

Lieutenant Colonel Jack Ables

USAF Retired

Nov. 2, 1929 – March 22, 2018

(From the Buffalo News)

Jack Ables, a longtime Orchard Park High School principal, died Thursday in the Rosa Coplon Jewish Home and Infirmary on the Weinberg Campus in Amherst. He was 88.

Mr. Ables was born in the Bronx. He went into the U.S. Air Force, beginning as an aviation cadet and commissioned as an officer in 1952, serving until his retirement from the U.S. Air Reserves in 1981. As a pilot he was activated during the Cuban Missile Crisis in response to a possible missile attack on Florida. He retired from service from the U.S. Air Force Reserve 914th Airlift Wing, Niagara Falls, as a lieutenant colonel flying a C-130.

After his active service, Mr. Ables completed his degree in education at City College of New York in 1954. He earned his master's degree in education at Buffalo State College in 1963 and his educational doctorate at the University at Buffalo in 1972.

He began work as a field engineer for U.S. Rubber, from 1956 to 1959 and then interviewed for a pilot position at Trans World Airlines. But his family said his true passion was in education, where he rose from teaching in the classroom to administration.

Mr. Ables began his career in education in 1959 as a science teacher at Clarence Junior/Senior High School. He also co-taught an adult education class in aviation with his close friend and 328th Tactical Airlift Squadron-mate, Mark Michalak.

He became principal at East Aurora Junior High School in 1964.

He came to Orchard Park High School in 1970, where he served as principal and then became the school's executive principal in 1976. He worked on a major renovation plan to update the school prior to his retirement in 1996.

An Alaskan cruise and a work fair led him back to education. He served as deputy superintendent for curriculum in Kodiak, Alaska, until he retired permanently in 1997. After his stint in Alaska