

Douglas Almeda McRee Frazier 1940

Our first inductee, Mrs. Douglas Almeda McRee Frazier, Class of 1940, was the first female President of the Chattanooga Engineers Club. She danced with United States President Gerald R. Ford. Twice during her travels she was within arms length of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II of Great Britain. These are just a few adventures of an alumnus born in her family's ancestral home in Soddy-Daisy.

The daughter of Douglas and Nannie Eldridge McRee, Almeda remembers Ruth Swingle, Rose Nipper Smith, Earnest Eldridge, Elizabeth Suddeth, Kyle Snyder and Ercelle Hunter Snyder as her favorite teachers. When asked her favorite memory of high school, Almeda stated, "We learned a lot because we studied, studied and studied and then we played some. Our teachers were caring, capable and well informed in making sure we were learning – particularly in all school activities as well as community activities to help us to become Future Leaders.

Audrey Dodd Warren, Dorothy Skillern Crawley and Rose Edna Jenkins Hassell were three of her dearest classmates. But Almeda is quick to say that all her classmates in the Class of 1940 were her friends and they still meet every year.

After high school Almeda graduated with a Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Music and Masters of Education degrees from the University of Chattanooga, now the University of Tennessee Chattanooga. She holds a life-time teachers license for both elementary and secondary schools in Tennessee. Almeda taught school in the late 1940's along with piano lessons. She then began working for the Tennessee Valley Authority in several different positions until retiring after 42 years of service as a "Power Supply Analyst."

Almeda married Earl Lee Frazier, the son of Presbyterian minister Rev. Samuel and Russia Frazier. Almeda and her husband of nearly 50 years enjoy traveling and volunteering. Almeda has played the calliope on the Delta Queen, Mississippi Queen and American Queen on many of her world travels.

Her honors and awards are as follows:

- People to People Award
- Grand Organist in the State of Tennessee for the Order of the Eastern Star in 1999
- Past Matron of Mayflower Chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star in Soddy

- Past President of AARP, Chapter #22 in Chattanooga. She instigated the North Hamilton Chapter #4863 where she won a certificate of appreciation award in 1993.
- Received the “Community Relations Award from Hospice for Volunteering at Health Fairs and knitting Afghans for hospice patients.
- Received a pin and certificate for volunteering with R.S.V.P. with Healthy Kids Initiative.

In 2008, Almeda received the “Volunteer of the Year” Award for over 8,000 hours of volunteering as a member of the TVA Retirees Association and the Bicentennial Volunteers.

Almeda is a member of Soddy Presbyterian Church, serving as Pianist and/or Organist for **45 years**. For the past 30 years she has served as the Pianist and/or Organist at Soddy United Methodist Church. Almeda played for your presenter’s wedding 32 years ago. She is involved in the “Soddy High School” annual reunion (over 100 years this year) and is currently Secretary of the Class of 1940 and has been for the last 69 years. Almeda represented the City of Soddy Daisy on “The Southeast Tennessee Advisory Council on Aging and Disability.” She is Past President of the American Association of University Women and Past Secretary of State AAUW. She is currently a member of Senior Neighbors, Chattanooga Music Club, Pilot Club of Chattanooga, Daughters of American Revolution, Judge David Campbell Chapter, Member of ASEBI Court #36, Ladies Oriental Shrine of N.A., the Elder scholars at UTC and Member of the First Families of Tennessee as a direct ancestor of William McRee.

As you can well see, Almeda has lived a wonderful life here in Soddy Daisy, Tennessee or as she refers to it as “The Garden Spot of the World!!”

Almeda would like the students of Soddy Daisy to remember the following:

“Life is like a Piano” --- What You Get Out of It –“Depends on How You Play It.”
 Live life to the fullest -- it gets shorter and shorter every day.
 “Pray a lot, smile a lot; learn all you can and have FUN, FUN, and more FUN!!
 Don’t look back, Live Today and Trust God for Tomorrow.

Almeda has played a very important part in my life and that of many young women at Soddy United Methodist Church. She taught us to NEVER forget where we were from and always do your best. Most importantly she told us that we can do anything we wanted to and never let being a female stop us.

It is my great pleasure to introduce my friend, mentor and role model, Mrs. Almeda McRee Frazier.

Ted Mills 1940

World War II was raging. A young soldier had just reached the Siegfried Line, a front line of battle in Germany where men were dying. Artillery shells were exploding with fierceness. Being an infantry replacement, he was destined for a foxhole. But to his surprise, an officer grabbed him and ordered him to a location behind the lines. His assignment was not to man a rifle, but to man a typewriter in the headquarters of the Adjutant General. It was there, for the next year, where he would type and send home letters to other soldiers' families to notify them that their son was killed in battle. When he asked "why was I chosen for rear echelon duty?" he was told it was because of his typing skills.

