

# Tribute to Ilion High School Health Staff

March 2018

By Aileen Carney Sweeney



Nursing Staff and School Doctor, left to right: Mrs. Leila Russell, Dr. Everett Mack, Mrs. Marion Hoffman.

Left to right: Miss Judith Scholl, Dental Hygienist; Mrs. Frances Edick.

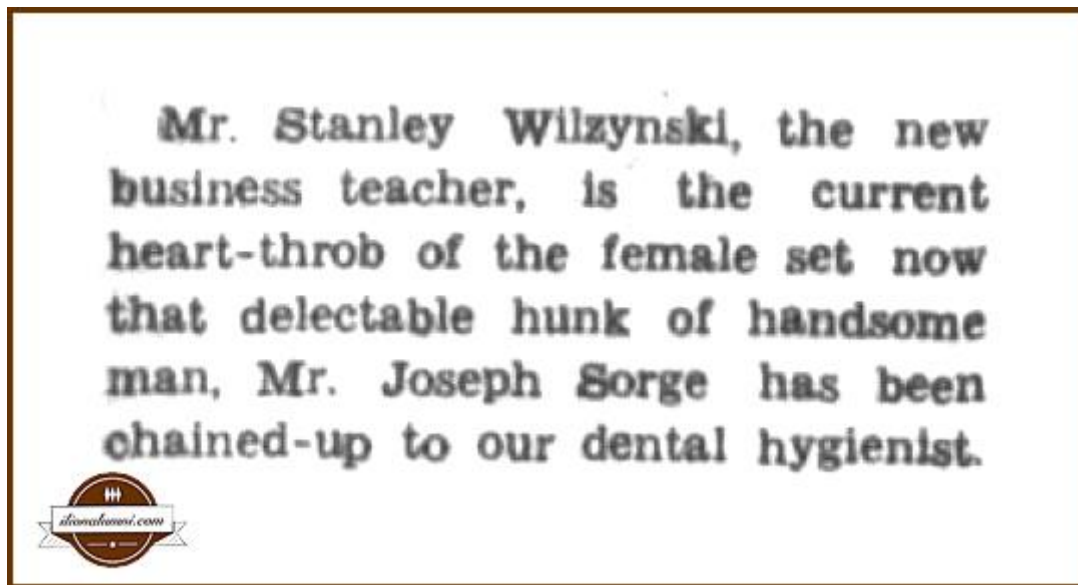
1961 School Physician: Dr. Everett Mack, School Nurses: Mrs. Leila Russell, Mrs. Marion Hoffman  
School Hygienist: Miss Judith Scholl, Nurse - Mrs. Frances Edick

## School Dental Hygienists

### "News From Old Baldy"

At one time, oral and dental care was part of a student's physical examinations. The Ilion School District employed dental hygienists going back as far as the

1940s. Mary Kay Heneka and Miss Elma Whiteman were on staff as the school dental hygienists in the 1940s. Miss Judith Scholl held the position in the 1960s.



[Iliion Sentinel - September 24, 1953](#)

Harold Whitemore, Editor of the Iliion Sentinel newspaper, under the pseudonym 'Jolly Bill' certainly had an amusing way with words. From this item published in the September 24, 1953 "Iliion Sentinel" column titled, "News from Old Baldy", one got wind that the school hygienist would soon become the future [Mrs. Joseph Sorge](#). While employed with the Iliion school system in 1953, Joe met and married school hygienist, Rose Mary Tyburski. She died March 22, 1995. Mr. Joseph Sorge, Director of Physical Education and Athletics, and Coach, age 74, of Iliion, died Wednesday, Dec. 13, 2000, unexpectedly at his home. Mr. and Mrs. Sorge are buried in Holy Trinity Cemetery. Their son, Dr. Kevin Sorge IHS 1974, is a dentist in Fayetteville, NY.

