



## SNAP SHOT...

April 17, 1978

RITA BRADY (continued from last issue)



Lincoln's Rita Brady is typical of Oak Park's excellent teachers. Each of her students are individuals and "special." A former open classroom teacher, she still has an "open" classroom in a traditional setting. Rita will receive a Master's degree in special education this summer.



Rita is the mother of four children (including OPRF High School twins) and has excellent rapport with her "school youngsters."

Part of the "team," Rita, Principal Dan Franco and Assistant Principal Paula O'Malley have frequent get-togethers to go over the progress of what we call Rita's "learners" instead of students.



INTERESTING PEOPLE IN "97"A PRINCIPAL FOR OUR TIME

Dan Franco, who is being featured in this last issue of the District 97 Newsletter, is a man who holds to the traditions of the past, lives each day to the fullest and looks forward eagerly to the excitement of the future.

In his eleven years as principal of Lincoln School, Dan has continued traditions that were long established at Lincoln by his predecessors. For example, each year he and the faculty become emotionally involved in the Memorial Day program, honoring the boys from Lincoln School who died in World War I. And the long-standing tradition of the annual Halloween Parade is still enjoyed by many friends and neighbors of Lincoln School. Dan's costume, by the way, is usually designed by his "couturier" co-worker and secretary, Dorothy Morrissey.



A scene from this year's Memorial Day program... The day was beautiful and every child in the school participated. The band under Ed von Holst's direction played, flags waved in the breeze, flowers again were placed on the soldiers' monument. Perhaps a thousand people from the community turned out to join the Lincoln tribute to the War dead.

Under Dan's leadership new traditions have become part of the life of the teachers and children. When school begins in the fall, teachers eagerly anticipate receiving their annual "Up at Lincoln" button. About six years ago Dan grew tired of principals and administrators referring to his school as "down at Lincoln." So every year he has had buttons with "Up at Lincoln" on them distributed to show the Village of Oak Park which end is up. The newest tradition to be established at Lincoln was inaugurated this spring. A twilight, Ravinia-type outdoor concert was given in Lincoln's Little Lane -- a small, attractive park at the south end of the school that had been developed by parents, teachers, children and neighbors. A large turn-out of parents and neighbors on a warm spring night attested to the success of this mini-music festival. Another tradition, begun last year, is that of announcing teachers' birthdays over the intercom and suggesting that the children give the teacher appropriate greetings.

Although Dan has always been quiet and self-effacing, his qualities of leadership are unquestioned. Long thought of by the Lincoln staff as the Phil Donahue of Lincoln School, Dan has been admired by many for his ability to stimulate controversial discussions in the faculty lounge, i. e. women's lib, smoking, tuna fishing, etc. This is the place where Dan's fine qualities are most appreciated. Where but "Up at Lincoln" could you find a faculty that so looks forward to Friday morning's coffee and rolls? This eagerness

A PRINCIPAL FOR OUR TIME (continued)

to attend the Friday coffees is due to the warm atmosphere that Dan has created. Webster defines socializing as, "to make social, make fit for life in companionship with others, to turn from an individual activity into one involving all or a group." Dan Franco has certainly followed this definition to a letter. When the "Up at Lincoln" staff gathers in the lounge there's a feeling of attending a gala affair -- an affair where one would find champagne flowing, ladies in evening gowns, red, long stemmed roses filling crystal vases on each table. Instead of feeling cramped into a 12 by 15 room filled with plastic furniture and life safety left-overs, there is an atmosphere of convivial elegance. Dan's natural charisma, friendly personality and great perseverance has created this most inviting atmosphere.

Dan has often stated this very personal educational philosophy -- that teachers do not teach subjects but teachers teach CHILDREN. If anyone would ask Dan to define or describe his ideal teacher, he might very well point to his latest acquisition, Sue Ellen. This "model" teacher was purchased by means of a very high auction bid at Lincoln's Fabulous Fifties party last month. Sue Ellen's assignment is to stimulate fashion consciousness and her permanent position is in the lounge.

