



RCMA HOY

Don't forget to vote on Election Day, November 5!

We Can Make A World of Difference

Helping Our Youth



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OUR MISSION: Helping Parents Restart, Giving Kids a Head Start, Helping Staff Develop

A confession from the "get-well bed" of Wendell N. Rollason

By WENDELL N. ROLLASON

I don't like living a lie, not even a small one. So this is to confess that November 2 is not my real birthdate.



That took place last August 21 at our beloved North Carolina log cabin where Barbara and I celebrated it alone. That's a ritual she and I would never want to change.

Yet friends and RCMA staff insisted there be an 80th birthday celebration. They figured—probably quite correctly—I'd have only one of those.

We scrambled around for a solution and came across the little white lie of Queen Elizabeth's. Her birthday that England celebrates is not her true date of birth.

Born in one of England's coldest months, it was decided most unfair to expect tens of thousands to stand shivering at curbside cheering Her Majesty. So they changed the date. Makes sense!

So we grabbed that idea. Not for the weather. But to get a date which fits everyone's need. Good thing we did, too. For more than half the time we were up in North Carolina, including August 21, the log cabin toilet failed to work! What a scrambling in the bushes that would have been!

So November 2 is the date, folks. And

"Friends and RCMA staff insisted there be an 80th birthday celebration. They figured—probably quite correctly—I'd have only one of those."

—Wendell N. Rollason executive vice president

that's how it came about. And by all I hear, it is going to be a grand affair. A wonderful event.

Then, slam! bang! along came my violent illnesses.

The party was almost over before it began. It was that close. But this apparently was not my turn. The love and power of your prayers were telling forces at my side. How the Almighty makes His decisions when illness strikes, none of us knows, not really knows.

But I do want each of you to understand that my cup of gratitude overflows for each word of prayer by each of you offered in behalf of Barbara and myself.

God bless each of you.

I hope you can come help me celebrate my 80th.

Two longtime teachers look back on 20 years with RCMA

By LESLIE MOGUIL Staff Writer

It was a special moment. Mary Lou Alvarado, a senior teacher at Immokalee Child Development Center Infant, recently was in a grocery store where she "bumped" into a man, Juan, who was holding his baby in his arms.

This encounter seems ordinary at first



Photo by LYNN BOWEN

Mary Lou Alvarado

glance. However, it was actually quite significant because Mary Lou could remember holding Juan in her arms at one time. It was about 20 years ago in an RCMA center.

Mary Lou came to RCMA thanks to her friend, Elvita. It began when Mary Lou saw Elvita at a local elementary school while they were both bringing in their children. "Elvita asked if I was working,"

Una confesion desde "la cama de recuperacion" de Wendell N. Rollason

Por WENDELL N. ROLLASON

No me gusta vivir una mentira, ni aunque sea una pequeña. Así que ésta es para confesar que el 2 de noviembre no es mi cumpleaños.

Mi cumpleaños tomó lugar el pasado 21 de agosto en nuestra querida cabaña en Carolina del Norte, donde Barbara y yo lo celebramos a solas; lo cual es un ritual que ella y yo nunca queremos cambiar.

De todos modos amistades y personal de RCMA insistieron en que hubiera celebración de mis 80 años. Ellos pensaron—probablemente están en lo cierto—que yo no tendría sino uno de esos.

Rebuscamos un poco para encontrar la solución y descubrimos la blanca mentirilla de la reina Isabel. Su día de cumpleaños que Inglaterra celebra no es realmente el verdadero día de su nacimiento. Como la reina Isabel nació en el mes más frío del año, se decidió que no sería justo el esperar que miles de personas se presentan afuera del palacio temblorosas para felicitarla. Entonces, se decidió cambiar la fecha. ¡Tiene sentido!

Así que tomamos esa idea. No por el clima, sino para hacerlo en un día que fuese conveniente para todos. ¡Buena cosa que tomamos ésta decisión, pues más de la mitad del tiempo que pasamos en Carolina del Norte, incluyendo el 21 de agosto, el

"Amistades y personal de RCMA insistieron en que hubiera celebración de mis 80 años. Ellos pensaron—probablemente están en lo cierto—que yo no tendría sino uno de esos."

—Wendell N. Rollason
vice presidente ejecutivo

sanitario de la cabaña no funcionó! Que desorden en el monte hubiese sido.

Entonces, el 2 de noviembre es el día amigos y así fue como se decidió todo. Por lo que he escuchado será una gran cosa, un evento fantástico.

Luego, ban! bun! de pronto llegó mi violenta enfermedad. La fiesta casi se acabó antes de comenzar. Estuve bien cerca, pero aparentemente no era mi turno. El amor y poder de sus oraciones fueron fuerzas que significaron bastante. Cómo toma El Todo Poderoso sus decisiones cuando llega una enfermedad, ninguno de nosotros sabe. No sabemos realmente.

Pero yo quiero que cada uno de ustedes entienda que mi copa de gratitud se riega por cada palabra de oración que cada uno de ustedes ofreció por Barbara y por mí.

