



Mary Jane Hoffer

Teacher of the Week Mary Jane Hoffer

"I am celebrating my Silver Anniversary," beams Miss Mary Jane Hoffer of Mount Joy. "Twenty-five years in teaching, that is."

Mary Jane, teacher of the Week, lives in Mount Joy and is the librarian at Beahm Junior High. She has spent all of her teaching years at Donegal.

"I started by doing my student teaching with Donegal," she tells us, "and after I had my degree, I did co-op work for a teacher who took off several weeks. At the end of the year I was asked to join the staff full-time."

Miss Hoffer began teaching English twenty-five years ago. She taught English for sixteen years, and then on a year's sabbatical she attended Millersville State College and was certified in Library Science. She has been librarian for the past eight years. "It is really hard to believe that it is that long," she says. "My, eight years. Where does the time go?"

Miss Hoffer still ties in some of her English training with her library duties. "I will often ask the students to write an essay about themselves. This is the best way I really know to get to know a student. They are able to be more honest than with their peers, and I am

often surprised by what certain students have to say. Many are very deep thinkers.

"We had a discussion about depression and teenage suicide recently. I was quite surprised by the mature thoughts and reflections of these young students."

Not only does Miss Hoffer discuss various problems faced by young teenagers, but she also directs them in finding answers in the library. "When a student has a problem, I not only discuss it with him, but I direct him in the library, also. He will then find answers for himself."

Miss Hoffer's duties as the librarian include teaching the students to use the tools of the library. They are given instruction on the use of the card catalogue, the reader's guide and the Dewey decimal system. "Many students are surprised when they find out how the library is organized. They think that things are just placed on shelves randomly."

Miss Hoffer takes her role as a teacher quite seriously. "I know I worry too much, but I am always concerned that I may have failed with a student. It is quite a responsibility. We are molding lives. If a painter makes

a mistake, he paints over it, or begins a new painting. You cannot do that with a human life.

"Parents and educators have a combined jurisdiction over the lives of young people as their providers, protectors and priests. Together, we are responsible for their physical, mental, moral, and spiritual growth and development.

"It is necessary for us to take inventory of the life-styles we live and the examples we set for our youth at home and at school. This challenge is always demanding, sometimes frustrating, often rewarding as we press toward the mark for the prize of these high callings which teach the art of living to those following in our footsteps."

Miss Hoffer tries to teach her students by example and by expressing her opinion. "I always tell students 'this is my opinion and you are entitled to your own.' I do think someone has to tell students what is right and wrong, however.

"So many students do not have the basic religious background that taught one the meaning of right and wrong. They just do not understand some of the principles. I try to teach them, if it is at all possible. "One thing I stress, is

dealing with other human beings justly and with kindness. I just had an experience with some students regarding malicious gossip. One student wondered how a little story could get blown out of detail all over the school. I told her it was like taking a bag of feathers to the top of a high mountain and spreading them with the wind, and then trying to collect them all and put them in the bag again. It is a difficult task, I told the girl, and gossip is much the same way. It is far better to keep the gossip to yourself, for then you will never have to worry about picking up, and correcting, all of the wrong."

Mary Jane is the daughter of Ammon and Beulah Hoffer. Her mother died about ten years ago and her father, who is 78, remarried this past summer. He married the former Mrs. Nellie Ash of Inwood, West Virginia. "In the deal I gained two step-sisters and two step-brothers."

Mary Jane's own brother Ray, and his wife Ethel, have three sons; Sam, Andy and Steve.

"Although I am not married, I am very much a family person," says Mary Jane.

Mary Jane keeps busy outside of her school duties by singing in the Lutheran Choir, participating in the Mount Joy BPW and collecting paintings of area scenes. She is the past president of the Lutheran Women, and she was both recording and corresponding secretary for the BPW at different times. Mary Jane also likes to travel. She has been to Puerto Rico, Iceland (her favorite vacation spot), Mexico, and this summer she plans a trip to Europe. She has also done much traveling throughout the United States.

Mary Jane places great importance in her faith in God. "Sometimes I am so frustrated by people looking for answers everywhere but through the Lord," she says. "I just wish I could tell them how simple life could be if they would only look to the Bible for answers.

