



*Teacher of the Year
Awards*

2010

A note from the editor

In the following pages you will see excerpts from recommendation letters we received for each of the teachers represented in this biosketch. While reading through these letters I felt inspired to the point of tears by the men and women who allowed the Holy Spirit to use them to do God's work in a way that would not have been possible if they had relied on their own strength. I wish that we were able to include every word that was written, but for practicality purposes, and to avoid repetition of what multiple people wrote about a particular teacher, we are simply including the major highlights of what a teacher did to impart the Word of God into their students' lives.

I am very grateful to have the privilege of reading how these godly men and women are being effective in the Kingdom of God. It is also a witness of God's greatness to my heart and an encouragement to my faith.

I thank those who have brought these teachers to the attention of the National Discipleship Ministries office. May God bless you and your teacher. Your words have been a blessing and honor to your teacher and an inspiration to all who read them.

Sincerely,
LeAnn Barker from Discipleship Ministries,
The General Council of the Assemblies of God



¹Blessed is the man that walketh
not in the counsel of the ungodly,
nor standeth in the way of sinners,
nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.
²But his delight is in the law of the LORD;
and in his law doth he meditate
day and night.
³And he shall be like a tree
planted by the rivers of water,
that bringeth forth his fruit in his season;
his leaf also shall not wither;
and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

-Psalm 1: 1 - 3 KJV

THE FIRST NATIONAL TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Billie Davis



As a writer, missionary, or educator, whether in a Sunday School classroom or the lecture hall of a university, Billie Davis is uniquely gifted to challenge others to pursue the excellence she personifies.

She has covered areas of education, curriculum and social issues related to migrant, multi-ethnic, Spanish speaking and disadvantaged children and youth as a lecturer and consultant. She has conducted several workshops sponsored by the National Education Association, state and local associations, regional conferences on migrant education, and national and state Sunday School conventions.

Billie wrote a story about herself called *I Was A Hobo Kid* that is about her experience as a migrant child who found that going to Sunday School profoundly affected her life. It has been featured in several publications and anthologies. The National Education Association created a film from this writing called, *A Desk for Billie*.

Announcing

the

2010

National Teacher

of the Year ● ● ●

Peggy Southerland

Illinois District
Industry Assembly of God
Industry, IL
Pastor: Jon Keck



Realizing there was a Teacher of the Year award, the first person that entered my mind was Peggy. There are a lot of words that I feel synonymous when I think of Peggy—prayer warrior, faithful, confident, listener, wholehearted, kind, respectful, humble, dependable, full of the Holy Spirit—the list goes on and on.

In 1971 Peggy came to church bringing her three children for spiritual training and leaving her alcoholic husband at home. Never wavering, she prayed for Jurl to know her Lord and Savior. In 1975, her prayers were answered and a miraculous transformation came to his life. From that time on, Peggy became a warrior for her God and her church as she knew what God was capable of doing.

Peggy has taught various classes in Sunday School, Missionettes/Girls Ministries, as well as leading Women's Ministries. No matter what class she teaches, her heart is always in it. Peggy feels inadequate to teach as she thinks she has a learning disability. Due to her feelings, she studies the Word and researches what she doesn't understand. Whether she is a teacher or a student her attitude in the class is always the same and comes from the heart.

Her home has been open for the young and the old! Home Bible Studies, adult fellowships, or girls learning how to enjoy the outdoors have all been part of her Christian walk. No matter where she goes, people who meet her love to talk with this little gray haired lady and she is not afraid to share the Good News of her faith.

Peggy's heart is a heart of gold and her teachings today spread around the world to those she has taught.

Sarah Myers,
Girls Ministries Coordinator

I would without any reservation, nominate Peggy for this honor as she has faithfully been teaching for many years and is one of the finest teachers I know.

In His Service,
Pastor Jon Keck

There is always a discussion in her classes that makes you go home for the week and ponder in your mind, not only what was discussed, but discovered biblically. While growing up in church and even when I went away to college, she encouraged and challenged me in my faith.

Sincerely,
Carina Zick

She has been a part of my life through just about every stage of Christian Assembly of God up bringing I can think of. I know her character remains the same inside and outside the church. I have never known her to waiver in her faith with God. She will always give a good common sense message when she teaches.

Daryl Myers

She shares from her heart during class discussions and gives individuals time to comment as well. She has a great heart and spirit and comes well prepared to teach. She cares so much for each one of us and is always there with loving arms to lend a hand and a prayer. Peggy is an exceptional Christian woman who shared the love of Christ in all aspects of her life.

In Christ's love and servant hood,
Patricia Friday

As I recall the teachers I have sat under, Peggy would be a number one teacher on my list because she not only teaches with the Word of God, but also by her life. When I was near eight years old, Peggy was my Prims leader. Even as a young girl, I could tell she put her whole heart into our lessons and she really loved Jesus. Peggy had a promise from God that her family would be saved and our church joined with her to pray that her husband would be saved. I remember when Jurl gave his life to Christ and the testimony of how God delivered him from alcohol and other things that bound him. In all this, Peggy taught me how to love Jesus with all your heart, pray, and trust God for whatever your need no matter how long you have to wait... He never fails.

Over the course of my growing up, Peggy has prayed for me and encouraged me. She told me, "You are going to a Christian college, but make sure everything they teach you is sifted through the Word of God." Peggy has continued to pray for me over the years, including my search for a godly husband which was answered this last December. When I had a miscarriage, she sent me a card to let me know she was praying for me. Philippians 4:6 says, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your request to God." I understand this verse by the example of Peggy Southerland... a great teacher.

Sincerely,
Amanda Kumm

What I do recall the most is her ability to hold my attention in class. She would bring up things I'd not ever given a thought to. Many times the Holy Spirit would come over her while teaching and she would weep openly and share passionately with our class what the Holy Spirit had been teaching her. And interestingly enough, God was using her humility in learning to teach us at the same time. Peggy's example before me taught me to show my true feelings for Christ as well.

When I sought her advice, she shared the Scriptures I needed to help me out with what I was facing.

With any good Sunday School teacher, students should bear much fruit as they go out from good teaching. This fruit is evident in the lives of many people who have been touched and taught by the gifted teacher, Peggy Southerland.

