

Distinguished Educator

Roger Chambers

Roger was heavily involved in A-F schools and the community at large, and above all, was deeply committed to student leadership. He positively impacted thousands of youth in Adams-Friendship and across all of Wisconsin.

Roger was born in Swea City, Iowa. During his childhood, his family moved to Nebraska and later to Iowa, where his father worked for a farm implement dealership. After high school graduation, Roger went to Westmar College where he received his teaching degree in 1960. In June of that year, Roger married his college sweetheart, Ellen, and they enjoyed 63 years of marriage together. They welcomed children Cathy, Marc and Willy into their lives, and later 5 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren.

Roger went on to receive a Master's Degree in Math Education from Ohio State University. He taught math in Ida Grove, Iowa; at the University of Dubuque, Dubuque Senior High School; at Black Hawk High School in South Wayne, WI, where his son, Willy, is now superintendent of schools. And finally, Roger joined at the Adams-Friendship School District, where he taught high school math and worked for his good friend, Bob Beaver.

If his students remember one thing about math, it's that "good old Pythagorus" had a theorem about a right triangle! But more than math, what Roger was best known for was his deep passion and dedication to student leadership through local student council and the Wisconsin Association of School Councils, better known as the WASC. Roger was active at the regional and state levels, serving as a WASC Region 6 Advisor and State Governing Board member for over 15 years. His leadership was recognized with the 1986 WASC Leadership Award and the 1996 WASC Advisor of the Year Award. More importantly to Roger, he guided numerous A-F high school and middle school students to their election as board members, allowing them to learn about self-governance on a board that gave equal weight to the student and advisor votes. He helped lead the A-F Student Council to two successful bids for State Conference host, first in 1988 and then in 1997. After retiring from teaching, Roger served as Executive Director of WASC for another 5 years.

Fellow teacher and student council advisor Scott Willis, who continued Roger's legacy for another 22 years at AFHS, called Roger's influence "legendary" and shared that he personally worked under the motto: "What would Roger do." Roger did great things, and as a result, many who learned from him have done great things too.

Beyond education and student leadership, Roger was also a longtime active member of the A-F Lions (known for running the Fair Stand kitchen with "Beav"), Ducks Unlimited, and Gundersen Moundview foundation board and assisted with many community projects, such as senior citizens dinners, local food drives and the Castle Rock Triathlon.

In learning of his passing, friends, colleagues and former students described Roger with phrases like: "incredible human," "great man," "great friend," "true gentleman," "heart of gold," and "the ultimate servant leader." Roger liked the poem *Drop a Pebble In the Water* by James W. Foley, which tells of the lasting waves that can be created dropping just a single stone into the water. The ripple effects of Roger's impact will be far-reaching and ever-lasting.