



"You're killing me," exclaimed Pam Dekker with tears in her eyes as she received hug after hug, flowers, homemade posters and a standing ovation from the teachers, students, fellow bus drivers and friends. It was her 40th year and her last day of driving the school bus for the Clark school system. Starting the following March after her high school grad-

uation, Dekker has been a faithful and reliable school bus driver since 1975.

Students pictured with Dekker from left to right are, Mallory Nelson, Leah Nelson, Emma Reidburn, Audrye Foster and Brianna Dale.

Pam Dekker has 40 years of school bus driving memories

In her 40 years of driving a school bus for the Clark school system, Pam Dekker recalls her favorite saying to the parents.

"I'll only believe half of what your kids tell me about you on the bus ... if you only believe half of what they tell you about me."

Pam Dekker retired last Friday from 40 years of driving a school bus route for the Clark school system. "I started when I was 10 years old," she kidded. In actuality she was just out of high school - not even a year after graduating. She graduated from Henry in 1974 and started bus driving in March of 1975. She also worked as a waitress in a Henry cafe at the time - a job she had in her high school years as well.

"I started out going south on my route, but then later ended up with the north route," continued Dekker.

"With the early route that I drove, I went to most of the kid's baby showers. They all knew me. One of my regrets looking back is that I didn't keep a list or book of all the kids I've hauled over the years. That would have been nice to help me remember their names.

"What I'll miss most is the kids. For the most part - they were great. Only three were 'memorable' or a problem over the last 40 years. I liked them all - I couldn't pick a favorite."

Her bus stopped for treats on that last day of school - a tradition Dekker continued for years. She also remembered them all at Christmas with treats, too.

Dan Duenwald of Duenwald Transportation had this to say of Dekker - "She's one of those bus drivers who never has a problem on the bus. She takes care of every-

thing." Over the years Dekker has seen many changes on the bus. "When I started we had manual transmissions and no power steering. Now we have automatic transmission, power steering and air brakes.

"I didn't get stuck very often, but one time in the spring on a path I'd taken everyday - all of a sudden - boom and I'm up to my rear axle in mud. It took two four wheel drive tractors to get me out.

"In the school year 1979-1980, was the only time we were snowbound. It was on an extra trip driving the gymnastic kids. We ended up having to stay in Lake Preston in a huge house, where everyone just had to pick a spot on the floor that night to sleep, courtesy of the local diner owner - Susie."

It was time, Dekker said of her retirement as she owns her own

business, Dekker Hardware which she bought from Henry (H.T.) Desnoyers in 2010. A lifetime in the hardware business, she said it was time to be a full-time hardware store owner.

"Clark's been really good to me," said Dekker. "It's so busy here now, especially since Bruce (Brekke) retired - I decided it's time to just focus on one job - not two.

"Like I said - I'll really miss the kids though. I also really appreciated the parents cooperating with me over the years, giving me road conditions, meeting me partway if needed and bringing them in if the bus couldn't make it through.

"With all the hugs and flowers and nice posters the classes made for me on my last day - it was hard to say goodbye. It was very bitter-sweet on that last day," ended Dekker.

El Nino could mean a wetter weather pattern

Since the beginning of May, precipitation conditions across South Dakota have changed generally for the better, becoming quite wet in certain areas of state, said Dennis Todey, SDSU Extension Climate Specialist and South Dakota Climatologist.

"During the month of May, some places in the west have seen three to four times the precipitation they had seen since January," Todey said.

The latest climate outlooks, released May 21, 2015 from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Climate Prediction Center keep with that same trend of nearer average, to wetter than average, conditions over much of the state.

Todey explained that due to a dry winter and early spring, South Dakota entered the month of May with growing drought concerns; and rapidly increasing U.S. Drought Monitor coverage and intensity. "The precipitation total across South Dakota were the lowest on record statewide for January through April," he said "leading to quickly building dryness concerns."

30-Day Outlook

The newly released NOAA 30- and 90-day climate outlooks continue to indicate wetter than average conditions are more likely for most of the state through the summer.

