

toledoblade.com®

This is a printer friendly version of an article from www.toledoblade.com

©2001 The Blade. [Privacy and Security Statement](#). By using this service, you accept the terms of our [visitor agreement](#). Please read it.
To print this article open the file menu and choose Print.

[Back to: http://www.toledoblade.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20030530/NEWS13/105300124/0/CLOBITUARIES](http://www.toledoblade.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20030530/NEWS13/105300124/0/CLOBITUARIES)

Article published May 30, 2003

DR. BRUCE M. SMITH, 1943-2003

Gibsonburg school leader enjoyed major challenges

GIBSONBURG, Ohio - Dr. Bruce M. Smith, a retired superintendent of the Gibsonburg Exempted Village Schools who, in retirement, was an elementary school principal, died Tuesday in St. Vincent Mercy Medical Center, Toledo, of a heart attack. He was 59.

His career in education was capped by his hiring in 1988 as Gibsonburg superintendent, a post he held for eight years.

"He had absolutely wonderful leadership," his daughter, Heather Smith Zeller, said. "He was extremely confident. He was very approachable. Everyone he dealt with, he treated them with great respect."

Dr. Smith had planned to retire. Instead, he agreed to fill in, temporarily, as principal of Wynford Elementary School in Bucyrus, Ohio.

"The kids absolutely fell in love with him. He ended up being there for two years," his daughter said. He deferred retirement again for two years to be principal of Stryker Elementary School.

As superintendent, he liked the challenge of big issues, whether a budget crisis or staff discord. "He would go in and that was his opportunity to shine," his daughter said.

In retirement, he was a consultant for school districts. He taught education courses for many years at Bowling Green State University and had a full summer class schedule.

"This man loved to teach," his wife, Karen, said. "He loved learning and reading. It was neverending."

Before he was hired by the Gibsonburg schools, Dr. Smith was superintendent two years of the Upper Sandusky Exempted Village Schools. He previously had been an assistant superintendent of districts in Summit and Preble counties.

He was principal of Ayersville High School and taught journalism, English, and history at Sandusky High School.

A Lorain, Ohio, native, he was a Lorain High School graduate.

"He'd always had a fond love in his childhood for books," his daughter said. "He had always been interested in history and writing."

.../article/Date=20030530&Category=NEWS13&Article=105300124&SectionCat=CLOBITUARIES/30/03

He received a bachelor's degree in education from Kent State University and a master's and doctorate from BGSU.

Surviving are his wife, Karen, whom he married June 12, 1965; son, Jason Smith; daughter, Heather Smith Zeller, and four granddaughters.

Services will be at 10:30 a.m. tomorrow in the Nopper-Veh Mortuary, Gibsonburg, where the body will be after 2 p.m. today. The family suggests tributes to the Bruce M. Smith Scholarship Fund or a charity of the donor's choice.
