

Great Neck Community School Gala Celebrates 75th Anniversary March 24

Gala Honors Donna Peirez and Wendy Karpel Kreitzman

By Carolyn Levin

Plans are under way at the Great Neck Community School for a Diamond Jubilee Gala on March 24 to culminate year long activities celebrating the school's 75th anniversary. Community School parents, teachers, alumni, and friends will gather at Harbor Links Golf Club in North Hempstead to honor 75 years of excellence.

Many special people make up the Community School's family — the school's exceptional director and dedicated staff, loving teachers, caring and involved parents and alumni, and, of course, excited, eager and inquisitive children. Two special members of GNCS' community — Wendy Karpel Kreitzman and Donna Peirez — have been chosen to be the distinguished honorees for the Diamond Ju-

bilee Gala. These two women truly exemplify what the Community School is all about — commitment, involvement, and love of children and learning.

Wendy Karpel Kreitzman has been the editor for the *Great Neck Record* for over 12 years; prior to that she was a reporter, writer and editor of the *The Great Neck News* for 10 years. For over 30 years Ms. Kreitzman has been on the board of directors of the United Community Fund of Great Neck and North New Hyde Park; at one point she served as UCF vice president for public relations. As well, she is a former Community School parent. Her older daughter, Susan, was a student at the Community School beginning in 1979, and her younger daughter, Emily, attended four years later. During her children's years at GNCS, Ms. Kreitzman served as

a member of the board of trustees of the school. Ms. Kreitzman's daughter Emily went on to become a teacher during summers at the Community School. Through her current position as editor of the *Great Neck Record*, Ms. Kreitzman continues to give so much to the larger Great Neck community.

Donna Peirez's association with the Community School began in 1974, when her first child, Joshua, began as a student. Her other two children followed as Community School students as well. Ms. Peirez was an involved parent, serving in several positions at the school, including chair of the board of trustees in 1976. After her third child was born, she began substitute teaching at GNCS, and then spent 11 years as a full time Community School teacher. She left to join the Great Neck Public School system, where she is currently a beloved first grade teacher