"The June to August outlook, in particular, has above average precipitation chances likely over most of South Dakota and the Great Plains," Todey said. "The June outlook has wetter chances just in southern South Dakota."

Temperature outlooks are listed as equal chances for below or

above average for both the next 30- and 90-days. Assuming the wetter conditions do occur, Todey said near-normal to cooler temperatures are more likely to exist for the summer. "Rarely do warm and wet conditions occur together during the warm season in the Plains," Todey said.

El Nino

El Nino in the Pacific is impacting much of the outlook. "El Nino is developing, which seems very likely to strengthen and persist through the summer," Todey said.

El Nino's are more typically a winter phenomenon, Todey explained, strengthening in the fall and weakening in the spring. "This El Nino is acting quite the opposite of usual strengthening through the spring," he said. "The impact of the likely wetter conditions will be to continue to reduce the precipitation deficits still existing in some places of eastern South Dakota."

The newest U.S. Drought Outlook concurs with this idea, showing drought reduction as likely in areas still listed on the U.S. Drought Monitor map. "The increased precipitation totals should generally be good for agricultural production for the year after the dry fall to spring period," Todey said. "Soils still have some deficits in the east to overcome. Thus, the additional precipitation is still needed."

He added that excessive wetness has not been too much of a problem yet, but will have to be monitored in some areas of the state. "The change to wetter conditions will also likely increase disease potential for various crops as the growing season progresses," he said.

Say cancer survivors Wicks and Dale

"Each day is a precious gift - cherish it"



Violet Wicks



Lori Dale

"You don't realize how hard something like this is until you go through it yourself," said Vi Wicks - one of the two Relay for Life survivors at this years event.

Her cancer battle started on April 22, 2012. "I found a lump when in the shower," she said of the cancer in her breast. "I've had mammograms all my life, but this mass didn't show up - that surprised me."

Her first step was to call her regular doctor in Sioux Falls, Candace Ziegler. "We visited a little and she said it could be just a fibrous cyst,

but I knew it wasn't. This was different. I felt that it was different, it had a funny shape to it," admitted Wicks.

The next step was a CAT scan with the results showing a 2.3 centimeter mass and one lymph node on that same side was also affected. The decision was made to have surgery - a right side modified radical and a left total mastectomy.

"I didn't want to take the chance," continued Wicks. "My sister Helen went through a breast cancer surgery on only one side and the can-

cer came back and she's gone now. Another sister of mine, Donna had breast cancer and colon cancer and she's fine now."

In July of 2012, she had her first intravenous chemotherapy treatment. She had three more treatments with the last one being on September 21.

"All of my kids were very good to me - they were just wonderful and right there when I needed them." Vi and her late husband Jerry had

Cancer survivors (continued on page 2)

Clark County Rainfall 5/19 - 5/25		
* Bradley	1.50"	
* Crocker	.75"	
* Raymond	1.30"	
* Clark	.69"	
* Carpenter	.52"	
* Garden City	.90"	
* Henry	.81"	
* Vienna	.90"	
* Willow Lake	.50"	

WEATHER			
Ryan Eggleston - Official Weather Observer			
	HI	LO	PR
May 19	51	34	0
May 20	60	39	0
May 21	70	43	0
May 22	72	44	0
May 23	63	48	0
May 24	59	52	.67
May 25	62	51	.02
2015 precipitation to date	5.29"		
2014 precipitation to date	5.20"		



Because of the Brave - Veterans...we salute you

Olivia Anderson reads her award winning poem while Post Commander Rob McGraw looks on at the Clark Cagley-Smith Legion Post #60 Memorial Day program on Monday.

In the foreground is the POW/MIA table, set up by the Clark American Legion Auxiliary women. The empty chair signifies the missing in action (MIA) and prisoners of war (POW) who never returned to their family table at home. A nice crowd attended the Memorial Day program which was held on Monday at the Clark Legion Hall. Colorful poppy and flag posters colored by elementary students also adorned the stage, one may notice.