

Woodstock Community Unit School District 200



Retirement Celebration

May 2021

Congratulations, thank you and best wishes to all of our retirees!

Debra Belmonte

Jane Benda

Mary Blietz

Jacqueline Budmayr

Gigi Carlson

Dale A. Daughterity

Diana Frisbie

Deborah Guild

Rich Hodges

Harold Hunt

John Hunt

Cheryl Kremske

Beate Krepel

Sandra Metcalf

Beth Miller

Corrine Nazimek

Thomas Powers

Robert Reed

Mark Rusk

Vickie Schmarje

Jodie Scott

Kathleen Shea

Bill Summers

Mary Takoy

Robert Teuber

Steven T. Thompson

Denise Wedoff

Gary Wedoff

Robert Welzen, Sr.

Barbara Wilson

Patricia Williams

Wendy Barreca

Kirk Benda

Gene Boelter

Debby Bruchsaler

Bennie Brunson

Lisa Cavitt

Linda Gabrielson

Robert Giles

Risa Hanson

Denise Hyde

Susan Kaszubowski

Jackie Loehner

Resa Luckey

Cynthia Maire

Michelle Martin

Lynn Mohan

Terry Moses

Tammy Ortmann

Tom Palek

Darlene Parr

Debra Perenchio

Linda Radke

Sandra Roberts

Kelly Smith

Carole Tipps

Jane Turley

Joanne Ventouras

Linda Warriner



Debby Bruchsaler

Greenwood Elementary School

Make lots of memories.

Joined District 200 in 2001

Plans for retirement?

- Spending time with my grandkids. Travel to see my two grandkids that are out west. Enjoying some relaxation, camping, pool time, spending some time with friends, family and some date nights with my husband. Conquer my big honey-do list of things I have put off for a very long time.

Any special interests or hobbies?

- Camping, gardening, relaxing in the pool and just being outside

Someone special who made a difference?

- Louanna Paradowski (A former employer) She taught me so much when I worked with her. She taught me to pick and choose my battles and to make lots of memories. Kathy Palek, Debbie Barnhill, Mary Hammond, Tammy Wood and Sue Malley for listening to me when times got rough; for letting me vent when I needed to. Most importantly, the children – I love when they come back years later and let me know how much they miss me and being here.



Bennie Brunson

Transportation Department

Treat everyone like you want to be treated.

Joined District 200 in 2010

Plans for retirement?

- Relax, and live a long life!

Any special interests or hobbies?

- Family, friends, walking, and dancing

Someone special who made a difference?

- All of my coworkers at D200. I enjoy being around all of them and they inspire me.



Jacqueline Budmayr

Special Services Department

Do small things with great love.

Joined District 200 in 1995

Plans for retirement?

- Travel; spend time with family

Any special interests or hobbies?

- Landscaping, interior decorating

Someone special who made a difference?

- Risa Hanson and Curt Johannsen



Gigi Carlson

Northwood Middle School (Served Multiple Schools)

"Stay in the Struggle!"

(It is a perspective I shared with students throughout my career, as well as difficult times in my personal life)

Joined District 200 in 1992

Plans for retirement?

In August of 2020, I became the director of the McHenry County Environmental Education Program. There will also be kayaking, swimming, painting, visiting my children, and spending time with our local families.

Any special interests or hobbies?

- I look forward to picking up oil painting again! I love to be outdoors and travel with my husband Bruce, when possible. Our home in Pennsylvania is still being rehabilitated - so construction and New England Cottage interior design will be explored.

Someone special who made a difference?

- Parents and sister – Eddie and Darlene LeCrone (retired D200 teachers) and Mimi Book (retired teacher) always encouraged me to be creative and move toward goals. They loved their jobs, their peers, their family, and traveled with all of us to far away places. They always made it OK for me to have different perspectives about the world.
- My husband, Bruce, and my children (Kurt and Larin) - They supported my path to becoming a teacher, helped with unique events, traveled and explored together in so many destinations.
- My peers - no one is a successful teacher without the gifts of knowledge shared by those you work with every day. I feel blessed to have worked with staff at a variety of grade levels, special areas, and at every school in the district. Life-long friendships developed out of my tenure with D200.
- Students - there are not enough words to express what they gave me throughout my career. I used to say from the words of my mentor (Mary Klos) - "See the world in a new and different way every day!" What happened was my world opening up as students imparted how they saw it.



