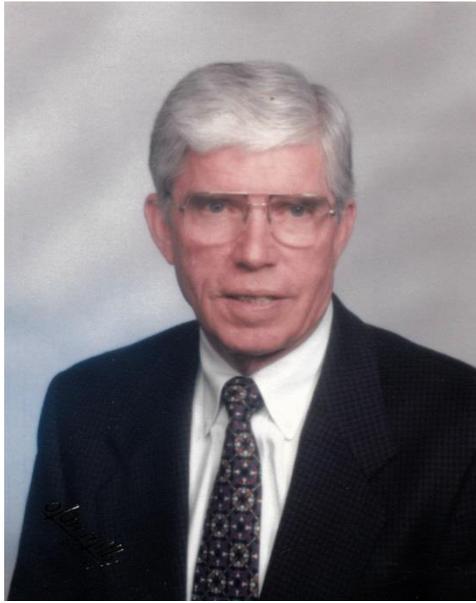


Named Scholarship

Pius X High School ~ Pius X Foundation



Phil Murphy Memorial Scholarship



Phil Murphy's legacy began with his adoption at age six by his parents. He was raised on a beautiful farm surrounded by aunts, uncles and cousins...the family he didn't know he would ever have. This is where he also met his wife, Florence Feller Murphy.

His legacy continued with his children, Janet, Paul and Jane, followed by 11 grandchildren. His family considers their father and grandfather to be the first of many generations at Pius X High School, and this year brings the fourth generation with one of his 15 great-grandchildren starting school.

Murphy began his teaching career in Wymore and York, Neb., after receiving his Masters in Music Education from the University of Nebraska. With the music programs well established when he arrived, Murphy was excited to accept the challenge of Fr. Gene Kalin to start up an instrumental music program at Pius X High School. In 1960 Pius X was the new Catholic high school in Lincoln and Vince Aldrich was the only other lay teacher.

"I was five years old and grew up in the long halls of Pius as my dad grew a music program from the parish schools starting everyone on tonettes," his daughter Jane recalls.

At that time, the parish schools consisted of St. Teresa, St. John, St. Mary, St. Patrick, Blessed Sacrament, Holy Family(Cathedral of the Risen Christ), and Sacred Heart. Students began playing instruments around 5th grade with Murphy giving private lessons and instructing group ensembles. Eventually middle school bands were added.

In 1964 Murphy was joined by Mike Veak who spent most of his time in the parish schools. This allowed Murphy more time to work with the students at Pius X. "As you can imagine, scheduling was

everything and attention to detail - we all were held to it precisely as a student and as a band member,” Jane notes.

Phil Murphy’s drive and love of music started with piano lessons shortly after his adoptive parents brought him home to Wisner, Neb. He had been cared for by the fine priests and sisters of St. James Orphanage in Omaha since his birth and now had parents to take over.

“Dad had a deep love for his parents and great respect for them. They mentored his developing skill and talent in music,” Jane explains adding that another mentor was his high school band director, Duane Schultz. “Mr. Schultz was a very positive influence and inspired my dad to pursue a career in music.”

Murphy marched in the United States Marine Corp Band, as well as the University of Nebraska Band. All of these experiences formed his drive to produce wonderful musicians and fabulous bands.

Early in his time at Pius, Murphy commissioned someone from UNL to write the Pius Fight Song which was memorized by all. Under his leadership, the Pius X Band attended, performed, competed and excelled in many competitions and parades. “Dad was known to begin and end most concerts with a lively John Phillips Sousa March, for which was particularly difficult for us in the clarinet and flute sections.”

“Dad worked everyone hard in band, but the reward, his pride of the end result and his constant praise for fine performances made it worth every bit.” His former students would attest to this, especially as many went on to make careers in music as well.

Murphy may be most remembered and loved for his Pius Homecoming Lights Out Shows. Performed on the Pius football field, the only lights were the flashlights taped to the left ankle of each marching band member.

Murphy was proud of his students, bands and their hard work and accomplishments. Music was his ministry and he devoted himself to his Catholic faith and to help grow Pius. With God as part of his everyday life, Catholic education was important to Murphy and his wife. “Dad would say being in a Catholic school that God was in everything we did. As a family, we are excited to be a part of this growing, thriving and loving school. And we are especially proud of the instrumental music program that has continued to grow and develop from its inception under Dad's direction.”

“Dad's greatest legacy is his family!” Jane shares. “And, now, as members of our Dad's "Murphy Family Legacy", Mom, Janet, Paul and I would like to extend this legacy to his and our "Pius Family". Just like the farm community where he was raised, you begin with raw land and a lot of hard work and passion. The result is a beautiful harvest. That was what Pius allowed Dad to do...begin with the raw material to mold and grow a great band program. For his children, Pius allowed him to be with my sister, brother and myself every day and to be our hero!”