

E-mail campaign set up for longtime teacher

By Jonathan Partridge
Patterson Irrigator

Mention the name Edna Stewart to any longtime Patterson resident, and one is likely to hear the words "local legend."

The 97-year-old Patterson resident spent 34 years teaching and then serving as vice principal of Northmead School, receiving acclaim from the town when she retired in 1962 during a city-sponsored Edna Stewart Day.

Earlier this year, the Stanislaus County Commission for Women also honored her as Pioneer Woman of the Year.

Now the retired teacher and local bridge club player is in hospice care, and a few friends are hoping that friends and former students will share their thoughts through e-mail.

Starting this week, the Patterson Township Historical Society Web site is posting e-mail tributes to the well-known Patterson educator.

"We hope to get a lot of correspondence for her," said Norberta Carter, Stewart's friend and fellow bridge player.

Carter is helping with the e-mail and letter campaign, while Claude Delphia, webmaster for the historical society, is maintaining the Web site and helping out with any e-mail problems. Stewart will receive printed copies of the emails as they are submitted.

Carter said Stewart knows about the campaign and is pleased with the idea.

"She was very happy that we thought about doing that for her," Carter said. "Her daughter said it was nice because she did so much for the city."

Stewart taught about 1,500 children, whom she affectionately calls "The Keechler Kids," during her 34 years working in education. During that time, she became well known as an extremely strict but fun-loving educator, who would shoot marbles and play baseball with students during recess.

In addition to her normal teaching duties, she started a bicycle club, a Citizenship



TRIBUTE: Edna Stewart (right) sits with John Azevedo during an event in March 2003. The photo is posted on a tribute Web site for Stewart, who served as a teacher and vice principal at Northmead School for more than 30 years.

Courtesy photo

Club, a Summer Playground Program, a Junior Red Cross group during World War II and an Audubon Society chapter. She also reactivated the Parent Teachers Association.

She also was involved in Girl Scouts, Cub Scouts, the Crippled Children's Society and the Stanislaus County Curriculum Board.

However, she has said in the past that her greatest accomplishment was starting Fire Prevention Week, in which students learn about fire safety at the Patterson Fire Station and then get to ride in a fire truck around downtown Patterson. The tradition continues.

A few friends and former students have already posted their thoughts about the well-known teacher.

"Some of my proudest moments are when I can refer to my third- and fourth-grade teacher as a good friend and also a customer," wrote Verlon and Bertha Haile.

Virginia Alvernaz Shipley also posted fond memories.

"I remember you as being very strict and disciplined, and it wasn't appreciated until many years later when I realized the

At a glance

- **E-MAIL ADDRESS:** contact@patterson-ca.com
- **LINK:** Stewart's tribute page, www.patterson-ca.com
- **PERSONAL NOTES:** Edna Stewart, in care of Patterson Township Historical Society, P.O. Box 15, Patterson 95363. Letters will not be placed on the Web page and will be delivered to Stewart unopened if her name is on the outside.
- **INFO:** Norberta Carter, 892-6465; those with e-mail problems may call Claude Delphia, 537-9604; class representatives may call Virginia Alberti, 892-6423.

values you had instilled in me," she wrote. "You taught me to love reading and be organized, because you insisted that our desks remained uncluttered while we were in class."

E-mail campaign organizers are encouraging other former students and friends to send written tributes this month. They are asking class reunion representatives to notify classmates of the tribute, as many of Stewart's former students now live far away from Patterson.

briefs.

Lions dinner, auction sold out

Tickets are sold out for Patterson Lions Club Third Annual Dinner and Ball Draw scheduled for Saturday at Bonaventure Hall, 505 M St.

The silent auction will last from 6 to 7:30 p.m., and dinner, prepared by the Tracy Breakfast Lions Club, will be served at 7 p.m. The ball draw for prizes begins at 8 p.m. Dress is casual and comfortable.

For information: 892-6184.

Emanuel auxiliary hosts fair

Emanuel Medical Center of Turlock's Auxiliary will host its annual Holiday Faire from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Nov. 11, and from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Nov. 12.

The 40-year-old event features Christmas decorations, candles, and baked goods.

It will take place in the

front lobby just inside the main entrance of the hospital, 825 Delbon Ave., Turlock.

Money raised from the fair will benefit the hospital.

For information: 668-5250.

The Washboard Wizardz

The Washboard Wizardz will present comedy and music at the West Side Theatre, 1331 Main St., Newman at 7 p.m. Saturday. The group combines vocals, clarinet, kazoo, guitar, banjo and string bass. Though the band's repertoire is taken from 1920s music, it has added few new songs to the mix.

The band consists of Steve Drivon, featured vocalist, slide whistle player, washboardist; Kurt Abell on guitar and banjo; "Blackwood Tom" Schmidt on reeds and Bill Reinhart on the stand-up bass.

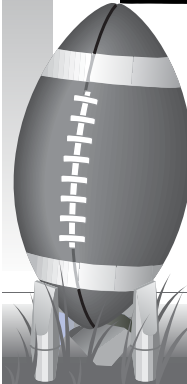
Tickets are \$10 for all seats. Doors open at 7 p.m., and the concert will begin at 8 p.m.

For information: 862-4490.

Tie Breaker Winner



Karen Agundez was the winner of last week's tie breaker prize. Peggy from Sam's Food City presents her with a case of soda.



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