

VC ECHOES

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1973 –What was the world like?

When a new teacher first steps into a classroom, they rarely consider what that classroom or the educational realm or the world may like twenty or thirty years from that day. Usually they are just hoping to survive that day, that week or that month! However, soon each day slides into each week, each week into each month, each month into each year and before one knows it—retirement is nearly upon one. Looking back over all those years—the change is evident. Wouldn't it be an interesting assignment for every new teacher, or every teacher for that matter, to predict what the world would be like twenty to thirty years from now?

So what was the world like back in the early 1973? Here are just a few glimpses.....

EDUCATION IN NYS

In 1971, the NYS Legislature passed a series of bills which eroded teacher rights, increased probation, eliminated minimum salaries and sabbaticals. In 1972, New York State United Teachers was formed from the New York State Teachers Association and the United Teachers of New York. This formed the largest employee organization in New York State. Teachers no had the power to improve the quality of education for

every child and raise the status of the teaching profession. Today, NYSUT is the largest union in the state with about 440,000 members and has the second largest PAC organization thanks to those members contributions to VOTE/Cope.

IN THE US:*Population :*

212,000,000

Unemployed:

5.6%

National Debt:

\$466 Billion

Ave. Salary:

\$10, 500

New Home Cost:

\$35,500

Gas:

.39 a gallon

Food Costs:

Milk -. \$1.33 a gallon,

Bread - .24 a loaf

Steak- \$1.30 per pound

Life Expectancy:

Male 67.1 years

Female 74.8 years

IN THE NEWS:

Richard Nixon was president. Watergate hearings begin.

Direct involvement in Vietnam ended, Cambodia was still bombed in effort to get back POW's

The global energy crisis emerged. OPEC imposes oil embargo

US and Cuba sign anti-hijack pact

Syria and Egypt attack Israel on Yom Kippur

The World Trade Center in NYC was completed.

Sears Tower in Chicago built

Artist who defined the 20th century, Pablo Picasso died

Roe vs. Wade legalizes abortion

Elvis grants Priscilla a divorce

Pet Rocks are a fad

ENTERTAINMENT:*Movies:*

The Sting, The Exorcist, , American Graffiti

Music:

Crocodile Rock, Bad, Bad Leroy Brown, Midnight Train to Georgia, Killing Me Softly with His Song

TV:

All in the Family, The Walton's, Sanford and Son, and M*A*S*H

SPORTS:

Super bowl VIII: MIAMI

Pro MVP: OJ Simpson

NBA: NEW YORK

World Series: Oakland A's

~ Patti Lunden, Editor

Sources: www.nysut.org,
www1970sflashback.com,
www.kclibrary.nhmccd.edu

A
good
teacher
is
part of
you
forever.

Maybrook Elementary School Will Miss Jan Borland

Maybrook Elementary School will be bidding a fond, but sad, farewell to Jan Borland this June. Jan has decided that now is her opportunity to spend more time with her husband, John and their sons, Steven and Matt. We will miss her presence in our school. Besides being a wonderful person and a pleasure to work with, Jan has been our reading resource. She has always been ready to go the extra mile to help anyone, children or staff, in any way she can.

Jan grew up in Montgomery, and after going through Valley Central schools, continued her education at SUNY Cortland. Her decision to be a teacher must have been influenced by her always being around children. She is the oldest of seven children in her own family, but also liked working with kids at day camps during her summer vacations and enjoyed seeing them learn. After receiving her BA in Education, Jan then went to Syracuse University and received her MS in Education.

Jan was first employed as a third grade teacher in Cossackie, NY. There she taught Reading Improvement at Oak Grove Elementary in the Wappingers Falls School District. In 1978, she came "home" to Valley Central and substituted in the elementary schools, and in 1979 she began teaching Remedial Reading part time in the Valley Central Middle School. This gradually increased to a full time position. In 1994, Jan received her training in Reading Recovery from New York University. She then worked her half time in Walden Elementary School and half time in the middle school. Finally, 1997 brought Jan to Maybrook Elementary School (what a blessing for us!) as our full time Reading Recovery and Remedial Reading teacher. She is our

reading expert! We all value her knowledge and expertise in reading and language arts.