Sincerely,
Benita J. Wagner

Peggy is so many things; faithful, generous, a prayer warrior, and her heart is for her students. She pushes forward for more of God in her life, and knows that we all need more of Him in our lives. Peggy has so much to give, and she does, but yet is so humble. She is a wonderful witness and example for all.

Linda Johnston,
Student Adult Sunday School Class

She loves the Lord and is always open to pray for me or listen to any problem I may have. She is one of the best teachers I have ever had.

Darlene Lawer,
Secretary of Industry
Assembly of God Board

Peggy Southerland lives what she teaches, and her love begins at home. She is a devoted woman of God, wife, mother, grandmother, aunt, sister, and friend. She sets a godly example of a wise, humble, and disciplined woman whose strength is in her joy. Through her teachings and testimony, we know that Peggy has endured many challenging situations during her lifetime and she faced uncertainty and puzzling circumstances with steadfast optimism and faith that God will work everything for the good for her and those who love the Lord.

Peggy is a student of the Bible, which is apparent in her class instruction. Along with the Scripture, Peggy shares personal stories that are appropriate and beneficial to those of us who sit under her teaching. She never tires of sharing Christ while she welcomes others to share their personal stories.

Marlene Forman

She is an excellent teacher and very devoted to teaching. Besides her quarterly, she researches from commentaries, uses personal experiences, and makes the lessons come alive.

Besides teaching Sunday School she teaches Stars in Girls Ministries. She contributes to a high standard of discipleship.

Sincerely,
Dean and Dorothy Beck

She is an uplifting teacher as well as a prayer warrior, a giver, a mentor, and a very humble attitude. She goes over Scriptures with a fine tooth comb. She conducts our class with love, and prays our prayer requests and for each one of us as well. She puts her whole self in the places or things that our lesson is about, grades herself on the questions and will ask the class for prayer for her attitude (she is so humble). She is a very attractive lady inside and out and has or is teaching her children and grandchildren the Word of God. She is a great volunteer and would not ask anyone to do one thing that she would not do or has done. She is very faithful to the church, the Word and the students, and keeps striving to do God's Word for a beautiful home in Heaven.

A student in Christ,
Mary Prueter

She is a very skilled teacher who brings lesson content to our level of understanding. During her lessons she presents a genuine love for her students and the lesson. She continues to improve her teaching style by using new training resources and demonstrates a positive attitude towards all the members of her class. What is most impressive about Peggy is her role as a teaching model for us, she always begins each lesson with a time for prayer which helps to promote personal and spiritual growth.

A student in Christ still learning,
Bruce A. Prueter

Peggy is an encourager of others, complimenting them in small and big ways. She is honest, transparent, and shares appropriately—a spirit booster! She is prompt and ready to greet students as they arrive. Peggy is obviously committed to helping her own family and our church family grow, a cooperative leader. She seems to always be reflecting, yet also searching for new applications in America's current challenges and future unknowns. I feel that Peggy does much to model personal spiritual growth. It is my feeling that spiritual growth of each student is a personal goal that she has.

A personal trait I feel Peggy has over many other folks as they age is this: While some people tend to back off some (or much) as they age, she seems to press on with a zeal that has not declined in any way as she seeks to continue doing her best within any area of involvement.

Submitted in love,
Judith E. Gade (Judy)

Peggy has been teaching Sunday School for many years and never have I seen and felt in my 30 years of being a Christian anyone who has more love, passion, and compassion for God and His people than she.

I know that Peggy would feel she was not worthy of this honor and would feel that so many others were much more so, but because of, or in spite of, her humbleness, God has blessed many lives through the life and ministry she has obediently given over to Him.

Sincerely,
Janet Detrick

*Honorable
Mention*

NORTH TEXAS

Doris McNellis

The Oaks Fellowship • Red Oak, TX • Dan Call



Ms. Doris McNellis has been a member of The Oaks Fellowship for 70 years and has taught Sunday School for over 30 years.

Ms. McNellis has been the teacher of the In Christ United Adult Bible Class for the last 20 years. The class has grown to over 200 members, and it is the largest Sunday School class in our church. This class experience includes a seven piece orchestra, three praise team singers, testimonies, a robust lesson, and ends with fervent prayer. It provides a dynamic spiritual experience for the scores who attend weekly.

The class has regular socials, trips and activities for its active members. Four small groups have weekly meetings in homes where attendees enjoy a meal, sing hymns, study the Bible, and pray.

Sincerely,
Tom Wilson Ph. D, Senior Pastor

As a leader, Doris loves God and loves people. She teaches a Sunday class at 9:30 a.m. consistently and with excellence. The class runs a regular attendance of around 175 people. Doris cares for the people who attend this class like few others. She knows her community of believers and calls them by name. She has developed a system of follow-up by recruiting volunteers from her class. She makes telephone calls and writes notes of encouragement, a practice she has followed for all the years of her teaching.

People love the class for its rich mixture of prayer, worship, teaching and its openness to the expression of the gifts of the Spirit. People who attend this class are committed and enjoy the diversity and blend of the old and the new in the expressions of ministry.

Sincerely,
Dan Call, Campus Pastor

As class started, I soon learned why people were so faithful to this class. Doris has the ability to remember new people who come to class. That is quite a feat when you consider that the class attendance is somewhere between 150 and 200 every Sunday.

Not only will you receive a card from the class, you will also receive a card from Doris herself. She makes sure that anyone stepping foot into that class knows that they are welcome and wanted. Her lessons go from being well planned Bible studies, to God breathed services drenched in the Holy Spirit.

I soon figured out that I had something missing from my walk with the Lord. That was the Holy Spirit as evidenced by speaking in tongues. Doris sensed this in my life. When we got to the time in class that we pray for people, she had pastor Tom come in. As they were going along praying for people that had come to the front, when they reached where I was standing, they turned and laid hands on me and prayed in the Spirit until I was filled. The thing I remember most about that moment is that I was jumping up and down and clapping my hands.

I know that the Lord was responsible for this wonderful moment in my life, but I also give thanks to Doris, who had the sensitivity of the Spirit to see my need.

