

ing for a considerable portion of the cost to provide 20 to 1 ratio classrooms in grades kinder-

at-risk kids, too. Teachers are seeing results sooner, with smaller classes they get more feedback. some other pot.

## GUEST COLUMN

# Reaction to her new life is mixed

In the last week, I've received phone calls from four old friends, three ex-students and various assorted relatives. It is as though everyone's New Year's resolutions had "Call Thea" somewhere in the top five.

On the other hand, this is not necessarily a good thing, because what it implies is that since I have slipped out of sight, gone underground, become a stay-at-home mom, the rare thought of me produces in my previous acquaintances a sense of guilt, as in, "I should *really* call her."

But life goes on, and I'm forgotten, until at last I end up on the mother of all to-do lists Jan. 1.



**Thea Rood**  
*Housewife Life*

Reaction to my new life has been mixed.

Probably the most supportive group has been my oldest friends, the ones from childhood, adolescence. These people actually have an easier time picturing me slopping around the house in a pair of tattered blue

jeans watching television—even if the picture now involves a baby—because frankly, their memories of me are pretty similar. In fact, it is this group that found it difficult to see me as a teacher, perhaps because they were the same people I used to cut school with, driving around in someone's red convertible smoking Salem Lights when we were supposed to be in chemistry.

The idea that I had become that goofy adult standing behind a podium marking people absent seemed ludicrous, to some downright amusing. "Do you ever ditch your own classes?" they would ask, pealing with laughter.

Most of these friends also have their own children by now, and they have been waiting for me to ask for boxes of hand-me-downs, to send a picture Christmas card of my family, to in effect, JOIN THE CLUB. If the truth be told, it was actually something of an irritant, a decade ago, that I was jetting off to Oahu with my boyfriend, playing around in graduate school, when they were waking to 3 a.m. feedings and trying to pay a mortgage. It's about time, they suggest, you finally settle down.

Another group that is supportive for different reasons is my disgruntled teaching friends. To a disgruntled teacher, anything that gets you out of the classroom is a good and enviable act. Being carried out on a stretcher, having a nervous breakdown, getting divorced and moving back home with your parents in Connecticut, receive the same reaction as taking maternity leave. "At least you don't have 7 a.m. faculty meetings and grades due every six weeks," they grumble.

GARY MARKS  
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COURTESY OF THE EDITOR



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Thanks for support of *The Nutcracker*

Dear Editor:

On Dec. 14, the greater Folsom Lake community came together to celebrate one of the world's greatest holiday classics, *The Nutcracker*, at the Folsom Middle School Theater, featuring the Theatre Ballet of San Francisco with the newly formed Chamber Orchestra of Folsom and local dance students from the Academy of Ballet.

This fabulous production was produced by local individuals, business and civic organizations, who acted as partners to foster local artists and quality performing arts in our community. The importance of this event was marked by including one of *The Nutcracker* posters in a time capsule in front of Folsom's Community Center

Telegraph, Joanne Burkett and Patty McAlpin; Folsom Veterinary Hospital; Hacienda del Rio, Chris Corda; Hannaford Cross; Intel, Roselyn Hudnell, Mike Reinking and Marguerite Rossoz; Kempner National Insurance, Michael R. Hoy; Kentucky Fried Chicken, Paul Jones; Kinko's; Mary Kay, Mary Strauss; La Bou, Sherry and Chin Wong; Lilburn Corporation; Lily's Tree Lot; Lumberjack; Office Depot; The Parkway Venture, Kirk Bone; Placer Savings Bank, Louise Allen; R.E. Marketing, Rhonda and Roger Criddlebaugh; Radisson Inn, Colleen Gerstner and Bob Leach; Ramirez Diversified Services; Rancho Cordova Moose Lodge; River City Recovery Center; Snooks Candies and Ice Cream, Jim Snook; Spring Foundation; Target Stores; The Theatre Ballet of San Francisco, Merriem Lanova, Arlene Newhouse.

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A much less supportive group, however, is my ex-students. There is a scene in the 1940s movie *White Christmas* in which Bing Crosby and Danny Kaye arrive at an inn that is, unbeknownst to them, owned by the general who commanded their unit during World War II. When he comes in the back door as they are checking in, carrying a load of firewood, Danny Kaye drops his suitcases and snaps to attention. In a horrified voice, he stammers, "General Waverly—a j-janitor!"

