

# Nancy Van Vranken: 1938-2006

I first met Nancy Van Vranken 25 years ago. It was at a presentation on the infusion of societal topics in science courses at a meeting of the Association of Teachers in Independent Schools in New York City and Vicinity (ATIS). After that presentation, Nancy, Irma Jarcho, and I decided that a more lasting effort to infuse societal topics in science courses was needed, and the following spring the Teachers Clearinghouse for Science and Society Education was founded.

Nancy soon found her niche in carrying out the Clearinghouse's mission. She raised most of the funds that enabled our *Newsletter* to be sent without charge for many years to a list of science teachers and educators that numbered in the thousands, and she edited a series of annual special topic supplements that began in 1983. They were regarded to be so comprehensive that they were included in the ERIC database of science education resources.

Nancy also represented the Clearinghouse at the Exeter II and Exeter III conferences, held in 1985 and 1987. The Exeter I conference, held earlier under the leadership of the late Richard Brinckerhoff at the Phillips Exeter Academy in Exeter, NH, had recommended a 10% infusion of societal topics in science courses. The Exeter II conference broadened the Exeter I recommendations to encourage more widespread awareness and appreciation of the role of science in students' lives. At the Exeter III conference Nancy was one of the Exeter II participants invited back to meet with state science supervisors about how to implement the Exeter II recommendations.

In 1988 Nancy was part of a delegation of biology teachers to visit China with the People to People Citizen Ambassador Program, and the following year she was appointed to the International Activity Committee of the National Association of Biology Teachers (NABT). She was later elected to be the Secretary-Treasurer of the NABT in 1990. In 1995-1998, the last three years she was actively involved with the Clearinghouse, she served as a member of the Board of the Triangle Coalition for Science and Technology Education.

Things were never the same after Nancy resigned as a Director of the Clearinghouse. Whether it was in conversation or in a written article for the Teachers Clearinghouse *Newsletter*, Nancy had a way with words that made them come alive and interesting. She was also a wonderful colleague to work with. I enjoyed that relationship not only at the Teachers Clearinghouse but also in working with her as fellow ATIS board members and as fellow organizers of the national conferences of the National Association for Science, Technology, and Society. It is said that our loved ones live on in our memory after they leave us, and that will certainly be true with Nancy.

- John L. Roeder