Growing up in the small community of Soddy during the Great Depression meant that families didn't own much. Since none of his siblings finished high school, Ted's wonderful mother insisted that he graduate. President Roosevelt helped by providing funds for jobs, and Ted landed one of these jobs at his school sweeping the floors of SD along with the custodian. His salary? Eight dollars each and every month! Even though he was the class president, he parked his pride to earn income for his family. He feels his greatest accomplishment in life was overcoming the pangs of poverty and accomplishing the better life with the help of the Lord and many people along the way.

Ted Mills was the president of his senior class in 1940...the third graduating class from the "new" Soddy-Daisy High School. He was **there** when the two communities joined as one, and became Soddy-Daisy. He saw two fierce rivals (Soddy High and Daisy High) become brothers. He was **there** when the school colors were chosen blue and gold. And, yes, he took part when the student body voted on the new school's mascot. Would it be a "Ram" or a "Trojan"? We are all proud of the outcome! From this school he left for war to place his life on the line for our nation's freedom. When he returned, the first person he found was his typing teacher, Miss Bessie Nipper, and he gave her a hug and told her "Thank you, Miss Nipper, for teaching me to type...You saved my life!"

Ted grew up in Soddy near Wall Street. The irony of this fact would come full circle one day as he would choose a career path that would take him to another Wall Street, the one in New York City where money changes hands with fervor. In college he studied finance while he worked for a bank. In 1962 he graduated from the Stonier Graduate School of Banking at Rutgers University. As his expertise grew, so did his value to the bank. He was later to be named Senior Vice-President of American National Bank, the bank you know now as Suntrust. He served there for 35 years.

One of his proud duties with the bank was to travel to New York City where he received a bond issue check in the amount of \$22.5 million dollars! The purpose of the money was to build some schools...one of them was the school he graduated from...and we are meeting in today, the 1983 construction of the current SDHS.

For his military service, he received the Bronze Star for serving in three major battle campaigns. He has served as the Grand Marshall in the Armed Forces Day parade, as well as a board member for United Way, Goodwill Industries, the Debbie Fox Cranial-Facial Foundation (FACES), and was one of the founders of the Chattanooga Food Bank. He was awarded an honorary lifetime membership in the Chattanooga Chamber of Commerce for meritorious service. And for 38 years he has served on the Chattanooga Industrial Development Board...one of their duties...to monitor the building of the **Volkswagen** plant!

What does Ted Mills do for a pastime? He grows Roses. In fact, Ted is a nationally known Rosarian. When people around the world want to grow roses, they ask Ted how it's done. He writes a regular column in the American Rose Society magazine, and he teaches rose growing to many enthusiasts around the world via internet. He even developed his own rose food products, one of which is called "Mills Magic Rose Mix". Go to millsmix.com and check it out! He and his wife, Mary Alice, are accredited Master Rosarians and Rose Show Judges, and the rose garden at Veteran's Park in Soddy-Daisy is named for them. Ted and Mary Alice and their personal rose garden have been featured on numerous TV shows including Home and Garden and PBS productions.

This final thought is a quote from a speech that Ted made in 2000 at his 60 year class reunion- ***"As the soldier says: 'Taps will be sounded over all of us.' But as we meet here today, let us always remain dedicated to the principles of good citizenship that we learned so well during our high school days. Let us resolve to preserve our reunion record and never disband the Class of 1940 until 'taps' is sounded for the last surviving among us."***

Ted, for your dedication to the principles of good citizenship, we honor you with your induction into the Soddy-Daisy High School Hall of Fame.

NENA ERNESTINE ELDRIDGE

Class of 1945

Ernestine Eldridge graduated from Soddy-Daisy High School in 1945. She enrolled at the University of Chattanooga after high school where she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree. She obtained her Master of Arts from Peabody College in Nashville. After graduation from college, Ernestine began her teaching career at Gann Middle Valley Elementary. She taught music there for two and a half years. She then transferred to Sale Creek School where she taught music and physical education for twenty five and one half years, coaching girls' basketball for 15 of those years. To finish off her teaching career she taught at Soddy Elementary for five years. Ernestine's music ability is legendary in the Sale Creek and Soddy-Daisy communities. She began playing the piano at the First Baptist Church in Daisy when she was still in high school. She is still playing piano at the church right now. Ladies and gentlemen, that is 68 years being involved with the music program at the church. Of course, she is a member of the church and has also served as the organist and Choir Director. She did the latter for 12 years. I know for a fact that this lady can play anything on the piano. I have witnessed her sitting at the piano and onlookers shouting out hymns and Christian music titles to which she immediately begins to play without the aid of sheet music. She is amazing in the respect. She says this is a gift from God and it truly is.