Jan's commitment to her profession is not limited to the children. She has done valuable in-service work with Maybrook's staff on guided reading, DRA training, and has done co-teaching on the district level as well. Parents have benefited from workshops presented by Jan and her co-worker, Chris Holloway. Jan applied for and received a grant from McDonald's which provided the funding for four Parent/Child Learning Nights, which Jan organized and taught. Through Jan's efforts more workshops have been provided through a Mobil Grant. In addition to these, Jan has made time to be a member of our school's Child Study Team and Principal's Council. She is also a member of the Amy Bull Crist Reading Council. Jan has been Maybrook's organizer and one of the "counselors" at our annual Camp Read-A-Lot evenings for second and third graders, and also sends out the information for our summer school and summer reading incentive programs.

When asked what she would miss, Jan's response was that she would miss the great people she has worked with through the years and also the eager faces of the children. She did not mention bus duty, but whatever she might miss, Jan has much to look forward to in her

future. She already has an October trip to Arizona planned. Her youngest son will be a senior at



Fairfield University in Connecticut this September and, at last, when she will be able to see some of those Friday Cross-Country meets. Jan is working on a whole list of projects to keep her occupied. She will enjoy working around their house at the lake and doing some gardening at home.

Last, but not least, don't be surprised if you pass a golf course and hear Jan shouting, "Fore!" as she has also mentioned practicing her game.

Jan, as you end your working years, many new doors will open for you. You have opened doors yourself for so many children by giving them the gift of reading. This time for YOU is well deserved. You leave with our admiration, respect, and all of our best wishes for a happy, healthy, and wonderful retirement as well.

~Donna Lloyd,

Maybrook Elementary School

Berea Says Goodbye

A building needs a strong foundation. Education needs a strong foundation. Mrs. Patricia Darney has been helping our children at Berea build the foundation to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

Mrs. Darney has taught second grade for many years at Berea and each year she has put her students first. Working from early morning into late evenings planning and developing her lessons, she has helped each of her students grow, stretch and reach their potential. Mrs. Darney has done what is right for her students and what is right for their education. She has done her best for her students and continues

to expect the best from them. Her second graders have been encouraged and inspired to become careful thinkers, observers and doers while learning about words, weights and worms. Indeed, her students have a firm basis for future years. Their foundation is solid.

Thank you, Mrs. Darney. You have done your job well. Berea thanks you now and for many years to come. We wish you a happy and healthy retirement!

~ Gail Roberto,
Berea Elementary School



Connie DeSantis Leaves Valley Central After Fifty Years!



Putting children first has never been a problem for Connie DeSantis. After 34 years of teaching, she is retiring from Valley Central but not before touching the lives of countless children.

Connie grew up in Maybrook and she is a true Valley Central native. She attended Maybrook Elementary School, as well as Valley Central Middle and High

School. After graduation, she attended Mount St. Mary College where she received her Bachelor's Degree. She later received her Master's Degree from SUNY New Paltz. Connie has spent all of her teaching career in Valley Central. She has been going to Valley Central schools for fifty years of her life!

She worked as a middle school English teacher for seven years before transferring to Walden Elementary School. Here she taught fourth grade for seven years before making a change to third grade. Recognizing a good thing when she saw it, she stayed in this position until the present time.

Connie is an enthusiastic, innovative and creative teacher, all

this and a great sense of humor, too!

You can walk by Connie's room at any time of day and be treated to the sound of children's laughter, or the voice of their teacher unexpectedly breaking into song. What you hear and what you see in Connie's classes are happy children who feel special.

She has a way of bringing out the "hidden" potential of each child, and the children blossom in her class. In addition to academics, Connie teaches her class to be kind, generous and truthful, which are not really "learning standards", but intangibles that inspire students to reach their highest potential. It is evident that Connie cares deeply for her students, and they love and respect her.

Connie is not only a "master teacher" but a productive and giving member of the VC com (continued on page four)

What you hear and what you see in Connie's classes are happy children who feel special...

