

P.T.A.



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PARENT-TEACHERS ASSOCIATION PUBLIC SCHOOL 21 • LEE AVENUE, YONKERS

MARION K. KING, *Principal*

To Your Good Health, Marion K. King



On February 19, at the turn of the century, in Nelliston, Montgomery County, New York, a baby girl was born to Joseph and Victoria Wickwire King. She was given the name Marion Katherine (and you will notice that Marion is spelled with an 'o' instead of the usual 'a' to denote a girl--her parents wanted it that way). Her mother had been a school teacher but the family ancestry was filled with sturdy New York State farmers--people who loved contact with the good earth.

In the early 1900's, the family moved to Starkville, Herkimer County and in 1908 they moved to East Springfield, New York. There, Marion Katherine and her brother and two sisters walked three miles each way to school. No small wonder that our beloved principal is the author of the remark that "today parents push their children in strollers until they are five and then they form car pools!" Even with walking 6 miles daily and helping with chores, in 1914 she was graduated from East Springfield High School. This was a small country school, but an eager mind is never stymied and she also learned from older members of her family. Following graduation from high school, she took a position cooking and waiting on tables in a resort hotel, to learn and to earn. She was graduated from Oneonta Normal School in 1917, subsequently earning a B.S. degree in Education in 1930 at Teachers' College, Columbia University and in 1937 a Masters Degree plus a certificate to teach history. Since that time, Miss King has amassed thirty credits beyond the Masters' Degree.

Her first teaching position was in grade school, Springfield Center, N.Y. From hometown teacher, she moved to Avon, New York and then to Westfield, New Jersey. She took and passed the New York City examinations, but apparently her assignment did not appeal to her. Miss Bertha Smith, Director of Elementary Education, (a stiff taskmaster, but superb in her method of training new teachers) had seen Miss King teach and was impressed, so she turned her back on New York City and came to Yonkers. In the fall of 1924 she came to School 21 as third grade teacher under an extremely able principal, Miss Nita Sibley. (It is interesting to note that Mrs. Alfreida Reid is the sister of the late Miss Sibley). At that time, School 21 had the first eight grades, and Miss King later taught in the upper grades and then, because of her love for History, went to Hawthorne Jr. High School for one year to specialize in teaching "her subject". Before she was made principal, she had taught all the grades except kindergarten.

Miss Sibley knew a born teacher when she saw one, plus a person with the administrative ability necessary, and at her urging, Miss King prepared for a principalship. In 1936, after the death of Miss Sibley, Marion K. King was named principal of School 21. This could well be called the fortunate year for this school. She thoroughly enjoys her work--loves the children and all the "doings" she actively participates in with them. With all the work Miss King does for our children, one would think she'd never have time or energy for hobbies or just plain fun. However, this lady learned early that you can make time. One of her biggest pleasures is planning and preparing food for a big crowd. From friends, we have this description: "She's a real homemaker and a wonderful cook." When at her summer home, she does all the housework and cooking, but the gardening is left to her dear friend, Miss Pauline Emery, guidance counsellor at Commerce High School.

Bridge is her game, but since reading has been a lifelong passion, she plays rarely. Crossword puzzles intrigue her, so occasionally after dinner she spends a little time on a puzzle. Reading fairly fills her leisure time. From childhood, she's read everything she could get her hands on and with her retentive memory, she has accumulated a wealth of information on diverse subjects. She particularly likes "refined" murders, and Agatha Christie is a favorite author; she's read almost all of her books.

Through her mother, she's a member of the D.A.R., but can't hold with many of the organization's opinions.

She has traveled extensively, having spent a summer in Hawaii and visited Bermuda. In 1955 she spent the summer in Europe traveling through Holland, Austria, Italy, Switzerland and France. She spent one summer traveling alone in the British Isles and it seems that this is her favorite place away from home. When abroad, she speaks English only, although she's studied German and French.

As a child she had the usual pets that a child in the country has, but without becoming particularly attached to any one. She has mentioned at one time having doves!

Some years ago, a colleague of hers made the remark, "There's something about Marion--you never go to bed at night wondering where she stands!" Her innate frankness, combined with complete fairness, has endeared her to all sorts of people through the years. You may be very sure if you ask her opinion on any subject, you will get it--no beating around the bush!

So, Miss King, this is your life! Your devotion to your work, to the children in your school and community, your continuing interest in them as they grow, has endeared you to two generations in and around Lincoln Park. School 21 is richer because of your leadership and guidance and proud of the remarkable reputation you have throughout the city.
