

HOOP DREAMS END

Canby basketball teams fall in first round of state playoffs this week
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Your Community Connection for 106 Years

“You can’t resolve any conflict without negotiations.”

Frederik de Klerk, former president of South Africa, on how to attain peace



Photo by Ray Hughey

President F.W. de Klerk of South Africa spoke before a crowd of more than 1,000 people that included Baker Prairie and Ninety-One School students Wednesday.

BY PEGGY SAVAGE
CANBY HERALD



Baker Prairie Peace Advocacy student Noah Snider, who was master of ceremonies at the school’s Peace Summit Wednesday, presents the first honorary Baker Prairie Peace Prize to President F. W. de Klerk of South Africa.

Despite the driving rain and bone-chilling wind Wednesday morning, President Frederik de Klerk of South Africa found a warm welcome in Canby.

Members of the Baker Prairie Middle School Student Peace Advocacy greeted the former president and Nobel Peace Prize recipient, escorting him to the library, where they held a brief dedication ceremony for the school’s new peace monument, “Pillars of Character.” Due to the weather, the ceremony, originally intended to be held beside the monument, was forced indoors. But students and co-principals Joel Sebastian and Jennifer Turner were able to explain to de Klerk the meaning of the monument, barely visible through rain-streaked library windows.

De Klerk promised to send a stone from South Africa to add to the monument.

“But the cost of sending such a big stone as your pillars would be too costly,” he quipped. “I will send a little stone.”

The former president was next welcomed to an assembly of more than 1,000 people, including some 300 community members, packed into the school gym to hear him speak.

Master of ceremonies Noah Snider, a Baker Prairie Peace Advocacy student, introduced de Klerk and the Baker Prairie eighth-grade band played a rousing rendition of the US national anthem under the direction of music teacher Don Feely.

And then, in the native languages of South Africa, the young voices of the school’s Eagle Choir presented the South African national anthem, directed by music teacher Keija Lee.

Students Bella Fenner and Maddie Linman described the mission of the newly established Baker Prairie Peace Advocacy: “Think globally, but act locally” to create world peace.

De Klerk, taking the podium, was visibly impressed by the students’ words and actions.

“I feel greatly honored by everything that has happened to me since I first set foot in your school,” he said.

