

March Monthly Mustang Staff



Carol Elwood, is a paraprofessional at Rushville Preschool. Carol graduated 40 years ago from Hay Springs High School. She has continued her education through the years, with many workshops and continuing ed hours. Mrs. Elwood has four children, Rachel, Aaron, Abigail and Nicholas. Her family has grown within the last few years as she has gained two beautiful daughters in-law, Jamie and Kate. She has three adorable grandchildren, Tyler, Kaitlyn and Ransom. Mrs. Elwood has been happily married for 25 years to Yoba

and they enjoy spending time with our family.

When asked what she was passionate about, Mrs. Elwood said, "I am passionate about my kids, grandkids and my students." One of Carol's strengths as a paraeducator is her love of children, nothing makes her happier than hearing from her former daycare kids or students. In regards to a favorite school memory, Mrs. Elwood replied "There are way too many to name just one!" The one thing that Mrs. Elwood would like the students to remember about her is "They will probably me as the "tooth-puller. But, I hope they remember my love for them." Mrs. Elwood feels that the best thing about her job is "My co-workers, we have a wonderful working relationship and it flows over to our student's." If Mrs. Elwood had total control what is the one thing she would do to improve the Gordon-Rushville Schools? She said, "Pave the parking lot at the Rushville Elementary."

When it comes to having dinner with one person, living or deceased, Mrs. Elwood said, "I would love to have dinner with my Mom one last time."



Julie Wolkow is the Resource Teacher at Gordon Elementary School. Mrs. Wolkow earned her Associates Degree from McCook Community College. She went on to earn her Elementary Education degree with an endorsement in Mild/Moderate Special Education from Chadron State College. In the next few years she added endorsements in Middle School Education from Doane College. Mrs. Wolkow and her husband Brad blended a family of five children. Anni is a nurse and paraprofessional for ESU #13. She and her family live in Gering. After serving in the US Army, Lucas and his son moved back to

the area to work for Krebs Ranch. Clay is a junior at the high school and looking into enlisting in the US Army. Jessica and Dalton and their families both live locally. Mrs.

Wolkow's favorite thing in the entire world is spending time with her family and friends. She also enjoys reading and gardening. When asked what was something Mrs. Wolkow was passionate about she replied, "I am very passionate about teaching and making sure my students feel loved and safe. I want them to feel they are part of a learning community that is centered around them and their needs and interests." When asked about her strength as a teacher Mrs. Wolkow stated, "Although I feel that teaching is a profession that I need to continue learning and evolving, I feel a strength that I possess is making every student who enters our room feel they are special, wanted, and matter. It is my hope that they feel they are valued and can learn and accomplish anything they put their minds to. I want them to know that, even though they may feel inadequate in other places, in our classroom community, they are one of the most important members of a remarkable classroom community." According to Mrs. Wolkow, "A successful school year would reflect smiling faces that are proud of their accomplishments and improvements. It would have students who love reading and learning and who are going to miss school and their teachers when they leave for the summer." When it comes to school memories, Mrs. Wolkow mentioned that, "I have many fond memories of elementary school because that is the one place that I felt successful and taken care of. One of my favorite memories is when my teacher read aloud. There is nothing more powerful than seeing one of the people you respect most bringing a book to life." When asked what was one thing she wanted her students to take away from their time in her classroom she answered, "I want every student whose life I touch to know that they have a special place in my heart. They are loved, respected, and valued for their individuality and selves, not their test scores." If she had total control of Gordon-Rushville Public Schools one suggestion for improvement Mrs. Wolkow had was, "If I had total control, I would have every grade level K-12 doing more activity based learning and less direct instruction and teacher led learning. There would be a focus on student led learning. I would have every student's successes and growth celebrated." Finally when Mrs. Wolkow was asked, If you could have dinner with one person, living or deceased, who would that be, and what is one question you would ask them? She answered, "If I could have dinner with one person who has passed away, it would be Mrs. Munn, the teacher I did work study in her resource classroom when I was in highschool. I would ask her if she thinks I am doing what is best for kids and if she is proud of me."



Kay Kruger is the Family & Consumer Sciences and Health teacher at Gordon-Rushville High School. In addition to her classroom duties Mrs. Kruger is the Freshman class sponsor and a National Honor Society Faculty Council member. Mrs. Kruger received her Bachelor of Science in Family & Consumer Sciences degree and a Master of Arts in Secondary School Counseling degree from Chadron State College.