Gayle Wilkinson

We came to The Oaks as hurting individuals and a marriage that was in desperate need of repair. We were led to Doris's class where, through Doris's leadership we found hope where there was no hope. We found caring, loving people who loved and prayed for and over us and our marriage. The first one to pray for us and lead us to Godly caretakers was Doris. That was over a year and a half ago and today our marriage is stronger than it has ever been but Doris and her team of prayer warriors continue to pray over us and lift us up.

Jackie and Linda Shults

She made me feel like I was needed and wanted in her class. As she taught with such passion and zest, I quickly knew she was the real thing! Nothing phony or religious about her, simply the supernatural love of Christ ascending through her in a constant flow.

While many people are 'attending' church and all of its functions, Doris McNellis knows how to BE the Church. Although she attends church and has an enormous class, it seems that the real church begins when she leaves the building—her choices, being led of the Spirit of God, intercession, open to others on the street (seven days a week)—all display the worship of God as a garment which she wears daily.

Sincerely,
Charlotte R. Ochoa

Our grandson, living in another town and not permitted to attend church was so stricken by God's Spirit in Doris, remarked, "I wish so much to be able to hear Doris talk; she is so nice and she even prayed for me. She is a very good teacher and I love her." We know that a strong anointing touched him the Sunday he visited our Sunday School class and a seed of His Word was planted as he sat in her service.

Sincerely,
Jess and Rebecca Ochoa

By example she has taught us how important it is to be prayerful in all that we do. Because of her great love for Jesus, she encourages me to want to draw closer to Him and do my best to live a life pleasing to the Lord. Every week she brings valuable lessons to us about what it takes to be successful on our journey following Jesus.

Sister Doris cares deeply about each one who attends her class. Her love for us goes beyond Sunday morning. She is always a phone call away. I know I can call on her and find someone willing, not just to say they will pray, but to actually stop what she is doing to pray with me. I am so thankful for the impact she has had on my life.

Janet Shearer

The Adult Sunday School class split up into three classes. Doris was asked to take one of the classes. After she had taught four weeks they had to bring in more chairs. Her class really grew after four weeks. She has been teaching adults ever since. She is a very caring person. People call her all hours of the day or night to ask for prayer for themselves or for someone else. She teaches from the Bible.

Winston and JoAnn Sewell

Being a good teacher is one thing, but being a teacher who is called of God to this ministry is another. The one thing that makes her so special is not only her dedication to this calling, but her anointing and obedience by letting The Lord always have His way in the class, regardless of what she may have planned. This special lady is in her 80's, although you would never know it, and seems to have unlimited energy when it comes to teaching, leading songs or even going throughout the class to touch someone and pray for them. She is truly a servant and her dedication is an excellent example for all of us to know.

Respectfully, Michael and Edee Hix

She is a teacher who can reach into the hearts of her students and do it so effectively. While some are great at ministering to a particular group, Doris has the ability to minister to a wide range of groups at the same time, for her class consists of those who are in their teens all the way up to those who are close to or over 100 years old, and her class consists of those from different backgrounds, ethnicity, and occupations. She loves each student with a Christ-like love; thereby creating an atmosphere of unity amidst this diverse group of people. I know of those who never cared much for Sunday School before, but now look forward in anticipation to Doris's class each week because they know they will be fed spiritually and will leave revived, encouraged and refreshed.

God bless,
Charlotte Heilaman

She is full of the Holy Spirit, so she knows she is praying the Will of God and He knows what to pray for. We are some of those who have been truly touched because of her many prayers that she has sent up on our behalf. The Holy Spirit takes first place in our classroom and it is because the teacher puts Him first place above her own agenda. She is truly led by Him and prays so much all week for the class and for the upcoming Sunday and for each and every one of us in the class. We feel that she is our adopted mother as we are her adopted children.

Kay New

Her love and devotion to the Lord is exemplary. She has a personal and deep relationship with our Lord. She is such a yielded vessel to the Lord, taking God at His Word.

She teaches the Word of God from her personal experience with the Lord. She not only 'talks the talk' but 'walks the walk.' She practices what she preaches and teaches.

David and Mickey Flalcomb

Doris is very committed to her class and to the people in it. She is always there for anyone who needs her, no matter what time of day or night. She takes everyone to heart. She is so good about letting the Holy Spirit guide her in everything she does. There has been many miracles in her class and it is because of her yielding to the Holy Spirit. She also takes the time to plan things for the class such as different parties and get-togethers for everyone to enjoy. I could not ask for a better teacher and friend.

Bob and Charlet Cowan

Though she is the one that God has chosen to be in charge, Sister Doris wisely uses the talents and God given gifts of the retired ministers and talented musicians and singers in our class.

Sister Doris spends many hours in study and prayer, preparing the lesson for each Sunday. She relies heavily on the leadership of the Holy Spirit and is very sensitive to His guidance. She is very concerned about our military serving in Iraq and Afghanistan and especially the ones from her class. She has coordinated sending phone cards and special gifts to them. She has also met and greeted returning soldiers at DFW Airport, showing them love and gratitude for their service for our freedom.

One lady in our class was in need of a car and had no means to purchase one. A suggestion was made to take a special offering for her. This was done in class and given to her. This reflects the caring and love for one another that Sister Doris nurtures in her person and teaching of God's Word.

Sincerely,
Minor and Leta Haskett
Members of Doris's class for six years

the
2010
District Teachers
of the Year ●●●

ALABAMA

Barbara Griffin

Vincent Revival Center • Vincent, AL • Jason Allums



Barbara has been the preschool teacher at Vincent Revival Center for over three years. Her faith in God is evident in her personal life as she ministers to others.

When Barbara first became the teacher for this age group I was excited to know that she would be teaching my grandson. However, she has far exceeded my expectations as I have watched a five year old grow and learn so much in Sunday School.

Her classroom is inviting and children receive cards throughout the year for no special occasion other than letting them know how much she loves them. Her teaching makes children eager to learn and she takes the time to minister to all of her students, some having special needs.

In Christ,
Sue Garrett, Church Secretary

ARIZONA

Floyd Allen

Paradise Hills Assembly of God • Phoenix, AZ • Dan Duka



Floyd Allen has been a member of our church for over 35 years. During that time he has held a number of leadership roles as well as serving behind the scenes without a title. His work ethic in every task is outstanding. If a person were to really get to know Floyd for any length of time that person would quickly learn about his love and passion for teaching God's Word.