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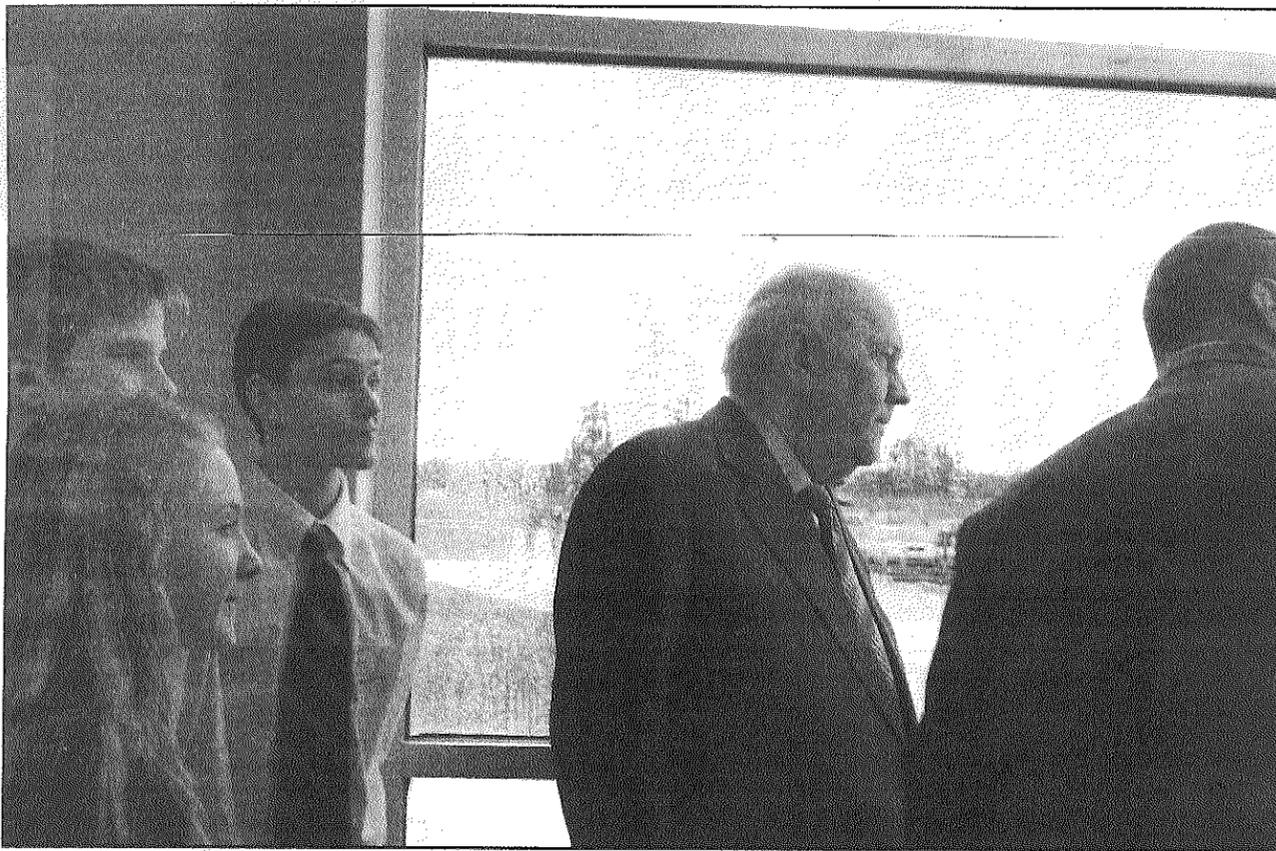


Photo by Peggy Savage

Cold wind and rain moved the Baker Prairie Peace monument dedication into the school library where Peace Advocacy students and Principal Joel Sebastian show President de Klerk — through rain-streaked windows — the school's new monument entitled "Pillars of Character" erected last week in front of the school. The former president of South Africa promised to send the students a stone from his homeland to add to the monument's three stone pillars.

Reactions to President de Klerk's message

BY PEGGY SAVAGE
CANBY HERALD

President F.W. de Klerk left the Baker Prairie campus accompanied by the combined voices of the Eagle Choir. And the stirring music may have augmented the reactions of Canby people to de Klerk's message.

Master of Ceremonies Noah Snider said, "I was really excited President de Klerk came to our school. Above all the places he could have chosen to go in Oregon, he chose the smallest town, Canby.

"Talking with him, it felt like I was a part of something big — so I felt bigger than I thought I was before. Being able to talk with the president of another country was amazing.

"He was a really nice guy," Noah said. "He made me feel good, because when I got done speaking, he said I did a good job, and I wouldn't have expected that from someone so famous."

Ava Mundy, another student who met with de Klerk and spoke at the event, said, "I'll remember this for the rest of my life. Although he was not our president, he is an important man because he does so many wonderful things for his country. I think what he said was important to students who want to make a difference in our country."

Canby resident Alice Merrill said, "For our community and school children, I think his message was really thrilling — how to resolve conflict, putting ourselves in the other person's shoes — he spoke in a way students could understand."

De Klerk: "I want a world without nuclear weapons."

"We live in a difficult world," de Klerk said. "But we have to make peace. In South Africa, we were at each other — there was conflict, and we were facing a low level civil war.

"It was not just about apartheid, we had conflict left from our old colonial days," he said. "We had racial issues. We were faced with possible catastrophe in South Africa. We had to make peace. My job was to lead the effort to make peace. And we had the opportunity of having Mandela, who was from the other side, also wanting peace.

"The odds were against us," he said. "If anyone asked in 1977 or 78 if there would be peace in South Africa, the answer would have been no. They all thought that peace would be impossible.

