



Nine Inducted Into Hall of Fame

April Ceremony Honors Rich East High School and Eight Who Helped Shape Village

In one of the largest group of honorees in its history, three husband and wife teams, a former Village Manager, a man who spent nearly six decades developing programs and overseeing events in Park Forest, and Rich East High School all were inducted into the Park Forest Hall of Fame this past April.



HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Newest members of the Park Forest Hall of Fame include (seated left to right) Ruth Henkel, Robert Pierce, A. Wayne Mann and Lois Navid and Jane Joseph Navid, the daughters of Robert and Ruth Navid, holding a photo of their parents. Standing are James Henkel, Terry Medhurst and Associate Principal Michael Laneve, representing Rich East High School.

The nine inductees brought to 154 the number of people and institutions who are enshrined in the Hall, which honors those who have made a significant and lasting contribution to the betterment and welfare of the Village.

Those honored included James and Ruth Henkel, Terry C. Medhurst and her late husband Ralph, both the late Robert "Bob" Navid and his wife Ruth, Robert "Bob" Pierce and A. Wayne Mann.

Rich East High School, observing its 60th anniversary was cited for its continuing excellence since first opening its doors in 1954.

Information on the nine newest inductees are on the following pages.

**Biographies of all members of the Park Forest Hall of Fame and information on the Historical Society can be found on the Society website:
www.parkforesthstory.org.**

I am working parts of several days per week on the IMLS Grant, and am also working with the supplies from the NEH-PAG Grant. The consultant we hired for the NEH grant has come and we have a draft of her report. Many of the supplies have been purchased. I supervise a rotating group of dedicated volunteers in the Archive Office at St. Mary's and we are making steady progress. But, I am constantly looking for new recruits to keep up the hours on the IMLS Grant. See our Museum article for an appeal for more volunteers to show the museum. The work on these grants and working with installing new computer equipment and programs are some of the many reasons that I can not fill all the open shifts at the museum. Believe it or not, there really is only

In My Own Little Corner
By Jane Nicoll

ONE of me!

Because Microsoft dropped support of the XP operating system, the Board had to make the expensive decision to purchase a new computer with memory and functionality to handle the digital files. We are keeping the old digital computer as an external drive and also to continue running some very important peripherals we can not attach to the new computer (one of many rude surprises along the way.) I had a spare older HP printer and a small monitor we could use to set up dual systems, for now. Through Tech Soup and its Microsoft donation program, we have purchased three "seats" of Microsoft Office for \$24 each--a value of over \$1764. The Society also has received a donation of Adobe Pro for \$48 (a \$199 value) which will help us save documents to PDF-A an archival version of PDF, and to scan and recreate as one document, sales brochures and other multi-page documents. For the money to make all of these purchases, we have our members and annual fund donors to thank for your support of our missions. **Thank you!**

I want to thank all of the volunteers who have been helping, both with the museum and with the archive collection. Thank you to Jim Silvia for advice, new cords, and a shoulder to cry on. A very special thank you and farewell to friend, Alice Wasney, who has done an incredible job of accessioning the OH! Park Forest Oral History of Park Forest collection, and has entered many of the records in Past Perfect. Alice is leaving us to move to the West Miami Beach area to join her husband Rick. I will miss her as a long-time friend and for her incredible attention to detail in tackling a very involved collection.

The PFHS Board thanks Linda Daniels for her work as Volunteer Coordinator over the past year. Linda will fill our schedule through August, then we welcome back Beverley Sailer to call volunteers. We hope to find another volunteer to train and coordinate volunteer activities. A note to all our museum docents--be kind, and return calls to Linda as soon as you can, so monthly schedules can be filled with less effort! It is a challenge and we appreciate the time Linda has given us, and thank Beverley for coming back to help again.

The Society usually holds a program on the last Sunday in June. We will not be holding one this June since my oldest son will be getting married that Sunday! Remember the baby boy I had the first year the Society was established? That is the one. Benjamin Stover will be marrying Caroline Greco of Wheaton, Illinois on June 29.



Park Forest Hall of Fame members attending the 2014 Induction.

2014 PARK FOREST HALL OF FAME BIOGRAPHIES

JAMES HENKEL

When Jim Henkel was working for American Steel Foundries in Chicago, a co-worker told him about buying a home in the newly created community of Park Forest. Jim and Ruth moved to Park Forest in 1951 and for the next 63 years have been actively involved in numerous community activities in addition to raising three children.

A mechanical engineer by profession, Jim's long list of accomplishments range from building and monitoring bluebird houses for the Audubon Society to managing boys' baseball teams and being a volunteer and docent for the Historical Society's 1950s Park Forest House Museum.

After joining the Kiwanis Club in 1987, Jim became actively involved in the maintenance and set-up of the venerable Pankatron machine, used for more than two decades to make and deliver pancakes at the club's annual Pancake breakfast fund raiser.

