

Edited by William L. Sherman

Tributes to Iowa Teachers

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1996



TRIBUTES TO IOWA TEACHERS

*People nurture the soil to bring forth its greatest abundance
as teachers and schools nurture students to bring forth
their greatest potential.*

*Tree Planting Group,
by Grant Wood, 1937.*



Tributes to

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS *and the*

Iowa Teachers

Edited by William L. Sherman

IOWA STATE EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

WILLIAM L. SHERMAN, APR, is the Public Relations Specialist for the Iowa State Education Association.

FRONT COVER: *Arbor Day*. Grant Wood, 1932. Oil on masonite panel, 24" × 30". Commissioned by the Cedar Rapids Community School District as a memorial to Catherine Motejl and Rose L. Waterstradt, teachers at William McKinley Junior High School, where Grant Wood also taught. Reproduced by permission of the Cedar Rapids Community School District.

BACK COVER: *Young Corn*. Grant Wood, 1931. Oil on masonite panel, 24" × 29½". Commissioned by the Cedar Rapids Community School District as a memorial to Linnie Schloeman, a teacher at Woodrow Wilson Junior High School. Reproduced by permission of the Cedar Rapids Community School District.

FRONTISPIECE: *Tree Planting Group*. Grant Wood, 1937. Charcoal, pencil and chalk on paper, 24½" × 28". Developed from a preparatory drawing for *Arbor Day*. Reproduced by permission of the Cedar Rapids Community School District.

QUOTE ON PAGE ii: John C. Fitzpatrick, Cedar Rapids Community School District.

Designed by Bob Campbell

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Contents

PREFACE *by William L. Sherman* viii

A TRIBUTE TO TEACHERS EVERYWHERE *by Garrison Keillor* xii

IOWA TEACHERS *by Ted Stilwill* xiv

Tributes to Iowa Teachers 3

ALPHABETICAL BY SCHOOL DISTRICT

“TEACHERS” *by Carolyn Warner* 197

INDEXES *School Districts* 199

Iowa Teachers 200

Contributors 202

Student Artists and Their Teachers 204

Preface

Many who read this book will recall the scene from *Mr. Holland's Opus* where he helps a young girl learn to play the clarinet. As the girl struggles, Mr. Holland asks: "What do you like best about yourself?"

The girl says it is her red hair. Her father has told her it reminds him of the sunset, she explains. "Then play the sunset," Mr. Holland admonishes.

In this book of teacher tributes, Iowans and former Iowans of all ages with a wide range of ages, occupations, backgrounds, and experiences share how their teachers motivated them by encouraging them to "play the sunset." Reading these expressions of gratitude helps one better appreciate the influence our teachers have had on us and on our society at large. For example, a former Bedford student recounts how lessons learned in elementary school have influenced the teaching methods he uses at the Yale University Medical School.

It is important to note that most of these testimonials were solicited. We asked presidents of our local affiliates to suggest individuals ISEA could contact. ISEA also developed a contact list. Some contributors appeared on both lists. One writer, who learned about this project from a friend who had been asked to write a testimonial, requested and was granted the opportunity to write a testimonial.

ISEA decided to produce this book of tributes and a companion student video to help support and contribute to Iowa's sesquicentennial observance. In a proposal submitted to the Iowa Sesquicentennial Commission we suggested that "through these tes-

timonials Iowans should have a greater understanding and appreciation of the role teachers and schooling played in the development of our state." The Commission agreed and endorsed the Teacher Testimonial project.

Arbor Day, the painting featured on the front cover, was produced by Grant Wood, Iowa's best-known artist and a former Cedar Rapids teacher and University of Iowa faculty member. Wood painted his famous Arbor Day scene for the Cedar Rapids Community School District as a tribute to two Cedar Rapids teachers concerned about environmental issues. They were Catherine Motejl and Rose Waterstradt. They both taught with Wood at William McKinley School. Wood took the *Arbor Day* painting with him and displayed it in an exhibit in Chicago, where it was sold. He agreed to paint another Arbor Day scene for the school district. *Tree Planting Group*, the refined charcoal and chalk study print displayed on the frontispiece, was as far as he got with the "second" Arbor Day scene.

Another Grant Wood painting, *Young Corn*, ap-



Catherine Motejl, Rose Waterstradt, and Grant Wood (arrows, left to right) at a McKinley School faculty breakfast in 1923. Courtesy of Cedar Rapids Community School District Archives, William McKinley School.

appears on the back cover of the book. *Young Corn* was commissioned by the Cedar Rapids Community School District in 1931 when students at Woodrow Wilson School mounted an extensive penny campaign to help pay for a painting to memorialize teacher Linnie Schloeman, whom they felt embodied the ideal of rural Iowa as depicted in Wood's work. A rendering of *Young Corn* was used as the official Iowa Sesquicentennial commemorative stamp, which the U.S. Postal Service issued August 1, 1996, in Dubuque.

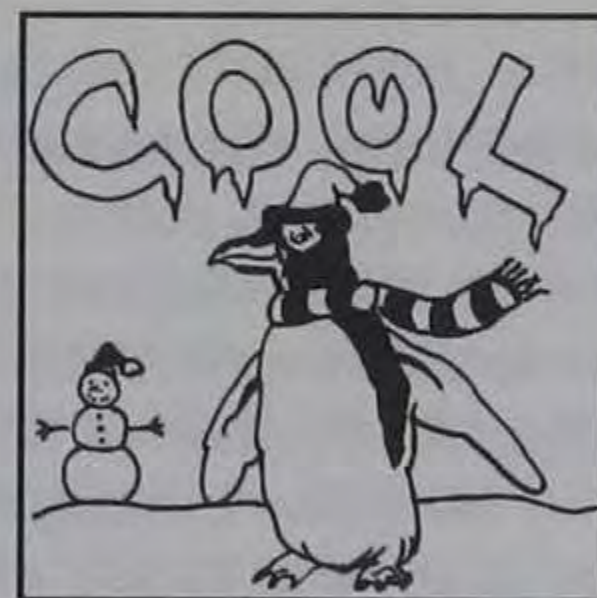
The other drawings used to illustrate this book (the first one is reproduced on the next page) were created by Iowa students for the annual "Design A Decal" competition sponsored by the ISEA and Art Educators of Iowa. This program was organized to give recognition to young artists and to support art education. Winning designs are printed in sheets of 48 by ISEA and are provided to teachers to use to provide positive feedback to students and parents. Somehow it seems appropriate to give students a chance to provide an expression of appreciation to Iowa teachers. Student artists and their teachers are identified in an index at the back of this book.

Originally, ISEA had planned a limited, self-publication of this collection. A reading of the first tributes to arrive at ISEA seemed to indicate that they might be of interest to a broader audience. The early manuscripts and publication ideas were shared with the representatives from Iowa State University Press. They also felt a broader audience would find this collection appealing. For this we are grateful. It will allow us

to help more people better understand and appreciate contributions made by Iowa teachers.

As we near the end of Iowa's sesquicentennial observance and approach the beginning of a new century, it seems right to honor teachers with this publication and to see that it is shared as widely as possible. ISEA views this book as a tribute to all Iowa teachers, who have helped make our system of public education the best in the world.

William L. Sherman, APR
PUBLIC RELATIONS SPECIALIST
IOWA STATE EDUCATION ASSOCIATION



1

A Tribute to Teachers Everywhere

I had a hard time learning how to read, but my first-grade teacher, Estelle Shaver, was very much a genius. She was a stout woman, who favored navy-blue dresses. Sleeveless. She stood at the blackboard and wrote vigorously with large, loopy handwriting. Parts of her upper arms seemed almost alive. Auxillary arms. We gave them names.

It was a classroom like thousands of other classrooms. Lincoln and Washington looked down from high above the blackboard at us. On the bulletin board, there were cheerful displays of fall leaves and spatter-paintings.

Miss Shaver taught me to read by the simple expedience of asking me if I would be so good as to stay after school and read aloud as she corrected worksheets. She told me that I had such a lovely voice, and she loved to hear me read more than she had a chance to in the classroom.

She managed to save my life. I had a problem, and she managed to solve it with-

by Garrison Keillor

out ever making me think I was in trouble. I did her a great favor of entertaining her, and in this way I got educated. It was for Estelle Shaver that all the children of Lake Wobegon are above average.

There were many teachers. Helen Story and Lois Melby and Helen Fleishman, who made us memorize poems. There was Miss Moehlenbrock, who taught us, in the fourth grade, about Frankie and Johnny, who were lovers, and Lord how they could love. He was her man, but he was doing her wrong. We loved to say those lines in the fourth grade, but we hardly understood what "doing her wrong" meant.

He was her man, but he was doing her wrong. That's why she pulled that 44 out. ... It was exciting stuff. Sex and violence, and we loved to hear about it. It was Miss Moehlenbrock who taught us meter—and the poetry of Emily Dickinson—by showing us what I've never forgotten: that most of Emily's poems can be sung to the tune of "The Yellow Rose of Texas."

These people gave me my life. Since I left school, I have been pursuing the life of writing and books, and so it is my pleasure and my duty to stand up for public education when it comes under attack.

Iowa Teachers

I have been fortunate. Many teachers have influenced my life, both personally and professionally. As a student, I was positively impacted by many teachers from kindergarten through high school. It would be too hard to single out just one.

However, from a professional standpoint, several outstanding teachers have shaped me as a teacher, as a school administrator, and today as an education administrator in state government. This may be a different way of looking at teacher influence, but for me the personal impact of these individuals has been substantial indeed.

Most of us have mixed feelings about our first year of teaching. My first year was also the first year of an "open concept" elementary school, and about half of the staff were first- or second-year teachers. Those of us in the intermediate unit (grades four through six) were forever thankful for Vickie Bastron (later Vickie Richards). Physically diminutive, Vickie was our mentor, our cheerleader, and our drill sergeant. She was intense. Intense in the way she organized all aspects of complicated team-teaching environments. Intense in her dislike for winter playground supervision. But most of all, intense in her commitment to the learning needs of kids and setting expectations for "difficult" kids that no one but Vickie could have helped them to achieve.

It took several teachers to help me to understand that education is a truly developmental process. They showed me that teaching needs to flex to meet the needs of kids and not the other way around. Marie Scott was a special education teacher who

could work with a child for a day or two and then describe with great clarity and simplicity how the physical, social, cognitive, and emotional development of that child had interacted to bring him to his present educational circumstance. Peg Shea understood early adolescent kids so well that she could always find ways to help them succeed. As a ninth grade English teacher, Linda Gardner knew that a highly structured environment was exactly what some kids needed—especially those that, just a few years later, would have been considered behaviorally disabled.

If you've never worked in a team-teaching situation, you can't imagine the professional learning and support that can take place when you share a group of students and their instruction program with one or more colleagues. You learn that another team member may have the "key" to a student that you just couldn't reach. If you team with really great teachers, then a little of that technique has a chance to rub off. You can get instant feedback and very meaningful support. It's the most professional experience possible. I was fortunate to work with Jean Blumgren (later Jean Ives) and Judy Jeffrey in a very positive team-teaching relationship.

It is difficult to maintain strong relationships with practicing teachers when you work in state government. But for several years I was able to work closely with the individual who was selected as Iowa Teacher of the Year and served as Ambassador for Education the following year. Pam Johnson, a former sixth grade teacher who is now director of educational television for Iowa Public Television, was the first Ambassador and helped to get the program organized. She is still teaching when she presents to

legislative committees and others about the Iowa Communications Network. Nancy Mounts has transferred her commitment to her classes of family living students to a regional commitment, helping students succeed through Tech Prep and School-to-Work. If there is a way to get support for a program that kids need, Nancy will find it. Pam, Nancy, and other great teachers in the Ambassador program have helped to keep me involved with teaching through their own teaching experiences and through all they learned traveling and meeting with teachers across the state.

There is much risk in only listing a few of the teachers who have been a great and positive personal influence for me. There are certainly many more. I will continue to be influenced by these professionals and other great educators who are the heart of Iowa's educational system.

Ted Stilwill

DIRECTOR, IOWA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

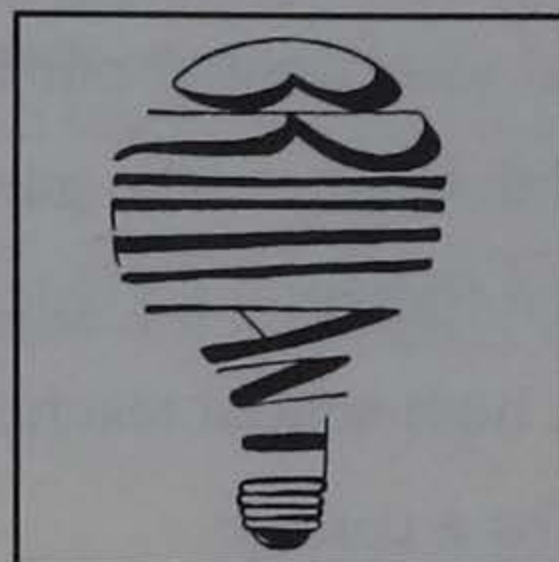
THINK BACK to when you were in school.

Maybe it was that first grade teacher who made you feel excited about coming to school. Maybe it was a third grade teacher who helped you conquer cursive writing. Or maybe it was the junior high teacher who gave you an "A" on that special speech, even though your voice was changing. Perhaps it was that high school teacher who helped you decide on a career or a college.

Everyone can think of at least one special teacher who made school important: A person who gave you that little extra push and that little extra confidence. Someone who cared about you and made a difference in your life.



2



3



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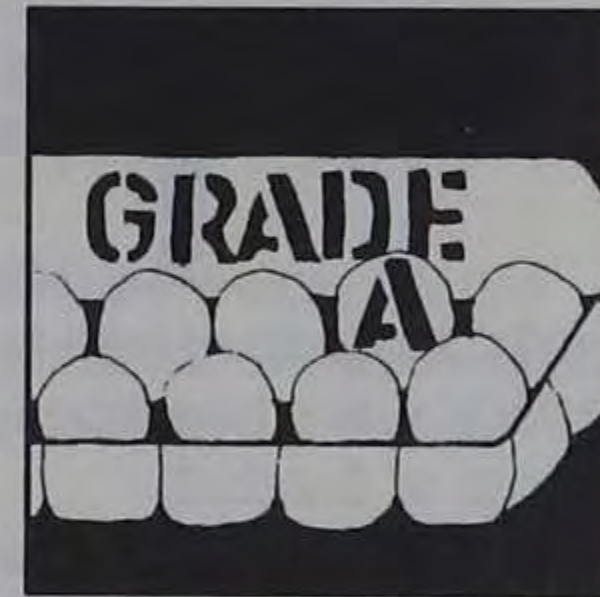
TRIBUTES TO IOWA TEACHERS



5



6



7

Bob Gress

ADAIR-CASEY JUNIOR-SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL



8

It was not the scheduled lesson plan, but the eighth-grade girls' request was an earnest one.

The class was physical education, and the instructor was Bob Gress, who was also a science and driver's education teacher and girls' basketball and track coach. Those girls who were eighth graders in the late 1960s were begging him to break tradition and teach females the mysterious concepts of football.

Probably, Gress was unable to mask his amusement.

Anyway, he scrapped his prepared lesson plans, and we played football. That particular day, Gress taught us about first downs and punts and quarterback sneaks. But through the rest of my junior high and high school years at Adair-Casey Community Schools, Gress taught my classmates and me a great deal more.

Somehow, through the emotional challenges of both dealing with teenagers and coaching sports, Gress continually maintained a calm, patient demeanor. When students disobeyed instructions, he taught that discussion was a more effective remedy than shouted reprimands. When the score was tied with 10 seconds left on the

clock, he taught that clear, methodical planning was a more effective tactic than panic.

If a request was reasonable, Gress considered it. If an argument was valid, he acknowledged it. If a rule was rational, he respected it—but if it called for an exception, he allowed it.

Take, for example, the case of the freshman girl who was never an outstanding runner, but who worked hard right along side the rest of the track team. All spring she stumbled through courses of wooden hurdles, suffering banged-up ankles and cinder-scraped knees, but sometimes earning a third- or fourth-place ribbon in a race. Still, she finished the season shy of the number of points required to earn a school letter.

Then, on the day the awards were given, Coach Gress announced a new clause in his rules allowing a runner who had placed in a conference meet (or something of that nature) to be awarded a letter. Suddenly, the less-than-glorious runner had qualified.

Through his integrity, fairness, patience, and caring in dealing with young people, Bob Gress represented standards that today I, as a parent, strive to model.

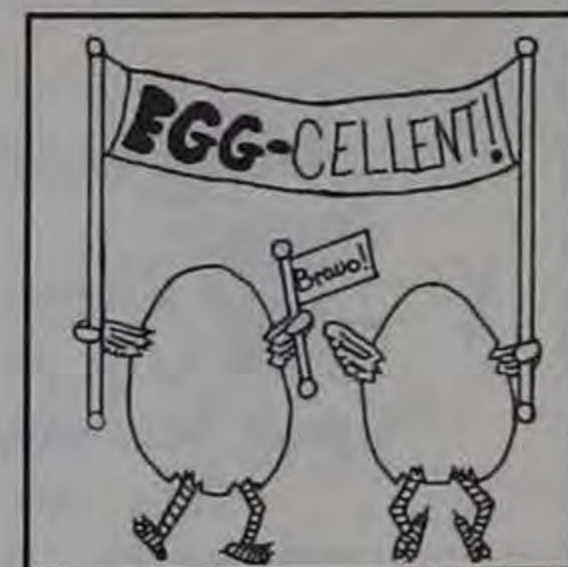
I wonder if he ever realized how much that track letter meant to me.

Jane Schorer Meisner

FREE-LANCE WRITER AND FORMER PULITZER PRIZE-WINNING WRITER
FOR *THE DES MOINES REGISTER*
URBANDALE, IOWA

Rosemary Weld

BALLARD COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL



9

I'll never forget the day Miss Rosemary Weld's car showed up in the driveway of our Story County farm. My emotions were a mix of terror and dread.

Miss Weld was my tenth grade Spanish teacher. I'd been out of school for a couple of weeks because of a serious health problem, and she was at the house to provide me with some one-on-one tutoring so I could catch up while I was on the mend.

I was tired and apprehensive. I still have trouble trilling my Rs and, for other reasons, wasn't the best of Spanish students. At the time, all I could think was that Miss Weld was showing up at the door to add to my misery.

Was I ever wrong. She showed up—I'm sure on her own time and initiative—not because she wanted to torment me in any way, but because she had faith in me, because she wanted me to learn, and because she wanted me to return to class in shape so I wouldn't be too far behind my peers.

I've never forgotten that special lesson from a special teacher.

As an editor, part of my job is to raise expectations—expectations my colleagues

have for our newspaper, and expectations Iowans have of themselves. As a teacher, Rosemary Weld's job was to raise my own expectations of myself—as a student and a citizen.

I was fortunate to have had a long list of teachers who were so very wise, who took such great care in their work, and who put in so much extra effort in behalf of their students. They were the kind of teachers who would call me in to ask if anything was upsetting me after I did more poorly than they thought I should have done on a test. They were the kind of teachers who challenged conventional wisdom. They were the kind of teachers who were role models in terms of how they respected others.

They were the kind of teachers who, like Miss Weld, were demanding and hard-working yet full of love and respect for their students and for their profession.

I think now about the successes I've had and the wonderful things others in my class have done with their lives. It's a credit to our families, of course. But it's also a credit to those teachers who gave us so very, very much.

Dennis R. Ryerson

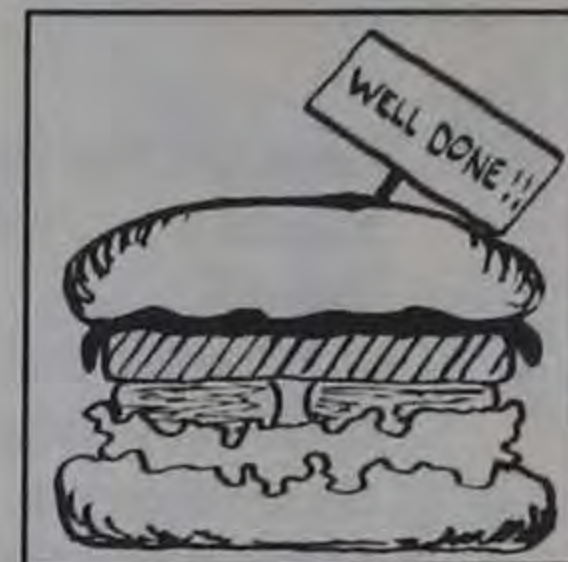
EDITOR, *THE DES MOINES REGISTER*

DES MOINES, IOWA



Ron Hackbarth

BAXTER COMMUNITY SCHOOL



11

I am writing this testimonial about a person who was a very big influence in my life. His name is Ron Hackbarth. Ron grew up in Dows, Iowa. He attended William Penn College, later transferring to Iowa Wesleyan, where he graduated. He then became a teacher and coach at Baxter Community School during my junior high and high school career.

He was very well liked and respected by his students. He instilled a very strong work ethic in his students and gave them a special sense of pride in what they did. He became somewhat of a hero to the students when his reserve unit was called to active duty during the Cuban Missile Crisis. I also remember being in his biology class when the superintendent brought the sad news of President Kennedy's assassination. As tragic as the news seemed to us, Coach reassured us that everything would be okay.

He was very instrumental in my decision to become a teacher and coach. He helped me make my decision on what college to attend. He remained supportive during my college career and was the person who was most responsible for my first

teaching and coaching position at Davis County Schools in Bloomfield, Iowa. During that first year of teaching, I spent many evenings at the Hackbarths' discussing the happenings of the day and getting as much advice as I could on solving problems that had arisen.

After one year of working in the same district with him, he left the coaching profession and became a successful school administrator in Washington, Iowa. Because of health reasons, he was forced into an early retirement. He now resides in Texas. He and his wife still correspond with many people in our community and almost always stop by when they visit Iowa.

Stanley J. Allspach

JSA INSURANCE SERVICES

BAXTER, IOWA



12

Irene Fosness

CONRAD CONSOLIDATED HIGH SCHOOL



13

Irene Fosness was the most influential teacher in my high school life—hands down! She taught English, drama, and speech. She and her husband, Paul, had no children. I think we high schoolers were her children.

I have never encountered a person so ambitious for the success of students.

We drove her little Studebaker car through ice and snow and fog to high school speech contests. We usually won. She entered me in a Methodist Church speech contest. She coached me through the state finals to finally place third in a multi-state contest.

She staged a serious high school class play, *Smilin' Through*. It wasn't the normal comedy fluff. It was the first and last time I pulled the trigger on a hand revolver, loaded with blanks. That was probably the most effective part of the play, but she chose productions to make high school students stretch.

She read "Mary White" in that English classroom, in the southeast corner on the top floor of the high school. It's the story an Emporia, Kansas, newspaper man wrote about the death of his daughter who hit her head on a tree branch while horseback riding.

Irene's voice broke and tears ran down her cheeks as she finished the story. I had never seen a grown person cry in public. It made an impression. The image is still there, vivid after 50 years.

I suppose there were times when we felt Irene was too controlling. She did her job with such intensity, like Bobby Knight and basketball. But she achieved results.

She wanted me to go to Northwestern in Chicago and major in journalism. My dad said we could afford Iowa State. I majored in agricultural journalism and continued to get involved in state productions and anything related to English, drama, and speech.

There's no question in my mind that she was the prime motivator that allowed me to work a lifetime in radio. In broadcasting, you write, you speak, and you put in a little drama. All these things we learned with Irene Fosness at Conrad Consolidated High School.

Lee Kline

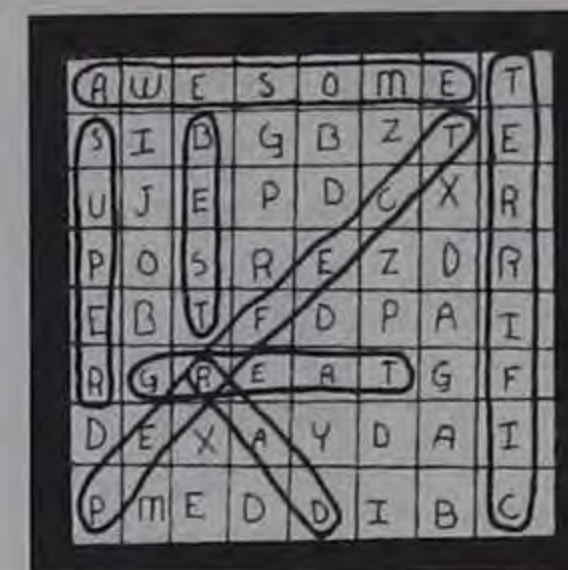
FARM BROADCASTER (RETIRED), WHO RADIO
DES MOINES, IOWA



14

Mary Helen Wainwright

BANNER SCHOOL, ROSS TOWNSHIP



15

The elementary educational experience of most of my present peers consisted of either a private school or selected public school where they were surrounded by many other children their own age and such a number and array of teachers that my colleagues cannot recall individual teachers with ease. They primarily remember the building, some of their friends, and the relationship of the school to home and parents, which were more consistent elements of their lives.

That was not my experience. I was a member of the last eighth-grade class to graduate from the Iowa rural country school system, the year before reorganization and bussing country kids to local towns. In fact, I have a rather sharp image of my little white one-room schoolhouse with the pony barn behind, where I installed my horse during the warm spring and fall breezes—when the best time of the day was heading home on the dead run, mud flying and saddle bags flapping. I can picture that schoolhouse inside and out. I can remember the texture of the various desks, and how I graduated to the elite left front corner of the seating arrangement. However, what I remember in sharpest relief against the old blackboards was the young

country schoolteacher with whom I spent the majority of my daylight hours between fall and spring, from fourth to eighth grade, from 1954 to 1959.

My tribute is to that teacher, Mary Helen Wainwright, and also to the institution of Iowa's one-room country schoolhouses and the generic country schoolteacher who represented all of the educational resources for rural children from kindergarten through eighth grade. She was to their education what the country doctor was to medicine. She was the science, math, and social studies teacher; the nurse and substitute mother when flesh and egos were bruised on the playground. She was the disciplinarian, and a particularly effective one. She was the psychologist and counselor for the little ones who were beginning to learn in the sandbox what socialization was all about, and for the eighth graders who looked upon adolescence and the inevitable move to Bedford High School with an apprehension that was communicated primarily by behavior.

I continue frequent visits to my home in Bedford and have watched Mary Helen age, but more slowly than the rest of us. She has, in fact, to this day, continued to teach in the Bedford public school system. When I think of her, however, it is that young woman sitting at the front table of the school calling the nine classes, usually only with one or two students in each grade, to recite before her, and those flashing dark brown eyes spoke their message clearly. She expected only the very best from you. She was the personification of continuous challenge.

She pulled her own son of my age from the local town school because she felt that she could provide a better education for him and, simultaneously, competition for me, who apparently was turning into a bored bully. And compete we did. With those penetrating eyes, a quick smile, or a well-timed frown, she pitted us against

ourselves and each other and did so without favoritism.

If I wanted to put a cat's brain in formaldehyde or bring a microscope to school because I discovered the wonders of hatching shrimp and new-formed crystals, she encouraged me. Should we build a huge Grecian temple out of Ivory soap? Of course! Could we possibly construct a detailed replica of the Golden Gate Bridge from Styrofoam and toothpicks? Why not? Could we read more books than had ever been consumed in a country school? Of course! When the books ran out, there were more to come.

I am sure there were moments when I must have questioned the sensibility of my growing need to absorb and achieve and her encouragement of that, but I do not remember them. I am sure I was sometimes bewildered by her intolerance of behavior I thought was the natural product of a 10-year-old boy's mission—to torture younger children—but I do not remember those times, either.

I remind my own students and neurosurgical residents that their educational experience is one punctuated by steep inclines of frenzied learning and plateaus of consolidation. The "Wainwright" years were the first and, perhaps, most important of these learning curves for me. I also reflect that the country school system not only challenged me but challenged teachers like Mary Helen Wainwright to be the very best they could be. Perhaps without knowing what was meant by the Eastern academic institutions' new drive to provide a "liberal education," she, in fact, was providing that through common sense.

As I watch my own children, who can write better than I could in college, speak foreign tongues, and visualize mathematics as a comfortable language, I sense that they are learning more at a younger age than I did. I only hope, however, that they

will be able to reflect upon an individual or two, like Mary Helen, who made a difference not so much in what they learned, but who instilled within them, as she did within me, the love to learn.

Dennis D. Spencer, MD

HARVEY AND KATE CUSHING PROFESSOR AND CHIEF OF NEUROSURGERY,
YALE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
WOODBIDGE, CONNECTICUT



16

Esther Palmer

IOWA #8 COUNTRY SCHOOL, NEAR BELLE PLAINE



17

I was extremely fortunate in having Esther Palmer as my very first teacher. She taught in a one-room, one-teacher country school known as Iowa #8, which was located near Belle Plaine in Benton County in the late 1920s and early 1930s. I had her as a teacher for grades one, two, and three, which was for the years ending May 1933, 1934, and 1935, and at the conclusion of which she ended her teaching at the Iowa #8 school.

She had a great interest in each student. I always felt that all of the students enjoyed going to school with Mrs. Palmer as their teacher. She was even involved during our recess periods, making sure that there was always fair play between all the children, irrespective of their grade level in the school, which ranged from grades one through eight.

