

It's More... from page 32

Year in 1993, and a second grade teacher, Gretchen Hildebrand, who was nominated not once, but twice, as runner-up for New Hampshire Teacher of the Year.

Three Centuries Of Experience

Did you know that our combined faculty and staff hold collectively approximately 350 years of experience? Nine faculty members hold masters degrees, and several more are working toward them. One member of the faculty is also working toward a more advanced degree – a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies.

Our nurse's office is a revolving door for earaches and skinned knees, headaches and sad hearts. Not only is Heather Hill the caretaker for the school's children, she has also completed a degree in health education to help our children better identify their health needs and concerns.

Our former physical education teacher, Percy Hill, started the now nationally famous Andover One Wheelers from a personal vision and his joy of working with children. He became one of 33 Disney American Teacher Award Honorees (one of only three teachers of physical education) for the year 2000.

Despite all the controversy surrounding the "No Child Left Behind" mandate, we parents in Andover can be sure our children have not been left behind. This is evidenced in part by our placing so well in the state for grades three through eight in the national standardized testing.

Our school library is a sunny, serene room, growing constantly to accommodate all ages and interests. Andover's computer lab meets with every child – often times more than once throughout the week – taught by Chris Connor, who has been in the computer industry for more than a decade; teaching for a decade more.

Early Morning Math

Approximately 15 years ago my son had a most difficult time in school. By the time he was in the third grade he had been diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, and Oppositional Defiant Disorder. He could not and would not go to bed at night. Nor could or would he get up in the morning. School life was difficult for him.

During my son's middle school years, AE/MS was fortunate to have a middle school math teacher, Randy Wormald, who dressed in everything from a toga to a tuxedo. He challenged those who were interested but were struggling in math to come to school at 6:30 AM for an extra hour of math. Every day.

I don't know how, but my son was up on his own at school every day at 6:30 AM for that math class. Mr. Wormald's passion for teaching made the passion for learning contagious. This remarkable teacher went on to become the 2005 Teacher Of the Year in New Hampshire. He also went on to become

the Disney Teacher of the Year in 2005 and appeared on "Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?"

Unsung Heroes

I believe it is also important to remember and acknowledge some of the unsung heroes who are critical to our school's workings:

- The cooking staff who prepare, serve and clean up for our 263 children every day. And I remember that preparing meals for my family of six felt daunting!

- Our two school custodians, who maintain tens of thousands of square feet, both inside and outside, of our school facilities and grounds

- Most parents depend on the school bus drivers for transportation. Your precious cargo becomes theirs. I have had the beautiful experience of watching the little yellow school bus drop off and pick up your children in kindergarten a number of times. This can be very overwhelming for little children, especially in the first few weeks. Trust me when I tell you they are met with warmth and a smile – always.

- There are countless volunteers of all ages and talents. The hours they give to help our learning community are endless and the children's needs are never unmet.

A Great Mix Of Talents

There is a high caliber of teaching that occurs at AE/MS. Yet the diversity that exists in the school is just as important to our children's education. To name a few examples, we have a custodian who is also a beekeeper, and another who is a firefighter. We have at least two staff who run marathons, one who has cut CDs and is in two bands, another who has lived in all parts of the northern hemisphere.

It is teachers who started the knitting club and the girls' creative writing group. Our faculty are going to school for themselves – in the fields of health, nutrition, art education, administration, and curriculum design. One teacher even does triple duty as part-time custodian and tech support to the office.

As I sit back and look at this town, as both a parent of four grown children and a member of this community, I am in awe.

I believe Andover is the heart of New Hampshire.

I believe our faculty and staff are the heart of the school, and

I believe the children are the hearts of our educators.

And...I believe we all need to be a part of our children's hearts.

I am proud to make my home in such a special place. Thanks to all of you who have made our children become better people. There is an old African saying that says it takes a whole village to raise a child. No truer words were ever spoken, and in Andover we live by them!

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As part of the school's day of community service, students from MVHS dug a long trench for daylilies at the Andover Historical Society's Freight House opposite the Potter Place Inn in Potter Place. (L to r) Keith Towle, Jacob Wagner, Pat Cutter (President, Andover Historical Society), Andrew Donaldson, Trevor Goodwin, Charlie St. Jacques, Ryan Labonte (in front), Mr. Jeff Neilsen (MVHS staff), Danny Nelson, Hunter O'Mara, Justin Gasper. Photo: Ed Hiller

Science Fair from page 32

Students then learned sampling techniques, generated random numbers, and collected field data trying to avoid any human bias. Once the data was collected, students wrote a formal lab report and poster to present at the science fair. These formal lab reports will be kept in the school library for future classes to use when they conduct their own field study.

Sixth grade students created science exhibits based on all the content they have learned this year. Projects includ-

ed posters, board games, newspapers, stories, videos, skits, and even giant bio-domes. These projects were very exciting and made learning fun for the elementary school students.

Both sixth and seventh grade students did a great job as both teachers and learners. Their exhibits and field study projects helped teach others and helped gather data which can then be used to document changes that are occurring in the field study area.

Thank you to all students, parents, and teachers for your help in the science fair.

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