Patricia Depew, HS Principal's Secretary to Retire

Patty Depew was born in Newburgh, NY and graduated Newburgh Free Academy in 1959. She worked as a legal secretary for two years and then went to Orange County Community College graduating in 1963 with an AAS degree in Secretarial Sciences. Upon graduation from OCCC she married her high school sweetheart, Ralph, and worked as an executive secretary at IBM, Fishkill until her first child was born. Ralph and Patty have lived in the Valley Central School District for 38 years and their four children (*Maryanne, Ralph III, Jennifer and Christina*) are graduates of VC. Their daughter, Jennifer Lynn, is a math teacher at VCHS. Ralph will enjoy his second retirement (*IBM - 1993*) on June 30, when he retires as head custodian at East Coldenham Elementary School. She is the proud grandmother of Ralph IV, Hannah & Brendan.

Patty began volunteering in the

PTO at East Coldenham in 1969 and continued to be involved with each child as they progressed through Middle School and High School. She was president of the EC PTO, Room Mother numerous times, and was general chairman of the annual Halloween Carnival for many years. At the Middle School she was an officer of the Middle School PTA for several years. She was a member of the VC Scholarship Council for many, many years and was the General Chairman of the Antique and Art Show in 1982 and 1988. She also was the President of the VCSC for several terms. During this time Patty was also an Election Inspector for the VC School District and also worked as a school census taker.



After retirement in December, 2003, Patty plans to relax and enjoy her grandchildren. She has always been committed to volunteer work and plans to re-volunteer at her church's soup kitchen which she had to stop doing when she started work in

the High School Main Office in 1988. Patty and Ralph hope to be "snow birds" enjoying the warmer climates during January-March. Her grandchildren live in the district and attend East Coldenham (*and in the future Berea*). She can see herself "coming full circle" and again doing volunteer work for her grandchildren's schools. VC School
(continued on page five)

Connie DeSantis Leaves Valley Central After Fifty Years! (continued from page 3)

munity. In her early years of teaching she was a VCTA rep and worked on the district newsletter. She is also a very active member of the Walden Elementary School PTO, implementing the Cashola nights held at many of our local restaurants. The money raised by these events is used for field trips and special programs for our students. Connie is also the coordinator for the Casual Days held monthly in Walden, which raised over \$14,000 for various local charities.

Connie looks forward to retirement as a time to "restore and recharge." She plans to do some traveling and perhaps volunteer

work. She considers herself "fortunate to work with, and for, supportive administrators who indulged my whims. For example, former middle school principal, Mr. William Cocks, allowed me to be a faculty room redecorator many years ago!"

"I don't consider my teaching colleagues and the wonderful support staff in the building my co-workers; rather they are friends who've made my life richer for their friendship."

Although Connie will be missed by the students and faculty of Valley Central, we hope retirement brings her the time and freedom to follow her heart and pursue

new interests. Thank you for your boundless energy, your sense of humor, your giving nature and your dedication to your students. We wish your retirement to be filled with beautiful memories and joyful moments.

~ Barbara Wutch

Walden Elementary School

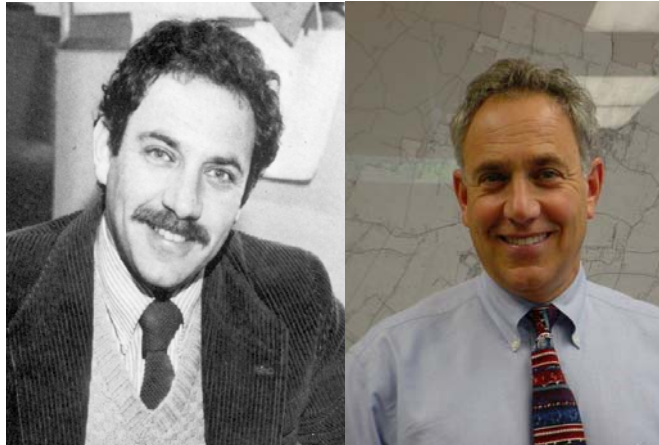
Assistant Superintendent Peter Roden Invested 22 Years in VC

Peter Roden has been the Assistant Superintendent for Business at Valley Central working under nine superintendents over a period of twenty-two years! In the world of central office administration, that is a very long time since most superintendents average 3 to 6 years.

