



Raymond E. Laffin (1931-2024)

Celebration of Life for Raymond Laffin at Advent Episcopal Church, Sun City West, AZ
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6poQpDFOvcM>

Raymond E. Laffin was born in Indianapolis, Indiana in 1931. He graduated from Warren Central High School in 1949. Mr. Laffin's college education at Butler University was interrupted by a two year stint (1952-54) when he served in the United States Army during the Korean War where he became Administrative First Sergeant of the Seventh Armored Division Band, Camp Roberts, California. He was Honorably Discharged in January of 1954 and resumed his studies at Butler, earning a B. S. in Music Education in 1956 and later a M. S. in Music Education and School Administration in 1961.

From 1956 until 1963, Mr. Laffin was Director of Bands and Choir Director at New Palestine High School, Hancock County. In 1963 he became Director of Bands at Woodview Junior High School, MSD Warren Township for one year. In 1964 until 1991, he was Director of Bands at Creston Junior High School, MSD Warren Township, Indianapolis, Indiana. In 1991, Mr. Laffin became The Music Coordinator of MSD Warren Township until he retired in 1993. During his teaching career, Mr. Laffin was very active in the Indiana School Music Association as Secretary and President. He organized the first State Marching Contest in 1973.

Since his induction in Phi Beta Mu in 1969, Mr. Laffin has served as President of Gamma chapter and for nine years as Secretary-Treasurer. He was inducted into the Gamma Chapter Hall of Fame in 1997.

Mr. Laffin and his wife Judyth, also a Butler Music Education major, moved to Brown County to retire in 1996. He was the Director of the Brown County Community Band for twelve years. Mr. Laffin has been an adjudicator of music organizations in Ohio, Kentucky, Illinois and Indiana. He has been a guest conductor of Junior High School Concert Bands in Kentucky, Wisconsin and all-Regional Bands in Indiana. He is a life member of the Musicians Union as a professional percussionist, and is a retired member of the American School Band Directors Association, Indiana Music Educators Association Music Educators National Conference and is Past President of the Warren Education Association.

In retirement, he enjoys hobbies of fishing, woodworking, and directing the Brown County Community Band from. He has also served as Secretary and President of The Brown County Lions Club, President of The Brown County Historical Society, and President of the Brown County Retired Teachers Association.

Ray and his wife moved to Sun City West, Arizona, in 2012. Once in Arizona, he became involved in performing and conducting several local community bands but was disappointed not to find an active Phi Beta Mu chapter. After several years of reaching out to his acquaintances in community bands, contact was made in 2016 with George Hattendorf, a former Indiana and Illinois band director and Xi (Illinois) Chapter member teaching in Phoenix. As is often the case, things move quickly once the right people are involved. George Hattendorf and Dennis Smith were the catalysts that led to the installation/reinstatement of the Kappa Zeta Chapter in February 2017.