This is pretty much the same reaction I get from kids. They listen politely as I talk about my baby learning to crawl, and the fact I'm doing this free-lance writing thing, and then they say, "Yes, but when are you getting a REAL job?"

As for my relatives, they are still reeling from relief-slash-amazement that I actually reproduced. Since it is the norm in my family to have children in your early 20s, the fact that I waited until I was 35 is garnering much the same reaction as say, when Sarah announced she was pregnant in Biblical times. The stories suggest she was "ancient," but I have a sense she was about my age.

However, this group also, understandably, had a difficult time picturing me in a position of authority. From the time I was a teenager, I was known to be "good with children," which basically meant I didn't allow them to tie me up the instant their parents stepped out the door, but wrestling with five-year-olds two-doors-down—or caring for my own daughter—is a world away from telling 30 adolescents to create the school newspaper. I think most of my relatives were secretly waiting for me to admit it was all a hoax and I really worked in the cafeteria.

In the end, I suppose, the opinions which truly matter are those of my immediate family. If the baby could talk, I'm sure she'd be entirely supportive.

For me, the joy of not putting on party hose at 6 a.m. is reason enough to never go back to a real job, even when my daughter is in medical school.

And as my husband so succinctly put it, "You're no different now than you ever were—you're still a kook," which I'm sure he means in the most affectionate way possible.

front of Folsom's Community Center, and will be opened in 50 years time.

I would like to thank all of those businesses and organizations who gave of their time, talent, resources, staff, creativity and money to make *The Nutcracker* happen: members of the American River Federal Credit Union, Kathleen Eggert; Angell Media Services, Kris Angell-Keables; Allen L. Bender, Inc., Brian Bender and Kathy Bender-Miller; Burger Physical Therapy, Carol Burger; Canned Foods, Dwayne Ozenne; Carpet's Plus; Carl's Jr; Chamber Orchestra of Folsom, Henrik Jul Hansen, Kathleen O'Neill; Coldwell Banker, Jim Ross and Fran Salvatore; Condrey Videography, Robert Condrey; Dawn Michelle's Hair Studio, Dawn Michelle Yslas; Folsom Arts and Cultural Council, Rhonda Cridlebaugh, Claudia Cummings, Bobbi Lungren, Dick Merz; Folsom Athletic Association, Rose Benevento, Lynn LePage and Ernie Sheldon; Folsom City Lions Club, Virg White; Folsom Community Center, Chuck Harrison, Lindsey and Marie; Folsom Cordova Unified School District, Larry Stark, Bob Mange, Michael Castelle, Pam McMillan; Folsom Ford/Geo; Folsom Lake Automall, Susan Samworth and John Sears; Folsom Learning Center, Lilly Ann Carder; Folsom Parks and Recreation Department, Sandy Hilton, Lynn LePage, Susanne Linanne and Roxanne Podesta; Folsom Steak House, Bob Minshew; Folsom Technology Group; Folsom

Barbara Owen and Jonathan  
US Rentals; Vix Signs and Banners  
Victor Blake; Peter Yeager's  
Peter Yeager; West Coast Carpets  
Mary Asay.

Also, thank you to those individuals in the community who contributed countless hours of volunteer time: Ruthie Anderson, Cindy Arsenault, Kerslake, Mary Asay, Denise Elizabeth Cassin, Rhonda Cridlebaugh, Cyndi Dow, Rose Davis, Mark Durfee, Gini Ehrhardt, Rick Ehrhardt, Thomas Herron, Lilly Hieronymus, Hill, June Hose, Carmen Craig and Jeanne Johnson, and Michael Lucien, Susan Diane Mahon, Dick Merz, Neumann, Carolyn Noia, Lillian Perez, Joan Pohlman, Lawrence Prophet, Janet Richmond, Marguerite Samworth, Lori San Juan, Schuler, Carol Tello, Melodie Wagner, Sue Webb and Sherrill Whitted. If I have missed anyone, please forgive me.

I would also like to extend my deepest gratitude to the dedicated musicians who believed in me and shared their unique talents with our community. Bravo! and happy New Year to all!

Debra  
Presenter and Partner