The previous Adult Sunday School Teacher at Paradise Hills Assembly of God had been teaching for some time when he decided to go on vacation for three weeks. During that time he asked Floyd to fill in while he was gone. During that teacher's absence the class grew quite fond of this substitute teacher. When the three weeks ended the previous teacher informed the class he would be stepping down from that position. The class unanimously asked Floyd to be their teacher. That was 30 years ago and the same passion and zeal that Floyd set out on his teaching journey with is still in tact today.

Here are some characteristics that make Floyd an excellent Sunday School Teacher...

The character of the person teaching is as important as the doctrine being taught. This principle of more being caught than taught is what I believe makes Floyd an outstanding teacher.

His teaching may begin on Sunday morning at 9 a.m. sharp, however, it doesn't end at 9:50 a.m. just because the schedule does. His teaching continues in his lifestyle the rest of Sunday along with Monday through Saturday.

Floyd views teaching Sunday School as an opportunity to encourage adults to reexamine their beliefs, to answer questions they have shied away from asking, to get rid of misconceptions they've held for years, and to renew their commitment to grow as disciples of Jesus Christ.

He believes that he has a higher calling than to simply transfer information. He promotes godly characters and the desire to transform students by the living Word of God.

Floyd gives attention to the little things that make for a valuable learning experience.

He believes that both young and old Christians have the same need, a fresh encounter with God's Word.

Floyd has a passion for what he is doing. He loves teaching and spending time with people. Passion is defined as boundless enthusiasm and that is one of the most important aspects of Floyd Allen's teaching style. I can look through our congregation and see many students who look to Floyd Allen as a mentor and example of a Godly husband, father, and disciple.

Thanks for your consideration,
Pastor Dan Duka

ARKANSAS

Barry Hall

Oak Grove Assembly of God • Monticello, AR • Dr. Bobby Spencer

Brother Hall has been a long standing member of Oak Grove Assembly of God in Monticello, Arkansas where he has taught the Adult Bible Class of over 35 years. He has served the church in many positions, currently as Song Leader, Adult Bible Class Teacher and Deacon. Brother Hall is faithful and cares about his church and students greatly. I know first hand the dedication he shows in preparation to teach his class each Sunday. He is an excellent communicator.

Recently his wife lost her battle with cancer. She suffered greatly the last ten weeks of her life and Brother Hall never left her side at the hospital. Every time I would visit them, he would always have God's Word open and would read it often to his wife. Through it all, Brother Hall remained faithful to his God, his family and his church.

Sincerely,
Dr. Bobby Spencer, Pastor

GEORGIA

Betty Smith

Evangel Temple • Columbus, GA • Richard Collins



Betty teaches the fourth grade class in Sunday School and is dearly loved by her children as well as by others who walk closely with her. Having never married, she gives all of herself to the work of God. In worship, she displays the passion and intensity of the prophetess Anna. Her deep and abiding love of God is then translated into her loving and gracious attitude toward others.

Betty lives an unencumbered life of modesty and simplicity so that when you spend time with her, she leaves no question that you have been conversing with a true woman of God whose life revolves around Him. She is well read and is a student of the Word who constantly looks for new ways to teach His truth. Because the life and love of Jesus shine through her, she is able to imprint many "life les-

sons" upon the heart of the children to whom she ministers.

When considering Betty's life, I am reminded of the words of Jesus when he said, "The light of the body is the eye: if therefore your eye be single, your whole body shall be full of light." During most of his life, King David lived that same life focus and reveals that in his words, "One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple."

The simplicity, clarity, and focus of Betty's life enable her as a teacher to make a deep and lasting impact on the lives of fourth graders.

Sincerely,
Pastor Richard D. Collins

GULF LATIN

Leroy Faz

Templo Emanuel • Crystal City, TX • Dino Espinoza



Leroy is a dedicated teacher who is punctual and creative. His illustrations using everyday-life experiences and help bring the Scriptures and biblical history alive and makes them relevant. It takes someone special and gifted to keep the attention of students who are older. Leroy has been gifted by God to keep our attention and relate the truths of God's Word in an extraordinary way. We appreciate Leroy and trust that his dedication, creativity, punctuality, and long-standing commitment to teaching God's Word with enthusiasm will be rewarded by being recognized as Teacher of the Year. He integrates the use of technology to liven up the lessons.

It seems time goes by too quickly, so he provides Monday night Bible Study since so many students are inspired to search the Scriptures and have many questions. Those Monday night Bible studies open an opportunity for those who attend Sunday School or Bible studies at church to bring their friends and families. From these Monday night Bible studies, many have come to our English adult class and attendance has increased.

Sincerely,
Sister Doris Loida Espinoza,
Student of the English Adult Class

HAWAII

Yoshi Ethel Yasuhara

First Assembly of God • Honolulu, HI • Klayton Ko

I remember when I first volunteered for Sunday School. My very first exposure to Sunday School teaching was with Sister Yasuhara's Primary Class. I was scared and unsure about being a Sunday School teacher, but when I saw her in action and the joy she radiated in teaching the Bible and loving these students, all fear vanished and faith began to rise within me knowing that with Christ I could be a Sunday School teacher. She was able to impart that simply by her example. I am so privileged to be able to be monitored and trained under such a woman of God.

Forever grateful,
Pastor Mel Corpuz, Children's Pastor

She exudes love and makes everyone feel so welcome. She is always early to class and ready for her students. I've never seen her frazzled even with the liveliest group of youngsters. She is patient and nurturing, and firm enough to keep her class under control.

Suzanne Pesateimpo

Sister Yasuhara has been teaching Sunday School for over 60 years.

She continues to be dedicated and faithful. Her Bible knowledge is great, from all of the studying that is required for teaching. As any good teacher knows, a teacher doing conscientious study and preparation for class will learn more than her students. Her family and friends often use her as a walking concordance.

Respectfully submitted,
Ralph Yasuhara, Sunday School Coordinator

In Sister Yasuhara's class, we had sword drill which helped me learn the books of the Bible. We had prayer requests at the end of Sunday School class where I learned to pray and seek God for direction in my life. The Sunday School lessons helped me trust God, to be obedient to my parents, and to love others with God's love.

