



# NEWSLETTER of the Joliet Township High Schools

## RETIRED TEACHERS

Vol. 58 - January 28, 2022

### JTHS Retired Teachers and Staff Group

We have been producing the newsletter for the JTHS Retired Teacher's and Staff for quite a while – this being Volume 58. We thought that our readers would like to read about the history and activities of this organization.

The group was formed as an organization for those JT Retirees who just missed the colleagues they worked with and would enjoy getting together to catch up with what they had been doing since retiring. It is therefore a group that only gets together for enjoyment and reminiscing with no other goals. Our first newsletter was issued on August 30, 2002 and besides the names of that year's retirees and those who had passed away, it indicated that a directory of retirees was being compiled. Since that first issue there have been 3 issues per year – January, late May and September.

Our data base contains a total of 921 entries. Not all of those names and addresses in the data base have been able to be tracked down. However there are 129 people that are on our current email list, 60 who have sent money for postage for a hard copy of the newsletter, 187 marked as “deceased” and 33 marked as “passed away”. This number may not be accurate as those marked are only those we have learned about. The newsletters are also on the JTHS web page for anyone with internet access to read and download. For several years the district would provide money to pay for postage but as the number of recipients grew to about 400, the district stopped their mailing money support so we went to the email and member postage delivery that we currently use. There is no fee for the electronic copies and only the cost of postage for those who prefer that way. The district still assumes the cost of printing.

Getting together was one of the original reasons for the organization of the group and, as such, we have organized several of them. The first was held at Syl's restaurant and was moved to the Empress for the second as Syl's needed the room and we were not able to just hang around and talk after our meal. We had a picnic with the JJC retirees at Inwood park and two dinners at Legion Post 1080 in Joliet. The get togethers were originally planned around the end of May as more retirees might be available close to Memorial Day. At the first dinners there were about 150 attending and as more have been held the numbers have gone down to around 50.

Some of those retirees who worked on organizing the group were Alice Henderson, David Jaeger, Shirley Gibbs, Dean Sayles and Hildreth and Bill McCarl.

If one were to pick a person who is most responsible for keeping the group active it would have to be Alice Henderson. So for a personality to feature for this issue we welcome Alice Henderson

who has been the mainstay of our organization since it started. Alice came to JTHS in 1961 as a French teacher in the Foreign Language Department just 4 years out of college. Her teaching experience was 3 years in Morris, Illinois plus 1 year at Emory University. She was drawn to the French Language as a major and was fortunate to be selected to participate in the National Defense Education Act which had the participants all living in a total immersion home where everything was in French. She was hired to be a French teacher but her first class assignment was 2 classes of General Math, 2 classes of Social Studies and 1 class of French. Things did get better however and she finally had an assignment of 5 classes of French. When West Campus opened Alice moved to West as Chair of the Foreign Language Department. Since her retirement Alice has served on many JT boards including the JTHS Foundation and the JTHS Archives Committee.

### JTHS Foundation

The executive board of the JTHS Foundation has been meeting by zoom because of the pandemic. Also, because of the pandemic, no grants from teachers or students were requested this past year. However, \$53,000 in scholarships will be awarded to JTHS students in May of 2022.

The trivia event, Trivia Rewind, is still scheduled hoping the pandemic will wane before its scheduled date of March 13, 2022. It will be held at 176 West with doors opening at 2:00 and the event at 3:00. Tables for 10 are available at \$200. Sponsors and round sponsors are still being sought. Visit the Foundation website for details. Also, information on the June 16, 2022 golf outing at Inwood will be on the site.

### Deaths

- **Margaret Ann Attaway**, 92, passed away at Senior Star Memory Care in Romeoville, IL on Thursday, December 30, 2021. Margaret was a long time secretary to JTHS Superintendents.

- **Byron E. “Chris” Chrisman**, age 96, passed away on Tuesday, December 28, 2021 at home with his family by his side. He was born in Chambersburg, IL in 1925. He entered into the United States Navy and proudly served his country. He then went on to attend Bradley University for undergrad, and earned a Master's Degree in teaching from University of Illinois. After graduation Byron began his work as a teacher for the Joliet Township High School District. Byron loved to teach and it was something he put his whole heart into. Upon retirement Byron began to enjoy the smaller things in life like reading a good book, catching up on current events, sipping a Budweiser with a line in the water, and just enjoying nature, especially birds. He also had

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quite the knack for gardening, and could cook up a wonderful fish fry that had all guests begging for the recipe. People meeting him for the first time would comment on what a gentleman he was. He demonstrated this by waiting to sit down until the lady was seated, always pulling out a chair for a woman and making sure to open the door for others. His favorite restaurant was the Country Charm in New Lenox, and in his later years, he could be found there several times a week enjoying a pot roast melt and a cup of fruit.

