

The Banks High School Alumni Foundation

Focus on Alumni

Don Caldwell (Banks '53)



Even though the community of Banks is relatively small, many Banks High School graduates have experienced success. They have made an impact not only on our community but also on this great country of ours. There are Banks graduates who, among other occupations, have become engineers, scientists, Court of Appeals Justices, mothers, lawyers, farmers, dentists, fathers, engineers, small and large business owners, loggers, military personnel, teachers, nurses, newscasters, truck drivers, barbers, financial planners, insurance agents, and even television stars. Some have moved away, while some have called Banks their home for their entire lives. We would like to highlight one graduate who has made a difference in people's lives. This year's alumni focus is on **Don Caldwell**.

Don graduated from Banks High School in 1953 and was drafted into the United States Army in 1957. After fulfilling his military duties serving in Germany, Don headed back to the family farm on Phil Road in the Manning area. He came back and stayed in the local area because Don says "it felt like home" and he liked living in the country and farming the land.

Don became the man with a thousand children. He started driving school bus for Mac Shafer in 1961 and spent the rest of the daylight hours farming on the family farm. He raised strawberries, black caps, hay and grain. To harvest these crops meant hiring labor. In those days that meant hiring kids. So besides having contact with all the students on the bus trips to and from school, he also worked with many of those same kids in the long summer months. When asked about Don Caldwell, parents still say, "He taught my kids how to work." Through the summers in the berry fields, Don taught not only

work ethic, but also how to get along with others. Many kids remember biking or walking to the fields, working in the sun all day, and the treat of Don driving them home after a long day's work. Don knew the benefit of hard work and understood that you may have to labor at jobs you didn't particularly like just to make ends meet, but you did what you had to do.

While graduating from Banks in 1953, Don says he did not do too well in school and he "barely got out." He knew, however, that he could help friends, neighbors and community members. Don still understands the importance of community and giving. He has remained active in many civic groups, including Banks High School Alumni Foundation, Sunset Park, Sunset Park Gun Club, Banks Union Point Cemetery, Banks Historical Society, and American Legion Post 90. One of his most memorable accomplishments was to be part of the founding of the Banks High School Alumni Foundation in 1988. The Foundation's mission is to provide scholarships to Banks graduates. Since its founding, 148 scholarships have been awarded, totaling \$217,000. To this day Don Caldwell is still helping raise the children of Banks. We applaud him.

*The message we want to share with you is that as you apply for scholarships to help with your college expenses, make sure you talk to the school counselor about scholarships offered by the **Banks High School Alumni Foundation**. Some of the scholarships are need based, while some are based on merit. You may qualify to be the recipient of any of nine scholarships the Foundation typically awards. **Please apply. We care about your future.***

*Sincerely,
Board of Directors
Banks High School Alumni Foundation*