

Marie Wiedeman, B.A.'32: A Passion for Biology, A Love for Teaching

By Carol Olechowski
Photography by Mark Schmidt

As a high school student, Marie Wiedeman, B.A.'32, didn't think she'd want to be a teacher. Then again, "I always liked reading and learning and memorizing poetry," the 95-year-old Glenmont, N.Y., resident recalls. "The teachers would ask us older children to hear the little ones read, and I liked that. Teachers had a long summer vacation, and they traveled. And I didn't want to sit at a desk and type; at least a teacher could get up and walk around the classroom." Before she knew it, Wiedeman was enrolling at the New York State College for Teachers, now the University at Albany.

She majored in biology and minored in English, and did her practice teaching at Milne High School. Seventy-three years after grad-

uating from State, Wiedeman is one of UAlbany's oldest alumni. "I'm very grateful to the college. Those were the Depression days, and my degree cost me very little. There were few fees, and I bought secondhand books. I lived at home; my parents and my brother worked in Albany, so my transportation was almost free," she noted.

Jobs were as scarce as money at that time, and Wiedeman's mother, who had been "a country school-teacher," suggested that Marie follow in her footsteps. "I had to go back to school to learn methods for the elementary grades," Wiedeman remembers, so she went to SUNY-New Paltz for that certification.

Back in the Albany area a year later, Wiedeman learned of an opening for a teacher at Cedar Hill School

in Delmar. She accepted the position and spent the next decade teaching 20 of the 46 students at the two-room schoolhouse. Wiedeman enjoyed her work; she also loved the children, who strengthened her passion for biology by bringing her caterpillars, snowy owls, and other "little creatures" to identify.

Wiedeman left Cedar Hill in 1944 to teach third and fourth grades in the Bethlehem, N.Y., central schools. She has been retired since the late 1960s.

Wiedeman was looking forward to seeing some of her former students — many of them now in their 70s — at a reunion at the old schoolhouse in August. Her nephew planned to chauffeur her to the event in the restored 1922 Franklin she used to drive when she taught there.

Marie Wiedeman's students at Cedar Hill School in Delmar, N.Y., strengthened her passion for biology by bringing her caterpillars and snowy owls to identify.



Changing the face of UAlbany . . . one success story at a time.

Your gifts to the **UAlbany Fund** have an impact that is both immediate and lasting: strengthening top-rated academic programs, providing critical resources, and giving UAlbany students the competitive edge to succeed in today's world.

For more information on how your annual giving impacts University at Albany students and programs, or to make a gift online, visit www.albany.edu/ualbanyfund.



UALBANY FUND
University Administration Building, Room 201
Phone: (800) 577-7869 / Fax: (518) 442-4014

Email: uafund@uamail.albany.edu