Many of her students became achievers later in life. Her style of teaching had a lot of one-on-one as well as a personal interest in each individual student.

I have always felt that an individual's initial school experience has a lot to do with what happens in their future school interests as well as their achievements. We would all be better off if there were more Mrs. Palmers, not only in the teaching pro-

fession but, also, in this world. As a matter of interest, Mrs. Palmer, who is now in her 90s, still enjoys good health and lives in Belle Plaine, Iowa. (Note: I was very sorry to see the demise of country schools. I happen to feel that something was lost when they were ended.)

Henry B. Tippie

CORPORATE EXECUTIVE AND RANCHER
AUSTIN, TEXAS



18

Viva Parker

BELMOND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



19

Forty years ago, I couldn't wait to get to school each morning, mainly because of a fun and creative fourth grade teacher by the name of Viva Parker.

Mrs. Parker was small in stature, very strict, and very demanding, yet she was a grandmotherly figure, full of love and concern for all of her students. She demanded respect from each of us. Respect for our peers, respect for private and school property, and respect for her and our elders. She reminded us over and over again, "Remember the 'Golden Rule'—do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

Personal hygiene was important to her. Daily we had clean fingernail checks, clean handkerchief checks, and teeth checks. Remember the yearly dental cards that would line our classroom?

Good penmanship was a must in her room. She refused papers that were sloppy and difficult to read and papers that had been ripped or heavily erased. She taught us the Palmer Penmanship Method and expected us to do our best.

Every Friday we looked forward to spell downs. Occasionally we competed

against the other fourth grade section. We always learned so much more than just spelling words. One day in particular, we were spelling so well and she was having trouble retiring us—she walked over to a large map, pointed to Mexico, and our next two words that sat down several of us were Ixtacihuatl and Popocatepetl. Believe it or not, I had a boy in my section correctly spell Popocatepetl and my section won bragging rites for the day. I have always remembered they were volcanoes in Mexico, but I do have to confess to checking the spelling before writing this paper today.

I have so many wonderful memories of my fourth grade year and it has been fun writing this testimonial. Mrs. Parker touched the lives of hundreds of impressionable 10-year-olds as she taught for 40 years. How fortunate I feel to have had this delightful woman as a teacher and role model. I think of her often with much admiration. I hope everyone has experienced a “Mrs. Parker” at some time in their life.

Vicki Quigly

GROCER AND HOMEMAKER
BELMOND, IOWA



20

Tambi Heiter

BONDURANT-FARRAR HIGH SCHOOL



21

I took three years of Spanish with Mrs. Tambi Heiter, who, in addition to using conventional Spanish instruction, is a great believer in games and other challenging applications in which to enhance students' knowledge. We would frequently play Trivial Pursuit—in Spanish. She and I developed a “Spanish Jeopardy!” tournament, complete with a broad base of categories including Mexican history and verb usage. She commissioned students to make cartoon flash cards to help beginning-level classes with vocabulary.

Perhaps the most creative and ambitious project with which she challenged us was to write and produce a short video production. We wrote “San Antonio,” a Spanish-language parody of nighttime soaps that explored the brutally competitive lives of rival picante sauce manufacturers, with scenes of betrayal and greed, and an assassination plot involving a trio of Mexican Ninjas. Mrs. Heiter supervised the script, helping us with complex verb tenses and conversational Spanish dialogue, and oversaw our production.

Mrs. Heiter has been instrumental in promoting an atmosphere of creativity at

Bondurant-Farrar and in encouraging the school to invest in students' creative endeavors. My junior year she volunteered to direct the spring play but was unable to find a light comedy with a substantially large cast (she wanted to involve as many students as possible). I told her I had an idea for a one-act murder mystery comedy and would appreciate the opportunity to have it produced. She recommended to the administration that I write the play that year. When the production received the go-ahead, Mrs. Heiter worked in the capacity of producer, acquiring all the necessary elements, as well as skillfully directing the production.

Mrs. Heiter has always put students first. She masterfully walks the line of being both a teacher and a friend—encouraging, challenging, supporting. She has made education her priority and has regularly found effective, original methods to accomplish this goal.

When a student looks forward to class and enjoys the process of learning, education works best. This has always been true with Mrs. Heiter.

Sean Gannon

WRITER AND VIDEO EDITOR

BONDURANT, IOWA

Dennis & Pat Wright

BOYDEN-HULL HIGH SCHOOL



22

Two of the many fine teachers that have had a positive influence on our lives are known simply as "The Wrights." Dennis and Pat Wright began teaching at Boyden-Hull Community School in 1968 when we were in junior high. They were fresh out of college, newly married, and ready to conquer the world. They both displayed a refreshing enthusiasm that was welcomed by their students.

Dennis taught in the junior high and Pat was at the high school. Everyone they came in contact with enjoyed their efforts and caring attitude toward kids. They made their classes interesting, fun, and educational, and they were both involved in extra-curricular activities.

An example of their caring attitude was demonstrated a couple of years later. Dennis had been drafted into the service during our freshman year. He was home on leave and attended a freshman basketball game one evening. After the game, several of us decided to go to the Wrights' house to welcome him home. Even though it was probably the last thing they wanted, Dennis and Pat invited us in, served pop and snacks, and visited for a couple of hours. We, the students, thought we were doing

them a great service by giving of our free time. However, as we grew older, we all came to realize that, once again, the Wrights were on the giving end.

Dennis and Pat have continued to teach in our district. Two of our three children have had the pleasure of having them for teachers. They continue to give of themselves and their time. In addition to teaching, Dennis is the athletic director and coaches and sponsors the Quiz Bowl team. Pat sponsors the annual school yearbook in addition to directing the libraries in both of our buildings. She also has videotaped hundreds of athletic contests as an aid to our coaches. Even though their two sons are now in college, they continue to support all school activities.

We are very fortunate to again live in the same school district we both graduated from. It definitely was one of the drawing cards to get us to relocate here. The Wrights have had a very positive influence on us as well as many students that followed after us. We are sure that they both had an influence on our daughter, as she is now in college studying to be a teacher.

The Wrights don't know what it is to sit back and take it easy. They continue to be involved in our district at several levels, and they continue to influence students. They have helped develop many students who are leaders in our society today. The Wrights rank at the top of numerous past students' lists of favorite teachers.

Doug and Janelle Beukelman

DEMCO MANUFACTURING

BOYDEN, IOWA

James Arneson

CEDAR FALLS HIGH SCHOOL



23

As a junior in high school, I took my first course in psychology. The class was Intro to Psychology and the instructor was James Arneson. I remember Mr. Arneson as a caring, effective, and good-natured teacher.

I became fascinated learning about human behavior and would later take more classes and do reading on my own to understand what drives us all to be who and what we are. Because of Mr. Arneson's introduction of this topic in my life and his enthusiasm for his subject, I am still driven to understand myself and those around me better.

My career combines a financial background with the human resource area, so I am able to apply some of my educational background in my dealings with a diverse group of employees on a daily basis.

On a personal and social level, I seem to have become known as a good listener and someone to talk over problems and concerns with, which I get great fulfillment from. I believe my contentment and enjoyment of life have to do, in part, with my

positive experience in Mr. Arneson's class. I lost track of him after high school, but I wish him well and thank him for influencing my life.

Karen S. Page

TREASURER, PORTER'S CAMERA STORE
CEDAR FALLS, IOWA



24

Walter Gohman

MALCOLM PRICE LABORATORY SCHOOL



25

Walter Gohman, a teacher of chemistry and general science at the Malcolm Price Laboratory School in Cedar Falls, taught me both science and self-confidence. For a young girl in the 1950s, a woman scientist meant Madame Curie—but who could imagine her as an eighth grader? Science was something for very bright boys who knew exactly what they were doing. But in *our* science class, Mr. Gohman expected as much of the girls as the boys.

At the beginning of the year, I was more interested in the school chorus than in science. But Mr. Gohman sensed a dawning curiosity and steered me toward the part of science that is experimental. He suggested that I do a project for a science fair. The investigation was pretty simple—having to do with the effect of mouthwashes on bacteria—but he let me know that he considered it important. He set up space in a back room where I could store equipment, grow bacteria, and conduct my experiment. I remember becoming so absorbed that at the end of the day he would rattle his key in the door and say, "I'm locking up—which side do you want to be on?" He was interested in everything I did and he helped me every single day. With such pos-

itive encouragement I gained confidence right away. From that first project grew many more, of increasing sophistication, leading to trips to national science fairs and, ultimately, to my becoming a finalist in the Westinghouse Science Talent Search.

As much as Mr. Gohman encouraged us as scientists, though, he also understood that we were teenagers. Once I traveled with him, another student, and another teacher to a national science fair in Indianapolis. When we stopped to eat dinner, I left my retainer on the table in a napkin and didn't remember it until we were back on the road. I panicked because I knew how much that retainer had cost my parents! Mr. Gohman calmly turned the car around, drove back to the restaurant, and found the precious retainer in a trash bin. I was so embarrassed at my absentmindedness that I couldn't believe anyone could still have faith in my intellectual potential. But Walt Gohman looked beyond my imperfections and immaturity, and made me feel important and valued as a scientist. Throughout my years at Price Lab School, he and my other teachers made it seem completely natural that a young girl should be interested in science and able to compete successfully with other young scientists.

The self-confidence that Walter Gohman taught me in that eighth-grade class has never deserted me. I will always be grateful to him for challenging me, encouraging me, and—most of all—believing in me.

Mary Sue Coleman

PRESIDENT, UNIVERSITY OF IOWA
IOWA CITY, IOWA

E.W. Fannon
Bill Jerome

CENTERVILLE HIGH SCHOOL



26

When I was a student at Centerville High School many years ago, there were two individuals who were very meaningful in my educational career. E.W. Fannon was the superintendent of schools. He told me "Simon, you have the ability to achieve anything you want to achieve in life. You simply need to work hard. Education is something no one can take from you." And he was a man of discipline, a man of vision, a man of encouragement, and in spite of my skin color he said, "You can achieve. You will have obstacles always in life, but you can overcome those."

Another individual who helped me a great deal was my high school coach, Bill Jerome. He is a dear friend of mine who lives, I think, in the Fort Madison area. Bill Jerome taught me a lot about anticipation in life. That came from basketball practice. He would tell us to try and anticipate another person's moves, so we could intercept the ball.

I have also used that in my personal life—to be prepared and to anticipate all sorts of obstacles that might be out there in the world today. Bill Jerome said, "Si-

mon, always have courage. Keep your head high when you walk." My mother also told me that.

So, the two individuals who influenced me very much in my education were E.W. Fannon and Bill Jerome. They taught me to be prepared and keep your guard up at all times. They said, "Work hard and you will succeed." I thank them for the lessons they taught.

Simon Estes

RECIPIENT OF IOWA AWARD, 1996

INTERNATIONAL BARITONE OPERA SINGER

ZURICH, SWITZERLAND



27

Carolyn Eggleston

CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL



28

Carolyn Eggleston, our high school music teacher, allowed anyone who participated in choir the opportunity to cultivate a skill that could be used for the rest of their life. She always demanded 100 percent effort from her students, and yet she created a fun atmosphere to sing in.

When competing in solo or choral contests, her attention to detail and striving towards perfection always left you with a feeling of pride for the school you represented. Those qualities can be carried through to the work we perform today. She always expected your best effort and you could feel accomplishment when you were finished.

I have a great respect for all teachers who taught me in school and also those who are now teaching our children.

The skills Carolyn Eggleston imprinted into her students—to give an honest ef-

fort, expect success, strive for perfection, and make it enjoyable work—are with me today. These are qualities I hope can be passed on to our children.

Murl McCulloch

FARMER

CAMANCHE, IOWA



29

Phyllis Anderson

VAN ALLEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



30

Miss Anderson, my first grade teacher, opened the world of reading and science to generations of Iowa students by using innovation and creativity.

As we progressed toward literacy, she provided patient guidance and gentle correction. She also gave us an inviting, seemingly endless, library—which she tailored, both literally and figuratively. She literally sewed colorful books for us to carry everywhere. Using wallpaper samples, she bound chapters of old readers into indestructible, appealing books we could call our own. She was our Gutenberg.

Figuratively, she guided us to the works that best stimulated our appetites. One day, she even handed me a scientific research manuscript by the man for whom our school was named—James Van Allen—which sent me looking into the heavens for years.

Before we were introduced to any formalized science curriculum, Miss Anderson also exposed us to the beauty and wonder of biology. A farmer as well as a teacher, she annually brought into her classroom chicken, duck, and goose eggs. Our

desks encircled a huge transparent incubator containing warmers and a sitting, clucking hen. We, in turn, were surrounded by Miss Anderson's large hand-drawn illustrations of daily stages of embryonic development, which hung laminated around our room.

We watched life grow and then peck its way out of eggs and into our hands. These lessons in embryology were almost at a level I only re-encountered in medical school, and they may very well have subconsciously guided me there.

Jeff McKinney, MD

RESIDENT PHYSICIAN,
YALE-NEW HAVEN CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL
HAMDEN, CONNECTICUT



31

Richard Simpson

CLARION HIGH SCHOOL



Many teachers have had a significant impact on my life, but one comes first and quickly to mind. Richard Simpson, a teacher of business courses and journalism at Clarion High School, was certainly among the few most influential educators of my elementary and secondary school years.

Now some will express surprise that a president of a liberal arts college would point to a teacher in vocational courses as among the most influential. However, Richard Simpson's teaching demanded that we use the skills and reasoning developed in other college preparatory courses. His teaching supported the work of those who taught English, for example, and his encouragement extended well beyond his own classroom.

Simpson was one of those teachers totally committed to the educational program of the school and the work of its students. He was for many years the adviser to the weekly school newspaper, the yearbook, and the Future Business Leaders of America chapter. He was always the adviser to the junior class, which meant he was adviser for the prom every year and responsible for the concession stand at all athletic events. In all these endeavors he sought excellence from his students, inspired creativity and leadership and responsibility. He encouraged and cajoled, befriended,

and modeled with tireless efforts. He knew virtually every student, took an interest in each student's endeavors (whether or not he had them in class), and attended school events with a loyalty surpassed by none other.

Underlying Richard Simpson's educational endeavors was a genuine affection for students. His disappointment in our failings was short-lived, but his enthusiasm for our achievements never waned. He always had a warm welcome, a broad smile and a hearty laugh to share, and his classroom was a gathering place for students during lunch period and after school. Students participated in his programs because of appreciation for him and because whatever he touched was well done. We were drawn to excellence. He helped build a firm foundation for effective citizenship and future learning.

As Iowa celebrates its sesquicentennial, it is appropriate to honor those who have always been among our communities' most important citizens—our teachers. To achieve excellence in education we need great teachers, and attracting persons to the teaching profession who have the potential for greatness depends partially on the honor those who choose this noble profession are afforded by their fellow citizens. Thus, in writing this, I salute not only Richard Simpson but numerous others of his colleagues who contribute so much to the education and lives of young people growing up in Clarion. When we "cut the cake" during this sesquicentennial year, our teachers should get the first slice!

William E. Hamm

PRESIDENT, WALDORF COLLEGE
FOREST CITY, IOWA

Ralph Currie

CORNING HIGH SCHOOL



33

First to set the stage: as a young teenager, I had a lot of self-confidence as a gifted athlete, a good rapport with my peers, and a determination not to be included as a “pond” of the establishment.

Mr. Currie played several roles that influenced my life—first, as a teacher who taught science, chemistry, physics, and a World War II course called “Preflight.” Through his excitement about the forces at hand that created flight for man and how through “dead reckoning” (flight navigation) man could arrive at his planned destination, he opened up a whole new horizon for me. I became a private pilot as soon as finances permitted. Today, each flight is truly made enjoyable by the basic aeronautical understanding of the forces at work.

Mr. Currie also was the principal of Corning High School. One of his responsibilities was being the disciplinarian. Since I had the opportunity to appear before him many times, I always felt his punishment quite severe to the act committed. However, he always made sure that you understood the reasons for their selection.

In raising my own children, I have often reflected on how Mr. Currie would ap-

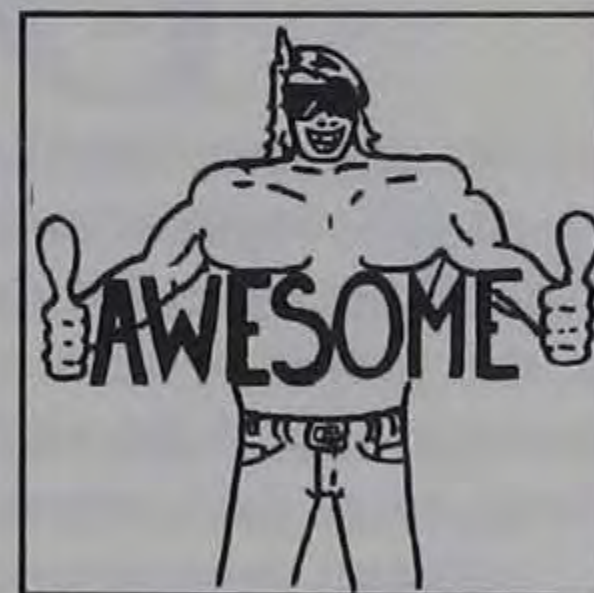
ply the punishment for the infraction committed. It was important to me for our children to understand the rules with which to live by and the consequences suffered if violated.

Mr. Currie was also my counselor. He always said that nothing was easy but if you strive to accomplish a goal and discipline yourself to attain it, success would be forthcoming. From this, I believe nothing is impossible if you have the will and determination to stay the course.

Ralph Currie believed in people and he even believed in me. I am eternally grateful.

Austin B. Turner

PILOT AND PAST OWNER OF A.B. TURNER AND SONS DEPARTMENT STORE
CORNING, IOWA



34

Dick Stahl

CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL



35

Dick Stahl was never really my teacher, but I remember him as one of the best that I had. Growing up in Iowa, I had many good teachers, and it's hard to narrow the list. But Dick Stahl stands out in my mind for two reasons. One: he gave me a break, and two: many years later, I became his teacher.

1967, sophomore year at Central High School in Davenport, Iowa. I had gone to Catholic schools for my grade school and junior high education, then found myself in the public system, in a very large school with many different activities and social groups. I liked the variety offered at Central, but having always been a shy person, there were days when I literally found myself "going up the down staircase."

Then I saw a notice go up for tryouts for a play, a melodrama, to be performed in the spring of the year. As a kind of therapy to overcome my shyness, I had been in theater all my life and often had been cast in the sweet little princess roles. I hated those parts. What I always wanted to be was the mean old witch.

"Ha, ha, Hansel, you're just about plump enough to make a tasty dinner. Gretel, hurry with those sticks. We'll make a nice, big fire."

Those were the lines I wanted but never got.

The melodrama had two female roles, one for a sweet young thing, and another for a middle-aged, eccentric woman who dropped dead in the final moments of the play. I walked into the theater room and there was a young teacher, one who was also new to the school. Dick Stahl's eyes met mine and I thought, that's it, he's pegged me for the ingenue. I wanted to throw up.

He asked me to read for the part, and I did. Then he had various boys read the male parts. After that, he scanned the room and I sensed a certain nervousness. He thought he didn't have anyone to read for the older woman's part.

"I want to try that," I said.

"You?" he asked, hearing my soft voice, glancing at my blond hair, my thin frame.

"Yes," I said. I took the stage, book in my hands, knees shaking. I opened my mouth and out came a loud, commanding voice, one that rose from somewhere deep inside myself that I had been trying to tap for years, one that needed to be let out, to allow myself to grow in my own self-determined direction.

Dick Stahl gave me the part. Now, years later, when I have become a middle-aged, eccentric woman, I no longer remember the name of that character, or even the name of the play, but I do remember the thrill of blasting out my lines throughout the CHS auditorium and the fun I had dropping dead at the curtain. I carried the self-confidence that role gave me throughout the rest of my career.

Fifteen years after that production, I almost dropped dead again one morning when I was conducting a weekend poetry-writing workshop for the University of Iowa. There, seated at the seminar table, was Dick Stahl. After all those years, though

in a different guise, he was the same person. Focused, intelligent, knowledgeable, able to take risks and work with surprises. The poetry that he wrote and has now published reflected these same qualities.

In that workshop, our lives came full circle. As a teacher, I was able to give back something of what a fine teacher had given to me. And isn't that what education is all about?

Mary Swander

RECIPIENT OF THE 1996 RUTH SUCKOW AWARD

AUTHOR AND PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH, IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

AMES, IOWA



36

C.W. Hach

DAVENPORT HIGH SCHOOL



37

How will I ever forget the first day I entered the journalism classroom of C.W. Hach in the old sandstone building, Davenport High School? He was so incongruously young (a mere 22) in a building that will be a century old in a few years. Certainly, Mr. Hach was no Mr. Chips. In fact, it was his choice that his students (migosh, what a switch in academia) call him C.W.

"Learn to love words, to cherish them, to wallow them around in your mouth like a piece of hard candy" were his first words to the class. He then said to take a few sheets of paper and write about a recent experience "just so I could see what you have going as a writer." I recall the piece I did, with a lead:

"She looked up at me with big brown eyes, and I knew she was mine. I wrapped my arms around her. It was instant love."

Well, I was not writing about a Lana Turner or other heartbeats of the time, but was describing how I had just picked out a cocker spaniel puppy from a litter of six.

C.W. said to me the next day: "That was a grabber. You can write. I'm going to put this piece in the *Black Hawk*, the school newspaper."

41

This was my introduction to a land of wonder—my land of words. Lo, in a young lifetime of schooling, C.W. Hach was the first to firmly encourage me. “You’ve got the stuff,” he repeatedly said. “You have a way of writing the way people talk.”

I was hired after high school graduation by a Davenport newspaper, and spent stints with the United Press and International News Service (even as a publicist with Ringling Bros. and Barnum and Bailey Circus) but am “here to stay” at the *Quad City Times*. Whatever I have accomplished, I owe to the encouragement of C.W. Hach. In my most recent book, I signed it: “C.W.—My thanks for opening the door for me to the wonderful world of words.” In a current issue of *Reader’s Digest*, I have a piece and scribbled on the margin: “Thanks again, C.W.”

I often find myself quoting C.W. Hach:

“Words: They sing. They hurt. They sanctify. They were our first immeasurable feat of magic. They liberated us from ignorance and our barbarous past. For without those marvelous scribbles which build letters into words, words into sentences, into systems and sciences and creeds, man would be forever confined to the self-isolated prison of the cuttlefish or the chimpanzee.”

Bill Wundram

COLUMNIST, *DAVENPORT-QUAD CITY TIMES*

DAVENPORT, IOWA

Marie Cronk

DAVIS COUNTY MIDDLE SCHOOL



38

When I started school, I lived in a rural school district which did not have a school. Students in that district were tuitioned to “town” school in Bloomfield. There, I was an ordinary student with no particular feelings that I was, or would be, anything other than average.

In my fifth-grade year, our family moved and I had to attend a one-room country school for the first time ever. The school had eight students in kindergarten through eighth grade—a far cry from the classrooms of about 25 students to which I had become accustomed. There was also, as was normal for country schools, one teacher.

This particular teacher was not destined to be one of my favorites. She, in fact, did little for my educational ego and I viewed my intellectual faculties as just average or maybe less. I didn’t do badly in school, but I did not excel.

By the time I reached eighth grade, the country school closed and I returned to “town” school. That may have been the happiest day of my life. During one of those first, few happy days I was stopped after math class by Marie Cronk, who had encountered me in my earlier years.

43

"You are much smarter than I remember you being," she said in a forthright manner.

I have pondered that moment many times, even wondering if she was using a psychological approach on me or if she was just stating fact. Whatever, it worked. My confidence in the classroom immediately rose. I began thinking of myself as a "good student." I received better grades and I believe I learned more than I would have otherwise. I went on to high school, where I was on the honor roll; on to the University of Iowa, where my grades weren't bad and where I graduated with a bachelor's degree.

I've often wondered if I would have been able to attain what I have without Marie's one, simple sentence.

Gary Spurgeon

PUBLISHER/EDITOR, *BLOOMFIELD DEMOCRAT*

BLOOMFIELD, IOWA



39

Dorothy Hall

CALLANAN AND MERRILL MIDDLE SCHOOLS



40

Sometimes, when she wakes up early, Miss Hall recites the 23 helping verbs just for fun.

"Oh, me," she thinks. *"Is, are, was, were, be, being, been, am, may, can, must, might, would."* Miss Hall sort of sings them, there in her bed, and repeats the last few to jog her memory if she gets stuck.

"Must, might, would."

"Must, might, would. Could, should, have, has, had, do, did, done, shall, will."

Some things in life are so certain. For 40 years, Dorothy Hall taught ninth-grade English in Des Moines. She taught the certainties, the basics, the building blocks for sentences, for paragraphs, for stories and for lives. For 40 years, her life followed a lesson plan. Semester after semester. Year after year, until Miss Hall became a legend.

Ben Harrison needs only to hear the name and he can picture Miss Hall at the front of the classroom. "Well, bear in mind that I was smaller at the time," says Harrison, 72, "but I think of a large woman, maybe close to 6 foot, I don't know, and towering over most junior high boys and girls, and she was what my mother would have called 'big-boned.'"

45

She spoke in a staccato, straight-at-you voice, Harrison says. Not one of those that trailed off and let you stare out the windows. Miss Hall used direct sentences. "And there wasn't any nonsense."

She must have been 7 feet tall.

"She was sort of the George Patton of the junior high school," Alan Cubbage says.

"Just towering," Andy Lyons says. He and Cubbage were classmates, the second generation in their families to have Miss Hall.

"I don't think I would use the word 'like,'" says Cubbage.

"I respected her, admired her," says Harrison, Hall's student in the 1938-39 school year. "I think I began to like her maybe sometime after World War II, honestly."

Miss Hall taught English with a vengeance. "And you know why?" she once said. "It was because I had so little."

Miss Hall, who taught 30 years at Callanan Middle School and 10 years at Merrill Middle School, made kids memorize the 23 helping verbs, the 54 prepositions (in alphabetical order), the eight parts of speech (and their definitions) and exceptions to the rule, "i before e except after c." Warnings about her class circulated as fast as school lunch menus.

Miss Hall makes you give oral presentations using five note cards that fit in the palm of your hand. Miss Hall makes you copy all kinds of grammar, punctuation and spelling rules in ink. And if you start with black ink and finish with blue—or the other way around—Miss Hall makes you start over.

Miss Hall is a terror. That was the word passed from class to class. "She kept very iron discipline," Bruce Kelley says.

She must have been 9 feet tall.

Kelley had her in 1968-69, her final year of teaching.

"Nobody talked in her class. Nobody passed notes. Nobody even looked behind them because," Kelley says, "you just didn't."

You didn't chew gum. You didn't slouch. You didn't fidget. You didn't sass.

"I got in trouble once, and it was just devastating," says Kelley, now 42 and the president and chief executive officer of EMC Insurance Cos. in Des Moines. Miss Hall made him stay after class, he says. "She caught me yawning."

Dan Hunter remembers how Miss Hall talked about the fate of recalcitrant boys: "He'd have been a millionaire if he'd have learned his prepositions."

Miss Hall is old now. How old, she won't say. "It frightens me to think about it, let alone to say it out loud," she says. But a newspaper article published in March 1979 gave her age as 74, which makes her 91.

"Smarty," she says when you do the math. Miss Hall can't add two and two, she says, and that's one reason she chose to teach English.

But the woman who required memorization now jokes that forgetting is the thing she does best. She lives in a nursing home, the health center at Calvin Community in Des Moines.

Fresh flowers arrive monthly from former students, but she can't remember who sends them. "It's so maddening to keep forgetting all the time," she says.

The flowers are from the Roosevelt High School Class of 1945. Members chipped in to buy them after Bud Green stood up and made an announcement at the 50-year reunion last summer. "I just said, 'Miss Hall is still living,'" he says. "And everybody gasped."

He asked his classmates to contribute if she influenced their lives. "Now, that's

not to degrade other teachers," he says. "She's on a plateau above them, that's all."

She must have been 11 feet tall.

She taught approximately 8,000 students, including former Gov. Robert Ray. Her spelling rules have been published around the country in Michael Gartner's column about words.

She didn't expect to get old. Her parents, Frank and Jessie Hall, died young, and Miss Hall, their only child, thought she would, too. But she has outlived friends, cousins and students. She lives with a roommate who gets confused and asks if it's dinnertime in the middle of the day.

"It's the middle of the afternoon," Miss Hall tells her.

"Huh?" her roommate asks.

"Two o'clock in the afternoon," Miss Hall says loudly. She doesn't tower anymore. Miss Hall, 5 feet 7 inches, sits in a wheelchair. She doesn't walk or leave Calvin Community, but she entertains many guests.

And she teaches. Calvin Community's Deb Bodson says she used to ask Miss Hall if she wanted to "lay" on the bed. The correct word is "lie." But Bodson couldn't keep lie and lay straight, she says. "I just finally got to the point. I said, 'Dorothy, do you want to stretch out on the bed?'"

Miss Hall is thankful that she gets along as well as she does, thankful for kind things that people do for her. And when she hears that former students say she did lots for them, she says, "Well, I hope I did."

Worn copies of "Miss Hall's Ink Section," the rules she distributed to students, are in several files. Cubbage, Drake University's marketing director, keeps his on a shelf in his office next to Strunk and White's *The Elements of Style*. He consulted it a few weeks ago.

