

2005 Allegheny Valley School District Alumni Hall of Fame Inductees

Gary Dreher

(attended 1954-1966) - Gary Dreher was an active student at Springdale High School. The eldest of 10 children, Dreher joined the United States Air Force after high school and went on to graduate from Alderson Broadus College with a Masters Degree in mathematics. Dreher was hired by Elk Grove High School (CA) and served as a mathematics teacher and baseball coach until his death in 1996. His passion for teaching, the sport of baseball, and a belief in learning led him to spend numerous hours mentoring students and athletes. Within the Sacramento baseball community, Dreher changed the normal focus of playing ball after the spring season. He began a Fall Ball league, a very aggressive style of play later named "Dreher Ball," and youth camps where his players coached young athletes. Dreher also put his stamp on the selection of umpires and the Section Baseball Commission playoff system. Under his leadership, teams won six Delta League Championships - unprecedented in California - and were once ranked in the top five high school teams by USA Today. Dreher himself was named Sacramento Metropolitan Area Coach of the Year and Delta League Coach of the Year several times. His colleagues considered him to be an esteemed, distinguished educator; his students referred to him as a great teacher. As a tribute, a baseball tournament, scholarship, and stadium have been named in his honor. However, Dreher's lasting legacy is that he made a difference in the lives of many.



John E. Heasley, Ph.D.

(attended 1950-1962) - After graduating from Springdale High School, John E. Heasley earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering from Grove City College. Having been in ROTC at Grove City, Heasley entered the US Air Force at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio where he attained his Masters Degree in Electrical Engineering. In 1978, he earned his Doctorate in Ecology at Utah State University. Since that time, Heasley has been actively involved in the application of technology to problems with natural resources. In 1988, he founded Resource Analysis Systems (RAS) - software, simulation models, and information systems - dedicated to the development and application of new technologies for information collection and analysis on our use of the environment. He has developed software for a generation of 3-D trail maps that help hikers better visualize the terrain and lay of the land. Heasley has authored or co-authored five books detailing the environment and nature trails in Colorado and developed a CD Rom that provides detailed descriptions of nature trails. Because of his work, information is now available to those who wish to indulge in the beauty of Northern Colorado and Rocky Mountain National Park.



Jean Remaley Higgins, Ph.D.

(attended 1943-1956) - Upon graduating from Springdale High School, Jean Remaley Higgins pursued a career in education. She attended Slippery Rock College and earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree, West Virginia University where she achieved a Master's Degree in English, and the University of Pittsburgh where she attained a Doctoral Degree. Higgins spent 14 years teaching in the Penn Hills School District and served as the Chair of the English Department. She went on to work as Supervisor of Instruction in the North Hills School District and became the Assistant High School Principal and Assistant Superintendent at Grove City School District. Several years later, Higgins became the first female to be elected Superintendent in Beaver County when she was selected for that position in the Big Beaver Falls School District. She served in this capacity for 14 years. Upon retiring, Higgins was chosen as the program coordinator for Duquesne University's Doctoral Program for Educational Leaders. She served her community as the Chair of the United Way Committee, an independent evaluator for Adult Literacy Action of Beaver County, the Associate Coordinator for Western Pennsylvania for Nova Southeastern University of Florida, President of Carnegie Free Library of Beaver Falls Board of Directors, and a member of the Board of Trustees for the Beaver County Library System. She was "born to be a teacher" and continues working with students of all ages to share her love of learning.



Judith Ipoletta Petersen

(attended 1961 - 1974) - Judith Ipoletta Petersen graduated with honors from Springdale High School and attended the Pennsylvania State University majoring in Aerospace Engineering. After graduation, she became a Senior Engineer in the aerospace industry, working on the Titan 34D as well as analysis of the Space Shuttle system. In 1984, Petersen became a Senior Systems Engineer and worked on early versions of the space missile defense system "Star Wars." In 1985, Petersen's ideology re-focused and she became a steward of the planet. She moved to Kentucky and began a life centered around the environment. Petersen was selected by the state's Governor as the first Ombudsman for natural and environmental resources. She has served with distinction as a spokesperson for the Cabinet Secretary of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection; led the Clean Water Act citizens' program; helped to establish and manage a volunteer citizens' monitoring network; and worked as Chair of Kentucky's Environmental and Legislative Issues Committee. Her career has led her through environmental preservation of natural caves to conserving air and water quality to managing landfills and waste water. Currently, Petersen is the Executive Director of the Kentucky Waterways Alliance. She has been awarded with the Earth Day Recognition Award, (2) Volunteer Service Awards from Kentuckians for the Commonwealth, Admiral of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, and the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels. Petersen's deep and profound respect for the natural environment, nurtured throughout her life, has motivated this outstanding commitment.

