

OFHS



WALL OF FAME

Inducted May 27, 2007



ROGER VanHAREN

Growing up on a farm on Konitzer Road, Roger VanHaren learned, loved and became a master of the English language. After a solid foundation at St. Anthony's, he thrived at OFHS. Participating in dramatics, forensics, newspaper, and the annual, he polished those language skills. Roger was active in sports, chorus and was selected by his peers to be a class officer. He walked across the stage with the class of '57 as a "Top Ten" graduate.

In the fall of 1961 his new BS degree from Oshkosh State opened the door to an English teaching position at Beaver Dam Junior High School and the start of an outstanding career helping young people develop that same love of the language. Along with teaching, Roger coached, served as an advisor and held leadership positions at Beaver Dam. Walking the talk, Roger continued learning and earned his Masters Degree from UW-Madison in 1969.

Shifting gears in 1974, Roger began teaching at Wayland Academy. He maintained that association until his retirement in 1998. In addition to teaching English at Wayland, he coached Academic Decathlon, advised yearbook, chaired the Fine Arts Department and served as Director of Student Activities. He served on the Academy Board of Trustees for six years. Once retired, he researched and wrote "The Sesquicentennial Story," a history of the school's 150 years.

Inspired by his parents, Chet and Gladys, Roger married Marilyn Schroeder in 1961 to start his own family. They raised five children, all college educated and have been blessed with seven grandchildren.

Always active in the community, Roger served on the Beaver Dam City Council and in several other capacities. Active in the Beaver Dam Lions for 45 years, he served as its secretary for a quarter century. Roger has been active in his church with several different roles.

Passionate about the arts, Roger was a charter member of the Beaver Dam Area Community Theatre. He performed in over 30 shows, along with a great deal of behind the scenes work. Taking this passion to another level, Roger and Marilyn brought Mark Twain to life in a show they created and performed in venues all across the land, including the OFHS Performing Arts Center. His writing includes weekly newspaper columns and the Memory Book for the 50 year reunion of the Class of '57.

Putting it all together, Roger shared, "The background and education I got at Oconto Falls High School laid a solid foundation for my life's work and avocations. Writing, acting, music, athletics, and a love for learning and of the English language, all of which filled my life in high school, have become the cornerstones of my existence. I will never forget my years at OFHS - and the great class of '57!"