When he and other former students write words and try to remember whether they are spelled "i before e" or "e before i," they recite, "Neither leisured foreign neighbor seized the weird heights during the reign of their sovereign king. ..."

Thousands of people have some pretty obscure party tricks.

Marjorie Spevak can still recite the prepositions. She's 74. She visits her former teacher twice a year, and she still calls her Miss Hall.

Ray says he still feels a little awkward saying, "This is I," but he knows that it is correct. Miss Hall taught him. She attended his speeches, he says, "and I always asked her if I did OK."

Once, legend has it, she sent him a good-luck note: "Dear Robert, I hope you do well on your oral report. Remember not to use too many 'ands.' If you make a mistake in grammar, don't go back and correct it. Ninety percent of your listeners won't know the difference."

A Des Moines doctor tells of the time Miss Hall had surgery years ago. He stopped to visit her in the recovery room. She was just coming to when he leaned over his former teacher and said, "Aboard, above, about, across..."

As Miss Hall began to wake up, she heard someone else in the room ask, "Where am I *at*?" And she thought hazily, "I'll have to do something about that."

Gartner, editor of *The Daily Tribune* in Ames, regularly mentions Miss Hall in his words column and quoted from her Ink Section. He met her 17 years ago after he read about her. He called her and asked for a copy of the Ink Section. "And she said, 'Listen, honey.' She says, 'You've got more money than I do. I'll give you a copy of the Ink Section if you'll Xerox it and give me back 10 of them.'"

And he did.

In his column, Gartner, former president of NBC News, calls Miss Hall his fa-

favorite teacher, though she didn't teach him. "I don't know whom I had for English, to tell you the truth," he says. Many people assume he had Miss Hall, and she has stopped explaining.

When people ask her what Gartner was like in ninth grade, she says, "Just like he is now. Kind of a smart ass."

It's easier that way, she says.

Gartner's column, now published in a handful of newspapers, used to run in 100 newspapers. People around the country have read about Miss Hall. Some ask Gartner whether she truly exists.

"She's real," he tells them. "It's too bad you never had her."

This article, "Miss Hall Lessons, Both Unforgettable," by Mary Ann Lickteig appeared in the *Des Moines Sunday Register* on March 24, 1996. Reprinted with permission by *The Des Moines Register*, 1996.

David Linder

HOOVER HIGH SCHOOL



41

Most of the defections, I think, were plotted during the two-a-day workouts, when we were swimming something like six miles daily, although some of us rehearsed our speeches before the new season began. The excuses varied, of course—too much homework, the part-time job was too demanding, maybe an illness in the family. One of us even insisted that he preferred to join the debate team rather than endure another season of grueling workouts and that awful gnawing in the stomach during the minutes and hours before stepping onto the starting block for the 200-yard individual medley.

Very few of us succeeded in persuading Coach David Linder that we should quit the swimming team. He was always ready with a response to even the best arguments, perhaps because he had heard them all before. No, he wanted us on the team, he insisted to even the most marginal athletes. I knew even then that, try as I might, I would never win a championship for Coach Linder (the best I managed was to qualify for the state meet), but he wanted me to remain with the team. He wouldn't let me quit.

51

I can think of many teachers who have had a profound influence on my life—an eighth-grade English teacher who drilled us on the rudiments of grammar, a high school government teacher who instructed us about the vagaries of the Iowa precinct caucuses—but Coach Linder taught me the virtues of discipline, fortitude, and persistence. In the years since my final sprint toward the finish line, I have been tempted many times to throw in the towel, to surrender in the face of professional or personal adversity. Quitting has rarely been an option, however, in large part because of Coach Linder. He wouldn't let me quit.

Randall Balmer

PROFESSOR OF RELIGION, BARNARD COLLEGE
NEW YORK, NEW YORK



42

Donald Murphy

HOOVER HIGH SCHOOL



43

The education that I received as a student in the Des Moines Public Schools was terrific. It prepared me to succeed in a career in medical research. A sincere interest in science developed during my junior year at Hoover High School when I learned chemistry from Mr. Donald Murphy. He provided me with a challenging hands-on curriculum taught with enthusiasm. This experience did not point me directly toward a career in science but rather fostered an understanding that science can provide the keys to solving problems. In addition, his teaching style gave me one of the greatest assets, a self-confidence that I was capable of succeeding in science.

Once at Drake University, I tried several majors but found none to my liking until I returned to science. I subsequently obtained a bachelor's degree in biology and decided to apply that knowledge toward the service of caring for others as a physician.

But it wasn't until I began to take care of children with fatal diseases that I became determined to integrate my love of science with medicine. Watching children die from genetic diseases despite a barrage of modern medicines was very painful. I

53

wanted so badly to save their lives, but we didn't have the answers. As a result, I stopped focusing on what we couldn't do and began to ask the critical question, "Could we change the underlying cause of the disorder as a new way to treat these diseases?" This led me into a research career that combines scientific research and clinical medicine.

Over the past 10 years, I have had the opportunity to work with two other physician-scientists in developing and applying gene therapy for the treatment of children with a form of the "bubble boy disease." As a result of these efforts, we were the first to demonstrate that gene transfer has the potential to improve the health of children with devastating diseases.

The insight, knowledge, and self-confidence that I acquired at Hoover was a critical component in preparing me to participate in the first human gene therapy experiment. The implications of this event are unfolding as more than 1,000 patients have now been treated with gene therapy.

I sincerely thank Mr. Murphy for recognizing the potential in his students and insisting that I take the time to appreciate not only what is known but what can be learned through asking the tough questions. Through his efforts, I have had the privilege to directly participate in scientific discoveries that may have changed the history of medicine.

Kenneth W. Culver, MD

DIRECTOR OF GENE RESEARCH AND CLINICAL AFFAIRS, ONCOR PHARM, INC.
GAITHERSBURG, MARYLAND

Mike Wilson

GREENWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



44

Those of you who remember P.E. classes as merely playing games have obviously not had Mr. Wilson as your instructor. He was not your typical whistle-blowing, refereeing, making-sure-you-showered type of teacher. He focused on teaching skills that would keep many of us health conscious for the rest of our lives. He had a knack for inspiring and encouraging kids. No matter if you were athletically inclined or not, he made you believe that you could do anything.

I met Mr. Wilson when I attended Greenwood Elementary School. Being an extremely shy individual, it was difficult for me to express myself. At all costs, I would avoid answering questions, reading aloud, or a fate worse than death—going to the chalkboard to solve a math problem! Mr. Wilson was a person with a great sense of humor (world-famous impersonation of Kermit the Frog) who would instill within me the confidence I needed to be successful.

Mr. Wilson taught us a variety of things from soccer to bowling to my all-time favorite, square dancing! It was here that I got to hold hands with Joey DeMarco, the shy but most-liked boy in the third grade. I still know bits and pieces of “Sweet Geor-

55

gia Brown," one of the songs from which we learned to dance.

When I think back to Mr. Wilson, I have nothing but fond memories. I know many people think of their favorite teachers as those that taught history, math, sciences, etc. These classes were crucial elements in furthering my education. I would not be where I am today without the wonderful teachers in the Des Moines Public School system (Mrs. Lauer and Mr. Cummings—math; Mrs. Maloney—chemistry; Mr. Van Dyke—science; Mr. Holcomb—English; Mrs. Robinson—ACT preparation; and, of course, Mr. Hewins, my high school coach).

However, I owe a special thanks to Mr. Mike Wilson. He was not "just doing his job" when he convinced me to run against a sixth grader while I was in the fourth grade. I came from behind to pass the girl, only to fumble the baton and lose the race. It was from this challenge that my athletic career had its beginning. My running paid for college and later gave me the opportunity to participate in the 1992 Olympics.

Thanks, Mr. Wilson. You are awesome!

Natasha Kaiser-Brown

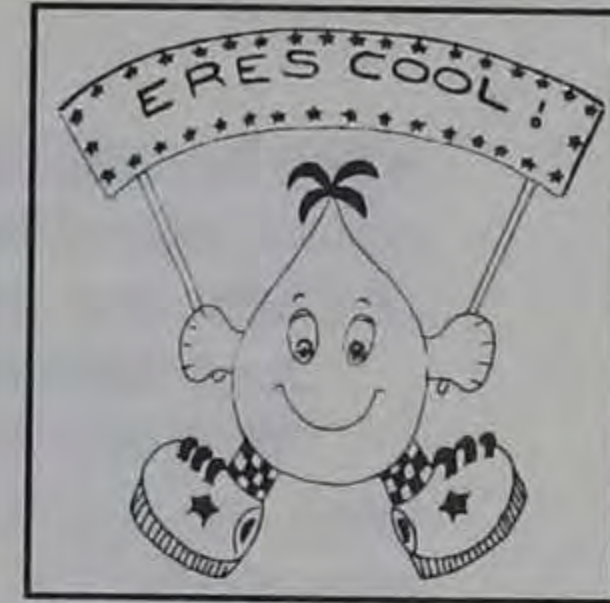
OLYMPIC SILVER MEDALIST

ASSISTANT TRACK AND FIELD COACH, UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI-COLUMBIA

COLUMBIA, MISSOURI

Jacqueline Burnett

PRESCOTT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



45

Some of the lyrics, she admits, are about her student days. And some are about her students.

Jacqueline Burnett, who teaches special education at Dubuque's Prescott School, stood before about 1,000 of her district colleagues this week and sang a song about teaching.

But it wasn't just any song.

It was her very own song. Burnett, who's been teaching at Prescott for nine years and in Dubuque for another eight years, wrote the lyrics and the melody. She asked Nancy Woodin, of Dubuque, to help with the piano accompaniment.

It was also a song about teaching character. Teachers, says the song, can teach their subjects and they can teach things like compassion, confidence, and acceptance.

It was a popular song, too. It sparked a standing ovation from the employees of the Dubuque Community School District. And it made Burnett the star of the district's annual assembly to kick off the new school year.

Superintendent Marvin O'Hare said the song was just what he was trying to say

57

when he told district staffers he wants them to think about teaching character this school year. That's why, after hearing her sing at First Congregational United Church of Christ one Sunday, he asked her to sing at the assembly.

And Burnett? What did she think about the idea?

Well, she went home and wrote about 20 versions of the lyrics before she had what she wanted. And, "It was a little frightening to stand up in front of 1,000 of your peers."

But she sang out. And as she did, more than a few eyes moistened. And then everybody stood to applaud.

"I was surprised and very touched by that," she said. "I was overwhelmed."

She's also convinced that the values in her song do belong in public school classrooms.

"There are so many different things that teachers have to impart to students in today's culture," she said. "It goes beyond basic education. There are people who don't think school should instill values, but I don't know how teachers could do otherwise."

This article by Mike Krapfl appeared in the Dubuque *Telegraph-Herald* on August 25, 1995. © 1995, Telegraph-Herald. Reprinted with permission.

"Lessons for Life" reprinted by permission of Jacqueline Burnett.

LESSONS FOR LIFE

Jacqueline Burnett

In my memory there is a teacher
who found a way to touch my life.
Compassion I could see
as he bandaged my scraped knee.
Compassion I have learned in my life.

In my memory there is a teacher
who found a way to reach my soul.
And confidence was born
as I learned to play my horn.
Confidence I've learned in my life.

As children we receive
the legacy we'll leave.
When you look into their eyes,
your own reflection will arise.

In my memory there is a teacher
who found a way to heal my pain.
Accepted I would be
as she helped and guided me.
Acceptance I have learned in my life.

Touch a heart, shape a soul,
change a life.

Ardis Bergfald

EAGLE GROVE COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL



46

The most notable teacher having a positive influence in my life was Ardis Bergfald. She was my tenth grade English teacher during the 1952-53 academic year at the Eagle Grove Community High School.

There were no prerequisites with Mrs. Bergfald. One need not be the best student or the most popular nor a star athlete to command her attention. Instead she took interest in all of her students and treated each one with dignity and uniqueness. Her genuine concern gained the respect of the student and allowed her to expand the teaching of grammar to that of life itself.

Mrs. Bergfald enabled me to place the problems and insecurities (so overwhelming in the mind of a 15-year-old student) into a broader and more proper perspective. She nurtured my self-esteem and confidence through gentle encouragement and understanding. Her goodness lit up my darkness and paved for me an easier journey in my further endeavors.

To my knowledge, she never received any awards or recognition, but in the hearts and minds of her many students she was, indeed, most notable.

Gary J. Groves

ATTORNEY

WEBSTER CITY, IOWA



47

Carson Griffith

GRAND JUNCTION HIGH SCHOOL



48

Although I can name several candidates for this honor, one in particular stands out among the rest. His name is Carson Griffith and he teaches music in Grand Junction.

Carson helped me to develop skills in vocal music so that I am able to enjoy a more fulfilling life in music. His patience and instruction helped me achieve All-State status as a vocal musician. More importantly, his influence helped me to appreciate music in all of its many forms. In so doing, it has provided an outlet for the expression of the joy of life through worship and song.

Carson had an innate ability to attract all the students to his room. Many young men who couldn't carry a tune in a bucket took a chance to participate in boys' chorus. Carson made them feel welcome and gave them a chance to learn the same appreciation I have come to know.

Carson Griffith's unending devotion to his students and his avocation makes him a perfect choice for this recognition.

Craig Rowles, DVM

CARROLL VETERINARY CLINIC

CARROLL, IOWA



49

Edith Larsen

ELK HORN-KIMBALLTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



50

Hey, Mrs. Larsen! Look what I drew last night!"

"Wow, Jan! Those football helmets are sure neat. You colored them so nicely. How many different helmets did you draw?"

"Twenty-six! There are 26 NFL teams, but the Minnesota Vikings are my favorite. That's why that helmet is a little bigger than the rest."

"Well, I'll have to start cheering for your Vikings then. All of the helmets are neat."

With that compliment, I was running out the door for recess, anxiously awaiting the beginning of another playground football game. I could not wait to make a diving catch for the game-winning touchdown—just like my beloved Minnesota Vikings. This was not an unusual dream for a second grader, but the thing that made this particular dream a bit unique was the fact that I was a girl! Twenty years ago, there were often many people, including some teachers, that felt compelled to inform children as to what dreams were appropriate for girls and what type of dreams were appropriate for boys. But not Mrs. Edith Larsen! She had no rules for dreaming. She saw the good in every child's dream and did everything possible to support those

dreams. I began dreaming in the second grade and I have never stopped.

Mrs. Edith Larsen was always a favorite of elementary students. She was the type of person that seemed to be your mother and grandmother marvelously wrapped into one person. Her smile was always inviting, and her eyes intently met yours—even if she had heard the same “show-and-tell” story 20 times in a row! Compassion could be felt by her every touch and action. Mrs. Larsen had that sensational ability to make every student feel special. I wanted to stay in second grade forever!

But, time has a way of marching on. Eventually, the second grade came to a close and the years seemed to pass so quickly. Although I have attained high school and college diplomas and a masters degree, a part of me has always remained in second grade. The “dreamer” in me continues to flourish because of the confidence that Mrs. Larsen instilled in me. I am so thankful that Mrs. Larsen encouraged my drawings of football helmets and allowed me to have fun playing football—even though I was a girl. She gave me the freedom to “tackle” the world and become everything I dared to be. I learned then that believing in yourself and in your dreams was the fun and exciting part of life.

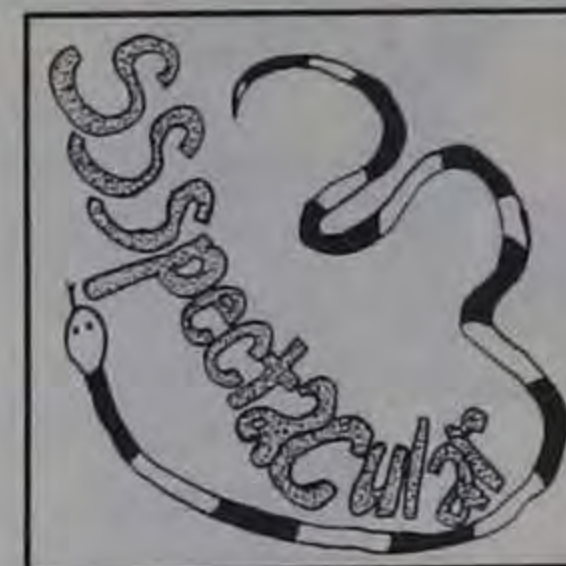
Today, I am still dreaming, and I am still having fun. Regardless of how long I am blessed to live, a part of my heart will always be in second grade with Mrs. Larsen. Every now and then I think of those football helmets and I smile; I always hope that Mrs. Larsen is still smiling too. I hope she realizes that I am only one of her many students, still dreaming because she taught us how.

Jan Jensen

ASSISTANT WOMEN'S BASKETBALL COACH, DRAKE UNIVERSITY
DES MOINES, IOWA

Kristy Hibbs-Burr

ESTHERVILLE HIGH SCHOOL



51

I knew I would like Mrs. Burr the first time I met her. She branded me "the lone frosh" in January of 1990 when I was the only freshman to try out for her mock trial team. But she didn't hold my inexperience against me, placing me on the varsity squad that year. She seemed to enjoy my overly aggressive, TV-lawyer cross-examination style. Every time I forced a witness into an unavoidable trap, her face lit up and a sly chuckle could be heard coming from her direction. It was the start of four great years of time invested in her literature and composition classes and her mock trial team.

To Mrs. Burr, students came first. Whether you had attained only three credits in two years of high school or had scored a 36 on your ACT exam—it didn't matter to her. She treated all students with respect and had the ability to communicate with both underachievers and overachievers alike, something many teachers are unable to do. In addition, Mrs. Burr always found time to chat with students. I once saw her converse for 10 minutes with a student about motorcycle parts—definitely not her area of expertise—and she did it with such ease that she might have been discussing the poetry of Walt Whitman.

Humor and Mrs. Burr went hand in hand. I never dreaded a Mrs. Burr class because I knew she would keep things lively. Whatever the situation, she was never without an anecdote about her family, a teacher with whom she had once taught, or her dog and cat. She always was able to find humor in the idiosyncrasies of human behavior.

I doubt that Mrs. Burr ever wanted to do anything but teach, and I must conclude that the hundreds, probably thousands, of students who have had a seat in her classrooms are thankful for that.

Travis Ridout

STUDENT, CENTRAL COLLEGE
PELLA, IOWA



52

Marvin Septer

FAIRFIELD HIGH SCHOOL



53

Any testimonial about Marvin Septer and his positive influence on my life must be more than a teacher testimonial. Yes, Mr. Septer was my ninth-grade physical science instructor and he was a tremendous teacher. I certainly don't want to minimize that, but he was so much more than just a teacher.

Marvin Septer is the kind of teacher who believes his responsibility to young people does not end when the school bell rings. He was my Sunday School teacher. He was my eighth-grade football coach. When I began working for the Fairfield Community School District summer maintenance crew while in high school, Marv took me under his wing on the paint crew. He not only taught me the finer points of plastering, puttying, and painting but also the value of hard work and responsibility to one's employer.

Later, he and a junior high school counselor, Dan Buttery, asked me to join them in a partnership—MDM Contracting (which stood for Marv, Dan, and Myron)—to do painting and light construction in the summer. Although I was only 18 years old, they treated me as an equal partner and included me in all decisions, including our initial meeting with a local attorney to draft the partnership documents. I spent many hot summer days with Marv—painting, pounding nails, glazing windows, pouring concrete, and talking about life in general. He was always positive, energetic,

and willing to share his infectious laugh, sometimes to the point of tears.

Marv was also the Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) sponsor at Fairfield High School. It had always been a tradition at Fairfield High School that a half-dozen or so athletes would go to FCA camp in the summer before their senior year. I was one of the half-dozen slated to go the summer of 1975. A couple of weeks before we were to leave, one of our friends and fellow FCA campers, Brad Wickliff, an outstanding student and athlete, was killed in a motorcycle accident. We were shaken to the core. Marv took us to FCA camp, anyway.

At FCA camp, we found that our Christian faith provided answers to many of the questions that had arisen in our hearts and minds since Brad's death. We told Marv on the way home that we wanted to start an active FCA chapter at Fairfield High School and share what we had found. He was behind us 100 percent. That year, our FCA meetings grew to more than 100 young people in attendance. Lives were changed. Marv was there the whole time, quietly supporting us, helping us to make good decisions for our lives, helping us search for the answers to difficult questions about life, helping us to lead lives of honesty, integrity, and service to others.

I am only one of the young people that Marv has influenced over the years. Others could tell similar stories of his selfless desire to support and help young people as they struggle through their difficult teenage years.

Marv Septer was more than just a tremendous teacher. He was, and is, a tremendous friend.

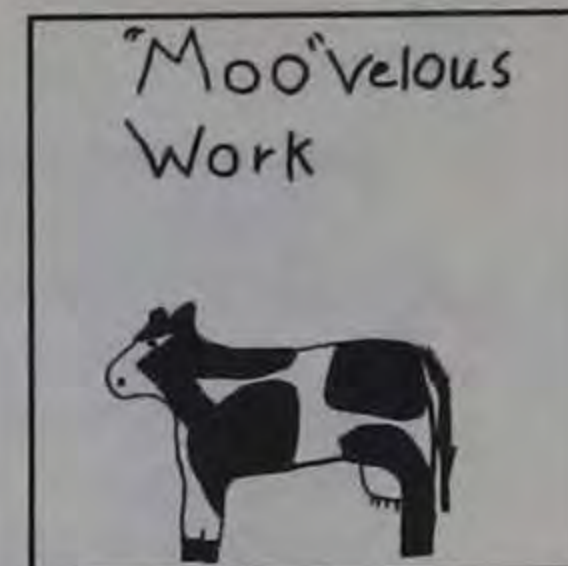
Myron L. Gookin

ATTORNEY

FAIRFIELD, IOWA

Leon Plummer

FARRAGUT HIGH SCHOOL



54

They buried Leon Plummer here 20 years ago, after a funeral that packed the gymnasium that now bears his name.

Still, the smiling, rotund Plummer—forever “Mr. Plummer” or “Coach Plummer” to the Farragut girls who played basketball for him—guides them daily, as if he were still on the bench to provide a disapproving glare or a reassuring nod.

He travels the Midlands with Janice Pierce Anderzhon as she sells nursery stock.

He helped keep Terri Brannen’s eyes on her goal as she pursued a degree in veterinary medicine.

He works the fertile soil of southwest Iowa with Becky Albright Head.

And he prowls courtside still at girls basketball games with Janelle Gruber Bryte, whose first coaching job set her behind Plummer’s old desk.

Plummer, who died of a heart attack at age 41 in 1976, took 10 teams to the state tournament in 19 years of coaching girls basketball at Farragut. His Admiralettes won the state title in 1971.

To his former players, though, the Farragut trophy case is not the best measure

of a man who spent his life leading young people. Coach Plummer's real legacy, they say, is his enduring influence in the lives of others.

"He really molded young women," said Bonnie Bickett MacKenzie. "The patience, the discipline, the teamwork, the hard work, the fun, the respect. I'm who I am partially because of him."

Ms. Anderzhon, a starter who watched most of the '71 championship game from the bench, remembers Plummer with the same fondness as the reserve guard involved in the game's key play.

Tanya Bopp Bland, the spunky guard who drew a charging foul on a girl nearly a foot taller than she was, called her coach "the greatest influence on me, other than my faith."

Ms. Anderzhon, a regional sales representative for a nursery wholesale company, likewise credited the coach with shaping the woman she has become.

"I'd be lying if I said it didn't hurt," she said of Plummer's decision to replace her for most of the title game. But she admired him too much to object. "I didn't ever say a word. I was happy for the team. I felt that I would be very selfish if I was to pout around."

The team, and obeying the coach, mattered most to Plummer's girls. In interviews a quarter-century later, Adettes—starters, subs and benchwarmers alike—used the word "respect" immediately when asked about the coach. "Team" followed quickly.

"We all respected him," Dr. Brannen said, "and would have done anything the way he wanted us to do it."

Dr. Brannen by any measure was a star in Iowa girls' basketball. She was the only

Adette named to the '71 all-tournament team and was named first-team all-state twice. She is the only Adette in the Iowa Girls' Basketball Hall of Fame.

But she wasn't a star in Farragut girls' basketball, because Plummer had no stars, only the team. The accolades made Dr. Brannen uncomfortable as a youth and drew little notice from the coach.

"I'm glad he didn't make an issue of it," said Dr. Brannen, now working at a veterinary clinic in Calgary, Alberta. "I just was much happier to be recognized as a team."

Her humility was typical of the Adettes. Plummer wouldn't show players their personal statistics after games.

A visit by *The World-Herald* last month to the Waterloo, Iowa, school where Mrs. MacKenzie teaches prompted colleagues to recognize her basketball achievements at a school assembly. She was a starting forward on the '71 championship team.

As students applauded and Mrs. MacKenzie blushed, a teacher called out, "How many points did you make?"

"I don't know," she answered with a smile and a shrug, "but we won." (She scored 17 points.)

Plummer grew up in Burlington Junction, Missouri. His only sibling was a younger sister. He was a pretty good basketball player but especially enjoyed baseball, said his widow, Sally Ashler, now remarried and living in Hamburg, Iowa.

He began coaching at Farragut in 1957, his second year out of college. He assisted the football coach and coached younger boys in summer baseball. But Plummer made his mark coaching the girls' sports, building a dynasty that dominated southwest Iowa softball, track and especially basketball for nearly two decades.

"I think he always preferred girls," Mrs. Ashler said. "He thought they worked harder for him. The male ego gets in the way with boys."

And he understood the girls. His daughter, Laura Krein, now of Underwood, Iowa, said, "He knew the symptoms of PMS before they ever identified it as PMS."

Plummer and his assistant coach, Max Livingston, who died last summer, taught the fundamentals of basketball to Farragut girls from the time they entered fourth grade. They were paid to coach junior high and high school, but Plummer and Livingston started the elementary program on their own time on Saturdays so the girls would know the game by the time they were ready to compete.

There would be plenty of time for scrimmaging and playing later. In drills they would continue into high school, the young girls practiced dribbling, passing, rebounding, learning how to cut off a girl who was driving into the lane.

Failing to learn a skill was not an option. "You redid it and redid it and redid it until it was right," recalled Mrs. Head, who farms with her husband, Jim, about nine miles north of Farragut.

Mistakes carried penalties. "I did a lot of pushups. Oh boy, did I do a lot of pushups!" said Penny Phillips.

But his practices were fun, too. Though always demanding, he'd joke sometimes when the girls would least expect it. He'd play the Harlem Globetrotters' "Sweet Georgia Brown" theme music.

Barb Young Lundgren, who was a sophomore guard on the championship team, still has a copy of the mimeographed training code that spelled out Plummer's expectations: no smoking or drinking, of course. Junk food was discouraged, and girls had to follow a strict curfew.

"We heard, or thought, he would go out and drive around to see if any of us were out late," Dr. Brannen recalled.

Plummer always insisted, Mrs. Bryte said, that "we should behave like young ladies off the court, but on the court we should play like boys."

Ms. Anderzhon said she once started getting in trouble and running around with some wild kids. Plummer called her to his office and expressed his concern.

"I went out of there angry," she recalled. But she stopped hanging out with those kids. "I was headed in the wrong direction," Ms. Anderzhon said.

The Sunday morning after winning the state championship, Plummer still expected the girls to attend church, even though they had been up all night celebrating.

Even in the off-season, Plummer would lay down specific goals for each girl, spelling them out in notes to take home over the summer: work on dribbling, cut down on traveling, practice your free throws.

"He probably instilled in all of us the idea of having a goal and working toward it," Dr. Brannen said.

Plummer expected his players to execute what they had learned in practice and concentrate on the game. "When you had a timeout and he was talking to you, you wouldn't dare look up in the crowd," said Ms. Anderzhon.

The concentration Plummer demanded made it easier for the girls to play under the pressure and emotion of the tournament. Dr. Brannen said, "We played almost like robots."

When youthful emotions surfaced, Plummer knew whether to respond sternly or calmly.

Janelle Gruber Bryte remembers her anxiety upon being fouled repeatedly late in the championship game as Mediapolis was trying to come back.

As the youngest forward, she knew the opponents were hoping she would be too nervous to make her free throws. After missing a couple, she looked over to the bench. "Coach Plummer just goes like this," Mrs. Bryte said, making an exaggerated upward shooting motion. "He didn't say anything. He just motioned that I should put more arch on the shot. He was so calm, and he got me concentrating on my shot instead of my nervousness."

Her free throws sealed the victory.

Of the '71 Adettes, Mrs. Bryte followed most closely in Plummer's footsteps, becoming the coach of Farragut's junior high girls a couple of years after Plummer's death. She remembers the feeling of awe as she sat at his old desk and found his old practice notes.

"The first couple years I coached, I was going to be just like him," she said. "I was going to be the woman counterpart to Coach Plummer."

"But my personality is so much different. It didn't take me long to learn I could be a very good coach, but I was going to have to do it with my personality."

Mrs. Bryte does, though, find herself using his very words when coaching, telling her team to "go meet the pass" or "take care of the ball." When one of her players is being guarded too roughly, she needles the referee with a phrase Plummer favored: "Get her a saddle."

She moved in 1993 to Pomeroy-Palmer in northwest Iowa, where she still teaches and coaches.

Plummer's lessons extended beyond the basketball court. He taught junior high

science and high school biology. And he taught compassion and acceptance of other people.

"He was always helping the underprivileged," Mrs. Bryte said. When some children in Riverton, where he lived, needed help to pay for a summer camp, he raised the money, "and I know part of it came from his pocket," she said.

