



T. E. Rine

Secondary Mathematics Teaching Award

T. E. Rine



EXCEPTIONAL
TEACHER
OF MATHEMATICS

My memories of T. E. Rine

In 1952, when I entered Illinois State Normal University, T. E. Rine was a Professor of Mathematics. During the next 3 years, I had Professor Rine as an instructor in 3 or 4 courses. He was a wonderful person and an outstanding instructor. His office door was always open to his students. He greeted me and everyone else with a smile as he helped each of us solve a problem or answer a question.

I remember Dr. Rine best for his teaching in the classroom. Many times I remember him filling the chalkboard with the solution to a problem or the lesson he was presenting. A student would then say "Dr. Rine, I do not understand that part." He would erase what he had done and start over using a slightly different interpretation of the problem. He was a master teacher.

Dr. Rine suggested that we all join ICTM and NCTM. It was difficult to say no to any of his suggestions. Dr. Rine left a positive impression on me, and I hope I passed some of his wisdom on to my students and colleagues during my teaching career.

- Alan G. Foster

Thoughts about T.E. Rine, Many Years Later

Dr. Toivo E. Rine was one of a small cadre of professors who taught in the Mathematics Department at Illinois State Normal University when I enrolled as a student in 1951. Early on, with some fear and trembling, (I was fresh-out-of-the-cornfield), I signed up for one of his classes.

My fears were allayed; I experienced from T.E. Rine what superb teaching was all about. The very first day, he created an atmosphere in the classroom in which all of the students felt comfortable talking about themselves, about their dreams and aspirations, and yes, even about what they had apprehensions about. He took the time to listen and to ask just the right questions. I felt that first day that I knew everyone in the class.

It was clear from the beginning that he truly cared about his students and wanted, most of all, for them to succeed. Up to that time, I had never had a mathematics teacher who could explain things so clearly, and who was so patient and understanding. He embodied the idea- one that seemed to be the mantra of the ISU Mathematics Department at the time—that "we take the students where they are in their mathematics journey, and take them as far as we can."

Later, as a masters degree student at ISU, I asked Dr. Rine if he would be my thesis advisor. He guided me through the thesis process with the same care he took as a classroom teacher, and was always pleasant, helpful, and available. I recall that he always gave me the impression that he thought I could, and would be successful in my mathematics profession. He taught me a great lesson in how to inspire students to be successful.

Inside the classroom and out, Dr. Rine was a mild-mannered gentleman who cared deeply for people. I considered him not only an excellent teacher, but a good friend. He was always having groups of students in the KME Mathematics Group at his house, and we were members of the same church. He had a good sense of humor. I became briefly acquainted with his wife, Lola, and his children, Janice and David. I thought they were a model family.

T.E. Rine was obviously one of the "good souls;" it is appropriate that the T.E. Rine Award for Teaching was created in his name. I know that many other students of his are thankful, as I am, that he passed this way and left such an imprint on our lives.

- Phares O'Daffer, April 9, 2010