



## Sue Magan

### 2020 Honorary Alumna

By Julie Lundgren

Sue Magan has a devoted following among Forest Ridge alumnae. For 39 years, until her retirement in 2002, Sue taught music and drama and even started a catering operation, Ed-U-Caterers, to provide lunch options for the students who otherwise left campus for lunch. Because of her strong presence in our community and devotion to Sacred Heart values, the Alumnae Board and the Alumnae Office voted to make Sue an Honorary Alumna of Forest Ridge School.

As a graduate of all-girls education from kindergarten through college, she could relate to Forest Ridge. In 1963, soon after arriving to Seattle from New York City, Sue found a position teaching music before taking over the Drama Department for the entire school – kindergarten through the fourth academic.

Sue recalls staging the “Music Man” as her first musical at Forest Ridge, followed by other well-loved classics such as “My Fair Lady.” “You’re a Good Man Charlie Brown” was her most popular production, garnering invitations to perform at Catholic schools in Seattle and for the UW and WSU Drama Departments. With the creative backing of Srs. Schadewald and Kramer, who built and painted scenery, and the accompaniment of the talented Trudy Pival, Sue produced ten plays a year.

The seventies brought much change to Forest Ridge. In 1971, the School moved to the then modern Somerset campus which had no formal theater. No problem – Sue turned the school gymnasium into a stage. Using makeshift lighting, bleachers for seating and the renaming of “stage left” and “stage right” to “Visitors” and “Home,” Sue made her productions work. She also produced plays with the young men from O’Dea High School. “I was never challenged in casting our girls in male roles, but you can imagine how exciting it was for our girls to now share the stage.”

Finally, the Lee Theatre, a proper theater space, was built on campus in 1982. Sue and her students reveled in the luxury of a spacious stage, perfected acoustics, professional lighting, dressing rooms and real theater seating. “Godspell” was the inaugural play.

Sue’s influence as a teacher left an indelible mark on her students. Alumnae remember taking stern direction and developing resiliency as they were pushed out of their comfort zones to project to “dear old deaf Aunt Jenny who sits in the back row.” Sue recalls that “girls who were fiercely academic, shy or suffered from slight stage fright, would suddenly be seen in a whole new light after singing, dancing and acting, giving them a new, strong footing where they were once feeling uncertain or even insecure.”

“ Sue was larger, and louder, than life. She provided a place for all girls. It didn’t matter their skill level; everyone was on equal footing and everyone had opportunities.”

~ Karen Swanson Dugan '76

Asked what advice Sue has for Forest Ridge students today, she says, “Every generation of our students has faced challenges and it is safe to say that we can proudly look back upon the manner in which we have risen to meet them. What I would tell the young ladies of Forest Ridge today is what I told them every year that I had the pleasure to teach...be of stout heart!”

Thank you, Sue, for your unwavering devotion to Forest Ridge School. We are proud to make you an Honorary Alumna.