Mrs. Kruger and her husband Mark have been married for 32 years. Their oldest son, Michael, is married to Tami. They live in Elmwood and they both work in Lincoln. Their daughter, Erin, is completing her master's degree in occupational therapy this spring. Their youngest son, Paul, lives at home and loves to participate in his Special Olympic activities. In her spare time Mrs. Kruger enjoys reading, spending time with family, and traveling. When asked what is something she is passionate about Mrs. Kruger answered, "I am passionate about life and learning. Education is valuable in teaching knowledge and helping to prepare students for their futures. I am also passionate about my family and my faith. I am blessed to have both. They are my true purpose in life." In regards to her strength as a teacher, Mrs. Kruger replied, "I believe that I have the potential to reach out to students and relate to them on a personal basis. I truly care for all our students." According to Mrs. Kruger, "A successful school year is when students grow and develop in life and their learning. Success happens when students believe in themselves, set goals, strive for excellence, and realize accomplishments ." A favorite school memory for Mrs. Kruger was, "One of my favorite school memories was surprising the students with the staff dance at the halftime of the basketball game a couple years back. We had so much fun practicing and performing for the crowd." When asked what was one thing she wanted her students to take away from their time in her classroom she answered, "Life is valuable. Develop healthy habits. Build strong relationships. Continue to learn. Strive to be the best you can be.." If she had total control of Gordon-Rushville Public Schools one suggestion for improvement Mrs. Kruger had was, "It would like to see improvements in our facilities, adding a fine arts facility, new locker rooms and concession stand, a new track, and new technology added to update classroom equipment." Finally when Mrs. Kruger was asked, If you could have dinner with one person, living or deceased, who would that be, and what is one question you would ask them? She replied, "If I could have dinner with one person, I would choose Julia Child. I would ask her what most inspired her as a chef?"



Robin Johnson is the GRMS, 7th-8th Social Studies teacher. In addition to her classroom duties Mrs. Johnson is a Middle School Volleyball Track coach. Mrs. Johnson graduated from Nebraska Wesleyan University in Lincoln, Nebraska where she received a Bachelor of Science degree in History & Secondary Education. Mrs. Johnson is married to Dave who is employed with the Nebraska State Patrol and they have two children, Tyler (8th grade) & Haley (6th grade). They enjoy fishing, bow hunting, trap shooting, Husker football and attending many of the kids' sporting activities throughout the

year. When asked what she was passionate about Mrs. Johnson stated "I am passionate about making a positive impact in the lives of my students. I want every student to be able to walk away from my class, knowing that what they have learned, will be beneficial in their futures. I am also passionate about developing a strong sense of community and citizenship amongst my students." In regards to her strength as a teacher, Mrs. Johnson replied, "I believe a strength that I have as a teacher is my compassion and relationships that I build with my students. I want all of my students to not only feel safe in my class, but to enjoy learning as well. I do my best to get to know my students and incorporate their interests in my lessons in order to create opportunities that focus on critical thinking, challenging students and giving them opportunities that build character to create future leaders for our communities" Mrs. Johnson believes "That a successful school year is when the entire school community is dedicated to reaching their full potential. I believe that it is a team effort between the students, staff and parents that all need to work together for the success and quality performance of our school and students." In regards to a favorite school memory Mrs. Johnson answered, "It's difficult to pick one favorite school memory, but one that I will always remember is having the entire GRMS staff and student body outside on the practice football field in Rushville to watch the eclipse. It was a very memorable experience to watch our students be so intrigued. It was a great example of bringing the classroom to life!"

When asked what was one thing she wanted her students to take away from their time in her classroom she answered, "One thing that I want my students to take away from my classroom is that they all have the potential to do great things in life. I want them to remember to be positive influences in their communities, to not be afraid to voice their

opinion and to continue to challenge themselves!" If she had total control of Gordon-Rushville Public Schools one suggestion for improvement Mrs. Johnson had was, "I would do my best to create an atmosphere that was welcoming and provided many opportunities to all of our students: bigger labs, greenhouse, a new, expanded commons area for students in the high school, curriculums that follow specific career tracks and more job-shadowing opportunities for our students. I would also put an emphasis on cultural studies in order to better understand and reach all of our diverse students."

Finally when Mrs. Johnson was asked, If you could have dinner with one person, living or deceased, who would that be, and what is one question you would ask them? She replied, "If I could have dinner with one person, I would choose my grandmother. She passed away two years ago at the age of 90. She lived through many struggles in her life, including WWII, when living in a small Nebraska town, was forced to stop speaking her German language. She always made sure that we remembered our heritage and to live life to the fullest!"