



Spring 2019

Retirements



Lee Stienbarger is retiring as principal of Rose Hamilton Elementary School after 11 years in that position. A native of Elkhart, Indiana, Mr. Stienbarger took his first teaching position in Richmond in 1971. During nearly 25 years as an elementary school teacher there, he started the Thump Jumpers, a jump rope team, and traveled with them from 1980 until 1999 as they performed in 28 states and 16 countries. The group was also the Jump Rope Heart Demonstration team, performing at schools across Indiana.

“We would travel once a month for the Jump Rope For Heart, leaving on a Wednesday evening, travel to whatever city we were starting programs at,” he explained. “We would do four shows on Thursday at different schools and then four shows on Friday, come home Friday night or stay and do a workshop on Saturday morning, and then come home.”

Mr. Stienbarger was also instrumental in starting the United States Amateur Jump Rope Federation, which has its national tournament at Disney World.

Mr. Stienbarger taught at LOGOS Lab School in Richmond for three years. After that he was hired as elementary principal at Randolph Southern Elementary School.

“I was there for six years, then moved to Westview as elementary school principal for three years, and then had the good fortune to be hired as the Rose Hamilton Elementary principal,” he said.

Mr. Stienbarger has two children. Jessica is a health educator for a community health organization in Indianapolis and Ryan is a Harley Davidson mechanic in New Orleans, Louisiana.



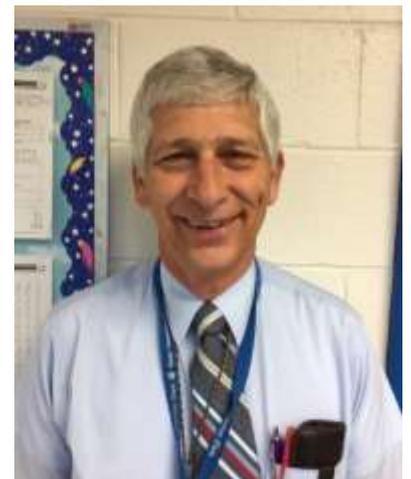
Roger Martin is retiring after 40 years in the Centerville-Abington Community Schools. He did his student teaching at Rose Hamilton in third grade with Marge Benner.

“The following year I was fortunate enough to be hired as a second grade teacher,” Mr. Martin said, adding that a drop in enrollment at the end of his third year resulted in his being transferred to sixth grade for two years. “At that time a third grade position became available back at Rose Hamilton. I moved back to Rose and taught for four years in third grade.” When the opportunity came to move back to second grade, he took it and has been in that position for the past 31 years.

Mr. Martin will remember fondly his colleagues and students.

“I think I’ve learned more from them than I taught them,” he said.

Mr. Martin has enjoyed the 33 years he helped with the basketball program. During that time, he was seventh grade coach, eighth-grade coach, junior varsity coach and varsity assistant coach (for the last 14 years). He plans to continue coaching both the boys' and girls' golf teams after retiring from the classroom. He and his wife also intend to do some missions work and help out where they can with their families.





Melissa Powell is a first grade teacher at Rose Hamilton Elementary School.

“I have taught first, second, and a week in third grade,” she said, adding that it has been a rewarding career. She retires with 40 years in education, all but two at Centerville-Abington Community Schools.

Ms. Powell said she has made many friends over the years in her position. She recalls with fondness her own first-grade Seussical Musical each spring and past Christmas programs.

“Phyllis Wesler was the music teacher then, and her programs were like a little play and included all the classes and just put you in the Christmas spirit,” she said.

Ms. Powell has no special plans for retirement, but she is looking forward to relaxing and spending more time with family and friends.

Carol Gable has taught third, fourth, fifth and sixth grades in the school corporation over the past 38 years following 12 years as a student. She started her teaching career in 1981 in fourth grade at Abington Elementary School. One of the high points of her teaching career was when she was named Challenger Teacher of the Year.

“I was one of the six in the U.S. and was awarded a medallion made from aluminum that orbited the moon aboard Apollo 8 in 1968 with astronauts (William) Anders, (Frank) Borman and (Jim) Lovell,” she said.

Mrs. Gable’s retirement plans includes spending time with family, including a grandson and nieces and nephews.

“My middle daughter is a teacher and also competes in Strongman competitions,” she said. “I go with her to competitions.”



Karen Bishop retires after 35 years at the Centerville-Abington Community Schools. Her first teaching position was at Richmond Christian School in 1983.

“I was fortunate to get hired with Centerville Schools in August of 1984,” she said. “My first eight years at Rose Hamilton I taught a.m. and p.m. kindergarten. My ninth year I switched to third grade and taught there for six years. Then a kindergarten position opened up and I moved back there and stayed for fifteen years.”