Dale A. Daugherty

Woodstock High School / Woodstock North High School

Encourage and support those who undervalue themselves.

Joined District 200 in 2004

Plans for retirement?

- Work part time; projects around the house

Any special interests or hobbies?

- Camping, biking, walking

Someone special who made a difference?

- Brian McAdow. Because he gave me an opportunity, and provided support consistently.



Linda D. Gabrielson

Mary Endres Elementary School

I have often pondered this thought. "Life is one long procession where you can not see its beginning or its end. You have no say as to when you will enter or leave the procession. However, you do get to choose your marching companions." I have been blessed to have had you as my marching companions for 23 years. As long as I am in the procession, I will cherish our time together.

Joined District 200 in 1998

Plans for retirement?

- I am going to strive to be more open to the needs of others. Discovering those needs will develop the blueprint for my future.

Any special interests or hobbies?

- Hiking, reading with my "Dysfunctional" book club and taking advantage of all the art and culture that Chicago has to offer.

Someone special who made a difference?

- Trying to select one person who has impacted my career would be like selecting one color from a Rembrandt painting. Each colleague has made a unique contribution to my life's canvas.



Bob Giles

Prairiewood Elementary School / Creekside Middle School

What is popular isn't always right and what is right isn't always popular.

Joined District 200 in 2008

Plans for retirement?

- Honey-Do List/Visit Grandchildren that have moved out of state

Any special interests or hobbies?

- Woodworking

Someone special who made a difference?

- Head Custodians Tony at WHS and Jeff at Creekside



Risa Hanson

District Office

“Live with intention, walk to the edge, Listen hard, Laugh, Practice wellness, Play with abandon, Continue to Learn, Appreciate your friends, Choose with no regret, Do what you love, Live as if this is all there is.”

~ Mary Anne Radmacher

Joined District 200 in 2000

Plans for retirement?

- Travel, outdoor activities, spend time at the lake in the summer and somewhere warm in the winter

Any special interests or hobbies?

- Exercising, home improvement projects and decorating, gardening, biking

Someone special who made a difference?

- Paul Schilling, who I worked with in Rockford, & Ray Reynolds from D200 are former Business Managers who took me under their wing and encouraged me to pursue my education and the CFO position. They were not only supervisors, they were mentors and friends and taught me all the skills that are necessary to be a successful school business manager.



Rich Hodges

Greenwood Elementary School

Children today are leaders tomorrow.

Joined District 200 in 2007

Plans for retirement?

- Travel and enjoy life

Any special interests or hobbies?

- Camping and traveling

Someone special who made a difference?

- Jeff Bruns



Resa Luckey

Transportation Department

Another day, Another dollar

Joined District 200 in 1994

Plans for retirement?

- Enjoy Life and grandchildren

Any special interests or hobbies?

- Travel

Someone special who made a difference?

- District 200 itself



Cynthia Maire

Mary Endres Elementary School

“The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.” ~ Nelson Mandela

Joined District 200 in 1989

Plans for retirement?

- Read, relax and vacation in the off season

Any special interests or hobbies?

- Reading, watching movies, hanging out in my pool

Someone special who made a difference?

- Dr. Levandowski was a great role model and helped me grow as an educator.



Michelle Martin

Verda Dierzen Early Learning Center

“I have learned that there is more power in a good strong hug than in a thousand meaningful words.” ~ Ann Hood

Joined District 200 in 1997

Plans for retirement?

- Travelling, visiting with friends and enjoying long walks with my girls

Any special interests or hobbies?

- Reading, traveling, crocheting

Someone special who made a difference?

- Dr. L, for introducing me to administration and mentoring me through my first year. Bob Hackbart, who gave me my first job in administration and has always been a quiet, gentle force guiding and advising me through my time at D200. Tricia Bogott, for being a good friend and giving me the opportunity to work with such amazing little people for my last four years.



Beth Miller

Verda Dierzen Early Learning Center

“It’s hotter than Haiti in here!” – referring to the many years of not having an air conditioned classroom.

Joined District 200 in 1984

Plans for retirement?

- Relax and enjoy life! Travel and get together with friends.

Any special interests or hobbies?

- Travel, camping, hiking, cooking, reading and movies

Someone special who made a difference?

- Mark Heckmon. He was my Special Ed supervisor in 1986 and taught me some important classroom management skills. Not only was I hired by Mark in 1984, he also helped me with my retirement.



Lynn Mohan

District Office

*“How lucky am I to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard.”
~ Winnie the Pooh*

Joined District 200 in 1988

Plans for retirement?

