

Pioneer Hall of Fame: Nancy Steele Brokaw, class of 1968



Author, journalist and feature writer Nancy Steele Brokaw has a passion for writing and literature. Much of her career has focused on the positive influence the literary world can have on young people. "I consider the public library one of the greatest gifts open to a child and I like to stress that the "wings of reading" don't require fancy computers or expensive lessons—just a library card. The same is true of writing. With a pencil and a piece of paper, a

child is free to create the world of his choosing."

The most notable accomplishment to date in Nancy's literary career is the publication and subsequent honors for her book "Leaving Emma." The novel, for middle-school aged readers, was published in 1999. "Emma" won the International Librarian's Award, and has been nominated for the William Allen White Award (Kansas) and the Sequoyah Award (Oklahoma), two of the nation's most prestigious student choice awards. Nancy also has written popular features in the Pantagraph, including a weekly series about local communities, called "Small Towns and What They are Famous For" that ran for a year and a half. Nancy also does a weekly restaurant review page, noting, "It's a tough job, but somebody's got to do it!"

Nancy spends much of her time helping others learn the craft of writing. She speaks frequently at schools and at Young Writers' Conferences. She has also served for several years on the U-High Alumni and Booster Boards, and has been very active in a wide variety of community service activities.

Nancy lives in Bloomington with her husband, Tom. Their children Katie (class of 1998) and Stephen (class of 2002) both enjoyed great success at U-High. Nancy graduated from IWU in 1971, but also has attended Oxford (one year of study in 1968), as well as graduate study at Harvard, Washington University and ISU.