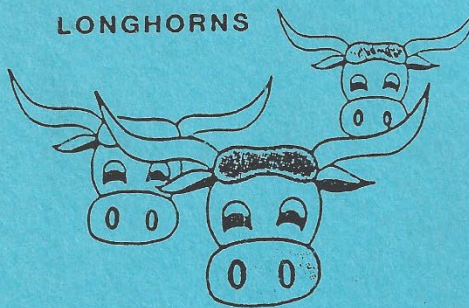




Laurel School Memories

A tribute
by
Castro and Greenwood, Inc.
and
Staff, Students, and Parents
Past and Present

LONGHORNS



THE
MANY
MEMORIES
OF
LAUREL
ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL

(1906-1992)

The Many Memories of Laurel 1906-1992

Bernard K. Johnston **Principal and K-6 teacher-(1968-1984)**

The most rewarding effort was establishing a Bilingual program at Harris-Laurel. It was difficult getting support from the school district. Any extra monies came from federal grants. Federal money was used to purchase the bilingual materials and hire bilingual aides. The Laurel community and staff were supportive. We all took much pride in providing for the educational and cultural needs of the Spanish surnamed students. I strongly feel that the entire community and school district benefitted from the program.

I often think of the many extra hours of time we spent implementing I.G.E. (individual guided education). I am still convinced that the basic philosophy behind I.G.E. was sound and practical. However, special programs require both moral and financial support from the school district and community. The support was often lacking and critics were active. As a result, I.G.E. floundered and was eventually dropped from the curriculum.

It was exciting to move to the new Laurel building. I can still remember the teachers and students carrying books and materials from the old to the new. Much school pride was developed by the students, teachers, support personnel and the community. The Laurel Longhorns had a lot of pride and rightly so. Laurel was truly a child-oriented school. Through assemblies, special awards programs, Discovery, I.G.E., Bilingual, and special events we proved that school can be an exciting place.

The students who went to Laurel can stand proud of their achievements. They were prepared well to be active contributors in our modern world.

GO LONGHORNS!

Margaret Beckman **Head Start, Kindergarten(1989-1990)**

Laurel: Caring, laughter, and friendships, even during stressful times, were what I hold most dear to me. The breakfasts, especially the Lemming breakfasts, were a highlight. What a wonderful "therapy!"

The Cinco de Mayo celebration during the spring of 1991 brought staff and community together to celebrate the beautiful diversity of Laurel school.

The people make our school wonderfully unique.

Betty Ellis **Head Start, Title I Reading,** **Fourth grade teacher-(1981-1992)**

What a fun time I have had teaching at Laurel for the past eleven years. Each year's particular class has special, happy, warm memories.

How exciting it is each fall to discover our family history and share culture and heritage. What a rich fabric our multi-cultural backgrounds weave. It has been very special to share these memories with my classes.

Then my favorite project of the year pertains to "following directions" when I get to make peanut butter and jelly sandwiches according to my student's recipes. It has never ceased to amaze me how many different ways there are to make that one particular sandwich.

Our Time Travelers have many exciting adventures; exploring the Oregon Trail, Ft. Laramie, the Forney Museum, as well as other historic places in our state. I enjoy this opportunity to interact with students in the 5th and 6th grades. Each year our 4th grade field trips to the state capital, the Colorado Historic Museum, and our day at the Poudre R-1 Rendezvous bring history to life for the students. It is a great joy of mine to share my love of history with the Laurel students.

It's been an exciting adventure teaching at Laurel. I have had the privilege to work with the best staff and the best kids in the world! Our building may change but the memories, the atmosphere and the "spirit" of Laurel will always remain and go with us as we move into the future.

Judy Sawyer-Voss **Teacher-(1978-1986)**

Being the Art teacher for Laurel-Harris for eight years was challenging, fun, frustrating, rewarding, exhausting, and full of surprises. The best memories I have are of watching kids develop their individual, unique talents. The school, teachers included, was bursting with creative energy. I have to admit, however, that I could never have managed all I attempted without the countless hours Eileen Lebsack contributed to the cause of kids' art!

