

VC ECHOES

Volume 15, Issue 6

Valley Central Teachers' Association

June 2013

VC'S RETIREE CLASS OF 2013



June 11, 2013 at VCTA Executive Council Dinner; Listed in Alphabetical Order by First Name: Albert Schmidt (Grade 3), Ava Kravitz (Special Education), Bonnie Rum (Reading), Candia Baxter (School Media Specialist), Christine O'Shea (Science), Diane Ruggles (Business), Donna Zajkowski (Family & Consumer Science), Florence Spies (Kindergarten), Georgina Robillard (Foreign Language), Helen Schoonmaker (Paraprofessional), Jeanne Cassel (Grade 2), Katherine Sarro (Grade 5), Kathy Manning (Registered Nurse), Linda Draughn (Grade 2), Lisa Daily (Remedial Reading), Lynn Flickenschild (Secretary), Madeline Brooks (Grade 6), Mary Failla (Special Education), Michael Fitts (Social Studies), Patricia Gorman (Student Assistant Counselor), Sharon Satkowski (Music); Missing from Photo: Carol Ann Kronyak (Art), Christine Reese (Physical Education), Michael Murphy (Science), Peter Anzovino III (Science)

There are no greater advocates for children and education than teachers and teacher unions.

Valley Central Teachers' Association

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VCTA Officers:

President, Tim Brown (HS)
Vice Pres, Richard Steger (EC)
Vice Pres., Patti Behr (MS)
Secretary, Christine Mello(HS)
Treasurer, Jennie Sexton (HS)

**Contribute to the next issue!
Articles or
Contributions
should be sent to
Meghan Rilley, HS, by
20 August 2013**

Executive Council Building Representatives

•Berea: Lisa Daily, Robin Scott
•E. Coldenham: Cathi Heil, Laura Casey
•Maybrook: Linda Draughn, Jeanne Cassel
•Montgomery: Gail Nozell, Andrea Turso, Susan Page
•Walden: Mary Ellen Raskopf, John Fisher, Lori Meyerson
•Middle School: Chris Arndt, Sonya Berger, Joe Collins, Derek DeVoe, Paul Dederick, Anne McKallen, Pat Weigel, Frank DiPasqua (A)

•High School: Steve Altman, Nancy Brother, Jim Hession, Deborah McKenney, Antoinette Oakes, Henry Pizzonia, Mike Score, Melissa Verlin, Scott Warner, Keith Sexton (A)
•Secretarial Representative: JoAnn Cassisi (HS)
•Paraprofessional Representative: Kathy Lennon (W)

The VC Echoes is the official publication of the Valley Central Teachers' Association—Local 3076—and is published regularly during the school year. Any articles submitted to the VC Echoes will also be posted on the VCTA web site.

Congratulations!



The VCTA heartily congratulates
all of Valley Central's 2012 retirees!

We wish you a happy and healthy retirement!

Thank you for your service to the District and
Community!

A Poem to our Maybrook Retirees

So...Anne, Linda, Carol Ann,
Jeanne, Chris, Candi, and
Flo...
Whose brilliant idea was it
For **all** of you to go??

Did you all conspire
On one "triangle" day?
When we were talking data,
Were y'all planning your soi-
ree?

I can understand one
Or quite possibly two,
Deciding it was time,
To bail out on the crew.

But to have our best leave;
Was it something we said?
Are you unhappy with us,
Or is it possibly State Ed??

What issues could you all
Quite possibly foresee,
With reflections and standards
And accountability??

Or maybe it's Oasys
And My Learning Plan,
And report cards and modules
That you actually can't stand?!

So first, to you Chris,
My days will drag on
Since my class won't be jam-
min'
To those top 40 hit songs!

The activities you create
With your classes each day,
Will truly be missed,
Especially Field Day!

Next, to dear Candi,
With your scanning of books,
You'll no longer worry
About finding book crooks!

The children learn quickly
To return what they borrow,
Now if only the teachers
Could just try to follow!

Carol Ann, you're creative
With drawing and art,
We feel like you've been here
All along from the start.

You've taught all the kids
About color and line,
Your talent and flair
Has allowed them to shine!

Jeanne Jeannie
I never thought I'd actually say
I will miss your rendition
Of Happy Birthday!

With retirement ahead,
You can relax just a bit,
And perhaps you'll become
More computer literate!

Flo, my one colleague
Who was there from the start,
Your friendship has always
Been straight from the heart.

I will miss hearing your stories
And telling mine in return,
And your laugh and reactions
To the new "phrases" you
learn!

To Anne, I call captain,
The one who outshines the rest,
When you came to Maybrook,
We were all truly blessed.

A professional at heart
Who's always caring and true,
And clearly we've enjoyed
The other side of you, too!

And finally to Linda,
I call you my mother,
Because you're there for me
Unlike any other.

Words can't express
How grateful I am,
For your advice, love, and sup-
port
From the beginning to end.

I wish all of you
Years full of loved ones and
laughter,
With many cherished memories,
And a happily ever after!

—With much love,
Jackie Scarano

Jeanne Cassel Retires From Maybrook Elementary

I wish the happiest of retirements to my long time, dear friend, Jeanne Cassel. I have worked with Jeanne for 25 years. Not only have I been fortunate enough to have her as a friend, but I also love her family like they were my own.

Jeanne was born in Pennsylvania. As a child, her family moved around a lot before they settled in Maybrook. She graduated from Valley Central High School in 1972. Then she attended SUNY New Paltz. She earned her Bachelors and Masters Degrees in Education. She substituted for a few months at Valley Central. Then she felt fortunate to obtain a teaching position at Maybrook Elementary in 1976. She spent thirty two years here! She taught fourth grade for thirty years and then became my partner in second grade for two years. Jeanne has served on the Child Study Team, SAT, the District Social Studies Committee, as the building's Wee Deliver Postmistress, and as a Building Union Representative.

Jeanne has been happily married to her husband, Jack, for thirty one years. They have three wonderful children. Jack, Jr., twenty nine years old, has been a fifth grade teacher at Cornwall School District for seven years. His wife, Valerie, teaches second grade at Scotchtown Avenue School in Goshen. They are expecting their first child in June. This will be the first grandchild for Jeanne and her husband, Jack! Jessica, twenty five years old, earned an Equine Degree from SUNY, Morrisville. She runs a breeding farm in Cream Ridge, New Jersey. Josh, twenty years old, is presently attending OCCC in Middletown. He would like to pursue a career in alternative energy. His ambition is to design solar panels. Jeanne's husband, Jack, will be retiring from the Federal Correctional Institute in Otisville this summer.

Jeanne looks forward to beginning a new phase of her life by retiring with Jack. They will spend time traveling and being with their family. When traveling, their goals are to take cruises to see other parts of the world.



They just bought a travel trailer so they can experience what the United States has to offer by camping. Jeanne's main goal is to enjoy her family as much as possible. She's looking forward to spoiling her first grandchild and any that may come later!!

Jeanne is very proud of being a cancer survivor. She would also like to volunteer to spend time with others who are going through some of the same experiences that she did. It is wonderful to be able to give back to others.

According to Jeanne, "Maybrook has been a wonderful experience for me. It has been like a second family. I will truly miss the students and the staff. I will cherish all of the wonderful memories."

Jeanne, I am so lucky that you and your family are such special friends. Darrell and I are looking forward to the fun times that we have ahead together with you!

With Love,
—Linda Draughn, Maybrook

(continued on page 6)

Say it ain't so: Linda Draughn Retiring!

Linda Draughn went to school in Balmville and Newburgh. Then she moved to Walden when she was nine years old. Linda graduated from Valley Central and BOCES Cosmetology in 1968. She went to SUNY, New Paltz at the age of thirty-three and changed her career. Linda graduated Cum Laude in 1988 with an N-6 Education degree. She received her Masters in Education in 1990 and now has a Masters plus 60. Linda worked at Wallkill Nursery School as an assistant while attaining her degree. She received her second grade position at Maybrook Elementary in 1988 and has been there for twenty-five years. Linda served on the Child Study Team, IST, Safety Committee, Emergency Response Team, District APPR Committee, and Sunshine Committee. She is a Building Union Representative, ran the Parent Center, and was a Summer School Lead teacher.

Linda married Joel Cook in 1968. They had two children together, Steven and Rachel, and they are proud Valley Central graduates. Steven works part time as a dental hygienist and is a stay at home dad for his two year old son, Andy. He is married to Kim, who is an accountant. Rachel is the Executive Director of the Orange County Youth Bureau. Her husband, Karsten, a stay at home dad, works part time as a driving instructor, and is completing his Ministry Certification. Their children are fourteen year old Sarah, ten year old Rebekah, and six year old Xavier. Sarah is in eighth grade, Rebekah is in fifth grade, and Xavier is in Kindergarten in Valley Central. Linda and Joe founded the National Human Rights Committee for POW/MIAs and ran the organization until he passed away in 1994. Their work with veteran groups made receiving the Citizenship Teacher Award more special to Linda. They also spent much of their time with their children in scouts, Little League, and camping. In 1996, while visiting her in-laws in Indiana, Linda met her sister-in-law's best friend. Linda married Darrell Draughn in 1997. He worked in construction, and also repaired

tractors. She said that he is a wonderful stepfather and 'Papaw' and very loved.



Linda is looking forward to spending time babysitting, fishing with Darrell and the kids, seeing movies with Darrell that she didn't have time for, and spending every possible minute with her grandchildren. (Teaching never stops!) She will also be sitting by the pool listening to country music. She adores being outside with nature. Many family get togethers are held at Linda's house. She is also looking forward to celebrating many more such occasions with her dad and stepmom, Bill and Trudy Johnson, and her four sisters; Penny Bellarosa, Becky McCord, Julie Santiamagro, and Cindy Cavallucci and their families. Linda said that being with her entire family is the most important thing. Retirement will give her the chance to cherish and take pleasure in her family, friends, and personal goals. She also plans to continue to organize the Happy Hours for her 'second family' from Maybrook Elementary.

The staff at Maybrook has grown as pro-

Enjoy Your Retirement, Candi!

