



March 16, 1998 Wyandotte Distinguished Graduate Inductee



John Lee Whitwell Class of 1960

John L. Whitwell has distinguished himself in the field of music as a nationally renowned educator, clinician, conductor, adjudicator, and author.

At Roosevelt High School, John L. Whitwell matured into a fine musician as a member of the Symphonic and Marching Bands. He was elected student president of the band, and was recognized for his leadership and assistance at the summer band and orchestra workshops at the National Music Camp in Interlochen.

John L. Whitwell began his college training at Michigan Christian College in Rochester, and in 1962 received the Associate of Arts Degree. John earned his Bachelor of Music Education in 1965 from Abilene Christian University in Texas and the Master of Music Degree from the University of Michigan in 1975.

John began his teaching career in 1965 in the Northwest Public Schools of Jackson, Michigan. He held positions at all levels from elementary through high school as an instrumental music teacher. From 1975-1981, Mr. Whitwell served at Huron High School in Ann Arbor as Director of Bands and Music Department Chairman. Huron High School is considered the premier high school band director position in the state.

In 1987, Mr. Whitwell began his college work with an appointment as Associate Professor of Music at Abilene Christian University in Texas. He served as Director of Bands and Conductor of the Symphonic Orchestra. It was during this period in Mr. Whitwell's career that he was recognized, both nationally and internationally, as an outstanding guest conductor, clinician, adjudicator, and music educator.

In 1987, John Whitwell accepted a position at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas, where he served as Director of Bands and was promoted to Professor of Music. Professor John L. Whitwell returned to Michigan in 1993, accepting the position of Director of Bands at Michigan State University, East Lansing. In addition to his work with the fine symphonic and marching bands, John Whitwell serves as Professor of Music and Chair of the Conducting Area at the University.

Professor John Whitwell has appeared at and participated in hundreds of music conferences, state and national music association meetings, and music workshops throughout the United States and several foreign countries -- including England, France, Germany, Holland, Switzerland, and Mexico. John Whitwell is a renowned lecturer, guest conductor, clinician, and adjudicator at music festivals and competitions. His writings appear in music journals and National Music Association publications. John serves on numerous State and National Band and Orchestra Associations.

John was honored by the citizens of Wyandotte by being named Co-Marshall of the Wyandotte Christmas Parade in November of 1997. John and wife, Carole, make their home in Okemos, Michigan.