

Teacher was 'a people person'

By Casey Hans
staff writer

An avid golfer, traveler and long-time Farmington teacher, 63-year-old Nina Toffanetti of Farmington Hills, died this week after a 1½-year battle with cancer.

The North Farmington High School Spanish teacher had worked for the Farmington Public Schools since 1969. She had taught at the former East Junior High and Harrison High School before moving to North Farmington, where she spent the past 18 years before retiring last year. She had been a teacher since 1958.

Toffanetti died Saturday, Oct. 29,

'She was a pretty bright, bubbly gal.'

— Geno Toffanetti,
Nina's husband

at Sinai Hospital of Detroit.

Her husband, Geno, said his wife still heard from Farmington-area Spanish students who had graduated 15 years ago. "She was a pretty bright, bubbly gal... very much a people person," he said.

ALWAYS ACTIVE in her field, the Detroit native had been active in the

Association of Women Students at Wayne State. She was a member of the Alpha Gamma Delta sorority and the Oakland University President's Club.

She earned a bachelor's degree in education from Wayne State University and a master's degree in education at Eastern Michigan University.

For their vacations, the couple made a number of trips to both Spain and Mexico, which "made her a more complete teacher," her husband said.

Geno and Nina Toffanetti also traveled across the country and outside of the U.S. for numerous golfing vacations during the past 15 years.

"SHE WAS an avid golfer," Geno said. "She really just couldn't get enough. We played golf all over the country."

Fellow teachers gave Nina a gold putter when she retired.

She is survived by her husband, Geno, and two daughters, Susan and Janine, all of Farmington Hills. A brother, James Catalano, also survives her. A funeral service was held Wednesday at McCabe Funeral Home in Farmington Hills.

The family asks that memorials be sent to Nina Toffanetti's name, to the American Cancer Society, where she served as a neighborhood agent/volunteer for many years.

Harrison Catalyst is tops in graphics

First place is becoming commonplace for student journalists who work at Farmington Harrison High School's Catalyst newspaper.

The paper has not only received first-place honors for the fourth year from Columbia University's Scholastic Press Association, but has also won All-Columbia Honors for its design and page layout.

"I feel really good about it," said Harrison journalism teacher and advisor Kathy Nyberg. Much of the credit, she said, should go to 1988 Harrison graduate Carig Moritz for making major graphics changes at the newspaper.

"He is really talented," she added. "I'm happy they recognized that."

THE NEWSPAPER staff is working on computer this year, teaching the student staff upgraded skills needed for today's journalism jobs. The Apple Macintosh is used for graphics at newspapers around the country.

In addition to the awards, Nyberg will again address the Columbia Scholastic Press Association conference, and has been asked to write for the scholastic Columbia Journalism Review magazine.

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clarification

In a story about the 15th county commission district race Oct. 31, David Moffitt's hometown was incorrectly listed. He lives in Farmington Hills.

A caption beneath Moffitt's picture should have made it clear that Moffitt's hometown was incorrectly listed. He lives in Farmington Hills.

In response to his opponent's call for the county to have a lobbyist in Washington, Moffitt said the county does have a Washington lobbyist — Thomas Bulger.

Moffitt will face Democrat Albert Zolton of Farmington Hills Tuesday.

Briggs gets '88 Citizen of Year award

Continued from Page 1

"She just can't say no when asked to help in any way. She has had a leading role in many local organizations, and hasn't slowed down one bit from her pre-retirement pace," Simanek continued.

Briggs, 78, a retired Farmington Public Schools teacher, was given the 1988 Citizen of the Year award to a standing ovation. Chamber vice president Mary Bush presented the award before 101 guests at the Botsford Inn, Farmington Hills.

"She said, 'Can I say a few words?' I think maybe I can. I'm very, very pleased with this," Briggs said. "But to all of my friends that are here, and you are my friends, and I know if you are here, you are involved in the community and that is one of the things that is really very necessary for a good community."

QUOTING HENRY Adams, President John Adams' great-grandson, Bush said: "A teacher affects eternity. He can never tell where his influence stops. And I certainly think Kay is a shining example of that."

Briggs, a local historian, was lauded for her activities, involvement and accomplishments. She represents Farmington Hills on the local Michigan Sesquicentennial Committee, serves as secretary for the Oakland County Sesquicentennial Committee and was chosen as "First Lady" of Oakland County for sesquicentennial festivities.

She's also chairwoman of the Farmington Hills Historical Commission and secretary of the Oakland County Historical Commission.

But there's even more. She's secretary of the Farmington Area Arts Commission serving as a liaison with area schools. She's involved in the Farmington Garden Club and serves as a director of the Livingston-Oakland Counties Credit Union.

Briggs also is involved in the Section 38 Homeowners Association and served as general chairwoman of the Botsford Inn Sesquicentennial Flower Show last year. She's produced a travelogue series for cable access Channel 12 called "Travel with Kay."

And she's a member of many organizations, including American Association of University Women, Older Women's League, Delta Kappa Gamma, Farmington Historical Society and Farmington Genealogical Society. She teaches homebound students in Oakland County.

"Whether rafting down the Colorado with a grandchild or running to three meetings in an evening, there's none like Kay. She is 'Mrs. Farmington' to all of her acquaintances; she's a dearly beloved friend to all," Simanek said.

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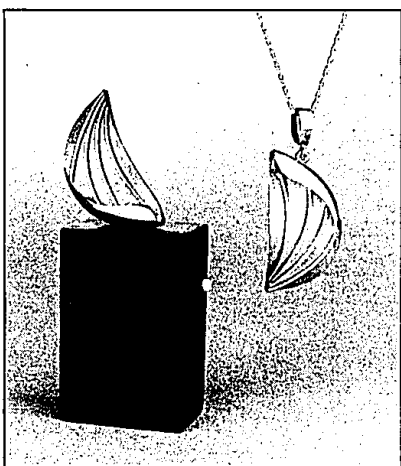
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