Ms. Eldridge is a rabid basketball fan! She'll go to a game in the drop of a hat. University of Chattanooga, UT, high school; doesn't matter. She loves the game. Why not? Her dad was a legend in the basketball world during his tenures at Soddy, Daisy, and Soddy-Daisy Highs. I know that on one occasion a certain person working for the now defunct Curtis-Mathis store here in the old Wal-Mart shopping center had to get a VCR hooked up in an emergency at her home in Daisy. Why, because she had just gotten a satellite dish and wanted to record as many games as she could during "March Madness" and watch them at her leisure. Ernestine will travel to watch games also. The Southern Conference Tournament, the SEC Tournaments and any other NCAA playoff game, you could find Ernestine in attendance. As a coach at Sale Creek she has many memories of her coaching career. The memory that stands out most is that in a very small school with only 15 or 16 girls in the senior class that they could and would compete with larger schools within the area.

Her community involvement is extensive. During and after her retirement she has been active in the Daisy Woman's Club. Each Wednesday she plays the piano in the lobby of Memorial Hospital or in the lobby of the Cancer Clinic of Memorial. She not just stuck on Memorial either, because she has also served as a volunteer at Erlanger Hospital. She also serves her church as the leader of the senior adult program called "Golden Agers". Ernestine truly gives of herself to others.

She feels that her greatest accomplishment in life was the ability to work with students. As she sees these former students contribute to their community and to their family, it makes her feel a part of their success. Ernestine is a member of Delta Kappa Gamma, a professional sorority. She was also inducted into Delta Kappa Gamma's Order of the Rose at the state level. She has been an accompanist at their state, regional and international conventions over the years.

Betty Harrell Bennett, Roberta Been Wright, and Martha Jo Norman Webb are three classmates that were favorite friends of hers while growing up. They are all deceased yet their memory of them singing at churches as a group provides a warm spot in her heart to this very day.

Her favorite teacher was Ruth Swingle, the legendary Social Studies teacher at Soddy-Daisy High. Mrs. Swingle always had time to listen to you if you needed to talk with her. Ernestine feels that she learned a lot, not just from books, under her guidance.

Her memories of Soddy-Daisy High School are plentiful; after all, her dad was a teacher and coach at the school. She attended many, many basketball games. She rode the bus with her dad to away games on a regular basis as a little girl. One particular memory involved Bradley Central High School. Her dad was sick and could not make the game. Bradley was ranked number one in the state at the time. Ernestine and her mother took the team to Cleveland to meet the Bears. The boys coached themselves while Ernestine and her mother yelled encouragement from the stands. The game was close, but Soddy-Daisy won by one in the last seconds of the game. She says that this memory is most special because of the team giving their very best to win for their coach and their fans.

It is with great pleasure that we honor Nena Ernestine Eldridge with induction into the Soddy-Daisy High School Hall of Fame.

Jane Buckner
1954

If you are a girl growing up today, you owe a debt of gratitude to Jane Buckner. She grew up during an era when few women worked outside the home, yet she forged two extremely successful careers in Miami, Florida, and here in Hamilton County and helped countless special needs children during her fifty year teaching career. The day I called her to interview her about her life, she was outside spreading gravel where she feeds her cattle every evening. She is a lover of animals, a world traveler, and a lover of lights of New York City. Movies have been made about strong women who are the backbones of our Southern society; these women have been called, Steel Magnolias and Ms. Buckner's grit and fortitude makes her one of them.

Jane Buckner grew up in Soddy Daisy, and she remembers her years at Soddy Daisy High as being so much fun...full of sweet memories, she said. She loved eating lunch on the lawn by the school with her friends, being in the junior and senior plays, and serving as manager of the girls' basketball team. She said 'Our school was small enough that most of the people were friends and most still remain close friends to this day.'

One of her closest childhood friends, Fred Rees Skillern, who said, "Jane was always the life of the party and she had something going on all the time. She was involved in EVERYTHING, but still managed to make straight A's ...except one class in which she made a B. The teacher said that she had missed so much class being involved with the senior play that she had to give her a B. Jane still gets mad if you ask her about that B...60 years later.

When I asked Jane about her teaching career, she said, "I majored in English and started teaching fourth grade. I had 42 students, one of whom was a special needs child...and it was that one child that I found myself drawn to...the one who needed the most help...the precious learning impaired child. I was hooked and knew that I had found my calling in life."

She said that she has seen many changes in special education program...some good and some bad. She truly believes that self-contained classroom help those kids the most, but that she doesn't make the policies.

I've never known anyone who loves a good joke and a hard laugh better than Jane Buckner. She lives everyday to the fullest and wouldn't even allow major heart surgery to slow her down. Who would think that a 78 year old woman would still be so active in professional organizations, in alumni activities, and in her church. Why! This past summer she set off on another trip to Europe...by herself...and had the time of her life.

