

Obituary -- David G. Greenwood, a retired Baltimore County career educator

By Frederick N. Rasmussen
The Baltimore Sun
September 17, 2017



David G. Greenwood, a retired Baltimore County public schools educator who rose from a Dundalk classroom to become a much-admired administrator, died Wednesday of a heart attack at Bonnie Blink, the Maryland Masonic Home in Hunt Valley. The Mays Chapel North resident was 82.

“Dave was a strong disciplinarian but was always very fair,” said Robert Y. Dubel, who headed Baltimore County public schools for

16 years, retiring in 1992. “He had high academic expectations and was respected by the students. We were impressed with him when he was assistant superintendent for the central area where he had 35 schools under his direction, which is one-fifth of the county’s schools,” Dr. Dubel said. “And all of his principals liked and respected him. He was a delightful person.”

“He was a fabulous administrator and in the Dundalk area was such an icon. He was a terrific educator, was admired by his staff, and loved by the community,” said Nancy S. Grasmick, former state superintendent of schools. “He was a person who saw life in the most positive way, and I never saw a person who smiled more. He overcame much adversity, but always saw the best in life,” Dr. Grasmick said. “He was a wonderful, wonderful joyous man.”

“ ‘Kids are the boss. Do what they want,’ he’d say,” said Tom Toporovich, former secretary to the Baltimore County Council, a Dundalk activist and a longtime friend. “I am not saying that he gave away the school; what he meant was do what the kids need, not what you think needs to be done.”

The son of George S. Greenwood, a Bethlehem Steel Corp. supervisor, and Rowena A. Fountaine, a homemaker, David George Greenwood was born in Buffalo, N.Y., and moved with his family in 1937 to Dundalk.

“He was raised in both Dundalk and Sparrows Point,” said his wife of 49 years, the former G. Sueanne Feihe, who was the secretary at Hereford Middle School for many years. When Mr. Greenwood was 16, he had his first job at the Nelson Co., a box manufacturing company, and worked for four years during the summer at Sparrows Point. He was a 1953 graduate of Loyola High School, where he sang in the glee club, worked as a reporter for the school newspaper, and was business manager of the yearbook. “He had to ride the streetcar from Dundalk and then take two transit buses to

get to Homeland, where he caught the Loyola bus that took him to Blakefield,” his wife said. After graduating in 1957 from what is now Loyola University Maryland, where he earned a bachelor’s degree in biology,

Mr. Greenwood served as a radio field operator from 1957 to 1963 with the Marine Corps Reserve. From 1957 to 1971, he attended and took courses in science and school administration at Morgan State, what is now McDaniel College, Loyola, the Community College of Baltimore County-Essex and Vassar College. In 1975, he earned a master’s degree in education in administration and supervision from the Johns Hopkins University. Mr. Greenwood began his career in 1958 teaching biology and general science at Dundalk High School. In 1963, he was named science department chairman at Patapsco High School, a position he held until 1972, when he was appointed assistant principal there. “He made his mark at Patapsco High School,” Dr. Dubel said. “When you walked in, you knew it was a very orderly school.”

In 1979, he became principal of Catonsville Junior High School, and in 1981 he was appointed principal of Patapsco High School. “He was so popular at Patapsco High School, he was always being invited to class reunions,” Dr. Dubel said. Additionally, he coached soccer at Dundalk and Patapsco high schools from 1962 to 1971, and was student council adviser at the two schools from 1962 to 1970. In 1962, he was appointed to the Ad-Hoc Committee on Living Standards by then-Baltimore County Executive Spiro T. Agnew. He was appointed in 1965 to the Baltimore County Commission on Physical Fitness, where he served for five years, by Gov. J. Millard Tawes. From 1966 to 1971, he was a member of the Baltimore County Youth Commission. In 1990, he was promoted to assistant superintendent, a position he held until his retirement in 1992. His professional memberships included serving on the board during the 1980s of the Secondary School Administrators Association, and from 1989 to 1990, on the board of the Maryland Association of Secondary School Principals.

Even though Mr. Greenwood lived for 30 years on Dunkirk Road in Rodgers Forge and moved in 1999 to Mays Chapel North, he stayed connected to the Dundalk-Sparrows Point neighborhoods. From 1984 to 2000, he was president of the Dundalk Concert Association that brought artists from the world of music to Dundalk. He was chairman of the Dundalk Centennial Celebration Association from 1993 to 1995 and served as president of the Dundalk Jaycees in 1961. Mr. Greenwood was a member of the board of the Greater Dundalk Chamber of Commerce from 1983 to 1985, and was named Outstanding Young Man of Dundalk in 1965 and Dundalk Humanitarian of the Year in 1995. “He remained active with the Dundalk community, of which he was a vital part,” Dr. Dubel said. “People saw him in the community as one of their own,” Dr. Grasmick said. “He was always thinking about what could enhance the area and provide opportunities.”

For a number of years, Mr. Greenwood waged a battle against diabetes that eventually left him a double amputee and blind. “He endured amputations and dialysis three days a week,” Mr. Toporovich said. “I always thought of Dave as a living profile in courage for what he had gone through during his lifetime.” “He never lost his good nature, despite

his difficulties,” Dr. Dubel said. Mrs. Greenwood said her husband never let his medical problems get him down. “He wasn’t depressed, he was still volunteering and active. He was a very strong man,” she said. He was a life member of the Dundalk Council of the Knights of Columbus, and an active member of the Blind Veterans Association, the Marine Corps League, the patient and family advisory council at the University of Maryland St. Joseph Medical Center and the Baltimore Council of Retired School Personnel. “We did some traveling, but volunteering was his hobby,” Mrs. Greenwood said.

Mr. Greenwood was an avid Baltimore Colts, Orioles and Ravens fan and collected memorabilia associated with those teams. Mr. Greenwood was a communicant of the Catholic Community of St. Francis Xavier in Cockeysville. Plans for a Mass of Christian burial to be held in the chapel of Our Lady of Montserrat on the campus of Loyola High School are incomplete.

In addition to his wife, Mr. Greenwood is survived by a son, John D. Greenwood of Annapolis; and a grandson.