His daughter, Julie Plummer, who teaches children with learning problems in Shelby, Iowa, said, "Dad always had a way of taking in kids and adults who were different from the mold."

Plummer returned from coaching after the 1976 state tournament, where the Adettes lost in the first round. He was going to be high school principal and spend more time with his children, three teenagers, a 4-year-old and a 2-year-old.

But he died of a heart attack less than two months after he quit coaching. He was somewhat overweight and smoked unfiltered Camels, but his death, at age 41, came as a shock.

Friends, fans, family, Adettes past and present and coaches from across Iowa came to Farragut's gym, which has a capacity of about 2,500, for the funeral. They filled the bleachers and the folding chairs set up on the court where Plummer's girls played.

His widow spent the summer writing more than 2,000 thank-you notes.

The Adettes mourned as though they had lost a father. "I never told him how much he meant to me in my life," lamented Ms. Anderzhon.

Mrs. Head draws great solace from the fact that she had told him. She was the oldest of three Albright sisters—Becky, Pam and Teresa—who started at forward for Farragut from 1968 to 1976. When Teresa was a senior, the sisters decided to write

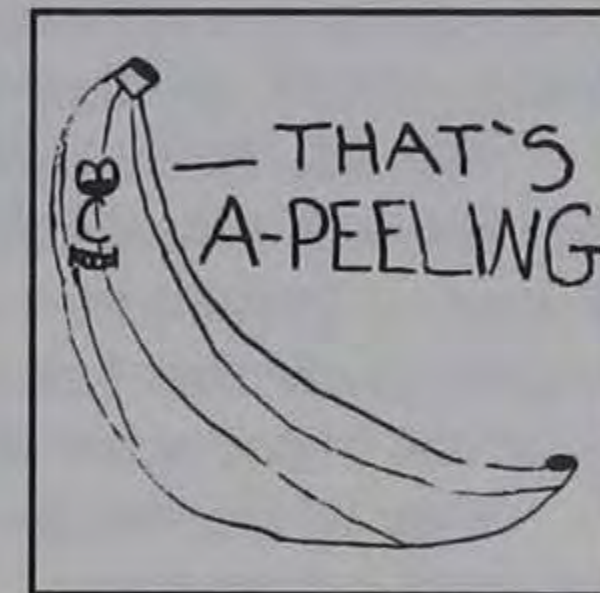
letters to Plummer the week of state tournament, thanking him for his years of guidance.

"I feel good because I know before he died, he knew exactly what I thought of him," Mrs. Head said.

After the service, Plummer was buried in the cemetery north of Farragut, where his gravestone reads, "Every kid's friend."

When Mrs. Ashler visits the grave, she usually finds flowers, though she doesn't know who puts them there. "There's somebody he touched that's still remembering."

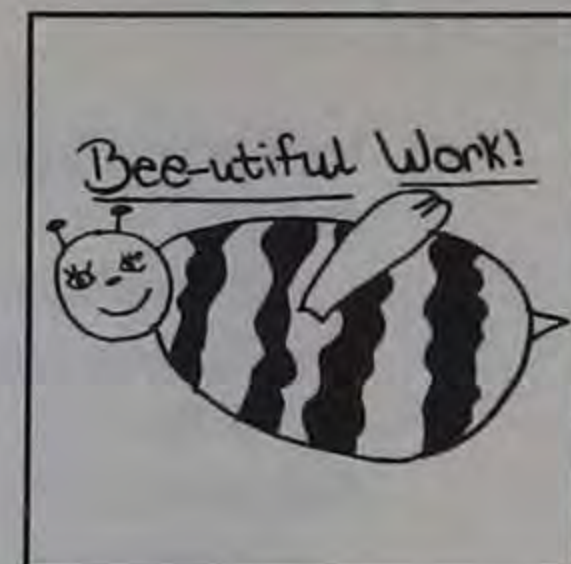
This story by Steve Buttry originally appeared in the March 5, 1996, issue of *The Omaha World-Herald*. Reprinted with permission by *The Omaha World-Herald*.



55

Lura Sewick

FOREST CITY MIDDLE SCHOOL



56

A teacher who really made a difference in my life was my eighth-grade U.S. history teacher at Forest City, Lura Sewick.

Lura Sewick taught for many, many years in Forest City, and she was really a dynamic teacher. She was kind of an unforgettable person because she had one blue eye and one brown eye and she always wore purple. So, that was certainly something that would get the students' attention.

She also had a tremendous love of America and American history, and I remember she was a very demanding teacher. We had to do a lot of time lines and we learned a tremendous amount about history. It was during that year that I had her in eighth grade that I decided I wanted to go into a career of public service and run for political office some day.

One of the things that I remember she taught were what she called "the three Rs of good government." And, of course, everybody's familiar with the first R, which stands for rights. The first 10 amendments to the Constitution of the United States are called the Bill of Rights. As American citizens, we're very jealously protecting those rights we have and recognize that's one of the great things about this country—

because people's rights are protected by the Constitution.

She also taught us that with rights must also go respect—respect for other people's rights. That means respect for your parents, respect for your teachers, respect for other people. As part of that respect, she would make us say something good about every other person in the class. So, you had to find something positive or some compliment to make to every other student in the classroom.

She also taught us responsibility. An important responsibility of being a citizen was to register and to vote. I know that long after she retired—she's still living and I think she's 91 now—she still sees to it that everyone in the little town of Burt, Iowa, where she lives, becomes registered to vote as soon as they're old enough. She's also been a stickler about getting absentee ballots to people that are away in the service or in the hospital or something like that.

She was a teacher who really brought American history to life and motivated a lot of students. At the same time, she taught us by example to be good citizens. I had a lot of good teachers growing up that had a very important influence on my life, but I think more than anyone else, I would credit Lura Sewick for my serving as Governor of Iowa today.

Terry E. Branstad

GOVERNOR OF IOWA

DES MOINES, IOWA

William Hueser

GEORGE COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL



57

William Hueser was my teacher all four years of my high school education at George Community High School. Mr. Hueser not only taught me typing skills, shorthand, bookkeeping, and secretarial training, he also taught us about everyday life and what it would be like in the so-called "real world" after high school. He gave us valuable advice on getting along in the work field after high school in a way that I and none of my classmates ever forgot.

At the time, he was teaching us (without any of us realizing it) by telling us of his past experiences and past experiences of his peers. He was a great teacher and is a good friend.

I have been out of school for almost 34 years, and in those 34 years I have lived in my hometown working as a bookkeeper. The last six and one-half years my husband and I have owned and operated the bowling alley in George.

There is hardly a day that goes by that there isn't something or some saying that goes through my mind that reminds me of the days in high school and Mr. Hueser. I still enjoy bookkeeping or any kind of secretarial duties and this is because Mr.

Hueser taught us how to enjoy what we had to learn in his class.

I have one son who attended George Community High School. He also had Mr. Hueser as a teacher and enjoyed his classes. As a matter of fact, I think if my son was writing this testimonial he would be saying the same things I am.

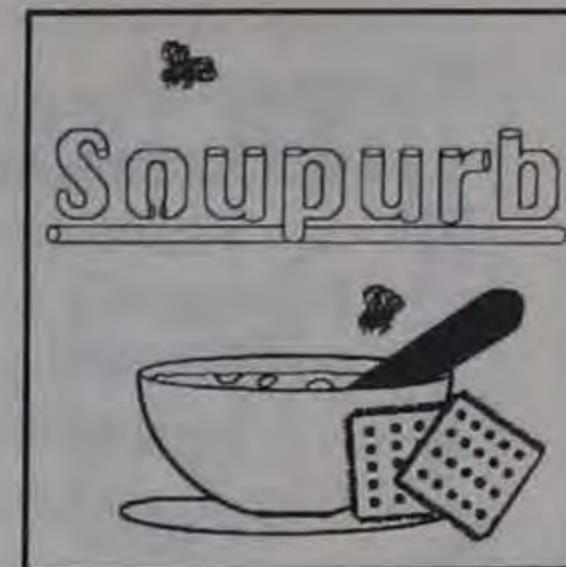
Again, William (Bill) Hueser was a wonderful teacher and is still a very good friend, and I thank him for his influence in my life. Thanks, Bill!

Janice Martens Koerselman

OWNER AND MANAGER, MUSTANG LANES BOWLING ALLEY
GEORGE, IOWA

Steven Young

GLADBROOK HIGH SCHOOL



I first met Mr. Young when I was only in fourth grade at Gladbrook Elementary School. He was the high school drama teacher and had a group of his drama students performing for the elementary students in a series of one-act plays. This was new for many of us, as Mr. Young brought his students to the classrooms to perform these plays. It was unheard of for high school students to “come back down” once they left the halls of elementary school, unless it was to terrorize some unsuspecting fool who wandered into high school “no man’s land.”

As I reached junior high and high school, I was a student in several of Mr. Young’s classes, as he taught English, Spanish, and advanced English composition classes. I saw firsthand that he was not an ordinary teacher. He would teach his lessons, then start a group discussion on the importance of the lessons or how we need to prepare for life after high school. There were times when I did not appreciate these group discussions or everything he was trying to teach me as I tried to understand exactly what an indirect object was, when to use a semicolon, what the dif-

ference was between "further" and "farther," and that "quicklyer" was not found in any English dictionary.

On several occasions, he exposed me to some of the great literature classics and forced me to read such books as *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *A Day No Pigs Would Die*, *The Scarlet Letter*, *Tom Sawyer*, *Huckleberry Finn*, and several others. In today's age of videos and book cassettes, I could have rented a copy or listened to the author read the book to me. I have a greater appreciation for actually reading the book and letting my imagination run wild with images of what was taking place within the book.

As my senior year began, topics of earlier group discussions came back to haunt me as the biggest question that I had was, "What am I going to do after I graduate?" I had a few options but chose to try and gain a nomination to the United States Military Academy at West Point.

Again, Mr. Young helped me by writing a letter of recommendation and getting more from my other teachers and school officials. Mr. Young, along with my mother, used his personal time to help me prepare for, including how to conduct myself during, the interview. (I was going to have several before I could receive a nomination to West Point.) All of my preparation eventually paid off, as I did receive a nomination from the Honorable Cooper Evans, then gained admission to, and eventually graduated from, West Point as a member of the Class of 1988.

I visited Mr. Young whenever I was home on leave from school and discussed how things were going in my studies. Years later, while I was stationed in Germany, my mother told me that Mr. Young transferred to another school and was a high

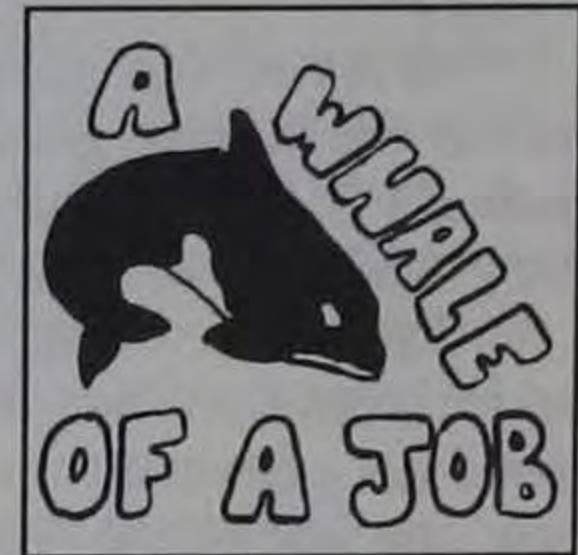
school guidance counselor. I was sad that he was not in Gladbrook anymore, but happy for him because he was doing what he always had been doing throughout his life—helping other students prepare themselves for the future.

I never had another chance to see or talk to Mr. Young again, as he passed away two years ago. I look back on my junior high, high school, and college days and feel very fortunate to have known Mr. Young—the teacher, the guidance counselor, and, most importantly, my friend.

Capt. Marc R. McCreery

7TH SPECIAL FORCES GROUP (AIRBORNE)

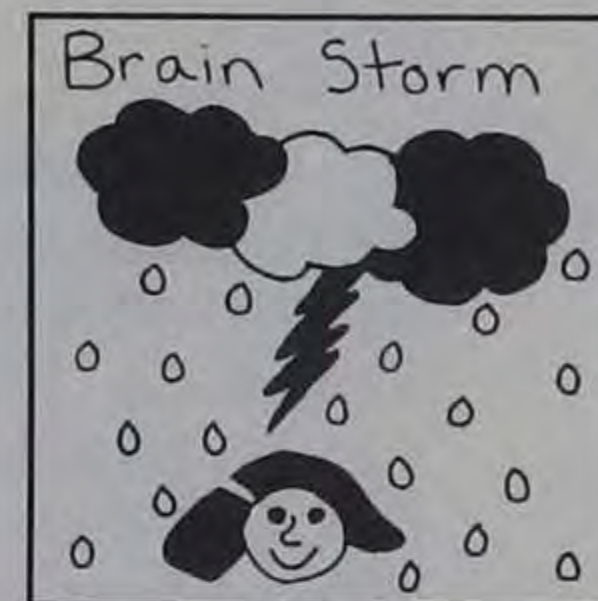
FORT BRAGG, NORTH CAROLINA



59

Willa Nolin

GLIDDEN-RALSTON COMMUNITY SCHOOL



60

I have always considered the years that I spent at Glidden-Ralston Community School to be a positive learning experience. The education which I received was of the highest quality and helped to set the foundation for the success that I would later achieve. The standard of excellence established at the Glidden-Ralston Community School is a tribute to all past and present teachers, as well as the Glidden community, school board, and school administration. The standard of excellence continues to this day, with measures taken to assure that it will continue far into the future.

Although many teachers had a positive influence on my life, Mrs. Willa Nolin had the most notable and lasting influence.

I feel that academic success and the influence that a teacher has on students is best measured by the positive role model they are in both their personal and professional lives. I have known Willa nearly all of my life, both in and out of the classroom. I had many occasions to see firsthand how Willa conducted her personal life, with her family and within the community. The dedication and caring which Willa displayed continued into the classroom.

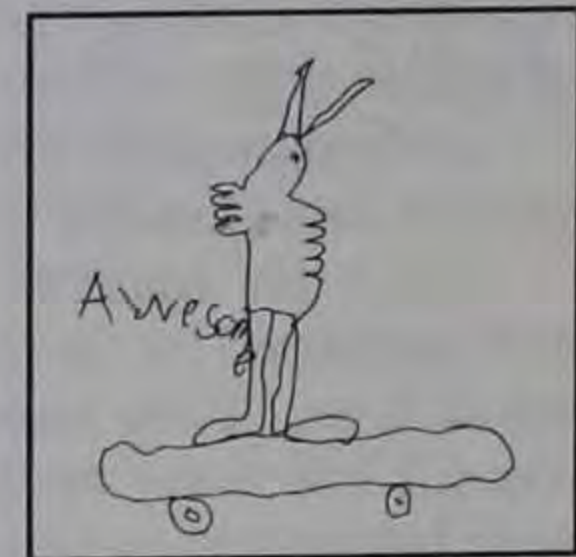
85

Willa demonstrated the practicality of the theory of advanced mathematics and the technical sciences through meaningful and understandable examples and demonstrations which were not above the student's level of understanding. This approach to teaching created a stimulating and fun environment in which to learn subjects of a highly technical nature and to see how they applied to real life. Willa always encouraged students to excel and do the best that they could, while at the same time being patient and helpful if students didn't grasp concepts the first time they were presented. Willa was respectful and considerate toward students and was always willing to give of her time, during and after school, to help students. Willa was a constant and consistent positive role model, both as a teacher and a person.

Willa practiced and instilled in her students, by her example, a standard of excellence that made Glidden-Ralston Community School an environment that fostered learning, while providing a quality education and a positive life experience.

Steve Zimmerman

CERTIFIED VALUE ENGINEERING SPECIALIST
SCRANTON, IOWA



Annette V. Shultz

GREENE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



62

The most important educator in my life is a third-grade teacher in Greene, Iowa.

The community in which she lives is a typical Iowa farm town. While rural, Greene has always prided itself on the quality of its school system and placed high expectations on its educators.

Three keys to this teacher's success are her dedication to students, her creative approach to the learning process, and her personal fortitude.

When I was in kindergarten, we had a classmate who could not communicate verbally. This teacher was the special education teacher at that time and was challenged with helping this student learn to communicate. She spent many hours working with this student and the student's family. Upon high school graduation, the student went on to college and has since married and started a family. The one-time special education teacher was a very proud guest at the wedding of this student.

The following year, she became a third-grade teacher—the position which she still holds.

In the classroom she has always found new and creative ways for teaching her

87

students. Often times these methods incorporate one of her personal interests. An example of this would be her approach to teaching beginning multiplication and division. Incorporating her passion for geology, she provides each students with a cup full of fossilized shellfish (found in local quarries). Using these three-dimensional prehistoric objects, the students are able to grasp these intangible math concepts and learn some geological history of their surroundings.

Foremost in my mind, I feel that this teacher's personal fortitude is a quality that has most impressed me.

Newly married to a local man, she moved to Greene in 1963 and began teaching. Five years later, her husband was severely injured in an automobile accident. This left him in need of nursing home care, and she with two preschool-aged children to raise.

The teacher I am speaking of is Mrs. Annette V. Shultz. She has been able to rise above this personal tragedy and remain dedicated to her husband and children, teaching, and the community. She has provided me with a model to refer to throughout my life. Thanks, Mom!

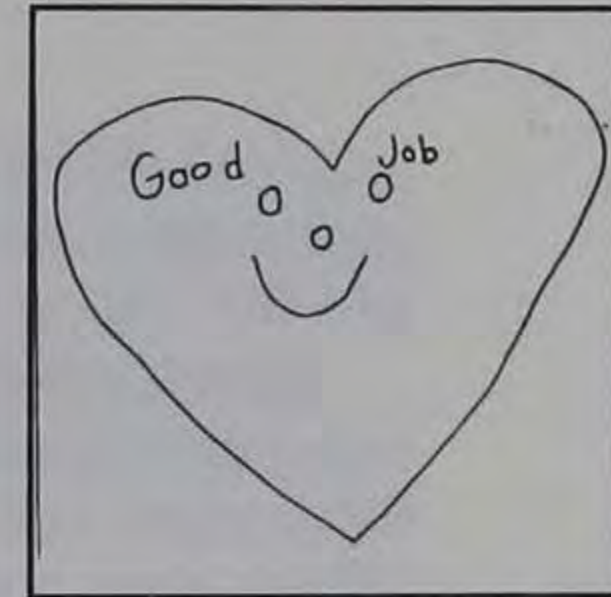
Craig S. Shultz

INTERIOR DESIGNER

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Edna Lee Houston
George Westby
Ruth Barnes
Avilda Buck
Wilson Goodwin
Leroy Smay

GREENFIELD ELEMENTARY AND HIGH SCHOOLS



63

Teachers in Greenfield when I was a boy in the 1930s were the most special group in town. Perhaps pastors were on their level, though there were not that many of them and their doctrine had none of the frightening certainty of English grammar and arithmetic. There were doctors and lawyers, but only a couple or three of each and, with luck, the exposure to them was minimal.

89

And, as I recall, there were only one or two families judged to be rich in my community, which meant that intellectual capital was more important than money and that led to solid respect for educators.

George Westby, the high school principal who lived two doors down from me, was a god in my young eyes. I saw him stride to school in the early morning in a three-piece suit, gold watch chain glinting in the sun, fedora squarely on his head. "There goes Mr. Westby," my mother would say as we watched out the kitchen window.

There was reverence in her voice, a hint of the hope that all Depression-ridden families had vested in the schools, the only sure way to better lives. Mr. Westby was soon gone. But others like him followed, good and devoted people, always held in awe.

I see that parade of administrators and teachers and coaches now in my mind, all worthy in some way of our esteem. Today I understand why. Back then I was part of a society that required unquestioning discipline and hard work. Teachers as much as anyone outside our families made us worthy citizens, if that was to be.

Edna Lee Houston taught my father in kindergarten, and me too. She was forever soft-voiced and tender-handed, knowing and caring from whence we came. She set the standard of our high expectations that followed.

Ruth Barnes lived with her sister on the north side of town and for nearly a half-century she taught high school Latin, which seemed so strange in that land of corn and hogs. Yet, when I looked back from my writing career I could see that while I never learned much Latin, I did learn grammar from Miss Barnes. And I did learn to finish what I started.

There was Avilda Buck, too, who taught us algebra and trigonometry and during World War II took us into her home summers and nights for advanced tutoring so we would be a jump ahead of others when we went into service.

And Wilson Goodwin taught us basketball and science and was such a genial and respected figure that at least one of my classmates became an Air Force meteorologist, as Mr. Goodwin had been during the war.

Leroy Smay, with the patience of Job, built a band out of a lot of tin ears and forever the strains of Bach and John Philip Sousa have lived side by side in most of our minds. Enduring treasure.

No wonder the teachers in our tiny culture were revered. They imparted the exhilaration of learning, the worth of thought. For that they received enduring honor and affection. It was a splendid partnership.

Hugh Sidey

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR, *TIME* MAGAZINE

POTOMAC, MARYLAND



64

Mildred Kellam

GREENFIELD HIGH SCHOOL



65

I was fortunate to have grown up in a small Iowa town. There are a number of benefits. One is the sense of community, of being part of a group of people that know you and care about you. At times it seemed to me as if the entire town was keeping an eye on me and participating in guiding my development. Although I did not always enjoy this supervision as a youth, I have now come to value it and to appreciate the role that my hometown and its citizens played in my growth to adulthood. One of the most prominent figures in these memories was a neighbor, a friend and a teacher, Mildred Kellam.

Mrs. Kellam lived up the block from my family. For most of my life I didn't realize she had a first name. She was always Mrs. Kellam. (As a child it apparently didn't occur to me that she would have a first name and as an adult I still couldn't seem to bring myself to address her in any way but as "Mrs. Kellam.") She was a very neat and orderly woman with a natural dignity that didn't demand respect as much as just drew it out as if there were no alternatives that were possible. She presented a very severe and intimidating image to me, but that feeling always seemed to dissolve with her ready smile and a kind voice that conveyed her genuine happiness to see me or any other young person.

My first memorable interactions with Mrs. Kellam occurred when I was a neighbor kid trying to earn some money by mowing lawns during the summer when I was 12 or 13 years old. She had high expectations of the quality of work I would do in mowing her lawn, higher expectations than I had. She always demanded more effort, more attention to detail and better work than I planned to deliver. She let me know in no uncertain terms that I could do better than I started out to do and that she expected me to do my best. (I didn't always provide the best lawn care service, either in terms of promptness or quality.) Mrs. Kellam was understanding the first time and patient in explaining her expectations, but was always unrelenting in her demand that I do my best. These were the same qualities that she brought to her teaching.

Mrs. Kellam taught high school mathematics. She taught with patience, understanding, and a determination to help us discover our own capabilities. She always expected us to work up to those capabilities. She understood the difficulties many of us faced as her students in algebra and calculus. She worked with us patiently as long as we applied ourselves to our task, and, in the end, she accomplished her goal—although most of us didn't have any idea what it was.

Now, upon reflection, I realize she invested most of her time and effort not so much in showing us how to solve the immediate math problem we were dealing with, but rather she was teaching us how to teach ourselves, how to figure things out for ourselves so that we would always be able to find ways to solve our own problems. In the classroom, this woman helped her students find abilities in ourselves we didn't know we had, gave us the desire to find and develop other abilities and, most of all, instilled an expectation of excellence in the application of those abilities. Mrs. Kellam accomplished the formidable task of raising her students' ex-

pectations of themselves and providing them with the ability to develop their own tools to achieve those expectations.

She did not seem to regard her profession as a job that began and ended with the school bells. Her students were not tasks to be accomplished. She was a part of our lives and we were a part of hers. Teaching was only a facet of her involvement in the whole of our growth and life in the community. When I saw her outside of class, she would inquire about how and what I was doing and demonstrate her genuine concern for my well-being and growth as a person. At times, when it seemed necessary, she would offer advice or guidance. This continued to be true long after I had moved on from her classes and the Greenfield school system. This genuine compassion and continuing concern for the overall development and progress of their students was characteristic of many of the teachers I was fortunate to have in that school system.

Mrs. Kellam was a remarkable part of growing up in Greenfield. This was true not only for the traditional virtues of a teacher, which she possessed in abundance, but also because she was part of our lives in the community and helped to instill the values that guide us today. Personally, she helped me to find more within myself than I knew was there and she helped give me the confidence and independence to develop it and use it myself. She believed in me and invested a part of herself in me. I'll always be grateful, appreciative, and, of course, respectful.

Doug Armstrong, DVM

HENRY DOORLY ZOO
OMAHA, NEBRASKA

Richard Peebler

GRINNELL HIGH SCHOOL



66

Looking back on my high school days, I remember that when I entered Grinnell High School in 1952, everything was old. The building was old (a new one was completed in 1960); the faculty and administration were old. But while I was a student at GHS, gradual changes began to take place. A new principal was hired in the fall of 1953, replacing an icon who had been in that position for what must have been 40 years. The faculty also began to change.

In 1954, at the start of my junior year, Richard Peebler was hired to teach math. He was like a breath of fresh air. Mr. Peebler had taught for three years prior to coming to Grinnell and was probably only 25 or 26 when he first taught in our system. He was enthusiastic about his subject. His energy was boundless.

I always looked forward to attending his math classes because I knew we were going to be challenged and that we would learn. He was firm but not dictatorial, and we could laugh and learn at the same time. A true testament to his abilities is the fact that several of my colleagues went on to be high school math teachers, and a couple even earned Ph.D.s in math-related fields. In short, we were ready for the type of in-

95

struction that he brought to us, and we prospered under his tutelage.

Mr. Peebler also took an interest in his students outside of the classroom. He followed our extra-curricular activities and took a real interest in all phases of our development. He was drafted as our class advisor and enthusiastically assisted in all of our projects.

In my senior year, I was chosen to be Master Counselor of our local DeMolay chapter. When it was time for me to step down, Dick Peebler appeared at the ceremony and presented me with a past Master Counselor's pin which had been given to him when he relinquished the same office several years earlier. I still have the pin. I cherish it—not because it has great value—but because of the thoughtfulness with which it was given.

Dick Peebler left Grinnell High School with our class, and in the fall of 1957 began a career that has spanned 40 years at Drake University. During that time, he has been a professor of accounting and for 20 years was the dean of the College of Business. I know that through the years he has continued to encourage young men and women as they pursue their academic goals and also as they grow and mature in all facets of life.

Richard K. Ramsey

PRESIDENT, RAMSEY-WEEKS, INC.
GRINNELL, IOWA

Robert "Bob" Pryor

CENTRAL SCHOOL



67

In 1932-33, one of my junior high years at Central School in Iowa Falls, my math teacher was Robert "Bob" Pryor. Mr. Pryor also was my junior high basketball coach.

In class, he ruled with authority, keeping order by rifling erasers and hitting those of us who might not be as attentive as he wished. He was remarkably accurate and could "pick off" an unruly boy at the back of the room. Under Mr. Pryor, discipline was learned.

On the basketball court he was equally demanding and we gave him 100 percent each game. Although stern of exterior, he was considerate and understanding, and he made the game fun.

One afternoon—either by request or by order—I was helping Mr. Pryor clean blackboards. He suddenly said, "Billy, sit down. I have something important to tell you." To this day, I can still feel the surge of fear welling up in my stomach. I didn't know what I had done to bring down his wrath.

Mr. Pryor looked intently at me, moved quite close and said, "Billy, remember what I am going to tell you today. You are an excellent basketball player. You have

97

great competitive desires. But, you are going to be small physically. All your teammates are going to be much taller than you. Therefore, you must do these things to keep up with them. 1. Always give everything you have. Never let up—outfight them. 2. Don't drink coffee. It's not good for you. 3. Never, never smoke a cigarette, as it cuts your wind. All of your friends will be smoking and you will be in better shape than they."

With that, Mr. Pryor said, "See you tomorrow, Billy. You are a good boy."

At age 75, I can attest that I have never had a cigarette in my mouth—not one puff. Coffee? Still only a cup when driving home from a talent show or late night event.

I feel that Mr. Pryor, on that afternoon, epitomized what teaching is all about—impressing the impressionable at precisely the right moment. Mr. Pryor also was a short man with a lot of "fight" and he could sure "peg" an eraser when needed.

Bill Riley

BROADCASTER AND STATE FAIR PROMOTER
CLEAR LAKE, IOWA



Mary Egan

CASS COUNTY RURAL SCHOOL

Dorothy Bowley

Ray Dillard

Gustava Price

JEFFERSON-SCRANTON HIGH SCHOOL

Donald B. Johnson

Russell Ross

George Chambers

Willard Boyd

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA, IOWA CITY

A number of teachers have had a significant impact on my life, so it's impossible to single out just one.

The list begins with my grandmother. Mary Egan taught school in a one-room schoolhouse in Cass County before she met my grandfather and she had to quit teaching. That didn't stop her love of reading and learning. Their home was always full of good books and there was always a warm lap where you could go to read them.

As a boy, one of life's pleasures was time at Grandpa and Grandma's house,

where an old set of the *World Book Encyclopedia* was as much fun as licking the mixing bowl at cookie baking time.

She helped teach a love of learning and reading early on. From her came the ethic which my parents passed on to me: Get a good education because they can never take that away from you. That is an ethic taught to many in Iowa over the years and it has paid off handsomely for our state.