"One reason we succeeded was we found a way to make a peaceful transition, and that was in the peace negotiations," he continued. "You can't resolve any conflict without negotiations. Without negotiations, peace is not possible. But there's secret as to how to negotiate, and it helped in South Africa: The leaders of both sides prepared to put themselves in the shoes of our enemies.

"I had to say to myself, if I were Mandela, what would be my priorities. The concern, if I wanted to make peace with Mandela, I had to address their most important needs. But Mandela had to do the same thing. He asked himself, what are they afraid of, with the "One Person, One Vote." I had to think about what Nelson Mandela and I could do to address those concerns.

"And we did it," he said. "We found a compromise. We found a way to make peace in South Africa."

With Nelson Mandela's release from prison, hopes were pinned on serious negotiations that could lead to a new political order for South Africa. While the government, led by State President F.W. de Klerk, held all the powers of state, its weakness was that de Klerk realized the existing political system was no longer legitimate. Mandela and other black leaders went to the negotiating table without the powers of state in their hands. The two leaders, however, negotiated for a new political structure that gave the black population voting rights based on "one person, one vote."

De Klerk explained to the Canby audience how those negotiations were made possible.

"You need to ask yourself, what is troubling the person you want to make peace with and then address those worries," he said. "It worked in the case of South Africa. If you look at other countries now — where no peace is being reached — you find there are no negotiations being made. The leaders in those countries are not asking, 'What does my enemy

want?' Only by doing that, can you achieve peace."

Q and A: Three Baker Prairie Peace Advocacy students presented deKlerk with prepared questions.

Orlando Ocampo: The students at Baker Prairie appreciate your current efforts with your global leadership foundation to support developing nations across the globe. Regarding leadership, what message do you have for current students to help them take their places as future leaders of their communities and worlds?

De Klerk: "This sounds boring and old hat, but you can't become a leader without working hard. Some are born to leadership, but few. You have to go through the process of interacting with your fellow students and all human beings. You don't just get accepted as a leader, you earn it.

To be a good leader, you have integrity and realize you do not have all the qualities needed to be a perfect leader. So leaders must know what strengths and weaknesses they have — then a good leader will surround himself with other people who can bring their strengths to the table. So a good leader surrounds himself with good advisors.

Leadership in modern times means to build a strong team spirit, and within the team, you must convince everyone of your vision. A leader must have a vision. A leader must say, "This is what I want to achieve."

Ava Mundy: "We are about to initiate a school award modeled after the Nobel Peace Prize. Can you comment on your experience as a Nobel Peace Prize winner to offer encouragement to our students who might seek to be considered for a school prize?"

De Klerk: It's a very high honor to be given the Nobel Peace Prize. I didn't even know I was being considered. I got a call: 'You have been named a recipient of the Nobel Peace award with Nelson Mandela.' I almost fell over.

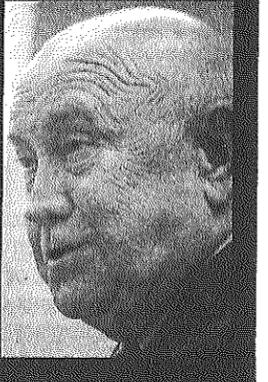
Receiving the award was such an honor and so important to me. It impressed me to continue what I had started. That is what the award meant to me.

Getting that recognition was important in my case — I had served in an apartheid government. I therefore had baggage from that — it was not popular. To be recognized, a leader of South Africa had to make the crucial decision to continue towards peace in South Africa. I had to be able to go back to the people and say, 'See, I was willing to make a sacrifice to make peace.'

So for you students to be considered for your Baker Prairie Peace Prize, you want to concentrate on what you are doing. If you do well, then you will be recognized by the selection committee."

"The issue of nuclear weapons is crucial, especially in light of what is happening in Iran and North Korea."