Candi Baxter grew up in Ossining, NY and graduated from Ossining High School. She attended Westchester Community College, and then went on to SUNY Fredonia to complete her BA. Candi accepted a job in September, 1970 in Goshen teaching third grade. She lived with her brother and his family who had purchased one of the first town homes in Country Club. Then she went back to school and completed the requirements for permanent certification at SUNY Cortland. Her next teaching job was in Chappaqua, NY, where she was a contracted substitute for one year. For the next few years she was a per diem substitute, primarily in the Wappingers District. Candi moved to the state of Florida in 1979, and began teaching third grade in 1980, at Babson Park Elementary School. In 1985 she returned to New York and went to work at Haldane Elementary School in Cold Spring, NY. While there, she worked in the reading room, taught kindergarten, and was in the library for five years. She taught fifth grade at Furnace Woods School in the Hendrick Hudson District for 1988-89 school year, but returned to Haldane until June of 1997.

We were very fortunate to have Candi come to Valley Central in September, 1997, as the librarian at Maybrook and Walden. She did not have library certification, but had library experience. So, she went back to school at SUNY Albany and earned a Masters of Library Science. She has not only been in the library at Maybrook, but has also had assignments in Walden, Montgomery, the High School and East Coldenham. She also taught computer in Maybrook for a few years. Candi has also participated in the Safety Committee and SAT.

Candi met her husband, Bill, through her brother Greg in 1972. They were both members of a Corvette club. They were married in 1975, and have two children, a daughter Alicia and a son Jeremy, whom they call Jay. They moved to the state of Florida in 1978, but Candi missed the change of seasons, so they returned to Cold Spring, New York in 1985. They lived there until



1998 when they moved to Fishkill, which is where they currently reside. Both of their children

live in Fishkill. Alicia is married and has four children. Jay is busy with his own business, installing home entertainment and communication systems.

Candi enjoys gardening, knitting, crocheting and classic car cruises. She and Bill have purchased a camper and hope to do some traveling. They may spend time in Florida in the winter. They will explore car shows that they didn't have time to attend before.

Candi said, "If my knees cooperate, Chris Reese and I may attempt to hit the slopes. I haven't been downhill skiing for many years, and we may be able to get the senior citizen's discount!! I plan to continue going to the gym, so that I can remain active. I might explore working with therapy dogs."

Candi also said, "I have been so fortunate to spend the last sixteen years at Maybrook. In Maybrook we share more than just work, we are like family; it is a group of such caring compassionate people. I hope to be able to maintain these relationships, as well as the relationships with other special people that I have worked with in the district."

Candi, I have enjoyed working with you and I will miss our many little chats! Enjoy! You have definitely earned the chance to do so! —Linda Draughn, Maybrook

Comments From Your Other Maybrook Friends

"One could always count on Candi's help in the library. Many happy years in your retirement. Now you can take all those wonderful trips." —Chris Hollway

"I hope you enjoy every minute of your retirement! Now you will be able to enjoy your morning coffee! Best wishes." —Danielle Schatz

(continued on pg 7)

Linda Draughn (continued from page 5)

fessionals, colleagues, and friends through Linda's guidance and nurturing. I personally have been blessed with a trusted colleague and trusted friend. (continued on page 7)
We wish you the fulfillment of all your dreams and aspirations for the future.

—Linda Weiner

Comments From Your Other Maybrook Friends

"Your working years are over! Now your fun begins. Thank you for all your guidance and support that you have given me, especially in my first year of teaching. Enjoy spending time with your family!" —Danielle Schatz

"Linda always wants the best for her kids. This is evidenced in the many conversations we've had over the years. She goes the extra mile for them. It's been great working with you. I will miss that wonderful laugh of yours."—Chris Hollway

"If you want a school building where people get together outside of the workplace... you need Linda. If you want to share time as a staff...you need Linda. We, at Maybrook Elementary, have been blessed to have Linda at our school!" —Flo Spies

"Don't underestimate the value of Doing Nothing, of just going along, listening to all the things you can't hear, and not bothering."

Jeanne Cassel (from pg 4)

Comments From Your Other Maybrook Friends

"When it makes you nervous to speak in front of the parents, it is very comforting to turn to a colleague who experiences the same feeling. Jeanne, you were my shoulder for Open House, Education Week Visitation, Reading Safari, and Math Fun Night. We smiled at each other; we understood each other."— Flo Spies

"Congrats on your retirement! Enjoy spending time with your grandchildren. The best days are yet to come! I am thankful that I had a wonderful opportunity to work with you! I will miss your laugh in the mornings! Best wishes!" —Danielle Schatz

"Jeanne, you have been a part of Maybrook for many years. I have come to know you as a caring and compassionate person who loves what you do. You were as successful with the second graders as you were with the fourth graders. Good luck and enjoy the retirement years." —Chris Hollway

Candi Baxter (from pg 6)

Comments From Your Other Maybrook Friends

"For many kindergarteners, Candi is the first grown-up to let them borrow a book! Candi's love of books is transferred to the children! They hold their books carefully with BIG smiles on their faces!" —Flo Spies

"I have worked with Candi Baxter for many years now. Our love of books and anything technology related has been a constant source of wonderful conversations between us! We share a room that's part library and part computer lab. It hasn't always been easy sharing this space, but we make it work. I know that she is really looking forward to her retirement. She is excited to be traveling the country with her husband, animals, grandkids, and friends. I am so pleased for her and wish her all the happiness in her retirement." —Arlean Veve

"It has been a pleasure. Best wishes and much happiness in your new phase of life. Maybe we'll encounter each other in our camping adventures!" —Jeanne Cassel

Carol Ann Kronyak to Retire

Carol Ann Kronyak grew up in Hasbrouck Heights, New Jersey. She considers herself a “real ‘Jersey Girl.’” Carol Ann went to Montclair State, New Jersey from 1981-1986, where she received her Bachelors of Fine Arts in Sculpture. Then she attended SUNY, New Paltz from 1993-1995 and received her Masters in Fine Arts in Sculpture/Ceramics. She was an Adjunct Professor at SUNY, New Paltz for Sculpture from 1997-1998. Next, she was an Adjunct Professor at Montclair State University, New Jersey, in 3-D Design, from 1998-1999. Then she received her Teaching Certificate from New Paltz in 2000. Carol Ann worked at Pine Bush School District as a Long Term Sub, teaching Elementary Art. Valley Central was blessed in 2004 when she became a Long Term Sub for Studio Art and Traditional Photography. Then she taught at the High School until 2012 for Studio Art, Drawing and Design I and II, Ceramics and Advanced Ceramics, and Sculpture and Crafts. Maybrook was thrilled to have her join our family and also East Coldenham for Elementary Art. Carol Ann has also served as Co-Advisor with her great friend Jacqui Schneider on the National Art Honor Society. She was Co-Advisor with Jim Hession for the Ski and Snowboard Club.

Carol Ann married Dennis Zingarelli 27 years ago. They have two great sons. Mickey is twenty two years old, a VC graduate, and a 2013 graduate of Full Sail University, Florida. Their sixteen year old son, Wyatt, is a Sophomore at VC. Carol Ann has been a practicing and showing artist since the early 80’s. She loves her family and the outdoors. She skis, gardens, plays in the pool, jogs, walks, and especially shares time with her family. She loves to travel and has only five more states to visit! When asked what she is planning for retirement, she said “Really? Heading south...South Carolina to teach High School again! Can’t wait!!!!” Carol also added, “I worked hand in hand with countless extra-ordinary people and made several memorable friends! I had a great opportunity to

facilitate many outstanding learners! I will mourn the loss, but will cherish the memories!”

I know we have only had the pleasure of your company with us this year, but you are an awesome person. I will always remember your incredible taste in clothes and jewelry. I wish you the best of luck in South Carolina. They are lucky to be gaining your expertise!

*Fondly,
—Linda Draughn, Maybrook*

Carol Ann is retiring From Valley Central School District and will be sorely missed. Her energy is unprecedented and she has a work ethic that is hard to find. I had the pleasure to teach with Carol Ann in the High School Art Department for eight years. We collaborated on many projects in art and she was extremely creative and devoted to her students and the art program. We became close friends and we joked with some of the students that we were sisters. Of course I was the older sister but we enjoyed each other’s company and teaching together. It is extremely sad that Carol Ann will be leaving this school district. It is a sad day for art.

—Jacqueline Schneider - Valley Central High School Art Teacher



Chris Reese Retiring From Maybrook

Chris Reese was born and raised in South Ozone Park, (Queens) NY. She went to school at PS 100 and John Adams High School in the Richmond Hill area of Queens and then Queens College. After graduating in 1975, she moved to Catskill, NY and became a per diem substitute in several school districts in the Catskill area. Then she received her first permanent teaching position at the Cairo-Durham Central School District in Cairo, NY. She taught physical education at the Cairo Elementary School from 1976-1990. During this time, she also coached modified soccer and JV and Varsity Volleyball. Chris finally began teaching physical education, one day a week, in the Valley Central School District at Berea Elementary School in December, 1996. Two years later, due to enrollment increases, the District added a few sections to her schedule and she was assigned to teach with Bob Leonard at East Coldenham Elementary. As Valley Central continued to grow, the District added another day and a half to her schedule and she was then assigned to Montgomery Elementary. In 2002, the District reorganized the Physical Education Department and she was assigned to Maybrook four days a week. She said she really loved this assignment because it gave her a feeling of her "own school (home)". Over the years, her other one day a week has varied in assignment between East Coldenham and Walden, depending on the District needs. Chris has also served on the Safety Committee in Maybrook.

Chris met her husband, Jim, when she was working in the Cairo-Durham School District (he was the Seventh Grade Math teacher). They were married in 1980. They have three children. After her third child, Chris put her teaching career on hold and became a full time mom and housewife. Jim moved into school administration in 1983, and then he accepted a position at the Pine Bush School District in 1991. They moved to Bloomingburg. Their children were very active in sports and they became very involved in the Pine Bush soccer program. Chris helped her



husband run a continuing education indoor soccer program. They also became very involved in the Pine Bush Little League. Next, Jim changed jobs, so they moved to Holmes, NY in Dutchess County. Their oldest son, Kevin, moved to Palo Alto, California, where their daughter Kristin was attending college. Kristin graduated in June and decided to stay in California.