## **Iliion's First School Nurse**



1917 - School Nurse - Miss Jane Boote  
Iliion's First School Nurse

Among the graduates of the Utica General Hospital, Class of 1913, who successfully passed the State Board examination for registered nurse, was Jane E. Boote. By June of 1917, Miss Boote had been appointed public health nurse in Iliion. Her office was located at the Morgan Street School where she took calls on the phone, from 8 to 8:30 am and from 2 to 2:30 p.m. Anyone who needed the services of the public health nurse was encouraged to contact her. Her duties were performed under the direction of the Iliion Public Health Nurse Board. By October of 1917, Miss Boote was provided with a car, a Saxon roadster that had been purchased by T. A. Noffer. He not only gave liberally to the fund but also took care of the auto, during the winter, without charge. A moving picture benefit managed by Alex Robinson, collected the "...neat sum of \$401 for the purchase of the machine."

Miss Jane Boote served as public health nurse from 1917, through the 1918 Spanish Influenza Epidemic. She resigned from that position to become Ilion's first school nurse in June 1919. The Ilion School District was the first district in Herkimer County to hire a full-time school nurse. She remained in that position for three years. The County Health Officer, Dr. Frank B. Counterman, worked with the school nurse to contain contagious illnesses.

"Dr. Frank B. Counterman, Health Officer, states that there are at present but four cases of diphtheria under quarantine in the village, and with the present precautions being carried out, it is believed that there will be no serious outbreak of the disease. The mild cases of sore throat, oftentimes unattended by a physician, and which may go unrecognized as diphtheria are the most fruitful sources of infections, from which serious cases often arise. Miss Boote, the school nurse, is under instructions from the health officer to exclude from school and take cultures of the throats of all children with sore throats and to secure negative cultures of all children with history of recent sore throat before allowing them back in school.

These methods have been followed for some time back and have resulted in the discovery of two carriers, who have been cleared up and are now well." -

[December 4, 1919 Ilion Citizen](#)

From 1923, until just before her death, Miss Boote served as county tuberculosis nurse. She was secretary of the county Tuberculosis Committee and organized the first annual Christmas Seal drive. She was instrumental in the establishment of Pine Crest Sanatorium for tuberculosis patients. Jane Boote died, at age 57, on Sunday April 19, 1942, in her home at 86 John St. She was buried in Armory Hill Cemetery.- [April 30, 1942 - Utica NY Daily Press](#)

## School Nurses 1925 - 1940

### Leila Russell and Ethel Stevens

Mrs. Leila (Roberts) Russell IHS 1922 was school nurse, in the Ilion Public Schools, for seven consecutive years from 1925 until 1932. She resigned her position as school nurse on March 1, 1932. Mrs. Russell would later return to serve the district as school nurse and attendance officer. In 1932, she was succeeded by nurse Miss Ethel Stevens.





1964 School Health Staff

School Nurse - Mrs. Leila Russell, School Dental Hygienist - Miss Judith Scholl  
School Nurses - Mrs. Marion Hoffman, Mrs. Frances Edick

## School Nurses 1940s

### **Catherine Ruth (Bedworth) Shelley, Marion Hollandt (Hoffman) and Leila Russell**

Miss Catherine Bedworth, 212 Elm Street, formerly of the Syracuse Public Health Department was appointed school nurse by the Iliion Board of Education in October 1940. The appointment was for a three-year probationary period starting on October 14, 1940. Miss Bedworth was chosen by the board after long and careful consideration of a number of applicants. She was a graduate of the Iliion High School, Class of 1933 and the nurses' training school of University Hospital of the Good Shepherd, Syracuse. At the time of her appointment, the position of School Nurse has been vacant due to the resignation of Miss Ethel Stevens. Miss Stevens resigned to accept a position in Hyde Park. Miss Bedworth's Iliion salary was less than \$2,000 while Miss Stevens had been paid \$2,100 yearly. - [October 3, 1940 - Iliion NY Sentinel](#)

Miss Catherine Bedworth, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Harold E. Bedworth, Ilion, married Mr. Barthau Shelly, Ilion high school physical education teacher and coach, of 122 John Street, son of Mrs. Johanna Shelly, New York. The marriage ceremony, performed by Rev. L. R. Benson, was held on Monday evening, July 20, 1942 in St. Augustine's Church. The wedding dinner was served at the Prospect Hotel, Herkimer. At the time of her marriage, Miss Bedworth had completed her second year as nurse in the Ilion schools. - [July 20, 1942 - Ilion NY Sentinel](#)

