

Belle Gates Grimsley, Kansas Teachers' Hall of Fame, Class of 2013

When Belle Gates Grimsley retired in the year, 2000, after 38 and a half years of teaching, she left a legacy of music that would not be forgotten. She played many instruments, taught band and music, and continued to perform and produce music even in her retirement. She taught grade school marching bands, and sponsored trips to dinner theaters in order that her students could see quality performances in other cities. She and her husband performed in the Nutcracker Suite presentations in Emporia, Burlington, and Garnett from 1994 to 1999. Belle started taking tap dance lessons at age 55, and still dances for rest homes, civic performances, and Dance Recitals.

Actually, Mrs. Grimsley started her career teaching vocal music to grades 1-8 in Hamilton in 1957. Thereafter she taught at Belle Plaine, Kendall, Alma, and Council Grove over her almost 40 year career. She taught vocal music, instrumental music, physical education, Kindergarten, Third Grade, Language Arts, Summer School Reading and Title 1 reading and math. Not surprisingly, she also supervised student teachers from 2001-2003.

Belle started teaching after finishing 60 hours at the College of Emporia, and then transferred to Emporia State where she finished her Bachelor's Degree five years later. Consider what Belle's days must have been like from 1957 to 1962---she taught for five years, while completing two full years of college. That means she was attending summer school, night classes, Saturday classes, and correspondence classes, and always performing.

Mrs. Grimsley later earned her master's degree from Emporia and her Reading Specialist's Certification. By the time she ended her career, she had completed over 200 hours of college credit.

Colleagues and former students attest to Mrs. Grimsley's enthusiasm and the active involvement she took in the schools and the communities in which she worked. She was a vital part of things that were happening. She took part in sports activities, parades, heritage activities, 4-H clubs and fairs. She did much to call attention to the rural agricultural background of the area and to help young people know and appreciate all of this environment. One person describes a time after her retirement when Belle drove a 1948 Farmall C tractor to a show in Winfield. It was typical of her willingness to be an active promoter of her community.

She was a member of her professional associations: Kansas Reading Association, Delta Kappa Gamma, and NEA, where she served her local at almost every office position, as well as regional ones. Her honors, awards, and recognitions are so numerous as to be difficult to list. She has been nominated by Marita Bolson of Council Grove for induction to the Kansas Teachers' Hall of Fame. It is hoped that readers will take the time to examine her listing on the interactive board at the Kansas Teachers' Hall of Fame where she will be proudly listed as Belle Gates Grimsley, Inductee of the Class of 2013!