The Many Memories of Laurel 1906-1992

Peg McLaughlin **Teacher-(1960's & 1970's)**

I taught at Remington School and moved to Laurel with the intermediate grades. Keith Johnston was the principal and Bernie Long was the assistant principal. When the new Laurel was built, my students really liked the big playground! We used to watch a little muskrat playing by the spring near the parking lot. It was unusual for a muskrat to be living near a school, but it must have been attracted to the water in the spring.

I remember the cottonwood trees, especially the one near the soccer field in the eastern part of the playground. Someone had put some extra cement near the tree, and the tree seemed to be dying. We removed the cement and dug a ditch all around the tree. My class worked hard keeping the ditch full of water until the tree started to recover. We also enjoyed working in the Nature Center. Jack, our janitor, did much of the planting and caring. When we first started, most of the plants were so small you could hardly identify them. There were a few elm trees near the east and south boundaries that were more than a few feet tall. My class pulled weeds, studied the different life zones, cleared the paths, and redid the walkways.

Lindy Marvin **Teacher-(1977-1978)**

I was thrilled when Keith Johnston hired me for my first teaching job. Isabelle Pena was an aide at Harris and kindly consented to visit my class several times a week to teach Spanish. Bud Hill was the P.E. teacher and last year, when I was substituting at Laurel, one of the students came back from P.E. class and told me Mr. Hill had found some frisbees in his closet with a Marvin label.

One of the things that changed at Laurel since 1978 was the addition of semi-walls between the classrooms. I also remembered the emphasis we put on handwriting skills that year when years later I received a note from a parent thanking me for teaching correct penmanship.

Mary Ellen Yates **Student-(1985-1986)**

I remember the choir singing at the Broadmoor, spending recess in the Nature Center, the closeness and unity of the school as a whole, assemblies, Student of the Month, school plays, and the race car driver.

Jessica Cromley **Student-(1983-1986)**

It has been six years since I sat in Mrs. Reuter's 6th grade class. I think the most memorable part of my three years at Laurel was going to the Broadmoor as a member of Mrs. Courtney's choir, "Expressions of Laurel." She continues to be the best at what she does, teach music.

ECO week! What a blast! I remember Kerian Nelson kicking the dresser in the middle of the night.

With all of the good things that happened it is difficult to think of the bad. The loss of a fine principal and great friend was traumatic. Mrs. Vigil was a wonderful inspiration to everyone.

As I graduate with the class of 1992, it is sad to see the old building go, but I know the new one will help educate the coming generations. Best of luck to all alumni--PAST, PRESENT, and FUTURE!

Ann Walden **Special Education Resource teacher-(79-85)**

I remember a group of people who worked and played together like a family. As a special educator I had to work closely with all the staff to develop programs suitable to an individual child's needs. A sense of what was best for the child always carried us through. Teachers spent lots of time not only on the necessities of the job but on extras for the students: supervising sports activities before, during their lunch time, and after school, choir and special music programs, enrichment classes and special events; the Holiday Bowl complete with Laurel's Logo, players, coaches, cheerleaders, a band; Mr. Johnston's bus and Christmas caroling in our school neighborhood and the Cinco de Mayo celebration complete with a burrito the length of three lunchroom tables.

Virginia Febinger **Nurse-(1964-1974)**

I was the nurse at the "old" Laurel when this Laurel opened so I was the first nurse at the "new" Laurel. It was wonderful to have a bright, new building with everything on one floor. At the old Laurel the Principal's office and the Health room were on the second floor. That made for good cardiovascular exercise.

The Many Memories of Laurel

1906-1992

Evelyn Traut

Chapter 1 Reading-(Before 1980)

I was the first Chapter One Reading teacher at Laurel. The students worked hard and many of them made a lot of progress. They also gained a lot of self confidence which was evident by the comments "I can read" and "Reading is fun". I have many good memories of these wonderful students.

