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Romeoville School Namesakes: Irene King

Opened in 1969, Ridge View Elementary School was renamed Irene King Elementary School in 1978. But who was Irene King?

King moved to Lockport in 1949, bringing with her 18 years of teaching experience. She began instructing eighth graders at Chapman Rural School, a one room schoolhouse located near today's intersection of Route 53 and I-55. She transferred to Valley View School in 1954 to teach first grade. She would move twice more in the district, first to Park View (today Robert C. Hill) and then to Ridge View before retiring in 1975. In total, she spent 26 years teaching in the Valley View School District.

In 1978, Ridge View Elementary School was renamed for King. The dedication ceremony was held in 1979 with King, who had since retired to Florida, in attendance. When asked about her most rewarding experience as a teacher, she replied it was "teaching a child to read and watching the words come to life for the first time." She died in 1981 after battling cancer. She was 73 years old.

This is the fifth in a series of six articles that explore the people the Romeoville Valley View Schools are named after.

