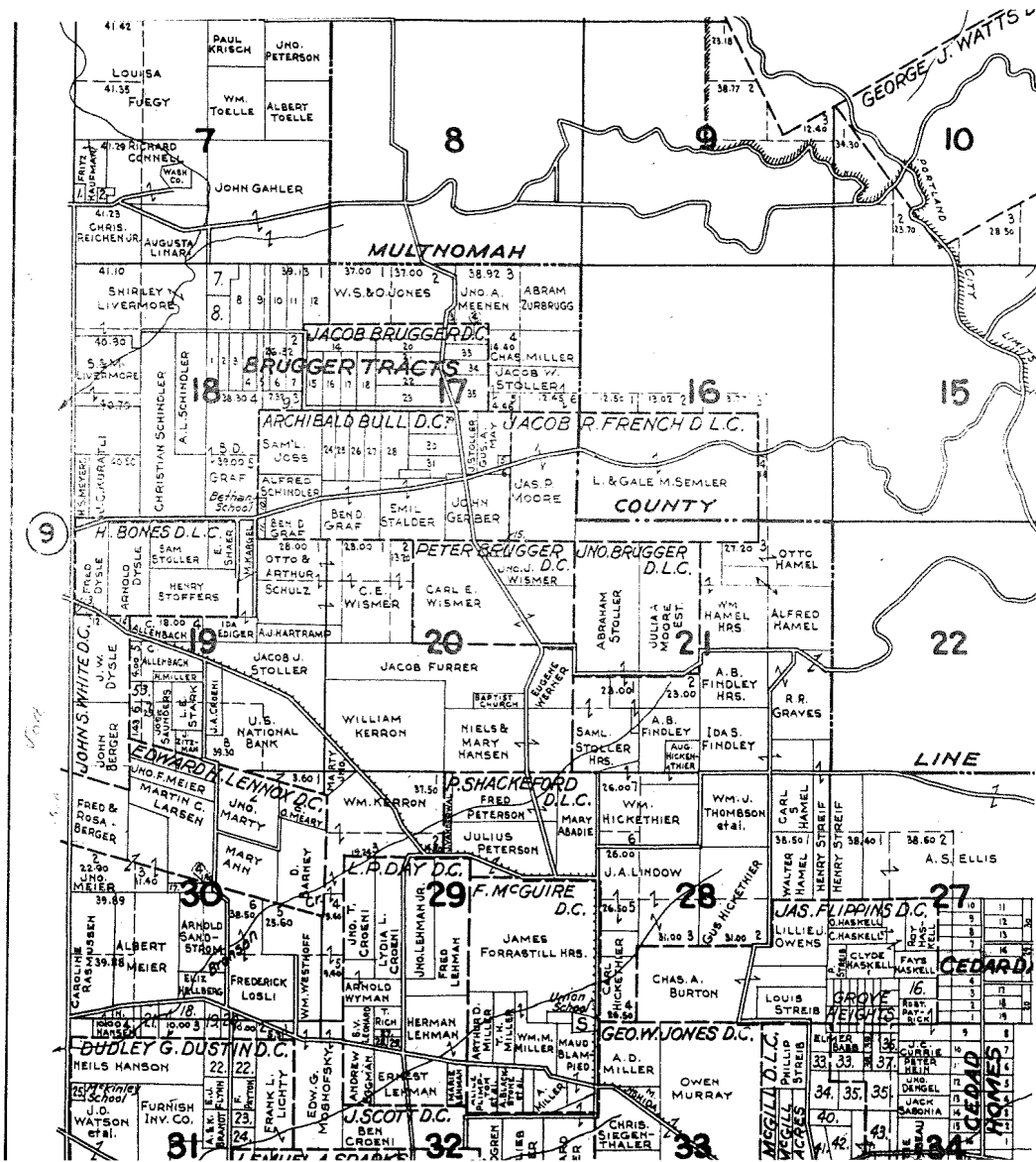
Ulrich Gerber and family came from Switzerland in 1876. Gerber's residence and farm were near the intersection of Springville and Kaiser Roads. He was the area's first postmaster, establishing a post office in 1878 in his Bethany General Store. This gave the community the official name of Bethany. He served as postmaster until 1900. The general store and residence also served as a stagecoach stop between Portland and Hillsboro, providing overnight accommodations for travelers. Gerber was one of the founding members of the Bethany Baptist Church.

