

# Pflugerville High School Rock Gym receives a Texas historical marker

By Lauri Zachry [<https://www.statesman.com/article/20121017/NEWS/310179599>]

Posted Oct 17, 2012 at 12:01 AM Updated Sep 26, 2018 at 10:55 PM

Longtime Pflugerville community members shared memories of playing basketball in the district's Rock Gym during a Texas Historical Commission marker presentation Friday.

The Rock Gym lives up to its name – having a rocky interior and exterior of limestone. The gym, which was built for \$17,000 in 1934 through President Franklin Roosevelt's Works Progress Administration initiative, served as the only high school volleyball and basketball gym in the Pflugerville and Round Rock areas during this time, according to Friday's presentation.

Located at 700 W. Pecan St., it was next to the original two-story red brick Pflugerville High School built in 1921. In 1957, a tornado destroyed the two-story red brick high school, but the Rock Gym remained unharmed.

Norman Sansom, an alumnus of Pflugerville High School, said the historical marker at the Rock Gym is the 12th historical marker to be added in the Pflugerville school district. The Pflugerville High School alumni group donated \$1,500 to purchase the historical marker for the Rock Gym.

Bunny Oliver, who graduated from the high school in 1958, recalled her memories of the school and times in the Rock Gym. She had only 16 people in her graduating class, she said.

"The times in the Rock Gym represented a simpler time," she said. "It was kind of like Mayberry but with a German accent." During Friday's presentation Pflugerville Mayor Jeff Coleman read a proclamation honoring the high school's football players, who 50 years ago set a national record with 55 consecutive wins from 1958 to 1962. Team members scored 2,354 total points during that period and 30 of those victories were shutouts, he said.

"I want my kids to come back to Pflugerville 30 years from now and have the same pride for their school as you guys have today," he said. "Thank you for creating this wonderful legacy."

The Hendrickson Hawk Chorale led guests in the national anthem while the Pflugerville Middle School choir led a rendition of the Pflugerville High School alma mater to end the historical marker dedication.

---

## The historical marker reads as follows:

*German immigrants arrived in northeast Travis County in 1849. Education was highly valued, starting with lessons in the home. In 1872, a one-room school opened on the Henry Lisso farm. The school later moved to the Carrington Ranch. This and surrounding rural schools often had one teacher for all grades, with instruction in English and German. In 1907, a two-story white brick school opened in Pflugerville on property donated by George Pfluger. Three young ladies comprised the first graduating class in 1911 by completing the 11<sup>th</sup> grade. The school year lasted seven months, coinciding with the growing season. Early educators included Principal L.W. Land and teacher Emma Kuhn Johnson. Henry Bohls, J.W. Neese, John Klattenhoff, and E.W. Pfluger were among early trustees. After completing sixth grade in rural schools, most area students came to Pflugerville to attend high school.*

*In 1919, the Texas legislature created the Pflugerville Independent School District (PISD). After consolidation with Highland, Dessau, Center Point and Rowe, a two-story red brick school was built on this site in 1921. The second story featured an auditorium for presentations and community events. Separate campuses were established for African-American and Mexican-American pupils. A Works Progress Administration (WPA) camp in Pflugerville built the rock gym in 1934 which became a noted athletic venue. The Panthers football team, coached by cousins Charles and Hub Kuempel, set a national record with 55 consecutive wins from 1958-1962. Pflugerville schools integrated in 1965, and in 1973 a new high school campus was established west of this site. Nearly a century after its founding, the PISD serves more than 23,000 students on 29 campuses. Graduates continue to make a difference in their community, state, and nation.*