

Teachers retiring after 28 years of service

By Michaela Kennedy

For two veteran instructors at Jamestown schools, this week, Teacher Appreciation Week, marks the last year they are recognized while still in the classroom. But for many whose lives have been touched by the professional educators, this will not be the last time they will be remembered for their contributions to the raising of Jamestown's youth.

Elizabeth Weibust and Linda Rezendes, who both retire in June, look back with appreciation on their teaching careers that span nearly of three decades. "We started together in 1980," recalls Weibust. Every day they feel gratitude in the regular moments of student learning, the teachers agreed.

Weibust walked into the second grade classroom where Rezendes has taught since the Melrose Avenue School was built. "Have you started cleaning out yet?" she kids the elementary school instructor, and reminds her that only 31 days remain until the end of their careers. Rezendes smiles, with a subtle shade of sadness in her eyes.

"Having a great opportunity to live and work in the same community, especially here in Jamestown, has been wonderful," Rezendes said. She mentioned siblings and new generations she has come to know over the years.

Weibust, who also lives on the island, nodded in agreement, and expressed satisfaction in seeing former Jamestown students and what they are doing now. "It's so nice to see kids I had doing something they love," Weibust adds. "It's one of my most rewarding experiences."

The joys of classroom teaching hit both Weibust and Rezendes from the moment they stepped into the classroom on Sept. 6, 28 years



Beth Weibust, left, and Linda Rezendes will retire this year after 28 years of teaching in the Jamestown school system. The teachers started and will finish their careers together.

Photo by Michaela Kennedy

ago.

Weibust pulled out a black and white picture of her first class in Jamestown, fourth grade, and named all of the smiling faces.

During the first week, her class found out their new teacher was about to be married that weekend and the elementary students threw a bridal shower for her. "They only knew me for two days!" she said. The young learners showed Weibust their appreciation for her from the very beginning, she revealed.

Rezendes smiled as she remembered gratitude she receives on a daily basis from her second graders. Hired her first year to teach fifth grade, Rezendes took the opportunity to move to the second grade the following year, where she has taught since. Rezendes quickly points out that she enjoyed both grades, but her move to the younger proved to be a rewarding challenge.

Surprise notes left on Rezendes'

desk show their understanding and excitement as the youngsters explore new subjects. One girl recently wrote how happy she was to practice her writing in a journal. "Second graders love all subjects," Rezendes said, admitting that she got notes frequently on all topics, from math to reading.

Weibust said that rewarding moments frequently emerge when spontaneity weaves its way into a lesson. She takes note of opportunities, such as stopping a lesson to look out the window and view the Ospreys nesting nearby. "We often get off track, and let that take us to a good learning experience."

Weibust illustrated her point with a story where a tangent turned into research and went on ultimately to change the mind of a young learner.

While instructing the pupils in writing persuasive essays, the sixth grade teacher explained they must include an opposing view and refute it. One boy, after he did his research, returned to Weibust to report that he could not do his essay because he had changed his mind. She showed him how to approach his task with his new perspective. "What a great thing for him, that he could then write his essay from the opposite point of view." Excitement for the boy and his leap in learning is reflected in the seasoned instructor's face.

When some staff members at the main office heard about the spotlight on two of Jamestown's finest educators, smiles spread on their lips, but with a similar shade of sadness in their eyes. "They will be sorely missed," the workers said.

The Jamestown Chamber of Commerce welcomes two new members to the board of directors: Ann McIntyre of Casita Sea Glass, and Richard Hopkins of the Bay Voyage. The Chamber also extends its heartfelt thanks to Eric Eunis of Eunis & Associates, CPA, for his term on the board and all his work as the Chamber's treasurer.

The Chamber elected the following officers for the 2008-2009 term: Vicki de Angeli, of Island Realty, president; Peter Brockmann of Brockmann Law Associates, vice president; Deb Goyette of the Purple Door, treasurer, and Richard Hopkins of the Bay Voyage, secretary.

