

# Teachers note difference between nations' school systems

by TERRY MARTIN

During the past two weeks a third grade class at Welches School not only gained a substitute teacher, but got an international experience all in one package.

Ruth Coleman arrived in Sandy in early February from Victoria, B.C., for a nine-day teacher exchange.

"I had a certain 'in-the-fog' feeling the first day because everything was so different," she said.

"I've really had no problems with the class, no more than a normal class. Kids always test a substitute teacher."

During her visit, Coleman felt a definite difference in the way American schools teach as opposed to Canadian schools.

"It's really interesting. There is so much difference," she said. "There is a difference in the way you prepare the work, and the organization of the day is different."

"You have four and a half hours of lessons. Out of that come two recesses and a lunch, and your school year is shorter."

"We have five hours of lessons. Included are the recesses and we have close to 200 school days. Also, we don't have a cafeteria in Canada," Coleman said. "Either the child eats the lunch packed for him in the classroom or he goes home for lunch."

Along with the regular lessons, the Welches class learned a few bits and pieces of French.

"They have learned to count from one to 10, recite the days of the week and sing a little French song," said Coleman.

The visiting teacher said she felt good about her stay in Oregon.

"The people here, the parents and staff, have really welcomed me," she said. "The school sent me flowers and



Ruth Coleman

everybody's been friendly and helpful. I've been in five different schools and have never been treated so kindly."

by DAN DILLON

A Welches School teacher spent the past two weeks in Victoria, B.C., and came home with a good feeling about the mountain school where she's taught the past five years.

"It was marvelous," third-grade teacher Kathy Dunbar said of Canada. "It makes our school look really good."

Canadian teachers face a longer work day and Dunbar felt the effects.

"I was really tired," she said. "I think their teachers are all really tired." The teachers handle all their own subjects including music and physical education, something not done here, she said. There is also no afternoon recess for the students.

When she spoke with her substitute, Ruth Coleman, after returning, the Canadian teacher empathized with her.

"She had a marvelous time," Dunbar said. "She felt like she really

had a light load and the first day she knew I'd be tired."

She said the Canadian school system emphasizes more board and seat work in the classroom and less use of paper as they do all assignments in a notebook. That, she said, results in less parent contact and involvement.

"My general impression is that they are behind us, but headed in the same direction as American schools," Dunbar said.

Cloverdale Elementary, where she visited, had a shortage of audiovisual equipment—only one movie projector, slide projector and filmstrip projector, and just two overhead projectors.

"I never did find the record player," she said.

Dunbar's trip was arranged through the University of Portland where she is taking graduate courses. Dr. Leo Leonard had arranged similar exchanges in Ohio, but this was the first time it occurred on the West Coast.



Kathy Dunbar

Now Dunbar is planning a return visit in June to show the three slide shows she made during her stay.

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