

ATRIUM TOUR

(3) Roger Bacon Heritage Wall

This wall preserves and celebrates the rich history of Roger Bacon High School through a collection of significant historical artifacts and documents. Featuring **presidential signatures, commemorative resolutions, historic American flags**, and other treasured memorabilia, the display honors the school's enduring legacy, its contributions to the community, and the generations of Spartans who have shaped its proud tradition.

Displays include (left to right):

1. **President Gerald Ford Signed Congratulatory Picture**

On July 3, 1975, **President Gerald R. Ford** dedicated the National Environmental Research Center in Cincinnati, marking a pivotal milestone in the history of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in the city. Constructed at a cost of \$30 million on a 22-acre site donated by the City of Cincinnati, the facility is now known as the Andrew W. Breidenbach Environmental Research Center (AWBERC).

President Ford was joined for the dedication ceremony by EPA Administrator Russell E. Train and Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Chairman Russell W. Peterson. Following the dedication, the delegation traveled to the University of Cincinnati campus, where President Ford delivered a major address on the importance of balancing America's growing energy needs with environmental protection. During his remarks, President Ford described the new research center as an investment in the nation's future, declaring that the \$30 million laboratory sent a message to future generations: "America — Handle with Care!" The phrase became one of the most memorable lines from the day's events.

Music for the ceremony was provided by the **Roger Bacon Band** ("*Ruffles and Flourishes*" / "*Hail to the Chief*") and the Anderson High School Orchestra.

The 10-story research facility was designed as one of the EPA's largest research and development centers, with an initial focus on water research and advanced wastewater treatment technologies. The building was later renamed in honor of Dr. Andrew W. Breidenbach, the center's first director and a pioneering EPA Assistant Administrator whose leadership helped shape the agency's national research program.

Gerald Ford was the 38th President of the United States, serving from 1974 to 1977 after the resignation of Richard Nixon. He was the only person to become both vice president and president without being elected to either office. Ford focused on restoring public trust in government during the aftermath of the Watergate scandal.

During his presidency, Gerald Ford worked to restore public trust in the federal government after the Watergate scandal by emphasizing honesty, transparency, and integrity. He signed the Helsinki Accords, which improved relations between Eastern and Western Europe during the Cold War and promoted greater international

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cooperation. Facing rising inflation and economic difficulties, Ford introduced the "Whip Inflation Now (WIN)" campaign to encourage Americans to help reduce inflation through voluntary actions. One of the most controversial decisions of his presidency was granting a full pardon to Richard Nixon, believing it would help the nation heal and move forward after the Watergate crisis.

After leaving office, Ford continued to serve the public by promoting bipartisan cooperation, civic leadership, and public service through speeches and public appearances. He actively supported the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation, which encourages integrity, leadership, and civic responsibility among future generations. Together with his wife, Betty Ford, he helped raise awareness about breast cancer, addiction recovery, and women's health. Ford also remained a respected elder statesman, offering advice to future presidents and encouraging peaceful transitions of power throughout his retirement.

Gerald Ford is remembered for his efforts to heal a divided nation, strengthen trust in government, and promote civility and bipartisan leadership both during and after his presidency.

2. **Jimmy Carter Signed Commendation**

Jimmy Carter was the 39th president of the United States, serving from 1977 to 1981. Before becoming president, he was a peanut farmer, served in the U.S. Navy, and was governor of Georgia. Known for his honesty and commitment to public service, Carter focused on human rights, energy conservation, and peace during his presidency.

Carter's greatest achievement as president was helping negotiate the Camp David Accords in 1978. The agreement brought peace between Egypt and Israel after decades of conflict. This led to the first peace treaty between Israel and an Arab nation and remains one of the most important diplomatic successes in modern history.

After leaving office, Carter became widely respected for his humanitarian work through the Carter Center, which he co-founded in 1982. The organization has promoted democracy, monitored elections, fought diseases, and advanced human rights around the world. Carter also volunteered for many years with Habitat for Humanity, helping build homes for families in need. In 2002, he received the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts to promote peace, democracy, and human rights.

3. **Ohio House of Representatives Resolution**

Vernal G. Riffe Jr. (1925–1997). Vernal G. Riffe Jr. was one of the most powerful and longest-serving legislative leaders in Ohio history. He served in the Ohio House of Representatives from 1959 to 1994 and was Speaker of the House from 1975 to 1994, making him the longest-serving Speaker in Ohio history. His major accomplishments include:

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- Strengthening Ohio's legislative branch. Riffe transformed the House into a more professional institution by expanding staff support, committee expertise, and legislative research capabilities.
- Championing Appalachian Ohio. Representing southern Ohio, he secured major state investments in one of Ohio's most economically challenged regions.
- Supporting higher education. He was instrumental in obtaining funding that led to the growth of Shawnee State University in Portsmouth from a community college into a four-year university.
- Improving transportation infrastructure. Riffe was a leading advocate for construction of State Route 32 (Appalachian Highway), improving access and economic development across southern Ohio.
- Economic development. Throughout his tenure, he supported industrial recruitment, state capital improvements, and public investment in southeastern Ohio.

