

Every month starting in September, four Gordon-Rushville Public School staff members are going to be highlighted in the Sheridan County Journal Star, on the GRPS Facebook page and on the www.grmustangs web site. The four staff members are randomly selected, one from each of the four attendance sites, and then asked to answer a few questions about themselves.

The purpose of the “Staff Monthly Mustang” is to introduce, reintroduce and highlight the awesome staff at GRPS! Because we all know, “It is always a great day to be a Mustang!”

“GRPS STAFF MONTHLY MUSTANGS”



Nancy Strong teaches 3rd Grade at Rushville Elementary. Mrs. Strong grew up in Cando, North Dakota and has a bachelor’s degree in Elementary Education from the University of North Dakota and a master’s degree from Lesley University.

She has three wonderful children. Jason, is a Senior Deputy in the Patrol Division of Pennington County Sheriff’s Office, Rapid City. Kristin is Supervisor/Clinical Coordinator for the Pediatric Dept. at Regional West

Hospital in Scottsbluff and Megan is the First Grade Teacher at Rushville Elementary. Mrs. Strong is really enjoying the opportunity to teach with her daughter. I am also blessed with three beautiful grandchildren, Khai age 6, Brody age 4, Brynn age 7 months, and her black Lab, Max. In her free time she loves to walk. She also enjoys spending time each summer at her lake cabin in northern North Dakota.

When asked what was something she is passionate about, Mrs. Strong replied, “I am passionate about my family. I love when we can all spend time together. As we all well know, time with loved ones is not guaranteed and time spent together is priceless!”

In regards to teaching, she was asked what she thought her biggest strength was as a teacher? Her reply, “I think my biggest strength as a teacher is my compassion. I try to be as understanding and supportive as possible with my students. So many of our children today have issues that they have to deal with on a daily basis before even beginning to think about focusing on school work.”

Mrs. Strong described a successful school year as, “one in which my students have grown academically as more independent learners and have learned to be more kind and respectful citizens.”

A favorite school memory of her’s was, “when I taught 5th grade, we would take an annual field trip to the Black Hills. I have many wonderful memories of students expressing pure joy and excitement in seeing Mt. Rushmore or Wind Cave for the very first time.”

A question all teachers were asked was, “what is one thing you want your students to take away from being your classroom? Mrs. Strong’s reply was, “I want them to know that they can become or do anything they set their minds to!”

When asked, If you had total control, what would be one thing you would do to improve Gordon-Rushville Public Schools? Mrs. Strong stated, “I would change our schedule to a four day week. This would save the district money and allow the teachers more time for planning.”

The last question the staff was 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. Strong felt that this would be impossible for her to narrow down to one person.



Randy Hurlburt is the 6th grade Science, Social Science and Health teacher at Gordon-Rushville Middle School. Mr. Hurlburt received his bachelor's degree from Wayne State College in Elementary Education and a middle school endorsement from Chadron State College.

When he isn't in the classroom Mr. Hurlburt can be found coaching middle school football, varsity girls basketball and middle school track. He also is a much needed bus driver.

Mr. Hurlburt is married to Melisa, and they have three children, Morgan is a senior, Shelby is a freshman, and Tessa is in 7th Grade.

When asked what was something he is passionate about, Mr. Hurlburt said, "Life - everyday is different with a different challenge. I strive to give my best everyday in whatever I am doing." He feels a strength he has as a teacher is the relationships he has formed with his students and players. When asked what he thought a successful school year was, Mr. Hurlburt stated, "One where kids are happy to be at school and are not afraid."

He also feels that when the staff is also happy and work together for the better of the students, that too is a successful year."

His answer to What is a favorite school memory you have? He replied "I have lots of them, but really not a favorite."

In regards to the one thing he would like his students to take away from being in his class? Mr. Hurlburt's response was that "Everyday is worth living and that you should strive to do your best everyday in whatever you do."

If Mr. Hurlburt had total control, the one thing he would do to improve Gordon-Rushville Schools would be to improve the communication between buildings in our district."

When asked what one person he would like to have dinner with he said, "Derek Jeter", and the question he would ask him would be, "What made you so successful in life and baseball?"



Erica Perez, works as a paraeducator at the Gordon-Rushville High School. Mrs. Perez is originally from Alliance, where she graduated from Alliance High. Erica is married to Michael, and they have three children, Josie is a freshman at WNCC, Gracie is a junior at GRHS and Michael Jr. is in 7th grade. When not helping students reach their potential at the high school, Mrs. Perez enjoys baking, cooking and traveling to watch

her children play volleyball, basketball and football. One of Mrs. Perez's strengths as a paraeducator is her kindness, yet ability to get the best out of the students she works with.

When asked what was one thing she was passionate about, Mrs. Perez stated " I am very passionate about my family and helping others who need a hand." A favorite school memory for

Mrs. Perez is sports. "Win or lose the kids always give a good performance." The most memorable was watching her daughters win the WTC basketball championship. As far as the person Mrs. Perez would like to have dinner with living or deceased, and the question she would ask? Mrs. Perez replied "My mom, I wouldn't ask her any questions, I would tell her all the great things about her grandchildren."



Joanie Burleigh, works as a Kindergarten paraprofessional at Gordon Elementary. Joanie is a Gordon High School graduate and attended SCC in Lincoln, where she received an associate's degree in Early Childhood. Mrs. Burleigh has been married to Rick for 33 years and has three grown daughters and two granddaughters. In her spare time she likes to do barnwood crafts and travel.

When asked what she was passionate about, Mrs. Burleigh said, "I love my job and it is exciting to see how much the kindergartners grow and learn each year." One of her strengths as a paraeducator is her patience with students and her positive attitude.

In regards to a favorite school memory, Mrs. Burleigh replied "There are so many good memories, the children come up with some pretty good stories each day that make me laugh!" The one thing that Mrs. Burleigh would like the students to remember about her is her caring and silly personality. Mrs. Burleigh feels that the best thing about her job is that she enjoys working with the staff and of course the students make it fun to come to work most days! If Mrs. Burleigh had total control what is the one thing she would do to improve the Gordon-Rushville Schools? She said, "I'm not sure at this time, things are running pretty smoothly."

When it comes to having dinner with one famous person, living or deceased, Mrs. Burleigh said, "That is a tough question, as I have several."