

Ina Lynn DILLDINE

Class of 1956

Friends joke that Ina Dilldine has spent more time behind bars than most of the convicts in McAlester prison. That may be true, but only because this year's Great Graduate from the Class of 1956 has been part of a prison ministry for more years than many of the inmates she helps have been alive.

As a volunteer at Behind The Fence Redeeming Love Prison Ministry, Dilldine is one of 50 ambassadors who work with inmates at 13 different men's and women's correctional institutions. Among her fondest memories, she says, was her ability to lead a Muslim man who was on death row to the Lord.

A native Broken Arrowan and one of six children (all of them Broken Arrow High School graduates) born to Clarence and Madge Edwards, she went to work for the Oral Roberts Evangelistic Association before marrying the late Cliff Dilldine and becoming "mom" to children Debbie and Dusty.

A licensed minister for the Church of God of Prophecy, she launched a second career in 1976 by joining the Child Nutrition Department at Broken Arrow Public Schools. For 15 years, she served as a cafeteria manager and later Director of Catering. After



both retired, she and her husband served as caretakers of their church's Big Cedars campground where they planned and cooked hundred of meals for scores of hungry campers and retreat and conference attendees.

Our Great Graduate's first mission trip took place in 1996 to Kenya. Later, while helping build a multicultural center in Awasi, the Dilldines recognized how badly that community needed a source of water, so they led a campaign to have a well drilled to tap into the Nile River. She has returned to Kenya numerous times since then along with mission trips to Rwanda, the Congo and Uganda and has helped clothe 300 girls with "African Dresses."

At home, Dilldine ministers to residents of the Broken Arrow Nursing Home and Village Health Care Center, is a member of the Broken Arrow Historical Society board of directors and volunteers as a docent. For the past six years, she "has been blessed" to be head chef for the annual reunion of Education Service Center retirees and to have quality time with her five grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

In her spare time, she tends to her flower and vegetable gardens and manages a backyard gold fish pond. But what she does best is make a difference in the lives of others.