For more than 20 years, and while his wife was a nurse at the Glenwood School, Jim helped boys and girls at the school on various woodworking projects two nights a week.

RUTH HENKEL

Caring for others was more than a passing fancy for Ruth Henkel who combined her work as a nurse with that of caring for the community for more than 60 years.

Her work as a nurse at Children's Memorial Hospital in Chicago was only a stepping stone to an impeccable record of helping others.

One of the founding members of the Park Forest Nurses Club, Ruth Henkel taught Red Cross classes and staffed the first-aid station of the Handy Camp program. As the Nurses Club historian, she was instrumental in putting together the group's archives from its start in 1950 to its last meeting in 2012. The complete archival collection is now stored at Prairie State College.

Ruth is proud of her years of service to Grace United Protestant Church and for more than 40 years she was the nurse at the Glenwood School and was a leader in the Camp Fire Girls in Park Forest.

In addition she has been involved with the Sauk Trail Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution since 1980 and has held numerous posts during her membership in the organization, including those concerned with scholarships, genealogy, veterans, and nursing homes.

A. WAYNE MANN

Before there was a Park Forest Recreation and Parks Department, there was Wayne Mann, who for nearly six decades worked in developing programs and overseeing special events.

Wayne moved to Park Forest in 1951, and quickly saw a need for youth-oriented structured activities. He worked with school and Village officials to create after-school programs for the growing numbers of children in the booming community. He developed numerous events for youth including intramural events, the Canteen and similar programs that have been part of the Department's programming for decades.

After hearing complaints that Village youth had little to do on weekends, he also designed and staffed Friday night events for sixth to eighth grade students. They were so successful they were extended to include Saturday night events for high school students.

A tireless worker, Wayne also developed two programs which he says are among his personal favorites, a Saturday morning adult basketball league as well as an adult softball league for both men and women.

2014 PARK FOREST HALL OF FAME BIOGRAPHIES

RALPH C. MEDHURST

From the time he and his wife Terry moved to Park Forest in 1960, until his death in 2004, promoting the arts and the health services in Park Forest were a way of life for the late Ralph Medhurst.

He served for four years as co-chair for the Tall Grass Arts Association's annual art fair, and for the Center for Performing Arts at Governors State University as a board member and lent his legal and organizational skills working with the university's SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives) program in an effort to help small businesses prosper.

His efforts also extended to the Park Forest Health Department where he established the "Friends of the Health Department," in an effort to help the underserved elderly. Ralph served on the planning board and, as an attorney, provided the pro bono legal work needed in order to create the group.

When the five Medhurst children (Tracy, Michelle, Rebecca, Charles and Nicholas) were young, both Ralph and Terry were involved in scouting programs. A staunch supporter of all things Park Forest, Ralph helped spearhead numerous local initiatives, including a letter-writing drive to keep the Marshall Fields store in the Village open.

TERRY J. MEDHURST

Along with her husband Ralph, Terry Medhurst was not only actively involved in the arts and community life but also helped others expand their civic lives. She was a member of the Board of Directors of the Park Forest Arts Association for 15 years, holding positions as gallery chair and treasurer.

She held numerous positions with the South Cook County Girl Scouts, ranging from troop leader, director of the summer day camp to serving on the Board of Directors.

In 1969, Terry was a founding member of the Chansonettes and later became the Board president and treasurer for the Park Forest Singers, now called the Grande Prairie Singers. She has been the treasurer for the Tall Grass Arts Association for 12 years and a volunteer for the Arts Association and as a docent for the 1950s Park Forest House Museum.

Her love of music, spurred her interest in helping to bring the "Opera in the Classroom" program from the Lyric Opera of Chicago into elementary school classrooms.

As time permits she works with the Park Forest Community Garden, is a PADS volunteer, assists with the Food Pantry at St. Irenaeus Catholic Church and is an active member of Quilters Plus.

ROBERT A. "BOB" NAVID

Shortly after the Navid family moved from Chicago to Park Forest in 1953, Bob opened a law practice in the Park Forest Plaza and served the community for 24 years until his retirement in 1977. Throughout that span, Bob was actively engaged in the public life of the community.

He served as Village Prosecutor for the local court and was twice elected Village Magistrate. In one election he received a newspaper's ringing endorsement as a man with an avid interest in civic endeavors and that "few candidates with such a high degree of community involvement have ever before sought public office here."

As magistrate, Bob enjoyed the lighter side of being a judge, performing marriages, usually in the Navid home on Wilson Court. After helping to found and develop the Park Forest Aqua Center, he was its secretary and attorney for more than 20 years.

He also served on the boards of the Westwood School PTA, Park Forest Rotary, Temple Beth Sholom, and at one time was the President of the Family Service and Mental Health Center of South Cook County, holding that last position until he retired in 1997.