A second teacher who has played a large role was Dorothy Bowley, the school librarian who coached my high school debate team. My parents had started me to school a year early, so I was always behind the older boys in competitive athletics. But in the library, I didn't get shoved around. Mrs. Bowley taught me how to look up books and articles. She also taught speech and debate, where she helped teach the power ideas and words can have when they are effectively used in tandem.

Other teachers were Ray Dillard, who taught a love of literature, and Gustava Price, who taught a love of history.

In college, several teachers drilled a simple ethic—how to ask questions and think critically. Donald B. Johnson, Russell Ross, and George Chambers exemplified what college is really all about—teaching you how to think and to appreciate the work of those who did.

One great teacher was Willard Boyd. He taught courage. It wasn't in a classroom. As president of the University of Iowa in the early 1970s, he had the unwelcome task of trying to preserve a great university in the face of the student unrest of the Vietnam era.

As a student activist, I got a chance to watch him up close. He saw the university as a place that should not be torn apart by those with other agendas. I remember

long, late-night talks with him. He taught that a college education can't teach you everything there is to learn, it can only teach you what you don't know and, maybe, the right questions to ask.

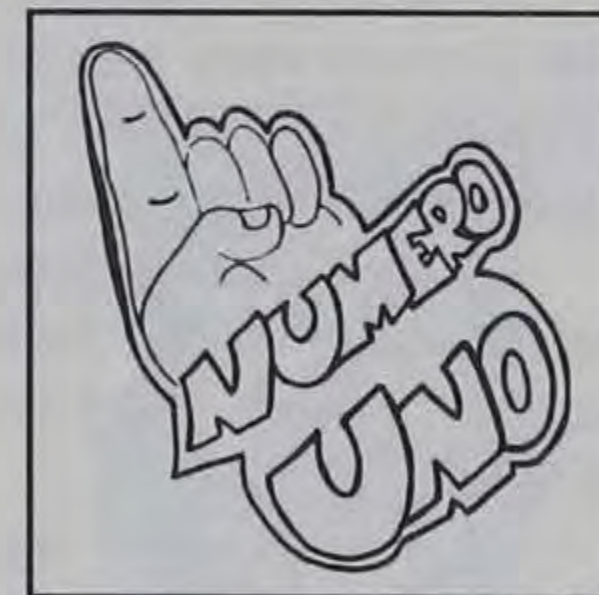
That made the place worth preserving to him. He faced down radicals who believed in violence. He faced down alumni threatening to withhold money. He faced down legislators threatening to impose laws. And he did it all with great civility at a time when that was a rare commodity.

We all owe a lot to the great teachers we have known. Most of us will spend our lives trying to live up to what they really taught us.

Their values—teaching with love, asking questions, keeping perspective, appreciating beauty, knowing how to find what you don't know, civility and courage—are traits that have marked the great teachers I have known.

David Yepsen

POLITICAL EDITOR, *THE DES MOINES REGISTER*
DES MOINES, IOWA



69

Gary Busby

JOHNSTON HIGH SCHOOL



I have known Gary Busby in various ways during my life—as my teacher/coach, as an opposing coach, and as a comrade in education. I have always found Gary to be a positive, hardworking, and enthusiastic person.

Teachers influence students in many ways—some by how they teach, others by the person they exhibit to students over a long period of time. Gary Busby was the type of teacher who influenced students by displaying a keen sense of propriety and helping students achieve success in many ways, both in and out of the classroom.

Gary taught science and coached wrestling at Johnston High School and served as co-leader of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes organization while I attended school. Today, Gary is the assistant middle school principal at Johnston Middle School.

Gary's positive role model taught me values that I wanted to exhibit and live my life by. I enjoyed being around Gary, both in and out of school, at different activities. Good role models are very important to students who are trying to discover who and what they want to be as they grow and become adults.

Many of my former classmates have commented on how they enjoyed Gary's classes. Gary was ahead of the current trend in science education. Students were doing lots of hands-on experiments as well as self-exploration-type projects in his classes during the early 1970s.

Little did I know at that time that Gary's influence would also affect how I would deal with people in my current professional occupation. I, too, am a science teacher—thanks to Gary's influence! Gary has made a great impact on how I teach science to my students today. I still seek Gary's advice and insights as I continue to grow and serve the community of public education.

I am thankful to have had a good role model who lived his life by displaying values and ideals that I found beneficial while learning about the type of person I wanted to be! Hopefully there are more Gary Busbys out there helping to bring our youth into our communities as productive citizens.

Kelly E. Rohlf

PRINCIPAL, STEWART ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
WASHINGTON, IOWA



71

103

Darwin DeVries

KINGSLEY HIGH SCHOOL



72

He strides into the classroom with a grin and a sparkle in his eye, then barks, "Take everything off of your desk except a pencil and a piece of paper!" The thought of a pop quiz in his class still strikes a chord of fear in me.

Although it has been nearly 10 years since I graduated from high school, there is one teacher who stands above the others—literally as well as figuratively—that has had an extremely positive influence on my life. A tall, athletic, and at times intimidating teacher and coach, Mr. Darwin DeVries can best be described as an educator and motivator. A man of strong convictions, Mr. DeVries practiced what he preached. Dedication, honesty, integrity, and motivation were virtues he radiated each time he stepped into a classroom. He would not favor mediocrity; rather, he challenged every student to achieve his or her best, whether it was in the classroom or on the court.

His classes were known for their toughness—pop quizzes, long and challenging homework assignments, and the dreaded problems on the board. "Forgetting" homework at home or unfinished assignments were not tolerated. At the time, his classes seemed like boot camp compared to some other courses. But in the process, Mr. De-

Vries taught responsibility and time management as well as the core fundamentals of algebra, trigonometry, and calculus.

Mr. DeVries, being a teacher of mathematics and a coach for basketball and baseball, was an extremely busy man. But that did not stop him from making himself available before school, during lunch and study halls, and after school for assistance on homework or other projects. It was obvious by the cluster of students following him from class to lunchroom to gym that his efforts weren't unnoticed or unappreciated.

It wasn't until I went to college that I received a deeper appreciation of his influence. It seemed that other students in my college classes had never had to derive their own mathematical formulas, complete their homework, or feel the pressure of a pop quiz. In a roundabout way, Mr. DeVries had prepared me for college (and life) more than any textbook could have. I hope that all students who pass through his class will realize that the tough teachers are usually the BEST teachers.

Laura L. Phelps, CPA

CURRENTLY STAY-AT-HOME MOTHER

KINGSLEY, IOWA



Donnabelle Oliver

LAWTON JUNIOR-SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL



74

I had more than one teacher who influenced my life in a positive manner. However, the one I wish to comment on is Donnabelle Oliver, one of my high school math teachers.

From the very beginning of my high school days, Mrs. Oliver made me want to think, reason, and find answers to all problems relating to math and science.

The techniques she used made our assignments fun. She taught us shortcuts in problem solving (that I still use today). Using her shortcuts, we would race to see who could finish first. We learned efficiency while we explored many math concepts.

The more problems I solved, the easier it got and the more fun it became. My math skills improved enough to allow me to exempt a college math class and make other college math and science courses fun and interesting.

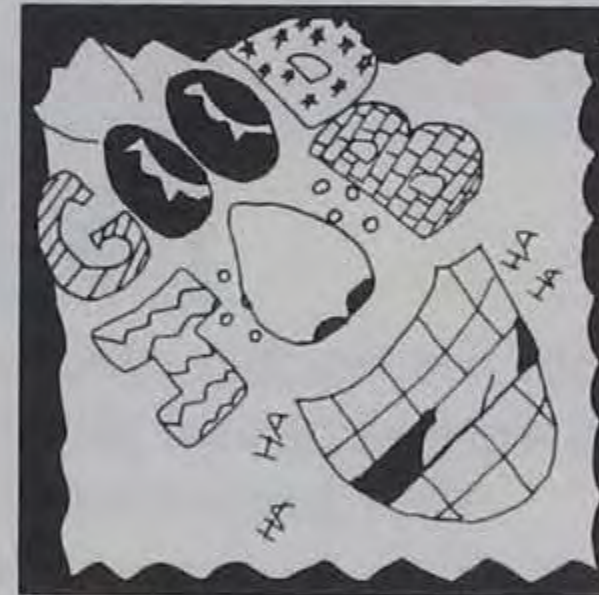
My major area of study in college (Mechanized Agriculture) is heavily dependent on math. I was able to do an independent study on how diesel engine efficiency is affected by various add-on components. This procedure was both fun and interesting.

Had I not had this math interest instilled in me by Mrs. Oliver, I probably would not have done this independent study.

I also like to weld and manufacture or improve various tools and farm equipment that I use in my occupation. If I weren't interested in math, these skills perhaps would not even be possible. The success and efficiency of my operation is highly dependent on my math and science skills. Because of her positive influence on my life, I believe Donnabelle Oliver has truly made a difference.

Kirk Flammang

GRAIN AND LIVESTOCK FARMER
LAWTON, IOWA



75

Casey Foster

MAPLETON VALLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

William Christensen

MAPLE VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL



76

Many teachers have had a positive influence on my life. The first teacher to change my life was my third-grade teacher, Casey Foster, who taught me to apply myself and to work up to my abilities. She turned my life around at that time, but the teacher who had an influence that continues to this day is my high school government and physics teacher, William Christensen.

Mr. Christensen was the first teacher to really prepare students for college. He taught us to organize our work and to think for ourselves. However, his example of community involvement made the biggest impression on my life. Many teachers teach community involvement, but Mr. Christensen still practices what he teaches. He has been active in church, political affairs, and community activities the entire period I have known him.

William Christensen moved out of the classroom and into administration shortly after I graduated from Maple Valley High School, but his example continued working for over 25 years as high school principal. He remains an active Rotarian, church

man, and community leader. Today he is retired, but I am proud to call him a personal friend who continues the example of "Service above Self."

Edward L. Maier

PHARMACIST AND PRESIDENT, MAIER FAMILY PHARMACY, P.C.
MAPLETON, IOWA



77

Robert J. Majerus

MAQUOKETA HIGH SCHOOL



78

With the many questions surrounding the direction of American education at the present time, I can say with certainty that recognition opportunities such as these for truly exceptional teachers in the state of Iowa are of great importance and richly deserved.

During my formative high school years, I was fortunate to have as a teacher an individual who was more than just an educator—he was my father. This combination awarded me the greatest opportunity to have a parental figure genuinely interested in my academic achievements and my educational experience as a whole. It is because of this that I am pleased and take great honor in being able to speak for Robert J. Majerus.

Mr. Majerus had dedicated his life to promoting excellence in education. For the past 29 years, he has been a high school English instructor. Since 1968, he has instructed eastern Iowa students at the Maquoketa High School as a member and chairman of the English department, providing guidance and stability to the community's educational system.

Highly respected in his field of expertise, Mr. Majerus is an inspirational, energetic, and responsible teacher. He possesses the undefinable "with-it-ness" which allows him to carry on a positive and highly productive rapport with his students. He demands quality and effort from those he instructs while guiding them through their language arts course work—all the while emphasizing its importance no matter what path they choose later in life. His students, in turn, give him the respect he commands and are able to take with them the skills needed to be successful in life.

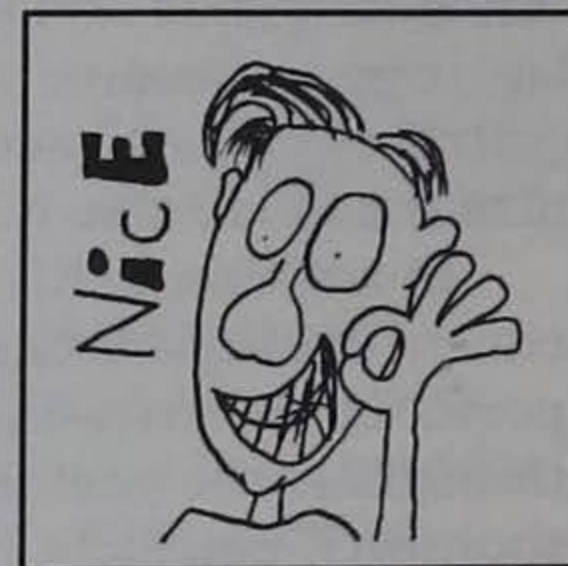
In addition to his classroom contributions, Mr. Majerus promotes the well-roundedness of Maquoketa students outside the academic school day. He is a positive supporter of the extra-curricular programs at MCHS, provides tutorial assistance throughout the year, and is a regular speaker at school functions and community-sponsored banquets. His genuine care and concern for young people is admirable.

The formal training I received from my father and many caring and knowledgeable teachers in the Maquoketa school system challenged, shaped, and readied me for "the real world" awaiting. A combination of Frank Strathman's sense of humor in delivering his biology lessons—Dennis Street's bottomless pool of patience with his geometry students—Karen Tilton's drive to make us better speakers—Mark Hillebrand's sound advice on what to expect in college—Chuck Wolf's unique delivery and enthusiasm—Holly Parmer's opening the door to diversity and other cultures in our daily French class—Claire Hoyer's ability to positively connect with his students—Kent Crawford's zest for the fine arts—Sherm Burns' professional demeanor and mastery of his mathematical material—along with a host of other special people boasting special gifts, helped lead me down the bountiful path of education while building in me the confidence to use the knowledge gained in any way I desired. I feel fortunate

to have received my strong education in the state of Iowa—and as a Cardinal at Maquoketa High School.

Robert C. Majerus

ENGLISH INSTRUCTOR AND FOOTBALL COACH, SYCAMORE HIGH SCHOOL
SYCAMORE, ILLINOIS



79

Gary Foster

MAQUOKETA VALLEY SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL



80

When I was asked to write a statement about a teacher who has contributed to my well-being, there was not doubt in my mind who I would write about. Mr. Gary Foster was my biology teacher as a sophomore and my psychology teacher as a senior in high school. Mr. Foster was the best teacher I'll ever have. He taught not only from the textbooks, but taught many life lessons as well. Mr. Foster leaves a positive lasting impression on most of his high school students.

One of the things that makes Mr. Foster such a great teacher is his ability to relate well with his students. He presents the material in such a way that students can easily learn and understand it. He also strives to help his students remember the material, not only for the test, but beyond it. He does this by giving examples that the students can understand and relate to. He takes many difficult subjects and simplifies them so his students can understand them.

Mr. Foster also cares a lot about his students. You can tell he cares because he is always interested in what you have to say. Whenever his students come back to visit him after graduation, he is always eager to talk. He is interested in how college is go-

113

ing or just life in general. He shows a genuine interest in all of his students, current or former.

There are so many things that make Mr. Gary Foster a wonderful teacher and person. His ability to relate to his students and his obvious interest in all of his students' lives are just two of the best. Mr. Foster teaches more than just science, he teaches his students about life. Mr. Foster has contributed to my well-being as a person, and most of his students, no doubt, would say the same.

Stephanie K. Zumbach

STUDENT, IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

AMES, IOWA



81

William H. Emanuel

MARTENSDALE-ST. MARY'S JUNIOR-SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL



82

While many educators are quality members of their profession and are positive influences to the children they teach, I am certain that few have exhibited the dedication to their careers and the personal interest in their students' futures as William H. Emanuel has in his career. Now retired, Mr. Emanuel was my former instructor in junior high physical science and high school earth science, chemistry, and physics from 1982 to 1987.

His teaching of science went beyond the textbook and class syllabus. In fact, Mr. Emanuel took the extra effort to generate interest and enthusiasm for science in each of his students through out-of-the-classroom activities—from recycling drives and field trips to sponsoring a special commemoration and viewing of Halley's Comet. The costs and time for these activities came from his own personal sacrifice.

Many were the Saturdays when he was to be found in his classroom, available for "weekend" help sessions, to aid students in their science homework and studies. He encouraged and helped students with special science projects, science fairs, and other related studies, but I particularly noticed that his interest in students didn't apply to just those who did well in science courses. In fact, he took a special effort to

115

assist those who needed the extra help in their studies.

Often times if a student did poorly in class, Mr. Emanuel knew that the problem might not just be the subject at hand, but larger problems or concerns with the student's personal or home life. On many afternoons, he would allow students to stay after school to help them with their homework for an hour or two, and he would then chauffeur two to three of them home, since they would otherwise not have had anyone to provide them transportation.

But the one thing that stands out most to me about Mr. Emanuel, was the fact that after you completed his courses, his concern was still there. When I left for college after my senior year Mr. Emanuel said to me, "Write to me while you are in school and let me know how you are doing. When you're back on a weekend or for vacation, drop by and visit!" Many of my former classmates, including me, were always happy to write to and receive letters from Mr. Emanuel while they were in college. It was an extra boost to know that someone was still rooting for you in your pursuits!

In 1991, I completed my studies at Iowa State University, receiving a Bachelor of Science degree. I have spent the last five years working in the scientific community as an environmental consultant. I owe Mr. Emanuel a great amount of credit for providing me the encouragement and support that has allowed me to succeed as I have. As an educator, he has truly passed the "torch" from one generation to the next.

Mel E. Pins

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANT

NORWALK, IOWA

Orville A. George

MASON CITY HIGH SCHOOL



83

Orville A. George was born in Hopkins, Minnesota, and attended the local schools. He then enrolled at the University of Minnesota from which he received the BA as well as the MA degrees.

He served his country during World War I, and began his career in the Mason City school system in 1919. The Mason City Junior College had begun in the fall of 1918 and was part of the Mason City Independent School District. The college was under the direction of a faculty committee on which Mr. George served.

While his principal responsibilities were teaching math at the college level, he also taught junior and senior math in the high school. He not only fostered behavioral discipline, but his teaching methods developed a mental discipline that his students found helpful throughout their lives.

For several years after reaching the age of retirement he was asked to continue teaching, which he did, finally retiring in 1963 with more years as a junior college instructor than any person in the state.

He was a life member of ISEA and an active member of the Iowa Association of

117

Mathematics Teachers, American Legion, Voiture 66 of the Forty and Eight, National Retired Teachers Association, Senior Chamber of Commerce, and life member of the Pioneer Museum Society.

During his long and successful teaching career, he was well-known by fellow teachers throughout the state of Iowa as an outstanding teacher of mathematics and was highly respected as such by all of his co-workers as well as by his students and the entire Mason City community.

Arthur M. Fischbeck

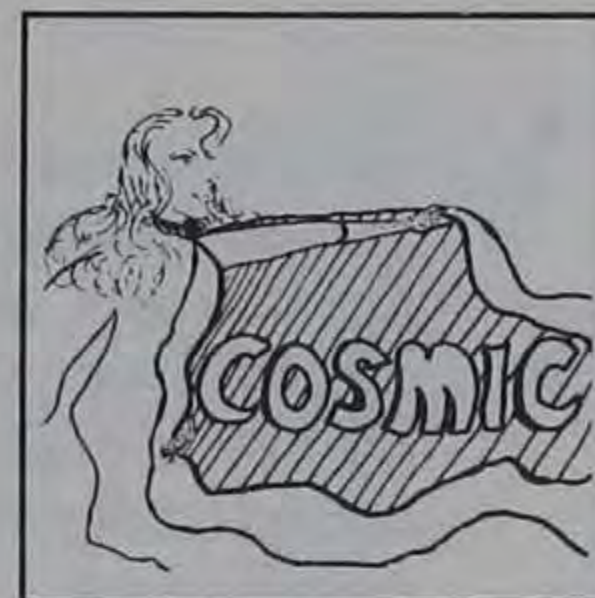
RETIRED PARTNER IN FISCHBECK PRICE INSURANCE
MASON CITY, IOWA



84

Alice L. Riter

MASON CITY HIGH SCHOOL



85

Many young teachers have had a profound influence on my life, from Miss Young (my kindergarten teacher who told me not to be a bully) to Neil Puhl (my journalism instructor who showed me how to make a simple sentence sound good). But the one who opened my mind the most, and probably prepared me to live abroad, was a teacher during my junior year at Mason City High School, Alice Riter.

For 33 years I have resided abroad. Why? Looking back, I feel it was inevitable that I would find and experience the places Miss Riter discussed in class: London, Paris, Madrid, Munich, Prague, and Rome. I was born with an adventurous spirit and she, I believe, knew how to mold it for the better.

I didn't get off to a good start in Miss Riter's "advanced placement" U.S. history class. Miss Riter required that we all buy, each week, the Sunday edition of the *New York Times* as our textbook. I complained to my football coach that I didn't have the money or the interest to buy an east coast newspaper that reported more rowing results than Big Ten scores. I really fought hard to get transferred out of her class, until

119

she introduced me to Arthur Daley's column. I had never read a sportswriter who quoted Shakespeare. Suddenly I had a new outlook, not only on athletics but on politics, the arts, and humanity.

Everyone that year had to read a minor masterpiece of world literature and report on it to the class. I had to study John Jay's *Letters From Abroad*. I envied a friend's assignment (Machiavelli's *The Prince*) but stuck with my ambassador's accounts of life in Paris and London—and was soon hooked on Europe and life there in the 18th century.

Alice Riter never married. Every summer she took an exciting trip somewhere. After I graduated in 1960, she concentrated her passions south of the border. I had known her as a short, thin woman with straight gray hair and functional lace-up shoes. But my younger sister remembers her coming back from South America wearing bright clothes, loop belts, silver bangles, and necklaces from Peru. But both of us agree, she was a teacher from the old school mode who loved her job and loved to learn. She had a grasp on what the world really was and maintained a firsthand knowledge of life through her travels.

You didn't have to be the most intelligent student to get a good grade from Miss Riter; you just had to be the most interested. She gave me my first "A."

Paul J. Polansky

DIRECTOR, CZECH HISTORICAL RESEARCH CENTER, AND
WRITER/HISTORICAL RESEARCHER
SPILLVILLE, IOWA

Alice Thie

MEDIAPOLIS HIGH SCHOOL



86

The teacher who I feel had the most positive influence in my life is my high school business teacher, Mrs. Alice Thie. It seems to me that I had quite a few good teachers through the years, but Mrs. Thie is definitely a standout. She not only knew the subjects she taught—and taught them well—but she also cared about her students as people.

I took more than one class with Mrs. Thie. She taught typing, shorthand, bookkeeping, and an all-encompassing business class in which we simulated an office and each had a job within that office. I learned so much in those classes, including how I felt about working under someone else's authority or as the office manager. Mrs. Thie asked questions and listened to the answers we gave her about those feelings.

Mrs. Thie was instrumental in me getting my first job. She told us that a local office was looking for a couple of part-time employees and helped us prepare for the interview.

Mrs. Thie was more than a teacher to us. She was the junior class sponsor and, in that capacity, helped us plan the junior-senior prom. She was the leader of our Fu-

121

ture Secretaries' Club and she was our friend. She shared personal anecdotes with us about her life and we shared ours.

She was not only close to the business students but she was (and still is) great with all students. My boyfriend—who is now my husband of 18 years—took beginning typing with Mrs. Thie. He has very large hands and had a lot of trouble hitting one key at a time. Mrs. Thie was very patient with him and took him under her wing. She knew he wasn't going to type for a living, but she encouraged him to do his best. She graded him more on how much effort he was putting into the class and how hard he was trying than how many words per minute he typed or how many errors he had.

Mrs. Thie is still teaching at Mediapolis High School. She teaches computers instead of mimeographing but her interest in her students is still genuine. I have children at the Mediapolis Elementary School and I sure wish they could have Mrs. Alice Thie when they get in high school. She's the best!

Cindy Orth

HOMEMAKER

BURLINGTON, IOWA



Mr. Cottrell

MOUNT PLEASANT HIGH SCHOOL

Raymond Crilley

Delbert Wobbe

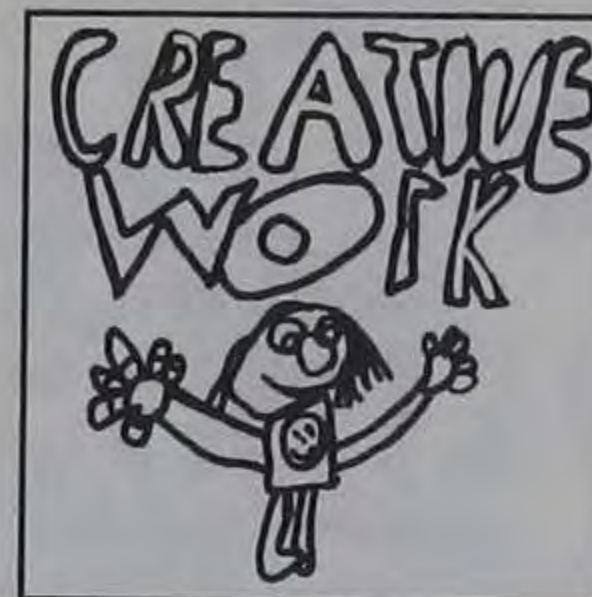
Thomas Poulter

IOWA WESLEYAN COLLEGE, MOUNT PLEASANT

E.P.T. Tyndall

Alexander Ellett

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA, IOWA CITY



88

My life is a kaleidoscope of memorable teachers.

First and foremost were my parents, who by precept and example imbued me with the basics of personal conduct—the pleasures and satisfactions of study and hard work, strict moral standards, and high aspirations.

In the public schools of Mount Pleasant, I recall many fine teachers who insisted on rigorous learning and a no-nonsense approach to understanding what one knows

123

and what one does not know. My favorite subjects were arithmetic, grammar, algebra, geometry, Latin, physics, and manual training. Among high school teachers, I was most indebted to Mr. Cottrell, who taught a senior course in physics with an accompanying laboratory.

Later at Iowa Wesleyan College, I again had outstanding teachers, among whom were Dr. Raymond Crilley in mathematics, Dr. Delbert Wobbe in chemistry and geology, and especially Dr. Thomas Poulter in physics. The latter was an individual of extraordinary competence and insight; and it was he who was the most influential in guiding me into research and toward graduate work in physics at the University of Iowa. There, Professors E.P.T. Tyndall and Alexander Ellett were my mentors. Their instruction and guidance prepared me for an independent career as a research physicist and university teacher. As such, I have been able to pass on what I have learned to hundreds of young students. And thus the process repeats itself!

I am forever grateful to the many teachers that I had during my formal education. But that was only the beginning of my good fortune. In subsequent years, I have benefited immeasurably by informal teaching by colleagues all along the way and, most importantly, by my wife of 50 years. Even at age 81, these pleasures continue.

Indeed, I am overwhelmed by the fundamental role of the student-teacher relationship in any significant career.

James A. Van Allen

PROFESSOR EMERITUS OF PHYSICS, UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

IOWA CITY, IOWA

Olga Piersall

MUSCATINE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL



89

Olga Piersall has a special place in the heart of many. At her funeral last winter, witnesses were given about her caring and understanding nature. They told of her compassion and determination. She was the rock, the steady force, the one who followed through and got things done. Indeed, she has made an impact on many lives.

Miss Piersall was a single woman with no children of her own, and yet she had thousands of children whom she nurtured. I was one of those.

My family and I had moved to Muscatine. I had left a class of eight and was now beginning junior high with 270 other students. I knew one person in the entire school. Miss Piersall, counselor, arranged for me to be in the same classes and home-room with my friend. Also in my classes, there was another girl who had been afflicted with polio. As I look back, that was probably well-planned. It was those little things she would do that made a big difference in the lives of junior high students.

Although I was physically handicapped, Miss Piersall recognized my need to be "normal." She encouraged me to participate and never made an issue of my handi-

cap. If you had a problem, she was there to help. Miss Piersall related well to kids and was not afraid to have fun. During the sock-hops she was known to be the leader of the bunny-hop line.

Her advice, support, and encouragement did not stop when you left the halls of junior high. She was always there. A friend of mine tells this story:

She had gone to the beauty shop to get her hair styled for graduation pictures and left with a not-so-good look. She was devastated. She saw Miss Piersall, who came to the rescue. Miss Piersall restyled her hair and the pictures came out great. What a lifesaver! It was those little things she did that sent a powerful message.

I guess you never left her care. She had a way of keeping track of you. If you did something good, she would acknowledge the accomplishment. If you needed help, she offered.

When I came back to Muscatine as a teacher, as Muscatine Education Association President, and then as Muscatine School Board member, Miss Piersall was one of my cheerleaders. Because I held her in such high regard, her vote of confidence meant a great deal to me. She made me feel special. Isn't that what we should all do?

Nancy Panther

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER AND FORMER TEACHER

MUSCATINE, IOWA

Catherine R. Miller

MUSCATINE HIGH SCHOOL



90

Catherine R. Miller ranks just below our parents as the person who most profoundly influenced our worldview during our formative years.

Catherine was a global educator before the term was coined. Long before such things were commonly done, she brought the wider world into her high school Spanish classrooms through recordings of Spanish opera, visits from Latin American students from various colleges, requiring us to keep current notebooks of news articles from Spanish-speaking countries, and putting on fiestas for the public, including appropriate food, dress, dances, and the learning of Spanish songs.

Threaded throughout this was her constant push to make us see the complexities of political situations there and here ("There are at least three sides to every issue."), and to help us understand and value the backgrounds (social and political), differences and similarities, and the importance of other cultures. In short, she introduced, or strengthened our awareness of, the Family of Humankind.

Through all of her years, Catherine's private life has matched her frequent pub-

127

lic utterances. Indeed, it is a seamless whole. Predating any organized "migrant council," she was teaching English to local Puerto Rican workers, helping families who worked in the tomato fields to improve their living conditions, serving as translator and advocate—and mobilizing others, including past and present students, to help.

