

OCTOBER MONTHLY MUSTANG STAFF



Stacie Lefler is the 7th and 8th grade math teacher at Gordon-Rushville Middle School. In addition to her classroom responsibilities Mrs. Lefler sponsors the Middle School Quiz Bowl Team. Mrs. Lefler holds two degrees from the University of Nebraska in Lincoln, a bachelor's degree in Middle Level Education and a master's degree in Middle School Mathematics.

Mrs. Lefler is married to Clint and they have an eight-year-old son named Riley. When she is not in the classroom, Mrs. Lefler enjoys fishing, reading, drawing, and spending time with her family.

When asked about something she is passionate about, Mrs. Lefler replied " I love teaching middle school math. Middle schoolers are amazing kids to work with and the math that we do is both challenging and rewarding. I am so lucky to have a job that I love and have lots of fun at with both my students and co-workers. Math Rocks!"



In regards to teaching, Mrs. Lefler felt that her strength as a teacher was that "I am excited about learning and helping others to learn. Everyone is different and has different needs and I try very hard to help students in ways that are right for them individually."

Mrs. Lefler described a successful school year as, "One where my students feel safe and welcome in my classroom, and that they are able to look back and see how much knowledge they have gained. I always love to hear from students that have changed their perception of math. They start to see that they are capable and can be successful. That is an amazing moment for them and for me."

When asked what was one thing she wanted her students to take away from their time in her classroom, Mrs. Lefler replied "I want my students to have a conceptual understanding of math as well as understanding the procedures. This includes them being able to make connections and being able to use a variety of methods to solve problems."

Finally when Mrs. Lefler 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, "I would choose the mathematician, Fibonacci. I would love to hear him discuss his famous sequence of Fibonacci Numbers and how they are found in nature."



Megan Janssen is the first grade teacher at Rushville Elementary. Mrs. Janssen grew up in Rushville, Nebraska. She is currently teaching in the same room in which she attended first grade. Mrs. Janssen was also part of the last high school graduating class in Rushville. She received her bachelor's degree in Elementary Education at Chadron State College and just recently completed a master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction from Olivet Nazarene University.

Mrs. Janssen is married to Ross who is employed at 21st Century as a Salesman. They have three wonderful kids, Khai (6), Brody (4) and Brynn (8 mo.)

Mrs. Janssen added, "Having three little ones, keeps me very busy! I also belong to many organizations and likes to do as much as I can within our community." As far as free time, it is spent with her family. She commented "Time is precious so any free moment is spent making memories with her family."

When asked what was something she was passionate about Mrs. Janssen replied, "I am passionate about touching people's' lives in a positive way. Whether it is my family, friends, coworkers or students, I want to be making a difference and leaving an impact that will not only make them better people but myself included."

When asked what her strength was as a teacher Mrs. Janssen replied, "I feel a strength that I have as a teacher is my compassion and the relationships I build with my students. Within a school year, my classroom kids become my second family. We maintain those positive relationships even as the students get older. They are still considered "my kids" even after they've grown and to this day I still keep in touch with so many of my students that I had taught years ago. They all hold a special place in my heart."

Mrs. Janssen describes a successful school year as when she is witness to a great amount of growth from each student academically and socially. She said, "It is beyond rewarding to witness students make strides with their academic learning and have that "aha" moment in which makes all of the planning and teaching worthwhile, but it is equally as rewarding to see them mature, grow, and become positive role models within their classroom community. Yes, a teacher's focus is to meet all standards and to ensure that they're academically fit for the next grade level, but I feel that it is as equally important for the students to grow socially as well. Becoming confident, encouraging, level headed individuals that can make a positive difference in the lives of others."

Mrs. Janssen stated that "Some of my favorite school memories are those in which we, as a class, are enjoying each others' company, laughing, having fun, and building memories. Whether it is our annual field trip to Walgren Lake or a holiday party, those are memories that last. Allowing them to take time out of academic work to just be kids is incredibly worthwhile!" One thing that Mrs. Janssen wants students to take away from being in her class is "To know that I will always love and care for them even when they are not first graders anymore. I want them to know that they can always come to me for anything. I will continue to be one of their biggest cheerleaders and supports in any task they may pursue. As much of a difference as I hope to have made in their lives, they've made in mine."

When asked, If you had total control, what would be one thing you would do to improve Gordon-Rushville Public Schools? Mrs. Janssen stated "I would thoroughly enjoy a four day week. It allows the teachers more prep-time in which gives those who take a lot of work home more time with family."

The last question staff members were asked was If you could have dinner with one person, living or deceased, who would that be, and what is one question you would ask them? Mrs. Janssen replied "I never got the opportunity to truly know my grandparents on my mother's side. My grandmother passed away when I was very young and my grandfather had already passed when I was born. It is quite heartwarming to go back to North Dakota and hear stories of how my grandparents had touched so many lives when they were living. I am going against the rules and picking two individuals. I would like to sit and talk with my Grandpa and Grandma Houtcooper and let them fill me with stories of the "good ole' days!" They were truly remarkable people and I hope I'm making them proud!"



Brandon Goodrich is a Resource Education teacher at Gordon-Rushville High School. In addition to his classroom responsibilities Mr. Goodrich is an assistant football coach, the head Unified Bowling coach, a volunteer track coach, and coaches a Special Olympics power lifting team.

Mr. Goodrich is a Chadron State graduate with a degree in K-12 Mild to Moderate Special Education.

When asked what was something he was passionate about Mr. Goodrich replied, "I am passionate about my agricultural background, I enjoy spending time out at the ranch."

Mr. Goodrich described his strengths as a teacher as "I am a very patient teacher." When asked to describe a successful school year, Mr. Goodrich stated, "A successful school year to me is where everyone learns something that they can apply to everyday

life."

A favorite school memory Mr. Goodrich has is from his own high school memories, "my senior year of high school football during homecoming when we beat Valentine in overtime on a goal line stand."

One thing Mr. Goodrich would like students to take away from being in his class is, "To get into the habit of doing things right the first time, even though it may seem very hard at first."

If he had total control one thing he would do improve GRPS would be to upgrade the track.

The last question staff members were asked was If you could have dinner with one person, living or deceased, who would that be, and what is one question you would ask them? Mr. Goodrich replied, "I would have dinner with my Dad. I would ask him how he was so good at making broken equipment work so good for him, because I seem to break everything that I touch."



Ann August is a fifth grade teacher at Gordon Elementary. Mrs. August attended and graduated from Charter Oak- Ute School District. She received her bachelor's degree from Wayne State College and her master's degree from Black Hills State University. Mrs. August is married to Alan, and they have two adult children Emma and Jake. The family enjoys spending time outdoors. When asked what was something she was passionate about, Mrs. August replied, "I am passionate in the belief that all people have value and should be treated fairly!" Mrs. August stated that a strength she feels she has as a teacher is "I believe my strength in teaching 5th grade is understanding their humor and persevering until they understand a concept."

In regards to a favorite school memory Mrs. August answered " I have many but they all going back to students experiencing new things/places/ideas!"

Something Mrs. August would like students to remember about her is, "I hope they remember that I cared deeply about them as people."

When asked what the best thing was about her job, Mrs. August said, " I love working with students in small groups."

When asked, If you had total control, what would be one thing you would do to improve Gordon-Rushville Public Schools? Mrs. August stated, " I would love to be able to have more small learning groups."