Mr. Roden graduated from Hunter College in New York City with a bachelor's degree having majored in Accounting and minored in Education. He received his Master's Degree from Penn State in the Psychology of Sport. He worked for five years in the New York City Schools in the South Bronx and then worked for seven years in the Liberty School District. During his twelve years he taught at the elementary level teaching grades 4, 5 and 6. He also coached.

While in Liberty, Mr. Roden pursued his certification as a School District Administrator and interned with the Business Superintendent in Liberty. In July 1981, he was hired at Valley Central just as Dr. Bill Moran was retiring. His office was in what some of the veteran employees will remember as the old farm house where central

office was housed until the building of the present administration building under the first Bond project. Under his tenure the District went through two major Bond projects and many capital projects. Mr. Roden has always had a vested interest here as this is his community. Mr. Roden lives in the district and his wife, Susan, works in the Middle School as a guidance counselor. Their two sons, Casey and Andrew, went through our schools. Looking back at his time here he said he has had many laughs and tears over the years. He sees his major accomplishment here as helping to overcome the taxpayer association. He recalled that time period in Valley Central's past as "fighting the good fight" for what was right for children.



For twenty-two years, Peter Roden has been VC's Assistant Superintendent for Business

The job of the Assistant Superintendent for Business is to manage the district's resources. Mr. Roden reflected on his many years and the amount of time thinking about cost effective ways to provide for the educational needs of the Valley Central. As he prepares to leave his position on June 30th, he is confident that the District is in good financial shape and the community seems pleased with the product of our schools. He noted that the infrastructure was also in good shape and that Valley Central has grown (*continued on page six*)

Patricia Depew, HS Principal's Secretary to Retire (continued from page four)

District has been an integral part of her life and she has always enjoyed the people she has met and worked with in the district.

Patty will be missed for her wonderful sense of humor. She has a very fun loving personality examples of these are as follows:

Mistletoe headband which she wore religiously (so she could kiss all the men). Christmas pins all over her clothes. Christmas lights on her shoes and her beautiful decorations of her "beloved" tree in her office.

We always knew what holiday it was because Patty's office was decorated beautifully. We will miss her "praying" to St. Anthony for missing objects we all lost and who by the way always found them for us. Patty's office was known for very specific things such as hugs, candy and tissues! Her hats, smiles on a stick and of course the gallery of pictures of her grandchildren.

Patty has made the job of Principals Secretary into a position of "good will ambassador" to all the employ-

ees and students. She was always there to help people no matter what there position was and made their lives a bit easier. Much paper work always went over her desk from employees but she never got overwhelmed by requests. Patty always kept her calm and was a very professional secretary. Have a wonderful retirement Patty and come back and visit us soon.

*~ Lucy Fox, Secretarial Rep.
High School*

Nancy Schmidt Leaves Room 22 after 34 Years

Nancy Schmidt came to Montgomery Elementary School in 1969. First, as a student teacher in Mrs. Cadzow's Room 22, and then second with her first teaching experience in Room 22. Nancy is a graduate of SUNY New Paltz and received her MA from New Paltz and received her MA from New Paltz in 1970. Her whole teaching career has been at MES in Room 22, where Nancy has proved herself to become one of Valley Central's most dedicated, reliable, and outstanding teachers. This year, 2003, Nancy was the recipient of the Dean's Award in Teaching from SUNY New Paltz School of Education. While at VC, Nancy has worked with the team teaching pilot project concerning alternative student assessments and taught Spanish options. Nancy spent many summers helping BOCES write curriculum for all Orange County schools.

Nancy has always been a leader in the classroom. Here classes were known for their writing skills, and theater productions. We, at Montgomery Elementary School, will remember her plays, Cinderella, Alice in Wonderland and It's a

Trial just to mention a few. Nancy must have had some grease paint in her blood for her singing the Wedding Song and who could forget Mickey and Chorus Line?

