

Four retiring teachers translate into 113 years of experience

(Continued from Page 1)
cess joke.

- Dennie bringing me a cup of coffee from White Fields to a chorus of voices saying, "Hi, Mr. Lofgreen."

- The Gingerbread House Party.

- The security of my own monthly paycheck hitting the bank account.

- Reading to my students after lunch.

- A little hand slipping into mine as we're walking down the hall.

- Center Time.

- Dandelion bouquets.

- My classroom.

Some of the things I WON'T miss are:

- Cold winds on the playground.

- The first and last weeks of school.

- Snotty noses, stuck zippers and untied shoelaces.

- Nervousness of the first day of school.

- Report cards and requisition sheets.

- Tattling and whining.

- Scouring my classroom searching for snakes that have escaped.

- Worrying about students.

- Long hours of work after school.

- Maneuvering 18 little bodies through the restroom or down the hall quietly.

Through the good and the bad, Eisenhower Elementary will always have a special place in my heart. As I embark on this next chapter of my life, I am sad because I am leaving a very important part of me. I didn't know it would be so difficult to leave.

But, I am also excited to know that I will have more time for my

family and to be part of causes which are important to me. This coming year when I would usually be busy in my classroom, I will instead, be in Alabama helping daughter, Ashton, adjust to graduate school at Auburn University and battling the heat and giant cockroaches. I'll be holding my new granddaughter in Wichita and thinking she's the most beautiful baby in the world, while her parents, Brock and Angie, and sisters, Abby and Jillian, move into their new home. I'll be going to Lawrence and Kansas City to see Regan and Holly without worrying about getting back for school on Monday. I'll be taking a 40th anniversary trip, somewhere! And...I intend to do whatever I can...small as it may be...to alleviate the injustices and prejudices of our world and make it a better place.

"Thank You" to all of you at USD 211, not only for the support and opportunities you have given me...but for the opportunities you gave my children as well, as they grew up in our excellent school system. "Thank You" also to all the parents who supported your children when they were in the classroom. And finally, "Thank You" to all my students who worked so hard and taught me so much!

Better go...before my "princess" coach turns into a pumpkin.

Always a Blue Jay!

Cheryl Roberts

29 years

I know all of you have better things to do than listen to the life story of Cheryl Roberts, so I will make this short.

Ever since I was in grade school, I knew I wanted to be a teacher

when I grew up. I came home every day and played "teacher". It wasn't until I started volunteering at the Norton State Hospital that I decided to become a special ed. teacher.

I went to Fort Hays State University and got my B.S. degree in elementary education and special education. During that time, I got married and had my first son, Trever. We moved to Bennington, and I completed my student teaching in Salina. I substituted in the Salina schools for one year and then took my first teaching position at South Junior High.

The next year, we moved to Ellis and I taught multiple handicapped children. During these two years, I started working on my master's degree and finished it after I came to Norton.

I was thrilled when I heard about an opening in Norton, because I could be closer to my family who lived in Jennings. Gene Wiltfong hired me for the EMH position at that time. When the EMH numbers began to decline and the LD numbers rose, my program changed to an interrelated program. I worked with K-6 students for a few years, then K-3, and finally K-2. I have taught at Eisenhower Elementary for the last 29 years. During that time, I had two more wonderful boys, Ryan and Aaron.

The teachers at Eisenhower became my second family. They have been wonderfully supportive and have become very good friends. It will be hard to leave them behind. I had great paras to work with and they were a great asset to our program and to me. Joyce Archer has been my right hand woman for the last 25 years.

I was very lucky to not only have a great regular ed staff to work with but also a great special ed support system. I felt like we all worked well together. I'm sure I will continue to keep in touch with them.

I can remember a lot of good times at Eisenhower. Before the advent of "No Child Left Behind", we had time to pull pranks on one another. Mr. Schrum sometimes had difficulty finding his desk. Mr. Hillman learned to go by our room quickly on the days he wore his suspenders. Whenever I was missing something in my room, it usually could be found in Mr. Poage's room. NCLB and state assessments have changed the atmosphere in the building. It has caused a lot more stress and less time to have fun with students and fellow teachers.

I have many fond memories of the students that I have had throughout the years, but I want to share only one of those. This young man was special to many teachers from grade school through high school. He was manager of the football team and he always had to serenade the bus on every away game with "Friends in Low Places".

When he was in grade school, he was a big tease. My room was right next to the boys' bathroom. One day, he asked to go to the bathroom. He was gone quite awhile and then I heard someone yelling from the bathroom. "Mrs. Wobuts, I'm stuck." By this time several boys came out of the bathroom worrying about him. When I went in and said, "Get off that pot and get back to the room," he merely said, "OK," and came right out. I'm sure he hung his head and smiled as he always did when he was up to something. I sure had a good laugh later.

I have always felt that the Norton school system was very good, and I was proud to be a part of it. Many of you have taught my three boys and I thank you for giving them a good foundation. I THINK the only time I remember any of them having to stay after school had to do with golf and the moon, right Mr. Stover? If there was anything else, I don't want to hear about it now.