Bethany Baptist Church originated from the Siegenthaler migration of 1876. Ulrich Gerber lead its formation in his home in 1879. It was originally known as the First German Church of Baptized Believing Christians of Bethany. The name was later shortened to First German Baptist Church of Bethany. The first church building was built in 1881. The congregation would continue to grow and a larger church was built in 1890. In 1913, Pastor William Graf would begin his 21-year leadership of this faith community. In 1933, it was renamed Bethany Baptist Church. The current building was built in 1976.

Johann Graf

Johann Graf was successful as a farmer and pastor in the Bethany area. He owned 40 acres of land purchased from Jacob Brugger. His family grew hay, raised chickens, beef, and pork, grew fruits and potatoes and produced dairy products. Prior to immigrating from Switzerland to Oregon, Johann Graf had been an established missionary and pastor of a small church who yearned to come to America to freely preach. He led the German Congregational Church of Cedar Mill in 1887 and would go on to serve as pastor of Bethany Baptist Church. He also donated land for the second Bethany School. Graf descendants still live in the Bethany area.

There were many other pioneer families who settled in the Bethany area who still have descendants living in the area. Three other Beaverton schools are named for some of these early settlers: Jacob Wismer Elementary, Findley Elementary School and Stoller Middle School.



Sato Family

During the nomination process, several people suggested the name of Sato (*pronounced Say-tow*) for the new K-5 school. Yoshinosuke and Asano Sato came to the Bethany area from Washington state in 1926. They were Japanese-Americans who lived and farmed on Brugger Road growing strawberries, blackberries, youngberries and vegetables on their property. From several accounts, they were industrious and hard working. Children in the area picked berries at their farm. Their four children attended Bethany School and Beaverton High School.

After Pearl Harbor, the Sato family was sent to the Minidoka Relocation Center (an internment center) in Idaho from May 1942 – August 1945. Two sons, Shin and Roy, enlisted in the U.S. Army with the 442nd Regiment of American-born Japanese. The 442nd suffered tremendous casualties, with 28% of the soldiers killed or wounded. Shin died in combat in 1944. Roy was wounded twice and received the Purple Heart.

After Roy was discharged from the U.S. Army in 1945, he returned to his parent's farm with his wife. However, the farm was never the same because it had not been maintained properly in their absence. The Sato family are buried in the Bethany Presbyterian Church cemetery.

Importance of Schools in the Bethany Area

German was the first language for the Swiss immigrants and there was strong community interest in teachers presenting the children's lessons in their native tongue. In the years leading to World War I, there was increasing tension over bilingual education. After the war, German was no longer spoken in public school classrooms.

Union School

Early Bethany immigrants in 1870 were served by the Union School District #6. It was established in 1856 by Erasmus D. Shattuck, Washington County's school superintendent. At the time, the name "Union" was a political statement for pro-North and anti-slavery sentiment in the tense times leading up to the Civil War and just before Oregon became a state in 1859. Union School was located in western Cedar Mill, just south of Kaiser Road and Springville Road on 143rd on the same grounds of the Union Cemetery. In 1865, there were 54 students and by 1883, enrollment had grown to 124 students.

Bethany School

Due to growth in the area, Bethany School District #74 was established in 1887 and the first Bethany schoolhouse was built that year. A second Bethany School was built in 1900 on land donated by Johann Graf. The school was located east of present-day Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District's Portland Community College Rock Creek field along Springville Road. It continued to educate several generations of area farm families until 1948. Bethany School District merged with Union School District in 1947. Both schools closed in 1948. Bethany area students then attended Sunset Valley School on Murray Road north of the Sunset Highway. This school was closed and it is now a Home Depot. The third Bethany Elementary School opened in 1970 on 174th Avenue, south of West Union Road in the Beaverton School District. It remains in service today with about 554 students.

Bethany School District #74



Bethany children, including those from the Graf, Croeni, and Dysle families, pose in front of the first schoolhouse, circa 1895, courtesy Doug & Bernietta Graf.

