

Downtown Mural

Stevens Point's Ten Most Influential Citizens



Kelly Meredith painted the mural titled, "Stevens Point's Ten Most Influential Citizens" on the east side of 1140 Clark St. (on the corner of Clark and Strongs Ave.) in 2008 to celebrate the City of Stevens Point's Sesquicentennial. The individuals in this mural were voted the most influential because of their contributions to Stevens Point. Although none of them is living today, their influence remains. Their names are on street signs, buildings, and parks in and around Stevens Point.

The names of the people featured on this mural, and brief descriptions of their contributions to Stevens Point, are on the following pages.



1. **Fred Schmeeckle (1893-1967)** Fred Schmeeckle taught at the Stevens Point Normal School, now UW-SP, and created the first conservation education major there. The reserve located on the north end of campus is named after him.
2. **Jules Iverson (1857-1939)** Jules Iverson was a jeweler who became one of the wealthiest businessmen in Stevens Point and donated much of his wealth to the community. Iverson is most well known today for the park that is his namesake, to which he donated 60 acres of land.
3. **K. B. Willett (1901-1994)** Kenneth B. Willett, who normally went by his initials K. B., lived his life by the motto, "Put more into the community than you take out." It was this motto that helped Willett deepen the sense of community that is still felt in Stevens Point today.
4. **Reverend Mother Mary Felicia Jaskulski (1866-1942)** Rev. Mother Mary was one of the founders of the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Third Order of St. Francis and helped create its convent on the city's north side. Being true to her Polish heritage, Rev. Mother Mary helped many Polish immigrants adjust in the new world without losing their roots.
5. **Lee Sherman Dreyfus (1926-2008)** As President of Wisconsin State University-Stevens Point, Lee Sherman Dreyfus played a major role in helping merge the school into the University of Wisconsin System. He became Chancellor of UW-SP in 1972 and served as governor of Wisconsin from 1979 to 1983. The UW-SP University Center is now named after him.



6. **Ruth Gilfry (1906-1974)** Ruth Gilfry was the first Portage County public health nurse and pioneered the public health nursing program, protecting and promoting the health of all citizens. The Ruth Gilfry Center on the southwest side of Stevens Point is home to the Portage County Health and Human Services department.
7. **Albert G. Ellis (1800-1885)** As a land surveyor and the man who started the first newspaper, "The Wisconsin Pinery," in Stevens Point, Ellis played a central role in developing the city, paving the way for many that would follow. Ellis St. is a block south of the mural.
8. **John Bukolt (1869-1929)** John Bukolt was an inventor who founded one of Stevens Point's top manufacturing businesses of its time, which made automatic cradles for children. Bukolt Park is located on the west end of Bukolt Ave. on the city's north side.
9. **John Joanis (1918-1985)** John Joanis became the Vice President, President, and then Chief Executive Officer of what is now Sentry Insurance. He helped create Sentryworld, the golf course and recreation facility located at the company's headquarters on far the north side of Stevens Point. Lake Joanis, located in Schmeckle Reserve, was created by the excavation of soil needed for building the new headquarters.
10. **Peter J. Jacobs (1869-1936)** Peter J. Jacobs worked for Hardware Mutual Insurance and helped expand the company nationally. The Hardware Mutual building (now Sentry Insurance) where Jacobs worked is on the southeast corner of Clark and Strongs, opposite the building on which this mural is painted. P. J. Jacobs Jr. High is located on the corner of Main St. and Michigan Ave.