The Reading program was dropped at Laurel because the goals of the program changed. The efforts of the Reading program were more on prevention, therefore only first through third grade students participated in this outstanding program.

Jesse Esparza

5th grade teacher-(1978-1979)

Old Laurel holds a special place in my heart. It was a school which was set within the beauty of the older part of Fort Collins. Its "Home Sweet Home" aroma, as one drove towards it, will never be forgotten. As friends and relatives visit, I regularly show them the old Laurel school. I hope to come back some day and be part of the new Laurel.

Pat Wunsch

Parent-(1975-1987)

My two sons, David and Mike Romero attended Laurel when the new one opened in 1975. They were in the 4th & 5th grades. When I mentioned the "Memory Book" to my daughter Carolyn Romero, who later attended Laurel, her first response was "The Wall!" Her class was instrumental in designing and painting the mural at the north end of the building by the art room..

Around 1985 my last child Annie Wunsch attended Laurel. She had many of the same teachers; Mrs. Courtney, Mr. Hill, and Mrs. Streeter, just to name a few. Annie is now taking Spanish 5 as a Junior at Fort Collins High School thanks to the Laurel-Harris Bilingual program. Laurel is indeed a school filled with memories for our family.

Jan Nesheim

Teacher-(1963-1966 & 1982-1989)

When I started at Laurel, Keith Johnston and Bernie Long met with teachers from Laurel, Remington, O'Dea, Harmony and perhaps Rocky Ridges schools. My classroom contained dozens of old readers which we boxed and sent to the warehouse. Today those books would probably be worth a fortune. Bernie was in his first year as administrator and several times he asked to teach a lesson as he missed teaching and my kids loved it.

I remember the first day of school at Laurel. There were over 70 fourth grade students in a classroom! Keith Johnston got another teacher (JoAnn Show) the second day. The kids were great as some sat in aisles or shared a desk.

Miss Crook was our instructional supervisor and Mr. Wolf was the curriculum director. Later on, Remington housed the primary grades while Laurel housed the intermediate grades. Parents were concerned about children crossing busy Mulberry and I think a crossing/signal light was installed.

Keith was always very supportive. During the years I was there I think Keith was really the spirit of Laurel. Students and faculty knew he would help.

In my early years as a new teacher, I taught next to two pros: Peg McLaughlin, and Ann Tavelli. Ann got the students to be super creative in art and drama. Peg always had exotic items in her room such as armadillo shells.

I left Ft. Collins in the 60's, but returned twenty years later. Keith was still the principal but at the new Laurel on Locust and Bernie had become the principal at Tavelli. It was a pleasure this time to teach with Laura Walton, Betty Ellis, Susan Minck, Karen Streeter, Jim Ogan, and Ed Castro. Students, faculty, teacher aides and parents were really friendly and worked well together.

I remember a Christmas program directed by Karen Courtney when the lights had been turned off except for a spotlight she was directing towards two singing children. Suddenly the bulb burst and a flame appeared where the filament had been. I had been accompanying the children on the piano and when the song ended Betty Ellis leaned over and whispered "Keep playing! Keep playing!"

The "end of the year" faculty picnics were fun. The parents put on scrumptious smorgasbords for us which were held in the yards of the Gardners, the Carrolls, the Yules and the Lileys. What a great way to relax and end the school year!

"Hot Fads"

(THROUGH THE YEARS)

Jeans & T-shirts

50's dances

curly top perms

wide ties

Yo-Yos

ankle bracelets

torn jeans

poodle skirts

rap music

long hair

"rads"

"awesome"

Painted sweatshirts

name brand tennis shoes

Ninja turtle

male earrings

Break dancing

step haircuts

bell bottom

pants

hula hoops

frisbees

I don't remember, **but**, whatever it was will return in 20 years!