The Chamber held its annual meeting and elected new officers on March 27 at Tricia's Tropi-Grille. After the meeting, everyone enjoyed the delicious spread of food, tasty cocktails, and the music of Jazz Candy.

Thank you to all the organizations that applied to be the beneficiary of this year's "Night At" Chamber event. This year's beneficiary will be the Jamestown Community Theatre, a group that has a positive impact on our town, and contributes so much to the quality of life here in Jamestown.

This year's soiree will be held on Friday, Aug. 15, at Fort Getty, and is aptly titled, "Night at the Fort." There will be great food and drink, live music, and a silent auction. If you would like to serve on the Night At committee, please



Chamber Chatter

By Vicki de Angeli

contact John McCauley at John@IslandRealtyRI.com. The Chamber looks forward to working with the theatre group in making this the best event of the year. Stay tuned for more details.

The Chamber's liaison to the Traffic Commission, Joe Frisella, reports that the Traffic Commission will recommend to the Town Council that the two-hour parking limitation along Narragansett Avenue should be extended this summer to 8 p.m. from the current 6 p.m.

Creation of loading zones and times for Narragansett Avenue businesses is still on the Traffic Commission agenda. Chamber members should check for notices of upcoming meetings on the Chamber website, and contact Donna Olney Kohler, executive director, with their thoughts on the subject. You can reach Donna at: info@jamestownrichamber.com.

For further information on the Jamestown Chamber of Commerce, go to the Chamber's website, www.jamestownrichamber.com, or contact Donna Olney Kohler at 423-3650, or e-mail, info@jamestownrichamber.com.

Coustan honored for "shaking up" system

Jamestown resident, Donald R. Coustan, M.D. was honored by the Rhode Island Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition at its annual May Breakfast on May 2 at the Radisson Hotel, in Warwick.

Coustan, an internationally recognized expert in the field of obstetrics and gynecology, received the 2008 Silver Rattle Award, given each year by the coalition to someone who has "shaken up the system for mothers and babies in Rhode Island."

Dr. Coustan came to Women and Infants Hospital in 1982 and has served as the Obstetrician and Gynecologist-in-Chief there since 1991. He has also been the Chairman of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the Warren Alpert School of Medicine at Brown University since 1991. He is a graduate of Yale University, having received both undergraduate and medical degrees there. He has lectured extensively both in the United States and throughout the world, authored more than 170 journal articles, as well as numerous books.

Fellow Jamestown resident, Candy Powell, who works at the Visiting Nurse Services of Newport and Bristol Counties, nominated Dr. Coustan for this award, and in her introduction of Dr. Coustan at the breakfast quoted one of the nurses at Women and Infants as saying, "He is like a rock star, and probably should have an agent!"

The Rhode Island Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition meets monthly at St. Joseph's Hospital, and is comprised of agencies and individuals dedicated to improving the health of mothers and babies in Rhode Island.

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CRANSTON COVE NOTICE

ALL DINGHY'S AND OTHER SMALL BOATS ON THE BEACH AT CRANSTON COVE (area across from Wrights Lane), require a valid sticker affixed to the craft by **June 15**. Stickers will only be issued to those with deeded beach access rights. To obtain a sticker send request along with copy of deed and vessel description to:

**EPELOA BEACH STICKER
PO BOX 207
JAMESTOWN RI. 02835**

Vessels without a valid sticker will be removed at owner's expense.

Visiting Nurse Services of Newport & Bristol Counties

Would like to thank the many volunteers who make a difference in helping us... help others.

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Bird-watching excursion planned

The Norman Bird Sanctuary will make a trip to the Mt. Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, Mass., know to be a Mecca for birds and bird watchers during the spring migration.

The trip will be on Saturday, May 17, from 6:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Flycatchers, vireos, tanagers, and above all, warblers can all be seen in their breeding plumage from this nationally known stop-over site. Join the birdwatchers for this full-day trip, which will include other migration hot spots along the way. Pack a lunch and bring binoculars!

The fee is \$40 for members and \$50 for non-members. Registration and prepayment is required, as space is limited. For more information and to register, call the Norman Bird Sanctuary at 846-2577.