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## 2 EMERSON TEACHERS RETIRING THIS SPRING

By Twila Van Leer, Education Editor

Published: Monday, May 4 1992 12:00 a.m. MDT

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### Summary

When Carl Wankier and Apache McLean leave Emerson Elementary School this spring, they'll take more than 70 years of combined teaching experience with them.

The Emerson community will honor the two retirees on Friday, May 8, from 3 to 5 p.m. The PTA is looking for former students and fellow teachers who want to contribute remembrances to "history books" for the two longtime teachers. Contributions may be sent to Mindi Stevens, 1017 Harrison Ave., Salt Lake City, UT 84105.

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Wankier started out to be an engineer or forestry expert but veered into teaching, instead, to be assured a job. He spent 39 of his 40 classroom years at Emerson, first teaching seventh-graders when the school had a combined elementary/secondary student body.

When the secondary students were placed in an intermediate school, he stayed to provide a positive male role model for elementary school children. Over the years, by conservative estimates, he figures he's directly touched the lives of at least 4,400 students.

A few of those thousands stick out in his mind - like the boy who had a lukewarm attitude, at best, about school. "His Mom couldn't get him here. He had a poor self-image and found it hard to express himself, but he had lots of ability. I took him aside and suggested he might be interested in engineering. He went home and told his mom. It gave him something to think about. He came out of his shell, began to participate in things like debate. And he ultimately went on to become an engineer."

McLean, who says he "traded a kilt for a breechcloth," has been a resource not only for American Indian students but for those from a variety of cultures. "They all call me Mr. Apache," he said. (He had his name legally changed to reflect his interest in the American Indian past.) In 31 years of teaching, he's been in a number of Salt Lake

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District schools, including Uintah, McKinley, Franklin, Glendale Park, Riverside and Meadowlark. He has been assigned to Emerson for the past eight years.

His philosophy extends to every student, regardless of background or culture. "As far as I'm concerned, we're all Americans. I want every child to be proud of and cognizant of his background. What we need is to work on the here and now and forget past resentments. We're all going to be together for a long time."

In 40 years, the two retiring teachers have seen society change. "Too many children come to school today with a baggage of social ills. Parents used to back our discipline. Now they threaten lawsuits. Many of our students have only one parent in the home, and they are so mobile it's hard to maintain continuity," said Wankier.

Retirement will offer McLean more time to do what he's been doing for years - participating in Indian dance ceremonies. "I've never been to Disneyland, but I've been on practically every Indian reservation in the country," he said. He's danced for a University of Utah anthropology program that took him to many areas of the United States and "raised my daughter in a cradleboard." He also has two sons.

Wankier intends to spend time on a small farm near Levan and "watch more baseball." He has four children.

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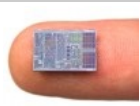
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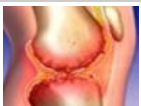
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