"I think this world needs to turn toward spiritual things if it is to survive. If people would search after that which is righteous they would find such happiness and meaning in daily living. To me, the answer is with things spiritual."

Miss Hoffer also places a good deal of emphasis on her fellow employees. "I want to express appreciation for those retired teachers and administrators who influenced my early professional experience. I also want to express regard for those teachers and administrators with whom I've been associated in more recent years at Donegal."

Miss Hoffer's true rewards, however, come from the students themselves. "When I see a former student, one who may have been bad in school, acting as a good citizen, I think that

maybe what I did has had some influence on that person. That makes it worthwhile."

In May of 1979, Miss Hoffer had seventh graders write about their year in school at Beahm Junior High. Following is a composite of the many thoughts expressed by the students in library classes as they reflected upon their year in the seventh grade. Miss Hoffer prepared the composite.

Before I became a seventh grader, I used to dread coming to this school. My friends told me the teachers were mean, but they aren't. I was surprised to find how nice and easy most of them are to get along with. The ones I'll remember most are the ones who reminded me and scolded me and pushed me to do things.

At first, I was shy and afraid I wouldn't make a good impression on students and teachers. I was nervous about not being able to find my way around the school, but I began to feel comfortable as I got used to it. When I started to make new friends, I started to like school.

I noticed that I matured, and the teachers had a lot to do with it. I learned self-respect and respect for my friends and parents. I learned good manners like saying excuse me, thank you, and please. I make sure I look nice for school every day. I feel more confident about handling the problems of life. You have to be confident in yourself and trust others. The easy life is over. Things at church and Sunday School helped me in school sometimes. I learned to study and hand in homework on time if I didn't want to get a zero. I understand that being a teacher is harder than it seems.

More and more things are becoming understandable to me such as friendship and taking on responsibility. I made a lot of new friends. It feels good to have good friends. My mother said she has noticed a change in my attitude toward life. I've changed in many ways. I care about my friends and family, fight less with my brother, and try to be a good influence on my nieces.

There was more to do at school this year. I was in girls' hockey, girls' basketball, student council, and cheerleading. Boys can play soccer and basketball and wrestle. Dances, movies, and assemblies made school fun. So did the volleyball marathon. Special days like green and white day and the fifties day were neat. Now I have more to do than go home and watch television.

I'm learning how important school is, and that I need a good education to get a good job in the future. I learned to use a ruler the right way. A boy student I know says he developed better arm and leg muscles. Another says he learned how to put books on library

shelves. I never knew there is a wall between East and West Berlin. I've learned to draw better. I've learned new words and read new books.

I've found out what people are like. I never realized people act so mean to each other. Some students are immature and say bad words I do not like to hear about teachers. Some are mean to teachers. Some students get suspended for smoking or bad behavior. But some who had trouble are beginning to get along better even though it is the end of the year. One girl said she is starting to change and do things on her own instead of going along with the crowd. She said, "If I have a willing heart and a positive attitude, eighth grade will be a good year for me." A boy said he started failing every subject because he thought school was a bunch of laughs. Another boy said, "Next year I want to be more polite so I won't get in as much trouble." A boy who wasn't in school much at first decided he ought to come to school because he needed the knowledge he missed not being there. The best time of the school day for some students is the end of the day, however.

One thing I didn't like when I got to this school was the library in the cafeteria. I didn't like the pushing and shoving in the crowded halls between classes. I didn't like some of the teachers as well as others, but I have learned I should try my best in all classes if I want to be something in life.

This year went fast. It should have lasted longer. I'll probably ride past school over the summer on my bicycle and stop and think of my year in seventh grade.

Bucs lead Chiques AAA Basketball league

Action in the Chiques A.A.A. Basketball League the past two weeks was as follows:

On January 7, the Sixers upset the Bullets 57 to 56 and the Bucs beat the Sonics 74 to 59.

January 10, the Bucs defeated the Bullets 83 to 77 to move back into first place, and the Sixers beat the Sonics 96 to 54.

On January 14, the Bucs beat the Sixers 79 to 59, and the Bullets overcame the Sonics 63 to 56.

On January 17, the Sonics won their first game of the season with an upset win over the Bucs 72 to 68, and the Sixers defeated the Bullets 82 to 67.

The standings are:

Bucs	9 3
Bullets	8 4
Sixers	6 6
Sonics	1 11