I may be moving down the road to teach, but I will always have strong ties to the students and teachers of the Norton school system.

Sandy Worden
29 years

It was a late afternoon on a

hot summer day, in a little red Corvair with NO air conditioning that I came for my first visit to Norton. I asked Chuck just the other day when it was that I started whining about "how much longer" until we're there? Would you believe he remembered it well and said we were only to Abilene (80 miles from Topeka). I had no concept about how far away from Topeka, Norton was. But, that became a very long five hour trip. Needless to say, I can do it blindfolded, now. Meeting his parents for the first time went very well, but when we returned to Topeka, I quietly asked him if we would ever have to live there.... the grocery stores weren't open on Sunday and there was no Pamida. He reassured me that we could make our home in Topeka — and we did for six years.

After finishing my bachelor's degree at Washburn University, I began my first job at Rochester Grade School in north Topeka in the Seaman Unified School District. The unique thing about my employment there was that my boss had been my principal when I attended Rochester K-8 as a child! He hired me for Second Grade and thus, the journey began. Mr. Gabbert became my mentor and is really the reason I am a teacher to this day. He was my rock those first five years of my teaching career.

In 1978, Chuck was appointed Judge of the 17th Judicial District. The journey was now heading West. The town with two stoplights, at the time, became our permanent home that same year. Rob was in the fourth grade by this time and I substituted the first year we lived here. Gene Wiltfong then asked if I would be interested in teaching part-time kindergarten. I liked the every other day schedule and made the switch from Second to Kindergarten. I finished my master's of science degree from Kansas State University in May 1980 and John was born the following December. I loved having every other day to be home with him, but when he was four, our numbers had increased significantly at Eisenhower and I had to go to full-time. I never told anyone, but I almost quit so John wouldn't have to be in full-time day care. However, Susan Engelbert was our savior from day one, and he adored her, so I decided to take the leap. Those big classes were going to need more teachers on up the line so I went to first grade and then settled in second at the south end of the building. Later, I moved up to the north end, where I have been ever since.

Odd things happen to you on the way through life, like students' parents being older than me, and then, magically, one day I am older than the parents! The years have slipped by and I stand in the halls after school lately, when it's really quiet, and realize that I had not anticipated it would go by so quickly.

I have no words of wisdom. Education has been my life for 34 years and I can't imagine it any other way. I have taped to a mirror in a spare bedroom a note John wrote to me one night when I had been on the phone too long with a parent. "You are the best mom, hurry up and take me to bed." School was just a part of our everyday home-life from the day my kids were born. I never seem comfortable without my Blue Jay bag, grade-book and a stack of papers.

As many of you know, I love children's books and as I look back over my career, that would be the one thing that I hope I have imparted to at least a few of my students...the love of books and reading.

This journey has come to an end, but I am excited to be looking forward to seeing my grandchildren a lot more, traveling to a few places I have been dreaming about, and helping out at Chuck's office some.

I do have to say that it's a good thing that initial visit to Norton wasn't my last. I have been proud to be a part of this community, proud to work with the fine people at EES and in the district, and al-



Joyce Lofgreen



Cheryl Roberts



Sandy Worden



Vicki Enfield

ways proud to be a Blue Jay. Thank You. **Vicki Enfield** 37 Years

In my years as a school nurse I have enjoyed two and three generations. We have great people in Western Kansas — very good people to work with.

This is kinda like writing your obituary (Larry, put your pen down; don't you dare take notes). (As the school nurse) I supervise many activities — hand-washing, combing hair, washing faces. Job security is pediculosis (head lice screening) and it will always be. It's a good idea to have a discussion concerning all kinds of lice infestation. I do not check for body or pubic lice. We operate the M.A.S.H. unit using triage — using around 3,000 band-aids yearly. We follow biohazard procedure and are required to cover all sores/wounds/blood. We also use a lot of latex-free gloves. We do not want MRSA in our schools. Cold compresses (ice in a baggie) comforts many injured students.

After graduating from Healy High School, I spent the summer as a Candy Stripper at the Scott County Hospital, working all three shifts. Then to college at Hays. During our rotations as seniors we were at the following cities: Pediatric Nursing at Denver Children's Hospital; Obstetrics at Chicago Lying-In Hospital; Psychiatric Nursing at Meningers, Topeka State Hospital, Kansas Neurological Institute and the TB (tuberculosis) Sanatorium in Norton. Surgical rotation was at Hadley Memorial Hospital, Hays. Sterile technique has always been a favorite procedure of mine. These rotations were incredible experiences.

Just a little of my school history: I graduated from Fort Hays State University with my R.N. and B.S. degree, and was employed at Hadley Memorial Hospital and the Eddy Clinic. We moved to Norton and I worked at the Norton County Hospital. That is where I learned the 3-H enema (High, Hot and a H--- of a lot). I also worked at the Norton State Hospital and was Administrator of the Andbe Home for three years.