2014 PARK FOREST HALL OF FAME BIOGRAPHIES

RUTH P. NAVID

As soon as the Navid family moved to Park Forest, Ruth Navid became active in school and scouting activities of daughters Lois and Jane, at the same time advancing her own education in a desire to be a powerful role model and to make substantial contributions to Park Forest.

Teaching became her passion. Ruth commuted to Chicago in order to complete her college degree in education and later earned both a Masters and Advanced Certificate degrees at the University of Illinois. She later developed creative and innovative approaches to education at Sauk Trail, Westwood and Mohawk schools. Upon her retirement, her School District 163 colleagues honored her as a Superior Teacher.

Simultaneous with her teaching career, Ruth supported and aided husband Bob's increasing role in community leadership. When Bob would officiate at a wedding ceremony at home, it was Ruth who made those private ceremonies so joyous by decorating the house with flowers and providing home-made pastries for the wedding couple.

Her commitment to Park Forest was wrapped up in a desire for all children and families to have an opportunity to grow and develop in a safe, loving, dynamic community.

ROBERT G. "BOB" PIERCE

Leadership, integrity and a reliance on a strong professional staff were hallmarks of Bob Pierce's 20-year tenure as Park Forest Village Manager. From 1962 to 1982, Pierce guided the Village into a new era, expanding the cultural and environmental life of the Village ranging from the formation of Thorn Creek Woods, the planning and financing of Freedom Hall, his support for community diversity, the formation of Aunt Martha's youth service center, and the establishment of new housing options for seniors.

He even recommended building a Fire Training Facility in the Village, which helped reduce insurance costs to property owners.

Pierce worked with Park Forest, Park Forest South, Will County, the State of Illinois and the private land owner and hammered out an agreement to preserve 800 acres of woodlands for present and future generations – Thorn Creek Woods.

Freedom Hall, a much needed community center, was completed on schedule in 1976 and along with the creation of Aunt Martha's, was a significant factor in the Village's successful bid for its second All-America City award. Pierce also spearheaded efforts by staff to create a climate of diversity, one which set a nation-wide standard of excellence.

RICH EAST HIGH SCHOOL

From the day it opened its doors in 1953, Rich East High School has been the pride of Park Forest and has become a standard of educational excellence with a distinguished honor roll of students and teachers and a noble history of what citizenry can accomplish.

In 1951, Park Forest residents, by a vote of 1,812 to 12, approved a bond issue to create a high school in the fledgling community. This overwhelming support by the citizenry led to the Village's first All-America City award in 1953.

Through the years, both academic and athletic excellence has created a pattern of outstanding achievement for the school and the community. The most recent honor came in 2012 when U.S. News & World Report, for the third time in four years, recognized Rich East as one of this nation's best high schools.

Actor Tom Berenger, famed soprano Dawn Upshaw, National Football League all-pro Larry McCarren, Chicago Bulls star Craig Hodges, author Kathy Reichs, and seminal rock musicians Kim Thayil and Hiro Yamamoto are but a few of the notable graduates.

Archive Volunteers and All The Great Things They Do



Carla Dinnocenzo, (left) library student from U of I, has been volunteering for several months on the IMLS Grant as Museum intern, and putting in more hours as an archive volunteer. On May 29 she shifted contents of an entire shelf to new boxes from the NEH-PAG



The new acid free buffered boxes on the shelf. The grant has purchased over 150 new boxes in a variety of sizes. One hundred twenty-five are document cartons.



Jessica Beno (left) library school intern from Dominican, who has returned to us as a volunteer after completing her internship, listing audiotapes in Excel on an older computer donated by St. Mary's. Carla Dinnocenzo, (right), library school intern from U of I, working on our IMLS-provided computer, entering museum collection pieces into the PastPerfect database funded by IMLS. Both have done an incredible amount of work for us. Thanks!!

House Museum's Doors Open For One More Year

The 1950s Park Forest House Museum address will remain 141 Forest Blvd through March 31, 2015. We will have a rent increase of \$20 per month rather than having to pay the full rent. **The PFHS Board thanks Mr. Andrew Brown and his partners and Central Park Apartments for this generous reprieve.**

The Board is still asking for volunteers to help us find and execute a solution to what and where the museum will be in the future. Can you help? Please contact PFHS President Mike Gans at 708-305-3308.

During these last months that the 1950s museum is in 141 Forest, we strongly urge you to visit, bring family and friends and encourage others to come. For one, we may not continue as a 1950s museum, and most Park Forest residents will have missed seeing it. For two, if we don't have a great increase in visitor support from residents and non-residents, why should we continue in any form?

We need a number of new volunteers to help show the museum. There are many uncovered shifts in June. Being open ten hours per week is one of the requirements of our lease. Two or three of us simply can not cover all of the shifts that others don't.



Andrew Brown