His influence is commemorated through several Ohio landmarks, including the Vern Riffe Center for Government and the Arts in Columbus and the Vern Riffe Center for the Arts in Portsmouth.

Terry M. Tranter, a Democrat from Cincinnati, represented Ohio House District 24 from 1976 through 1992, serving nearly 17 years. He was first appointed to complete the term of Jim Luken before winning election to eight consecutive full terms. His notable accomplishments include:

- Consumer protection in the motion picture industry. Tranter sponsored legislation prohibiting "blind bidding," a practice requiring theater owners to license films before viewing them. The legislation became a model for fairer business practices in Ohio's movie exhibition industry.
- Advocacy for Cincinnati and Hamilton County. During his tenure, he worked on legislation involving urban development, economic growth, and constituent services for the Cincinnati area.
- Long-term legislative leadership. Serving under Speaker Vern Riffe during much of his career, Tranter became known as an experienced legislator involved in commerce, regulatory, and public policy issues affecting southwestern Ohio.
- Bipartisan legislative work. Colleagues recognized him for his practical approach to policymaking and willingness to work across party lines on legislation affecting business and local government.

Both men left lasting marks on Ohio government. Vernal G. Riffe Jr. is remembered for reshaping the Ohio House into a modern legislative institution and directing significant public investment toward Appalachian Ohio. Terry M. Tranter is remembered for his long service to Cincinnati, his work on consumer protection legislation, and his contributions to Ohio public policy during nearly two decades in the General Assembly.

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4. Ronald Reagan Signed Congratulatory Picture

President Ronald Reagan famously delivered a speech at Fountain Square in downtown Cincinnati, Ohio, on August 20, 1984. During his "Reagan-Bush '84" campaign stop, the President spoke at an outdoor campaign rally for the Reagan-Bush '84 Committee following a tour of the nearby Procter & Gamble World Headquarters. Reagan praised the city's economic turnaround, emphasized patriotism, economic recovery, and called on local voters to back Republican candidates in the upcoming fall elections. The **Roger Bacon Band** played "*Hail to the Chief*" at the ceremony – quite an honor for a non-military band.

Ronald Reagan was the 40th president of the United States, serving from 1981 to 1989. Before entering politics, he was a radio broadcaster, a Hollywood actor, and president of the Screen Actors Guild. He later served as governor of California from 1967 to 1975 before being elected president.

Reagan is best known for helping bring an end to the Cold War through a combination of military strength and diplomacy with Mikhail Gorbachev. He also signed major tax cuts and promoted economic policies that became known as "Reaganomics."

After leaving office, Reagan remained an influential public figure. In 1994, he announced that he had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. His openness about the illness helped raise public awareness and support for Alzheimer's research. His legacy continues through the Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation and Institute, which promotes education, leadership, and the study of his presidency.

5. Flag of Honor

The Flag of Honor displayed was **donated to Roger Bacon by faculty member Maria Waltherr-Willard**. It is an official commemorative flag created to honor the memory of every individual who lost their life in the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. The names of the victims from the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and United Airlines Flight 93 and American Airlines Flights 11, 77, and 175 are permanently woven into the red and white stripes of the American flag. The flag also memorializes the six victims of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, recognizing that tragic event as part of the history that preceded September 11th.

Created as a lasting tribute to those who perished, the Flag of Honor has become a **powerful symbol of remembrance, unity, and resilience**. Unlike traditional memorials, it carries the names of every victim together in a single American flag, ensuring that each life is remembered equally and forever connected.

The significance of the Flag of Honor extends beyond remembrance. It serves as a solemn reminder of the courage displayed by first responders, the selflessness of ordinary citizens, and the enduring strength of a nation united in the face of tragedy. Displayed at memorial ceremonies, educational events, and places of honor throughout

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the United States and around the world, the Flag of Honor inspires present and future generations to never forget the lives lost, to honor the heroes who answered the call, and to uphold the ideals of freedom, service, and national unity.

6. **American Flag – Flown Over the United States Capital**

Having a flag flown over the United States Capitol is one of the nation's most meaningful civic honors. **It transforms an ordinary American flag into a symbol of the country's democratic institutions and constitutional heritage.** Once the flag has flown above the Capitol, it becomes a tangible reminder of the place where Congress meets, national laws are enacted, and decisions are made that shape the history and future of the United States.