One week after their wedding, Mr. Bart Shelly joined the 27th and largest contingent of Draft Board 409 inductees, which was comprised of 61 inductees, three volunteers and five transfers from other boards. Most of the men took advantage of the initiatory two-week furlough that was then permitted inductees. A send-off for the contingent was arranged by Crim-Shaffer Post, American Legion. - [July 30, 1942 - Ilion NY Sentinel](#)

[Catherine Ruth \(Bedworth\) Shelley](#) IHS 1933, and School Nurse, age 98, formerly of 122 South Fifth Avenue, Ilion, passed away peacefully on Monday, July 2, 2012, in Greenwood, SC, with her son, Harold and his wife, Barbara, by her side. Catherine was interred at Arlington Cemetery, in September 2012, next to her husband of fifty-two and a half years, Barthau Shelley (former Ilion teacher, coach and West Hill School Principal).

### **Mrs. Leila (Roberts) Russell**

#### **Attendance Officer and School Nurse**

Mrs. Leila (Roberts) Russell, former school nurse, returned on a substitute basis as school nurse and attendance officer in September 1943. Mrs. Russell would be employed, as an Ilion school nurse, through the 1960s. She was the mother of Jane Russell Nile IHS 1950, Margaret (Peggy) Williamson IHS 1951 and Ben Russell IHS 1957. She was the wife of pharmacist, Benjamin A. Russell Jr. Her husband passed away in 1955. Mrs. Leila (Roberts) Russell died in 1990 and was buried, next to her husband, in Armory Hill Cemetery.

### **Dr. Erwin Hollandt and wife Marian (Hollandt) Hoffman**

## School Physician and School Nurse

Over the years, the school district employed many physicians as the school medical examiner. Oftentimes, the doctor hired was a former student. Some alumni who served in that position include Dr. Adelbert C. Douglass IHS Class of 1893, Dr. C. J. Diss IHS 1897, Dr. Erwin William Hollandt IHS 1925, Dr. Vincent Mack IHS 1930 and Dr. Theodore Carney IHS 1936. Dr. L. P. Jones also served as the school medical examiner. Other alumni served as school physicians in other districts. Dr. Arthur Applegate, 1936, was the school physician for the Mohawk School District.



School Nurse - Marion (Hollandt) Hoffman  
School Nurse 1945 - 1976

Doctor Hollandt had been school physician for two years in 1943 but had to decline the appointment for his third year because of ill health. [Doctor Hollandt](#) died in his home at 17 Third Street, in the evening of October 11, 1944. Dr. Hollandt was only 35 years old when he died and left his widow with two young children, Robert and Barbara Hollandt, to raise. His widow, the former Marion Vail, was soon after hired by the school district to serve as School Nurse. Marion later married Howard G. Hoffman in 1948. [Mrs. Hoffman](#) was employed by the Iliion School District, as a teacher and school nurse, for 31 years, from 1945 to 1976. Marion (Hollandt) Hoffman, age 95, a longtime Iliion resident, passed away Tuesday, June 5, 2007. She is buried in Armory Hill Cemetery.

## School Physicians

In addition to handling day-to-day student care and examinations, the officials often were called upon to deal with epidemics like influenza, diphtheria, tuberculosis, polio and other childhood illnesses such as measles, mumps and strep throat.

In June 1945, under a free program promoted by the Herkimer County Tuberculosis and Public Health Association, Ilion high school students and staff received chest x-rays. The films were read by Dr. Herbert Schwartz at Pine Crest Sanatorium and the results were given to the family physicians and parents. The program was continued for a number of years. The emphasis was placed on high school students, 15 years and over and school personnel.



# Editorials

Joseph Baker, principal of Iliion High School, Dr. Vincent Mack, school physician; Dr. Donald Davidson, village health officer, and Dr. Arthur Applegate, Mohawk school health officer, exercised excellent judgment in postponing the scheduled Mohawk-Iliion football game this Saturday.

