

**Mary Kay McNeill is being honored by
GFWC Antioch Jr. Woman's Club**

Mary Kay McNeill poured her entire life into education. She began her career as a teacher at Fremont Elementary School in Mundelein. In 1979 she settled in Antioch, where she taught at both Antioch Upper Grade School and W.C. Petty Elementary School. In 1992, Mary Kay became the first woman principal for Antioch School District #34, beginning at Antioch Lower Grade School and retiring from W.C. Petty School. She faced many challenges in a position that had long been dominated by men.

Mary Kay's dedication to students extended well beyond the school day. Aware of the needs of poor families, she spent her own money to buy Christmas presents for the children and delivered them to the families' homes.

Mary Kay also served on the Antioch Public Library Board of Trustees for over 27 years. Every year she purchased books for each student in the school as a birthday gift. She had great empathy and truly wanted to help every student.

In her honor, the school, where Mary Kay first served as a principal was renamed in 2019 as Mary Kay McNeill Early Learning Center, and it became a school for students aged 3 and 4. To honor her passion for libraries, reading, and children, each child there receives a book on their birthday, a tradition she began so many years ago.