- My goal in retirement is to “live a balanced life - learn some and think some and draw and paint and sing and dance and play and work every day some.” I almost forgot, “take a nap every afternoon.”

Any special interests or hobbies?

- My husband and I share a love of the outdoors. We enjoy gardening, hiking throughout the seasons, and spending “lake time” on our boat. We look forward to traveling throughout the United States in our motorhome visiting family and friends, exploring new places, and meeting new people.

Someone special who made a difference?

- I could not possibly name just one individual who made a difference in my career. I have had the privilege of working alongside so many dedicated and talented colleagues supporting initiatives to provide the best possible educational experiences for our students, staff, families, and community. Spending the better part of my life in District 200 first as a student, then parent and employee, I am so thankful to have been surrounded by people with a passion for excellence, and a sense of pride and accomplishment. So many have inspired me both professionally and personally, offered me unwavering support, and taught me to work hard and play hard. I have been fortunate to be a part of the District 200 family and I take with me fond memories that will last my lifetime.



Terry Moses

Clay Academy

The race is not given to the swift, nor to the strong, but to he who endures to the end.

Joined District 200 in 2007

Plans for retirement?

- Relax Continue to run my 3 businesses. Continue to train WCUSD employees. Perhaps work part-time in the district.

Any special interests or hobbies?

- Motorcycle riding. Movies, Grilling & Cooking.

Someone special who made a difference?

- Dawn Cook has been an incredible leader and supporter. She's allowed me to approach my position in a way that I feel has been best for our students. Melvin Harris has been my best friend for over 25 years and my excellent coworker for the last 12. Michelle Bohacz has always helped me with anything I needed from her, and has been a tremendous support. All the staff at Clay have been excellent Co-workers and I couldn't have asked for a better team to be a part of.



Tammy Ortman

Westwood Elementary School

All students can learn and succeed, but not in the same way and not on the same day!

Joined District 200 in 1988

Plans for retirement?

- Upon retirement I will begin spending several days a week with my new granddaughter. This is something I have looked forward to for a very long time. I will continue to work at Ortman's Red Iron as well, but do plan to take a few trips to visit friends I have not seen for several years. Having extra time to spend with family and friends is something I really look forward to being able to do in retirement.

Any special interests or hobbies?

- I enjoy yard work and spending time outside during warm weather. I hope to do more gardening, walking and will be completing outside projects at home.

Someone special who made a difference?

- I have technically been with District 200 since 1970 when I was a student at Clay Elementary. There have been so many wonderful people that have made a difference in my career with District 200. Dr. Robert Bosman, Mrs. Darlene LeCrone and Mr. Jim May were three Clay Elementary educators that inspired me to enter the world of education. Their passion and excitement about teaching and learning had an everlasting impact on my life. During the 33 years of working in District 200, I have had countless individuals that have made a difference. I am forever grateful to all of those who have teamed with me, supported me and encouraged me professionally and personally over the years.



Linda Radke

Woodstock High School

"Too much sanity may be madness – and the maddest of all: to see life as it is and not as it should be." ~ Don Quixote

"If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his own language, that goes to his heart." ~ Nelson Mandela

"Él que lee mucho y anda mucho ve mucho y sabe mucho." ~ Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra

Joined District 200 in 2006

Plans for retirement?

- Travel. Spend more time with grandchildren. Becoming a Snowbird.

Any special interests or hobbies?

- Gardening. Travel. Reading. Walking my dogs, Lucy and Jewels.

Someone special who made a difference?

- Corey Tafoya and Art Vallicelli – for their positive leadership, trust in the professionalism of their staff, and the can-do attitude they always model – inspiring students and teachers to do better, be better and to Choose Kindness.
- Laure Foerster, Kathy Sima and Jane Turley – extraordinary math teachers – for their friendship, collegiality and many walk and talks in the hallways of WHS. Jane also conquered the stairs to the Alcázar with me. :-)



Robert B. Teuber

Westwood Elementary School

"No one who achieves success does so without the help of others. The wise and confident acknowledge this help with gratitude." ~ Alfred North Whitehead

Joined District 200 in 1988

Plans for retirement?

- I plan on traveling by bicycle, on foot, and with an RV of sorts where I will enjoy wherever the road takes me. I also plan to continue to work on my model railroad empire in my basement.

Any special interests or hobbies?

- I love to ride bicycles, travel, photography, hiking, reading, and model railroading.