Both the Whitesboro Central School game of last week and the Mohawk game of this week were called off because of the slight chance of contagion on the squad from a mild case of polio reported on the Iliion football team two weeks ago.

It would have been easy for Baker and the health officers to shrug the matter off by saying the case was light, it happened several days ago — and let's go ahead with the game.

[Iliion Sentinel October 7, 1954](#)

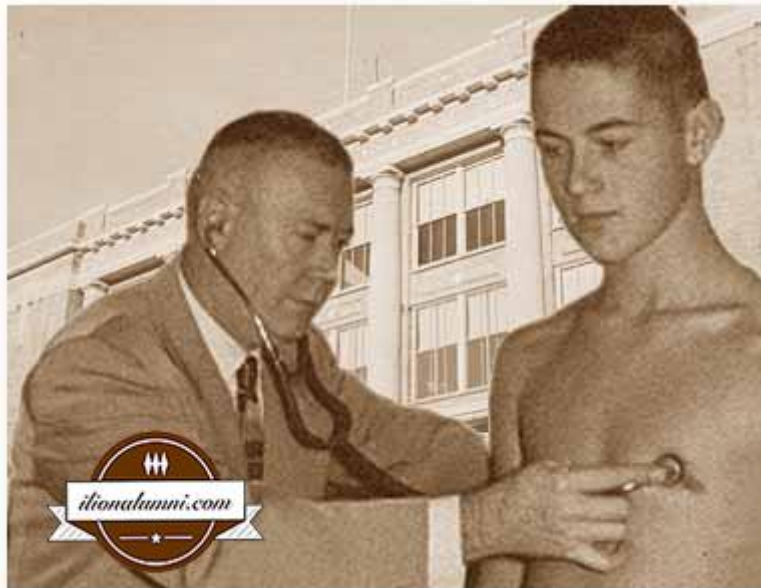
Editorial commending school health officials

In October 1954, Iliion School Physician, Dr. Everett 'Vincent' Mack, along with Dr. Donald Davidson, village health officer, and Dr. Arthur Applegate (IHS 1936), Mohawk school health officer, with the Iliion High School Principal, Joseph Baker, postponed the Saturday football game between Iliion and Mohawk. The decision was made to prevent the chance of players and spectators being exposed to polio. A mild case of polio had been reported on the Iliion football team two weeks before the decision to postpone.

Measles, mumps and chickenpox infested the district in January of 1955. More than 300 children were out in the five grade schools: East Frankfort, West Hill, North Street, Annunciation and Weber Avenue. There were also more than 60 high school pupils out. Dr. Everett Mack, school physician, and Mrs. Marion Hoffman, school nurse, monitored the situation closely. School officials said nearly all parents had been very co-operative in keeping children home after recovering from the measles but the nurse has been kept busy taking boys and girls home to avoid the chance of pneumonia or other complications. In April 1955, meetings for setting up clinics for the administration of the first Salk polio vaccine were held. The clinics were planned for first and second graders. In Herkimer County, more than 1,000 children were given parental consent for the inoculations.

### **Dr. Everett Vincent Mack**

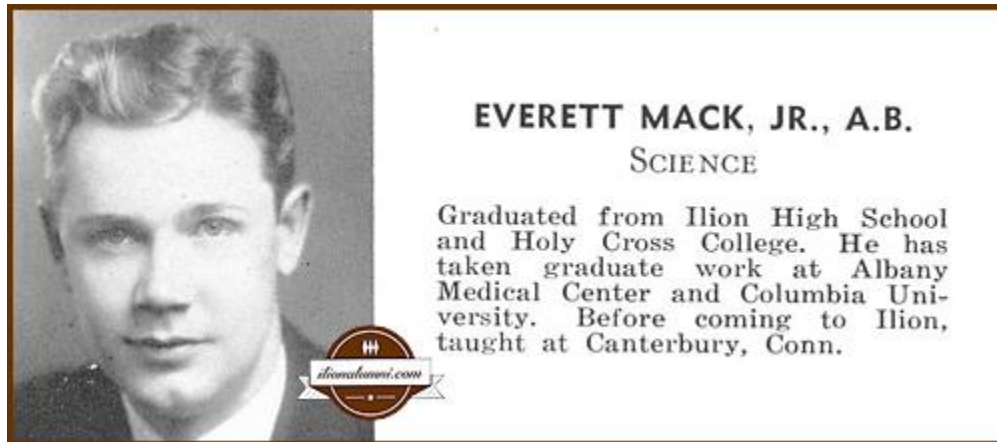
**Pediatrician - Long Time School Physician**



