



## **Nonie Bidwell Buis Class of 2020**

Nonie graduated from Las Plumas High School (LPHS) in 1968 and was very involved in Associated Student Body activities. She was active in Photo, Pep, and Spanish Clubs. She was also a member of the Letterettes, (the first Letterettes team at Las Plumas), The Future Homemakers of America and the American Field Service group that supported Foreign Exchange Students. Outside of school, Nonie was a member of the Jobs Daughters in Oroville.

Nonie went to work for the Butte County Office of Education in 1977, serving as an Instructional Assistant in the Special Education Local Plan Area until retiring in 2008, after 31 years of service. During those years she worked mainly with students who were hard of hearing and deaf as well as with other students who had special needs.

During her career of working with special needs students, Nonie was honored in 1997 by Butte County Special Education Local Plan Area for her outstanding work with special needs students. In 2000, she was honored by Oroville Secondary Teachers Association as a Friend of Education for her dedication to high school students as a parent while serving on the School Site Council, the PTA, and the California State School Employees Association.

Following her retirement, Nonie actively served her community, continuing to focus on students. She lent strong support to Las Plumas and Oroville High School track and field and cross-country teams, photographing athletes competing and then posting the photos on the Harrison Stadium Facebook page that she personally facilitates and keeps current. She's also an annual "fixture" at The Special Olympics Event held every year at Harrison Stadium. During that event, maybe Nonie's highlight event, she is still seen walking around the infield with a special glow and excitement watching special needs kids give their all while competing in their events.

In 1999, Bruce Harmon and the First United Methodist church had a vision for supporting Oroville Area educators. Just after the first awards dinner, Bruce passed away and Nonie stepped in and became the primary player for the event. Now, thanks to Nonie, the event is known as the Ross-Harmon Awards in honor of Bruce Harmon and retired classified employee and Oroville Union High School District Hall of Fame member, Charlotte Ross, the first recipient of the award. The award given annually in April, honors a certificated and a classified employee from each school district in the Oroville Area and is held at the Methodist Church with Nonie working behind the scenes.

The year 2008, saw Nonie and longtime Oroville High School teacher and coach Tom Aldridge, put their heads together to decide how to upgrade Harrison Stadium. They formed a group called OASIS (Oroville Area Sports Initiative Supporters) and Nonie worked tirelessly on Measure G to get it on the ballot and it passed in that year to generate \$12 million in funds for the much-needed upgrades. Renovation was completed in 2009.

Nonie's efforts on Harrison Stadium did not end there. To this day she serves as secretary of the organization and continues to be a prime mover of OASIS and a major contributor on its Facebook page on Harrison Stadium. For the past 11 years, Nonie has spent countless days and evenings at the stadium, working the scoreboard monitor for nearly every sporting event held there as well as graduations and the Special Olympics. At graduation ceremonies, she posts the name of every graduate in lights on the monitor for all to see, giving each student well-deserved public recognition.

In 2015, The Butte County Office of Education honored Nonie by naming her a Hall of Fame Honoree and in 2017, she received the YMCA Community Service Individual of the Year Award.

Tom Aldridge writes in his letter of support for Nonie, *“Her willingness to be a tireless supporter of OHS and LPHS is truly amazing. I have known Nonie for 14 years, and can say that she is the type of person who gets involved for the betterment of the District and the students in the District. It has been a pleasure to be involved with her because she does what she does for the best reasons – just to help and for the betterment of the District’s needs.”*

Nonie does not know the meaning of the word receive...she just gives!

Nonie makes her home in Oroville.