

Jenny Allford
Educator

Jenny Allford graduated from Kermit High School, Kermit, Texas, in 1949. She attended East Texas State University from 1949-1951, and transferred to Texas Technological University where she received her Bachelor of Music Education degree in 1953. Mrs. Allford continued her education, taking courses at Wichita State University, Fort Hays State University, Kansas State University, and Kansas University.

Jenny's love for music developed at an early age under the guidance and encouragement of her parents. Her father insisted she take the education courses necessary for a teaching certificate to give her something "to fall back on" while preparing for a career as a concert pianist. She began taking piano lessons at the age of six, and by age nine, had played for 3 governors of the state of Texas.

She began her teaching career in 1953 in Plainview, Texas, as a junior high choral music instructor. She moved to the high school the following year and continued teaching in Texas until 1969. In 1969, Jenny accepted the vocal music position at Roosevelt Junior High School in Great Bend. She taught at Roosevelt until 1978, and then moved to Great Bend High School, where she continued to teach vocal music for 16 years, until her retirement in 1994.

Jenny served as Director of the Chancel Choir at the First United Methodist Church and continues to serve as Chancel Choir accompanist. She has been the rehearsal and performance accompanist for the Great Bend Community Theater and rehearsal accompanist for the Barton County Community Choir. She has been accompanist for the Barton County Choral Society and the Lyric Singers Community Chorus.

Mrs. Allford has maintained professional memberships in the Music Educators' National Conference, the Texas Music Educators' Association and Board of Directors, and Kansas Music Educators' Association. She served as KMEA District and State Choral Chairman, and served on the KMEA State Executive Board. She is a member of the American Choral Directors' Association, the Kansas Choral Directors' Association, District V KCDA Board and the National Education Association. She was a member of the Texas NEA and a member of the Kansas NEA.

Mrs. Allford's vocal groups always ranked among the best in Kansas. Her choirs have sung for the Kansas School Boards Association, the State PTA Convention, and the State Convention of United School Administrators. The Madrigal-Pops Singers averaged sixty performances a year, outside of the school day. Her Madrigal groups have represented Great Bend and the state of Kansas, both nationally and internationally.

The Madrigal-Pops Singers first gained national acclaim when they performed for the opening general session of the National School Board's Association Convention in San Francisco in 1983. That performance gained them a prolonged standing ovation that literally "put the session on hold" while hundreds of school board members from across the country congratulated the students. The Madrigals, under her direction, were invited three times to perform at Kiwanis International Conventions: the first in Toronto, Canada, in 1985; in Seattle, Washington, in 1987; and in St Louis, Missouri, in 1989. The Madrigals were the only vocal group from the United States invited to these events.

Jenny Allford has a love and passion for Great Bend High School, its students, and its traditions. She has been an inspiration to her students and colleagues throughout her teaching career and taught a love for music. The song "Reach Out and Touch" still being sung by our music groups became the Madrigals signature song under Jenny's direction and may best exemplify her career that touched the lives of thousands of young people who had the good fortune to say they were a part of her program.

Glenn Opie
Community Service

Glenn Opie graduated from Great Bend High School in the Class of 1944. He earned his Bachelor's Degree from Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois in 1950, and his Law Degree from the University of Kansas in 1954. Following high school graduation, he served overseas in the United States Navy as a radio operator during World War II. Glenn has been a lifelong resident of Great Bend and continues to bring recognition to his school, community, and himself.

Glenn is perhaps best known for the work he and his wife, Sandra, did as volunteers training and managing the Argonne Rebels Drum and Bugle Corps. Nearly 1,700 boys and girls participated in this summer activity that spanned 22 years and brought tremendous crowds to Great Bend for Drum and Bugle Corps competitions. The corps won three national championship titles in the American Legion contests in the early 1970's. Glenn was inducted into the Hall of Fame of Drum Corps International in 2003. Glenn and Sandra still hear regularly from former corps members all over the country.

Glenn served as the Drum Major for the Northwestern University Band in the Rose Bowl in 1949, and later as Drum Major for the University of Kansas Band, while working on his law degree at KU. While at Northwestern, he ran the mile and 2 mile on the varsity track team. He has served as a volunteer track coach for 14 years for the Kansas Junior Olympics and is an active long distance runner to this day.

Glenn is known far beyond the Great Bend community for his work in the legal profession. He is a member and Past President of the Barton County Bar Association, and worked with others to maintain the present system of electing judges. In the Kansas Bar Association, he served for 19 years on the KBA's Public Information Committee, including 11 years as chairman. He earned the KBA President's "Outstanding Service Award" in 1973-74.

In the Great Bend community, Glenn served on the City Council for 2 years and on the Board of Education of USD 428 for 12 years, including four years as president. He received the Great Bend Jaycees "Distinguished Service Award" for community service and the local Kiwanis Club's "Make Great Bend Greater" award. The local Chamber of Commerce presented him with the "Community Award of Honor for Outstanding Service"; an honor not bestowed each year.

Glenn has been a member of the Great Bend Rotary Club for over 50 years and served as the club's president at one time. He has been active in Boy Scouts of America, serving as Scout Master of Troop 110, an adult selectee for the Order of the Arrow, and was a member of the Honor Board of Review of the Kanza Council that examined and approved candidates for Eagle Scout designation. He is one of a small number of people honored for "Meritorious Service" by Barton County Community College. In addition, he served on the Chamber of Commerce's Homework Help Committee, a group of adults that volunteer to tutor elementary students needing help. He served as Vice-Commander of Argonne Post 180 of the American Legion for three years. Glenn has been active in the former Barton County Chapter of the American Red Cross, serving as county fund drive chairman, board member and water safety instructor for 15 years, and chairman of the Water Safety Committee for 15 years.

Presently, Glenn is serving as fund campaign chairman for the Jack Kilby Memorial Plaza project on the west side of the Barton County Courthouse that will honor Great Bend's most famous native who invented the integrated circuit. He is a lifetime member of the First United Methodist Church where he has served on the Board of Trustees and Staff-Parish Committee as well as being a member of the Chancel Choir for 50 years.

Glenn Opie has been a lifelong resident of Great Bend and has touched the lives of thousands of people. He built a very successful law practice, raised a family, and stayed involved in numerous organizations, activities, and associations. His optimism, leadership, and dedication to our youth and his service to the community over the years have been second to none. Glenn is truly one of the "Greats" of Great Bend.

