



NEWSLETTER of the Joliet Township High Schools

RETIRED TEACHERS

Vol. 51 - January 31, 2019



Mike O'Connell

As part of our periodic feature articles about JTHS faculty and staff after retirement, we would like to feature Mike O'Connell. Mike, a member of the O'Connell family who are working or have worked for JTHS, retired in 2006 after a long and active career. The O'Connell's came to JTHS from Penn High School in Mishawaka, Indiana when Dale Sr. and Estelle O'Connell were asked to come to Joliet by East Campus principal, Jim Risk. Dale Sr. was head basketball coach at East Campus and taught PE there. Estelle was for many years a para-pro and security guard for JT. Mike is one of 6 children of Dale Sr. and Estelle, 4 boys and 2 girls. Education and particularly JTHS has played an important role for most of them as well as the O'Connell grand children. Other O'Connell's with JT connections are Dale, Jr., who worked at JT West, Patrick at JT Central, Billy who works for the Chicago Tribune newspaper, Kathy O'Connell Forsyth whose husband and son are coaches and Virginia who did not pursue an education career but has two children connected with teaching and coaching. Mike graduated from JT East and during his career for JTHS served as a Dean at West Campus as well as head basketball coach at JT Central. There are O'Connell's working at Minooka High School, Lockport High School as well as JTHS. Eight of nine grand children live in Joliet and are active educators as well. Since retiring Mike has served on the board of Joliet Junior College for over 10 years. He also serves on the Shorewood Police and Fire Board. Besides his civic activities he and his wife Justine (a JT Central grad and teacher at Union School) have enjoyed travel, especially in Europe as well as biking, walking groups and membership in two golf leagues. Mike is also an avid Pickle Ball player in his "spare time". Without a viable check, it probably can be said that the O'Connell's hold the record for being the first family in number for contributions to JTHS. It is mind boggling when one thinks of the number of JT and other students over the years who have been influenced by their teaching and coaching. Also anyone who is familiar with the O'Connell's know how they love to talk – particularly about sports.

2019 Retired Teachers and Staff Reunion

Sunday, May 19, 2019

American Legion Post 1080 • 5:00 -- 8:00 p.m.

Cost is \$10 per person • Cash Bar

Reservations due March 15, 2019

Catered by Mediterranean, Inc., snacks will consist of a croissant sandwich platter, appetizer fruit trays and appetizer vegetable trays. The cost of \$10 includes the food plus 9.75% tax, 10% tip,

\$200 hall rental and \$50 bartender tip.

All retired or former JTHS employees and spouses are welcome. This is the 9th reunion of former JTHS employees. It is a good time to renew acquaintances, talk about your experiences with old friends and have a good time.

Please send in your reservations immediately because we will not have a reunion unless more than 50 people respond.

Also please note that this is a Sunday, one week after Mother's Day and one week before Memorial Day weekend. We used this Sunday for our last reunion and it seemed to be better for most people.

Return your reservations by March 15, 2019 to **Alice Henderson, 3205 Willardshire, Joliet, IL 60431, (815) 436-5418**. Email **Cah3205@aol.com**. Make checks payable to Alice Henderson. Both the hall and the caterer require cash payments for their services.

Deaths

• **Lawrence Alvarez**, 86, passed away at his home in Joliet, Illinois on Sunday, December 3, 2018, surrounded by his wife of 62 years, Toyoko, and his two daughters, Joan and Ana. He was a beloved and devoted husband, father, family member, friend and educator. He was a veteran of the **United States Air Force**. While deployed in Japan, he met and married his wife, Toyoko, in 1956. Larry taught Spanish and French at Joliet West High School (1965 to 1992), Joliet Junior College and Joliet Township Central High School, as well as Kimball County and Scottsbluff High Schools in western Nebraska. He was a Fulbright Scholar and spent the summer of 1966 studying in Spain. He earned a Masters Degree from the University of Colorado Boulder and an Undergraduate Degree from the University of Northern Colorado. Lawrence was a life long fan of the St. Louis Cardinals baseball team. He also played for the Gilcrest Aztecs of the Rocky Mountain Baseball League in summer 1946. He enjoyed spending family time traveling internationally, dining at his favorite Chicago restaurants, and attending pop and classical concerts, Broadway musicals and Cirque du Soleil performances.

• **Rita A. Barnes** (nee Lehman), age 81, passed away on Tuesday, October 23, 2018. Rita was born in Joliet. She was a longtime resident, moving to Lander, WY for 15 years, returning home on October 9, 2018. Retired from Joliet Central High School, she was a member of the CCW at St. Ambrose Catholic Church and the Cathedral of St. Raymond Nonnatus. Rita was voted Woman of the Year by St. Ambrose Parish. She performed many volunteer activities for her church as well as volunteering for many of her children's school functions. Rita was a very avid White Sox fan and enjoyed following her grandchildren's sporting events.

• **Linda Berganske** (nee Myers), age 67, of Summerville,

SC, was born February 22, 1951 in Joliet. She remained in the Joliet area after high school receiving her BA from Lewis University and began her 33-year teaching career in the Valley View and Joliet High School Districts both Central and West Campus, retiring in 2006. Linda was a dedicated educator to her English and speech classes and was loved and held in the highest regard by her students and colleagues. She loved learning and sharing her knowledge. Linda became a national trainer in the Franklin Covey leadership system and helped implement it within the Joliet High Schools. She completed her MA in Journalism at Governors State University while teaching full time and began freelance writing, several of her pieces being published in local newspapers including The Star, The Herald News and regional magazines. She was a true advocate for supporting friends, family, students, and causes like St. Jude and the Ronald McDonald House. In her retirement, she enjoyed supporting her community with her husband, Rodney, through organizations like Meals on Wheels. She maintained her life-long pursuit of fitness, enjoyed discovering Charleston and international travel with Rodney, continued her love of the French horn and music, and relished every moment she could spend with her eight grandchildren.

