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HONEOYE LAKE COURIER

Grace Babcock

# Tribute to a Great Teacher

*Editor's note: the following award-winning essay was written by Dolores Johnson of Lawrence Hill Road in Canadice about her neighbor and former teacher, Grace Babcock, who has a summer home on County Road 37 also in Canadice. Because of this fine essay Mrs. Babcock was honored on Sunday, April 17 at Nazareth College for her outstanding role as a teacher.*

My first day at Monroe High School back in 1961 was an exciting, but intimidating experience. I had transferred from a small parochial school. The enormous size of Monroe with its large number of kids was just

incredible. Just when I thought this experience was too overwhelming for a shy girl like me to handle, I met Grace Babcock.

Grace Babcock's sensitivity and caring spirit carried me through those first terrifying weeks. She created an atmosphere in her class that made her students feel comfortable. Eventually the huge size of Monroe with all its new faces was not so terrifying after all.

Mrs. Babcock had a way of motivating the shy girls like me to try different activities like basketball, swimming, tennis, volleyball and baseball. She not only motivated us to try a new

activity, but got us to a point where we forgot how we might have looked to others. We actually had fun doing those activities we thought we could never do. Her concern to share one another's culture was indicated when we were taught the Jewish dance, the Hora. The list of my experiences and the creative way Mrs. Babcock presented each one is never-ending.

Mrs. Babcock's positive teaching attitude inspired me to seek out a teaching career. Her patience with kids who thought they were less than athletes helped break the stereotype "girl's can't do it" image. She created the competitive spirit that aided in developing the physical strengths, talents and self-confidence of each girl. Her enthusiasm for athletics made my high school gym classes unforgettable events. Mrs. Babcock has truly made this a family affair since my mother and aunt share similar memories of their high school gym days when they were students of Mrs. Babcock.

My hope is that the positive role model shown by Mrs. Babcock will blend with my education to help me reach my full potential as a teacher.

*Mrs. Johnson informed the Courier that Mrs. Babcock received the Inspirational Teacher Award for 1988 at Nazareth College on April 17. She described Mrs. Babcock as an innovator, a person who taught women's physical education for 45 years, a member of the original faculty at Monroe High School in Rochester and an inspiring friend and neighbor in the Town of Canadice.*