School Physician, Dr. Everett Mack examines Tom Pratt, Class of 1961

Most baby-boomers can remember receiving a school physical conducted by the district's doctor. For most of our education in the 1950s, and 1960s, that physician was Iliion alumnus, Dr. Everett Vincent Mack.

Dr. Mack was born in Iliion in 1912. He graduated from Iliion High School in 1930; during the same time that his mother, Genevieve Mack, was serving on the Iliion School Board of Education. His mother would serve on the Board of Education for over 22 years. She also was a teacher and Principal at the Morgan Street School.



1941 Yearbook - Science Teacher Everett Mack

Everett Mack graduated from Holy Cross College in 1933. He served as the head of the science department in the Canterbury School, New Milford, Conn., from 1936 - 1940. He was hired by the Iliion School District in August 1940 to succeed Mrs. Davies as science teacher. He remained in that position until 1944 when he enlisted in the service.

### **Teacher Everett Mack - Gunshot Victim**

E. Vincent Mack, teacher in the Iliion High School; and son of Mrs. Everett Mack, Iliion, was shot in the arm while hunting for deer near Otter Lake in November of 1942. Mr. Mack was sitting alone on a run way when he was shot. He said he believed the shot came from about 200 yards away. The bullet tore through the upper part of his right arm. The wound was not considered serious except for the amount of blood that he lost. Mack walked to Otter Lake. He then was taken to the office of Dr. R. W. Lindsay, Old Forge, for treatment. From there, he was transported to the Iliion Hospital in the Eldridge ambulance. Dr. B J. Kelly, Frankfort, oversaw the treatment for Mr. Mack. As a victim of a gun shot wound, one wonders how Dr. Mack would react to the school shootings that have plagued our nation in recent years. [Iliion Sentinel November 5, 1942](#)

### **Dr. Everett Mack - School Physician**

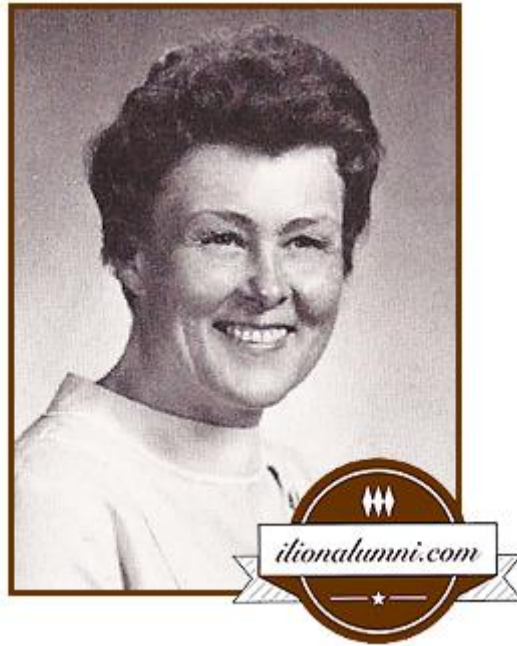
Everett Mack entered Syracuse University Medical School, graduated in 1950 and established a medical practice in Iliion. He temporarily closed that practice, in 1953, to further his studies in pediatrics at Syracuse University Medical College. In 1954, Dr. Theodore Carney, retired as school physician, the appointment he held for two years from 1952 - 1954. Through the years, the practice has been to change school physicians every two years. In 1954, the annual salary for the position was \$1,300. Dr. Everett Mack, a pediatrician, was named to the two-year term in 1954, at a salary of one dollar per pupil or approximately \$1,800. At first, the Board of Education was hesitant in granting the \$500 increase in one lump sum. Due to the annexation of the East Frankfort School and formation of the new Iliion Central School District, George Purple, superintendent argued that Dr. Mack would have additional work and the pay amount was more in line with other schools. "Dr. Mack has indicated to the board he is interested in giving more than a cursory examination to the children although such examinations will be handled with care and no children will be embarrassed."