Chris enjoys photography, traveling, riding a bicycle, walking, and swimming. She and her husband hiked thirty five peaks in the Catskill mountain Park (which are in excess of 3500 feet) before they had children. She would like to resume hiking and conquer the ones they missed. She and Jim are also looking forward to traveling and spending more time with family and friends. She decided to attempt skiing again with her friend, Candi Baxter. They intend to venture out when conditions are perfect for the "fair weather skiers" and "hit the bunny slopes." Chris also purchased a new hybrid road bicycle and plans to (continued on pg 10)

Chris Reese Retiring From Maybrook (from page 9)

spend time on the local bike trails. While Chris is continuing to be fit and trim, Jim is going to expand his recipe file and improve his cooking skills so she can critique his creations.

According to Chris "I have enjoyed working with the entire Physical Education Staff at Valley Central. I feel very blessed to have been able to work part time in every elementary building. At each building, I always learned something new or picked up a great idea which I frequently used to enhance my program."

Chris, I am so happy that you are part of our "Sensational Seven." I will miss you!

Love,

—Linda Draughn, Maybrook

Comments From Your Other Maybrook Friends

"Chris Reese started working at Valley Central at about the same time that I did, but I did not get to know her until she came to Maybrook. In sharing duties as well as lunches we have become friends. We have discussed many things during these times about school and our families. We have a common interest to stay fit so that we can remain active in retirement. We go to the gym a few afternoons most weeks. Chris has incorporated a few of the Zumba routines into her PE classes; I participate in these exercises when I can. We also hope that our knees will cooperate and we will be able to do some downhill skiing next year. Neither one of

us has skied in a few years; maybe we will qualify for the senior's discount!! Chris I wish you a wonderful retirement, full of good health and happiness as you continue on your journey in a new and exciting phase of your life."

—Candi Baxter

"It has been a pleasure working with Chris. Best wishes and much happiness in your new phase of life. Happy retirement!"

—Jeanne Cassel

"I always marveled at the many games Chris would play with her students. I never knew there were so many out there! She truly enjoyed them all. I'll miss you at our field days. Enjoy your retirement-you deserve it."

—Chris Hollway

"Best of wishes on your retirement! I wish you happiness and all the joy retirement can bring you! Relax and have fun! Now is the time to enjoy things you never had time to do when you worked!"

—Danielle Schatz

"Every year my kindergartners LOVE to go to the gym for P.E. Chris keeps the equipment updated which makes the gym a very colorful and inviting place to be. I know that my students are having a wonderful time in P.E., because they can barely contain themselves when they are waiting quietly on line."

—Flo Spies

Florence Spies Retiring from Maybrook

My dear friend and colleague, Florence Spies, lovingly known as Flo, is retiring as a Kindergarten teacher from Maybrook Elementary after 21 years in Valley Central School District. I have worked with Flo for the past 20 years and have been fortunate enough to have her as one of my close friends. I have watched, listened, and seen her children grow up into beautiful successful adults that any parent would be proud of.

Flo was born in Demarest, New Jersey. She attended Northeast Missouri State University where she majored in Elementary Education. She received her Masters Degree in Early Childhood from SUNY New Paltz. After meeting and falling in love in Missouri, Flo married Dan Spies in 1974 in Demarest, New Jersey. She began teaching Kindergarten in 1975 in Park Ridge, New Jersey. She then taught Kindergarten the following year (*continued on page 11*)

Florence Spies Retiring from Maybrook (from pg 10)

In 1977, she taught Compensatory Education in Bergenfield, New Jersey. Her son Gregory was born in March 1978. In March of 1980, Flo and Dan welcomed their daughter, Katie into the world, and two years later, in March of 1982, their youngest daughter, Jill was born. Flo stopped working the month prior to Gregory's birth, and loved being a stay at home mom. In 1992, Flo obtained a fifth grade teaching position at Maybrook Elementary. She taught fifth grade for one year. The following year she moved down to Kindergarten and has been there ever since!! Flo has served on the Kindergarten Report Card Committee, the Professional Development Team, and SAT.

Flo has been happily married to her husband Dan for 38 years. Their son Gregory graduated from the University of Delaware. He currently lives in Portland, Oregon and has his own web development company. Katie graduated from Elon University. She is a Physical Education teacher. She married her college sweetheart, Zane, and they have a beautiful daughter; Dan and Flo's first grandchild, Reese. They live in North Carolina. Jill graduated from the University of Connecticut. She is an Early Care Education Analyst for Connecticut. She married her college sweetheart, Evan, and they have a wonderful son, Donald and the happiest little girl, Edith. Flo quotes, "We are Gran and Papa and overjoyed!" (Surprise! Flo is going to be a Grandma again in October!!)

In her retirement, Flo plans to read more; especially during the summer when she can go outside and enjoy the beautiful weather. She will also visit her children and grandchildren more often. She will go to the doctor whenever she wants or needs to! She would also like to learn some "new" cooking recipes and maybe even take a class. She is considering joining the "gym on 9w" (commonly known as Sports Plex) so she doesn't sit home on the couch all day. She would love to travel Hawaii, Italy, and anywhere else Dan would accompany her to. Flo will continue writing poems. She has turned some of



them into children's books of her own. Her son Gregory used to illustrate them and those are her favorite ones to share because of the beautiful illustrations. She will continue working in her garden to make sure every last weed is pulled!

Flo commented that she was supposed to be a nurse. Her high school yearbook says, "Doctors Right Hand." Her oldest brother, John believed that being a nurse would be too emotional for her. He enlisted his wife in a plan to redirect Flo's future. Jeanne said, "Why do you want to be with sick children when they are sick and unhappy when you could be a teacher and be with children who want to be with you every day and they will love you?" That was when she knew teaching kindergarten was what she was meant to do. Flo loves teaching kindergartners- helping them, listening to them, laughing with them and especially reading to them. She is thankful to her brother for his suc-

Florence Spies Retiring (from pg 11)

cessful plan!

Flo, we are all so lucky to have worked with such a special friend and colleague. We wish you the best of luck and happiness in all that you do. And what we will miss the most is that special laugh that you have...the laugh that you share with your kindergartners. We love you!

With love,

—Jackie Scarano, Maybrook

Comments From Your Other Maybrook Friends:

“Flo always has a smile on her face. One could see she truly loves working with kindergartners. She is organized and firm in her discipline. Her students always know what to expect. I am always happy to help her with any reading questions she has. She will be widely missed by

all the staff at Maybrook Elementary.”

—Christine Hollway

“Congratulations on your retirement! Enjoy spending time with your grandchildren! The best days are yet to come! I am truly thankful that I had the opportunity to work with you! I will miss your laugh in the mornings! Best wishes!” —Danielle Schatz

“I’ve had a blast working with you! Who will I discuss our morning news and weather with? Who will I play “Footsie” with at lunch? I’m looking forward to our “Happy Hours”!

—Linda Draughn

“It has been a pleasure working with Flo. I look forward to your inspiring countdown cards as each approaching month to retirement ticks away! Best wishes and much happiness in your retirement.”

—Jeannie Cassel

Congratulations to Maybrook’s Sensational Seven!



Maybrook Salutes Anne Sussdorff

Anne Sussdorff was born in Staten Island and her family moved to New Paltz when she was two and a half. She has lived there ever since. Anne graduated from New Paltz High School, attended SUNY Oneonta for one semester, and graduated from SUNY New Paltz three times. She received a Bachelors in Science, Masters in Science and a Certificate of Advanced Study. Her first teaching position was at Valley Central Middle School in the sixth grade, where she taught reading and language arts for three and a half years. After receiving her certification in reading, she went to Walden Elementary and taught remedial reading for ten and a half years. During the next ten years, Anne was the district Coordinator of Compensatory Education. During much of that time, she was also the Assistant Principal of Walden. During the last sixteen years, she has been the Maybrook Elementary Principal. Over the years, Anne has served on innumerable committees as a teacher and as an administrator.

Anne has two children. Her son, Chris, recently began work in the solar technology field. Her daughter, Amy, is in chemistry at SUNY Albany and in laboratory science at Albany Medical.

Reading has always been an enjoyable way for Anne to relax. She also likes being outdoors, 'digging in the dirt', walking in the woods or along the beach. However, as Anne says, "I haven't spent nearly as much time in those outdoor pursuits as I should." Anne has one major project to accomplish early in her retirement, which is to get her house ready to sell. She is looking forward to 'condo life' where she can "close the door and travel". Her brother, sister-in-law, and some friends have been talking about a Mediterranean cruise for a few years. So, that trip is pretty high on her list. She also plans on getting back to the gym at least four days a week, and eventually becoming involved in volunteer work. It will also be easier to spend time with her family as her schedule will no longer be dependent on the school calendar. Anne has



some very dear retired VC friends who are greatly enjoying retirement and she is looking forward to spending more time with them.

As Anne prepares for this new adventure, she says, "Spending my entire forty year career at VC has been an honor and a pleasure, thanks to all those terrific people with whom I have worked!"

Anne, it was quite difficult typing this article without tears in my eyes. Working with you has been an honor because you are not only an incredible boss, but a special friend. As both you and I are moving into that new phase in our lives, I will leave you with the quote from a very special gift which I received for my birthday this year. "Memories are a way of holding onto the things you love, the things you are, the things you never want to lose." I told you that I cried as soon as I read it and we decided that we would both have many tears this year. How true!! I can't thank you enough for always being there. You are one of those "Memories."

With Love,
— Linda Draughn
(continued on page 14)

Maybrook Salutes Anne Susdorff (from pg 13)

Comments From Your Other Maybrook Friends

“We came to Maybrook together and now we are leaving together. I wish you peace, health, and happiness as you begin the journey in a new phase of your life. You certainly deserve it. Thank you for all that you have done.”
With Love, Candi Baxter

“I have had the pleasure of working under the leadership of Anne for the last five years. She is someone who not only leads her teachers, but guides them in the direction they should be. She is a caring individual, who cares about her staff, cares about her students, and cares about her community. I feel blessed to have been able to start my teaching career under a principal like her. As sad as the whole community is to see her go, I am so happy that I got to work with her.