Again and again, her voice has been heard in meetings, in letters to the editor and to legislators and others, in personal telephone calls, and in notes or packets of information dropped off at the front door. She has promoted justice and equity through her words, as well as her continuing actions on behalf of all disenfranchised people of whatever background.

Catherine's other great cause is world peace and related global issues. She has devoted her time, skills, tireless energy, and resources to that end.

Now in her 80s, Catherine remains an inspiration and a model for what one committed and determined person can do. Her still-blazing passion and her tenacity and accomplishments both prick the conscience and encourage all who are working to make the world a better place—to keep on trying!

Mary Jo Stanley

HOMEMAKER AND COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER

Dick Stanley

CHAIRMAN, STANLEY CONSULTANTS, INC.
MUSCATINE, IOWA



Areta Schmidt

SHILOH SCHOOL, AREA VI SCHOOL IN MUSCATINE COUNTY



92

Have I had a teacher who influenced me and could I write a short statement about him or her? Sure, no problem. I can do that. Now the deadline has arrived and what I said I could do now must be done. But, can I choose only one?

Should it be the high school teacher who, by his own enthusiasm, made U.S. history one of my favorite subjects? And even though it wasn't really part of the class, interjected the American government angle that may be responsible for me being a school board member today. Certainly a worthy candidate.

Or maybe the junior high teacher/coach who I had so much respect for that I admitted to him that I had been chewing gum when he told me that another teacher thought that I had been. By the way, gum chewing was a grievous offense that carried a 10-day detention penalty back in the mid-sixties. Obviously a person who influenced me.

While I admire and respect both of these teachers, I choose instead to write about the person who, in my mind, embodies what a teacher is.

I was fortunate enough to experience the one-room schoolhouse through the

129

first half of the seventh grade. Even more fortunate, I believe, was that the building was still K-8. It was here that I had the teacher that I believe was a most positive influence on me. She was my teacher for kindergarten and grades five and six, as well as a neighbor and family friend.

When I come home for a school board meeting in 1996, I think of all the things that have been discussed. They more than likely include racial and gender equity, inclusion, activities, building maintenance, art, food service, planning periods, student contacts, administrative duties, and the list goes on and on. More often than not, I end up thinking back to those one-room schools and the the individual teachers who staffed them. What I end up thinking is that these were people who could, with great pride and accuracy, use one of today's popular slang sayings, "Been there, done that."

So, to teachers across the state of Iowa, congratulations and thanks from all of us. And a special thanks and salute to my teacher, Areta Schmidt of Shiloh School, a part of what was known then as Area VI Schools in Muscatine County. I couldn't have asked for a better teacher or a better place to start.

Tom Welk

MUSCATINE SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER

MUSCATINE, IOWA

Marilyn Woodruff

NEW HAMPTON HIGH SCHOOL



93

Never! Never will I be glad that Miss Woodruff was my English teacher!" I spoke these words so passionately to my parents that they ring clearly in my memory more than 30 years later.

Antle, Brunsvold, Dierks, Harmon, Hutloff, Kaiser, Krumm, Maupin, Nehring, Thronson, Woodruff, and others dance through my mind when I think about my 13 years in the New Hampton schools. All shared in shaping our values, defining our culture, and furnishing our minds. All deserve our thanks. But Miss Woodruff was perhaps most noteworthy because she was so difficult for us to appreciate while we were her students.

We thought of her as a tyrant, forcing us to memorize line after useless line from Macbeth; to master long lists of vocabulary words; to write and rewrite sonnets, essays, and biographies which she would correct and criticize "unmercifully." Few students would say that they liked her or her class.

Ironically, years later, as I reflect on my own 18 years as an English teacher, I realize that by the time I left the classroom, I was trying to teach more as Miss Woodruff did than as did any of my other teachers. I was demanding memorization

131

of Shakespeare and others, demanding mastery of long lists of difficult spelling and vocabulary, demanding rewrites of papers, and not accepting faulty grammar or mechanics.

I had come to value the emphasis that Miss Woodruff had put on vocabulary and correct usage of the English language, and I wanted my students to have similar skills. I had come to realize that her criticism of our careless writings had not stifled our creativity, but it had given us the confidence to believe that through effort we could produce work that even she would accept. I wanted my students to have the same confidence. I had come to realize the worth of the poetry which was carved into my memory, and I wanted to furnish my students with similar gifts.

While I was in her classroom, I was too young and too inexperienced to appreciate what she was forcing us to realize in ourselves, but now I am able to say sincerely, thank you Miss Woodruff.

Gary Borlaug

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM CONSULTANT,
BUREAU OF PRACTITIONER PREPARATION AND LICENSURE,
IOWA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DES MOINES, IOWA



Vida Nelson

NEW MARKET COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL



95

One of my many teachers who left a lasting impression was Miss Vida Nelson. She was "old" from our (now admittedly narrow) point of view. We figured (rightly or wrongly) that she was a teenager during World War I. To teenagers in the 1970s, that made her ancient. Why was she memorable?

Miss Nelson ran a tight ship. Ironically, she probably couldn't or wouldn't hurt a fly, but she sure didn't give you that impression when you were in her gaze. She meant business and other teachers and all the students took her at her word. If she said to do it, you did it. So, as is perhaps always the case with the best teachers, she maintained discipline.

Miss Nelson made you learn in more of the classic mode—read the assignment and be able to articulate the answers in the test. No multimedia show or entertainment in the name of education. Having said that, she allowed and encouraged knowing about the world around you rather than just what was in the book.

For example, in her American government class, she often gave extra credit for correct answers to current event questions. The incentive was not just to memorize

133

the book, but to read, watch, or listen to the news. It meant we students discussed current events with each other before a test so we would have a chance at the extra points. Whether we correctly anticipated or not, the exercise effectively made us more aware of the world around us.

At our 20-year high school reunion we were still fondly telling "Miss Nelson" stories—a fitting tribute to a fine and memorable teacher.

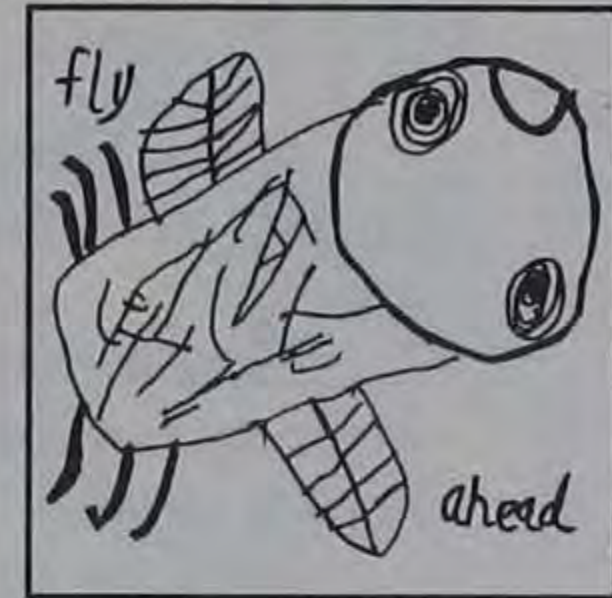
Terry Tobin

LEGAL COUNSEL, THE PRINCIPAL FINANCIAL GROUP

DES MOINES, IOWA

Terry Brown

NORTH CENTRAL JUNIOR-SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL



96

Teachers influence tomorrow's leaders every day in the classroom, through coaching and other extra curricular activities. The lessons that are taught help prepare students to succeed in society.

I was fortunate during high school to be influenced by a teacher that went the extra mile on every occasion. Although not a student in his classroom, I was team manager for the girls' basketball team he coached. He taught me the importance of hard work and dedication, the very skills I needed to accomplish my career goals after high school.

Terry Brown was the industrial tech teacher and girls' basketball coach while I attended North Central Community Schools in Manly. I worked with Mr. Brown for four years as manager of the high school basketball team, and the first thing I learned from him was to *never* quit. He taught me that perfection is attainable and I should strive for it. I knew he expected us to give 100 percent—anything less was unacceptable. He also demanded that we have proper respect for people and their property. His example of work ethic was reinforced by his expectations of us.

135

When I first started working with Mr. Brown, I was timid, shy, and unsure of myself. He made me believe I was competent and that anything was within my reach.

I knew that becoming a registered nurse would take dedication and hard work, and I was prepared for the commitment after the lessons in accomplishments Mr. Brown taught.

Growing up in the Midwest was a privilege I am grateful for. I have wonderfully supportive parents who taught me a strong value system. Having a teacher like Mr. Brown gave me the confidence to accomplish my career goals.

I am currently a registered nurse working in cardiac surgery. Part of my career satisfaction is knowing I'm impacting patients' lives by assisting the physicians to heal them as well as giving direction in finding total well-being.

Jean Woodiwiss Torgeson, RN

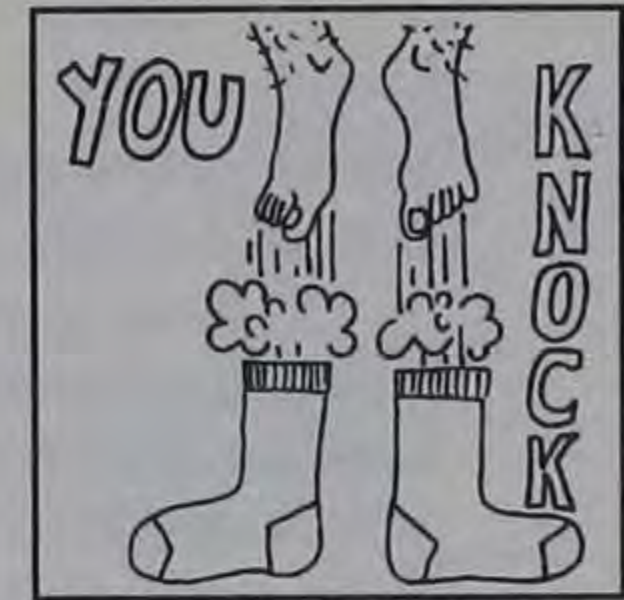
CARDIAC SURGERY NURSE

MANLY, IOWA



Harry Gamble

NORTH KOSSUTH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL



98

When reflecting upon my high school years at North Kossuth, it is not difficult for me to name Harry Gamble as a teacher who has had a positive impact on my life. As my grammar and composition teacher for four years, Mr. Gamble not only taught me the fundamentals of English, but he taught me fundamentals of life as well.

In the classroom, Mr. Gamble instructed in explicit detail the English language and its usage. I, along with my classmates, spent many hours writing and rewriting until the work met his standards. Papers and speeches had to fall within the length or time requirements, or your grade would suffer. This process not only taught excellent grammar skills, but it taught discipline and precision as well. Mr. Gamble enjoyed keeping his students alert by encouraging them to be aware of what was going on around them. His bonus questions for quizzes often concerned current events or quiz directions contained loopholes simply to see how observant students were. I failed a quiz once by placing all the correct answers in all the wrong answer spaces, simply because I didn't look to see how the answer sheet was numbered. To this day,

137

I read instructions word-for-word and am often commended for my attention to detail—all a result of Mr. Gamble's quiz.

I chose to pursue an education in the field of public relations after high school, a decision I relate directly with my experiences in Mr. Gamble's classroom. He taught me to enjoy writing and speaking and to appreciate the talents I have. His words of approval were present, but he was careful not to overdo it, for he didn't want me to think that I had ever reached perfection. There was always something I could be doing better.

Mr. Gamble has influenced the lives of many students throughout his career at North Kossuth, and he continues to do so with each day he teaches. I can honestly say that if I didn't have Mr. Gamble as a teacher, I probably wouldn't have been as successful in college as I have been. In my opinion, Mr. Gamble is by far one of the finest teachers I have ever had the pleasure of meeting.

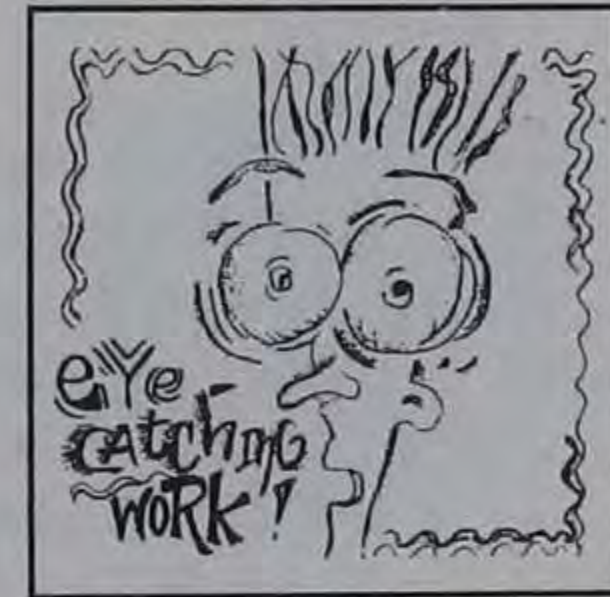
Kathryn R. Heldorfer

SENIOR HONORS STUDENT, UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA
VERMILLION, SOUTH DAKOTA



Marilyn Aden

NORTH LINN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL



100

My high school teacher, Marilyn Aden, coached a team of "winners." Just ask her. As the leader of my high school speech team, she guided me through four years of competition and taught me many valuable lessons.

Through her persuasive skills, Mrs. Aden brought a young guy on board the competitive speech team. I still reflect and ask myself what potential Mrs. Aden saw in me as a freshman. After all, I was the standard 13-year-old kid. Regardless, my participation on the team is one of my most rewarding experiences. It developed self-confidence, a feeling of competence, and increased my abilities to express thoughts verbally. In total, she taught me to be a more effective communicator.

Although Mrs. Aden viewed speech competitions as important events, her priorities remained in the welfare of her students. My most memorable occasions are of Mrs. Aden's predictable pep talks. A competition never passed without her standing at the front of the bus, looking back at her students, growing a huge and sincere grin, and reminding us of her priority. She always proudly and with heart proclaimed, "You are all winners. You have made it this far."

139

Beyond high school, Mrs. Aden's influence continues to affect my life. My high school competitive speech experience fueled a collegiate major in communication, developed my skills needed to intern as a television news reporter, and motivated me to attain my Iowa High School Speech Association judging certificate. Now, when judging speech contests or living my daily life, I remember the advice of Mrs. Aden. "You are all winners. You have made it this far."

So, as I prepare to graduate from college with degrees in public communications and political science, Mrs. Aden needs to know that she is a winner and has helped me make it this far.

Jason Zabokrtsky

STUDENT, LUTHER COLLEGE
DECORAH, IOWA



101

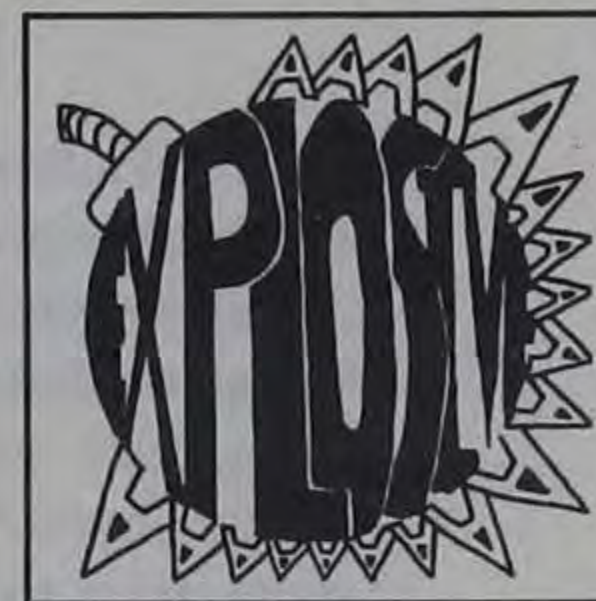
Miss Kuhn

WALKER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, WALKER

Rita Houlihan

Leigh Fleming

NORTH LINN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL



102

Like many others, I would have difficulty identifying only one teacher who had a significant influence in my life. Three teachers contributed important aspects to my life and my work in education.

The first was Miss Kuhn, sixth-grade teacher at Walker School. She taught me the value of work—hard work. Miss Kuhn seemed to be, in my eyes, the hardest teacher; she required the most work of anyone I had ever experienced. She had spelling tests constantly. She also made us stand up and recite Presidents of the United States, the Gettysburg Address, and the Preamble to the Constitution. All of those activities and the homework that she kept giving us taught me the value of work. I learned that whatever I did the rest of my life was going to require work.

How could Miss Kuhn give all that work and get away with it? Well, first of all you had to understand that Miss Kuhn had been at Walker probably since the exis-

141

tence of Walker. She also had my father in sixth grade. The whole community knew that Miss Kuhn was going to make you work. Not until the end of the year, when she took the whole class out to Betty's Grove where we had a picnic, did we find out that she smiled and she was "kind of nice." But there was no question in her mind or her students' minds that success in life would involve work, hard work.

The second teacher that had an important impact on my life was my high school mathematics instructor. Miss Rita Houlihan helped me decide to become a math teacher. Miss Houlihan taught me patience and to go back and try again. She motivated me to rework problems until I came up with the correct answers. "Look at your problems carefully, find out where the mistakes are, and always review your work," she stressed. These two important lessons built my knowledge base in mathematics and helped me succeed later in life. Miss Rita Houlihan, who I had for four years, taught me that "stick-to-itiveness" was important to future success.

The third teacher who had a significant impact on me was a teacher fresh out of college. His name was Leigh Fleming. He was a music teacher, filled with excitement and enthusiasm, who would have a significant influence on students. Leigh Fleming instilled in me an appreciation of the classics. This was a valuable lesson that I have carried with me all my life. Mr. Fleming taught us the importance of experiencing new and different challenges. He used classical music and drama events to expand our horizons. Those are experiences I never would have gotten if it hadn't been for Mr. Fleming.

These three teachers taught me not only subject matter, not only facts and figures and textbook content, but they taught me valuable lessons of life. They taught and modeled hard work. They taught me patience and perseverance. They taught me

to always expand my horizons. These things are valuable lessons of life.

I have spent my life trying to instill these concepts into my students. Miss Kuhn, Miss Houlihan, and Mr. Fleming have not only influenced my life, but they've influenced thousands of my students as well. What more valuable lessons could we provide for the next generation?

Robert J. Gilchrist

PRESIDENT, IOWA STATE EDUCATION ASSOCIATION, AND
TEACHER AND COACH, LINN-MAR COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
MARION, IOWA



103

Ogden Faculty

OGDEN SCHOOLS



104

Rather than think back to my school days, I would like to comment, if I may, about our current teachers in Ogden.

Since my retirement in 1986, I have tried to relay to my community some of the many benefits that come from living in a caring environment.

Certainly high on my list has been my association with the faculty in Ogden. I have served on several citizen committees and have been so impressed with the caring attitude of the staff. Their concern is certainly of the students and not of the paycheck. Curriculum is of constant concern.

In my assignments on church boards and with civic outreach programs I am always sitting beside many of the faculty who are there to volunteer to make Ogden a step ahead with local concern.

Finally, I am so impressed with the continued effort of the faculty to communicate with the school district families and to foster an understanding of school policy and direction.

Dean M. Ohlson

RETIRED PHARMACIST
OGDEN, IOWA

Ralph Dillon
Randy Wright

OSKALOOSA HIGH SCHOOL



105

A native Iowan who has had a major influence in the field of movie animation and special effects credits two high school teachers for helping him get where he is.

Scott "Zax" Dow graduated from Oskaloosa Senior High School in 1978. He participated in the marching band and took part in musicals and plays. Now he works in Los Angeles, producing computerized special effects, industrial videos, and regional television commercials. And he teaches others how to do animations at the American Film Institute in Hollywood.

Dow's story was distributed to newspapers nationwide by the Associated Press (AP) after first appearing in his hometown paper, the *Oskaloosa Herald*. The AP reported that Dow has created his special effects and digital visuals in a home-based animation studio.

Dow was born in Ottumwa. In 1975, his parents bought the Chief Mahaska Restaurant in Oskaloosa and operated it for 20 years. Dow says his attraction to animation and the world of visual display resulted from the wit and wisdom of two Oskaloosa teachers.

145

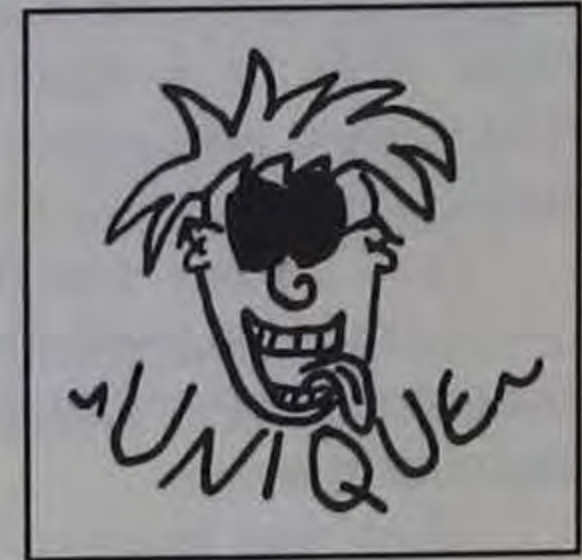
"Ralph Dillon was not one of my teachers, but he was very much a part of my life," Dow explained. "He taught my dad science when he was in high school and was a substitute teacher in my day. He invoked the spirit of play. He said science was nothing to be afraid of, that science should be respected, yes, but should be fun."

"And Randy Wright, my theater teacher in high school, gave me the chance on stage to find out what I could do," Dow told the AP.

For the movie *Precious Find*, Dow designed a 20-story, pentagon-shaped space station and the lighting for it. He also used his computer to create digital "extras"—animated characters that replace live extras.

Dow has also done interactive demos for Microsoft, Intel, Lexmark, Quantum, and others plus many industrial videos. Perhaps his most widely viewed productions are the animated football game plays for weekly NFL broadcasts on the Fox television network.

Rewritten by William L. Sherman from an AP news story that appeared in the *Omaha World-Herald*, March 6, 1996.



Bob Witzenburg

PEKIN COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL



107

The teachers I had when I was young were so important in shaping my educational and career success. It is a very difficult task to select one teacher who has excited a positive influence in my life. I have been fortunate to have had many terrific teachers who have made it possible for me to be where I am now. To all of them, I would like to say thank you.

The teacher I have chosen to talk about is Mr. Bob Witzenburg. Mr. Witzenburg played a very important role in my high school education. He taught chemistry, advanced chemistry, and physics. I am now an optometrist and these particular subjects have been a fundamental part of my undergraduate and graduate education. He made these difficult subjects more interesting and learnable. He was very knowledgeable in these areas and, more importantly, he was very good at explaining it to his students. He provided me with a very solid background in these subjects, which made the college-level courses much easier to handle. He also taught me how to study. Learning these study skills really prepared me for college and, later, optometry school.

147

In addition to his excellent teaching abilities, Mr. Witzenburg was also a very nice person. He was easy to talk to, eager to answer questions, and always willing to help his students learn. He was also encouraging and supportive to me when I expressed interest in becoming a doctor.

I haven't seen or spoken with Mr. Witzenburg for a long time, but I hope he knows how important he was to me.

Laurie Collett, OD

OPTOMETRIST

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS



108

Ray Doorenbos

PELLA HIGH SCHOOL



109

Throughout my years in the Pella Community Schools, mathematics was always my favorite area of study. Starting in elementary school, where some of my teachers encouraged individualized programs to allow students to learn at their own pace, I gained confidence in my academic potential. In middle school, my teachers' unique styles of teaching showed all students that math could be interesting and fun. Talented teachers made math that was becoming intangible more concrete and easier to understand.

It was through high school math, though, that I became especially confident and prepared for the academic challenges of my premedical courses in college. I was fortunate to have Ray Doorenbos for four years of high school classes of math and computer science, shortly before his retirement in 1984.

The atmosphere of Mr. Doorenbos's classroom was unique compared to the average high school classroom. There was a level of intensity present that did not allow for discipline problems. Mr. Doorenbos's personal style of perfection and diligence transferred to each of us when we were under his direction. He challenged us to

149

perform at our greatest potential, which was now necessary to master the more difficult material of the college preparatory classes he was teaching. Because of his expertise in communicating difficult concepts, we were able to excel in these classes. The confidence and self-satisfaction we gained propelled a majority of my classmates and me to excel at the next level of our education.

Despite the respect that he received, Mr. Doorenbos was also very kind-hearted, patient, and approachable. He was available to us outside of class and even the school day for extra help. He was very devoted to us, his students. He cared about each of us as individuals and encouraged us, whether male or female, to set our goals high. Then, years later, he was genuinely interested in hearing how we had reached those goals.

Mr. Doorenbos was also a leader in initiating computer education at Pella High School. At a time in his life when nearing retirement could have consumed his mind, he became the first teacher of computer programming. Computers became his passion personally and this was shared with us in the classroom.

Although Mr. Doorenbos never had children of his own, he certainly left a legacy in the lives of hundreds of Pella students.

Lori Vander Leest Wenzel, MD

OBGYN ASSOCIATES

IOWA CITY, IOWA

Roxine Hild

GLADBROOK-REINBECK HIGH SCHOOL



110

I don't know many people my age that make it a point to stop by and visit a former teacher whenever they can. I guess that says a lot about Mrs. Roxine Hild, my high school math teacher.

When I was asked to participate in this book, there was no doubt who I would be writing about. Mrs. Hild's name jumped in there right away. But just like back in high school, I have waited until the last minute to complete this chore. I only hope it does her justice.

Her true strength lies not with her ability to instruct children on how to crunch numbers and balance equations, but to learn about themselves. At a time in your life when you have a lot of doubts, Mrs. Hild was always there to guide you along. Mostly through her "no nonsense" attitude and way of doing things. She gave each student the latitude to be a strong individual while at the same time making sure that he or she was a focused part of the group.

The teenager's creed in high school is "I'll never use this stuff, so why do I have to learn it?" In some aspects it's true. To date, I don't think I have ever used the Pythagorean theorem or bisected angles since leaving her class, but I can now tell

151

you that there is something I picked up in her classroom that I use every day—a better sense of myself.

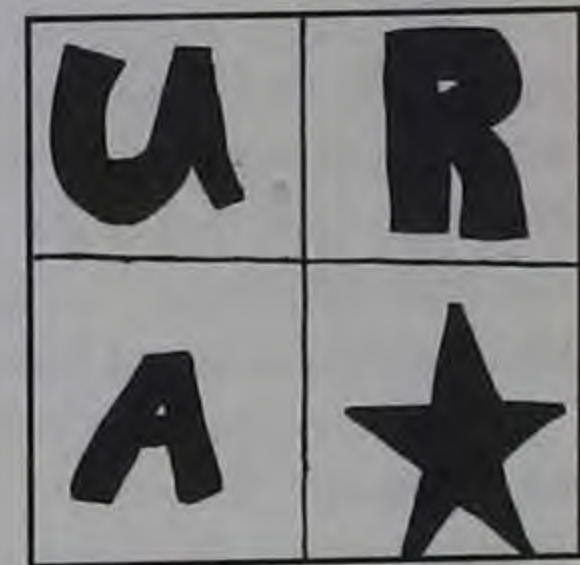
She would always give me this look if I acted up or became frustrated with the problem in front of me. The glance let me know that she wasn't buying it—that she knew I was just testing her—and, more importantly, she wasn't going to let me. If I honestly didn't understand, she was more than ready to come to my desk and help me out as an individual or put it on the overhead to help me work it through with the group. I guess that says it all right there. She taught me how to solve problems and how to come at a problem from a variety of directions—and that's something I use every single day.

More importantly, I consider her my friend. Her support and friendship mean a great deal to me even though we only speak a handful of times each year. But each time, the friendship and relationship grows a little more.

Thanks, Mrs. Hild.

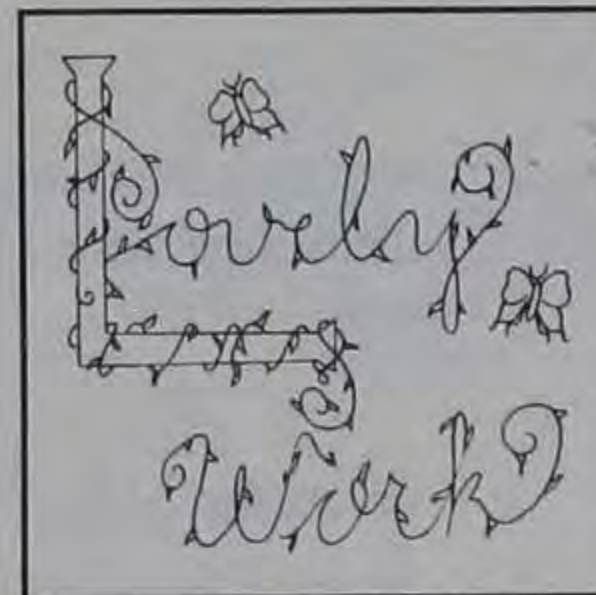
Craig Rickert

SPORTS ANCHOR/REPORTER, KWWL-TV
WATERLOO, IOWA



Lewis Bredeson

RICEVILLE HIGH SCHOOL



112

I am honored to write about Mr. Lewis Bredeson, my high school history teacher and principal. Without his guidance, I doubt if I would be where I am today.

When I was in grade school and high school, I knew I wanted to teach more than anything else. At that time, one could prepare to be a one-room school teacher by taking certain courses in high school. I began this program my junior year.