Dr. Everett Mack was also known to go by his middle name, 'Vince'. He remained as the district's school physician up until the late 1960s. Dr. Mack resided with his wife and maintained his office practice at his home on George Street. He was the father of four children, Suzanne (IHS 1956), Everett V. (IHS 1958), Mary Sharon Mack (IHS 1965) and James "Jimmy" Mack, IHS 1971. His wife, Helen Mack passed away in the 1960s. Dr. Mack remarried Mrs. Rapenske. He passed away in 1972 and was buried in the McCann family plot in St. Agnes Cemetery, Iliion.

## **1970s - 1990s School Nurses**

**Mrs. O'Conner and Mrs. Basi**





1975 - School Nurse - [Mrs. Eleanora Theresa \(Cahill\) O'Connor](#)  
Ilion Class of 1944 Ilion Graduate

Mrs. O'Connor was a graduate from Ilion High School Class in 1944. She received her Bachelor's in Nursing from the College of St. Rose in Albany. For five years, she taught as a health teacher with Herkimer BOCES, before returning to school in 1972. She and earned her School Nurse Certification from Oneonta State and returned to her alma mater, Ilion High School. She held the positions of school nurse and health teacher until her retirement in 1988. She passed away peacefully, on Monday afternoon, July 24, 2017 at the age of 91.



Ms. Cathy Basi



Last Ilion High School Nurse - Ms. Cathy Basi

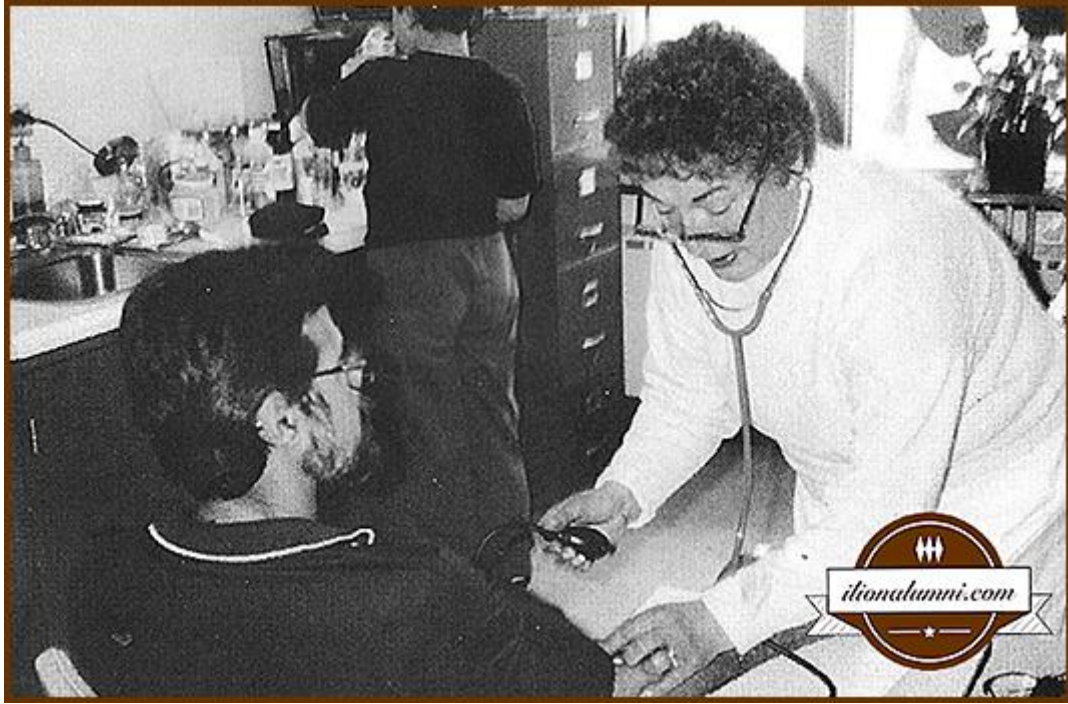
Ms. Cathy Basi continued her duties as School Nurse in the merged Iliion-Mohawk School District. She is currently the high school nurse at [Central Valley Academy](#).