The Many Memories of Laurel

1906-1992

Leonard "Buz" Tobin
Teacher-(1969-1976)

Jim Hays and I started the basketball program which continues still today through dedicated teachers at Laurel.

Jeannie Bowman
Student-(1989-1991)

I remember when all of Mr. Castro's 6th grade class had a water fight after school.

Elisa Lopez
Student-(1987-1990)

When I think of Laurel I think of ECO week, the Holiday Bowl and the field trips. I had fun.

Angie Klibbe
Student-(1987-1989)

I remember; the intramural sports program that gave guys and gals fair shots, the Spanish we learned since 1st grade, the parachute games with Mr. Hill, Mrs. Courtney's birthday kisses and the Chile Suppers.

Jennifer Hull
Student-(1987-1989)

What I remember about Laurel Elementary is the intramural sports, the teachers who cared about what you did, the Science Fair, the extravagant decorations in each room and the great school spirit that you could see, hear, smell, and feel each day in each classroom and hallway. I will always treasure my days at Laurel and I hope that same Laurel spirit will live on in the new school.

Kathy Hays
Student-(1988-1991)

What I remember most about Laurel is all the wonderful teachers who made life bearable and learning "Fun". THANKS A LOT!

Donna Reidhead
Media Specialist-(1983-1990)

I was an Odyssey of the Mind coach. I also taught Sign Language as part of Discovery. We grew from a two computer school to a class-sized computer lab.

Debi Miller
Instructional Aide-(1987-1990)

When I think of Laurel I remember good friends and happy students. I have sub-consciously blocked out all the other garbage.

I remember: When Pat Nesbitt and I celebrated May Day by setting up lounge chairs in the middle of the playground during noon recess. We sat there sunning in our shorts, drinking our sodas, and the students thought we were cool. (We were!)

Cody Brassfield getting hit on the head with a bat (I'll never forget that sound!) I kept telling him it was a little bump because he was about to pass out.

Eileen's bulletin boards. If they gave prizes as in the Olympics she would have been Laurel's gold medal winner.

An Mexican breakfast theme and D.J. bringing her famous brownies with a bowl of salsa in the middle.

Ed Castro, the only teacher I worked with from beginning to end. I would do anything for him, even cut out 10,000 little turtles!

Spanish class with Jim Ogan. I still say "Ola" and "Adios" instead of hello and goodbye.

Karen Courtney and LOUD and skinny!

Ted Stoeckley, Science, and Writer's Workshop.

Breakfast Club with Sandy, Debi, Pat, and "Rita" meeting faithfully, early on Friday mornings.

Sandy's bright smile that always defused any bomb about to explode.

I made two of my best friends at Laurel and have great memories of a great school.

Katrina Peterson
Student-(1988-1991)

My favorite memory wasn't about events, it was about the teachers. I learned a lot at Laurel. I learned that I want to continue my education.

The Many Memories of Laurel 1906-1992

Lorraine Gonzales

Teacher-(1979-1980 & 1986-1987)

When Janet Dryden left mid-year on maternity leave, I taught 5th grade with my teammate, Laura Walton. The staff was small, cohesive and genuinely cared for everyone so that a family-like atmosphere was continually nurtured.

The 5th graders were a crack-up; a little emotional and always exploring new territory. Yes, the boys and girls started to notice each other. I even remember a mock wedding complete with a preacher and flowers...the whole nine yards. The end of the year picnic at the Walton farm was a blast with kids running through the alfalfa field, cartwheels on the porch, gallons of lemonade, and the best ethnic food ever made. Students and teachers were ready for a long nap at day's end.

Karen Courtney's music programs had everyone involved; the back stage crew, actors, actresses, coaches, and all around support staff. We loved show time. The teachers got into the act, too. There was the lip-synching "Stop In the Name of Love", the leg routine in "New York, New York" and even "Splish Splash I was Takin' a Bath." It was our time to "shine" under the lights and we had them rolling in the aisles.

There is more, much more. The more I think the more I remember.