Que Dios les bendiga a cada uno de ustedes. Mi deseo es que puedan venir y ayudarme a celebrar mis ochenta.



Photo by GERRY LAMBERT

SEBRING TEACHERS: Cecilyn Malcolm (left), who became a senior teacher this season, and Centrilla Sherrill, who is a first-year teacher trainee, work together to provide a nurturing environment for the three- and four-year-olds in their classroom. They are enjoying a larger, just renovated center at a new location.

Safety News

Save your family from fire

When you think about Emergency Preparedness, think about some simple ways you can be prepared in case of fire. Also teach the children so they are prepared.

Use common sense. Most fires are caused by smoking cigarettes or faulty electrical wiring.

- Don't smoke in bed.
 - Don't empty ashtrays before you go to bed.
 - Keep matches and lighters away from children.
 - Don't overload electrical outlets.
 - Don't run extension cords or other wiring under rugs or carpet.
 - Don't put a space heater too close to bedding, clothing, or a wall.
 - Don't leave a heater unattended.
- If you use space heaters, be sure there is no carbon monoxide build-up in the room or house. You can purchase a carbon monoxide detector from your local hardware store.

Make an emergency phone list.

Do you have fire extinguishers in your home? (If not, purchase a class ABC multipurpose fire extinguisher from a local hardware store.) Where are they? Do you and the older children know how to use them? Don't ever use water on an electrical fire—it will shock you. Don't use water on a grease fire—it will spread it.

Do you have smoke detectors in several places in your home? Do they work? Check the batteries monthly.

Do you practice fire drills at home? Does everyone know different ways to get out of the house. Take time to talk to the children about what to do.

October is Fire Prevention Month. In many communities your fire departments have displays or exhibits available. Take time to visit.

Submitted by Dana Reeves

APPLAUSE

HAPPENINGS

Palm Beach Area

You may recall reading about Tony Gallegos in a recent issue of the RCMA HOY.

Nina Gallegos, family support assistant at Farmworker Child Development Center, is really proud of her son now.

Tony was recently one of two migrant students who was awarded a \$2,500 scholarship to attend Palm Beach Community College.

The good news is that the scholarship is renewable for a second year pending acceptable grades. Tony plans to study bilingual education and model himself after the teacher that Edward James Olmos played in the movie "Stand and Deliver."

Lee/Hendry/Glades/DeSoto Area

Mercedes Pacheco, a teacher at LaBelle I Child Development Center, became a United States citizen in September. Mercedes, a native of Ecuador, can now vote in the November general election. We congratulate her for this proud moment.

Highlands/Hardee Area

Charlene Edwards, program coordinator, is enrolled in a graduate-level course that had her involved in a memorable project.

Charlene checked credentials of people involved in the Jack Kemp/Al Gore vice presidential debate in St. Petersburg on October 9. It gave her first-hand and up-close insight on this event that was nationally televised on the major networks. If you see Charlene, be sure to ask her why they kept the temperature in the debate auditorium at a bone-chilling 58 degrees.

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Congratulations to Evan Portee, the area coordinator, who recently purchased her own home in Lake Placid.

Pasco/Lake/Orange Area

Area Coordinator Angie Herrera's daughter, Erica, has always been on the principal's honor roll. But this month she received something special.

Erica received a signed letter of recognition from state representative Carl Littlefield, congratulating her on her "good work, excellent grades and class leadership at the Saint Anthony School." This made Angie proud as it did Erica.

Lee/Hendry/Glades/DeSoto Area

Congratulations to four LaBelle staff who recently received their Child Development Associate Credential. They are teachers Florida Zamarron, Claudia Salinas and Regina Rhoomes, and center coordinator Viola Esquivel.

**

Glades Early Childhood Center was designated as a Model Inclusion Training Site. This designation signifies their success integrating children with special needs into the classroom. The designation was given by FDLRS Heartland for a four county area.

Currently the center receives funds from the Glades County School System to provide an inclusive developmentally appropriate environment for all of Glades County's special needs pre-schoolers.

Frances Canty, program coordinator, has received requests from other RCMA areas which would like to observe this program.

Gadsden Area

Congratulations to Wanda Gunn of Gadsden County Migrant Head Start in Quincy who recently was recognized with the CDA Credential as well.

N. Hillsborough/Polk Area

Rick Colvin and Rodney Surrat have been developing computer software that can be used to track statistics for RCMA's Head Start programs. They recently held an orientation to the new software with the Plant City Migrant Head Start team. The team is very excited about the opportunity to begin this new system of data tracking.

Pasco/Lake/Organge Area

Congratulations to Guadalupe Reyna Rubio on her promotion to center coordinator at Zellwood Child Development Center. Lupe was previously outreach worker at Mascotte Migrant Head Start.

Immokalee Area

Olga Gutierrez is now the center coordinator at Farmworker Village B. Olga, previously an education coordinator, has set the goal of NAEYC accreditation.

