

Tiogue's Ferrari rides off into sunset

After spending 18 of 23 years in Coventry schools at Tiogue Elementary, secretary will have to adjust to some down time

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COVENTRY — With flowers and goodbye cards surrounding her desk, Tiogue Elementary School secretary Edna Ferrari finished up her last day of school last Tuesday and began planning to begin her retirement.

Ferrari explained that she's been with the Coventry Public School system for 23 years, of which 18 of those years were spent at Tiogue.

She said she first began as a kindergarten assistant at Tiogue. Unfortunately, because of low enrollment, she was bumped from the position.

"I loved it here and I loved

the people and I was determined to come back," she said.

For five years following, she jumped around between Washington Oak Elementary School, Blackrock Elementary School and Hopkins Hill Elementary School as a teacher's assistant.

"I had been a secretary before I worked in the school system though, so I knew that eventu-

ally that was something I wanted to do; I then took the clerk's test," she said.

She said working in the school system was the perfect job for her. During her earlier years with the system, she said her children were young.

"When they had their vacations, I had mine also," she

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Tiogue Elementary School Principal Louise Seitsinger (right) said retiring secretary Edna Ferrari (left) was the backbone of the school.

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Ferrari loved working at Tiogue

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said. "Once they got older it wasn't an option for me, I wanted to stay in the system."

Once she received the clerk's position at Tiogue she said "I've loved every minute of it."

Ferrari explained that she constantly wants to be busy during work and working as a clerk is a busy job.

"It's also stressful at times, but I love the students, the teachers, faculty and staff," she said with a smile. "It's been a great ride."

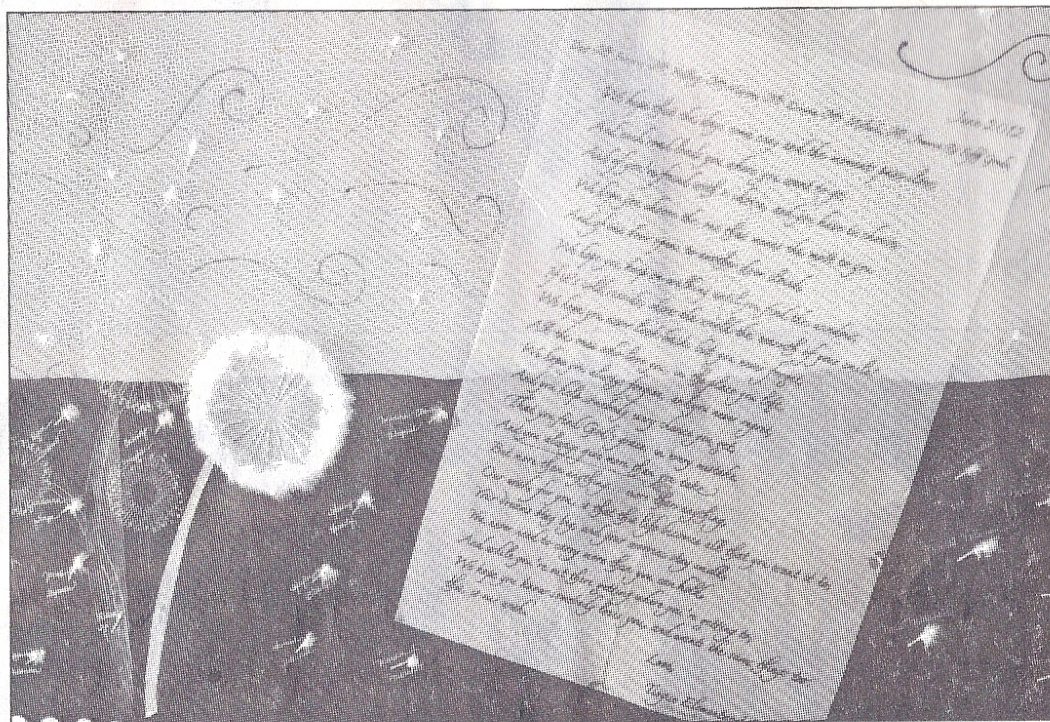
Tiogue Principal Louise Seitsinger explained that she and Edna have been working together for two years.

"But my children went here and my son used to come to kindergarten and sit down and talk with her," she reminisced.

Seitsinger said the backbone of a school is the secretary. She said the secretary shows the culture of the school building and is the first face a person sees when they walk in.

Physical Education Teacher Alicia DelSanto said she has been working with Edna since she began 18 years ago.

"She's been loved for so many years — never a bad word about anybody, always there for teachers, students, faculty and staff," she said. "She's a great family person,



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Edna Ferrari was presented with a thoughtful going away present when Tiogue Elementary's fifth-graders found out about her retirement. Each dandelion thistle in the photo above carries with it one fifth-grader's name.

we'll miss her terribly. She can really hold this staff together."

Seitsinger said because she's only been principal for two years, Edna has been her navigator, since she has been at Tiogue for so long.

"I've worked with Edna for three years," said Special Education teacher Jill Hague. "I think it's a big loss for our

school, she's wonderful and very passionate and sincere and every question people have she has the answer. I wish her the best of luck."

Ferrari said she does not know what she will do now that she's retired. She said she plans to travel to a couple places during the summer.

She also explained that her

daughter is getting married in two weeks and currently, all her concentration is on that.

"But overall, I'll miss the people here, they're like family to me," she said with tears in her eyes. "We've been through a lot in 18 years. It's them, and the kids, and the whole environment is wonderful."