

Teacher

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Mrs. Larkins. She played hopscotch with us at recess."

Sheena's stuffed pillow, which she keeps on her bed, is decorated with the Moon and stars. "Mrs. Larkins was fun," she said. "At Halloween she gave us real pumpkins to decorate and take home."

Jack's face lit up as he remembered seeing real rocks from the Moon, a national treasure which Mrs. Larkins arranged to visit his class, complete with special security clearances and procedures.

"It was neat," he said. "I never thought I would ever get to see something from the Moon in my life."

He also fondly recalled a project in which his class made cookies to sell for a penny apiece and donated the proceeds to a family who owned a giraffe whom they had read about.

Students selling different kinds of cookies and debating which kind was the best sat behind desks lining the first-grade hallway. The chocolate chip cookies were the best, Jack said.

First grade teacher Susan Yogodzinski, who taught in the room next to Lolly's for 10 years,

called her "my best friend, my inspiration."

"She never stopped working, even during the summer. Lolly was always looking for something new to try in class. She was very open to change if it would help the students," Sue said.

When the district changed its reading textbook, Lolly worked hard with Sue to coordinate the changes in their teaching methods. They set up their classrooms with several different learning centers for the different subjects.

"Lolly always wanted to teach elementary school," Sue said. "She was very open to change and really supported hands-on learning experiences. She wanted her students to love learning and books as much as she did. She called her students 'her babies.' She never forgot about them, even when she was so sick at the end."

Making school and reading interesting were never far from her mind.

"Who else would introduce her class to Dr. Seuss and celebrate his birthday, or bring in a bread machine so the class could make bread while reading about it in



Lolly Larkins, showing off signed photos sent to her class from President Clinton.

The Little Red Hen?' When the class read 'No Dragons on My Quilt,' Lolly brought in quilters to teach them how to make a quilt," Sue said smiling.

When school started this year, Lolly, who was on sabbatical, wrote Sue a letter. "You give 300 percent to your profession," she

wrote.

"Sure, I may have, but that's only because I was trying to keep up with Lolly," Sue said, recalling how her friend came in half days last semester, using a cane or a walker and wearing an intravenous setup which delivered pain medication. "She never gave up her profession, no matter how sick she was. If she could be here in a wheelchair, she would have come in."

Kindergarten teacher Joan Roskos was Lolly's next-door neighbor before the Larkins family moved to Chase. Their children grew up together.

"Lolly was so much fun," Joan said. "She loved everyone, especially children, and would do anything for her children. One of my earliest memories of Lolly is going with my children to her house, where she put a big sheet on the floor and set up a popcorn popper without the lid on. It was marvelous!"

Who or what a person is didn't matter to Lolly, Joan said. "She saw good - and God - in every-

one."

Kindergarten teacher Gail Long was impressed by how highly Lolly valued family and a child's self-esteem.

When her son, Troy, was in Lolly's class, he brought a teddy bear home for the weekend to share in all the family's activities - raking leaves, going to visit relatives, watching television. When he took it back to school on Monday, he had to write a short story about what his family shared with the bear.

"Another family project Troy had was to bring a suitcase containing special things about his family to school," Gail said. "He worked very hard, finding objects which he felt were important to us to share with his classmates."

Lolly Larkins is perhaps best remembered as the teacher who brought The Polar Express to Lake-Noxen. The story of a boy who takes a magical ride on a train to the North Pole and meets Santa. The Polar Express has become a Christmas tradition for the school's first grade.

The children listen intently as Kunkle reads them the story and a large model train circles their seats on a track. Each child receives a piece of nougat candy from the elves and a magic bell which rings only if they truly believe in Santa Claus. Lolly's always rang the loudest and best.

"I'll always remember Lolly at Christmas because of the story," Kunkle said. "I looked forward to reading it to the first-graders every year. I hope we can carry this tradition on. I respected her as a teacher. She was very determined, very strong-willed. She felt as long as she was in school, she should do every aspect of her job. Other teachers offered many times to help pick up some of her recess and other non-teaching duties, but she always felt she should do them. I hope I could be as strong as she was if I had to."

Memorial contributions to the Lolly Larkins Reading Corner may be sent to the Lake-Noxen Elementary School, RR 3 Box 270, Harveys Lake PA 18618.

