

Schulte Golden Bear set to rise again

- By Arthur Foulkes/Tribune-Star can be reached at 812-231-4232 or arthur.foulkes@tribstar.com
Nov 19, 2014
-



Artist Bill Wolfe carves more texture into the cheek of the Schulte High School Golden Bear statue at his Ohio Street studio

Schulte High School closed its doors decades ago, but its alumni want the school's legacy to last for the ages.

Graduates of Schulte, which operated from 1953 to 1977 on the city's east side, are raising money to place a Golden Bear monument at the corner of Ohio Boulevard and 30th Street, site of the former co-educational Catholic school.

The memorial structure has already been

designed by Wabash Valley artist Bill Wolfe, and now Schulte grads are working to raise the money needed to finish the job.

"This is a big project," said Tom Newlin, a member of the Schulte class of 1967 and an organizer of the monument project along with Mike Eldred, class of 1966. "I think we can see the light at the end of the tunnel."

About two dozen Schulte alumni met at the Seventh and Elm Grill Tuesday night to discuss ways to raise the approximately \$40,000 needed for the project. They have already raised more than \$9,000, and an anonymous classmate from the class of 1965 has offered a \$5,000 matching gift.

But much more work is needed, organizers said. Members of various classes at Tuesday's meeting were asked to provide names and addresses of alumni who have left the area but may still want to help their former school.

"A lot of Schulte graduates are leaders in their communities," said Dave Thiemann of the class of 1969. "A great deal of us are very proud of the education we got at Schulte."

The Schulte mascot was a Golden Bear, and Wolfe has sculpted a six-foot bear for the monument out of clay. Once transformed into bronze, the Golden Bear will stand next to a four-foot wall bearing the school's name and shield.

Hulman and Co., which owns the property on which Schulte once stood, has granted a permanent easement for the monument, Eldred said. St. Patrick Church has agreed to serve as the not-for-profit sponsor for the project, allowing donations to be tax deductible. St. Patrick has also agreed to insure and maintain the monument in the future. As a result, Schulte grads want to present St. Patrick with at least \$5,000 for future expenses, organizers said.

Wolfe, who is perhaps best known for his Larry Bird sculpture at Hulman Center and Max Ehrmann at the corner of Seventh and Wabash, has been working on the project for more than three months, he said.

"I'm pleased with the way he came out," Wolfe said of the Golden Bear. "It's been a fun project to work on for me."

Schulte was named for the then-archbishop of Indianapolis, Paul C. Schulte when it opened in 1953 with 256 students. It would later grow much larger. The graduating class of 1967 had 143 students alone, Newlin said. The school served freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors. Enrollment declined in the 1970s and, for financial reasons, Schulte closed in 1977.

But the school's alumni want the legacy of their alma mater to live on.

"I'll be very proud to see it there," Thiemann said of the planned monument to his former school. "It's sort of a living memory."