There is no telling how many lives this wonderful teacher has touched, how many days she had made better for her students, or how many smiles she has brought to the faces of her colleagues.

This past year, when she was presented to the Hamilton County Commission who honored her for her long teaching career, Jane said, "I am a very lucky person to have been able to work at a job that I loved for 50 year."

The Soddy Daisy High School alumni committee is honored today to induct Ms. Jane Buckner, our own Steel Magnolia.

Louis Priddy 54

Never in his wildest dreams did he expect to own a sporting goods store. Louis Priddy thought his life's calling would be in the ministry, serving God somewhere. So after high school, he attended King College in Bristol, TN, then he received his Seminary Degree from the Union-PSCE in Richmond, VA. During college, he worked for the Bristol Boy's Club, and then he served as director of youth and recreation in two Memphis churches followed by a term with the National Foundation of March of Dimes. But it was during a 10-month period without a job in 1981 that a tiny seed began to germinate in Louis' life which would grow into the Front Runner Athletic store.

Sometimes a great idea has to prove itself. Going into business was a scary proposition, and Louis says when it came time to borrow the money that he remembered praying...but isn't sure if he prayed to "get the loan" or to "not get the loan" which was needed to open the retail store. Louis founded and operated this sporting goods store in Hixson for almost 20 years. Not all the days were productive at first...there were many days when Louis says he felt like closing the store and just going home. But eventually the business started moving ahead. Young people, don't **ever** give up on life's worthy adventures or tasks you are **called** to do.

Louis says that as God blessed his business, **the store** became a ministry... a **way** of helping others. You see, every bare-footed child can't afford shoes but 150 pairs of free shoes went each year to the Big Oak Ranch in Alabama, a Christian home for troubled kids. The owner, John Croyle, played football at Alabama, as did his son, NFL and Alabama quarterback Brodie Croyle. And a portion of the profits from the business supported the Wycliffe Bible Translators mission work, and a world of other church and community projects.

Louis Priddy is a people person. John Hunt once wrote that Louis "could probably make friends with a stop sign!" His favorite sport is running. He once drove 500 miles to run in 3 races in the same day. But it's making friends that he's best at...and he has made a ton of friends in the running community over the years. Running has been very good to Louis, providing him with lots of friends and a source of income as well.

One-time UTC track coach, Bill Gautier, said "When I first came to Chattanooga, the track program had no support from the university...our support came from Louis Priddy." His Front Runner store became the gathering place for many in the community. They congregated there because they liked Louis. His personality draws people. Columnist Roy Exum titled the headline of his story about Louis- "Priddy Teaches Lessons In Love and Sells Shoes." In the story he told how Louis often referred customers to his competitor's stores when he didn't have the product they needed, and how he sold shoes at his **cost** when

someone needed a little extra help. That kind of math does not add up to expanding his business 3 times, but love and generosity can never be out-given. And this business truly became a ministry in every sense of the word.

Louis Priddy redefines the word “volunteer.” He has served on the board of directors for the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, the Chattanooga Track Club, the Northside Neighbor’s House, and the North River YMCA. He has sponsored 40 to 50 Road Races to raise money for various causes, including the Big Oak Ranch. The 5K for FCA race provided many area Christian Athletes of the Year with \$5,000 scholarships. At the Santa’s Workshop he organized and collected toys for 350 children to have Christmas presents each year. At his church, Hixson United Methodist, he volunteers with the homeless ministry and several other causes.

He received the following awards:

- 1987 Chattanooga Track Club Member of the Year
- 2001 Chattanooga Area Sports Hall of Fame
- 2001 Chamber of Commerce Distinguished Service Award
- 2001 The Gerry Stephens Influence Award from the Fellowship of Christian Athletes
- TSSAA A.F. Bridges Contributor of the Year Award

Louis, you have taught all of us that it is possible to serve God in a sporting goods store. And may we never forget the manner in which you have served your fellow man. You are Soddy-Daisy’s Front Runner!

It is my honor and privilege to induct Charles Louis Priddy, volunteer, servant and friend, into the SDHS Hall of Fame.

Herschel (Huck) Smith
Soddy Daisy High School Alumni Hall of Fame
March 5, 2010

Herschel (Huck) Smith - Soddy Daisy High School Class of 1959. Huck's credentials include: a B.S. in Health & Physical Education from the University of Chattanooga in 1964 and an M.E.D. in Educational Administration from UTC in 1970. Huck has compiled an incredible career that spans the sports, education, and business worlds, and his success began here – in the Soddy Daisy community.

Huck moved to Soddy Daisy just before his sophomore year, quickly making a name for himself in the area with his athletic prowess in both basketball and baseball. He was a member of the powerhouse basketball teams led by Ernest "Big Boy" Eldridge during their domination of the Tennessee Valley Conference, domination due, in part, to players like Huck, who was Greater Chattanooga's leading scorer his senior year with an average of 21.7 points per game and who scored 52 points in a tournament game that year, a record that still stands in the area.