## Elementary School Nurses



[Florence \(Shaw\) Baker](#) - School Nurse  
IHS Class of 1939

Florence (Shaw) Baker graduated from IHS in 1939. She began her nursing career employed as an industrial nurse with Remington Rand. She then took time off to start a family. After raising her four children through their elementary years, she undertook the challenging task of completing her School Nurse teaching degree from Oneonta State. Upon completion, she began her employment with the Iliion School system. This was a job Florence truly loved until her retirement in 1976. Mrs. Baker passed away peacefully on Tuesday, July 4th, 2017 at the age of 96.

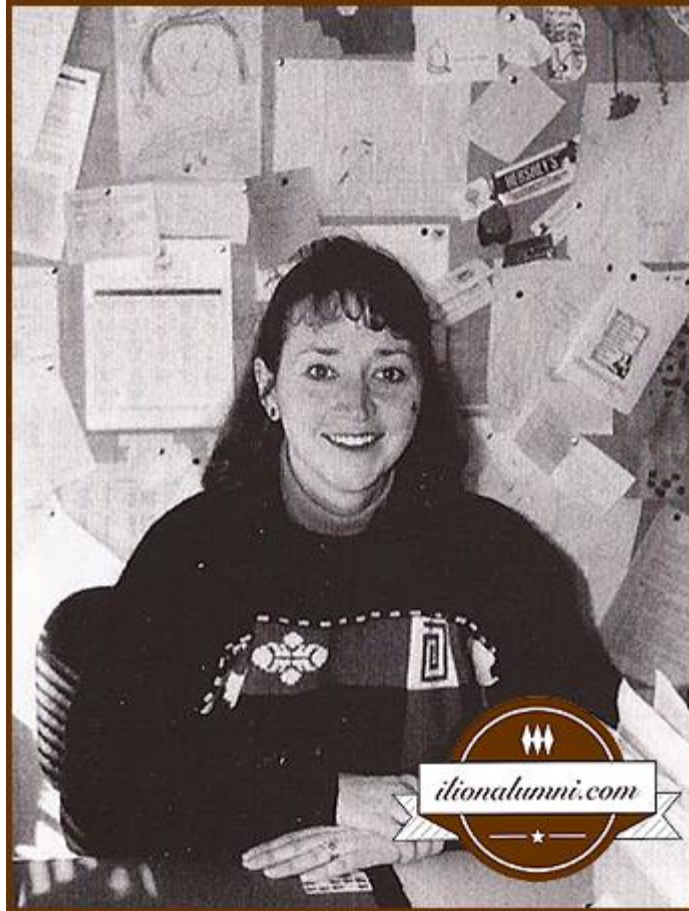


Barringer Road School - 1992 Mrs Hall.





Barringer Road School - 1996 Shelley (Danforth IHS 1970) Morris



Barringer Road School - 1997 [Mrs. Mary Ellen Clark](http://ditionalumni.com)



Barringer Road School - 2000 [Mrs. Mary Ellen Clark](http://ilionalumni.com)



Barringer Road School - 2004 Shelley (Danforth IHS 1970) Morris

## Today's Health Officials Duties

"A Registered Nurse is on staff in each school building in the merged school district to assist students who may become ill or injured during the school day. School must perform vision tests for students in grades K-3, 5, 7 & 10 and hearing tests for students in grades K, 1, 3, 5, 7 and 10. New York state requires that all students in grades Prekindergarten, Kindergarten, 2, 4, 7 and 10 have student physicals. Physicals may be performed by the family's physician or by the school's Physician Assistant. Athletes are required to have a physical annually to participate in interscholastic sports." More information is provided on the [Central Valley School District's Health Services page](#).

We will always remember that having the tender care of a school nurse was the next best thing to having mom take care of us when we were ill.