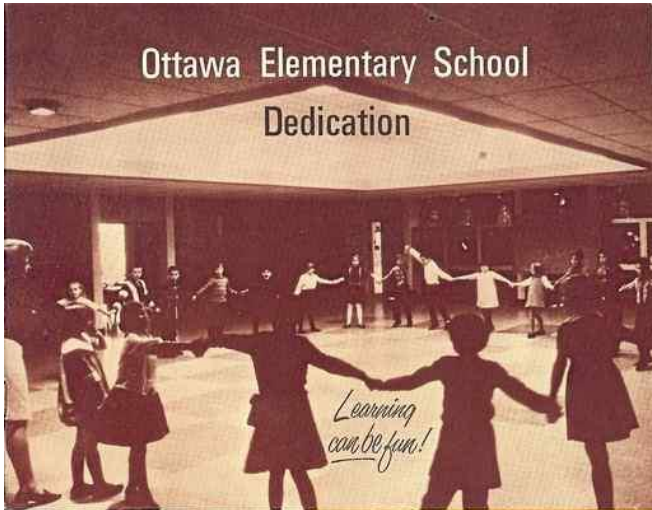


# Chippewa Valley School Ottawa celebrates 50 years



On May 18, Ottawa Elementary School in Clinton Township will celebrate its 50th anniversary. Pictured is Ottawa Elementary's 1968 building dedication. Photo courtesy of OTTAWA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

By Nicole Tuttle, For The Macomb Daily

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Ottawa Elementary School, a Chippewa Valley Schools building, will host a 50th anniversary event on May 18. Nicole Tuttle — For The Macomb Daily

As Americans reeled from the turbulence of 1968's Tet Offensive in the Vietnam War as well as the assassinations of Robert F. Kennedy and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., locally some teachers were organizing makeshift classrooms until Ottawa Elementary School completed construction.

Ottawa Elementary School, which is part of the Chippewa Valley Schools district and located in Clinton Township, will celebrate its 50th anniversary this year. Current Ottawa Principal Duane Lockhart said that one of Ottawa Elementary School's original teachers recalled that classes had to begin before all the rooms of the school were completed.

"She actually had kindergarten in the basement of a church in Mount Clemens. They would take down the religious items on Monday and put them back up on Friday," Lockhart said.

Ottawa Elementary School will play host to a 50th anniversary celebration May 18 from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. Ottawa Elementary School is located at 18601 Millar in Clinton Township. Alumni, alumni parents, staff and former staff are invited to attend the free open house with an RSVP to Ottawa Elementary School Administrative Assistant Pam Infante at [PInfante@cvs.k12.mi.us](mailto:PInfante@cvs.k12.mi.us) or by contacting the school during regular school hours of 8:33 a.m. to 3:18 p.m. at 586-723-6600.

Current Chippewa Valley Schools Superintendent Ron Roberts will speak at the event, and retired principals of the school will also be asked to share stories of their time at Ottawa, according to Lockhart. Décor will include pictures of past fifth grade graduating classes, Lockhart said.

“Some of the retired teachers are coming in this week to help prepare for the celebration, getting pictures together and things like that,” Lockhart said.

Current students are also developing several ways to mark the school’s anniversary during May, according to Lockhart. One method is the development of time capsules with information about the present day and predictions for the future. Lockhart said he is planning to make a capsule himself, and that the capsules will be hidden in school rooms six inches above the cupboards or buried.

“The children are making time capsules for each grade level. They are doing a lip dub song for the celebration, and we’ll make a big 50 in the parking lot with students and parents,” Lockhart said.

Today, the school has about a 400-student population, and most fifth graders take the next steps in their educational careers at Chippewa Valley schools Algonquin Middle School and Chippewa Valley High School, according to Lockhart. Both schools are located in Clinton Township.

“I’ve been here 14 years, and so it really is some of the bond issues that we have had that have allowed us to expand the building, to allow for a full sized gym, a brand new science room/discovery room, expanded front office,” Lockhart said.