

In 1976

C'ville schools returned to basics

By DAVID B. MCDOWELL  
Superintendent  
Clarenceville School District

Each year at about this time the Observer calls and asks if I, like other superintendents in the area, will write an article giving my thoughts about what the 1977-78 school year will be like for education and the Clarenceville school district.

First, I am grateful that I am not a reporter, who must daily create articles that will capture the reader's interest and second, I am saddened that I am not a car manufacturer who annually stimulates the reader to buy a new car. If I were an automaker I could tell the reader that this wonderful new car is smaller, lighter, consumes less gas and is the latest engineering design, besides a joy to look at and a thrill to drive. All of these wonderful new features for only \$250 to \$500 more than the now obsolete 1976 models.

As a school superintendent, I can't promise new immediate thrills and joys for your money, but I can promise you the long range satisfaction of meeting your responsibility to the youth of this community and nation. AS I LOOK at education for 1977-78 and beyond, I don't see a revolution of new ideas or methodology. I do see the need to continue efforts to educate each child to the point where he can function as a contributing member of this society.

I see a need to take a long hard look at the idea that learning and education are competitive. We must realize that our first responsibility to each student is a mastery of clearly defined basic skills, and other skills

deemed necessary for further education or job entry.

Educators and parents must believe that we can't serve a certain portion of the student body. Students must be willing to assume the responsibility to put forth the necessary time and energy to learn.

We know that in most instances the difference between the more successful student and one less successful is the time it takes to learn. To put it another way, the less successful student must be willing to spend more time learning than his counterpart, but all can learn.

I continue to see a greater need for the home and school working together to assist the student in the learning process and academic achievement.

Student enrollment in the nation, state and many local districts, including Clarenceville, will continue to decrease. This will be particularly true in the urban areas and the suburbs.

Decreasing enrollment presents a set of unique problems in school financing. For example, decreasing enrollment districts can hire few or no new teachers. The present staff members are moving towards the top of the salary schedule. This becomes very costly when one considers that two beginning teachers cost about the same as a teacher with 12 years experience.

A second problem caused by decreasing enrollment is that other than teaching personnel, employee reductions can not be made in direct relation to student loss. Building principals, secretaries, custodial maintenance personnel and other school re-

lated jobs must be considered in the school budget.

Inflation and lack of state funding has and will continue to place the burden of funding evermore on the shoulders of the local taxpayer.

Despite efforts to reduce costs by boards of education, inflation in the form of increased cost for instructional materials, utilities and maintenance supplies continue to defeat their efforts. Year after year employees need to receive salary improvements to meet their ever increasing expenses. Unlike industry, schools cannot put a new price tag on our commodity (the pupil), but must ask the taxpayer to increase his already heavy burden to meet the needs of youth.

IN SPITE of the current problems of inflation, decreasing enrollment and lack of state funding, the need to

educate the young people of this nation continues to be the best assurance that this country and its form of government will survive and thrive.

I have faith that each of us, as citizens, will recognize the importance of education in perpetuating a free society and be willing to support the schools in these very trying times.

As I close this article, may I thank you on behalf of the Clarenceville Board of Education and all the employees for letting us serve your youth. We pray that we have served them well.

May I also call your attention to the fact that the Clarenceville School District will hold a special election on Jan. 17, for the purpose of asking voters to renew five mills which expired with the 1976 levy. A second proposition will ask the voters to consider three additional mills for operating expenses.

'Create' jobs,  
MSU prof says

Using tax cuts to create jobs will cost the government about six times as much per job created as would an expanded public employment program, said the chairman of the National Council on Employment Policy (NCEP).

Michigan State University professor Charles C. Killingsworth presented NCEP's plan for reducing unemployment by creating jobs.

If adopted, the economist said, it "would bring us within striking distance of President-elect Carter's goal" to reduce the national unemployment rate by 1.5 per cent in 1977.

The plan calls for expanding the present public employment program to provide a minimum of one million jobs (about 630,000 above the present level), at an initial cost of \$5 billion per year.

"THIS SINGLE action would reduce the national unemployment rate to seven per cent or less within six months," Killingsworth said.

Furthermore, NCEP recommends that \$2 billion be added to the public works program, which would initially create another 112,000 jobs within 12 months.

"The indirect effects of this expenditure would create an approximately equal number of jobs, for a total of roughly 220,000 jobs," the NCEP chairman said.

In addition, the council recommends expanding manpower training money by at least \$1 billion per year, with part of the

tax money going toward on-the-job training in private firms.

Finally, Killingsworth said, a tax cut of modest size might be considered in addition to the foregoing increase in spending.

ANY TAX CUT must be justified, however, on grounds other than its direct job-creating effects. Killingsworth maintained, pointing out weaknesses of using tax-cutting alone to reduce unemployment.

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People pull strings  
to enliven holidays

By DONALD FREDERICK  
National Geographic News

Few things are as appealing to children and adults alike as a holiday with strings. In fact, puppet shows can enliven almost any season.

"The ancient art form has never been more popular," says Phyllis Nierendorf, company manager of Nicolo Marionettes.

"The puppets teach children to be an appreciative audience, and give them the experience necessary later to enjoy real theater performances. Adults relate even more to the little stringed figures. I guess they appeal to the child in all of us."

PUPPETS AND PEOPLE have been making magic together for centuries. Some say the people of India were the first to enjoy puppet shows and that Arab traders took the art to Europe.

String puppets were popular in India and Burma, but the Javanese favored intricately carved shadow puppets and stylized rod figures. Later, actors and dancers adapted the movements and costumes of puppets to live performances.

Ancient Greek scholars grumbled about the preference shown for a string puller over serious drama.

ARISTOTLE described little figures "so realistic that even their eyes moved. Puppets followed Roman soldiers over the Alps probably carried hand pup-

pets with them. During the Middle Ages, churchmen used animated figures of teach Bible stories to a populace that was largely illiterate.

The word marionette may mean "little Mary" and refer to images of the Virgin. The puppets called marionettes probably were an Italian invention.

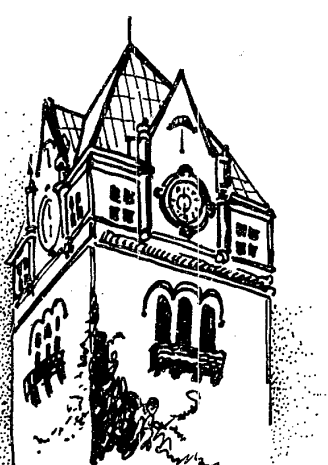
The word puppet comes from a Latin term for girl, pupa, which became pupette, or little doll, in French.

PUPPET WERE ALL the rage in Europe from the 16th to the 18th centuries. Elaborate man, -ettes mirrored and twirled for the gentry, w. - country folk delighted in simple hand puppets. A favorite folk hero was an ugly clown called Kasperle in Germany, Pulcinella in Italy and Punch in England.

Puppeteers may put fingers, hands or whole arms into the puppets' bodies and heads or they may animate the characters by moving them with metal rods from below. Figures manipulated with strings are commonly called marionettes.

Puppetry faded and nearly died in the glare of 20th-century entertainment. Children, however, saved the ancient art with their open, imaginative minds.

Today groups have rediscovered what children always knew—that puppetry can educate as well as entertain. Puppets sell products on television, walk in protest marches and even appear in sophisticated Off-Broadway revues.



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