

The Oregon Caveman

North of the [Redwood Highway](#) and California, an imposing representation of primitive man has guarded the entrance to Grants Pass since 1971, when the town's "Caveman Club" erected him. The caveman is 17 feet tall, on a rock pedestal. He was created by International Fiberglass to celebrate a strange brand of town boosterism that started in 1922. Local businessmen would don furs and animal skins, marching down Main Street brandishing their ceremonial spiky caveman clubs. The activity was to promote caverns at nearby Cave Junction.

In a traumatic event for Grants Pass, the caveman was torched by a couple of teenage morons in 2004. But the town rallied, repaired the statue, and had it back on its pedestal the following year.

Decades of economic evolution have buffeted the resident Neanderthal, leaving him on a small square of grass among fast food outlets. You're unlikely to find the mayor in bears skins nowadays, much less a civic-minded store clerk dragging a realtor by her hair. But the high school teams still compete as the Cavemen, and pride remains strong. As tipster Holly M. wrote us in April 2010: "NO ONE in GP is embarrassed by the statue! We are a proud city and proud of our caveman. Growing up one who loved here couldn't wait till we would be old enough to be Caveman or Cave Woman. One of the proudest days of my life was when I was able to graduate from GP High as a Caveman!"

In 2014, a tree that had blocked the Caveman from public view was cut down, and the statue received a full makeover at a local auto body shop. [<https://www.roadsideamerica.com/story/2194>]



The Oregon Caveman Club of Grants Pass, a boisterous group of civic boosters, formed in 1922. Although less active and notorious today, the club still meets regularly in Grants Pass. [<http://archive.ijpr.org/Feature.asp?FeatureID=89>]

