

1940s Clubs and Activities

If one has gone to Peoria High School, one knows that activities, clubs, and involvement is central to the philosophy of the school. The philosophy was an active mind can't get in trouble and leads students to keep the academics in good order also. This is what Peoria is about, INVOLVEMENT.

Clubs:

- Future Farmers of America (FFA) – Peoria was an agriculture community and this club was important from the first day of the high school opening. One of the top and most respected programs in the state.
- Girl's League – Since there were no organized athletics for girls between schools, this became an intramural program so girls met once or twice a week to compete.
- Letterman's Club – The club was organized to promote athletics and raise money through activities for athletic programs. One of their activities was to organize boxing matches during the school carnival.
- Peettes – They were a pep club for athletics. The only requirements were that you had to have a loud voice and that you would go and support the athletic teams.
- Athenian Society – The club was what we would call today the Honor Society. Good grades and character got you into the club.
- Hi – Y and Y- Teens – These were clubs that were organized and did a lot of activities through the YMCA and the YWCA. They were still active in the '60s.
- Home Economics Club – Organized through the home economics department, they conducted activities such as the Sadie Hawkins Day and other dances during the year.
- Band, Operetta, Boys and Girls Chorus – Though the school wasn't that big at the time there were a full array of clubs and activities involving music and voice.
- Annual Staff, Panther Purrs (Newspaper), and Student Government were active in the school community.

Activities:

- **Field Day** - This occurred in the spring and involved races and competition between the classes. There were boy teams and girls teams for each class. In the beginning, these were track events, but in later years there were events like egg tossing, cotton bail rolling, tire rolling, pie-eating, etc. It was all set up for competition and to unite the classes. One of the big races in the 1960s was the chariot races.
- **School Carnival** – Every fall the high school clubs and student government had a carnival on the baseball field. Moneymakers included things like the fish tank, penny toss, haunted house, raffles for cakes and hams, cake walks and the letterman’s club even had boxing.
- **Homecoming** - Each class built a homecoming float the week of homecoming and there were awards for the best float. A parade occurred in the afternoon with the floats leading the way. There was always a homecoming dance with a king and queen crowned.
- **Freshmen Initiation** – Freshmen girls and boys had to dress up in special ways and had to obey and do errands for the upperclassmen. The boys wore dresses, a hat and had one barefoot with a ribbon tied to it. The girls had to wear a skirt, a masculine shirt, a tie, and one high heel shoe. The boys also had to have curlers on one side of their head and the girls had to carry a doll and a baby bottle full of lemon juice. At the end of the day, there were gunny sack races and other fun activities.
- **Prom** - The tradition of the end of the year dress-up social event was alive and well during the 1940s. The Juniors organized the prom and it was preceded by a picnic or a banquet. One of the venues that was used was Encanto Park.
- **Senior Ditch Day** - The seniors would gather in their cars and drive to a destination for a day of fun and food. Many times they would drive to Prescott and enjoy a meal of sandwiches and potato salad and then hike and swim before returning in the afternoon.