4 periods

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teacher, agreed that Wycallis has the authority to reassign teachers.

"I haven't seen the intensified scheduling plan yet, so I can't comment more on it," Wagner said. "The high school teachers are all anxious to see it. We plan to vote on it again after careful professional consideration."

Board member Clarence Michael said he won't support the change.

"Will the teachers have fewer discipline problems with the longer classes?" he asked. Wycallis replied most discipline problems don't happen in class, only while the students are changing classes. Because the school will have only four classes, there will be fewer opportunities for discipline problems to occur, he added.

"What about the students who don't want to become involved in class?" Michael continued. "What about the students who are acting out their problems in class?"

Assistant superintendent Dr. Gil Griffiths answered that most of these students aren't well prepared for class and are trying to simply coast through the system, which they won't be able to do

"It really trashed my literature classes."

Rebecca Ferguson
Sullivan County teacher

with the new schedule.

Maureen Banks also doubts the new scheduling will be as successful as its proponents have promised.

"How will we accommodate the students who want business, music and art classes - will there be enough time for them to take these courses?" she asked. "I agree with Mr. Michael - the students will still lose 15 hours per subject each year, and more in the science courses."

Other board members wouldn't say how they plan to vote on the schedule change at the October 9 meeting.

These concerns are echoed by teachers in the Sullivan County School District who have used intensified scheduling for the past two years.

"When you have the same students for a longer period of time, you still have the same discipline problems," said Dan Doughton,

president of Sullivan County's teachers' association. "You need an alternative method to deal with discipline problems. They aren't insurmountable, but the district must anticipate them and have their solutions already in place."

Two years ago Sullivan County switched to a two-period day, which the teachers and administrators found difficult to work with, Doughton said. Last year Sullivan County switched to a day with three 90-minute classes, which many teachers have found successful.

High school English teacher Rebecca Ferguson isn't one of them.

"Switching to the longer classes actually decreases the number of hours the students have to prepare for classes," she said. "I must cover a year's material in a semester. It really trashed my literature classes. Instead of teaching seven full-length novels, many short stories and several plays, I can now do less than half of that. You can assign only so many hours of homework a night."

The language arts and social studies teachers have found themselves in the same situation, she added.

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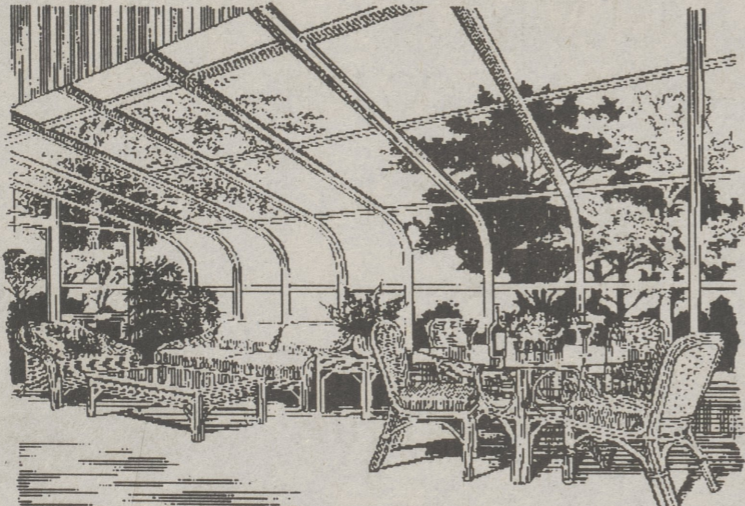
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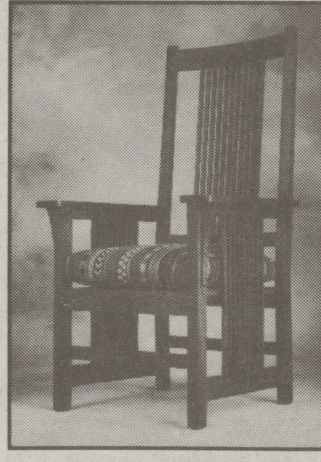
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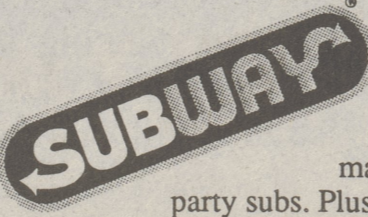


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