Dan is too modest to want his private life known but it can be told that he is a noted collector of old bottles, campaign buttons and narrow ties. He is an avid Cubs fan. He lives in the house in which he was born in Glencoe. His dedication to his work, his school and his teachers is evident from the fact that he has commuted this distance for thirty years! Showing his flexibility in this as in other matter, Dan claims to have never taken the same route twice!

No story on Dan would be complete without some comment from his three most outspoken fans, Rhett Butler Duck and his two "wives," Maureen and Scarlett O'Hara.

Dear Grandpa Dan:

We're writing this thank you note to let you know how much we appreciate your loving concern for us. Your daily trips out to the courtyard to feed us, your concern for our health, your man-to-man talks with Rhett which inspired him to be unconcerned about the population explosion problem--all this has endeared you to our hearts.

Scarlet says your daily peeks into her nesting box has so encouraged her that she has decided to name her first hatched, Dan. We do so hope it's a drake. Rhett so admires your lettuce pitching skills--left over from your coaching days, no doubt.

As for all of us, we feel so proud every time you point us out to every visitor. Thanks again,

Love,  
Maureen, Scarlett and Rhett



Dan Franco as he is today ... someone special to his family, his staff, his students and to District 97.

A PRINCIPAL FOR OUR TIME (continued)

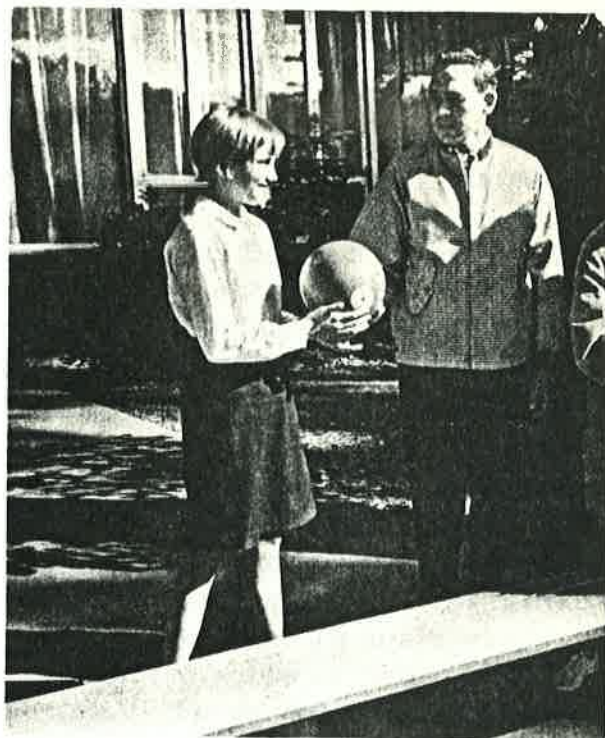
Dan Franco "came up from the ranks." He began his teaching career in Oak Park as a physical education instructor at Holmes and Whittier schools in 1949. He continued his education and was active professionally during his teaching years. When the Board of Education took on the assignment of rewriting policy and establishing a district philosophy Dan was the District representative. When Bill Matthias resigned as Lincoln principal 11 years ago Dan was appointed acting principal. He became an "immediate success" with the Lincoln staff and community which had had four principals in a short period of years. The next year he became the principal.

An indication of the type of administrator is shown in the success stories of his assistant principals. Stuart Mitchell, now principal of Hawthorne Junior High, was assistant principal at Lincoln; Herb Rohmann is now principal at Irving. John Alfonsi, a former Lincoln teacher is assistant principal at Emerson Junior High School. Ramona Lacy became principal of Whittier School and is now principal of a junior high school in another district. (Dan, hang on to Paula O'Malley!)

## NEWSLETTER

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This is Dan when he was a physical education teacher at Holmes School. He hasn't changed too much, has he?

"THANK YOU" FROM "HAP"

"Dear Friends,

May I express my sincere appreciation for the many wonderful cards and letters that have filled my heart with happiness.

It isn't much fun being on the side of the fence where people are waiting on you. My one big desire is to get on the other side where I can serve others.

I know I have a rather rough road ahead but I also know I will make it because so many of you really care!

Warmest regards,  
Hap"