And of course, Nancy always made sure all the children in the fifth grade knew all their lines for Fifth Grade Graduation.

Mrs. Schmidt was a building representative from Montgomery on the VCTA Executive Council. She was the treasurer of the MES PTA and was named a Life Member of the MES PTA in 1984.

Besides working tirelessly for the past 30 plus years in Montgomery, Nancy has volunteered at the Highland School for Boys, Arden Hill Hospital, and teaching at the Wallkill Prison. She tutors students and helps those in need. Mrs. Schmidt has been a social committee member and a leader in all retirement parties in Montgomery.

Now that Nancy is leaving her first profession she will have time to enjoy the other loves in her life. Nancy enjoys walking, hiking,

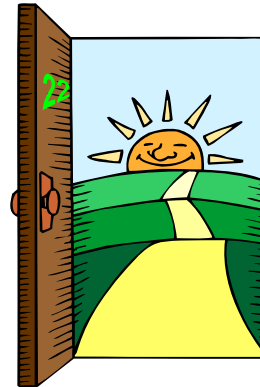
exercising, Mohonk, the outdoors, and traveling. Nancy could always find the great places in the country to explore and learn to love.

We all know about her gardening skills. Nancy, with Steve's help, came to Montgomery Elementary School to improve the planting in front of our building. Her garden at home will someday soon be pictured in Better Homes and Gardens.

Nancy is a true friend and excellent teacher and someone who could always be counted on. She will truly be missed.

~ Toni Sperry,

Montgomery Elementary School



Assistant Superintendent Peter Roden Invested 22 Years in VC (continued from page 5)

with technology. He said he will miss the people of Valley Central, especially the Business Office staff, Nancy Conroy, Polly Coniglio, Judy Lozier and Jan Phelps, all of whom he credits with the smooth operation of that office.

The first thing Mr. Roden looks forward to in retirement is understanding a new schedule since for fifty years he has operated on a school schedule. He looks forward to letting the schedule go. He also appreciates the opportunity our profession provides in letting us retire

young enough to pursue other endeavors. His first endeavor following retirement will be to help transition the new Assistant Superintendent, so while he may be officially retiring on June 30th, he will still be around the District for a little while. He has also already had offers to be a consultant for other districts and is considering them as well as an offer from his son, Casey to go into business with him. The endeavor Mr. Roden spoke of, with much enthusiasm, is returning to the classroom as a volunteer— hopefully helping to

teach HS Math.

We wish Peter a long and healthy retirement and thank him for the years he invested here in Valley Central.

~ Patti Lunden,
Editor

Berea will miss Allan Takvam

Allan Takvam is retiring this year from a teaching career of twenty seven years at Valley Central. Allan was born in Brooklyn and moved to Montgomery when he was in the fifth grade. He graduated from Valley Central and returned to the City to attend Brooklyn College. He transferred to Mount Saint Mary College to complete his Bachelor's degree and earned his Master's degree at New Paltz.

Allan's teaching career began at our middle school in 1976. After nine years there, he transferred to Berea where he has taught second grade through fifth grade. He is finishing his career at the fourth grade level. Allan has been president of the Scholarship Council and a building representative to the VCTA.

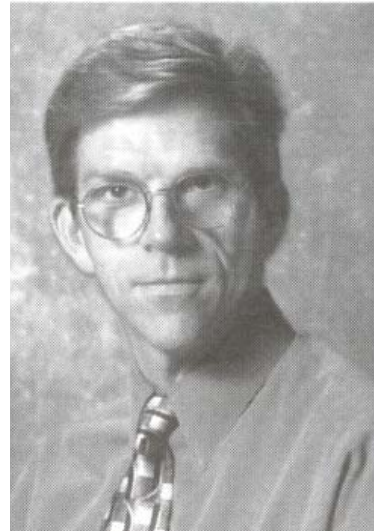
Allan's students have greatly benefited from his dedica-

tion to our profession. His patience, understanding, creativity and knowledge was evident in every lesson he taught. His sense of humor was appreciated and enjoyed by his students and made his classroom a place where his students wanted to be.

Allan's colleagues appreciate him for always having time to share his resources and ideas.

