

Tales of a Pleasant Valley School preserved with

What was it like to go to school in a one-room schoolhouse? You had to ride your horse, mule or walk through the hills to get to school. Classes began with the sound of a schoolmarm ringing the bell as students took their seats at their desks made of rough wooden benches and tables.

Students probably read from a McGuffey reader, wrote on a slate and ate a lunch that was packed in a tin lunch pail. During recess they played hop scotch, red rover, marbles or cowboys and Indians on the grass outside the school.

There were no bathroom facilities so they used outhouses and pulled their water up with a hand well pump or by a well bucket. Heat was provided by a wood-burning stove that the teacher had to prime and get ready each cold morning way before class started.

This may sound foreign to people today, but not to Joyce Rust who not only attended the Pleasant Valley School in the early 1940s but also was the last teacher at the school from 1952 to 1955 before it

was consolidated into the Boerne County Line ISD.

She now serves as historian and archivist for the Pleasant Valley Community Center Inc., a nonprofit agency that is custodian of the historic Pleasant Valley School.

Rust maintains historical records, photos and anecdotes of all the students who attended the school, many of whom were her family members, neighbors and friends. She and her family are long-time residents of the Boerne area and she has a lot of historical knowledge of this community, but her love is the historic Pleasant Valley School built in the mid-1880s.

The Pleasant Valley School is an icon of the rural Texas education system. It began as a one-room schoolhouse for the rural community around Boerne, circa 1887. The 18x20-foot building was transferred from its original home on the Nichol property to its current spot at the intersection of Hwy 46 and Los Indios Ranch Road in that year.

Students in grades one through

eight attended classes there as they learned the basics of reading, writing and arithmetic. At that time, R. W. Whitworth donated the acre of land where the school was located to the Pleasant Valley community for the schoolhouse which is now the Pleasant Valley Community Center.

The Pleasant Valley School became a focus for the small community. In 1905 it had one teacher and 34 students. The school and a few houses marked the community on county maps in the 1940s when Rust attended the school.

She also remembers her teaching years, "Teachers were expected to teach all levels, handle discipline and take care of the children's needs - build fires, clean the school and they had to have training degrees and certifications," she said, "but the main requirement is that you could read, write and know how to handle children. Many teachers were also single women and were housed by local families on surrounding ranches."

In the early 1950s the Panther Creek School on Kendalia Road near Bergheim was moved to the site and added to the Pleasant Valley School building to accommodate a larger enrollment.

Ms. Rust was the teacher for the last years of the school when in 1955 it was consolidated into the BCLISD. In 1957, the Whitworth estate, as heirs of the original owners, rededicated the schoolhouse and property to the community to be used as a Community Center.

In December 1963 the PVCC was created by a group of concerned citizens. The historic school building then became a central point to the community and appeared on maps of the area through the 1980s. The Pleasant Valley Community Center Inc. (PVCC) was incorporated as a nonprofit community organization in the State of Texas in 2003. The PVCC still maintains the school building as a very important gathering place for the surrounding rural community as it also preserves the historically significant 1880s school as an icon of the early Texas rural school system.

Rust still remembers good times at the Pleasant Valley School where the children of founding families learned how to make their lives productive and how to better their

community. It is because of this school and teachers like her, that Boerne and the surrounding community enjoys its prosperity today.

It takes a lot to maintain and preserve a historic 1880s school building and the PVCC could use help.

Stanley Jones, a PVCC board member, invited all as he stated, "Love to see you all come join the



Photo by Diane Aguirre
Pleasant Valley Community Center Historian Joyce Rust peruses the history of the iconic rural Texas school.

Boerne, Comfort Senior Center Menu

Please call before 9 a.m. to make or cancel a lunch reservation: Rainbow Center 830-249-2114 or Golden Age Center 830-995-3032.

Tuesday, April 5 - Cold plate of tuna salad & lettuce, three-bean salad and cottage cheese salad.

Wednesday, April 6 - Beef tacos, refried beans, Spanish rice, lettuce & tomatoes.

Thursday, April 7 - Pulled pork with onions & pick-

Wednesday, April 13 - Baked cod, hot potato salad, zucchini & tomatoes, wheat bread.

Thursday, April 14 - Chicken fricassee, scalloped potatoes, okra & tomatoes.

Friday, April 15 - Smothered pork chop, lima beans, garden salad, cornbread.

Monday, April 18 - Beef steak fingers & gravy, black-eyed peas, mixed greens.

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"Love to see you all come join the

fun at the PVCC annual BBQ and
help preserve this school. Come
enjoy a good time with friends and
family."

The good down-home barbecued
chicken dinner fundraiser begins
at 11:30 a.m. and ends at about
1:30 p.m. on Sunday, May 1, at
the Pleasant Valley Community
Center.

All funds raised will help repair
the roof of the historic Pleasant Val-
ley School and other much needed
maintenance. Donations are always
gratefully accepted. Contact the
PVCC at P.O. Box 4043, Bergheim,
TX 78004, visit www.facebook.com/pleasantvalleycenter or e-mail
pleasantvalleycommunitycenter@gmail.com.

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www.toudaninescleaners.com

Center Menu

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