Teresa Salazar is now a health

coordinator for Farmworker Village A and Immokalee Child Development Center Annex. She was previously an outreach worker.

John Rush and Daniel Steffens have recently joined the school-age AIM program as site tutors. They are Mennonite Volunteers. John, an avid guitarist and vocalist, has already used one of his special talents in the classroom. The crowd of kids was very enthusiastic about the live music, and the possibility of weekly music sessions.

Daniel is from Germany and is serving as a Mennonite Volunteer as an alternative to serving in the German army, in which males are usually required to serve.

Highlands/Hardee Area

Welcome to Juliett Sloan and Kelly Bork, the new education coordinators at Fred Dennis and Bowling Green/Zolfo Springs Child Development Centers, respectively.

Rebeca Milan is now the education coordinator at Avon Park Head Start.



Photo by GERRY LAMBERT

LETICIA GONZALEZ is area secretary for the North Hillsborough/Polk area in Plant City. Leticia oversees RCMA's statewide video library, a great training resource, that is available for all staff. If you're interested in borrowing a video for your center, call Leticia at 813-752-6480.

A big welcome home to executive vice president Mr. Rollason. We wish him a speedy recovery.

Teachers Alvarado and Daniel touched many lives over two decades of service to children and families

continued from page 1

Mary Lou said. "When I said 'no' she asked if I would be interested in a job with RCMA caring for children before and after school. I stopped by the program and it looked interesting so I said 'yes.'"

Mary Lou recalls how things were different back then. "We cooked breakfast for the children in electric skillets and later walked about one-half mile to another RCMA site for meals."

Mary Lou has had the opportunity to be both a cook and an assistant center coordinator, but the classroom is her favorite. "I enjoy working with children, especially infants. I feel important when I am there and the kids around me need and love me. It makes me feel needed too."

Mary Lou has recently been the primary caregiver of a special needs child who is blind and must be fed through a tube. "I learned how to care for this special child and it made me feel very good to be able to help."

A Longtime Homestead Teacher

"It was October 22, 1976 at the old wooden building in South Dade Labor Camp that I started with RCMA," said Rose Daniel. Rose, a senior teacher at South Dade Child Development Center Infant, can tell you who was at her inter-

view as if it were yesterday.

But most of all Rose likes talking about her children. She has been caring for infants and toddlers for 20 years.

"RCMA has changed a lot," Rose said. "Back when I first started we cared for more children in a smaller space."

On one occasion Rose was asked to transfer to a 3-year-old classroom, with the guarantee that if she didn't like it she could return to her familiar classroom.

Rose gave it a shot but missed her infants and toddlers too much to make it permanent. Like Mary Lou, Rose has seen her babies grow up. She often receives hugs from Henry and others who are now in RCMA's Early Intervention school age program nearby.

Rose was asked to share a special memory that made her feel good. She said, "it was the day that one of my parents gave me a certificate of appreciation for caring for her child. It really meant a lot to me."

Rose and Mary Lou have really meant a lot to RCMA too. They have provided two decades of commitment, love and energy to hundreds of chil-

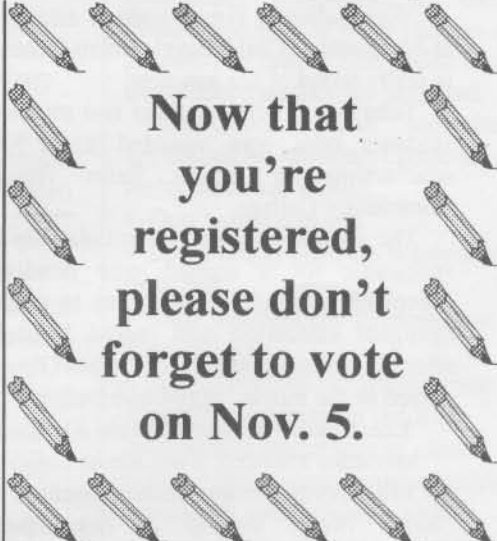
dren and families who have passed through their classrooms.

In addition, these two remarkable women have cared for their own children and families. Rose has three children and Mary Lou has six children, all of whom are fortunate to call these two women "mom!" □



Photo by GERRY LAMBERT

Rose Daniel playing with her charges.



**Now that
 you're
 registered,
 please don't
 forget to vote
 on Nov. 5.**

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear HOY,

What a delight it was to meet and teach several of the staff from your centers in Highlands and Hardee Counties!

I must say I was very impressed by the knowledge and dedication these early childhood professionals had for their field. My hat goes off to the RCMA organization and education coordinators for the excellent job done in teaching those that work in your centers what is truly best for young children.

Of course, prior knowledge alone isn't enough. The students I taught from RCMA showed a high level of perseverance and discipline as they were always well prepared and ready to work hard.

Kudos RMCA students of the introductory A.S. degree course at South Florida Community College for a job well done!

Signed,
 Garla K. Johnson, Adjunct Instructor
 South Florida Community College

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