

OUTSTANDING ALUMNI AWARD 2019

ORIOLE FULLER HART – Class of 1955

After graduation, Oriole held various clerical positions while attending evening classes at the CU Extension in Denver. She graduated from CU with a BA in Math in 1973.

Early in her career she held several very interesting positions including work as a Geological Draftsman in their Exploration Projects Group abstracting the State of New Mexico for the Bureau of Land Management.

She then decided she was interested in "computers" and went to school at Emily Griffith Opportunity School 8 hours a day, 5 days a week for nine months to learn Programming. During that time, she worked part time at Central Bank working with computers and after the nine months of schooling, she went to work full time at Central Bank as a Computer Programmer. Next, Oriole was hired by NCR and spent 15 years with them. The last 4 years with NCR was spent teaching Computer & Programming Classes and Computer Operating Systems. During that time, she made her first trips out of the country. After leaving NCR, she spent a year consulting, then went to work for CSF a Computer Software House in Dayton Ohio. During that time, she traveled to all over the world working on customer projects. Malaysia, Singapore, and Kuwait were some of the countries visited. As a result of her work with CSF she moved to Kuwait and went to work for Gulf Bank for the next 8 years.

It was during her time in Kuwait that on Aug. 2, 1990, the area was invaded by Iraq. The French, British and Americans were prevented from leaving Kuwait and were considered hostages. Five weeks after the invasion, she was in the first group of American women that were evacuated. They gathered next to the burned-out Safeway store where Canadians helped them board busses which took her group to the Kuwait Airport. They boarded an Iraqi plane that flew them to Baghdad. Their Passports were stamped with an Iraqi Exit Visa. They re-boarded the plane and flew to Jordan. A US flight which had brought troops to Saudi Arabia then came to Jordan, picked them up and flew them to Frankfurt, Germany. From there they were flown to South Carolina and she finally arrived back to Denver.

Less than 2 months after the liberation in April 1991, she returned to Kuwait to resume her job at Gulf Bank. It was more dangerous then than during her period as a hostage. There were more than 700 oil wells on fire or damaged. Sometimes at noon the sky was pitch black from the smoke. There were mines and booby traps everywhere. Small mines about the size of baseballs washing up on the beaches where they would explode if they hit something solid.

In 1996, at the age of 60, she left Kuwait and returned to CSF which had relocated to Sarasota. Florida. She worked there till she retired at age 76 and moved back to Denver.

Upon returning to Denver, she began her "Volunteer" career. She has been a Docent at the Museum of Nature and Science for the past 5 years working in the Space Odyssey exhibit. During that time, she has taken classes in Historical Geology, Oceanography, Weather & Climate, and Global Climate Change which have expanded her knowledge in her areas of responsibility on Science on a Sphere (SOS). She began working Part time at the Aurora Center for Active Adults in September 2017, where she provides continual help to the Aurora Seniors who visit the Center.

Five years ago, Oriole became a member of the Alumni Board for West High School. She was elected Treasurer 3 years ago. She says it's ironic because when she was at West, she ran for the Class Treasurer's position all four of her years in High School and was never elected. She has done an outstanding job as the Treasurer. As a result of her background in systems and programming, she has developed an excellent reporting system for the Alumni Association. The records are in the best shape they have been for years. She has provided excellent reports and with details and comparisons for all the funds which have been collected and those which have been given to various recipients such as scholarships, grants, etc. When our status as a Non-Profit was rescinded for failing to report, Oriole did the research and submitted the information to get us reinstated with the Federal and State agencies. She has used her own funds to purchase the current accounting software for our system and sorted and incorporated what we had in our previous records. As her fine tuning of the Alumni Association records continues, the Association can provide more detailed and accurate financial reports to the members and government officials. This also enables the Association to monitor operations and provide data to assess the present and future needs for change to better serve West High School students, staff and Alumni membership.

Oriole has 3 children, 6 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren. Her life philosophy is "Life is an adventure, and sometimes you get more adventure than what you bargain for".