

## **Pioneer Hall of Fame: Marilyn Mette Freedlund, class of 1945**

Anyone associated with education in Bloomington-Normal recognizes the name Marilyn Freedlund for a variety of reasons. For over 45 years, she has devoted much of her career as well as her life to the betterment of children, education, and the community as a whole. She is known as a teacher, a parent, a leader, and especially as a pioneer.

Marilyn's love and passion for education was apparent early as she graduated from U-High at the top of her class. She attended Illinois State University, receiving her Bachelor of Science in Education degree in 1962 and Master's degree with an emphasis in Reading in 1968. In 1973 she received an Advanced Certificate of Education in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Illinois, and an Administrator's Certificate with a Supervisory endorsement from the State Department of Illinois.

Marilyn began teaching first grade at Centennial Elementary School in Bloomington in 1962. She helped found the Bloomington Education Association in 1968 and served as its first negotiating team leader. After ten years, she obtained her administrative certificate and became an Assistant Principal at Irving School and a Curriculum Project Director in Mastery Learning at Bloomington Junior High School.

In 1976 Marilyn moved into central administration becoming the Director of Curriculum for District 87, a position responsible for all grades K-12. She held this position for 13 years, during which time she developed an in-service course for teachers entitled "Improving Learning" as well as new reading textbooks for Ginn and Company. After her retirement from public schools in 1989, she continued her work in higher education, teaching English and Composition at Heartland Community College and supervising student teachers at Illinois State University.

Her contributions outside the classroom are just as numerous as those inside. Marilyn has served on a variety of committees and boards to help shape this community in valuable ways. She has served as President of the Baby Fold, President of the Westminster Village Foundation Board, member of the Heartland Headstart Board of Directors, and Clerk of Session at Second Presbyterian Church. She was named Outstanding Educational Leader in Illinois and was awarded the Presbyterian Women's Association Life Membership Award.

It is easy to see that Marilyn (Mette) Freedlund is a pioneer at heart through her numerous accomplishments as well as her strong Pioneer ties. Her husband Rogers, as well as brothers, a sister-in-law, all four of their children, and three grandchildren have attended U-High – making it "Hall of Fame" in everyone's book.