Anne, I wish you the absolute best that life has to offer. Thank you for always being there when I needed help, personal and professional, and for just being the wonderful person you are. Enjoy your retirement. You deserve it! “Don’t cry because it’s over. Smile because it happened.” -*Dr. Seuss* Love, ~Heather Jurgens

“Anne has been a wonderful boss. She is very dedicated and committed to meeting the educational needs of her students. She is also very supportive of the needs of her staff. She is not only your boss, but your friend. I feel very fortunate to have been able to work for Anne.”
Love, ~Jeanne Cassel

“Congratulations on your retirement! Maybrook Elementary School is so lucky to have had such a supportive and caring principal like you! You will truly be missed by many! Enjoy the new chapter in your life. Make time each day to enjoy the things you love to do. Your working years are over, now let the fun begin! Congrats!”
~Danielle Schatz

“It has been my pleasure to work with someone as wonderful as Anne Susdorff. She is so unpretentious, but a true professional, and a terrific boss! She has a wonderful team here in Maybrook, and we all love and respect her so much! She always has the staff’s best interest at heart and she is truly loved by everyone.

She has made me laugh with her challenges in the field of technology! Either with the camera, computer, Kindle Fire, laptop, or iPad, it’s been great to work with such an amazing person. I admire her so much and I consider myself very fortunate to call her my friend. I wish her the happiness she so much deserves, and I look forward to our continued friendship.”
Love, ~Arlean Veve

“Anne, thank you for hiring me all those years ago. You have given me opportunities to grow in my teaching. I’ve been trained in Reading Recovery, Literacy Collaborative, and Literacy Leaders. You have always advocated for what you think is the best for your students. May you enjoy your retirement years. (Now you can catch up on all those books you said you didn’t have time to read.) Here’s to the 3R’s: Reading, Relaxing, Retirement”
~Chris Hollway

“There is an old expression: A new broom sweeps clean. Getting a new principal can be daunting because everything can change. With Anne, that wasn’t the case. Programs and procedures that she liked remained in place. My respect and admiration for Anne has never wavered from that first year.”

~Flo Spies

Lisa Daily to Retire from Berea

With such uncertain times in Valley Central School District's history, there came an unexpected and unimaginable turn-of-events. Lisa

Daily decided to retire when the program that she so truly embraces, Reading Recovery, was cut due to budget constraints. Lisa lives and breathes Reading Recovery each and every day of her life. Quoting her words, "Reading Recovery is not my job... it is the way I live my life."

Lisa began this journey in 1987. She was accepted into a rigorous one-year training course to become a Reading Recovery teacher for the Newburgh City School District. After undertaking this endeavor, her vision of literacy was forever changed. In 2000, Lisa became part of our Valley Central School District family when Newburgh suddenly cut their Reading Recovery program.

Lisa, a dedicated Reading Recovery teacher for 18 years, decided to undertake another year of intense training to become a Reading Recovery Teacher Leader for Valley Central in 2005. This afforded Lisa the opportunity to teach children and adults to love literacy as much as she does! Not only has she served as a trainer for our district, but various surrounding districts as well.

For the past eight years, Lisa has imparted her vast theoretical knowledge to every Reading Recovery teacher in her realm. Many of us have seen teacher leaders come and go through the years. No one has ever come close to portraying the professionalism that Lisa exhibits, nor the knowledge that she possesses. She has spent countless hours conversing with anyone willing to embrace literacy education.

Lisa will be sorely missed by students, teachers, staff and administrators alike. She teaches and touches the lives of everyone that has had the privilege to cross her path. As stated by one Reading Recovery student as he wrote his story one day, "Reading teachers can't retire. We'll be robbed of knowledge." I believe this statement definitely rings true when you

think of *Lisa Daily*.

Lisa, we all wish you well in your new endeavors!

With warm regards,
Joy Spring
Berea Reading Teacher



Led literacy education in our district
Inspired students and adults alike
Supported each and every colleague equally
Acknowledged for her expertise and guidance

Lisa Daily (right) is pictured here with Tonimarie Meyer as they pose for staff pictures.

Farewell, Cherub Leader! Diane Ruggles Retires

In 1982, the Pine Bush School District was forced to make cuts in staff. Unfortunately among those cuts was a bright, articulate young business teacher by the name of Mrs. Diane Ruggles. Diane was crushed until she was quickly (and wisely) scooped up by Mr. Victor Hagggar, Principal of VCHS. The rest was history as Diane would spend the next 31 years teaching business classes in room 101 at VCHS!

Over those 31 years, Diane would serve as department chair for close to 20 years! She would “break in” at least 8 different principals and countless new department chairs including myself. Diane was a constant voice of reason at the ed-council meetings, never agenda-laden or selfish – just level-headed with the best interests of all in mind.

In the classroom, she conducted herself with the utmost professionalism. Before “putting children center” became a popular phrase, Diane had been practicing this for her entire career! Affectionately known as the “Cherub Leader” among her students (because ALL of her students were her personal cherubs), she never shied away from helping a student to do his/her best. She never failed to remember a student’s birthday or offer students a kind word, a piece of candy or even financial assistance to those in need. (Wow, if that doesn’t sum up what a teacher is, then I don’t know what does!) In fact, I know that one would be hard-pressed to find anyone who would utter an unkind word about Diane.

Besides being an exemplary teacher, Department Chair and colleague, Diane is a friend to all of us! How many of you have ever received a note, a card or gift from this big-hearted woman? How many of you have sought her out for help, wisdom or solace? How many of you have noticed her year after year volunteering at the Senior-Faculty barbeque or the end of the year faculty/staff breakfast? This unassuming, professional of professionals has been there over, over and over again for all of us. For me, Diane has been the sister I never had. Over the years I

have counted on (and cherished) her wisdom, advice, camaraderie and compassion—for which I am forever grateful.

But the time has come hasn’t it? Diane never wanted to be the one that stayed at the party too long or smeared lipstick above her lips! The decision has been made, time to move on. Diane leaves behind a huge void at VCHS, but also takes with her many, many fond memories. Although retiring from teaching, Diane will continue to be the same dedicated, kind, considerate and generous human being that she has always been--- just no longer in the halls of VCHS.

We wish our friend and colleague Diane a very happy and healthy retirement. You will be sorely missed by all --- especially me!

—Respectfully submitted by Rob Sassi, HS

VC Will Miss Peter Anzovino

FBI agent, with teaching career book-ends...certainly an interesting professional pathway; however, when Pete Anzovino left teaching and began a 21 year career with the FBI in 1983, he knew someday he would return to his original calling as a science teacher. For the past 9 years, the students of Valley Central have been the fortunate recipients of Pete's decision to come back to his teaching roots.

Pete initially taught Chemistry in Columbia County. He married Tricia in 1975, and several years later, they began their family with the birth of their first son, Peter. It was at this point Pete joined the FBI working in counter intelligence and counter espionage. While his FBI career was vastly different from education, Pete's myriad responsibilities included instructing fellow FBI agents and police officers in the art of interrogation. As Pete's FBI career flourished, so did his family, with the birth of Timothy. In 2003, he retired from the FBI and returned to teaching.

Pete's teaching style is old school in the best sense of the term. In fact, he often says that when he *first* arrived at Valley Central, not much had changed in his 21 year hiatus from the profession...teaching was still about connecting with kids. Knowing this, Pete worried whether he would be able to develop a rapport with students like he did early in his teaching career. Happily, Pete's time at Valley Central has shown him to be masterful at forming connections with students to get them to do their best—for themselves—and because they don't want to disappoint "Mr. A." An accomplished storyteller and an avid outdoorsman, Pete beautifully weaved the intricacies of Chemistry with stories from his life and career experiences—the FBI, kayaking, fishing, hunting, and even his search for the mysterious Yeti or Bigfoot—to make Chemistry come alive for students. The excellent performance of his students on the annual Chemistry Regents would rate Mr. Anzovino highly effective on the HEDI scale. But Pete would tell you that his measure of success as an educator goes

well beyond test scores—it's about his ability to make those essential connections with students. And while Pete doesn't enjoy the limelight, and is humbled by the honors he's received during his time at Valley Central—including a PTSA Founder's Night Award and being chosen by the senior class to read names at graduation this year—such honors are a true testament of professional success, as they signify inspired students, appreciative parents, and respect among one's colleagues.

Regarding limelight avoidance, Pete is always available, without fanfare, to do extra. He arrives at school by 6:15 every morning to get ahead on whatever needs to be done, and be available to students for extra help. Pete also served as a mentor to one of my Science Research students doing a project on forensics that involved going to a shooting range and collecting and analyzing gun powder residue patterns. I'm not sure whether my student or Pete enjoyed the experience more, but I know the student gained a wonderful experience. These are but a few of the ways Pete quietly goes above for the students of Valley Central.

Like many teachers, Pete finds the thought of retirement bittersweet. He will miss his students and also his colleagues, but recent developments in education, and more importantly in Pete's life, serve as compelling retirement incentives. Pete's and Tricia's family continues to grow with the recent birth of their first grandchild, Natalie Rose, to son Peter and his wife, Jeanine. Peter and Tim are both pursuing successful military careers in the Army—Peter has been promoted to Major and Tim is currently a Second Lieutenant. Spending more time with family is top on Pete's retirement list, especially at his cabin in the High Peaks near Lake Placid. Perhaps someday he'll even spot that elusive Yeti! Pete, on behalf of your students and colleagues, much health and happiness, and all the best to you in your retirement! Valley Central will miss you.

—Joseph Fracalossi, HS, Science

Life's A Beach: Michael Fitts to Retire from VCHS

If the measure of a man is the impact he has had on others, then Mike Fitts is a great man indeed. A moment in Room 120 (itself a work of art) gives a glimpse of the depth of influence Mr. Fitts has had on his students for the past 33 years (32 at VC)! The walls are covered in advertisements for businesses of every kind, each conceived and created by his students—most of whom are seniors in high school. This level of work from 12th graders is almost unheard of and a tangible testament to the fact that Mr. Fitts has made a tremendous difference in his students' lives.