Needless to say, Huck garnered many awards and much media attention; however, when asked about his athletic career at Soddy Daisy, he minimized his own accomplishments and concentrated instead on what he learned while here - from Coach Eldridge, his teammates, his teachers, and the community. Huck says that even as a sophomore just starting out at SD, he was taken by surprise by the involvement of the community in the school and its athletic programs; as fans they were committed to the athletes, and they expected winners. Perhaps this attitude came in part from Coach Eldridge, who, according to Huck, coached as if the team were a business; each player had a job and was expected to do it. Eldridge's philosophy simply put: don't ever accept defeat; losers accept defeat. Perhaps Eldridge was not an N.B.A. tactician when it came to coaching, but he taught common sense in all aspects of the game and in turn, in life. Huck says that Eldridge's philosophies often found their way into his own coaching style throughout his career.

Huck's favorite memories of Soddy Daisy include sunny days spent sitting on the front lawn of the campus of the old school with his friends: Leland Millsaps, Tom Springfield, Sammy Gill, Johnny Hargis, Herman Ables, and others. He says he still remembers the fun he had on those bus rides home after a road game (if they won) and the feeling he got when running out onto the court before a game or when wearing his letterman's jacket to school. However, all of Huck's SD experiences were not athletic. He speaks proudly of the faculty at SD, where sixteen of the twenty-one teachers had Master's Degrees, and every teacher made you work hard, just like a coach. His favorites included: Coach Eldridge, of course, for obvious reasons; Mr. Gene Elliot, Miss Hartley Ashley, Miss Ruth Swingle, and Miss Elizabeth Jenkins. Whatever grade you received was truly the grade you earned, but because of their instruction, Huck says that

his freshman year of college was much easier; high school had truly prepared him for college.

Teachers had prepared him for the college classroom, but natural talent and sound coaching made him an instant standout in college sports, where he played for Coach Leon Ford at UC, and where, as a scholarship athlete, he was named MVP in 1964 and won the Dayle May Award given to the senior student athlete with the highest GPA.

After graduation from UC, Huck took his first coaching job at Trion, GA, both girls and boys basketball; in 1965 the boys were sub-region champs, the girls had an 18-6 record, and Huck was named North Georgia Coach of the Year. He then came back to SD as assist. basketball coach and head baseball coach. Although at SD only one year, he was named Baseball Coach of the Year in 1967. Huck then went to UTC in 1968 to coach and teach while working on his Master's Degree. In 1970 he left UTC to be head basketball coach at Lakeview HS, compiling a career mark there of 83-33 and again being named North Georgia Coach of the Year.

The consummate competitor, Huck remained active as an athlete even while coaching. He is noted for having influenced the growth of Chattanooga's Open Slow-Pitch Softball Program, starting out with Daisy Esso, moving on to Kobax, and then Thurman-Bryant – a legendary softball dynasty in the area. In addition, Huck was a member of the Rossville Chiefs of the Dixie Pro League of the 1960s, and in 1990 he was inducted into the Old-Timers Sports Hall of Fame that honors Chattanooga's athletic legends.

Following Lakeview's 1974 season, Huck made a difficult decision to leave coaching for the business sector. He entered on the ground floor of the corrugated industry as a sales rep for Southwest Forest; after four years he was promoted to Sales Manager; five years later he was made General Manager, a position he held until 1986 when he left to start Cherokee Valley Container. He managed Cher. Valley for two years before selling the company to Swiss businessman Peter Model; the company then became Model Box. Two years later, Huck took the reigns of Jamel Containers, a struggling corrugated company in Ft. Payne, AL, turning the business around to the point that the owners were able to sell it in 2000 to a Chicago based company for a net of \$1.4 million. Huck retired from Jamel in 2001, giving him more time to devote to his other passions – being Cap't Huck onboard his boat, the "Against All Odds," and spending time with friends and family. Huck and his wife, Debbie, live in Hickory Valley. He has two daughters: Tammy Kirkpatrick and Denise Cooper; grandchildren- Josh Cox, Mallory Cooper, and Brandy Vincent; and great-grandchildren – Austin & Anna Vincent.

When asked what his life's greatest accomplishment has been, he said apart from his family that he is thankful for the opportunity to be an influence on the lives of young people. His advice to Soddy Daisy students is to work hard in whatever you undertake.

It is always an honor to be a part of this ceremony, but today is especially meaningful to me because I have the honor of introducing you to one of my life's heroes. While Huck was busy setting the basketball courts and ball fields ablaze, while he was teaching young people athletic fundamentals, and while he was building a business from the ground up, he was teaching his little sister how to meet life head on with passion, determination, and a sense of humor; he was teaching me to hold on to my dreams and proving to me that it is never too late to accomplish your goals. And so, it is, indeed, my honor to welcome Herschel "Huck" Smith into the Soddy Daisy High School Alumni Hall of Fame.