One noon hour, just prior to 1 p.m. classes, Mr. Bredeson walked up to my desk and said, "Weston, don't you want to go on to college?" I answered immediately in the affirmative. "Why are you taking normal training courses? Would you not rather like to teach at the high school level?"

In five minutes, I knew my answer. I walked up to his desk and informed him I was dropping my normal training curriculum and would have as my goal to be a high school music teacher!

I would have been happy as a one-room school teacher, I know. But where would that have led me? Mr. Bredeson was a graduate of Luther College. The infer-

153

ence is obvious. Forty-seven years later as a member of the faculty of Luther, I still remember that 12:50 p.m. encounter with a man who changed the direction of my life!

Weston H. Noble

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC, LUTHER COLLEGE

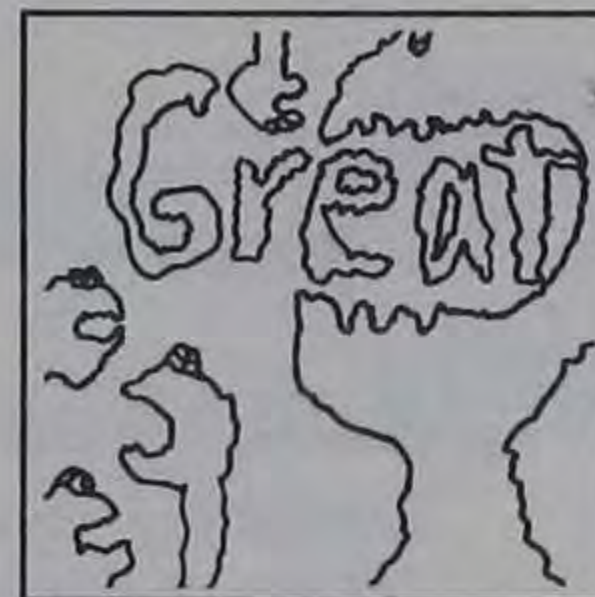
DECORAH, IOWA



113

Paul Filter

ROCKFORD HIGH SCHOOL



114

The best testimonial to a teacher I ever wrote is in my book *Just Beyond the Firelight*. The piece is called "Leonard." It's about one of my instructors at Northern Iowa who encouraged me to pursue a doctorate at the University of Indiana and then return to teach at UNI.

In addition, my high school coach, Paul Filter, was not only a fine coach, he also was a serious classroom teacher. In my senior year, when it became clear to him that I was going to become an all-state basketball player and receive college scholarship offers, he took me aside and had this to say (I'm paraphrasing, of course, since the event happened 40 years ago):

In the long run, basketball is not important, and you must begin preparing yourself for a life beyond basketball. I repeat: It's not important. You don't think so now, but it's true.

It only took me another two years to figure out he was correct. He's one of a

155

handful of people who changed my life, and I still keep in touch with him. His words got me out of short pants and into life.

Robert Waller

AUTHOR AND FORMER TEACHER AND DEAN,
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS, UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA
LIVING ON A RANCH IN WEST TEXAS



115

Frances “Fannie” Vacha

ST. ANSGAR MIDDLE SCHOOL



116

My life has been blessed by good schools and great teachers. My start came at St. Ansgar Community School, where from 1947 to 1959 some of Iowa's most dedicated public school teachers nurtured my classmates and me along—Mae Chancellor, Joe and Margaret Jordahl, and Frances “Fannie” Vacha.

Along the way I've been lucky enough to study under the best of the best: At the University of Iowa, physicist James Van Allen and poet Paul Engle; at Columbia University in New York City, philosopher Jacques Barzun; and at Harvard Law School in Cambridge, Massachusetts, constitutional scholar Archibald Cox. I even married a teacher, Professor Karen A. Conner of Drake University in Des Moines.

But the very best of the best was Fannie Vacha (rhymes with ha ha), my sixth-grade teacher at St. Ansgar Middle School.

Fannie was the arch-typical Iowa schoolteacher of her generation.

Born in 1881 of Bohemian emigrants to Iowa, Fannie was a beloved pioneer teacher who taught for 51 years in the St. Ansgar Community Schools, from 1904 to 1955. She was a legend in my hometown. A natural teacher known for her strict dis-

157

cipline and perfect penmanship, Fannie taught three generations of many families in our community. My mother, Norma, had Fannie in the sixth grade in the 1920s; I had Fannie for my sixth grade in the 1950s. So did hundreds of youngsters in between.

When Fannie died in 1963 at age 81 she left a treasured legacy aptly characterized in her obituary published by the weekly *St. Ansgar Enterprise*: Fannie's "outstanding quality was her ability to make her pupils feel they were worthwhile and although prospects looked very unpromising at times, she never seemed to lose faith in them. She placed that importance on the worth of the individual. Her untiring efforts to assist and advance the pupils who were slightly backward in grades, will long be remembered."

A spinster and avid gardener, who never drove a car or enjoyed indoor plumbing, Fannie made the ultimate pronouncement on her faith in education after her death in 1963. In her will, Fannie left her entire estate—\$121,500—to help complete construction of a new high school in my hometown. The grateful citizens of St. Ansgar remembered her with an honorary plaque placed in the new school.

Fannie's remarkable faith in education and love of and dedication to her pupils is the very stuff that has made Iowa's public schools the envy of the nation.

Gary G. Gerlach

PUBLISHER, *THE (AMES) DAILY TRIBUNE*

AMES, IOWA

Henry Geery

SAYDEL HIGH SCHOOL



117

It is difficult for me to identify a teacher who has had a positive influence in my life because there have been several. From the Roberta Menoughs and Charles Nagles of elementary school to the Dave Hansens and Pete Cramers of junior high, numerous teachers have served as role models and inspirations for me. Doug Larche, a drama instructor and football coach (how's that for a combination?) taught me that it was okay to enjoy athletics and drama. Gene McCurdy (math) and Mildred Cox (English) expected more of me than I expected of myself. Gail Wiederholt nurtured my creativity during her writing class. Believe me, there were many others and I hesitate to name the aforementioned for fear of leaving some out. But the schoolteacher that impacted my life the most was Henry Geery.

Mr. Geery was a government and economics teacher at Saydel High School. I remember taking a nine-week course in the social studies curriculum during the third quarter of my senior year. I had at least five or six credits beyond what was necessary for graduation, but this course was required for graduation under school policies. I went to class every day, but I did none of the daily assignments. When the final exam

159

was given, I scored the highest in the class with a perfect paper. Assuming that my grade would be less because I hadn't done the required daily work, I was stunned and outraged that he had the nerve to **fail** me for the entire course. This meant that I would have to repeat the course during the fourth quarter, thereby removing that "free period" from my final quarter schedule. I schmoozed, argued, pleaded, and begged, but Mr. Geery would not give in.

As one might guess, I repeated the course and did the daily work. As Mr. Geery called me to his desk to review my grade just prior to the final exam, he asked me what I had learned from the experience. I told him that each of us is responsible for his/her own choices and the resulting consequences of those choices. With that he smiled, gave me an "A" and excused me from the final exam.

To this day I don't remember the exact content of that course, but the lesson(s) that Henry Geery taught during that class remain with me.

I attended Henry Geery's funeral on the 4th of July about three years ago. As I listened to the various eulogies, it was obvious that Mr. Geery influenced many lives, much the same as he had mine.

Timothy Pratt, CFP

AMERICAN EXPRESS FINANCIAL ADVISORS
WEST DES MOINES, IOWA

Velma Ady

SHENANDOAH HIGH SCHOOL



118

Mrs. Ady was a real lady. She taught sophomore English and American literature. She was also assistant principal in charge of the junior high school. Everyone learned in her class and, at the same time, enjoyed it. She was a woman of small stature, yet commanded respect and could discipline easily. She was well liked by students and yet she wasn't "one of the kids," as some tried to be.

Betty Jane Rankin Shaw

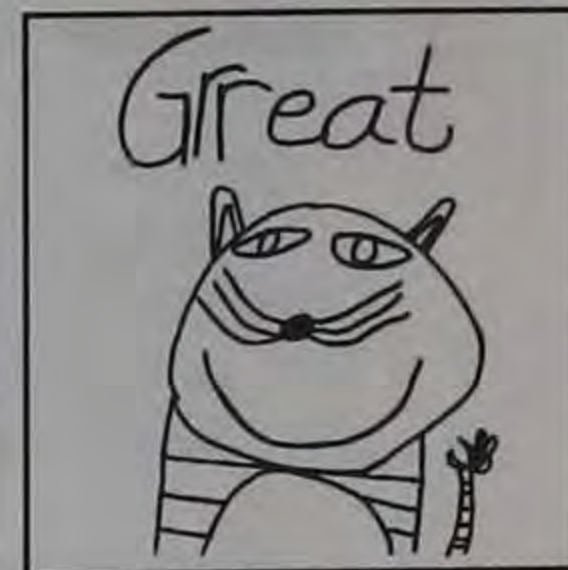
PRESIDENT, EARL MAY SEED AND NURSERY

SHENANDOAH, IOWA

161

George Haws

SHENANDOAH HIGH SCHOOL



119

My father, Herman Offenburger, died of a heart attack while shoveling snow on Christmas Eve in 1961. I was 14 and a freshman in high school in Shenandoah in southwest Iowa, and it had never even occurred to me that I might lose Dad so early.

My mother, Anna Offenburger, did an amazing job of seeing me and my younger sister on through our high school and college years.

But I'm pretty sure now that if a very special teacher hadn't taken a special interest in me soon after Dad died, I might well have strayed during high school. I probably would not have been as attentive to my studies, as responsible and enthusiastic on my job as a sportswriter for the *Shenandoah Evening Sentinel*, or as loyal and respectful to Mom as I was.

That teacher is George Haws, although 35 years later I can still barely call him "George." He'll be forever "Coach Haws" in my mind and heart. Coach Haws taught us history in eighth grade, he coached us in football, basketball, and track and he served as Shenandoah High athletic director. So I had regular contact with him, not

only in the classroom, but also as I covered the school sports scene.

I spent most of that Christmas vacation after Dad's death at home, grieving. I dreaded going back to school when classes resumed, not knowing what to say to my friends and teachers. But I did go back that first morning.

In my first-hour English class, suddenly the classroom door opened and in walked Coach Haws. "Mr. Hufford," he asked, "can I have Chuck Offenburger for a few minutes?" He motioned me to follow him out of the classroom. "Let's go," he said, once we were in the hallway. "We need to talk."

He led me down the stairs, through the ground-floor restroom, on down the steps to the school basement, where the old gym, coaches' office, and boiler room were located. That boiler room was a place where students dared not go, uninvited. He led me in there and closed the door. He pulled out a cigar—first time I'd ever seen him smoke one—lit it and finally said, "Sorry about your Dad."

"Thanks," I said, looking away, trying to stop the tears I was afraid were coming.

"You know, I lost my Dad when I was a freshman in college," Coach Haws said. "He had a heart attack, too. It was sure hard without him, just like it's going to be hard for you without your Dad."

"Uh-huh," I said.

There was a long pause. "I want to tell you something," he said. "I'm going to be watching you. If you need help, tell me—understand?"

"I will, Coach," I said. "Thanks."

"And one more thing," he said.

"Yeah?" I said.

"If you get out of line, it'll be my boot and your butt, you got that?"

"Yes," I said, and my tears began giving away to a grin, which I tried like heck to hide.

"Now get on back up to class," he growled.

And that's how it was the rest of my way through high school. I'd talk to him two, three, maybe four times a week. He'd stop me in the hallways to see how I was getting along. He often talked to my mom, making sure I was helping at home.

That's how a friendship was born that continues yet today, years after we both left Shenandoah. George Haws went on to teach and coach at Lewis Central in Council Bluffs and then at Marshalltown, where he retired five years ago. I considered it one of the nicest honors I've ever received when I was asked to speak at his retirement party.

A lot of time has passed since that morning in the boiler room in the basement of Shenandoah High School in early 1962.

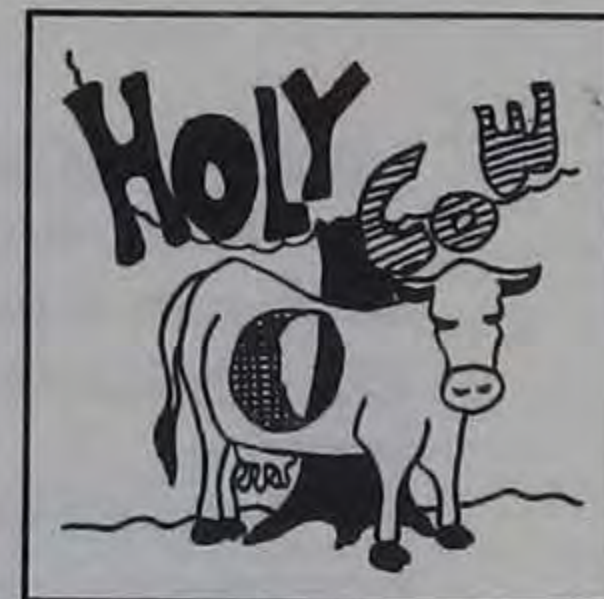
I don't know how many times through the years when I've been facing some big problem or decision, I have called Coach Haws or dropped in on him at Marshalltown. "A coach's work is never done," I always tell him on those occasions. "Okay," he'll say. "Sit down and tell me about it." And whatever it is that's been bugging me is always better when I leave him.

Chuck Offenburger

"IOWA BOY" COLUMNIST, *THE DES MOINES REGISTER*
DES MOINES, IOWA

Chleo Weins

SIOUX CITY CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL



120

Old Sioux City Central High had some inspirational teachers during my three years there (1955-58). But the one who impressed me most was a teacher whose class I never took—Chleo Weins.

I don't even recall meeting him until three years after I graduated. It was the summer of 1961 and Chleo, then 36, was standing in a freight car adjacent a downtown Sioux City warehouse. Shirtless and dripping with sweat, he sure didn't look like a schoolteacher. And the only teaching he did that day was showing the new guy—me—how to move 100-pound bags of sugar and powdered milk from the freight car into the warehouse.

I didn't even know he was a teacher until he mentioned warehouse duty was only a summer job.

"What do you do the rest of the year?"

"I teach math, Central High," he grunted as we lifted a bag.

For a few seconds, I was speechless. I knew what I was doing in the hot, humid warehouse and hotter freight cars: earning some money between semesters at the

165

University of Iowa. But what in the world was a schoolteacher doing there?

"Economic necessity," Chleo said. He explained that satisfying as classroom work was, it just didn't pay enough for him to take the summer off. He had a wife and two sons to support. So he sweated out his "summer vacations" at Bekins Warehouse.

I never saw Chleo Weins again after that warehouse stint. But I thought about him every time the question of teachers' pay came up. To me, he symbolized every underpaid educator who ever toiled during the summer to make ends meet. (Journalists, incidentally, feel they are first cousins to communicators such as teachers and librarians.)

Twenty-nine years ago, when I wanted to write on changes in the teaching profession, I called Chleo for an interview. He brought me up to date. He stayed at Central three more years before moving into administration. He was junior high principal, assistant principal at Sioux City North, and then, until his retirement in 1986, principal at the Career Education Center housed in the old Central Annex.

His summer work experience reads like something out of Jack London: three summers at fill-in duty at Swift and Co., two at Wonder Bread as a bread slicer, two on night security patrol, and six summers at the warehouse.

"On those summer jobs, I never mentioned that I taught," he said. "But the word always seemed to get out. At those places—especially Swift and Co., where I cleaned cut guts and stomachs and carried brains around—it gave people a different concept about teachers. They found out we are human, just like everybody else."

Although Chleo Weins never instructed me in the classroom, he taught me a lot about the teaching profession in the pre-collective bargaining era. It made me appre-

ciate all the talented educators who kept persevering year after year. Those who did, touched thousands of lives.

Jerry Elsea

OPINION PAGE EDITOR, *THE CEDAR RAPIDS GAZETTE*
CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA



121

Loren Straube

SOUTH WINNESHIEK HIGH SCHOOL



122

Although I encountered very good teachers at South Winneshiek High School, undoubtedly I would not be where I am today had it not been for the support and encouragement of my chemistry/physics teacher, Loren Straube. Mr. Straube was especially good at convincing me that, yes, I could go on and succeed in the field of chemistry. This sort of confidence was extremely important as I got to college and to graduate school, where the level of the people around me got higher. Still, I never felt inferior. Of course, this had a lot to do with the people with whom I was interacting at the time, who were not concerned with *where* I was from, but interested in *what* I could do. However, that I could do it was largely dependent on Mr. Straube's influence.

I think the most convincing aspect of Mr. Straube's teaching comes from the fact that many former South Winneshiek students have gone on to receive advanced degrees in science and medicine. While this is a reflection of the entire math/science department at South Winn, it is largely due to Mr. Straube's influence and his involvement in the UNI Math/Science Symposium. His enthusiasm for this program is obvi-

ous and is appreciated by both students and by the UNI faculty.

Although I may be in the minority, I always thought Mr. Straube had a very effective teaching style. Chemistry and physics are difficult subjects, and students' problems are often blamed on poor teaching. However, I always thought Mr. Straube did a very fine job. He always tried to use common, everyday examples to explain complex, microscopic phenomena. In other words, he explained things in words and concepts that we could comprehend. Of course, this would sometimes get him into trouble, as the students would try to carry the analogy too far, but he was always careful to not overstep. I try to use this approach when I teach.

Paul G. Wenthold

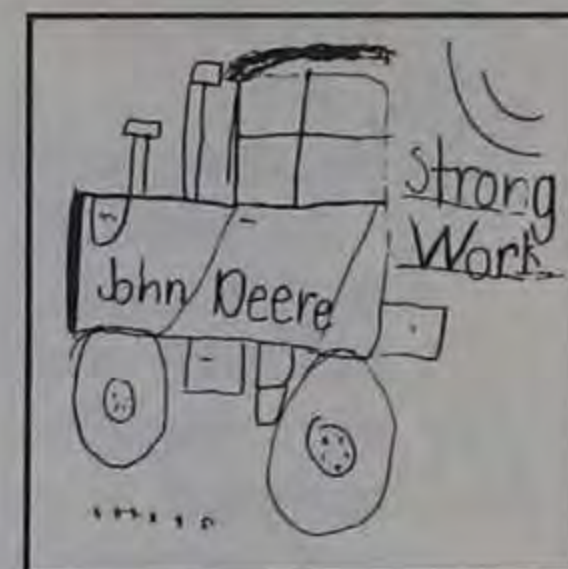
RESEARCH ASSOCIATE, UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO
BOULDER, COLORADO



123

Ron Ambroson

TITONKA CONSOLIDATED HIGH SCHOOL



124

In recalling my days at Titonka Consolidated High School, I can remember several teachers that influenced my views on society and my career choices. In particular, Mr. Ron Ambroson had a great influence in shaping my personality and my career successes.

In the mid-1980s, Mr. Ambroson was teaching government and economics and coaching football at Tyke High School. In the classroom, Mr. Ambroson was an extremely effective teacher who motivated his students through positive comments and actions. He showed a genuine interest in the material he presented and he challenged his classes to appreciate and fully comprehend the subject's value. This devotion to education was clearly evident to his students and it encouraged them to step up their scholastic performances. Although the subject matter was often difficult, I remember that my class always looked forward to attending Mr. Ambroson's classes.

After completing the day's classes, Mr. Ambroson carried his teaching skills to the football field. He excelled at coaxing each athlete to perform at their highest level and he praised each and every player for their efforts. No member of his squad—starter or third-stringer—lacked for attention and words of encouragement. He

placed strong emphasis on teamwork and taught us how to work together to achieve a common goal.

The devotion that Mr. Ambroson has for teaching young minds is to be admired. It is critical that high school students interact with positive role models, such as Mr. Ambroson, during a time of development that often sets the tone for the rest of their lives. His examples of leadership and positive teaching techniques have been very influential in my own day-to-day management and guidance of research teams. In summary, the devotion to one's career and motivation to succeed that has been passed on by Mr. Ambroson are universal in nature—and can be applied to life—long after we have completed our high school education.

Charles L. Leeck

POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW/BIO TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH,
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
MADISON, WISCONSIN



125

Ken Wulf

TRI-COUNTY COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL



126

I am honored to have the opportunity to help recognize Mr. Ken Wulf as an outstanding Iowa teacher. During my four years (1966-1970) at Tri-County Community High School, I took several of his math courses. Up to this point in my elementary and junior high education, mathematics was not a subject that I enjoyed and found that I struggled through each semester. However, the learning environment changed as a result of Mr. Wulf's dedication and effective teaching skills in the classroom. He would willingly give his free time to help me and other students better understand problem areas. He required his students to be attentive and yet made the lessons interesting so that I wanted to increase my knowledge of mathematics. As a result of his thorough teaching and sincere interest in me, I found his classes my favorite courses and achieved high marks.

His personal interest in his students did not stop in the classroom. His enthusiasm for sports was tremendous, especially girls' basketball. As a player, I can remember him giving us pep talks and being very supportive, whether we won or lost the game. It meant a lot to me and the rest of the team to know he would voluntarily

come to our games and keep the statistical records for the coaches. It was quite obvious caring for his students didn't stop in the classroom.

As I look back on those four years of high school, Mr. Wulf did have an impact on my life. Why? Because he believed in me. He provided the learning environment for my self-confidence to grow and not be afraid to tackle new experiences in life. This attitude has served me well over my 22-year career with DuPont Ag Products.

I believe Mr. Wulf is very deserving of this recognition and appreciate being able to give my testimony.

Barb Hervey

U.S. DISTRIBUTION MANAGER, DUPONT AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS
CHADD'S FORD, PENNSYLVANIA



127

Martin Lundvall

WEST JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL



128

Throughout grades K-6, academics just didn't seem that high on my list of priorities. Fishing, hunting, sports, and getting into some kind of trouble were higher on my list of things to do. I had a good environment during these years between my parents' guidance and the local YMCA. And yes, the elementary school provided great teachers, but something was lacking to put me in the best direction. My grades and the learning I could have had didn't reflect my ability or what I should have been working for. Maybe it was trust or simply never letting anyone get very close to me during these years.

Once junior high came, organized sports were offered. Looking back on my old report cards, elementary arithmetic didn't go too well. In fact, none of my grades here are worthy of bragging rights, yet one of my teachers in junior high, my math teacher, also coached wrestling. Something clicked here—for not only was I able to excel in wrestling, but I also had that someone who now inspired me in the classroom. I guess it took an outside activity that I wanted to participate in to make me wake up in the classroom.

My positive rapport with Mr. Martin Lundvall away from the classroom gave me

a new feeling about teachers in the classroom. I believed in what he said in sports and how he went about it. So in math class, I paid attention as well. I had already known the feeling of being a successful athlete through the YMCA and early years of summer baseball, but listening to teachers somehow didn't seem the same. But now, since one of my coaches also taught me in the classroom, it seemed different. I now started listening, believing, and doing my work in his class as well. I received an above-average grade in math at this time and finally realized that winning in the classroom had similar feelings that winning and participating in sports had been giving me.

This spread to other class work and now all my teachers seemed more like coaches instead of just teachers. I tried harder now because the relationship was different from this point on. It came at a great time because now, sports and class work and coaches and teachers seemed more alike. All of my grades and learning from this point forward were very respectable (well above the average)—in fact with honors—often through junior high, high school, college, and graduate school. As well, my relationship with my future coaches and success in my sport stayed at the highest.

Even more importantly—in my profession of coaching and, as well, in raising my family—the same lessons learned in early junior high in math class from Martin Lundvall, my junior high wrestling coach, have given me the opportunity to believe, listen, and achieve for those influenced by me.

Dan Gable

WRESTLING COACH, UNIVERSITY OF IOWA
IOWA CITY, IOWA

Robert "Bob" Siddens

WEST HIGH SCHOOL



129

Mr. Bob Siddens is a teacher who I have never forgotten. He had a major impact in my life, instilling basic moral and personal characteristics that I have utilized time and time again.

It is trivial to say that he was just a strong motivator at a very influential time in young people's lives—he was so much more.

He stressed to always believe in yourself and set no limitations. You and only you could limit the vast future which lay ahead. "Dedicate yourself to a cause" still rings in my ears as I look back on words of wisdom from Mr. Siddens.

But, more importantly, he taught me that perseverance is the majority of the battle—in life, in school, and in sports. To persevere through all adversity is the key to obtaining success. I found this to be so true in both my professional and personal life.

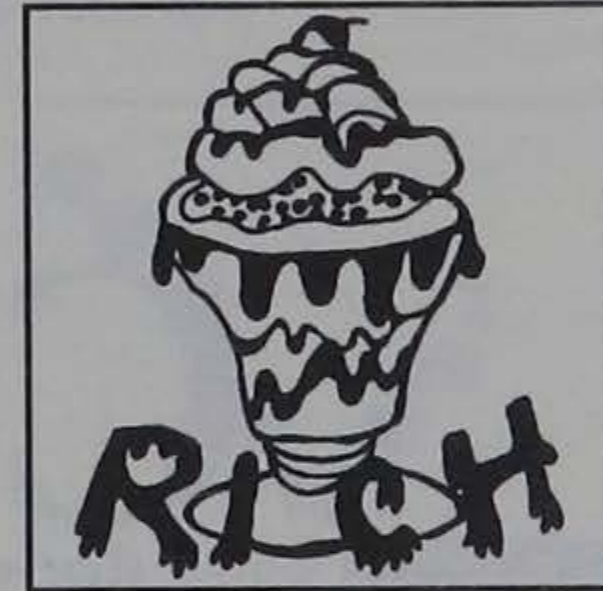
Words that had impact and meaning shaping the lives of thousands of young people is what Bob Siddens did best.

Thank you, Bob Siddens!

John R. Rooff III

MAYOR, CITY OF WATERLOO

WATERLOO, IOWA



130

Carl Dillon

WAVERLY-SHELL ROCK SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL



131

Carl Dillon's enthusiasm for literature was infectious. That, along with his winning personality, helped him reach a wide diversity of students.

He certainly influenced me. He encouraged me to write! Little did I know that writing would become a basic tool of my daily work as a broadcast journalist. Or that I would one day author a book!

I met Carl Dillon when I moved to Waverly from New York City. I was a junior in high school. I had attended a private prep school, which prided itself as one of the finest such schools in America. Its teachers were mostly Ivy League-educated. So, when I arrived in Waverly, I was a typically provincial New Yorker—apprehensive about the quality of teaching I'd encounter in small-town Iowa.

My first class with Carl Dillon dispelled those fears. But even more important than his teaching skills were the intangibles he brought to the classroom. He cared for his students. They sensed that, so discipline was never a problem. And he managed to cultivate the unique abilities of each student. To my mind, that's the highest

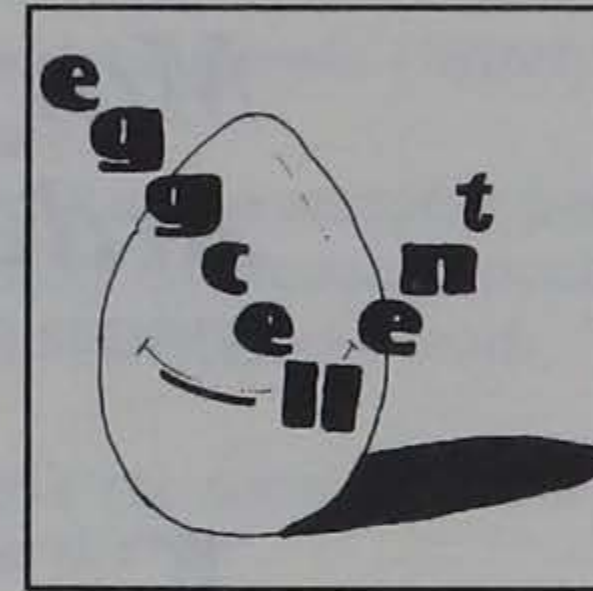
testimonial a teacher can receive.

I'm honored to have this opportunity to publicly thank Carl Dillon for his positive influence on my life and my career.

John Bachman

NEWSCENTER 13 REPORTER/ANCHOR, WHO-TV

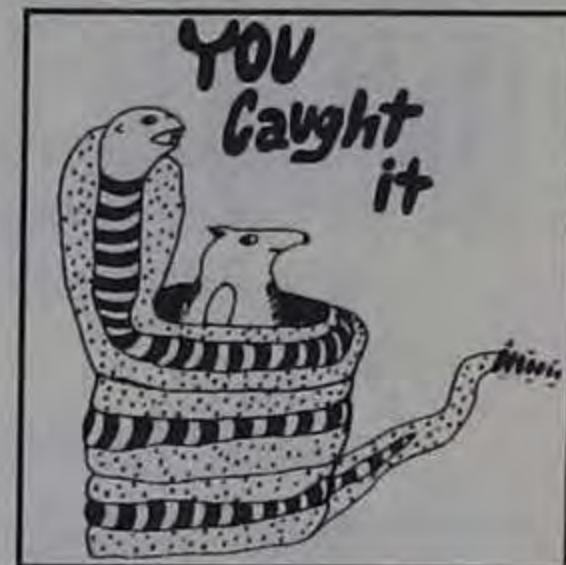
DES MOINES, IOWA



132

Alice Armbruster
Geneva Gorsuch
Mary Hubbard
Ardeth Jameson

WEBSTER CITY JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS



133

It is not easy to limit a statement of the numerous fine teachers I had while going through the Webster City public schools. I will, but not without acknowledging the contributions several made to my upbringing. This was a serious task for them given my proclivities that did not lead entirely to academic stardom.

