

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Sarah Reckmeyer

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Sports Stories - IHSA Oral History project

Interview SIH-A-L-2017-073

Sarah Reckmeyer, award winning band director at Ottawa Township High School, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Sports Stories- Illinois High School Association Oral History project*.

Date: Jul 29, 2017 Location: United Church of Christ, Ottawa, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Philip Pogue, ALPL volunteer

Transcription by: _____

Edited by: _____

Total Pages: _____ Total Time: 1:34 / 1.56

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The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

Interview being
processed

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Abstract

Sarah Reckmeyer, *Sports Stories-IHSA*, SIH-A-L-2017-073

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Sarah was born in Oregon, Illinois in March, 1960. She grew up in Mt. Morris, Illinois where she was a part of a music family (her parents were music teachers in the school district). At Mt. Morris, Sarah was involved in concert jazz, swing choir, drama, and madrigals, along with the sports of field hockey, basketball and track. While at Illinois State University, Sarah qualified for a field hockey scholarship and played basketball and competed in track. Graduating in 1982 with a major in music education, she began her teaching career in the Ottawa Elementary School District, where she stayed for over five years. Sarah then worked on her master's degree at Northwestern University, earning that in 1989. Sarah was the Ottawa Township High School band director from 1989 to 2016. Sarah is a member of Illinois Music Education Association (IMEA) and has served the organization as a president, band representative and organizational chair. In addition to teaching at Ottawa Township High School, Sarah directed the Rivercity Community Band for eleven years, and is a past president of the Ottawa Amateur Music Club. She has been a guest conductor at music festivals and contests, serves as organist at the Open Temple United Church of Christ, and plays clarinet with the Illinois Valley Community College Wind Ensemble and Illinois Valley Symphony Orchestra. Her awards include the Ottawa Township High School Hall of Fame, Illinois Educator of the Year (2016), Ethyl Strong Ambassador of the Year, Forrest T. Buck Community Service, the key to the city of Ottawa, parade marshal for the Ottawa Riverfest Parade, and the Most Inspirational Teacher award from Western Illinois University.

This interview covers Reckmeyer's experiences as a successful high school band director, including twenty straight IHSA Music Sweepstakes first place awards. She described the Music Sweepstakes and its solo, ensemble and organizational components. Sarah also discussed the IHSA music competition by-laws, the importance of developing a strong elementary music feeder program, the challenges in maintaining a strong music program during tough financial times, the importance of music education, and the role of the IHSA Music Advisory Committee. Finally, Reckmeyer reflected on the importance of having great musical facilities and shares her favorite memories from a thirty-three-year musical career.

Subject Headings/Key Words: Illinois High School Association (IHSA) Music Sweepstakes; solo and ensemble awards during music sweepstakes; Ottawa Township High School music program; Ottawa Township High School band; value of musical education; role of an elementary music program; IHSA Music Advisory Committee; Title IX and expanded sports opportunities for girls

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