

I Touched the Future

Maurice's children often remarked that their dad gave them the gift of time, which meant more to them than any monetary gift. For David, a 1987 NAHS grad, his dad walked with him on the railroad beds in areas surrounding Nazareth and the vicinity. They constructed an HO layout and attended weekly NASME meetings. These endeavors led David to his future career of being a conductor and railroad engineer on the Grand Marquis Railroad System in Scottville, Michigan.

His daughter Marleah, a 1989 graduate of NAHS, shared music endeavors with her dad, as they were members of the Chieftan Drum and Bugle Corps. as trumpet and drum players. She encouraged her dad to play tennis and ski. Maurice feeling the importance of spending time with her, and being a life time learner, agreed to try out his skills with skiing and playing tennis. These sports had an impact on his future.

In 1993, after marrying a Shafer kindergarten teacher, he became actively involved in educational programs in the Nazareth Area School District. Frequently, he came to her class and spoke to the children about the history of transportation in the Lehigh Valley, always including a hands on portable train layout. Annually, Maurice participated as a reader for *Read Across America*. During career awareness week he participated as an instrument technician from Hoffman La Roche Vitamins and Chemicals, bringing in balances for the students to do hands on science experiments. Annually, Maurice served as a judge for Shafer's National Geographic Geography Bee. As a Shafer Ski Club chaperone, he instilled the love of skiing as a lifetime sport.

In October 1998, Maurice was appointed to fill the term of a NASD School Board Director. Maurice represented our district as CIT board member from 1998-2013, holding the offices of President and Treasurer of CIT. He encouraged CIT students to participate in Skills USA. He annually attended the Co-op banquet honoring CIT's business partners, and the National Technical Honor Society banquets. Currently, he is serving on the CIT Advisory Board and the NASD Comprehensive Planning Committee.

In August 17, 2000, earning his private pilot's license, Maurice participated in AOPA's Young Eagle events. He was awarded a Young Eagles Cap when he proudly flew his 50th child, ranging from 8-18 years of age, in our Cessna 150. From 2000-2005 it was up, up and away with grandparent's day, with Mr. Heller doing assimilated flight patterns, flight book of rhymes, tangram plane designs, sharing many good times. As a NASD Board of Education member, Maurice touched the future of many athletes as he supported the construction of the NAMS Natatorium, and the installation of the original artificial turf in our football stadium.

Maurice and his wife are partially funding the NASD tennis court signage. Maurice commented that he felt that this investment would touch those lives who are benefitting from this lifetime sport. Keeping one's body physically fit and mentally alert makes them a productive member of society for a lifetime.

As a member of the Kiwanis Club of the Nazareth Area, he was honored for his presidency and service to the Youth of the World by receiving the Hixson Fellowship Award in 2015. The International Rotary Foundation awarded Maurice a Paul Harris Fellow, for his contribution to Polio Plus.

Maurice Heller, through his dedicated parenting, his active involvement in the Nazareth Area School District and his community, is deserving of this "I Touched the Future" award.

Katherine J. Heller