In 2006-07, she went through Literacy Collaborative training at Purdue University. She taught a.m. kindergarten and was a literacy coach in the afternoon for two years. When the school corporation began all-day kindergarten, she taught full time again until 2013. After intensive training at Wright State University, she assumed her current Reading Recovery position six years ago.

“I feel fortunate to have been a part of Centerville Schools for 35 years,” she said. “Both my children got their education through Centerville, and I feel they received a wonderful education!”

Mrs. Bishop looks forward to having more time with her husband and family, reading, walking, working on hobbies, and volunteering at her church and the hospital.



Lynne O’Neal retires after 35 years at Centerville High School. She has taught English, speech, creative writing, and theatre arts. She has also served as the head coach of the Academic Team and coach of the English and speech teams.

She received the ISTAR teacher award this year and in 2012, 2006 and 1996. She is a member of the leadership team at Gateway church and has also served as a Sunday school teacher. She is an active member of the Centerville-Abington Education Association, Indiana State Teachers Association and National Education Association. She is married to Pat O’Neal and has five children: Erin (Charles) Roesch, Amber (Anthony) Sagardia, Patrick, Mary, and Abby (Charles) Shultz.

Mrs. O’Neal’s retirement plans include trips to Europe, winters in Florida and time with family.





Denise Scalzo's first memories of Centerville-Abington Elementary School are from 1962.

"No, I was not a teacher," she said. "I was a kindergartner in a building that sat where the maintenance building sits today. I had many great elementary teachers who inspired me to be the teacher I am today."

Her first teaching position 31 years ago was at Rose Hamilton Elementary School as a part time kindergarten teacher. After a few years, she was asked to help create an accelerated program for Centerville-Abington Elementary School. She began teaching fourth grade after working with the accelerated program for three years.

"One funny memory I have is when a boy in my class fell asleep during math class, and when I yelled his name he raised his arms in the air and said, 'Can't a guy just close his eyes for a few minutes?'"

When she was 52, Ms. Scalzo decided to get her master's degree from Indiana University East. She said her time at Centerville has been fun, mentioning homecoming floats, Diana Weatherly's basement parties, and fourth grade lunches. She also called her years successful, educational, challenging and stressful.

Teresa Downs was hired as a third grade teacher at Centerville-Abington Elementary School in 1994 and began teaching second grade the next year.

"I remarried in the middle of the year so the students had to learn my new name in order to have some of my wedding cake," said Mrs. Downs. The next year she moved to fourth grade and teaching Indiana history soon became a passion. She, her husband and new baby, Sarah, became Civil War reenactors in 1997.

"When I was moved to third grade in 1999, God again gave me a way to continue teaching Indiana history by starting the History Club," she said. "Yearly Civil War Days began as half days, but quickly were expanded to an all-day emersion for fourth-grade students."

Mrs. Downs completes 25 years under six different principals. She said the last several years have been the best of all because of the support and friendship of Principal Kelly VanWinkle and Superintendent Phil Stevenson.

"Great leaders bring out the best in others, and those two led us to be the finest school system around," she said.

Mrs. Downs plans to keep working at least part time in some area, but wants to save time to enjoy sewing, quilting, reading, gardening, researching ancestry, painting, weaving on her new loom, volunteering, and riding around in her 1927 Buick sedan. She also intends to spend time with her husband, three children and five grandchildren.



Cheryl Oesterling started teaching K-6 students with disabilities while working on her master's degree in 1999. She said becoming a teacher had never been on her agenda, but becoming a mother had.

"And I did become a mother of three children, but when my eldest child was preparing for college, I knew my job as mother was coming to an end," she said. "At that point, after much prayer, I was led to start into the elementary education teaching program at Indiana University East. It was the closest career to being a mom."

Mrs. Oesterling taught special education at Rose Hamilton Elementary School until the restructuring of the school system. At that time, she moved to Centerville Elementary to teach special-needs students in grades 3-6. For the past seven years, she has taught fourth grade.

"It's been a great ride with lots of ups and downs, and I am proud to have been part of an amazing team of sacrificial, compassionate educators," said Mrs. Oesterling. Her retirement plans include gardening, being Bible Study Fellowship Group Leader, assisting at Community Christian School and traveling.

Teacher of the Year



Tiffani Thornburg has been named the school corporation's Teacher of the Year. To receive the award, a teacher in the Centerville-Abington Community Schools must be nominated by another teacher or teachers in the corporation. The previous Teacher of the Year award recipients review the nominations and select one of the nominees for the award. Criteria for the selection of the nominee are the same at the state's criteria, including consideration of community and school service, education history, professional development and memberships, devotion to improving learning, education contributions, use of date in instruction, and concern for individual students.

