

Waconia High School Hall of Fame – Class of 2012

Class of 2012: Michael Matson, Paul Melchert, Donna Moonen & Mary Rademacher.

Michael Matson – 1976 WHS Graduate

Michael Matson graduated from Waconia High School in 1976. In his junior and senior years at WHS, he received superior ratings at the MSHSL music contests in voice, trumpet and piano. Mr. Matson was in the Minnesota Music Educators Association All-State Orchestra and MMEA All-State Choir. He graduated second in his class, and received the National School Choral Award, the John Philip Sousa Band Award, the Marine Band Award, the Best Thespian Award and the American Legion Award.

Michael received his Bachelor of Arts degree in vocal and instrumental music education from Luther College in Decorah, Iowa. While at Luther he was a soloist with the Nordic Choir and tenor soloist at their annual production of The Messiah. He received his Master of Music degree in vocal performance from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music.

He has sung with West Bay Opera, the Lamplighters, the San Francisco Symphony Chorus and The Carmel Bach Festival. He was twice chosen as tenor soloist for the Sing-It-Yourself Messiah at San Francisco's Davies Symphony Hall.

Mr. Matson continues to study voice, trumpet, piano and organ. He has been music director at Calvary Lutheran Church in Millbrae, California since 1987 and on the music faculty of Mount Tamalpais School in Mill Valley, California since 1989.

Paul Melchert -- 1952 Waconia High School Graduate

During the course of Paul's WHS career, the written word and spoken word were vital. He served as class president and treasurer, participated in speech/declam activities, pep club, and drama, worked as the business manager for the first ever annual the Chieftain, and graduated as the salutatorian. Recognition for speech activities was also gained as the 1952 Minnesota 4-H State Radio Speaking Champion, and as a delegate in the Minnesota-Mississippi 4-H Student Exchange.

After graduation, Paul went on to Valparaiso University, receiving his BA. in 1956, and his LLB. from the Valparaiso School of Law in 1958. Paul returned to Waconia and Carver County, his family's home area, and began what was to become a most successful law career. He is the senior member of an 18 member law firm, with offices in Waconia, Chaska, and Hutchinson. During his practice, he

has served as attorney for Waconia and numerous other Carver County communities, acted as attorney for Ridgeview Medical Center for 30 years, is past president of the 8th District Bar Association, and a past Board Member of the Minnesota State Bar Association Board of Governors. His career has also encompassed 31 years of service in the Minnesota Army National Guard and Army Reserve, retiring as a Full Colonel in the Judge Advocate General's Corps.

Community involvement and service have been a constant throughout Paul's career: he is a founding member in the Waconia Chamber of Commerce, serving on its original Board of Directors; he has served the Carver County Historical Society as a past president and board member, is the President of the Waconia Heritage Association since its inception and has helped in the writing and publication of Waconia's historical books; Paul has actively supported the Ridgeview Medical Center as a member of the Planned Giving Committee, the Executive Management Services Committee, the Ethics Committee, and as a co-chair for fundraising; the Boy Scouts, the Red Cross and the Lions Club (over 50 years) have all benefitted from Paul's involvement; he is even a charter member and past Board Member of Island View Golf Club; as an active member of Trinity Lutheran Church since 1959, Paul has been involved in numerous committees and activities; Paul has also served District 110 as both its attorney and as a co-chair to build the current high school; he has also been an active WHS Alumni Association Member for over 25 years, having served as both a president and a board member.

For this level of community commitment, Paul has been recognized by the Waconia Chamber as its Business Person of the Year in 1994, by the 8th District Bar Association with its Community Service Award, and in 2009 as the Minnesota Attorney of the Year for Community Service.

Paul has been proudly married to Joyce for 52 years, and they have 5 children and 10 grandchildren.

Donna Moonen -- 1960 Waconia High School Graduate

In many ways, the names Donna Moonen and Waconia are interchangeable. Moonen was a cheerleader for Waconia High School and a member of the 1960 graduate class; however, this was just the beginning of her contributions to the Waconia Public School system. Moonen served on the School Board from 1978-1981, was the Waconia High school Cheerleading Advisor from 1982-1987, and the Head Girls' Golf Coach from 1985-2011. It was her tenure as the girl's coach that brought many honors to the school and to her personally. Donna was named the Minnesota State High School Golf "Coach of the Year" in 2001. Her teams were both the Suburban West and Wright County conference champions numerous

times. Nearly every year of her 27 years as coach, either the team or an individual player, were participants in the Minnesota State High School Golf Tournament. In fact, Waconia is in the top ten for the most team appearances (12) in the State Golf Tournament – all of these appearances under Donna's leadership. Her team's 2nd place finish in 1998 was a highlight in Moonen's coaching career.

Moonen has had 5 children and 11 grandchildren, 10 who have or will graduate from WHS. She has been a proud supporter of all activities at WHS and has been an integral part of all the changes the school has been through -- including the move from the Suburban West Conference to the Wright County Conference and the name change from the Waconia Chiefs to the Waconia Wildcats. She has been a small business owner of the Income Tax Service in Waconia for over 40 years. Donna and her husband, Gary (Ozzie) live in Waconia, MN. Her children include a son, Ron, and daughters Robin, Rhonda, Vici and Rochele – a 2009 inductee into the Waconia High School Hall of Fame.

Mary Rademacher -- 1974 WHS Graduate

In the fall of 1972, Mary (Deluhery) Rademacher was a junior at Waconia High School. Rademacher and her good friend, Sue (Rief) Gregory, were taking dance classes at the newly opened Charlene Knorr Dance Studio. WHS had many activities available to their students but had no dance team. The two girls felt that dance was something that the school needed so they approached the school administration with the idea of adding a dance team at WHS. The request was approved and the dance team (Pom-Pom Girls) began performing at home basketball games in 1973. The team continued to dance at basketball games and other school events over the next few years and then moved onto participating in the state dance team tournament which began in 1975. The Pom Pom girls expanded their horizon and became members of the newly formed marching band in the summer of 1973 by performing routines with flags, thereby adding another dimension to this outstanding group (now referred to as the color guard).

In high school Mary was also involved in several additional activities including mixed choir, jazz ensemble (playing the guitar), Future Homemakers of America and Girls Athletic Recreation Association; in 1973, her peers selected her as class secretary and in 1974 as class president. Mary was a 3-year National Honor Society member and at graduation was honored by the faculty with an award for outstanding senior leadership.

After graduating from WHS, Rademacher attended and graduated from the College of St. Catherine with a double major in business administration and education. Professionally, Mary has worked at Sun Newspapers, Softsoap Enterprises, taught

in the Mound-Westonka School District and currently works at Elkay Manufacturing (Medallion Cabinetry) here in Waconia.

Mary's involvement with the dance team was rekindled in 1998 when her daughter Katie was a freshman on the dance team. Since then she has continued to work with competing teams' coaches and invitational committees to insure all event details are properly planned, as well as organizing the Section Dance Team Tournament at WHS on several occasions. Rademacher has four children; her three daughters have all danced on the Waconia Lakettes Dance Team – Katie, Kim and Krissy. Katie and Kim are both coaches today – Katie (Mueller) is the head JV Coach and Kim is the Assistant Varsity Coach. Krissy, a senior at WHS, has participated in the state dance tournament for the past three years – 2010 – 2012. Mary's husband Gary, and son, Brian, have also been strong supporters of the Waconia High School Dance Team Program.

The Waconia Lakettes is an organization that has touched the lives of hundreds of students; they have won six state titles and have had numerous performances over the past 30 years. A teenager's dream back in the 70's grew to become integral part of the Waconia High School experience for many young women.