• **William L. Burns, Jr.** “Bill”, age 91, a lifelong Joliet resident, passed away peacefully on November 14, 2018. Bill was a man of language; he taught French, German, Spanish, Russian, Latin and English as a second language. He also learned his wife’s native tongue, Slovenian. He graduated from Joliet Township High School in 1945 and from Joliet Junior College in 1947. With only a two-year degree in his pocket, the township superintendent offered him a job teaching grades one through five in a one-room schoolhouse in Beecher. While teaching, Bill continued his education and completed his Bachelor of Arts degree from DePaul University in 1952. He immediately pursued and obtained his Master of Arts degree from the University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana in 1953. He then began teaching languages at JT and teaching a few courses at JJC. In 1963, Bill took a sabbatical from JT and relocated his family to Montpellier, France for a year of culture immersion and continued education. Upon their return to Joliet in 1964, Bill began teaching full time at JJC. He led the foreign language department at JJC until his retirement in 1984. Bill enjoyed cooking, grilling and sipping on a fine wine. He bowled regularly into his 80s, loved crosswords, Sudoku and other types of puzzles, and was tough to beat in Trivial Pursuit.

• **Carl “Miles” Carlson**, age 89, passed away on January 6, 2019 at Beacon Hill Community in Lombard, Illinois. Born and raised in Grand Forks, North Dakota, Miles was the son of Carl and Hannah Carlson. A veteran of the Korean War, he was awarded the Bronze Star with Valor for his service as a medic. After returning from Korea, Miles received a Bachelor of Science and Masters in Education from the University of North Dakota and began his career teaching Industrial and Graphic Arts. Miles and his family moved to Joliet in 1965 where he taught at Joliet West High School until his retirement in 1989. With a camera strapped around his neck, Miles captured the memories of a lifetime through his love of photography. Miles was laid to rest with military honors at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery. He also loved music and over the years directed choirs and shared his deep, rich, baritone, solo voice. A man of faith, he volunteered in his church and community. He was a devoted family-man, accomplished handyman and proud Norwegian.

• **Dale Wesley Glenn** went to the Lord on December 23, 2018. Dale was born on August 28, 1939, in Hoopston, IL. He

attended Hoopston Public Schools, graduating in 1957. Dale received his Bachelor’s Degree in Education from Eastern Illinois University in 1962. The **University of Illinois** was his next step in his education, where in 1967 he received a Master’s Degree in Education Psychology. In 1973, he received a Master’s Degree in Special Education from Northern Illinois University and in 1980 received a Masters Degree in Administration from Illinois State University. After graduating from college in 1962, he coached basketball at Tinley Park, Potomac, and Oakwood before becoming Head Basketball coach at Joliet Central, where his teams won over 300 games, and in 1970 the “Steelmen” played for the Illinois State Championship title. While at JTHS, Dale was Director of Special Education for the district, where he pioneered Joliet into the forefront of High School Special Education in the 1970’s, including founding one of the first high school Alternative School programs for “Behaviorally Disturbed” students that nearly every high school district in the country has today. After retiring from coaching in 1981, Dale joined the Will County Sheriff’s department as a youth and gang counselor, eventually retiring in 1997 as a training Sgt. for the Will County Auxiliary. An avid tennis player, hunter, and fisherman in his younger days, his hobby became golf after retiring, and he and his wife Joyce enjoyed almost every day at the Fruitland Golf Course with their friends. Dale had 5 “Hole in Ones” in his career and often shot his age into his 70’s. Dale’s book of poetry, “The Journey” reflects his love for God, parents, spouse, family, and friends.

Foundation News

One of the two major Foundation fundraising events is the trivia event “Let the Music Play” which will be held March 10, 2019 at a new location, the Holiday Inn Ballroom, 1471 Rock Creek Blvd., Joliet. Tables are \$150 for ten and can be reserved online or by contacting **Mark Turk**, (815) 922-4065, mltrk05@comcast.net. The second fundraiser is the annual golf outing which will be June 13, 2019 at Wedgewood Golf Course. This event will also offer online registration.

Noteworthy JTHS News: Ms. Arlene Albert and Jeff Pierson are retiring from the Board of Education after many years of service to the district. Dr. Cheryl McCarthy, superintendent will retire after 33 years in District 204 as teacher and administrator. In July 2019 Dr. Charles M. (Mike) Hanson II will begin his duties as superintendent. He comes to JT from Hill City School District in South Dakota.

Finally

If you have been receiving our newsletters via the USPS please send money to cover the cost of postage as the costs are going to rise. Thank you and keep on enjoying retirement.

The next issue of this newsletter will be published at the end of April, 2019. It will only be available in a PDF version or on-line. If you are not on the e-mail list, send us your address. The newsletter will also be available on the JTHS home page (<http://www.jths.org/alumni-and-community/jths-retired-faculty/>). If you do not have an internet connection please send \$4.00 to Alice Henderson to cover mailing costs for two years. Keep the news and feedback coming as we all like to hear from and about former colleagues. Please send information to:

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