



NEWSLETTER of the Joliet Township High Schools

RETIRED TEACHERS

Vol. 54 - September, 2020

JTHS Retirees, Class of 2020

Because of the continuing pandemic and the closing of the JTHS buildings we were unable to create a newsletter in April to honor this years retirees. The buildings were closed and no one was allowed inside. Therefore we were unable to print and mail the newsletter. Hopefully this will solve our problem as we wish all of JT's retirees the best in their future years in these unpredictable times. We trust that the teachers and support staff are coping with the new problems of teaching and that JTHS continues their traditions of excellence. This brings more meaning to the inscription on the ceiling of the JT Central auditorium: "The Foundation of Every State is the Education of Its Youth."

The JTHS Retired Teachers wish all of the 2020 retirees well as they pursue their lives after retirement and urge them to keep up their JTHS contacts. Current retirees will concur that retirement is great.

There are 18 JTHS Retirees this year.

Deborah Borroughs - West - Student Asst. Coord. (26)
Darlen Bradley - West - Security Para-pro (24)
Matthew Carrino - District - Transportation (9)
Douglas Cherry - Central - Math (33)
James Genseal - Central - Spec. Serv. Para-pro (13)
Shari Grigsby - Central - Security (31)
Diane Hunsley - Central - Head Cashier - (33)
Maria Lopez - West - Service Worker - (12)
Alan Mart - West - Guidance (31)
Robert Matlak - West - Security Para-pro (13)
Sharon Murray - West - Service Worker (22)
Cynthia Palya - District - Office staff (16)
Christine Peterson - Central - Security Para-pro (29)
Cheryl Pullara - West - Office PPS (31)
Paul Resce - Central - Para-pro (23)
Patricia Sewing - West - PPS Coordinator (23)
Diann Tribble - West - Security Para-pro (21)
Andrea Wayland - West - Security Supervisor (28)

Deaths

- **Liberata (Libby) DiVecchio** passed into eternity on July 16, 2020 after a ten-year courageous battle with lymphomas. She was born on September 11, 1935 to Fiore and Linduccia Brandolino in San Vittorino, a little town nestled in the mountains of Italy. Life was difficult there and Liberata often told stories of being raised in a small village with none of the luxuries we are all accustomed to. At the age of 18 she immigrated to America and a new life. It was in America that she married her husband John DiVecchio and in May they celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary. While primarily a homemaker, Libby did work a few jobs including being a seamstress for Al Baskin and she retired from Joliet Central High School where she worked in the cafeteria for many years. She was a member of the Church of St. Anthony ever since she arrived in America. She was also an active member of the American Italian Cultural Society and she could be found volunteering at their monthly spaghetti dinners and the Festa Italiana.
- **Silas Ellingson** age 92 passed away on August 10, 2020. He began his teaching career in 1950, and taught in ND, WY, MT, JTHS and JJC. He was a member of NCTM, SUAA, NEA, AFT and The United Church of Christ for 50 years. He was chairman of the JJC mathematics department for nearly 30 years. His summers were spent traveling. He and his family visited all 50 states and many foreign countries such as China, Africa, Germany, Ireland, Russia and many others.
- **Dr. Karen Freeman** - A Life Extraordinarily Well Lived. Karen passed away on Friday, May 22, 2020, at Advocate Christ Medical Center in Oak Lawn, IL. She was born in Champaign, IL. She taught at Joliet West High School, where she was a co-sponsor of the Multicultural Club and directed fashion shows, talent shows, and other events for high school students. She also taught at Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. College Preparatory High School in Chicago. Dr. Freeman was a scholar and educator. She was a longtime professor, teaching at Chicago State University, Roosevelt University, and other Chicago area colleges. She was a teacher of teachers, and a stellar researcher and lecturer, presenting at universities and academic institutions in nations around the world. Dr. Freeman earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Southern Illinois University, with a double major in History and Government, a Master of Education degree from the University of Illinois at Chicago, and a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Public Policy Analysis and Administration from the University of Illinois at Chicago. She even entertained the idea of pursuing a law degree. Dr. Freeman received the 2011 Outstanding Faculty

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

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.

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Member Award from Chicago State University, where she also served on the College of Education's Oral Interview Committee. The American Leadership Initiative honored Dr. Freeman with the Excellence in Leadership Award. She was recognized by Cambridge Who's Who, Who's Who Among Professional Women, Who's Who in the Midwest, and Who's Who in American Education. She also served on the Golden Apple Selection Committee. She enjoyed horseback riding, and as a child, she loved playing the piano. She made her friends feel like family, and she especially enjoyed time commiserating with her family, many friends and colleagues.