I have had the pleasure of working with Mike for the past 12 years and have enjoyed discussing educational philosophy with him. Mike is a quiet, dignified gentleman who sees the potential in every student. He is not one to frequent the faculty room or engage in negative banter about the “troublemakers” of the building—be they student or faculty. He greets every student with acceptance and strives to help them reach their fullest potential. As Mike has said to me many times, “One size doesn't fit all!” He is passionate about the affective aspect of teaching and learning and has worked hard to make sure that it is alive and well in Room 120. He builds a rapport with each and every student, knowing that it might be the most positive interaction that student has with an adult. Mike believes in his students which helps them believe in themselves. His kind, gentle nature and his positive attitude help kids build confidence.

Mike's influence doesn't stop at his door, he has also managed to make his classroom a “community classroom” by inviting literally hundreds of parents and business owners to come in and speak to the students, as well as work with them to create their own businesses as a project. Before it became an education trend, Mike was involving parents and community members in the learning process to help the students succeed to the best of their ability. Many of the businesses conceived for his project have become working businesses both locally and be-

yond. The real-world experience he provided has made a significant impact far beyond his classroom.

Of course, behind every great man is a great woman! Mike met his soul mate at Valley Central. He and Carole married in 1985. They have two wonderful children: Melissa, a second year medical student at Dominican College who is working towards becoming a Physical Therapist, and Ryan who attended Mount St. Mary College and is currently beginning a career in HVAC maintenance and repair. Ryan was a student of mine and easily one of the sweetest young men I have ever had in class. In retirement, Mike is looking forward to spending more time with his family and his beloved dogs. He and Carole have a home on Hilton Head Island in South Carolina, where Mike will enjoy sitting on the beach, relaxing, and loving life all summer long!

Those lazy summer days will give way to more work soon. Mike wants to continue teaching in his retirement, though not full-time. He is looking forward to being able to really focus on the affective side of education to continue making a difference in the lives of students who desperately need guidance. He would like to work with kids who are struggling to achieve their goals. Mike's calming presence and his absolute conviction that “one size doesn't fit all” will serve him well in these endeavors.

Mike, you are a consummate professional and you have inspired many students over the course of your career. You have been a good friend to me over the years and I will miss you and our chats (even your technical difficulties! :-)) . On behalf of our colleagues in the Social Studies Department, I want to wish you the best of everything in your retirement! You have earned it! More importantly, you deserve it!

—Meghan Rilley, HS

Au Revoir, Madame Robillard!

When contemplating how to sum up Georgina Robillard, the *grand dame* of the foreign language department, the word erudite seems unavoidable. Paraphrasing from Merriam-Webster online, it is defined as having or showing great knowledge that is gained by studying; being educated, knowledgeable, wise or sapient. That is the Georgina Robillard known and loved by so many, that and so much more.

As a young girl, Georgina was influenced profoundly by a French-speaking woman who lived in her apartment building in the Bronx. This woman took Georgina under her wing, gave her French magazines to read and opened a window for her that allowed her to imagine a world far from her life at the time. In Mount Saint Ursula, her high school in the Bronx, Georgina's silent, competitive nature led to her graduating well within the top ten of her class. It was during her undergraduate studies at Hunter College, where she graduated with highest honors, that Georgina developed a passion for the great French writers. As a graduate student and doctoral candidate at NYU, this passion was further fostered by her outstanding professors who promoted her career and helped in all things French. While there, she also taught a freshmen course in French and spent a summer abroad immersing herself in and embracing the culture of Nice and Paris.

Georgina began her teaching career at Packer Collegiate in Brooklyn, (she spent part of those eight years also as department chair) where she initiated a foreign exchange program with a school in Paris. In 1994 Georgina left the private sector and brought her vast knowledge of French, her native Spanish and her self-taught Italian to join the Valley Central family, quickly becoming an integral and beloved member of the foreign language department.

How do you describe Georgina Robillard? Caring, generous, dedicated, tireless, wise, collegial, and intellectual yet humble are words that only begin to scratch the surface of this remark-

able woman. An educator in every sense of the word, not a day goes by where students are not given a mini-lesson on the Latin etymology of a word, the impeccable comportment she expects of her cats and therefore of her students or old world wisdom, prefaced by "You know, my mother always used to say...." Always the mentor, Georgina has reached out and taken each and every new teacher in the department under her wing, giving them sage advice, gathering materials for them and sitting down and guiding them through the realities of lesson planning.

From her department colleagues:

"When I first started in the high school as a maternity leave replacement I taught in Georgina's room. She was so welcoming and helpful. She answered all the questions that I had, and there were a LOT, and she did everything she could to make the transition easy for the students and me. I've never met a person more dedicated to her students (her little "weasels") than Georgina. The hours that she spends before and after school to make sure that these kids have all of the tools they need to be successful is amazing. She cares about her students and it's obvious. How can so much love fit into such a tiny body? She's one of the most compassionate, thoughtful people I know." —Kelly Napoleon

"Georgina is a wonderful, caring, devoted teacher and friend. I had the pleasure of working in the high school with her. She shared her expertise with me when I first started and continued collaborating with me throughout the years. I feel privileged to have worked with her and I am proud of all her accomplishments. She will be greatly missed by her colleagues and students." —Carmen Maher

"Georgina is a spectacular person who is so humble. She is truly (continued on pg 18)

Au Revoir, Madame Robillard!

deserving of a great celebration. She works tirelessly for her students and does so much for her colleagues...when I am with her I feel like I am with family. I will miss her so much.” —Linda Geiger

“Georgina is one of the most dedicated women I know. Her love and enthusiasm for her craft is demonstrated through each and every moment she devotes to her students. It has been an honor and a pleasure to work along side such a wonderful teacher and most of all a true friend. With your retirement, I am sending you the most loving thoughts and well wishes as you move forward in the next chapter of your life. “May good fortune be yours, may your joys never end.” ~an Irish blessing” —Ashley Sanchez

“Every child should have a caring adult in their lives, and that’s not always a biological parent or family member. It may be a friend or neighbor. Often times it is a teacher.”—Heather Vasquez

“I think of Georgina as a professor to whom I look for sage advice and wisdom. Georgina reminds me of a classic piece of literature whose lessons are timeless. I also liken her to a classic Victorian home filled with refined beauty, detail and craftsmanship. I haven’t mentioned the obvious: Georgina is completely selfless with regard to her students. She practically has lesson plans for each and every student. What I would have done to have been her student.” —Carolyn Zayas

“Georgina’s heartfelt passion for teaching and her students, her high ideals for this profession and her love of the pursuit of knowledge has inspired our whole department throughout the past two decades to strive for excellence. Her empathetic ear, her astute words, her dedicated drive, her appreciation and heartfelt joy of simple quality, her thoughtful and caring kindnesses and, most of all, her deep rooted friendship will all be greatly missed.” —Liz Papesca

“I knew from the start that Señora and I were kindred spirits. When I first started she involved me in an elaborate knighting ceremony that involved capes, kneeling and a plastic sword. Who on earth would be able to incorporate Cervantes’ Don Quixote into their lesson plan? This made it alright for me to be creative and fun in the classroom. That innate passion for language and teaching will be sorely missed.”—Al Ortiz

There is an old saying that good things come in small packages. Georgina is a gem, a precious gem. We all wish Georgina and her husband, Richard, the very best as the next chapter of their life unfolds and leave them with this Irish blessing:

“May God grant you always...a sunbeam to warm you, a moonbeam to charm you, a sheltering angel so nothing can harm you, laughter to cheer you, faithful friends near you and whenever you pray, Heaven to hear you.”

With Love & the Greatest Admiration,

—The VC Foreign Language Department

Donna Zajkowski Retires from VCHS

After receiving her degree from Oneonta in 1977, Donna began her teaching career in one of the most challenging positions available, a residential placement center. The Rhinecliff Union Free School District's Pius Campus was looking for a Family and Consumer Science instructor. Undaunted by the dangers of working with the most difficult students in a room full of scissors, hot oil and knives, Donna stayed for seventeen and a half years. Much more than a culinary and fashion instructor, Donna was the physical education teacher, work study coordinator, cheerleading coach, counselor, and surrogate mother. As Project Adventure leader she helped the students gain confidence through mountain climbing and high ropes courses.

By the time Donna arrived at Valley Central in 1995, she was a seasoned teacher ready to take on the challenge of reviving the long dormant fashion program. While teaching culinary and human development classes at the same time, Donna designed a four level fashion curriculum that gives students basic to expert tailoring skill sets. Donna has encouraged and helped many students pursue college careers in the fashion industry.

Not only was Donna brilliant in the fashion room, but a perfect role model for culinary students as she taught nutrition. A fitness expert, Donna understands the importance of eating correctly and balancing diet with exercise. One of her former students was so inspired that she is now a nutritionist. Many VC students and staff have had the privilege of taking Donna's classes at a nearby gym where she works as a fitness trainer. .

Never afraid of a challenge, Donna has handled increased class sizes, demands on her time and never-ending piles of paperwork with professionalism and humor. After breaking her ankle during a race, Donna found it impossible to maneuver through the classroom on crutches and simply hopped everywhere! With true fashion sense, she also made sure her cast matched

her outfit each day.

A true member of the VC family, Donna has participated in fund raising events to help others in need and has kept in touch with students throughout her thirty-six years in teaching. According to Donna, the most rewarding part of teaching is hearing from a former student and discovering that she has made a lasting impact on their lives. Students and staff alike will remember Donna for her dedication, strong work ethic, and passion for excellence.

Unlike most people who look forward to a relaxing retirement, Donna will be seeking even more challenges. As Valley Central begins a new school year in September she will be running a marathon in Maui! She looks forward to traveling and spending more time with her husband Paul.

Best of luck, dear friend! Enjoy many wonderful years of retirement!

—Submitted by Marie Fasulo, HS

Our Mrs. Brooks

Madeline called me today to tell all of us here at the Middle School that her first grandchild had been born. Walter William Kloss was born June 6th healthy and “with a little bit of red hair.” I guess no one has to wonder what Madeline will be doing during her retirement!