JUDY PITTS MEDEARIS
1960

“Learning should be a life-long activity” are the words of advice from our next inductee. Judy Pitts Medearis hasn’t stopped learning since her days at Soddy-Daisy High School. She encourages all students to continue their learning experience after graduation, even if you can’t afford college. She did not have the resources to finish college after high school, so instead she spent four years working while attending classes to become a Certified Public Administrator. You see, **where there’s a will, there’s a way.**

Judy attended Tennessee Wesleyan College in Athens, and then the University of Chattanooga. She has also attended seminars and workshops throughout her career to improve her skills in for running for office. Even today, in retirement, she takes art classes that she enjoys. She says ***“any job you wish to do, and do well, will require you to learn some additional skills or knowledge to be successful.”***

Even though she grew up during hard economic times, Judy Pitts had a very happy childhood. Like many of you, her family had limited income. She developed a strong sense of family, church, and community that stays with her today. Her favorite memories of Soddy-Daisy High School are going to the football and basketball games and the pep rallies. Some things about high school never change! Even **marching on a hot day at band practice** is a good memory for her...it allowed her to do what she loved, marching with the band at football games.

Miss Ruth Swingle was her favorite teacher. She taught American History and Miss Swingle made the class read the newspaper each day and discuss what they read. This created in Judy a natural interest in the world and in her community. Such a spark can be all it takes for a teenager to find his or her niche in life. Judy’s niche would be found in the political arena, in running for office and winning her job.

She served the people of Hamilton County for a total of 38 years. After having served for 14 years as deputy clerk, 9 of which as Chief Deputy, she was elected in 1978 as Circuit Court Clerk and re-elected 5 times. Her responsibilities included the handling of over 15 million dollars per year of our citizen’s money, and the proper and efficient handling of all legal documents. Judy brought major improvements to any job at which she worked. She implemented a phone-in system for jurors which has saved juror’s valuable time and the taxpayers of Hamilton County over a million dollars in jury costs. Many other counties in Tennessee have followed her lead and are using the same procedures. Judy also instituted a state-of-the-art filing system for better access and retrieval of cases.

She has received the following recognition and awards for her contributions to the legal profession:

- Board of directors and President of Tennessee Court Clerks Association
- Tennessee Clerk of the Year
- Tennessee County Official of the Year
- President , National Association of County Clerks and Recorders
- Clerk of the Year- National Association of County Clerks and Recorders
- Only Court Clerk in Tennessee to be appointed by the Tennessee Supreme Court to serve on the Commission of the Future of the Tennessee Judicial System.

In 2003, Judy received the Liberty Bell Award from the Chattanooga Bar Association, given to an outstanding non-lawyer citizen whose service has strengthened our system of law.

Judy is a member of the Daisy United Methodist Church. She is married to Harvey Medearis. They have two children and three grandsons.

When asked what her greatest accomplishments are in life, Judy named two. ***“That my two children, Gena and Allen, are caring and loving unselfish people,” and “That I have so many friends.”***

Judy Pitts Medearis, for your excellent service to our community, and for making our world a better place in which to live, we proudly induct you into the SDHS Hall of Fame.

ROBERT E. SMITH
1967

He enrolled in the first grade at age 5 and began playing competitive sports by age 10. By 9th grade he weighed barely 100 pounds, but his coaches saw his toughness from the very beginning.. He played 3 sports for coaches like Buck Johnson, Merle Crawley & Teddy Millsaps at SDJH. In high school, his mentors were Harland Burnett, Frank Cofer and another of today's honorees, Coach Huck Smith. By age 17, Robert Smith was one of the most storied SD Trojans in school history.

As Soddy-Daisy's quarterback, he was the leading scorer for the Chattanooga area his senior year. He later earned a four-year football scholarship to the University of Chattanooga. He says ***"the lessons learned by playing sports are so applicable to life in general. To be successful one must work hard and give 100%. You have to be a team player and learn to work with others, learn to take constructive criticism, and learn from your mistakes...You have to learn to get up when you are knocked down."***

The obstacle that **knocked Robert down** time and time again would not defeat him in the end but would make him strong and give him a desire to excel. You see, like some of you today there was only one family car that his dad drove to work, and staying after school for all those practices meant not having a ride home to Flat Top Mountain. So he had 2 choices, quit sports or walk home. Occasionally he would catch a ride but more often than not he would walk from school to his house, some 5 miles. Sometimes after dark. Up a mountain! You have heard of "uphill both ways", well it felt like "uphill both ways!"