- **Reinhold Fritz**, age 80, passed away peacefully on January 31, 2020, with his family by his side. Reinhold was born December 11, 1939 in Kulczyn, Poland, even if he wouldn't say so, and moved to Germany shortly after. As a teenager, he and his family moved to the United States. Reinhold was known for his wonderful sense of humor and his enormous amount of knowledge. He was a German teacher for 38 years for JTHS. He also was a football and track coach.
- **Shirley M. Gibbs**, Beloved U.S. History teacher for thirty years at Joliet Township High School, West Campus passed away on July 24, 2020. A favorite of many years of West Campus students. She was a great influence to many to continue with their interest in history. "May she fly with the angels."
- **John W. Murray**, age 93, passed away January 30, 2020. Loving husband to Marie for 68 years. John attended St. Dennis and St. Joseph grammar schools. During his senior year at Lockport High School, he was drafted into the Army during [World War II](#). He served his country in the Philippines and in Japan. Upon returning to civilian life, he completed his high school education. He continued his education at Loras College, the University of Portland, and [University of Illinois](#), Urbana/Champaign, where he earned his Bachelor's degree and two Master's Degrees. His career in teaching began at District 92 in Lockport, followed by Lockport West High School, and concluded at Joliet West High School. In 1985 after 34 rewarding years in the field of Physical Education, he retired. John was a true patriot, a man of high ideals. Honesty, integrity, kindness, and caring were his forte. He treasured his family, many friends, and his golf partners.
- **Nanette "Nan" Zalar O'Hara**, of Joliet, passed away peacefully Tuesday, June 9, 2020, in the comfort of her own home. She was born in 1952 to the late Enid (nee Bruning) Blunck-Zalar and Dr. Joseph A. Zalar. She attended St. Paul the Apostle School and Joliet West High School. She graduated from the University of Illinois at Chicago. At age 50, she went back to college and

obtained two master's degrees: one in Education, and one in Library and Information Science. After receiving her master's degrees, she became a teacher at Joliet Central High School. Nanette's greatest joys in life were her children, and she could not be more proud of them and who they have become. She also enjoyed golfing,

- **Joan M. Samlin** (nee Gibson), age 88, passed away peacefully on Friday, June 26, 2020, at the Clarendale of Mokena, surrounded by the love of her family. Joan was born on May 28, 1932, in Boston, MA. As a child, Joan's family moved to Sturtevant, WI, and then LaSalle, IL, where she was raised. She was a graduate of LaSalle Peru High School, where she met her husband, Richard Samlin long time teacher and administrator at Joliet West High School. They wed in July 1952 and were married for 66 years.
- **Rodney C. Springer**, 74, was welcomed into the loving arms of our Lord with family by his side on June 3, 2020, at Silver Cross Hospital. He was born on March 23, 1946, in Champaign, Illinois. Rod attended Illinois State University where he studied Education and played fullback and linebacker for the mighty Redbirds. He earned his Master's degree in Education at Governors State University while working at Joliet Township High Schools where he taught Physical and Drivers Education (often considered one-in-the-same, if you asked Rod). He also enjoyed coaching football.
- **Helen J. Zlogar**, age 93, passed away peacefully on Sunday, January 19, 2020. Helen was born in Joliet and was employed for many years as a culinarian at Joliet Catholic and Joliet West High Schools. She was later employed by the Deaton Kennedy Company.

News

JTHS Foundation - Because of the pandemic, board meetings have been by "zoom" and the June golf outing was cancelled. Fund investments which provide most of the money for distribution have suffered from the economy's reaction to the virus. In spite of that, in May \$42,550 was awarded in scholarships to JTHS students and summer school and virtual education were given \$7,000. Plans are being made for both the 2021 trivia event and golf outing. Financial support will be given where needed and when possible as this situation continues.

Joliet Area Retired Teachers Association - Alice Henderson has been treasurer of this group for many years. We would like to appeal to retired teachers to continue to support this organization and the state organizations, Illinois Retired Teachers, Illinois Federation of Teachers and Illinois Education Association by paying your dues. All these groups are lobbying to defend teachers' pensions and insurance. We can't afford to allow the State of Illinois to further decrease their funding of these items. Stay informed and pay your dues.

The next issue of this newsletter will be published at the end of January 2021. 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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