For decades, members of Congress have arranged for flags to be flown over the Capitol on behalf of their constituents to commemorate significant people and events. Flags are commonly requested to honor military service, recognize first responders, celebrate retirements, graduations, Eagle Scout and Gold Award achievements, weddings, anniversaries, birthdays, and other important milestones. They are also flown in memory of loved ones or to recognize extraordinary contributions to a community or the nation.

Each Capitol-flown flag is accompanied by an official Certificate of Authenticity issued through the office of the requesting member of Congress. The certificate identifies the date the flag was flown and the individual or occasion it commemorates, providing a permanent record of its significance. This documentation distinguishes it from a standard American flag purchased from a retailer, giving it both historical and personal value.

The tradition reflects the ideals upon which the United States was founded. The United States Capitol is more than an iconic building; it is the seat of the legislative branch of the federal government and a symbol of representative democracy. A flag that has flown above the Capitol represents the enduring principles of liberty, self-government, and public service. It serves as a reminder that the nation's laws are created through the voices of elected representatives and that every citizen shares in the responsibilities and privileges of American democracy.

Because of this symbolism, a Capitol-flown flag often becomes a cherished family heirloom. Whether displayed in a home, school, veterans' organization, or public building, it stands as a lasting tribute to achievement, sacrifice, and service. For many recipients, it is not simply a flag—it is a visible connection to the ideals of the Constitution, the history of the United States, and the enduring legacy of the nation's democratic institutions.

This particular flag was flown at the request of the Honorable **Steve Chabot, Member of Congress**, in recognition of the Roger Bacon High School Marching Band. Steve Chabot is an American attorney and former Member of Congress who represented

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Ohio's 1st Congressional District as a Republican for 26 years over two separate periods, serving from 1995 to 2009 and again from 2011 to 2023. A lifelong resident of Cincinnati, Chabot earned a bachelor's degree from the College of William & Mary and a law degree from the Salmon P. Chase College of Law at Northern Kentucky University before beginning his career in public service.

Prior to his election to Congress, Chabot served on the Cincinnati City Council and as a Hamilton County Commissioner. During his time in the U.S. House of Representatives, he served on the House Judiciary Committee and the House Foreign Affairs Committee and chaired the House Small Business Committee during the 114th and 115th Congresses. Throughout his congressional career, Chabot focused on issues including economic development, small business growth, fiscal responsibility, and international affairs.

7. American Flag – 101st Airborne Division, Operation Iraqi Freedom

Donated by an **anonymous Roger Bacon alum**, a limited-edition American flag accompanied by a certificate stating that it was carried by Task Force 1-327 Infantry Regiment during Operation Iraqi Freedom represents far more than a commemorative keepsake. It is a tangible piece of American military history, symbolizing the service, sacrifice, and dedication of the soldiers who deployed with one of the U.S. Army's most distinguished combat units. The 101st Airborne Division, known worldwide as the "Screaming Eagles," has earned an enduring reputation for courage and excellence through its service in conflicts ranging from World War II to Iraq and Afghanistan. Within that storied division, Task Force 1-327 Infantry Regiment carries its own proud legacy, tracing its heritage to the famed "Bastogne" Regiment.

During Operation Iraqi Freedom VI, which encompassed the 2007–2009 deployment cycle, Task Force 1-327 conducted demanding counterinsurgency and security operations throughout Iraq. Soldiers carried out combat patrols, protected local communities, partnered with Iraqi Security Forces, and worked to create conditions for long-term stability. A flag carried by the unit during this deployment accompanied these soldiers as they served in a combat environment, making it a meaningful artifact directly connected to a significant period in modern military history.

The accompanying certificate serves as the flag's authentication and provenance. It verifies that the flag was carried by the designated unit during its deployment and distinguishes it from commercially produced commemorative flags. Original certificates often include deployment dates, the operation's name, and the signatures of commanding officers or other unit leaders, providing an official record of the flag's military connection. This documentation significantly enhances both the historical importance and collectible value of the flag.

For veterans, military families, and historians, such a flag carries profound symbolic meaning. It represents the commitment and sacrifices of the men and women who served overseas under difficult and often dangerous conditions.

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Rather than being valued solely as a collectible, it stands as a tribute to those who wore the uniform and a reminder of the shared experiences, challenges, and accomplishments of the soldiers who carried it.

Because of its documented association with the 101st Airborne Division and Task Force 1-327 Infantry Regiment, a flag of this nature is regarded as a meaningful military artifact. Preserved together with its original certificate, it serves not only as an enduring symbol of patriotism and military service but also as a lasting historical record of the dedication and professionalism demonstrated by American soldiers during Operation Iraqi Freedom VI.