Eugene Wiltfong, our neighbor, asked me to be school nurse, and with our boys in Kindergarten and first grade, it was perfect. I went to school with my boys.

My schedule was as follows: 8 to 9:30 a.m., Washington School; 9:30 a.m. to noon, Eisenhower School; 12:30 to 2 p.m. NCHS

East Campus; and 2 to 4 p.m. at NJHS. I was also Girls Counselor.

Years later my schedule changed to part-time due to budget. I worked Monday, Wednesday, Friday first semester and Tuesday, Thursday second semester. I did some private-duty nursing during that time. In conjunction with my school employment, I worked part-time at Norton Valley Hope for 20 years, retiring in 2005. I now work mornings at USD 211, Norton; two afternoons a week at USD 212, Northern Valley; and two afternoons a month at USD 213, Lenora.

Nurses are aware of anaphylaxis, blood-borne pathogens, scheduled medications, C.P.R. (Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation) and Heimlich maneuver. Automated External Defibrillator (AED) program will be next. My predecessors were: Nora Mechsner, Teresa Goscha, Jackie Keener and Beverly Kline.

I have a diary of cute things and sayings from students, parents and staff. Great memories — I thank all of you for the wonderful years.

With Loving Appreciation,
Vicki
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Biking: recumbents popular

(Continued from Page 1)

bikes, three-seaters and even a four-seater. More people all the time are riding the recumbents, which they literally lie down in.

Rob Aiken, Colby, a first time BAK cyclist, is riding a recumbent tricycle that he made from some plans he ordered. He started it in February and finished it just last week. When he arrived in Norton, he had only 70 training miles on it and 181 total miles and planned to go all the way across Kansas on it.

After the bikers leave Smith Center, they will stay overnight in Beloit, Washington, Sabetha and Horton. On Saturday morning, June 14, they will cycle to the state line at Atchison, where they will finish and enjoy a celebration picnic.

Although there are some other BAK riders in their 80s, the oldest cyclist on the trip across the Sunflower State is Wanda Groves, 86, of Goddard. Always a believer in physical fitness, Wanda was a medalist for years in her age group in running races. About 20 years ago, her children presented her with a bicycle.

"I slowed down on my running and have done more bicycling," she said Sunday night. "It gives me a chance to exercise my legs without the impact of running."

"My husband, Jim Groves, didn't ride but was one of the sags (support vehicles along the route) on BAK and was also a District Governor in Lions Club, so I got to know people all over the state and I feel like I'm coming home when I come to Norton, Phillipsburg, Smith Center, etc."

"The people you meet on BAK are great and they keep you young."

Wanda is riding on her 13th BAK and plans to keep on riding.

Two riders, both of whom have ridden every mile so far, tied for the youngest rider on the trip at 10 years of age. One is Ryan Millershaski, who is biking with his mother, Pam, and the other is Tristan Marsh, Topeka, who is riding with his father, Richard, on their first BAK.

The official ride records did not indicate that any Norton County residents are on the tour this year but Norton native Mike Lacy, who now lives in Hays, is a first timer and said he is really enjoying doing something he has wanted to do for a long time.

"The facilities at the school were great," said Charlie Summers, BAK executive director.

"We had plenty of sleeping room and shower facilities in the buildings and enough room to set up our tents outside."

"Superintendent Greg Mann and his staff were great to work with and everyone in town treated us well. It's been a good experience coming to Norton."

"The restaurants in Norton were really popular and several ran out of food," said the Chamber's Reed. "The bikers didn't just stay on the highway but went downtown as well."

"It was great!"

Gary Schultz, 68, Overland Park, retired track coach at Phillipsburg High School and Colby Community College, is on his third BAK. "It sure is great to get back out in Northwest Kansas League and Mid-Continent League territory," said Gary.

Riding with Gary was his son, Brad, Lenexa. He said his other son, Mark, recently went his father and brother one better when he bicycled across the United States!

One of this year's riders got a real warmup when he joined BAK after a grueling 335-mile single day ride from Topeka. Eric Nordgren launched his 2008 efforts to raise funds to fight cancer through the cyclist fund raising Sunflowers to Roses program. Last year, Eric raised over \$15,000 to fight cancer. Several family members dying of cancer prompted Eric to begin his fund raising.

C.L. Friend, 62, Eufaula, Okla., was one of a number of out-of-staters enjoying the ride. A veteran of similar bike rides in Tennessee, Indiana, Virginia, Texas and Oklahoma, he is another first timer on BAK. "It's been a good ride so far," he commented as he came to a stop in Norton.

"It's been an awesome ride, dry and cool," said Don Graber, formerly of Pratt but now living in Vermont and riding his third BAK.

Several riders summed it all up when they made the same comment at different times, "I'm riding across Kansas with 800 of my best friends!"

That shows how fast you become friends with your fellow riders, who are not competing against each other, but enjoying together the challenge, camaraderie and adventure of pedaling under their own power and experiencing the friendly hospitality of the many small communities along the way.

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