Someone special who made a difference?

- Bob Bosman. He was the person, along with Bill Schuette, who hired me to work at Dean Street Elementary School. He guided me through my first years of my career. Dick McDowell. He renewed my spirit and my career when he invited me to join the staff at Westwood Elementary School. He reinvigorated my career and left lasting impressions on how to successfully work with children. Ryan Hart. He was the principal who took me to the end of my career. He challenged me to stay strong to the end and enjoy the journey. Gigi Carlson. We worked together at Dean Street and Westwood Elementary Schools. She was always willing to listen and share her insights with me. Her enthusiasm for working with children was something that always lifted my spirits. Tammy Ortmann. Tammy and I began our careers about the same time. We worked together at Dean Street and Westwood Elementary Schools. Through thick and thin Tammy always had a heart for working with the children. I miss most of all our morning talks before the start of the school day. So many others have helped me in my career and I want to say thank you to all who made this a most rewarding career.



Steven T. Thompson

Woodstock High School

Woodstock High School kept me grounded.

Joined District 200 in 2007

Plans for retirement?

- I am working at Scot Forge as their Technical Educator

Any special interests or hobbies?

- I like to put miles on my bike; golf

Someone special who made a difference?

- I had a very a close working relationship with Jeff Griffith and Pete Catan at WHS CTE. Matt Boland was very helpful and supportive to me. Art Vallicelli – simply the best Principal I ever worked for.



Jane Turley

Woodstock High School

“What lies behind us and what lies ahead of us are tiny matters compared to what lives within us.” ~ Henry David Thoreau

Joined District 200 in 2000

Plans for retirement?

- Traveling and spending my summers on the southern coast of Maine

Any special interests or hobbies?

- I knit and crochet and attend live music whenever possible.

Someone special who made a difference?

- RB Thompson always cheered me on when I first started. I felt empowered by him even when I was ready to decide I couldn't do this my first year! Sometimes we just need a cheerleader.



Joanne Ventouras

Woodstock High School

Care for all students with your heart and treat them as if they are your own.

Joined District 200 in 2010

Plans for retirement?

- Relax and sleep in later because I am not a morning person; get a part-time job and travel when I can!

Any special interests or hobbies?

- Reading, baking, playing Words with Friends, and I have painted and furnished a doll house. I also like spending time with my family and friends.

Someone special who made a difference?

- Mike Degrassi; I worked as a sub in his Life Skills class and he wanted me as a Paraprofessional in his class permanently. So I was hired on as a one-on-one associate for a student for about 5 years.



Linda Marie Warriner

Woodstock North High School

I have said this every day before I get out of bed for many, many years. "This is the day the Lord hath made, be glad, give thanks, rejoice. Stand in His presence unafraid, in praise lift up your voice."

Joined District 200 in 2005

Plans for retirement?

- I am relishing the idea of not having a plan; it's the first time in my life that I don't know what is coming next. I'm sure I will reinvent myself again, as I have a few times over the years. I hope to find some form of philanthropic work where I can feel helpful.

Any special interests or hobbies?

- I love to travel and look forward to future excursions; fishing in Pelican Lake up in Orr, Minnesota; visiting my brother and family in Rochester, New York and going with them up to a cabin in the Adirondack mountains; visiting a dear friend in Boise, Idaho. My son and I are planning a trip to Paris. I love to cook, garden and have friends over.

Someone special who made a difference?

- Mrs. Engel was my Belvidere High School Family Living teacher; she was such an inspiration to me as she taught me skills I would need to navigate the world. She was so kind and sensitive, and took time to really get to know me. She became very ill and I would go to her house to help her get lessons ready for school. She had a private nurse who had a young disabled son who I enjoyed interacting with. Mrs. Engel told me I had a gift to work with the special education population. So here I am, retiring from a perfect career due to one woman's encouragement, Mrs. Engel. She was my inspiration to become a teacher. I hope somewhere along the line, I have been that teacher who inspired students to become successful and fulfilled in their careers.



Robert B. Welzen

Westwood Elementary School

Wash your hands!!!

Take every day as a blessing.

Joined District 200 in 2002

Plans for retirement?

- Enjoy being with my grandchildren; golfing and traveling the States

Any special interests or hobbies?

- Golf, fishing, riding my bike

Someone special who made a difference?

- Brian McAdow and Tom Hoven – for showing me that they had the confidence in me to select me for the head custodian position at Westwood.