He calls this ***"the defining time in my life"..."a daily challenge and test of will every evening or night."*** Doing something hard makes us tough. Robert made good grades despite getting home late and studying past bedtime. He finished in the top 5% of his class, was the senior class vice president and best all-around male student. He also made his mark on the athletic field, earning 1st team All City in football and baseball. He received a full scholarship to play football at the University of Chattanooga. There he set four university football records and was Most Valuable Player on his team. He did all this while keeping the highest Grade Point Average on the team. Robert was later inducted in the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga Athletic Hall of Fame.

The National Football League showed some interest in Robert's skills and placed him on their draft list. Unfortunately, Uncle Sam also had him on a draft list to serve in the Viet Nam War. He chose to serve in the Army National Guard and he never realized his dream to play professional sports.

While still in college, a good friend, Don Bishop, suggested that Robert become a teacher. And what a teacher he became! He spent 16 years in the classrooms at Red Bank High and Soddy-Daisy High, teaching Math & Business. There he earned the “Laura Handley Brock ‘Most Influential Teacher’” award.

In 1990 Robert Smith was named the 8th principal of SDHS. He is one of 3 alumni to serve as principal at our school. As principal, he implemented many positive changes, including the transition to block schedule, the Renaissance program, Work-Based Learning, the Freshman Academy, the Engineering and Technology Academy, the Student Advisory Program, Credit Recovery, and many other advancements in education.

Under his leadership, the high school itself won many awards, including 5 National Championships & 2 State Championships in Cheerleading, Three State Championships in Wrestling, Six State Championships in Softball, three State Championships in Golf, and one in Tennis. He helped build the premier band program in the state of Tennessee and shaped the school into the number one overall academic program in the Hamilton County Schools.

For his hard work and excellence, the Tennessee Department of Education named Robert the 2000 State Secondary Principal of the Year. And in 2006, he became the only Tennessean to be inducted into the Jostens National Renaissance Hall of Fame.

Robert Smith holds a very unique distinction in the history of our school. He is the only person to have been a student, player, teacher, coach, athletic director, principal, and parent at SDHS. It is our privilege to induct Robert E. Smith into the SDHS Hall of Fame.

TRUDY HARPER 1979

Trudy Harper still lives in the 'Possum Creek neighborhood where she grew up in the 1960's. Only, today she has to get there by airplane. Her job keeps her in Dallas, Texas most of the time. But she gets back home as often as she can. In fact, her big plan involves returning home to Soddy-Daisy for good one day... when circumstances allow. Her Texas friends think that Soddy-Daisy is a world-class vacation destination with a really catchy name!

The Class of 1979 voted her **most intelligent**, and her God-given talent was used to its fullest. She was always a leader, able to envision the big picture, and able to set goals. Her friends say that she possessed "quiet strength" and lived with **no fear of failing**. She says that her toughest leadership assignment to this day was being a sorority officer in college, and today when hiring employees, she always notices if they took leadership roles as a young person.

One role model in her life was her mom, Sue Harper, who was a natural leader as well. Sue was one of the first women executives in the Chattanooga business world, and Trudy was cut from the same mold as her mom. Trudy was honored as the valedictorian of her class. Her favorite teacher was Dr. Eddie Owens who taught her Chemistry and Physics. She says that Doc Owens loved to share his passion for science. Passion is contagious, and Trudy caught his passion for the sciences and later carved out her own career path in a field that she says did not even exist when she was in college.

In 1979 Sequoyah Nuclear plant was under construction and the nuclear engineering field was blooming. But an accident at the Three Mile Island facility in Pennsylvania diminished Trudy's outlook on a nuclear career. Instead she chose electrical engineering. She wanted to learn about electric power production, so she entered Tennessee Tech where she earned her Bachelor's and Master's degrees. Her first job was as an electrical engineer and manager with Texas Utilities. In 1992 she joined a new company, Tenaska, where she helped build power plants. And in 1996 she was named President of Tenaska Power Services, which produces \$1 billion dollars per year in revenue. Her company also manages about 10% of the wind-generated energy in the U.S.

To explain in simple terms what she does for a living, let's just say that Trudy is in charge of **keeping the lights on at your house!** That's right, she buys and sells wholesale electric power so that America's lights stay on. Tenaska Energy Inc. is listed by Forbes Magazine as the 16th largest private company in the United States.

Trudy serves on the Tennessee Tech Engineering Industrial Advisory Board. She has served as chairman of the North American Electric Reliability Council,

and has been awarded the Pat Wood Power Star Award given in recognition of her contributions to the power industry. And on two occasions Trudy has been invited to share her expertise with the United States Congress Sub-Committee on Energy. That's right, when Congress wants to know what is going on, they ask Trudy!

