

# HOMEFRONT

SECTION C



Former Round Rock teacher Xenia Voigt now resides at a retirement facility in Austin, but until recently had lived in the same house in which she was born on Feb. 10, 1905.

## ROUND ROCK LOCAL LEGENDS

The City of Round Rock has honored three more of its own with the title, "Local Legend." The 1995 honorees are Xenia Voigt, Betty Porter and William N. Todd, who was featured in the Dec. 28, 1995, issue of the *Leader*.

### Xenia Voigt

By WILEY GILMORE  
Leader Staff

In a typical small town, which Round Rock was for the first three-quarters of this century, the teachers of the community's children exert a lasting influence. Such influence has been recognized since the establishment of the Round Rock Local Legends awards by the inclusion of several educators.

This year's list of honorees includes one who devoted 48 years to the education of Round Rock children: Xenia Voigt.

Now 90, Voigt resides at an Austin retirement facility but until recently had lived in the same house where she was born on Feb. 10, 1905. She graduated from high school in

1921 and began her teaching career in 1923 at the Stony Point school between Round Rock and Hutto.

In a 1988 interview, Voigt recalled Stony Point had two teachers and offered classes from first through eighth grades.

"I taught first through fourth grades," she said, "and the other teacher had the fifth through the eighth. I guess we had one of the first school lunch rooms at Stony Point. Parents would send vegetables to the school and we would let some of our older students fix soup."

Stony Point consolidated with the Round Rock schools in 1925 and Voigt began almost a half-century of teaching first grade. She also

served as principal of Northside Elementary School while sharing the teaching load.

Among her colleagues during her career were Claude Berkman, Noel Grisham and the late C.D. Fulkles.

"I taught three generations in Round Rock," Voigt said in a recent interview. "I taught one complete family — mother, father and children."

Gale "Big Boy" Hester confirmed he, his two brothers and a sister had all gone through first grade under Xenia Voigt, but couldn't remember if his parents had also had her.

"She's in a league by herself," Hester said. "We all enjoyed having her in first grade."

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Xenia Voigt's 48-year teaching career was recognized in 1975 when the elementary school on Cushing Drive in Round Rock, above was named for her. In the photo below, she accepts congratulations from then-superintendent Dan McLendon and one of her former students, teacher Gloria Vallejo, at the 1988 dedication of an addition to the school.



# Voigt: Hometown product honored for 48 years as teacher

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Hester recalled Voigt's willingness to apply the paddle when necessary.

"We usually behaved because we knew we'd get another paddling at home," he said.

"They were all good kids," Voigt said. "Only one little boy gave me trouble, but that's all. I think they all wanted discipline. The only time I used the paddle was for lying, cheating or stealing."

In 1975, the new elementary school on Cushing Drive in Round Rock was named in Voigt's honor. She was again the guest of honor in 1988 at the dedication of an addition to the school, and commented on how restrictions on class size were not a consideration during her teaching career.

However many students showed for school, she remem-

bered, the available teachers taught them.

"I think it's great they have smaller classes now," she said. "One year I had 50 students in first grade. I told the school board the only thing we could do was teach reading, writing and arithmetic. C.D. Fulkles, who was the high school principal, said that was one of the best classes he ever had because they could all read and spell. We didn't have music, art or science when I first started."

Recalling more of her Stony Point teaching experiences, Voigt said teachers would spend one night during the term in the home of each child. It was easy enough to do, she said, because the teachers had no husbands and children waiting at home at the end of the day.

"They wouldn't let married women teach," she said, "and

two persons from the same family couldn't teach in the same school system."

Voigt is a lifetime member of Palm Valley Lutheran Church and said she was particularly proud of having been elected to the church's board. That and nurturing two children to adulthood.

"I raised two nieces," she said. "Their mother died when one was 3 and one was 6."

Voigt earned bachelor's and master's degrees from Southwestern University and has also studied at the University of Texas and Columbia Uni-

versity. She is a member of the Texas Retired Teachers Association and the Williamson County Education Association.

Voigt noted in the 1988 interview her favorite subjects to teach were reading and spelling and said she, like her father, has always been sensitive to the correct spelling of the family name.

"I always appreciate it that you spell Voigt without an 'h,'" she said. "My father would never pay a bill if it was addressed to Voight instead of Voigt."

## Past Local Legends

The Historic Preservation Commission of the City of Round Rock created the Local Legend Award in 1990 and announced the first recipients the following year. The Local Legend Award program recognizes Round Rock citizens who have had a positive and lasting impact on the culture, development and history of our community, and who exemplify the very essence of Round Rock. Honorees have included both individuals and groups who have played an important, if not always prominent, role in the history of Round Rock. Past honorees are:

### 1991

Joe Lee Johnson  
David Carlin Sr.  
The Domino Players  
The Rev. Oliver Berglund  
The Old Settlers Association

### 1993

Claude Berkman  
Billie Henna  
Rudolf Petersen

### 1994

1992  
Mack and Lorenzo Rubio  
Genoveva Rendon  
"Tiny" McNeese

Garfield McConico  
Lerlene Ward  
O.F. Perry  
Noel Grisham