In 1978, with degrees from Brooklyn College and NYU, Madeline started her teaching career in the 6th grade in Massachusetts. She began working as a sixth grade teacher in Brooklyn in January of 1981. With her Masters degree in Deaf Education, Madeline used her skills to work with hearing-impaired children for the BOE in Brooklyn and at a private school on weekends in a respite program. In 1993, Madeline, along with her husband, Ken, moved their family to Salisbury Mills. She interviewed with John Hunter and Art Nugent for a 6th grade social studies maternity leave position. Her degree in history and experience in 6th grade prompted John Hunter to say she was “exactly what we need.” Those of us who have been fortunate enough to work with her know John’s words couldn’t have been truer.

Ken is a skilled carpenter and craftsman. He built a “cabin” for their family in Meridale, NY. There the nature and rustic living is perfect for them to enjoy their love of fishing, hunting, and kayaking. Madeline always makes our mouths water when she tells us about the family pizza-making competitions at the cabin, and we all make sure we clear our calendars for the semi-annual Brooks Family Barbecue. There’s not a bigger or better party around with the food, drinks, games, live music, campfire and camping. Everyone is made to feel like they’re part of the big, extended Irish family.

Several years ago Madeline and Ken bought property in Nova Scotia. Madeline tells us that Ken says he has “one more house in him.” In the meantime, they enjoy traveling there to camp, fish and kayak. Now that Madeline’s

retiring they won’t have to only plan their trips in August!

After retirement Madeline plans on spending more time with her family. Her mom, brother, and sister-in-law live in North Carolina. Their two sons, Adam and Stewart, live in New York City, and their daughter, Meghan, lives with her husband, John, at Fort Mead in Maryland. With a brand new grandson, you can be sure the car will be on auto pilot and create a well-worn path to Maryland!

Madeline says she will miss being a teacher, and VCMS will miss her. She was a founding member of the Teacher Mentor program as well as the WEB program. Madeline was instrumental in helping start our monthly teacher breakfasts and the Making Strides campaign each year. Her classroom is welcoming and alive with student work and motivational sayings. One of those sayings on her front blackboard is “Somewhere, something incredible is waiting to be known.” Well, Madeline, that somewhere was your classroom for all of your students whose lives you touched over your 20 years at VCMS.

We wish you and your family health and happiness. We wish you hungry fish when you’re fishing and calm waters when you’re kayaking. We wish you morning yoga classes instead of having to take after-school classes. We wish you sweet smiles and hugs from your new grandson as he grows. We’ll all miss you dearly, and we’ll be looking forward to our invitation to the next Brooks Family Barbecue!

With much love,
—Carolyn Baker and the
6th grade POWER Team

“I’m Going to DisneyWorld!” Mary Failla Retires

What comes to mind when you think of Mary Failla? The answer is a petite blonde with a big smile and merry eyes. But she is more than that. She is a dear friend and esteemed colleague.

Mary is retiring after 12 years as a Special Education Teacher. She spent most of the time at the middle school with her last year, serving as the District of Location Teacher for Harmony Christian, Montgomery Montessori, and the Most Precious Blood School.

Mary has a long history of working with special needs students. For sixteen years, she worked as a Teacher’s Assistant in the Washingtonville School District. It was during this time that Mary made the decision to become a Special Education Teacher. Mary received her BA degree in Secondary Education majoring in Social Studies from SUNY New Paltz and she continued her education at Mount Saint Mary College, in Newburgh earning a MA in Special Education.

Mary started her teaching career in 2001 at The Discovery Center in Sullivan County. She joined the Valley Central Family in 2003 where she became a collaborative teacher on the 8th grade Blue Team. Being a collaborative teacher in the same grade Mary and I worked on many projects together. We’ve shared the agonies of re-evaluations, annual reviews and the scoring of the WIAT-III. We’ve also experienced the joy of triple copies, “wandering” and IEP Direct. For several years, Mary was in charge of scheduling the eighth grade science practical. This was not an easy task—making sure every student received their appropriate testing modifications. Jim Allen remembers Mary would not give up and after a lot of effort she managed to get every student where they needed to be—a task Jim admitted he couldn’t do.

Mary also gave freely of her time as a Student Government Advisor. It is obvious Mary offers a helping hand whenever it is needed. She put in many hours helping me with the Beautiful

and Development Team. For four years, Mary also helped plan the Celebration of Capabilities. Mary has also been an active member of the Bully Committee.

Mary has been married to her husband, Dan, for 40 years. Together they have raised two boys. Daniel is a fire chief in Summersville, S.C. and Anthony is an Assistant Fire Marshall for the city of Charleston. Mary is also a grandmother of two boys, Jonathan (4) and Christopher (9), the children of Anthony and Karen.

Mary and Dan have already started a new chapter in their lives. Thinking ahead about retirement Mary and Dan purchased property in the Adirondacks, where they built their summer residence—a solar powered cabin. They are now in the process of building their perfect winter home in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. This move will bring Mary closer to her children, grandchildren, and her brothers, Tommy and her twin, John.

In her retirement, she will continue to be really busy. Along with Dan she will work with the Disabled American Veterans and whether she is in South Carolina or in Boonville you can bet that Mary will continue to be a Eucharistic Minister with her new church.

Mary has always enjoyed traveling and she will start off her retirement with a planned trip to Disneyworld with her grandchildren. She has also planned a future trip to an island off the coast of Spain where 40 years ago Dan and her honeymooned.

Mary, you will always be a part of the V.C. family enjoy your retirement. We will truly miss you...especially me! We wish both you and Dan many years of happiness and good health.

*—Donna Marie McCarthy
Middle School Special Education Teacher*

Congratulations, Lynn!

Lynn Flickenschild started in the Valley Central School district on November 7, 1977. She was a volunteer at Walden Elementary School. Lynn was a home-room mother for each of her four children: Dawn, Bill, Tammy and Stephen. She also volunteered as a Den Mother, belonged to the church choir and taught Sunday school. She loved every minute of her volunteer work. She would not begin a fulltime paying job in the Valley Central School District until after her last child was in school.

Lynn began working in the Maybrook Elementary school as a reading aide. She worked very closely with Mrs. Anne Sussdorff, who was a reading teacher at the time. Lynn began her career at the middle school in the library with Mark Morris. Bill Cocks was principal at that time. When Mark Morris left the district in 1986, Carol Hochreiter became the new librarian. In 2000, Mrs. Hochreiter retired and Lynn had to train another librarian, me!

Lynn has always had the patience of a saint. Whether it was training all of the librarians and learning how to use a computer, dealing with an irate parent, teacher, administrator, student, occasional crazy intern or librarian... Lynn never wavered with her amazing sense of calm and rationality. (Yes, she knows where all of the VC skeletons are hidden and Yes... Lynn is the real librarian). She was always ready to take on a new assignment or help carry out whatever harebrained scheme I would come up with to get people into the library.

I would have to say that the eleven years that we have worked together have been filled with much laughter, learning and adventures. Lynn helped to take the library from a place no one (including teachers) visited, to one of the most popular spots in the middle school. Students, staff and teachers are always welcome and know that they can find whatever they need in our library. This includes our 'therapy chair' (when needed), a shoulder to cry on, a safe place to hide out, and the occasional snack

or piece of chocolate (purely for medicinal purposes, of course!) Lynn has forged many long lasting relationships with our present and former middle school students. Students come back all the time, just to say hello to her.

Lynn's duties were not just limited to helping to maintain our library. She was always up to volunteering to chaperone our many National Junior Honor Society field trips. This was definitely above and beyond the call of duty. Stalled buses, lost bus drivers (can you say, The Big Dig?) , missing chaperones and sick kids never once fazed her. (Well, maybe fazed her a little!)

Above all, I would have to say that the laughter and camaraderie is what I will miss the most about working with Lynn. There were some days, we would just turn to each other and know that we couldn't make up some of the things that would transpire in that library. We would just look at each other and laugh ourselves silly. I will miss seeing Lynn file the cards for our obsolete card catalogue, (because you never know when technology will fail!). I will also miss our daily banter. Most of all, I will miss a dear employee who became one of my best friends. We always talk about the Valley Central family. In June, we will be losing one of the most valuable and dedicated employees that this district has ever had... (of course, I am just a little biased!)

While I would love to keep her here until I retire, (I told her we could get matching wheel chairs) I know that her family has many plans for her. Lynn and her husband, Conrad, plan to travel and enjoy their many grandchildren and great granddaughter. In the words of Mark Twain, " Good friends, good books and a sleepy conscience: this is the ideal life." Good luck, Godspeed.. And please, please answer my phone calls when I have a question that only YOU will have the answer to.

—Barbara Intracaso, MS

Congratulations, Ava Kravitz!

It takes a very special person to work with special education students for almost 25 years. Ava is one of those special people. She came to Valley Central 14 years ago and worked with our special education students at the secondary level. Outside of her work life, she is married to Larry. They have three children: Debbie, Brian and Talia, and four grandchildren: Wyatt, Tyler, Gabriel and Henry.

I had the pleasure of working with Ava during my first years at VC. Ava was always available for collaboration, ideas to help students and overall moral support. She was there for me to lean on when I was a fledgling in the special education world. One year I was lucky enough to have my lunch period with her. I will always remember her stories of her adventures down in the city with her husband and family including the unique museums and shows she saw. She taught me to enjoy life and find the funny in our job.

Ava could be found most afternoons for a few hours in the room that she shared with MJ Hebbard, planning her lessons. Ava and MJ shared a room for many years. During those years they shared many things and many laughs. They spoke often of the more interesting pictures and explanations that occur in math (yes, believe it or not, math can be fun and funny at the same time). MJ fondly remembers the decorations Ava would pin on her lanyard including a most cherished lighthouse pin.

One of Ava's favorite times of the year has been Halloween. She would come to school dressed in a Halloween costume. Ava also enjoyed the sweets during that time. She would bring candy for herself and her students to enjoy for Halloween.

MJ and I were not the only teachers lucky enough to work with Ava. She worked collaboratively with Beverly Risco for close to 10 years.

She also worked with Betty Gaudette and Jenn Lynn in the past years.

