



## **Ron DiLorenzo** – *Education and Religion*

Ronald Jacob DiLorenzo, or Ron, Ronnie, DiLo, or Mr. D, as his students knew him, left a legacy of touching countless young people through his music and counseling skills. He was raised in Weirton, West Virginia, and graduated from Weir High School in 1965. He was an outstanding Weir High band member who performed numerous trumpet solos at many events. His love of music led him to West Virginia University as a music major and WVU marching band member. He received his undergraduate degree and later earned a master's plus 45 graduate hours in counseling from WVU.

He began playing in local bands with his dad at the age of 14. They both played the trumpet, and music was their passion. Ron continued his musical profession throughout his life playing in many Ohio Valley bands and events. As front man for the “Shop” band, his singing, dancing, and playing always got the audience moving and participating. He also played the National Anthem on his trumpet for many local events.

Ron began his career in Ohio County Schools in the 1969-70 school year as a traveling music teacher. He also served as Wheeling Park High School's assistant band director and later became Woodsdale Elementary's full time music teacher. He later decided to pursue his advanced degrees in counseling. His caring and compassionate nature, matched with his excellent communication skills, provided students, parents, and staff members with someone who actively listened, actively responded, and actively followed up with everyone. He exhibited the same exuberance when he led the pep rallies at Wheeling Park High School.

The West Virginia Board of Education named Ron the 2007 West Virginia Department of Education Paul J. Morris Character Educator of the Year, in recognition of his exemplary modeling and instilling character in his students. State Schools Superintendent Steve Paine said, “Mr. DiLorenzo

not only teaches the six pillars (of character), but lives them every day and instills their lessons in his students.” The six pillars of character include trustworthiness, caring, respect, responsibility, citizenship, and fairness. “I am very proud and honored,” DiLorenzo said. “During my 38 years in education, I have always believed that character education plays an important role. I always emphasize respect. That one little word accomplishes so much.” Ron also was honored as the Wheeling Park High School 1999-2000 Educator of the Year.

He married his wife of 48 years, Roberta “Robbie,” in 1971. They had four children and eight grandchildren. Ron and Robbie did nearly everything together, but each was his/her own person – always able to go and do whatever they chose because they knew they would always come home to each other.

Ron was an active member of St. Michael Church, Wheeling, and served as Eucharistic Minister, Engaged Couples Sponsor, and Confirmation Instructor for many years.

After 42 years of service, Ron retired as Wheeling Park High School Dean of Students/Chairperson of the Guidance Counseling Department in 2010. He loved everything about working with staff and students and was a fervent WPHS fan. At his retirement dinner he said, “We have the best jobs and should be thankful each and every day that we get to do what we do.”

Ron died on August 3, 2019, at the age of 71. A scholarship has been created in his name for a Wheeling Park High School student furthering his/her education in music and for beginning band instruments for Woodsdale Elementary students.

Ron shared his time and talents with all whom he met. He was a model of integrity, respect, love, laughter, and famiglia first.