Submitted by Shirley Yasuhara

I have known Sister Yasuhara for almost 30 years and she is all that the letters say. She is a wonderful woman of the Lord, who does always have a smile and a heart that matches and as was written would not want to be recognized for doing what the Lord calls us to do. Two thumbs up... if I had four or five, she would get them too.

Submitted by Kimberley Small,
Hawaii District Christian Education Director

INDIANA

Laverne Woodard

First Assembly of God • Danvill, IN • Phil Bilyeu



Laverne Woodard is a wonderful Spirit filled lady. I have sat under her teaching for the last ten years. She is well qualified and I know she starts on Sunday night to study for her next lesson. She says she has to know what God is saying to her before she can teach it to others. She also teaches the Bible class on Wednesday night. Therefore, I think she should be and is my Teacher of the Year.

A sister through Christ Jesus,
Freda Farley

Laverne Woodard has been a Sunday School Teacher for possibly over 50 years. She is a wonderful teacher. She brings out the lesson in such a way that it is so easy to understand and she is so knowledgeable about the Bible that she is awesome. I have been sitting under her for several years and in Sunday School I hate to see the time run out for the class.

Laverne spends many hours in prayer and study. She has fasted more than anyone I have ever met. She is sincere and loves God and always studies to show herself approved and it truly shows. I have learned so much from her.

In God We Trust,
Janice Hardwick

IOWA

Ruth Florke

Day Spring Assembly of God • Spencer, IA • Kevin Grimes



I asked Ruth why does she teach and what her favorite thing about teaching is, and she told me it was the joy of learning herself and passing that on to the young minds as well as getting to know the kids. She said, "It is rewarding to have kids learn and have them participate. Also being honest and open with them and showing respect. I also want them to be in God's Word every Sunday, because it may be the only time in the week that they are in God's Word."

Ruth is a faithful church attendee, she's always willing to help when asked, and always has a positive attitude about everything and everyone. I've never heard a negative comment about anyone or anything come out of Ruth's mouth before. I've been blessed with great Sunday School teachers to work with thus far, and Ruth would be one that has made my job easier. She's always willing to help with and for our ministry.

The times that we've attended Sunday School training classes, each time I've gone with Ruth. I know that she's gone with others because we have discussed other books that she has had a chance to read from other trainings. Ruth is always looking to grow spiritually and in her ministries she is a part of so she can better assist that ministry. She takes her job seriously in all areas she's a part of.

I respect Ruth for her honesty and ability to be transparent in her faith and her walk with God and things that she goes through to help others in their walk as well. I have personally gained a lot from Ruth that has challenged my walk with God.

I have had students that have had Ruth in the past and present relay to me that they love Ruth as a Sunday School teacher and have even told me things they've learned in class. These children's lives are important to her and instilling God's Word in their hearts is first and foremost on her mind when she is teaching.

I know that Ruth tries to make the lessons come to life and show them how it applies to their own life. Most recently I saw Ruth take the kids outside near the church as part of an object lesson in class. Ruth puts the Bible lessons in a language they can understand. I'm glad to have Ruth as part of the Sunday School ministry, I appreciate all she brings to Sunday School, to her class, and to our Sunday School meetings.

Stephanie J. Prince

KANSAS

Stacie Cathcart

Bethel Life Center • Wichita, KS

Stacie is an incredible woman of God who teaches my Sunday School class on a weekly basis. I compare her to a Beth Moore. She quit having a day care ministry in her home a few years ago to devote more time to studying the Word of God and developing many ministries. She leads several women's missions trips a year as well as multiple ladies Bible studies. She has an incredible personality that is a magnet for integrating new people to the church. Her passion for serving God and transparency in living out her daily walk are great for people to grasp and

integrate into their personal lives. She longs to be close to God and ministers out of the overflow of what is happening in her personal walk. All of the characteristics listed on the nomination form (Evaluation of Excellence) she lives out to the max. She is an incredible teacher, student, and follower of God!

Darin Stroud,
Kansas District Christian Education Director

LOUISIANA

Nancy L. Roberts

First Assembly of God • Springhill, LA • G. R. Collier

Sister Roberts has been teaching for 60 years. I have observed her relentless efforts at reaching children with the gospel of Christ. It is my understanding that she has always taken her class very seriously and now some of her students have gone on to become leaders at various levels within the Church. Sister Roberts' witness in the community is recognized as a woman of the Word and of prayer. Her caring nature has earned the title given her by many children, "Nanny." Even now many adults fondly call her by that title. She has reached out to her own neighborhood by staying acquainted with local children and ministering to them as their doorways were opened to her. Nancy "Nanny" Roberts is the epitome of what Sunday School teachers should be.

Respectfully Submitted,
G. R. Collier, Pastor

As a young girl at six, while she sat on a swing on her front porch rocking her baby sister to sleep, she made a promise to God. She prayed, "God, if you will let my mother live, I will always serve you, the rest of my life." God was faithful and miraculously healed her mother who was lying in a hospital bed with malaria.

I recall as a young child watching mom prepare through the week for her Sunday School class. She would go the extra mile to bring the lesson alive to her students and help them grasp Biblical truths. Over the years she has minis-

tered to and mentored many who have gone on to become leaders, teachers, and preachers in the church.

Sincerely,
Rev. E. Daphne Roberts

I have personally known Nancy of over 40 years. During this time, she has been an example to students and teachers alike, as well as to the community. She has not only ministered to people in the church doors, but she has been a light to our world outside of those doors! Nancy has shown patience, integrity, faithfulness, love—all of the fruits of the Spirit—throughout the years. She is respected among her peers, both in and out of the church realm, as a woman of God.

In His Service,
Patricia Stroud, Children's Pastor

In the kindness that Nancy has shown me through selfless patience and help, I have come to understand what it is to be a parent. There were times growing up, living across from her house, my sister and I needed rides to school or church. Nancy would provide rides for us. She was there to talk to when no one else was there. She is a tireless woman, full of strength and courage.

Stephen M. Olivier

NOTE by Pastor Collier: Mr. Olivier is a product of a very dysfunctional home. He is one of many that she reached out to. She is the one that introduced him to the Lord and church. He continues to attend with his children at a local church.