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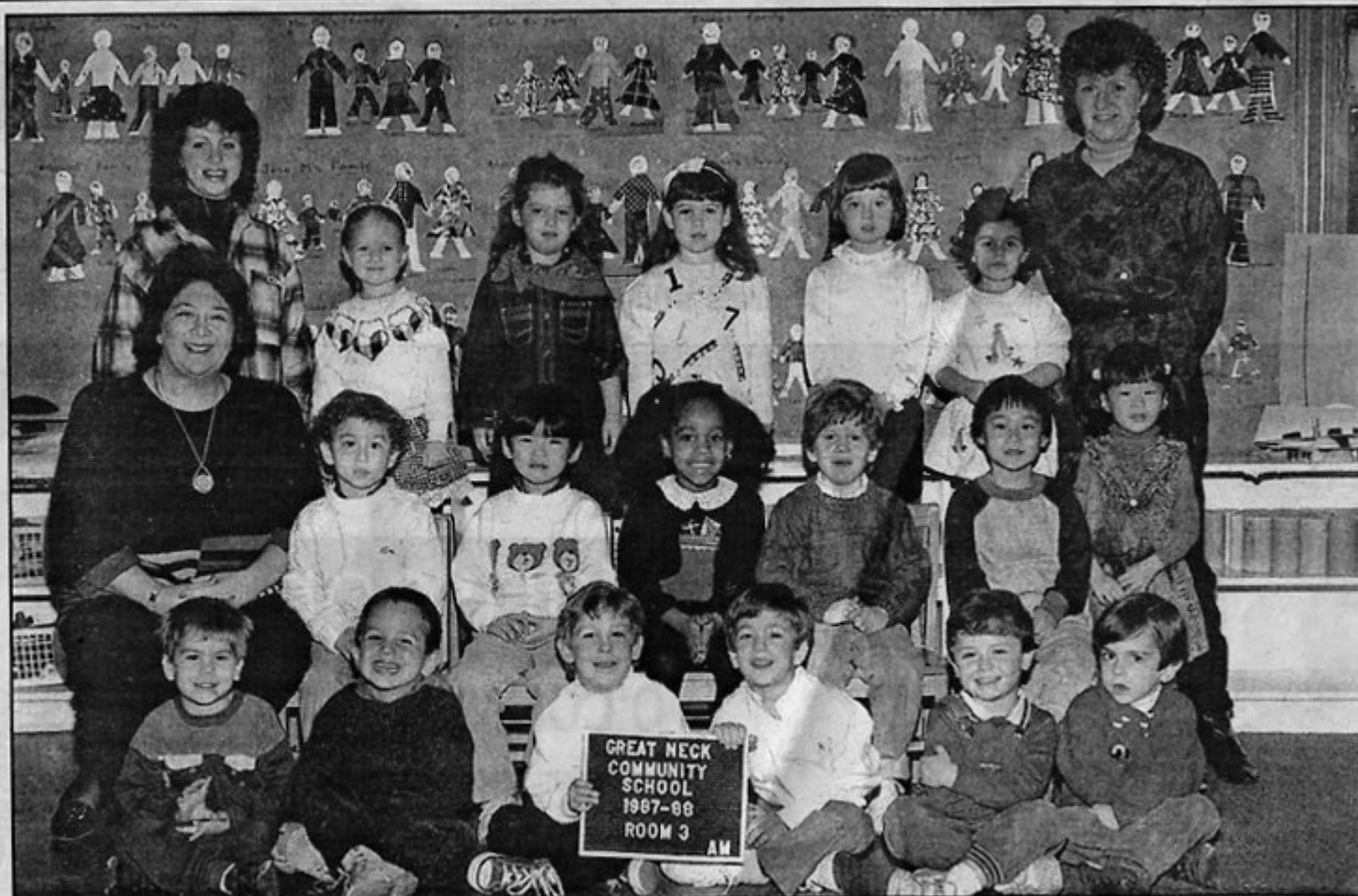
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at Lakeville School. Her daughter, Rachel Venegas, also taught at GNCS before joining the Great Neck Public School system as a kindergarten teacher at the E.M. Baker School. Both of Rachel's children, (two of Ms. Peirez's four grandchildren), have attended GNCS as students. Ms. Peirez has been a community and public school activist, serving as PTA vice president at Kensington-Johnson, North Middle and North High; PTA president at Baker; UPTC budget chair, legislative chair, safety and transportation chair and UPTC executive vice president and president, as well as a member of United Community Fund and Student Aid Fund.

Both honorees speak fondly of their favorite nursery school, and the difference it has made in their lives and the lives of their children. During its 75 years serving the Great Neck community, the school's mission has never wavered — to provide a nurturing, safe and enjoyable first school experience for young children. As a parent cooperative, the Community School stands as a model for what can be accomplished when true collaboration between parents, teachers and children is in effect.

Seventy-five years after its incorporation in 1932, the Community School is vibrant and innovative and yet also continues to be, in the best sense, committed to its traditional values. As a licensed preschool, GNCS is highly compliant to standards for education and the environment. The school now has five fully equipped classrooms, a children's library, and an unmatched, shaded, constantly updated outdoor play area divided into four yards, each with its own complex permanent climbing apparatus, moveable climbing equipment, playhouses, basketball "court," tables and a "tyke" track. The school offers programs for 2s, 3s and 4s, with both morning and afternoon



Donna Peirez (second row, extreme left) and her last class at Great Neck Community School.

sessions. For older children, a variety of after school enrichment classes enhance the pre-school experience, including Spanish, Yoga, science, kiddie soccer, art, and literature, among others. In addition, the Community School runs a highly acclaimed and

stimulating summer camp program.

Graduates, current parents, alumni, alumni parents, current and former teachers, local dignitaries, and other friends are excitedly preparing to join together on March 24 to celebrate the Community

School's past, present and future. For more information about the Community School's 75th year Diamond Jubilee Gala, please call or email Community School Director Barbara Breslow at 482-5005 or info@gncommunityschool.org.