Mrs. Thornburg said she is thankful for the award but believes there are many outstanding teachers in the school corporation.

"It is truly an honor to be held in such high esteem by my colleagues and to be in a prestigious group with those who have previously earned this award," she said. "I could not possibly fulfill my teaching role without the help of everyone else around me. Centerville Schools is an amazing corporation! I feel so blessed to have the opportunity to work with such wonderful students, teachers, staff and administrators."

Mrs. Thornburg was nominated by two of her colleagues. According to the nomination letters, they nominated her for the following reasons: participating on several committees, coaching track and basketball, supervising student council and organizing fundraisers and service projects within the club, leading teachers during professional development sessions, being a helpful resource to other teachers in the corporation, and caring deeply about students by creating units that engage students and push them to success.

Teacher takes extra steps to increase student fitness

KidsFit

More than 40 students and chaperones from Centerville-Abington Elementary School were in Indianapolis early in the morning on May 4 ready to run in the KidsFit 5K.

"We have worked very hard at increasing our running endurance and are looking forward to a great run," said P.E. teacher Jodie Rusznak prior to the race. Principal Kelly VanWinkle is impressed with what Ms. Rusznak has accomplished this year.

"She has made a huge positive impact on our students' fitness level after only being here not even a year as P.E. teacher," said Mrs. VanWinkle.



Ms. Rusznak said she has implemented the **500 Festival KidsFit** running program, which was designed as an effort to fight childhood obesity by encouraging Indiana youth to be more active and pursue a healthy lifestyle. It seeks to spark interest in walking and running, as well as encourage fitness-related activities among Indiana youth and families, according to 500 Festival online information.

"It is a great addition to their grade level running goals," said Ms. Rusznak. "Students have been recording their weekly exercising over the past nine weeks. It's great when they all share all the different ways they are exercising. The students are motivating each other in class every day to reach their goals. I love it!"

Girls on the Run

The Girls on the Run program consists of 50 girls divided into three teams.

"This program is a physical activity-based positive youth development program that inspires 3rd-8th grade girls to be joyful, healthy, and confident using a fun, experience-based curriculum which creatively integrates running," said Ms. Rusznak. "Girls on the Run envisions a world where every girl knows and activates her limitless potential and is free to boldly pursue her dreams."

The season ends with a community service event and a 5K.

Seeing stars



A retired Fayette County teacher spent three days with Rose Hamilton Elementary School students sharing his knowledge of the solar system with the portable StarLab Planetarium.

“We were very fortunate to have him visit our school,” said Principal Lee Stienbarger of **Marvin Kuhn**. “It can show the stars anytime during the day or night and any day of the year. You can zoom in on the planets and get a closer look at them and their moons. It will show the constellations as dot to dot or as pictures. You can also show videos of various things in space.”



The planetarium is inflated with a fan and is operated using a computer and projector.



Drama directors retire



Patti Sharp and **Diane Luken** have retired as directors of the Centerville Elementary School Drama Club after many years of service. Ms. Luken has served as director for 15 years, and Ms. Sharp has served as her co-director for the past 13 years. This past winter's play, *"Alice in Wonderland,"* was their final show.

Principal Kelly VanWinkle said they both have brought out great creativity, bravery and talent in many of their students over the years.

“They are leaving some big shoes to fill as the elementary plays have often been compared to higher level education performances,” she said, adding that many students have gotten their theatrical starts under the direction of both of them and that their impact at the school was profound and will never be forgotten.

A voice from the past



During a recent program for fifth-graders, Kevin Stonerock, an historical interpreter, portrayed a passenger aboard the Mayflower.

For sixth grade, he portrayed William Fentress, a soldier in the Civil War from nearby Henry County. He explained his uniform, showed his gun and talked about life during the war, including some of the battles. Programs were funded by a \$500 donation from Meijer.

**You are welcome to attend meetings of the Board of School Trustees,
held on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month
at 7 p.m. at the Spencer Administration Building.
You are encouraged to contact our schools if you have questions or comments.
Office hours for corporation buildings are from 8 a.m. until 3:30 p.m.**

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Assistant Superintendent: Mark Campbell
855-3475

High School Principal: Mikel McCoy 855-3481
Assistant Principal: Timothy Hollendonner 855-3481
Junior High School Principal: Sean Stevenson 855-5113
Centerville-Abington Elementary Principal: Kelly VanWinkle 855-5132
Assistant Principal: Brian Bellew 855-5132
Rose Hamilton Elementary Principal: Lee Stienbarger 966-3911