- **Salvatore A. (Sol) Dispensa**, age 88, died peacefully on January 15, 2022. Sol was a proud alumnus of De LaSalle High School in Chicago, the University of Illinois, and the University of Colorado. He served as a Staff Sergeant in the United States Air Force and was a Korean War Veteran. Salvatore was a proud High School Typing Teacher for 34 years teaching at Joliet Central High School and Joliet Catholic High School. He will be remembered as a devoted Chicago White Sox fan his entire life and dog lover especially to his dogs Sparky & Socks. He was a strong advocate of the the JT teacher's union and took an active part in many of the negotiations with the administration and school board.

- **Robert "Bob" Gutierrez**, age 91, passed away peacefully at his Orland Park home on Friday, January 7, 2022. Survived by his loving wife of 53 years, Barbara. He was born June 7, 1930 in Joliet, IL. Bob lived with his family in Shorewood, IL for 45 years in a home he helped build, alongside his brother Tony and cousins. In his youth he played basketball and baseball, graduating from Joliet Township High School (JTHS) in 1949. He earned his bachelor's degree from Illinois State University) and his master's degree from Northern Illinois University. He served in the army in Alaska during the Korean War. He enjoyed listening to music, especially Mahler, and sang in school and church choirs, as well as the JTHS Alumni Choir. Most of his life, Bob taught in the business department at JTHS, first at Joliet East, and later at Joliet West. He also coached boys' and girls' tennis teams at both schools. In the summers he worked in the Tony Gutierrez Construction Company. He also served on the Shorewood Parks & Recreation Committee and the board of the Learning & Skills Center, as well as delivering Meals on Wheels. JTHS "old timers" will remember Bob as a member of the Gutierrez family, many of who served for the High School.

- **Edward S. "Eddie" Matesevic**, age 96, of Joliet, passed away on Tuesday, January 11, 2022 at Lightways Hospice with his family by his side. Throughout his career, Eddie worked for Will County Produce, United States Steel and retired from Joliet Township West High School after 35+ years as a dedicated maintenance man. In his free time, Eddie liked carpentry and brick work, which included remodeling, adding to his home and making small furniture pieces.

He enjoyed dancing, singing, working on jigsaw puzzles, and was an avid card player, spending many hours with his family playing, pinochle, euchre, sets & runs and dominos. He enjoyed retirement as a true "dumpster diver", bringing home various treasures.

- **Alfred A. Racchini**, age 95, of Shorewood, IL passed away peacefully at home Sunday, October 10, 2021. He was born May 19, 1926, in Catobagli, Italy, and was raised in Eveleth, MN after immigrating to the US at the age of two. While not a member of the JTHS faculty he is remembered by many who taught with him while JJC was located at JT Central. Al is a proud retiree of Joliet Junior College, where he taught and was a guidance counselor for over 25 years. He was proud of his upbringing on the Iron Range of northern Minnesota, where he grew up as a goaltender in a hockey hotbed. Fred served in the US Navy during World War II. He reveled in his Italian heritage and traveled to Italy many times, visiting his place of birth for the last time at the age of 84. He was a builder extraordinaire, having constructed--with his father-in-law--his and wife's first home and having built the cabin in Northern Minnesota that was a source of great joy and life-long experiences for the entire family.

**And finally for all of you Pickles fans who perhaps can relate to this...**



### JTHS Web Page Update

For those readers of the Retired Teacher's and Staff Newsletter on line here's the new location on the JTHS web page:

[www.JTHS.org](http://www.JTHS.org)

Quick Links

Alumni

Get Involved

JTHS Retired Faculty

Links located at the top of the page on pull down tabs.

Newsletter from the past 3 years are located on this page.

The next issue of this newsletter will be published at the end of May, 2022. It will only be available in a PDF version on the JT Web page or mailed to those without internet access who have requested hard copies.

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