Her spiritual hero is her husband, Roger. She says "***He has helped me keep my life God-centered.***" Together they work in the Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Dallas where they sponsor activities for Hispanic families, their fondest project is an annual Carnival that brings joy to all the kids. Thanks to Trudy and Roger, the neighborhood kids in Soddy-Daisy have met friends from around the country and from the four corners of the world. She has the gift of entertaining and truly loves people.

Around the Possum Riviera (as one of her friends dubbed her neighborhood), Trudy is known as the queen of all water ski instructors. She makes it a personal challenge to teach each and every child how to ski, and then rewards each one with a huge celebration that they remember for a life-time. Can you tell how much she loves people?

Trudy's quiet inner strength has helped her through many battles- her most recent battle was with **breast cancer**. One year ago she was diagnosed and began treatments to defeat this foe. She has fought and won victory after victory. Remember, Trudy Harper **lives with no fear of failing!** She says that her lifelong friends were her best medicine.

She has championed the cause of cancer research by raising awareness and money to help others win this battle. Her co-workers made a challenge that if the money goal was met, the men would shave their heads in her honor. No time to lose a bet...Trudy and the others raised more than enough money to see the 29 men in her office shave their heads in solidarity. What an event it was! A friend of Trudy's, Marty Lasley, suggested the co-workers wear t-shirts that read, "**I survived Trudy Harper's breast cancer!**" Truly, laughter has been a good medicine as well. She says "***it probably sounds weird, but the blessings of cancer have outdone the curses.***"

It is our privilege to induct the **Queen of Possum Riviera**, Trudy Harper: Engineer, Ski Instructor, and Friend, into the Soddy-Daisy High School Hall of Fame!

PATRICK MULKEY 1980

One key to success is being prepared to walk through the door of opportunity when it is open. Of course, hard work always pays off as well. Our next inductee has both prepared himself for the opportunity and has worked hard to get there. And above all, he has not forgotten where he came from.

Patrick Mulkey grew up in Soddy-Daisy playing all the games that kids played. You would seldom see him without a basketball or baseball in his hand. In elementary school he played basketball for the KIDS club. He was skilled enough to be invited to play for the Little Mocs, a traveling team of basketball trick shooters and ball-handlers.

In high school Patrick was a member of the Beta Club, FCA and many other activities. He was a representative to Boy's State and a member of the Soddy-Daisy Court. He was voted Best School Citizen by his senior class.

Of all his gifts, music became his most noted talent. He took piano lessons from his aunt Edith Mulkey beginning in the third grade. Many of us wish that we could play a musical instrument but lack the discipline to learn. Patrick spent those necessary hours of practice to become accomplished on piano. He joined the Soddy-Daisy high school chorus and was elected President his senior year. He enjoyed singing. Also during his senior year he auditioned for the Chattanooga Singers, and for the Singing Mocs, a show choir that traveled extensively. He was chosen to sing in both choirs, and this greatly influenced his decision to attend the university. Many of you today in this audience have talents that will earn you a scholarship to college if you will practice hard and believe in your talent.

Patrick had the chance to tour with these choirs in Europe and Australia along with performing at various local concerts. At UTC he also took a choral conducting class. With this newly learned skill he helped organize a community choir in Soddy-Daisy. The choir was originally formed for a community celebration but was continued year after year as a Christmas concert. He has served as choir director for Soddy United Methodist Church. He says that he received a lot of encouragement and influence for singing and directing from his friend, Almeda Frazier.

Patrick graduated from UTC with a Bachelor's Degree in Business Management and went to work for a well-known company, Taco Bell. He served as purchasing manager, then as Operations Manager, supervising 30 stores in the Atlanta area.

Opportunity knocked one day, and Taco Bell briefly offered a program where employees could become franchise owners. Patrick was able to purchase a franchise and today owns Atlanta Mexican Foods, Inc. He bought five Taco Bell Restaurants in Atlanta, and has since built several new restaurants and became a Kentucky Fried Chicken franchisee as well. Through hard work and honest dealings with people, his company has grown from five to eighteen restaurants. He employs 600 workers. Patrick is also President of the Taco Bell Franchise Association for Georgia and has served in that capacity for 10 years.

He is actively involved in giving to his community. Each year Taco Bell raises money to help support the Boys and Girls Clubs in Atlanta. He has helped raise over \$100,000 for Atlanta teens. The Association teaches these teens life skills and how to prepare for their future.

In 2001 Patrick received the Taco Bell **President's Award** for delivering high standards in his restaurants. And in 2007 he was named the National Taco Bell **Franchise Operator of the Year**. His secret to success is in building relationships with his employees. Patrick exhibits excellence, and he is a genius in making others want to be excellent too. His peers say that Patrick "has never forgotten where he came from."

Soddy-Daisy High School would like to honor Patrick Mulkey's excellence by inducting him into the 2010 SDHS Hall of Fame.