

Area loses a great community member whose desire was to make Bedford a better place to live

By Jackie Giroux
Reporter

Kay Saralyn Williams, 71, of Temperance died Saturday, April 28 in The Toledo Hospital. She had been hospitalized after a nighttime fall at home on April 18 while going to check on her stepmother-in-law who lived with Kay and her husband, Tom.

Over the years, Kay was involved in many projects for the betterment of the Bedford area. Long-time acquaintance, Gene Stock, said, "The main theme in her life was what could she do to make Bedford a better place to live."

What she is probably known most for in the community is serving for 16 years on the Bedford Board of Education, elected in 1983, with several of these years as president.

John Satkowski recalled, "We were on the board for 13 years together. We went from the depths of financial problems to setting the district on financial stability. She had a very good method and style of working with people. She was a joy to work with; we had almost like a brother-sister relationship.

"When she left the board, it was at a point when we were at a very high level of looking out for the students and giving them the programs that they needed."

In 1986 Kay was elected to the board of the MASB (Michigan Association of School Boards) while maintaining her position with the Bedford Board of Education. She became president of MASB in 1993.

"She did that role well, she had the style. She was not in it for the recognition but 'can I do something for the kids in the



Kay Williams

state of Michigan," Satkowski stated.

"She was a quiet person. She didn't seek recognition. It was probably the least thing she wanted," Stock remembered.

According to Stock, Kay and her husband were charter members of the Alumni Association and original members of the Bedford Advocates. Kay did a lot of behind-the-scenes work, researching various things needed in the construction of the stadium, such as seating.

"She really helped us the last seven or eight years for the Hall of Fame. She sent out invitations and put programs together. She did table decorations for the banquet. She involved her family and they helped her," Stock said.

Stock added that she also was active in politics and supported candidates that she liked and the things they stood for.

"With 10 children, Kay attended a lot of community events. Not only did she do this for her family but for the district as well," Satkowski said.

"She was very family oriented and she tried to involve her kids. She instilled in them and her grandkids to give back to the

community and do whatever you could," Stock said. "Kay was a real role model as far as a wife, a mother and a citizen."

Kay was born on March 10, 1941 in Anderson, IN. She was the daughter of Waldo and Frances (Fye) McGraw. She and Tom were high school sweethearts and married in 1963.

She taught kindergarten for a year in Newark, Ohio, having received a teaching degree from Ball State University. "One of the reasons they moved to Bedford was because of the schools," Stock said.

Kay is survived by her husband of 48 years and children: David Williams of Temperance, Mike (Kimberly) Williams of Rochester Hills, Chris (Matt) Andrews of Temperance, Suzi (Med) Barr of Temperance, Buffy (K.C.) Ruddy of Temperance, Rob (Tanya) Williams of Elmhurst, IL, Dan Williams of Ann Arbor, Greg (Tiffany) Williams of Ann Arbor, Kathy (Mike) Moran of Erie, Jenny Williams of Temperance and 28 grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her parents and brother, John.

Burial was in Greenlawn Cemetery in Greentown, IN.

Because Kay was a survivor of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, the family suggests that tributes in memory of Kay be made to the Williams Warriors team participating in this year's Bedford Relay for Life.

"Kay always had a great smile on her face. She always greeted people. She had a very positive relationship with everyone she would meet. We lost a great community member and we lost her way too soon," Satkowski said.