

ALASKA LEGISLATURE

IN MEMORIAM

GLORIA VIRGINIA "GINNY" PACKER

The members of the Thirty-Third Alaska State Legislature honor the life and legacy of Ginny Packer and her tremendous contributions to advance music education and performance in Sitka.

Former Blatchley Middle School music teacher Ginny Packer passed away on January 22, 2024, in Oak Harbor, Washington. A consummate teacher dedicated to her students' exposure to the joys of performing music, her influence continues to be felt by many over the years.

Born April 18, 1942, in Kenosha, Wisconsin, she was raised in various farming communities from Kansas to Washington. Ginny attended Quincy High School in Washington where she met her future husband of sixty years, Lance Packer. Ginny earned her bachelor's degree in music at Washington State University and her master's degree in creative arts education at San Francisco State University. Her first teaching position was in Turkey where she and Lance were Peace Corps volunteers. She taught high school music for a year in Crow, Oregon, and junior high music for two years in Anacortes, Washington.

In 1976 Ginny and her family moved to Alaska. She taught K-12 music at King Cove School where she established the school's first music program. In 1977, after moving to Sitka, she taught band and chorus at Blatchley Middle School. She was instrumental in expanding the music curriculum into jazz, ensembles, and multiple grade levels. Combining drama, dance, and art classes, Ginny and three colleagues, including her husband Lance, created yearly musical play productions. An outgrowth of those productions was a combined arts and music class. As a result of this work, Ginny and her Sitka colleagues received a Rockefeller Outstanding Award in the Arts grant in 1984. All four teachers took students on performing arts tours of Japan in 1984 and Poland, Estonia, and the Soviet Union in 1988. Ginny was leading a renaissance of the arts in Sitka schools.

After Ginny traveled away from Sitka to teach in other communities, she maintained contact with her former students, encouraging and appreciating their continued interest and passion for music. Ginny continued to teach solos, ensembles, choral music, specialty choirs, musicals, band, and jazz. She also taught college-level classes in instructional technique for music majors and participated in adjudications at music festivals. Because of her dedication and infectious enthusiasm for middle school music, the small community of Sitka has produced scores of professional musicians and music educators.

In honor of Ginny's legacy, four former students gathered after her passing to produce a musical tribute to her on the local radio station. Three of these students are now teachers in Sitka, including two in music, and one former student is the director of the nationally recognized Sitka Fine Arts Camp. All the teachers make an impact, but an enduring legacy like Ginny's is truly uncommon.

The members of the Thirty-Third Alaska State Legislature join Ginny's family, her devoted students, and admirers to remember how she so dramatically affected the Sitka arts community. Ginny had a great love for music and she, in turn, is beloved by all who have been touched by her magic.




CATHY TILTON
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE


GARY STEVENS
PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE


REP. REBECCA HIMSCHOOT
SPONSOR


SEN. BERT STEDMAN
CO-SPONSOR

Date: April 26, 2024

ALASKA LEGISLATURE

IN MEMORIAM

GLORIA VIRGINIA "GINNY" PACKER

The members of the Thirty-Third Alaska State Legislature honor the life and legacy of Ginny Packer and her tremendous contributions to advance music education and performance in Sitka.

Former Blatchley Middle School music teacher Ginny Packer passed away on January 22, 2024, in Oak Harbor, Washington. A consummate teacher dedicated to her students' exposure to the joys of performing music, her influence continues to be felt by many over the years.

Born April 18, 1942, in Kenosha, Wisconsin, she was raised in various farming communities from Kansas to Washington. Ginny attended Quincy High School in Washington where she met her future husband of sixty years, Lance Packer. Ginny earned her bachelor's degree in music at Washington State University and her master's degree in creative arts education at San Francisco State University. Her first teaching position was in Turkey where she and Lance were Peace Corps volunteers. She taught high school music for a year in Crow, Oregon, and junior high music for two years in Anacortes, Washington.

In 1976 Ginny and her family moved to Alaska. She taught K-12 music at King Cove School where she established the school's first music program. In 1977, after moving to Sitka, she taught band and chorus at Blatchley Middle School. She was instrumental in expanding the music curriculum into jazz, ensembles, and multiple grade levels. Combining drama, dance, and art classes, Ginny and three colleagues, including her husband Lance, created yearly musical play productions. An outgrowth of those productions was a combined arts and music class. As a result of this work, Ginny and her Sitka colleagues received a Rockefeller Outstanding Award in the Arts grant in 1984. All four teachers took students on performing arts tours of Japan in 1984 and Poland, Estonia, and the Soviet Union in 1988. Ginny was leading a renaissance of the arts in Sitka schools.