MINNESOTA

Betty Schlupp

Assembly of God Tabernacle • Verndale, MN • Jill J. Holm



Betty has been teaching teens in the past and again now. She has a very good rapport with them as well as children of all ages. She had four of our six children in her classes. They always looked forward to going on Sundays and Wednesdays. She still checks up on them and prays for them. She is a very dedicated woman and servant in the Church. I thank the Lord for Betty.

Sincerely,
Janis Rolli

Betty has always been someone I can depend on. Betty is the first one to step up and get involved, when it comes to Vacation Bible School or any other Sunday School sponsored event. She truly displays a Martha's heart, but constantly giving of herself without question. Betty is adored by each child and teen she has had the opportunity to teach. I am proud

to have Betty as a part of our Sunday School department. Betty's heart is filled with love for God and his children.

Rosalie Fearing,
Sunday School Superintendent

She is an outstanding member of the church as she served with her whole heart, not only in Sunday School but all areas of activity. She had most of the unchurched youth in this community in the youth group at one time.

I think she envisions young people as flowers and plants in her garden: the need for tender loving care. When I think of Betty, I think of the phrase, "Life is growth." She has done an outstanding job, not only in this church, but in the community in which she lives.

Pastor Jill J. Holm

MISSISSIPPI

Lance Grigson

Liberty Assembly of God • Gautier, MS • David Watson

Lance is a very good friend of mine. There is no doubt in my mind that Lance is a modern day God-called teacher. He leads by example and always has the good of the people at heart. He desires to see the Word enter their hearts and to watch them “come alive” as the Word of God does its work.

Scripture teaches us to honor those who labor among us and to esteem them highly. Lance deserves to be honored and esteemed. He is that kind of man in our eyes and I’m sure, more so, in the eyes of God.

Blessings,
David Watson, Pastor

NEW JERSEY

Tom Santo

Marlton Assembly of God • Marlton, NJ • Jonathan Wagner

I have on numerous occasions sat and listened to Tom teach at Marlton Assembly of God.

He is always prepared and has a genuine concern for his class. I especially like the way he can bridge the gap

between the elder and younger generation of adults in his class. Tom Santo is an exceptional teacher and that is why I am recommending him.

Sincerely,
Fabian Kelapuch
NJAG Youth and C. E. Director

NEW YORK

George Kwame Arkhurst

Ebenezer Assembly of God • Bronx, NY • Benjamin Boakye

Brother George Kwame Arkhurst, the presiding elder for the English Service, is the Youth Teacher of the Sunday School Department. His overall input to the church had won him great admiration. He is a person you can count on as far as the work of God is concerned.

His relationship with his students is above reproach, and the demand for his presence in his class is always high. The students easily relate to him. This creates a good atmosphere for them to express themselves in class. His class is therefore lively, and any attempt to exchange him with another teacher always meets resistance from both parents and students.

The enthusiasm as well as the method with which he approaches his lessons elevate the interest of the class. Brother George is one of the backbones of the department and a shoulder to lean on.

Brother George is the sole organizer of commemorative events in the church as a whole, and the department in particular. He is full of new ideas that are being utilized for the benefit of the church.

Tawiah Mensah,
Sunday School Superintendent

NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND

Emilio Marianelli

Trinity Assembly of God • Derry, NH • J. Stephen Earle



I have attended his classes for almost ten years and greatly appreciate his wisdom and dedication. It is obvious he spends many hours studying and preparing for each class.

I especially enjoy his classes that delve into Biblical history. That knowledge has helped me appreciate to an even greater degree the truth of the Bible. We are definitely being fed the meat of the Word in his classes.

Emilio always backs things up with scripture. He encourages his students to come prepared, bring their Bible, ask questions and voice their own thoughts and opinions of what he puts forth in class.

With my best regards,
Jerrif M. Bork

On Sunday mornings, he comes fully prepared to teach us. God has blessed him with so much wisdom.

God bless,
Theresa D. Vogel

He inspired me to want to come to Sunday School. I have been under his teaching for a number of years. My favorite class he taught was on the Blessing.

About two years before my dad died, I was able to give him a blessing and tell him I loved him.

God bless you all,
Ruth Jones

He is a compassionate person and is very in touch with the Scriptures and with the Holy Spirit to be the best he can be before God's Will.

The class is always a relaxed atmosphere of learning. Emilio is a true Christian and is always ready to teach. As a teacher he gets an A+. I don't know anyone who doesn't like Emilio's teachings.

NORTHWEST

Theresa Bolyard

Lake Stevens Assembly • Lake Stevens, WA • Rich Smith



Theresa was saved in her twenties and became committed to the teaching ministry from that time forward (about the past 30 years). Even though she works a full time job apart from the church, she serves as one of our best and main Sunday School teachers, currently for grade school ages. She serves 12 months of the year, and is faithful every Sunday.

The quality of her teaching the Bible and love for the kids is reflected by her faithfulness and priority. The kids respond to her and seem to love and appreciate her greatly in return. She is also a great team player, never critical, and a joy to work with.

I would also go so far to say, that she is probably the main reason our Sunday School is still up and running today.

Sincerely in Christ,
Rich Smith, Pastor

OHIO

Sharon Engard

Harvest Assembly of God • West Leipsic, OH • Nestor S. Reyes

Sharon has been a staple of our congregation for many years even before I arrived as the new pastor. I have been blessed by a body of chosen vessels as herself, who have a burden of servant leadership in our body. Sharon has been a great testament of someone who allows God to use her even when she feels inadequate. Sharon has allowed God to move her outside her box and challenged her to minister to children as Sunday School director and leader. She has been instrumental in all the venues asked of her in this position of servant hood.

Sharon has doubled the Sunday School class for our church in a year, and has maintained the number and has ministered so openly to our community of children, we have run out of room in our basement. We are actually looking to build even sooner because our community is being affected by the ministry she has allowed God to use her for His Glory. There have been many times she has felt as if she does not know what she is doing and I express to her, "Sharon, look what the Lord has done." This is a woman who has been changed, challenged, and

committed to the calling God has placed in her life for this season. Sharon developed an event called *Back 2 School Bash* for the community. This is one of many events she has done and it was done in excellence and God supported this event. We had about 80 community members show up with their children for the first bash. We, as the church, are so excited for next year.

In closing, I have many more testimonies I may write about, but I believe this is just the beginning of what God has in store for our Church, our families, and our community. Sharon is a part of it, and because she has a humble heart God will be exalted.