F. W. de Klerk
Former president, South Africa



Malek Friolo: Students at our school learned in class that you took the bold step to disband the nuclear weapons program in South Africa. How can we as youth use the wisdom of Nobel Laureates like you to create a movement to eliminate nuclear weapons?

De Klerk: "The issue of nuclear weapons is crucial, especially in light of what is happening in Iran and North Korea. I have gone on record, saying that I want a world without nuclear weapons." (The statement was met with a roaring applause from Baker Prairie students and guests.)

"That includes a United States without nuclear weapons, Great Britain without nuclear weapons, France without Nuclear weapons. Of course, it's impossible to suddenly disarm. What we need is new a negotiation program for a world without nuclear weapons. We need orderly inspections. The end goal worldwide is no country with nuclear weapons.

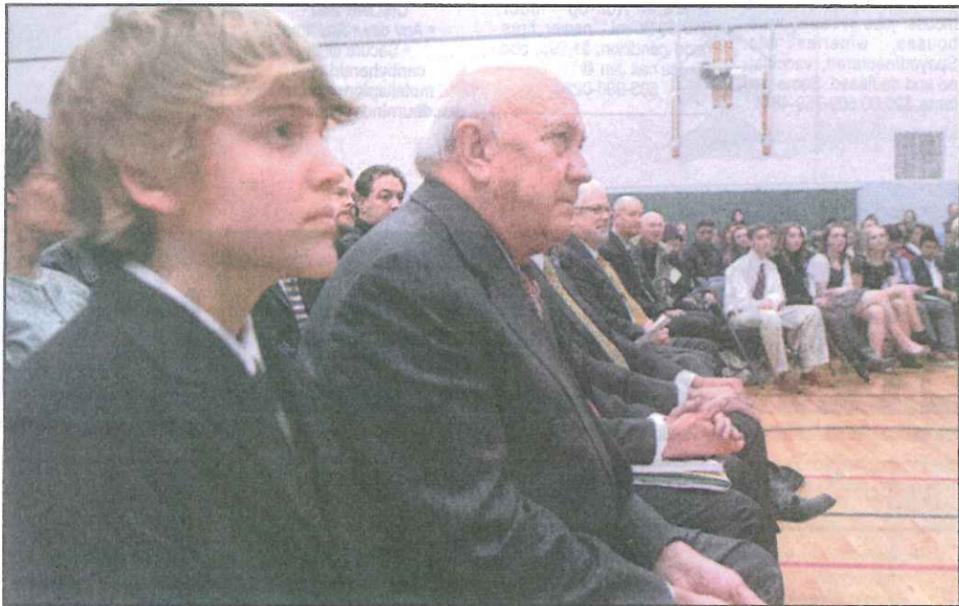
As students, directly, there is probably not much you can do. But ask your representatives in the House and Senate to do what is morally right. Shouldn't the United States take leadership in bringing the world leaders together and dispense the message no nuclear weapons for the world? This is a crucial issue. We need to bring the issue to the forefront. We need to mobilize public opinion."

Wholistic Peace Director Gary Spanovich gave credit to Baker Prairie Peace Advocacy teacher Tony Crawford for building the peace prize program at Baker Prairie and bringing de Klerk to Canby. "This event would not be possible without Tony Crawford," Spanovich told the assembly. "This is only the beginning. We want this curriculum to be taught by Oregon educators in all middle and high schools. So students are taught conflict negotiation skills and dialogue skills and are trained to be leaders. Then they can take those skills out into the world."



PEACE TALK

Former President F.W. de Klerk of South Africa came to Canby Wednesday for the Baker Prairie Middle School Peace Summit. De Klerk met with Peace Advocacy students, top left, stood at attention while the school's Eagle Choir sang South Africa's national anthem, above right; and listened to Baker Prairie students address the crowd of more than 1,000 people, below, with master of ceremonies Noah Snider, a Baker Prairie student. Right: Two Peace Advocacy students greet de Klerk during a dedication ceremony for the school's new peace monument.



Photos by Julie Smith, Peggy Savage and Ray Hughey