While Ava will miss seeing the friends she made during her time at VC, she is looking forward to retirement. She plans enjoying the freedom of traveling not only on school holidays, but anytime of the year she chooses. She will also be able to enjoy time with her children and grandchildren. I am sure she will continue to enjoy attending different plays and spending time with friends. Ava will be greatly missed; her dedication to education will be her legacy as well as her fabulous sense of humor, her generosity and her kindness.

—*Katrina Smallwood, HS*

Mike Murphy to Retire

Mike Murphy has been a fixture in the middle school for a long time. His wit and humor combined with his storytelling ability has led to many a memory for both student and staff. He has been a part of the VCMS science staff, teaching life sciences, for 30 years and listening to him share his stories as he teaches his students is always a pleasure. With the adults he shares his love of

the Mets, Giants and some interesting escapades. Mike's ability to prioritize and make sense of the nonsensical has been beneficial to the science department. His easy going nature has always made him someone people can relate to and will keep him near and dear to us when he retires.

—Nancy Fabrizio and Nancy Rypkema, MS

Congratulations, Christine O'Shea!

Christine O'Shea is best known for her smile and outgoing nature –she is everyone's best cheerleader and she will be dearly missed when she leaves VCMS. She has been an integral part of the middle school for the last 32 years and trying to imagine some of the programs that she has been part of without her is difficult. Chris has been a pillar and a mentor in the science department and has helped implement many new ideas into the department. Her dedication to the students is impossible to surpass and hard to match. Even this year, as she prepared to retire, she was looking for new ideas and better ways to serve her students. So many times when we reviewed activities and their outcomes Chris's comments would start with "let's try this next year" or "maybe we can change this."

Chris has taught the Living Environment (Biology) program since its inception and numerous students have successfully completed the program, mastered the Regents and most importantly walked away with a life lesson in how to succeed. The success rate of these students is amazing and many of the students have come back to share that the middle school program was the most rigorous they had been faced with and they appreciate the skills they learned to prepare for the other tests they faced.

Beyond the classroom Chris has multiple other roles in the school. She cofounded the VC Spirit group which does a variety of outreach

programs and has run the recognition dinner for over 20 years. This is a remarkable night where each staff member has the opportunity to recognize a student for something they have done. The dinner is an inspiring event that offers recognition to many students who might otherwise have been overlooked as part of the crowd. Chris has also worked with other clubs, coached, mentored students in the big brothers/big sisters program and helped to organize multiple activities for staff members in the middle school.

Beyond the school Chris keeps busy in a number of ways and although she will be missed by all of us we wish her well as she pursues the multiple interests she has outside school. Look out world because when Chris is involved things will get done!!

—Nancy Fabrizio and Nancy Rypkema, MS

Congratulations, Kitty Sarro, on Your Retirement!

A true friend and respected colleague, Kitty Sarro, is retiring after 19 years in the Valley Central School District. Kitty began her teaching career in New Jersey where she taught 6th, 7th and 8th grade. After having her daughter, Rebecca, Kitty left teaching to focus on motherhood. During this time, she became an active parent serving as president of the East Coldenham PTA and was part of the committee which started the Spectrum program here at Valley Central.

Kitty began her career at Valley Central in 1994 as a substitute teacher. She then became the full time teacher for the very program she helped create, Spectrum. Kitty worked in all five elementary buildings. In 2005, she moved to Montgomery Elementary School where she has been teaching fifth grade ever since.

Kitty was born and raised in West Milford, NJ. She attended Bucknell University and finished her schooling at Fairleigh Dickinson University, earning her Bachelors Degree and Masters. In 1980, Kitty married her husband Tom, a biology professor at Mount Saint Mary College. In 1986, they welcomed their daughter, Rebecca, who is now an Assistant District Attorney in the Bronx.

Kitty has served on many committees both building and district wide. In Montgomery, she has been our fifth grade representative on Principal's Council for many years as well as serving on the Safety Committee. District wide, Kitty has spent many hours devoted to the Scholarship Council and its many endeavors as well as serving on the Professional Development Team.

In her retirement, Kitty plans on spending more time visiting her mother as well as other family. Also, there are quite a few books she plans on reading for pleasure and at her own leisurely pace. Spending time with other retired friends, doing a bit of gardening and traveling, are on the list as well.

Who will be our grammar go to, our math whiz? We will miss her ever-present wit and



sense of humor. Kitty's students have always strived to do their best and she has challenged them to succeed both academically and socially. There is no doubt she has made a difference in those students' lives, and the many colleagues who have been lucky enough to call her a friend.

-Andrea Turso, Montgomery

After 40 Years: Al Schmidt Retires

After 40 years at Valley Central, my friend and colleague, Al Schmidt is retiring. Al is one of the very first people I met at Montgomery Elementary School. He taught me that Montgomery Elementary is a family. He welcomed me with a friendly smile, helpful advice, stories to share, lesson ideas, and let's say...slightly disorganized, overflowing file folders that he was so willing to share and I was so grateful to borrow.

Whenever I think of Al I think of his overflowing files – packed tightly with a love for what he teaches and overflowing with his passion to teach and try new ideas (even as the pendulum swings back and forth). I think of how he shared his love of teaching with me and anyone who has been as fortunate as I to work with and learn from Al.

Al is an overflowing file folder. He comes to work each and every day filled with excitement. He has filled his days at MES with more than anyone can ask. He is extremely passionate about books and is eager to share new treasures with his students. His love of science has always been evident whether you see his students presenting their very own experiments, have been to one of the science fairs he helped organize, or maybe you caught a glimpse of Al Schmidt as the “mad” scientist teaching the MES kids all about the scientific method. He coached Odyssey of the Mind, taught summer school for many years, and so, so much more.

Al will never be forgotten at MES. How can one forget the man who walks around barefoot all summer long? Who can forget someone who has worn his jammies and bathrobe to school, has been caught in a dress on opposite day, worn many wigs and hats, has dressed as a pregnant woman, exercised daily with his class, filled hundreds of water balloons, tie-dyed t-shirts, expertly navigated his class around the Museum of Natural History for years, and whose car is always found outside of school all summer long???

After a wonderful career, my friend is stepping away from his home here at MES. Though his files may not be here anymore, Montgomery Elementary will always be his home. I, along with the rest of the MES staff, will miss him. Montgomery Elementary School is saying goodbye to a friend and a family member, but this will always be his home. Al Schmidt has positively impacted too many lives to be forgotten. I wish him the best in his retirement and hope he fills some new “file folders” along the way.

—Cara Hoffman, Montgomery



Congratulations, Al!

Forty years ago, a young enthusiastic student teacher entered the doors at Montgomery Elementary School and will soon close the doors in the same building. The young novice teacher will leave as a well-respected member of the VC community. Al Schmidt has been an inspiration to his colleagues and students in this district ever since. He has witnessed teaching reforms come and go, and pedagogical practices implemented, and renamed, but one thing has not changed and that is the vision he has for the students that walk through his classroom door each September. In his classroom, Al's passion for learning has INSPIRED his students to take ownership of their own learning. Under his superb guidance, he has inspired and encouraged his students to be intrinsically motivated. He continues to encourage them to investigate and be an integral part of their own learning. In Al's class questioning is key, he does not tell, but rather promotes intrigue and inquiry.

During the past 3 years, I have had the pleasure of teaching the 3rd grade with Al. I have been inspired by his continued passion and teaching methods. Those of us who have had the privilege of working with him, either closely or on a district committee, know that he always has the best interest in mind for the students of this district. He will stand up for and has had no problem advocating for what he believes in, always with students in mind. His love of literature and science is apparent in all that he does. His room is immersed in literature, and he can be found reading aloud to his students daily. The amazing part of this is there are times his students can be found sitting in the hallway engrossed in a story, even during their recess time.

Science is an area for which Al also has an extreme passion. When I first came to Montgomery, I was a 4th grade teacher. As you know, the 4th grade science assessment contains a hands-on component which requires the use of many science manipulatives. I first got to know Al, when I identified him as the "closet bandit"

that was borrowing our science supplies for his 3rd grade class. Did I mention that Al is extremely territorial and has no problem claiming supplies as his own if they will support his instruction? When any books or equipment are missing, the first room to check is Al's. Any teaching tools that allow his students to experience creativity, academic freedom, experimentation, and innovation during their school day, Al would have no problem harboring in his room. He most likely will not have returned them, and if Al can find them in his room when you need to borrow them back, you are lucky!

Most inspiring to students and staff alike is Al's wall of class photographs that he proudly displays at the end of each academic year. He has 40 years of success proudly displayed on a wall outside of his classroom. He also keeps track of his students and PROUDLY identifies their occupations or successes as a caption on the photograph. This has become a school tradition, when you see the photos being hung; you know the school year is ending. This year, Al proudly displayed these photos the entire year, and hung the 40th year proudly at the end of his timeline.

During this past year, Al could still be found coming in early each morning to work with his Odyssey of the Mind team, volunteering his time for Family Math Night, assisting with the installation of our playground equipment, checking-in racers for the playground fundraiser, and most recently coordinating our Science Fair. Al has been an inspiration to all that have had the privilege of being his student or his colleague, and the MES and VC community will truly miss him! I am privileged to have had the opportunity to work with Al, and proud to call him a friend. My hope for Al as he embarks on the next phase of his life is that he will be found with his favorite book in one hand, and a fishing pole in the other. Congratulations, Al! "You know what I mean?"

Respectfully & Admirably Submitted by,

—Debi "Debs" Peet

Bonnie Rum: “It is what it is!”

One of Bonnie Rum’s favorite sayings is “It is what it is!”, and she has decided that **it is** time for retirement! Bonnie, a reading teacher at Walden Elementary School, is retiring after twelve years of service with Valley Central, and a total of twenty-seven years of teaching experience. She will be sorely missed! Bonnie began her long, distinguished teaching career in 1986 as a paraprofessional in Queens, New York. Subsequently, Bonnie studied to become a teacher and has taught 2nd, 3rd and 5th grades, as well as reading.