Historical Overview of the Hosford Property - Site of the New K-5 Elementary School

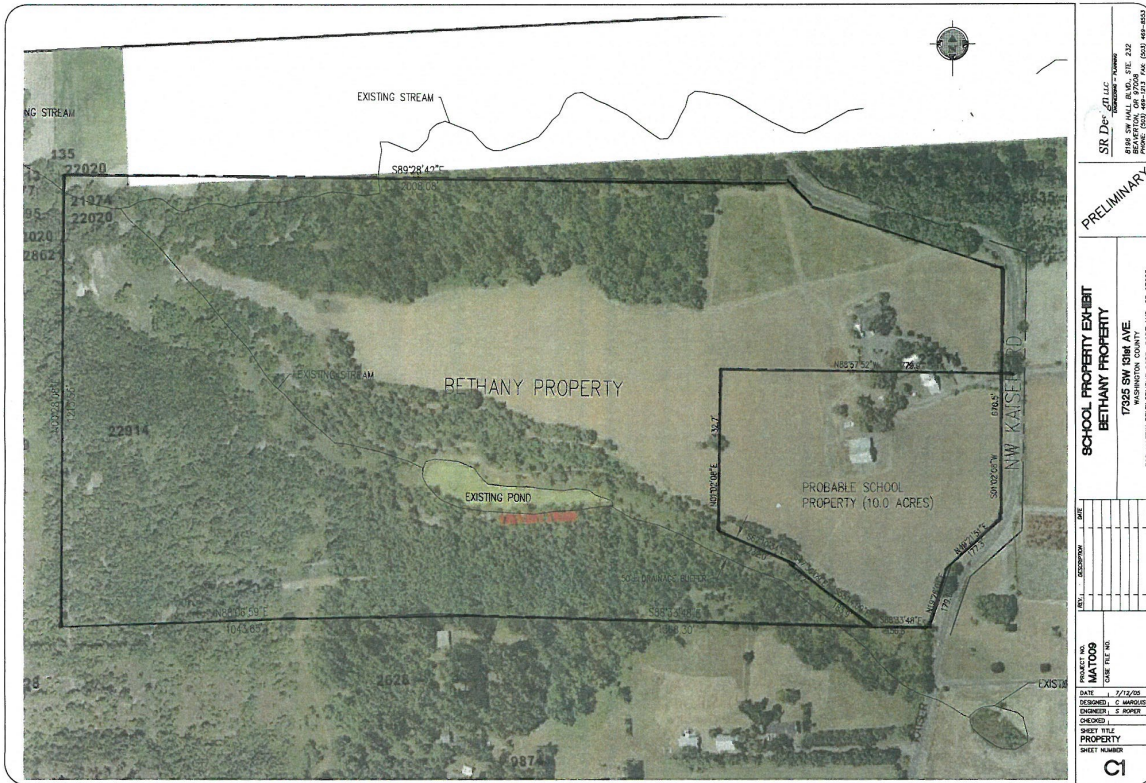
Early records show that **William S. Jones and Olive "Ollie" Jones** (W.S. and O. Jones) lived on the property as noted on a Township Map dated 1928. They rented the property for several years in the 1920s and by the 1930s records show they owned the property.

Herbert R. and Marie Elizabeth Gooderham bought the property around 1943 and began their farm life with their only child, a daughter, **Sharon J. Hosford**, who was about six years old at the time. It was a dairy farm, but they also raised pigs, grew hay, and tended to apple, cherry and plum fruit trees. Sharon Hosford recalled one of her favorite horses was named "Ladybug" and another "Tiny" a Shetland stallion pony. She also had a favorite dog named "Lassie" a collie. Sharon spent hours riding her horses and playing with children of other area farm families. She remembered that it was a tight knit community. All the neighbors were well-connected and many marriages came from those strong relationships.

Sharon attended Bethany Elementary School in grades 1-4 and then completed grades 5-8 at Sunset Valley Elementary. Even then schools were growing fast and had to be updated. She graduated from Beaverton High School. After college, Sharon went on to teach 4th, 5th and 6th grade students in the Beaverton School District at Fir Grove, Vose, Cedar Hills and Cedar Mill elementary schools for over thirty years.