His wonderful sense of humor added laughter to our school days and often came just when we needed it.

Allan and his wife, Kathleen, will be living in Longboat Key, Florida during the winter months and spending the summer



months in Hendersonville, North Carolina. Allan is looking forward to playing tennis, taking walks on the beach and painting with watercolors.

His colleagues at Berea wish him a rewarding retirement filled with contentment, relaxation and good health.

~ Sara Ackerson,
Berea Elementary School

Reflections on a Master Teacher—Kathleen Takvam Retires (continued from page 7)

Kathleen's class was in the newspaper again this year, winning an essay contest on "an ice cream moment." A representative from Edy's ice cream visited the class giving lessons on ice cream tasting with plenty of samples! I know if I were 9 years old, I would choose to be in Mrs. Takvam's class!

Kathleen has had a long and successful teaching career, enriching children's lives and inspiring her colleagues with her amazing energy and enthusiasm. I know every time I walked into her room I learned something.

So we honor you today, Kathleen, for all you have accomplished, and share with you the excitement as a new phase of your life begins. We wish you, Kathy and

Allan, much happiness relaxing in Longboat Key, Florida and hiking in the mountains of North Carolina

We hope you remember us fondly, as we will remember you.

~ Janet Sharp
Retiree,
Montgomery Elementary School



The VCTA congratulates all of Valley Central's

soon-to-be newly retired:

Jan Borland, Rod Clune, Pat Darney,

Patty Depew, Ralph Depew,

Connie DeSantis, Bob Klein, Nancy Schmidt,

Allan Takvam and Kathleen Takvam.

The 21st Annual VC Retiree Luncheon

(for all District retirees) :

Will be held on Wednesday, September 3rd at the

Crossroads Restaurant

on the corner of Rtes. 208 and 17K.

Come and raise a glass to the yellow school buses !

Contact VCTA Retiree Representative Kevin McFadden

for more information!

Advertising Section

These ads will be seen by over 750 members of the VC Educational Community and their households. If you would like to advertise in the next issue of the VC ECHOES, contact Patti Lunden, 457-5899 for rates.

“ If I had a child who wanted to be a teacher, I would bid him Godspeed as if he were going to a war. For the war against prejudice, greed and ignorance is eternal, and those who dedicate themselves to it give their lives no less because they may live to see some fraction of the battle won.”
 ~ James Hilton

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Vice President, Richard Steger (Walden)
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The VC Echoes is the official
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Article contributions or Letters to the
Editor for the next issue should be
sent to Patricia Lunden, HS, by
June 6, 2003.

Any articles submitted to the VC
Echoes will also be posted on the
VCTA Web page.



Retiree Class of 2002
May the Road rise to
Meet You.

May the Wind be Always
at your Back.

May the Sun shine Warm upon
your Face.

The Rains Fall Soft upon your

On Retirement: A Reflection

*“Consider the re-
spect you owe your
students, for the
more you respect
them the more you
love them, and the
more you love them
the greater care you
will have for them.
Then it will be im-
possible for you not
to have them all
graven in your hearts
night and day, each
one individually...
forever.”*

*“First Counsel,” An-
gela Merici*

What

greater gift can be
bestowed upon a re-
tiring teacher than
the knowledge that,
through love and re-
spect, young people
have been cared for

individually? The
retiring teacher car-
ries this realization
forever, not as a
monument in bronze
or stone which are
fleeting, but as a
graven image in his
or her heart—a gift
eternal.

There is also
a flip side to this.
Just as the “true”
teacher retains these
memories of students
past, so do the stu-
dents retain the mem-
ory of a teacher who
treated them not as
numbers, but as
Mary or John or Pete
or Sally. A given
lesson might be for-
gotten, but the per-
sonal care by the true
teacher will remain
forever.

As you leave
the hurly-burly of



everyday teaching
life with its stress
and sweat, its conso-
lation and desolation,
may the recollection
of having made a dif-
ference usher you
into this new and
glorious time of your
life.

Welcome to
the ranks of the retir-
ees!

~ Kevin McFadden,
Retiree Rep.