Before she began working in the field of education, Bonnie shared ownership of two small businesses in New York City with her first husband, Azmi. One was a Middle Eastern/American deli in Greenwich Village, and the other a Kosher restaurant on the lower eastside. Bonnie strongly believes that people are all tied to each other in a very global way. For example, she likes to point out that her first husband was a Palestinian Muslim and she is a Jewish American. Sadly, her first husband passed away in January of 1998. Bonnie found love again when she met her current husband, Carl. She was belly dancing at an Armenian Church fundraiser, when Carl caught her eye. As a result, Bonnie decided to trade in her urban lifestyle for romantic, greener pastures in the bucolic Hudson Valley. She worked for approximately three years as a reading teacher between two buildings (East Coldenham and Walden). However, Walden Elementary has really been her home, full-time, for the last nine years.

Bonnie is a very hardworking reading teacher and always looks for ways to help her students. She demonstrates that she truly cares about them by constantly encouraging them and by always having high expectations for them. As a lifelong learner, Bonnie continually strives to keep abreast of current reading research



practices that would benefit her students. Her wealth of accumulated materials and ideas prove this!

Bonnie has been a dedicated and integral part of the Valley Central “family”. She has served on the ELA, BLT and SAT committees because she believes teachers need to have input on both building-wide and district-wide planning and decision making. She

has led workshops, taught Homework Club, and she even implemented a Brainiac Olympics program in Walden to help students improve critical thinking skills. But perhaps Walden will most miss Bonnie’s contribution to the second grade’s Camp-Read-a-Lot program, where she was the best s’mores chef!



Bonnie very much believes in the connection between mind and body. Besides striving to continually challenge herself mentally, she is also very health conscious. Her daily regimen, at lunchtime, consists of homemade hummus; a soft, delicate corn tortilla; and a luscious grapefruit. She has often shared her knowledge about vitamin health, which she acquired from her husband, Carl.

Bonnie also strongly believes in recycling! She is an avid garage sale/flea market/consignment shop guru! For a very reasonable cost, and with her extraordinary sense of style, she can put together an amazing mixture of vintage haute couture with a bohemian flare. Of course, she always accentuates her ensembles with one or more charming, often eclectic pieces of jewelry. *(continued on page 29)*

So what does the future have in store

Bonnie Rum (continued from pg 28)

for Bonnie Rum? She looks forward to spending lots of time with her two granddaughters, ages seven and five. Bonnie and Carl recently purchased a lovely home in the Tomahawk Lake community, complete with an in ground pool; and at age sixty, Bonnie learned how to swim! She will continue to pursue her love of art, in particular oil painting; but hopes to add watercolor to her repertoire. Of course, there will also be lots more time for Bonnie to snuggle up with her "Nook"! Our best wishes to you, Bonnie, for a very happy, healthy retirement!

Written by:

Your Reading "Buddies"

Jessica Tsantes, Suzanne Eastwood,

Andrea Zolotas, and Linda Kirkpatrick, Walden



Swan Song for Sharon Satkowski

With a minimum of "rumpus and ruckus", the students of Walden Elementary School have been shepherded through our music program by Sharon Satkowski. From the fledgling kindergartners to the self-assured fifth-graders, Sharon gave them the courage, skills, and opportunity to experiment and grow throughout their elementary music experience, until they were ready to grace the WES stage, believing that they were ready to conquer Broadway.



Sharon grew up in Cornwall where she attended school at St. Thomas and then graduated from Cornwall High School. From there, she graduated from Fredonia State University with a bachelor's degree in Music and went on to earn a master's degree at Western Connecticut State College.

After high school and during summer vacations, she worked part time as a checker at the Grand Union. It was there where she met Paul, the love of her life, who was working as a clerk. They married in 1979 and have two sons, Justin and Jona-

than. Justin works in the athletic department at Mt. St. Mary's College as a tennis coach and Jonathan is also a tennis coach in Saratoga Springs. Sharon's parents are in their 80s and are still working, so she feels that even after retirement she will continue to work in some capacity.

Sharon began her career in 1979 as a leave replacement in Walden and Montgomery. Art Nugent observed her chorus class with about 100 kids crammed into a small classroom and wisely decided she had what it takes to be hired full time in the Middle School. She taught there for five years and then transferred to Walden Elementary School in 1985. It was with the collaboration of the fifth grade teachers (Dan McGinnis, Barbara Winchell, Peg Costic, and Margaret Monahan) where she began to take on the direction of the fifth grade annual musical. Sharon has directed 28 plays and even authored 2 of them along with the fifth grade staff and also with a little help from Merlot, Chablis, and Budweiser! It was always a pleasure to work with Sharon each fall and winter on these musical productions. No matter the circumstances, Sharon always directed a success

Swan Song for Sharon Satkowski



while never losing her (continued on pg 30) composure during rehearsals where she managed about a hundred students at a time. Students who took part in these musicals remember the experience fondly. Every child and every part was made to be special because of Sharon and her

unique talent of making every child feel important no matter what part they played. It was clear by watching Sharon direct that she absolutely loved and cared about every child on the stage and in the chorus. This love was evident by the smile she wore that lit her face and reflected back through the children who were so proud to be performing.

Sharon also taught in the Summer Enrichment program for several years. Each year she would take about a dozen students to East Stroudsburg University who would perform a musical at a national music convention that was held there. She would have these students completely prepared to perform with scenery and costumes within a few weeks. She also dedicated her time to students at risk through Viking Academy. Sharon contributed to community events. Each year her students would sing at the tree lighting festivities in the Village of Walden and also at Orange County Park. Her chorus would also bring cheer to the elderly in nursing homes.

All of us at WES know how lucky our students are to have Sharon for a music teacher, so when she came up with the idea to form an adult choir known as *The Walden Warblers* who would sing in honor of retirees at their party, we all jumped at the chance to sing for her. Of course she never minded how tone deaf or off-key we were. She only wanted us to show up for rehearsals and help write clever lyrics to well-known tunes. These were wonderful



and special times for those of us who participated as they clearly made us "family" and bonded us together as a staff.

In her retirement, Sharon plans to spend a great deal of time on the golf course here in NY playing on the Scott's Corner's Ladies League and also in North Carolina with her family. She says that she hopes to improve her game, since it can't get any worse!

We find it difficult to imagine WES without Sharon and her music. We wish our friend well, and from the words of our *Walden Warblers*, "Wherever You Go" you know that "You've Got a Friend." Sharon, we love you and wish that your retirement will be just "tickity-boo!"

—A Tribute by Friends from
Walden Elementary

Food For Thought: Truus Malley Retires

Truus Malley is retiring as Cook Manager of Walden Elementary School, a job she has held for 21 years. Originally from The Netherlands, Truus has been a part of the Valley Central School District since moving from Cornwall in 1961. As a student, Truus was part of the first Freshman-to-Senior graduating class of Valley Central High School.

Truus started working for Valley Central in 1982 by subbing in Montgomery Elementary School's cafeteria. From there, she moved to working part-time in the kitchen at Walden, and although she worked in the kitchens of a number of district schools, she always returned to Walden, drawn by the feeling of "family" she felt from employees throughout the building. After five years of working part-time, Truus started full-time in Walden in 1987. In 1992 she took charge of the kitchen and has held that position ever since.

Truus has a son, and daughter and a foster-daughter. Her seven grandchildren are her pride and joy. Truus was married to Jack, a dairy farmer for 28 years, and when he passed away in 1994, Truus credits the support she received from her Walden School family that saw her through that difficult time. She remembers fondly the days she started at 4:00 am working with her husband on the farm before going to work in the kitchen at school. She also laughs when she remembers the substitute worker who saw what was required to run a school kitchen, threw up her hands and walked off the job before the day had even begun.

Under Truus' leadership, Walden's kitchen has been known for its organization and efficiency. Truus says you've got to make sure the food taste good, looks good, and is properly prepared. For this she always credits the great team she works with. When asked her philosophy, Truus says, "Do your job; have a little fun; and the day will go faster." Thank you Truus, for all you've done for the students of Walden Elementary School. We will miss you.



Pat Tubbs Retiring After 21 Years

Pat Tubbs is retiring after 21 years as a Food Service Worker in the kitchen at Walden Elementary School. A graduate of NFA, Pat has lived in the Hudson Valley her whole life. She has faithfully served the students of Walden Elementary with dedication and a sense of purpose.

Pat and her husband, Donald, now live in Walden, in the Town of Montgomery. They have been married 39 years, and have two daughters, Tracy and Tricia. But Pat's face lights up the brightest when talking about her "little miracle," her granddaughter. Born prematurely and underweight, she is now as healthy and active as other two-year-olds. Pat speaks so fondly of the support she received from her co-workers and "family" at Walden Elementary, support that helped her and her family get through this challenging time.

Pat Tubbs has seen a lot of changes in her 21 years at Walden Elementary School, though she has worked that whole time with her friend, Truus Malley, who is also retiring this year. One of the changes that stands out most in Pat's mind is how the food has changed, with more emphasis now on fresh fruits and vegetables. One thing she misses is that they no longer bake - the kids and the staff miss that too! Nonetheless, one constant has remained throughout Pat's time at Walden, and that is the friendship and bond she has formed with her co-workers. "I'll miss how well we all get along and how well we work together," Pat says. "We really are good friends here."

We will all miss you too Pat, and we truly thank you for being such a devoted part of the Walden Elementary School family throughout your career.



The World: Thirty Years Ago

Billboard Top Ten: 1983

1. "Every Breath You Take" - The Police
2. "Billie Jean" - Michael Jackson
3. "Flashdance" - Irene Cara
4. "Down Under" - Men At Work
5. "Beat It" - Michael Jackson
6. "Total Eclipse of the Heart" - Bonnie Tyler
7. "Maneater" - Daryl Hall and John Oates
8. "Baby Come to Me" - P. Austin and J. Ingram
9. "Maniac" - Michael Sembello
10. "Sweet Dreams" - Eurythmics



What money could buy:

- Average cost of a new home: \$89,800.00
- Median Household Income: \$20,885.00
- First Class Stamp: \$0.20
- Gallon of Gas: \$1.24
- A Dozen Eggs: \$0.86
- A Gallon of Milk: \$2.24



putting children center

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