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push, encourage, evaluate, share, and a million other tasks. It is the best job in the world!”

Additionally, she said she enjoyed being at the school every day “because of the people. I am lucky to work with the very best teachers, students, and families. We are one team working together. I will miss my AE/MS family more than anything. We are truly a community of learners. AE/MS has been my life for 23 years.”

Jane’s vision for the future of AE/MS is that it continues to be “a welcoming and safe place for students. I see AE/MS students thriving, learning, and giving back to their community into the future.

“AE/MS is not about the building or the materials. AE/MS is all about the people, the relationships, and the community-building. Keeping that as a focus will always make AE/MS a special place. Andover is a special place and will continue to do the right things for their school system.”

Asked what she would like to say to the students, past, present, and future, Principal Slayton offered this statement: “I would say thank you to the students of the past and present. Thank you for letting me share your school days, and

thank you for all you taught me over the years. I will leave AE/MS with the best memories ever!

“Students of the future are following in the footsteps of the students before them. Learn from them and follow their examples. Be true to yourself and never forget AE/MS is your home. I love following the successes of our students long after they leave AE/MS. I also love that our students return to AE/MS and give back to their communities. I love seeing AE/MS students on the School Board, working as firefighters and police, volunteering in the school, coaching in the community, and being wonderful parents for the next generation.”

Principal Slayton’s long-time Administrative Assistant Gail Parenteau is also retiring. When asked about their time working together, she called her “Saint Gail of the Office,” “amazing,” “a friend and partner,” and said that not only is Gail dedicated to the school, but she is the “heart and soul of AE/MS.” Gail was on the hiring committee that chose her as the new principal years ago.

Jane lauded Gail’s other qualities in describing her activities outside of work. “I admire Gail as I watch her give back to her community. After a long day at school, she can be found cooking and serving at a local soup kitchen. During

the holidays, she works between donors and families in need and helps make holidays happy for all. Gail has a heart of gold and is one of the best parts of AE/MS!”

They used to joke about how they should write a book, but admitted they never had time. “Maybe we do have time to write a book now. It would definitely be a bestseller!”

Jane does not have any set plans for retirement outside of some work and making time for outdoor activities such as running, hiking, kayaking, and traveling, and enjoying family and friends. In closing, she states that she has “been a school administrator since 1980 and I am looking forward to having less responsibility, working part-time, and spending more time exploring life.”

from eighth grade. It is wonderful to see them grow up and to see what they accomplish at AE/MS. It is even more heartening to see them become adults and watch their own children become part of the AE/MS family.

“Over the past 35 years, getting to know all the students and their families has brought me such joy. There have been so many memorable moments with all the people I have worked with, all of whom hold a very special place in my heart and have given me many long-lasting memories.”

About Jane Slayton, Gail reminisced that she was on the committee that hired her as a new principal 23 years ago. They knew as soon as they interviewed her that “she was the one we wanted to lead the way, and AE/MS has never looked back.”

She said that Jane is “kind to the children,” and that “she truly has the students’ best interest at heart, and it shows. The students love Jane and all she has done for the school. We all owe Jane a debt of gratitude for all the hours she has put in to AE/MS and how wonderful our school is. Jane is a wonderful leader, but then again AE/MS has the best staff and one I am so glad to have been part of.”

When asked about her vision for the future of AE/MS, she said that the Andover School District is made up of a “wonderful group of hardworking people who all have the same goal: to keep AE/MS the best it can be.” She said their one-time motto says it all: “Soaring To Be the Best We Can Be.”

To the students of the past she says, “I am so thankful to have known you and to have watched you grow up and become the wonderful people you are today.” To the students she is leaving behind, she says “study hard, and I will be back to visit you in the fall, I hope.” To all students she expressed that “you have all brought me great joy, and I thank you for this.”

Gail’s retirement plans are simple. She plans to enjoy her family, traveling, See Retirements on page 27



Gail Parenteau
Administrative Assistant, 35 years

Gail has been responsible for the daily front office operations, which included assisting the principal and other school staff, communications with students, parents, visitors, and community members, among numerous other duties. She said that “the office was a busy place all day long!”

When asked what she loved most about her time at AE/MS, she said “I love meeting the new groups of kindergarten students in the fall, and in a blink of an eye they are graduating





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