Sincerely,
Pastor Nestor S. Reyes

OKLAHOMA

Lois Branch

Community Fellowship Assembly of God • Ringling, OK • Chad Barron



She continues to work, pray and study all week up until time to teach the class next Sunday morning. Also, she contacts those who were absent from class the week before. She works hard at building the class,

both in numbers ("every 'number' is a soul that needs Jesus" according to Sister Lois), and in spiritual values. She prays daily for every member of her class. Her dedication and loving care of her class has touched many lives.

Though Sister Lois is 83 years old, and her health seemingly is on the decline, she continues to work for the Lord in whatever capacity she is able. She is often heard to say, "There is no retirement in God's Work."

Sincerely, Jolene Mullikin

I am a mother of three boys trying to keep God, church, and an unsaved husband in balance. Wanting to be at church all the time with like believers was putting stress on my marriage. But Sister Lois, through many years of experience, showed me that God would have me put my husband before church, and that God would work out the details of saving my husband.

Thank you, Donna Goates

She has always been very knowledgeable about the Bible and she is the most Godly woman I know. Each and every one of her Sunday School kids is loved as much as her biological kids.

Sincerely, Rhonda J. Mauldin

She is willing to help in anything we need her to do. She teaches us that God is alive and here today.

Joe Boswell

She encourages me to talk in class. She prays daily for our class and our family.
Jean Boswell

I always look forward to class. She does so much research and is always able to tell us what led up to the events that we're currently studying and what comes afterward. We always have time for class discussions and she encourages everyone to participate.

Ruby Musick

Lois shares stories about her own personal faith and spiritual growth. She makes you feel special. She helps you develop your unique gifts and helps you grow spiritually.

Gladys Griffith

She strives everyday to do the will of God in all things. She is always early, well prepared, and organized. Visitors that come to Sunday School feel welcomed.

Charla Stubbs

She studies, reads, and digs into the Bible to bring out even the smallest detail of every lesson of God's Word and passes it on to her class with understanding, compassion, and love for the Word of God, leaving nothing out.

Thank you, Annie Owens

She is a saint, she loves Jesus and will tell the world how good He is and what He will do for anyone who will let Him into their heart.

Thank you, Mrs. Ramona Thoroughman

Due to Sister Lois' love and concern for me I have continued to attend church. She also told the class one time to memorize John 14:1 - 2 and I was the first one to stand and quote it and won a prize.

by Odell Carroll as told to Jolene Mullikin

OREGON

Dave and Linda Hoard

Family Worship Center • Gresham, OR • Dan Hatton



Dave and Linda Hoard have taught preschool/kindergarten Sunday School for more years than I can count. They are amazing teachers who are faithful and determined to uplift each child as they enter their classroom and teach them the principles of God's Word. They have an amazing gift and passion to reach children on their level and they successfully teach children in a way that the children look forward to coming week after week. As C. E. Director, I can say that they are prepared, prayerful and overwhelmingly faithful in their responsibilities as teachers AND their walk with Christ. You will never hear them speak negatively about anything or anyone and they are able to pass that quality on to the children they teach.

I have had the pleasure of having two of my children personally attend their class over the last few years. One of the most impacting things that has left me in awe is how my children would walk out of the class excited, uplifted and eager to go back next week. When asked what they learned in Sunday School class, they would eagerly explain to me what they learned and what it means.

It is an honor and a privilege to have them as part of our Teaching Staff at Family Worship Center and I know that children's lives are forever impacted because of their passion to teach God's Word to children.

Andrea Franco, C. E. Director

PENINSULAR FLORIDA

Marcia Hendricks

Faith Assembly of God • Orlando, FL • Carl Stephens



Marcia Hendricks is passionate about the study of the Word of God. She is a great example of what a Sunday School teacher should be. She cares about her students, is always prepared, and is sensitive to the Holy Spirit as she teaches. Her students have caught her infectious love for the Word of God and her class continues to grow. It is currently filling the largest room we have available during the Sunday School hour.

Marcia is a team player and a great support to the Christian Education pastor serving on committees and going the extra mile. Marcia teaches for the ladies ministry in small groups as well as the *Ladies God Encounters*.

POTOMAC

Maxine Carlson

Victory Church • Winchester, VA • Robert Purcell



'benevolent.' Her great grandson has had a multitude of broken situations to face and he is only 4 years old. Maxine has decided to take him in and raise him as her own. She had many sleepless nights with him dealing with memories and nightmares, then turning them into smiles as she describes the spiritual triumphs she has had with him.

In His service, Pastor Robert Purcell

Mrs. Carlson is a teacher's teacher. She makes the new teachers feel confident and empowered to teach their class and shares her wisdom from years of teaching with experienced teachers. She reminds parents of boundaries and encourages them to look for the child's strengths and celebrate their uniqueness. Maxine was my partner in authoring a teachers and general training manual for Sunday School.

Sincerely, Stanley Kraft,
Sunday School Superintendent

As a parent of a child who recently was promoted out of the four-year-old Sunday School class, I would like to tell you of some of the changes I have noticed in my child. First, Joanna was very intimidated to go to Sunday School class, but once she started attending Maxine's class, all of that changed. Second, I and Joanna started praying at meal times and it progressed to her praying for her little sister. One time without prompting, Joanna put her hand on her sister and asked God to heal her. That touched my heart. Third, Joanna is not one that easily warms up to people, but with Maxine, it was almost instantaneous. I had never seen my daughter so excited about Sunday School before.

Very Sincerely, Tammy L. King,
Mother of a former student

At Victory Church we have a motto, WALO, which stands for Willing, Available, Listening and Obedient. Let me share with you how Maxine fits the WALO motto and lifestyle...

Willing: She is willing to arrive early Sunday mornings to make sure the class material is prepped and ready to go, that all activities are well supplied, and the classroom is clean and ready for the children coming to the four-year-olds Sunday School class.

Available: After our training course this year, as a master teacher, she shared her expertise with the other teachers. She was lovingly available to answer precisely any questions they had.

Listening: She is patient and attentive when anyone speaks to her.

