

**ACCEPTANCE REMARKS – ALFRED-ALMOND ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
JULY 22, 2006**

Good evening everyone. I'm here today with my brother Robert and our wives representing our families for the enshrinement of our mom, Juanita Whitaker Pulos, in the Humanitarian Hall of Fame. Our mom's sister who lives in S.C., her best childhood friend from Neon, Ky. and her college friends from Chicago and Mobile Bay, Ala. are all aware of this evening's ceremony, would like to be here, but time, distance and health have all conspired against them and they send their best regards. Our mom's best friend, Virginia Buchanan, A-A Class of 1955, an All-State musician and college music major, and matching donor to the Juanita Pulos scholarship, is on the other side of the world tonite, is not able to be with us and sends her best wishes to all. I'm also pleased to report my brother's high school daughter is on a singing tour in Europe, now doing the things her grandmother Juanita could only dream about.

We feel extremely honored and privileged to be here with you in recognition of our mom's achievements that she made on behalf of the greater Alfred-Almond, Allegany and Steuben County communities. We are thankful and grateful to many people that have had an impact on this entire process and in giving thanks, I apologize if I miss someone. If I do, I'm hoping someone from the table here will help me, and if not, Dale Lorow can always stand up and help me.

First, thank you to the Hall of Fame Selection Committee of Amanda Snyder, Steven Crandall, Betsy Stout, Steve Metzger and David Palmer for the time they took reviewing our mom's credentials for induction to this very select group. With special deference, special admiration and special gratitude to Jean Hanks Palmiter, Dale

Lorow and Anita Evans for pulling this organization together, we want to recognize and thank the current Association Board of Directors of Lee and Donna Ryan, Bob Baker, Arlene Roberts, Kay Chapman, Sally Doty, Don Jefferds, Butch Lorow, Kate Palmer, and Jill Giese, for the time they take to run this organization and make an event like this happen. It is a lot of work and a labor of love; these people do not get enough credit, doing for us. On behalf of all of us, thank you.

Our mom had the privilege to work with hundreds of students in her lifetime, many of them right here at Alfred-Almond. Many of them became great musicians in their own right. Three of her first prize pupils back in the 50's were Jackie Paine Walker (whose mother Mrs. Doris Paine was also a long-time A-A teacher), Patty Spaine Harvey Curran and Rosemarie Emerson Jennings; they were featured in my mom's biography. Rosemarie Jennings would like to be with us here tonight but she's unable because of a terrible medical condition. I ask you to join with me now in a moment of silence or prayer for the life and well being of Rosemarie Emerson Jennings in Belmont, a music teacher for over 30 years. Thank you.

Our mom, Juanita Pulos, started her life in the heart of Appalachia in the coal fields of southeast Kentucky. From the beginning she had a love and gift for music. Probably her most unique music attribute was her ability to play any tune without music after listening to it just once. Her parents recognized her gift and encouraged her to develop her talent through the worst years of the Great Depression. In leaving her home for college in Indiana, during World War II, she took a giant leap of faith with the hope and the courage to seek a better life.

After college, she and our dad took another leap of faith, put everything they owned in a car and drove to Alfred where they settled in Saxon Heights in 1949. Both of our parents loved music and both loved art. A year later, Juanita was hired by Alfred-Almond to teach music and the rest is history.

The word I would use to describe our mom's attitude toward teaching and helping others is rejoice. She would rejoice in helping others, she would rejoice in teaching others and she would rejoice encouraging others, especially small children, to appreciate the music, the arts and by doing so discovering the concepts of respect, generosity and love.

The concepts of happiness and gratitude were very important to her. With her service to others, her generosity and good humor, Juanita served as an inspiration to many. Her number one concern was for the welfare and benefit of children, she was all about their learning and she was all about discovering their potential.

After Juanita was nominated to the Hall of Fame, I was asked to prepare a background history to support the nomination. I really didn't know what I was getting into. I've got Donna Ryan to thank for that and for a lot of other things. She basically gave me a boot in the rear to get going on the project. The biography probably would not have happened if it were not for her.

I'd like everyone to know the odyssey of writing it was a very humbling experience. My parents were very reticent about their backgrounds. My brother and I did not know many of the things reported in the biography. I'd like to thank my wife

Darcy, my brother, Jennie Hanks Wright , my law partner Tim Rosell, my friend Mark Davidson and my professional office teammates for their help in its production.

I've taken a quote from our other inductee, Marjorie Dunn Area, to explain what I tried to do with my mom's story. Marjorie's quote best describes our effort to tell my mom's story:

“What is it that makes one story live while other stories fade? The lasting story creates an emotional response-an important moment shared by the teller and shared by the listener, one that makes them both participants. In the end-it's the relationships that mark an individual-rather than accomplishments!”

Well, our mom had many great relationships with the people of this community in the 50's, 60's, 70's and 80's. I'd bet if all the people that knew her through various relationships were asked to stand, it would be quite a number. She last taught at Alfred-Almond 40 years ago and still, her presence and spirit is felt in this room tonite. She lived to see my brother become an elementary teacher and he's been at it 27 years at Belfast Central School right here in Allegany County. We both managed to make our lives better by marrying elementary teachers.

My brother and I didn't follow a music career, but my brother's daughter is. We all join in asking you never to forget the importance of music and art in the development world of children. Music enhances the wellbeing of children and stimulates them to learn and we urge you to protect the fine arts in your schools and communities.

We are honored with this induction and on behalf of my mother, my father and my brother, thank you. Thank you very much.