After Sharon's mother died, **Sharon J. Hosford and Bruce E. Hosford** became the owners of the property in 1985. They sold ten acres of their 74-acre property to the Beaverton School District in 2006. The remainder of the property was sold to developers. *See aerial photo of property page 6.*

Aerial photo of Hosford Property purchased by the Beaverton School District in 2006



Aerial photo of new K-5 Elementary School under construction - January 2017

Community Suggestions for New K-5 Elementary School

Times Suggested	<u>Area Historical Names</u>	Background
2	Brugger Elementary School or Jacob Brugger Elementary School	Jacob Brugger and his brothers were farmers whose large donation land claims date back to the 1850s. They came to Oregon from Switzerland and were active in early Bethany. <i>See report for more details</i>
1	Chakeipi Elementary School	Native American tribe in area; Chakeipi means place of the beaver; was name of the village later called Beaverdam, and then Beaverton.
11	Gerber Elementary School or Ulrich Gerber Elementary School	Ulrich Gerber came to Oregon from Switzerland in the mid-1870s and was instrumental in establishing the Bethany post office in July 1878. <i>See report for more details.</i>
2	Graf Elementary School	Johann Graf was one of the original settlers in the Bethany area. <i>See report for more details.</i>
5	Kaiser Elementary School	Kaiser Road is a major road in the Bethany area.
15	Shin Sato Elementary School or Sato Elementary School	The Sato family were Japanese-Americans who lived and farmed on Brugger Road. Two sons served in World War II. <i>See report for more details.</i>

Community Suggestions for New K-5 Elementary School

Times Suggested	<u>Community Names</u>	Background and/or where name may be used in another Oregon or WA school
3	Abbey Creek Elementary School	Abbey Creek runs near the new school property
1	Anne Curry Elementary School	News journalist
1	Broughton Elementary School	
1	Cecelia Payne Elementary School	Early female astronomer who dispelled the long-held misconception that the stars and the sun were made of the same material as the Earth (1900-1979)
1	Deer Creek Elementary School	Deer Creek Elementary School in Tigard-Tualatin School District
1	Deer Field Elementary School	
1	Freedom Elementary School	
1	Hilltop Elementary School	Name of preschool and kindergarten at the Portland Christian Center
1	Lightwing Elementary School	
1	Pinecrest Elementary School	
1	Red Cedar Elementary School	Juniper tree common in Oregon
1	Snowy Owl Elementary	Special species rarely seen in Oregon, native to the Arctic tundra, Alaska and Eurasia
1	Trailhead Elementary School	Springville Road Trailhead
1	Union Elementary School	Union School was the first school in the Bethany area. Union Elementary School, Union, Oregon
1	Ziggurat Elementary School	Ziggurats were built by the ancient Sumerians, Babylonians, Elamites, Akkadians, and Assyrians for local religions; they were part of temple complex which included other buildings

Community Suggestions for New K-5 Elementary School

Times Suggested	<u>Honorary Names</u>	Background and/or where name may be used in another Oregon or WA school
1	Abigail Scott Duniway Elementary School	American women's rights advocate, newspaper editor and writer, whose efforts were instrumental in gaining voting rights for women (1834-1915); Duniway Elementary School, Portland, OR
4	Bortolin Elementary School	Former Officer Dan Bortolin served as a school resource officer in the Beaverton School District for several years; he died in 2004.
1	Boyd Applegarth Elementary School	Former Superintendent of the Beaverton School District for 19 years – 1970-1989
1	Denny Doyle Elementary School	Serves as the current Mayor City of Beaverton (2009-present)
1	George E. Russell Elementary School	Former Beaverton School District teacher, coach, principal and Assistant Superintendent (served 1951-1985)
1	I.R. Metzler Elementary School	Served as Superintendent of District 48- 1926-1944; Union HS District- 1944-1954
1	John Glenn Elementary School	First American astronaut to orbit the earth in 1962; U.S. Senator from Ohio (1974-1999)
1	Nisei Elementary School	Honors the Japanese heritage and contributions of many U.S. citizens; word means: a person born in the U.S. or Canada whose parents were immigrants from Japan
1	Owens-Adair Elementary School	Dr. Bethenia Owens-Adair, the first female physician in Oregon (1840-1926)

Closing

The North Bethany area has grown exponentially in the last decade. Like the early settlers, the area is now home to new immigrants who have come seeking freedom and economic opportunity. They seek a strong community, good schools and an array of services. This foundation was laid by the early pioneers who established the early Bethany community.

School names to consider: *(in alphabetical order)*

- Jacob Brugger or Brugger Elementary School
- Sato Elementary School
- Union Elementary School

Respectfully Submitted by:

Maureen Wheeler, APR, Public Communications Officer, Beaverton School District

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