Obedient: Maxine has been able to teach each child to be obedient to God's Word by obeying God's Word intensely herself. Sincerely, Reverend David Cunsolo, Senior Pastor

If I were to describe Maxine to you in a way that is fitting I would have to start with 'passionate.' Next I would add 'joyful.' She is always saying uplifting and kind words. Maxine exhorts people with the Word of God. Lastly I would add

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Hazel Wood

Northeast Assembly of God • Fresno, CA • Mike Bruton



In 2009, Hazel celebrated her 94th birthday. She started teaching at age 16 and has taught without a break for the last 78 years. Sunday School is her devoted passion. She has taught many classes but most notably, she taught the third grade boys class for 30 years. She also made sure the other classes were ready for Sunday by preparing the bulletin boards, assembling the lesson pages, punching out the visual aids and supplying the object lessons. The children lovingly refer to her as Grandma Hazel.

As a teacher, Hazel has exemplified and modeled the character of Christ. Everyone in our church loves her.

Hazel begins her Sunday School lesson preparation for the following week on Sunday afternoon to familiarize herself with the Bible story. By Thursday, all the object lessons and resources needed are collected and stored in a box. By Saturday, the box is put in her care to make sure all was ready. As you can see, teaching Sunday School was a priority and a highlight of her week.

Due to declining health, Hazel will no longer be able to teach after this year but her heart is still passionate for Sunday School. She has prepared several boxes of used curriculum to send to Mexico and we know she will be in fervent prayer for our Sunday School until Jesus calls her home.

Pastor Mike Bruton

SOUTHERN MISSOURI

Carol Brooks

Glad Tidings Assembly of God • Kansas City, MO • Vincent Fraser

Despite Sister Brooks limitation, due to a birth defect, she truly loves the Lord Jesus Christ with all her soul and might. She is a very soft spoken individual, but is fervent in her love for the Lord. Sister Carol can be counted on to be present to teach her nursery class, in addition to being present every month for teachers prayer and teachers meetings. She loves to encourage the parents to bring their children to Sunday School, in addition to loving the children, and sharing Christ with them.

Sister Carol has successfully completed the Acts training series. She's been working in the Sunday School Department and the Glad Tidings Christian Academy for over ten years. Her faithfulness to the ministry is commendable.

My prayer is that others will see her love and focus for the things of God and desire to emulate them as well.

Prayerfully submitted,
Jennifer Thomas, Sunday School Director

SOUTH TEXAS

Beatrice Briceno

First Assembly of God • Kirbyville, TX • Al Pittman



She has just retired from Children's Church, you can't replace her, you can only know that the one who has stepped in her place is one that she has taught and shown the way. She is still very active as an outreach minister in our church and in our community. Whenever there is a need, she will be found praying, but not only praying, she finds ways to do something to solve the problem or situation. She is a very giving person, one who supports more of our missionaries than anyone in our church. She has a true heart for God and His family.

Sister B. is a mentor to the younger women by her example and life. She has taught them in church and then taught them in school. The children remember when at school, often they would find her with her face to the wall, some of the children would make fun but they found out she was praying for them. She has and is a living example of a true Christian. She is on fire for the Lord, reaching out to those around her.

In Christ,
Glenda Pittman, Associate Pastor

There is no one who is more deserving than Sister B. She has been teaching Sunday School since she was 11 year old. That is over 65 years ago. This 82 year old lady is so full of life and always has a smile on her face. The children love her and her class reflects her preparation and commitment to demonstrating God's Word and His Truth.

She is faithful, loving and kind, committed to directing her students to the love of the Lord Jesus Christ by her actions and her gentleness. She has the respect of the other teachers as well as her students. She also has the respect of her community, where she has taught in public schools for over 50 years. Even when she retired, she was asked to return and teach Spanish to children of migrant workers. She also tutors single moms in our church to help them get their GED.

SPANISH EASTERN

Humberto Velázquez

Siloam Pentecostal Christian Church • Bronx, NY • Anibal Maldonado



Mr. Velázquez has been a Sunday School teacher for over 20 years. During this time he has taught children, youth and adults. He has been the superintendent for the past five years. As superintendent he not only supervises the adult Sunday School classes, he teaches and sets the schedule for the classes given to the teachers.

This past year he has become very active in the trainings for Sunday School teachers at the sectional level. He is a hands-on person and is always willing and eager to help in every way he can.

He is also a teacher at the Spanish Eastern Bible Institute in the Bronx and was named teacher of the year. He uses all of the technology available using power point, projector, lap top, computer, etc.

Respectfully,

Reverend Anibal Maldonado,
Pastor

Reverend Virginia Maldonado,
Director of Education Department

WISCONSIN/NORTHERN MICHIGAN

Carol Kuhlow

Christian Life Assembly of God • Plymouth, WI • Richard York

Carol Kuhlow has been our 3rd and 4th grade Sunday School teacher for the past ten years.

Carol loves her students, is in her classroom early to meet her students each week and gives them individual attention. She shows interest in the home as well as the school life. Though she is soft spoken, Carol has a very orderly class.

She also goes above the call of duty by organizing a Sunday School children's Christmas program each year. Carol sees this Christmas program to be an extension of our discipleship ministry as the children learn while they hear and act out the Christmas story. It also reaches unchurched people when the children invite unsaved family members and friends

who encounter the birth of Jesus and the message of salvation. Carol provides her own props, costumes and everything needed for the program.

Carol loves the Lord and is faithful in church attendance each week. She also attends Spirit-filled conferences and meetings whenever possible. She is an exceptional role model for her class and her peers.

Respectfully submitted,
Marilyn Jacoby

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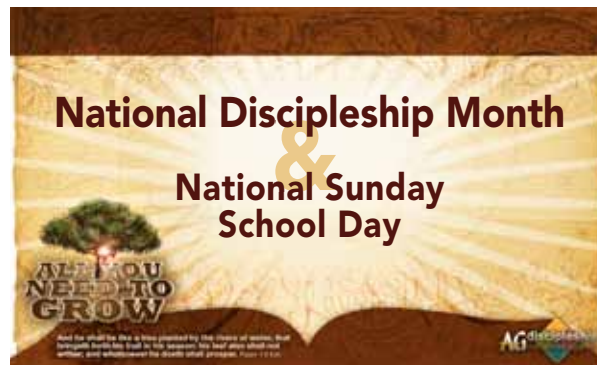


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