After Ginny traveled away from Sitka to teach in other communities, she maintained contact with her former students, encouraging and appreciating their continued interest and passion for music. Ginny continued to teach solos, ensembles, choral music, specialty choirs, musicals, band, and jazz. She also taught college-level classes in instructional technique for music majors and participated in adjudications at music festivals. Because of her dedication and infectious enthusiasm for middle school music, the small community of Sitka has produced scores of professional musicians and music educators.

In honor of Ginny's legacy, four former students gathered after her passing to produce a musical tribute to her on the local radio station. Three of these students are now teachers in Sitka, including two in music, and one former student is the director of the nationally recognized Sitka Fine Arts Camp. All the teachers make an impact, but an enduring legacy like Ginny's is truly uncommon.

The members of the Thirty-Third Alaska State Legislature join Ginny's family, her devoted students, and admirers to remember how she so dramatically affected the Sitka arts community. Ginny had a great love for music and she, in turn, is beloved by all who have been touched by her magic.




CATHY TILTON
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE


GARY STEVENS
PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE


REP REBECCA HIMSCHOOT
SPONSOR


SEN BERT STEDMAN
CO-SPONSOR

Date: April 26, 2024

ALASKA LEGISLATURE

IN MEMORIAM

GLORIA VIRGINIA "GINNY" PACKER

The members of the Thirty-Third Alaska State Legislature honor the life and legacy of Ginny Packer and her tremendous contributions to advance music education and performance in Sitka.

Former Blatchley Middle School music teacher Ginny Packer passed away on January 22, 2024, in Oak Harbor, Washington. A consummate teacher dedicated to her students' exposure to the joys of performing music, her influence continues to be felt by many over the years.

Born April 18, 1942, in Kenosha, Wisconsin, she was raised in various farming communities from Kansas to Washington. Ginny attended Quincy High School in Washington where she met her future husband of sixty years, Lance Packer. Ginny earned her bachelor's degree in music at Washington State University and her master's degree in creative arts education at San Francisco State University. Her first teaching position was in Turkey where she and Lance were Peace Corps volunteers. She taught high school music for a year in Crow, Oregon, and junior high music for two years in Anacortes, Washington.

In 1976 Ginny and her family moved to Alaska. She taught K-12 music at King Cove School where she established the school's first music program. In 1977, after moving to Sitka, she taught band and chorus at Blatchley Middle School. She was instrumental in expanding the music curriculum into jazz, ensembles, and multiple grade levels. Combining drama, dance, and art classes, Ginny and three colleagues, including her husband Lance, created yearly musical play productions. An outgrowth of those productions was a combined arts and music class. As a result of this work, Ginny and her Sitka colleagues received a Rockefeller Outstanding Award in the Arts grant in 1984. All four teachers took students on performing arts tours of Japan in 1984 and Poland, Estonia, and the Soviet Union in 1988. Ginny was leading a renaissance of the arts in Sitka schools.

After Ginny traveled away from Sitka to teach in other communities, she maintained contact with her former students, encouraging and appreciating their continued interest and passion for music. Ginny continued to teach solos, ensembles, choral music, specialty choirs, musicals, band, and jazz. She also taught college-level classes in instructional technique for music majors and participated in adjudications at music festivals. Because of her dedication and infectious enthusiasm for middle school music, the small community of Sitka has produced scores of professional musicians and music educators.

In honor of Ginny's legacy, four former students gathered after her passing to produce a musical tribute to her on the local radio station. Three of these students are now teachers in Sitka, including two in music, and one former student is the director of the nationally recognized Sitka Fine Arts Camp. All the teachers make an impact, but an enduring legacy like Ginny's is truly uncommon.

The members of the Thirty-Third Alaska State Legislature join Ginny's family, her devoted students, and admirers to remember how she so dramatically affected the Sitka arts community. Ginny had a great love for music and she, in turn, is beloved by all who have been touched by her magic.




CATHY TILTON
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE


GARY STEVENS
PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE


REP. REBECCA HIMSCHOOT
SPONSOR


SEN. BERT STEDMAN
CO-SPONSOR

Date: April 26, 2024