As I think about these people, they all helped me be successful, not because of their insistence on doing my assignments or working harder on my lessons, but because they obviously cared about me, about my doing well, and pressing me to expand my views and experiences.

The junior-senior high school music teacher, Miss Alice Armbruster (she was quietly known as Trixie), introduced me to vocal chamber music in a madrigal en-

semble and choral music, which is still with me today. I completed a BA in music at Grinnell College.

Mrs. Geneva Gorsuch, my high school English teacher in grammar—the real kind with diagraming and all—pushed me to enter extemporaneous speaking in the state contests. She coached me after school and I received a superior rating as a sophomore.

A high school speech teacher, Mary Hubbard, coached our debate team entirely after hours to insure our preparation for successful state contests.

And finally, Mrs. Ardeth Jameson, speech and drama, allowed me to attend a performance of Charles Laughton's production of *John Brown's Body* by Steven Vincent Benet. It opened the world of serious drama to me, although my subsequent work dealt mostly with musical theater and opera.

They were significant to me then and now because they gave me some of themselves—they cared enough to help me be successful.

Robert G. Crumpton

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, OREGON EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
TIGARD, OREGON



Mrs. Stevens
Mr. Wedeking



135

As I think back to my school years, I believe that each of my teachers had a positive influence in my life.

In 1948, when I was just three years old, I was paralyzed on one side from polio. I spent nine months at St. Vincent's Hospital in Sioux City. I was released when our hospital building was condemned, but I still needed a lot of physical therapy. Consequently, when I started kindergarten, I wore special shoes and was not able to keep up physically with all of my classmates.

The fourth grade was one of my most difficult years. My parents had to drive me to school many days as I always found an excuse to miss the bus. Mrs. Stevens was very kind and understanding to a shy, handicapped little girl and helped me overcome my many social obstacles and, once again, be able to enjoy my classmates.

Mr. Wedeking, my business and accounting teacher, made my business courses a real challenge. I soon realized my desire was to work with figures and people. When I enrolled at Mankato Business School in Mankato, Minnesota, the courses were easy

for me since I had an excellent high school teacher. Only when I observed the many other students really struggling did I fully appreciate Mr. Wedeking's driving efforts and ability to instill in us a desire to do work well and understand what we are learning. A job worth doing is worth doing well! He demanded perfection in such a way that we strived to fulfill his expectations.

During my high school years, I had to struggle to learn to be quiet and listen during class. One of my teachers moved me to the back of the room so I wouldn't disturb the whole class, and one even dismissed me from his class for a day. Mr. Wedeking informed me that of the eight Gerber girls he had already taught, I was the worst when it came to talking. However, I believe I should have been graded on my talking as I now get paid well to communicate with my customers. I am now the vice president of our country bank. Being able to communicate with my customers is as important as understanding their numbers that help them make their business decisions.

Delores Gerber

VICE PRESIDENT, IOWA STATE BANK
WEST BEND, IOWA



Bob Reed

WEST DELAWARE MIDDLE SCHOOL



137

For me, I think 1964 was probably the year several things started to take on a new look. Although I was a good student, decent athlete, and a truly nice guy, it took an eye test during Mr. Reed's eighth-grade civics class to find out I couldn't see. After getting my first pair of "cheaters," two things immediately happened—I could sit in the back of the class instead of having to sit in the front, and I sported the "Buddy Holly" look with those classy, new black frames. However, the reason I'm writing this is because Bob Reed was (and remains to this day) the teacher who has had the greatest positive influence on my life.

It is a very hard task to pick my "favorite" teacher because I really liked school—mainly due to the fact that West Delaware has always employed great teachers. There are lots of my teachers who could be my favorite—some because they were funny, others because they were interesting, and maybe some who were really pretty. It's amazing how much I liked English during my senior year, due to the "youth" of Miss Kerr! However, eighth grade was that transition year between being a junior high

“Mohawk” and a senior high “Manhawk.” Junior high was a time when we boys started noticing the girls a little differently, and when we were able to impress them (or so we thought) with our newfound athletic prowess.

I think that’s probably why Bob Reed comes to my mind first for this article, since in addition to being my civics teacher, he was also my first real coach. Although probably a guy thing, looking back 30 years I find all of my coaches hold fond memories with me. This may be due to the fact that, back then, all of the coaches were teachers, which put us into daily contact with them.

Even though Mr. Reed was not a large man in size, he was the biggest man I knew, next to my dad. Mr. Reed had my respect from the first day we met. He was firm and tough, but fair. He expected discipline to be maintained—but that was easy since he never expected us to know or do anything that he didn’t. He took my little eighth-grade brain—void of any knowledge of what civics even was—and made it hungry to know more. In fact, the only nonsports scrapbook that I ever kept was my eighth-grade civics scrapbook. It has since been misplaced through moving, but by accident and not by design!

I chuckle every once in awhile when I think of the only bad advice Mr. Reed ever gave me. He said, “Max, if you ever have a problem, just write your congressman and he will help you out.” I have forgiven him for that one!

I am a salesman by trade, and provide an important service for the community. But my job doesn’t hold a candle to the important needs a teacher fills—teachers (right or wrong) are held to a higher standard than most other people. Teachers are role models that have to exude positive influences over their students. When they ac-

comply that feat, the student will be like me when they grow up—they will be able to remember all of the teachers they had. If I was not engaged in a family business, I would like to be a teacher—just like Mr. Reed.

Max Boren

SALESMAN

MANCHESTER, IOWA



138

Jerry Kinney

VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL



139

Jerry Kinney was my elementary and high school band leader and teacher. In elementary school, he came to our class and demonstrated a few instruments and, from that point on, my life was changed. I do not consider myself a musician anymore, but I will always be a proud member of Jerry Kinney's marching band. Mr. Kinney taught us to play and appreciate music. He also taught us how to be a part of a team.

Mr. Kinney's greatest gift wasn't only that he taught us to work hard. He held high expectations for each of us. He taught commitment to practicing and to making the band the best it could be.

What I remember the most about band was that he made practice a fun time. When it was time to be serious, we were serious and we did well. However, during the down time, you would see Mr. Kinney talking, joking, teasing students, or being teased himself.

He seemed to know what everyone was capable of accomplishing and how to help them reach their potential. He treated each student with respect and he always expressed a genuine interest in each of us as a person.

187

I can think of several teachers who had an impact on my public school career. I was very fortunate to be a student in the West Des Moines Community School District. For me, the world became a much brighter, more interesting place when Jerry Kinney became an integral part of my education.

To this day, I am always excited to see him and I have always wanted to find the right moment to thank him for helping me to become the person I am today.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to say publicly, "Mr. Kinney, you were a very special person in my life and I just want to say thanks for being my teacher!"

Gerald D. Page

PRINCIPAL, WESTRIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
WEST DES MOINES, IOWA



140

Dorothy Holmberg

BRITT HIGH SCHOOL



141

Several teachers (and professors) stick out in my mind as “favorites”—those who you felt really cared about you and learning and what might happen to your life. To them, teaching was more than a job—much more. And it showed.

One very special teacher was Dorothy Holmberg, who came from Decorah during World War II to teach at Britt in northern Iowa. A Luther College grad, as I recall.

At the time, I was a farm boy with a most uncertain future. I knew I loved to read and write, and received good grades in English, but I didn’t know where such things might take me. Somehow, in her classes, writing as a career became a distant hope. Miss Holmberg’s unbridled enthusiasm (in the classroom or directing the junior and senior class plays) sort of rubbed off on some of us.

In the end, I was to spend my career putting words together, for nearly 40 years, on daily newspapers in Marshalltown, Omaha, and Des Moines.

Her influence came during a critical growing-up time in my life. And, I never forgot her.

189

P.S. Nearly half a century later, I still remember the name of our senior class play, for which she picked me for the lead role. It was *Grandad Steps Out*.

Don Muhm

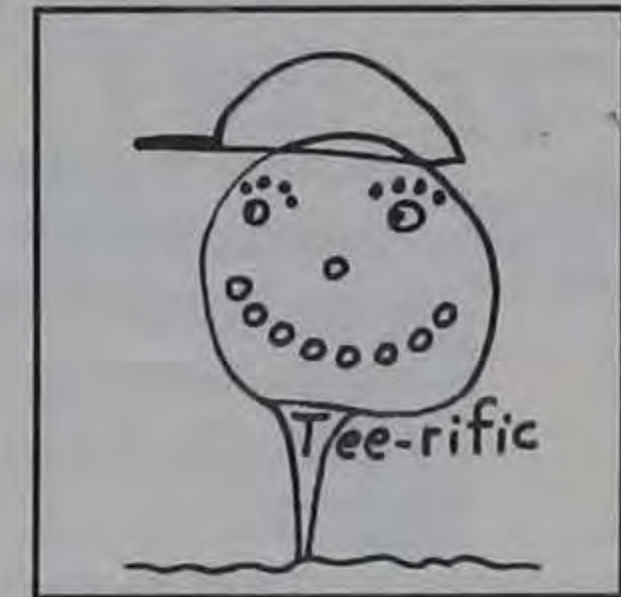
FARM EDITOR (RETIRED), *THE DES MOINES REGISTER*
DES MOINES, IOWA



142

Vicki Kingsbury

WEST MONONA JUNIOR-SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL



143

When I think back to high school I remember life being so incredibly easy and stress-free, except for one little glitch—tenth grade speech class. I had never experienced so much work and stress in a classroom as I did that year in Vicki Kingsbury's speech class. Mrs. Kingsbury's well-known phrase was, "It's here, it's now, it's real, people!"

I used to think that phrase was a little over-dramatic, but once the real world slapped me in the face, I soon realized it wasn't dramatic enough. Vicki Kingsbury was teaching us how to survive in a demanding society. She forced us to go beyond the assignment, to strive for excellence and not settle for mediocrity. Vicki Kingsbury taught me how to be an individual. Thinking for myself and being confident enough to express those thoughts are traits that I learned in tenth grade speech class.

I recently graduated from college and, as I was looking for a job, my first thought was, IT'S HERE, IT'S NOW, IT'S REAL! Even though finding that first job is a stressful venture, I felt prepared to do so, because of the confidence that Vicki had

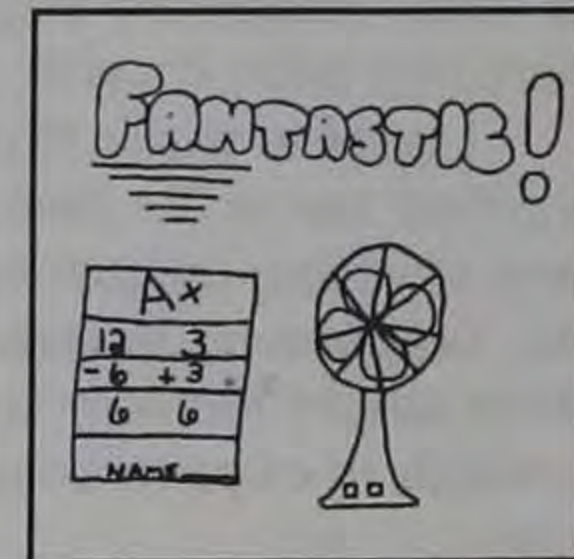
191

instilled within me. I finally hooked that “first job” and find that I am constantly pushing myself to do better. Mediocrity is just not acceptable. If Vicki Kingsbury had not motivated me at a young age to go beyond my own expectations, I would probably be wearing a paper hat right now and asking if you wanted fries with that order. Thanks to Vicki, my boss is not Ronald McDonald, and I’m confident that he never will be.

I had several great teachers while attending grade and high school, but no one held a candle to Vicki Kingsbury. She forced me to find myself and to mold that person into an ambitious, confident individual. I used to think that she was too demanding and expected too much of her students, but she was preparing us for life beyond high school—and for that, I thank her.

Jennifer Samson

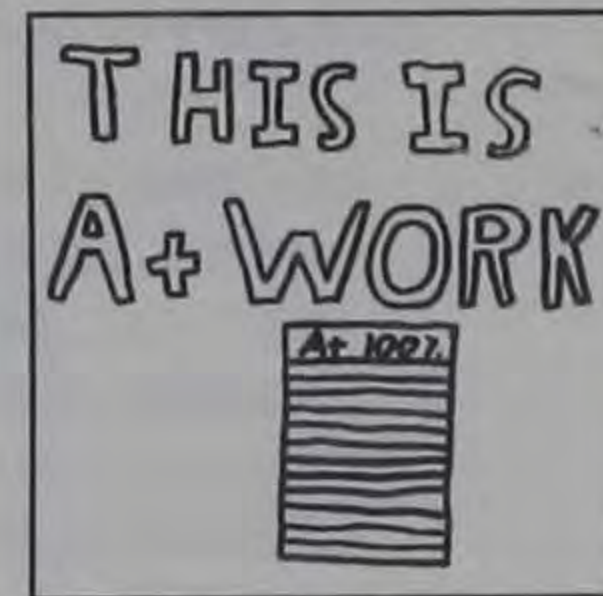
MONONA COUNTY ZONING AND
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ADMINISTRATOR
ONAWA, IOWA



144

Margaret Koob

HAWARDEN RURAL SCHOOL



145

Miss Margaret Koob really influenced the future of this teacher-to-be with her capable handling of children and the deep concern she had for each child. She was totally dedicated to her job and devoted herself entirely to the education and development of each individual.

There were 17 children in this one-room rural school in all eight grades. In the short time that I spent in that environment, I was totally impressed with how she imparted to each of their young minds the importance of their learning and how she instilled in their young hearts the ways of kindness, sympathy, and compassion for others.

Throughout my 50 years of educating young children, I can honestly say that until my retirement in June 1992, hardly a day went by that I didn't think of Miss Koob and the extraordinary impact she made in my meager training to go out into the world and mold young lives and minds.

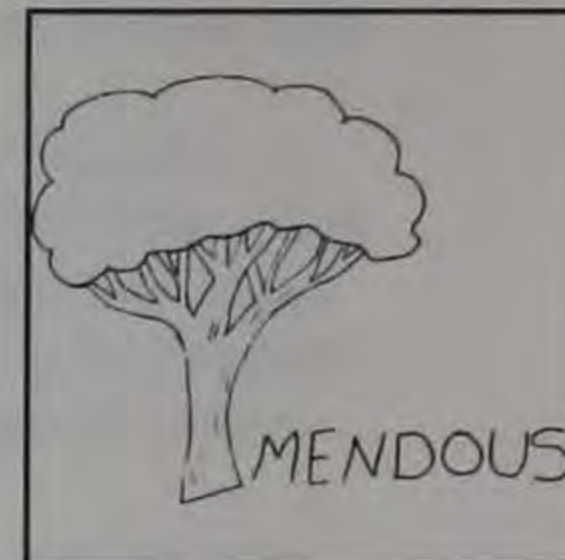
Kathleen Ronan Tomjack

TEACHER (RETIRED)

ROCK RAPIDS, IOWA

193

Evelyn Wood



146

Arriving at college was, at once, exhilarating, intimidating, and suspenseful for me, having come from a rural southwestern Iowa town. I graduated from a class of seven. My only brush with academic science was a test tube displayed in the hallway trophy case. Any potential for success in arithmetic had been forever vanquished by an elementary teacher convinced that such skills were the inherent domain of boys and men.

Nevertheless, I wanted to be a teacher, and I wanted to taste life outside my sheltered, small-town existence.

It was my freshman advisor at the University of Northern Iowa, Evelyn Wood, who sensed both my fears and my wish to burst forth with confidence.

She checked my first quarter grades. Then, by assuring me that I could have reasonable expectations for being a good student, she provided the spark for confidence-building and dream-shaping. The boost she gave with that initial assessment was followed by more. She instilled a feeling that I could always take problems to her. She provided the personal interest I needed upon entering that huge, unknown

college world. She expanded my view of the possibilities for women every time she shared her experiences as a WAVE, and before I graduated, she encouraged me to stay connected to a support system.

Her involvement in the WAVES was almost mind-boggling to me. Here was a woman (and women were “supposed” to be farm wives, secretaries, nurses, or teachers!) doing highly responsible work in far-off places in wartime—the height of an intimidating situation!

Conversations with Evelyn Wood helped me set new sights. The support system she suggested was the American Association of University Women, a membership which later ushered in my lifelong and enthusiastic commitment to community involvement, leadership, and concern for issues beyond my own private world.

Joy Corning

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF IOWA
DES MOINES, IOWA

TEACHERS

Carolyn Warner

FORMER ARIZONA SUPERINTENDENT
OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Give me your hungry children,
your sick children, your
homeless and abused
children.

Give me your children who
need love as badly as they
need learning.

Give me your children who
have talents and gifts and
skills.

Give me your children who
have none.

Give them all to me, in
whatever form they come,
and the people within these
walls will help

give you the doctors and the
engineers and the scientists
and the lawyers and the
ministers and the teachers of
tomorrow.

We will give you the mothers
and the fathers, the thinkers
and the builders, the artists
and the dreamers.

We will give you the nation of
tomorrow.

We will give you the future
of Iowa.

We will give you the
American Dream.

This poem was presented by the author at
the ISEA Summer Leadership Workshop in
August 1995.

School Districts

Adair-Casey, 4-5
Ballard, 6-7
Baxter, 8-9
BCLUW, 10-11
Bedford, 12-15
Belle Plaine, 16-17
Belmond-Klemme, 18-19
Bondurant-Farrar, 20-21
Boyden-Hull, 22-23
Cedar Falls, 24-27
Centerville, 28-29
Central Clinton, 30-31
Chariton, 32-33
Clarion-Goldfield, 34-35
Corning, 36-37
Davenport, 38-42
Davis County, 43-44
Des Moines Independent, 45-56
Dubuque, 57-59
Eagle Grove, 60-61
East Greene, 62-63
Elk Horn-Kimballton, 64-65
Estherville, 66-67
Fairfield, 68-69
Farragut, 70-77
Forest City, 78-79

George, 80-81
Gladbrook, 82-84
Glidden-Ralston, 85-86
Greene, 87-88
Greenfield, 89-94
Grinnell-Newburg, 95-96
Iowa Falls, 97-98
Jefferson-Scranton, 99-101
Johnston, 102-3
Kingsley-Pierson, 104-5
Lawson-Bronson, 106-7
Maple Valley, 108-9
Maquoketa, 110-12
Maquoketa Valley, 113-14
Martensdale-St. Mary's, 115-16
Mason City, 117-20
Mediapolis, 121-22
Mount Pleasant, 123-24
Muscatine, 125-30
New Hampton, 131-32
New Market, 133-34
North Central, 135-36
North Kossuth, 137-38
North Linn, 139-43
Ogden, 144
Oskaloosa, 145-46

Pekin, 147-48
Pella, 149-50
Reinbeck, 151-52
Riceville, 153-54
Rudd-Rockford-Marble Rock, 155-56
St. Ansgar, 157-58
Saydel, 159-60
Shenandoah, 161-64
Sioux City, 165-67
South Winneshiek, 168-69
Titonka, 170-71
Tri-County, 172-73
Waterloo, 174-77
Waverly-Shell Rock, 178-79
Webster City, 180-81
West Bend-Mallard, 182-83
West Delaware County, 184-86
West Des Moines, 187-88
West Hancock, 189-90
West Monona, 191-92
West Sioux, 193

University of Northern Iowa, 194

Iowa Teachers

Aden, Marilyn, 139-40
Ady, Velma, 161
Ambroson, Ron, 170-71
Anderson, Phyllis, 32-33
Armbruster, Alice, 180-81
Arneson, James, 24-25
Barnes, Ruth, 89, 90
Barzun, Jacques, 157
Bergfald, Ardis, 60-61
Bowley, Dorothy, 99, 100
Boyd, Willard, 99, 100-101
Bredeson, Lewis, 153-54
Brown, Terry, 135-36
Bryte, Janelle Gruber, 75-76
Buck, Avilda, 89, 91
Burnett, Jacqueline, 57-59
Burns, Sherm, 111
Busby, Gary, 102-3
Buttery, Dan, 68
Chambers, George, 99, 100
Chancellor, Mae, 157
Christensen, William, 108-9
Conner, Karen A., 158
Cottrell, Mr. 123, 124
Cox, Archibald, 157
Cox, Mildred, 159

Cramer, Pete, 159
Crawford, Kent, 111
Crilley, Raymond, 123, 124
Cronk, Marie, 43-44
Currie, Ralph, 36-37
DeVries, Darwin, 104-5
Dillard, Ray, 99, 100
Dillon, Carl, 178-79
Dillon, Ralph, 145, 146
Doorenbos, Ray, 149-50
Egan, Mary, 99-100
Eggleston, Carolyn, 30-31
Ellet, Alexander, 123, 124
Emanuel William H., 115-16
Engle, Paul, 157
Fannon, E.W., 28-29
Filter, Paul, 155-56
Fleming, Leigh, 141, 142, 143
Fosness, Irene, 10-11
Foster, Casey, 108
Foster, Gary, 113-14
Gamble, Harry, 137-38
Gardner, Linda, xv
Geery, Henry, 159-60
George, Orville A., 117-18
Gohman, Walter, 26-27

Goodwin, Wilson, 89, 91
Gorsuch, Geneva, 180, 181
Gress, Bob, 4-5
Griffith, Carson, 62-63
Hach, C.W., 41-42
Hackbarth, Ron, 8-9
Hall, Dorothy, 45-50
Hansen, Dave, 159
Haws, George, 162-64
Heiter, Tambi, 20-21
Hibbs-Burr, Kristy, 66-67
Hild, Roxine, 151-52
Hillebrand, Mark, 111
Holmberg, Dorothy, 189-90
Houlihan, Rita, 141, 142, 143
Houston, Edna Lee, 89, 90
Hoye, Claire, 111
Hubbard, Mary, 180, 181
Hueser, William, 80-81
Ives, Jean Blumgren, xv
Jameson, Ardeth, 180, 181
Jeffrey, Judy, xv
Jerome, Bill, 28-29
Johnson, Donald B., 99, 100
Johnson, Pam, xv-xvi
Jordahl, Margaret, 157

Jordahl, Joe, 157
Kellam, Mildred, 92-94
Kingsbury, Vicki, 191-92
Kinney, Jerry, 187-88
Koob, Margaret, 193
Kuhn, Miss, 141-42, 143
Larche, Doug, 159
Larsen, Edith, 64-65
Linder, David, 51-52
Livingston, Max, 73
Lundvall, Martin, 174-75
Majerus, Robert J., 110-11
McCurdy, Gene, 159
Menough, Roberta, 159
Miller, Catherine R., 127-28
Moehlenbrock, Miss, xiii
Mounts, Nancy, xvi
Murphy, Donald, 53-54
Nagle, Charles, 159
Nelson, Vida, 133-34
Nolin, Willa, 85-86
Ogden faculty, 144
O'Hare, Marvin, 57-58
Oliver, Donnabelle, 106-7
Palmer, Esther, 16-17
Parker, Viva, 18-19
Parmer, Holly, 111
Peebler, Richard, 95-96
Piersall, Olga, 125-26
Plummer, Leon, 70-77
Poulter, Thomas, 123, 124

Price, Gustava, 99, 100
Pryor, Robert "Bob," 97-98
Puhl, Neil, 119
Reed, Bob, 184-86
Richards, Vickie Bastron, xiv
Riter, Alice L., 119-20
Ross, Russell, 99, 100
Schmidt, Areta, 129-30
Schultz, Annette V., 87-88
Scott, Marie, xiv-xv
Septer, Marvin, 68-69
Sewick, Lura, 78-79
Shaver, Estelle, xii
Shea, Peg, xv
Siddens, Robert "Bob," 176-77
Simpson, Richard, 34-35
Smay, Leroy, 89, 91
Stahl, Dick, 38-40
Stevens, Mrs., 182
Strathman, Frank, 111
Straube, Loren, 168-69
Street, Dennis, 111
Thie, Alice, 121-22
Tilton, Karen, 111
Tyndall, E.P.T., 123, 124
Vacha, Frances "Fannie," 157-58
Van Allen, James, 157
Wainwright, Mary Helen, 12-15
Wedeking, Mr., 182-83
Weins, Chleo, 165-67
Weld, Rosemary, 6-7

Westby, George, 89, 90
Wiederholt, Gail, 159
Wilson, Mike, 55-56
Witzenburg, Bob, 147-48
Wobbe, Delbert, 123, 124
Wolf, Chuck, 111
Wood, Evelyn, 194-95
Woodin, Nancy, 57
Woodruff, Marilyn, 131-32
Wright, Dennis, 22-23
Wright, Pat, 22-23
Wright, Randy, 145, 146
Wulf, Ken, 172-73
Young, Miss, 119
Young, Steven, 82-84

Contributors

Allspach, Stanley J., 8-9
Armstrong, Doug, 92-94
Bachman, John, 178-79
Balmer, Randall, 51-52
Beukelman, Doug and Janelle, 22-23
Boren, Max, 184-86
Borlaug, Gary, 131-32
Branstad, Terry E., 78-79
Burnett, Jacqueline, 59
Buttry, Steve, 70-77
Coleman, Mary Sue, 26-27
Collett, Laurie, 147-48
Corning, Joy, 194-95
Crompton, Robert G., 180-81
Culver, Kenneth W., 53-54
Elsea, Jerry, 165-67
Estes, Simon, 28-29
Fischbeck, Arthur M., 117-18
Fitzpatrick, John C., ii
Flammang, Kirk, 106-7
Gable, Dan, 174-75
Gannon, Sean, 20-21
Gerber, Delores, 182-83
Gerlach, Gary G., 157-58
Gilchrist, Robert J., 141-43
Gookin, Myron L., 68-69

Groves, Gary J., 60-61
Hamm, William E., 34-35
Heldorfer, Kathryn R., 137-38
Hervey, Barb., 172-73
Jensen, Jan, 64-65
Kaiser-Brown, Natasha, 55-56
Keillor, Garrison, xii-xii
Kline, Lee, 10-11
Koerselman, Janice Martens, 80-81
Krapfl, Mike, 57-58
Leeck, Charles L., 170-71
Lickteig, Mary Ann, 45-50
Maier, Edward L., 108-9
Majerus, Robert C., 110-12
McCreery, Capt. Marc C., 82-84
McCulloch, Murl, 30-31
McKinney, Jeff, 32-33
Meisner, Jane Schorer, 4-5
Muhm, Don, 189-90
Noble, Weston H., 153-54
Offenburger, Chuck, 162-64
Ohlson, Dean M., 144
Orth, Cindy, 121-22
Page, Gerald D., 187-88
Page, Karen S., 24-25
Panther, Nancy, 125-26

Phelps, Laura L., 104-5
Pins, Mel E., 115-16
Polansky, Paul J., 119-20
Pratt, Timothy, 159-60
Quigly, Vicki, 18-19
Ramsey, Richard K., 95-96
Rickert, Craig, 151-52
Ridout, Travis, 66-67
Riley, Bill, 97-98
Rohlf, Kelly E., 102-3
Rooff, John R., III, 176-77
Rowles, Craig, 62-63
Ryerson, Dennis R., 6-7
Samson, Jennifer, 191-92
Schultz, Craig S., 87-88
Shaw, Betty Jane Rankin, 161
Sherman, William L., 145-146
Sidey, Hugh, 89-91
Spencer, Dennis D., 12-15
Spurgeon, Gary, 43-44
Stanley, Dick, 127-28
Stanley, Mary Jo, 127-28
Stilwill, Ted, xiv-xvi
Swander, Mary, 38-40
Tippie, Henry B., 16-17
Tobin, Terry, 133-34

Tomjack, Kathleen Ronan, 193
Torgeson, Jean Woodiwiss, 135-36
Turner, Austin B., 36-37
Van Allen, James A., 123-24
Waller Robert, 155-56
Warner, Carolyn, 196
Welk, Tom, 129-30
Wenthold, Paul G., 168-69
Wenzel, Lori Vander Leest, 149-50
Wundram, Bill, 41-42
Yepsen, David, 99-101
Zabokrtsky, Jason, 139-40
Zimmerman, Steve, 85-86
Zumbach, Stephanie K., 113-14

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4. HERB HOOVER

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Sioux City
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134. RACHAEL EGGERS

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Muscatine

Teacher: Mrs. Kelty

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Teacher: Bev Thies



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Tributes to Iowa Teachers will encourage teachers facing the current challenges of the classroom and it will honor those who have already survived a career in teaching. It will touch the hearts of nonteachers and students who read it, perhaps inspiring memories of personal mentors.

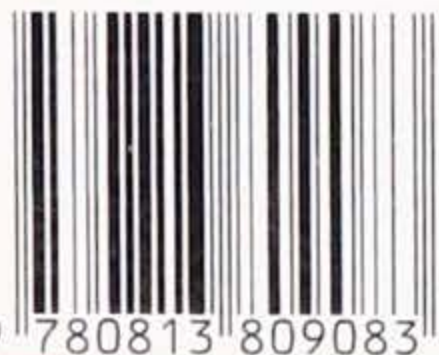
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BACK COVER: *Young Corn*, by Grant Wood, was commissioned by the Cedar Rapids Community School District in 1931 as a memorial to Linnie Schloeman, a teacher at Woodrow Wilson Junior High School.

FRONT COVER: *Arbor Day*, by Grant Wood, was commissioned by the Cedar Rapids Community School District in 1932 as a memorial to Catherine Motejl and Rose L. Waterstradt, teachers at William McKinley Junior High School.