Brandi Harris

Student-(1983-1986)

Some of my happiest memories during my three years at Laurel include seeing what was new in the Student Store; the competitive spirit at the Annie-Annie-Over-Wall; feeling of success after making the Haunted House in Castro's 4th grade class; the Chili Supper and Carnival; Career and International Days; U.S. map painted in Mrs. Streeter's room; the fish named Oscar in the library; the football, basketball, softball, and indoor soccer leagues; toughing out ECO Week; the Get-Aways in the Nature Center; the proud but sad feeling at 6th grade graduation and finally, all the wonderful people I hold dear.

Laura Walton

Bilingual Resource & Teacher-(1975-1986)

My memories date to 1951-1952, when I was a first grader on Laurel Street. I was "Queen of the Jax" and helped curve and smooth the entry steps to the school with my fast scooping hands! By 1975 I was teaching at Laurel and by 1982 my own children were students at Laurel!

I remember: my daughters, Kate and Emily, and I playing the "Pointer Sisters" to an enthusiastic audience, Judy Sawyer-Voss and I painting a wall size U.S. map in my room, Westbrook bombing me with paper wads from over the curtain when he differed with anything I was saying to my class, the walls going up between the classes and Lorraine Gonzales and I could not roll our eyes at each other anymore from across our open room, the Christmas candle project that went up in smoke, so many Kindergarten students that they had class in the Art room, and the turkey Jim had ready for us from my oven at Christmas vacation.

Laurel will always have a special place in my heart. My school family helped me professionally. They taught my children and watched them grow. They wept with me when Steve died and have rejoiced with me in life. There will never be another you!

Michelle Ryan

Student-(1986-1989)

I remember having fun playing sports during the lunch time sports program, the great Art teacher Mrs. Nuth, but especially the Spanish they taught us from day one.

Elissa Marvin & Mary Francis

Students-(1988-1991)

ECO Week. Everyone was crying and scared because a kid told a story about a ghost he had seen! There were five kids in our room and we laughed so hard we were sick to our stomach. We were the only happy people there as everyone else was "freaked out"!! We will also remember Mr. Castro, favorite teacher and longtime friend.

The Many Memories of Laurel

1906-1992

Candis N. Hodgdon
Nurse (1981-1984)

Although I was the school nurse at Laurel for only a half day each week from 1981-1984, I thoroughly enjoyed Eileen Lebsack and her skill in ceramics. I especially like the manger scene we have enjoyed at Christmas for many years.

Jean Shook
Learning Disabilities-(1981-1983)

I remember Karen Courtney and the terrific music programs. The kids had fun as did the audience. (I wasn't always sure that Karen had fun!) I also remember the elaborate Christmas presents the children helped to make for their parents, such as terrariums, and appleseed dolls.

It felt like the faculty had a good spirit among them of closeness and cooperation. Mr. Johnston was always so positive and supportive. I really enjoyed working with him.

Richard Sadowske
Counselor-(1974-1990)

I was the counselor at Laurel for 17 years beginning at the "Old Laurel" (now Centennial High School). Laurel has always been a wonderful, supportive, interwoven community of parents, students, and staff who together share their talents, creativity, energy and humanness. Always, however, when I think of Laurel I think of PEOPLE.

Keith Johnston always set the tone for Laurel. We always joked that he never met a piece of paper he liked and yet was always concerned about the human element of the school. Keith concerned himself with the educational, social, and emotional well being of all the students and supported the efforts of the entire staff.

As a boy from Kansas who lived a Tom Sawyer/Huck Finn existence, I have very special memories of Karen Courtney's staged musical "Tom Sawyer". I sing all those songs and think I still have some white wash on me. On my bedside dresser I have a picture of the staff on stage after the final performance.

My own daughter, Erin Guinee, still laughs about "Betty Body", the aerobic instructor she played in "Shape Up Santa". I believe that was when Eloy crashed the antique nickelodeon that Karen is still paying for today!!!

The "Expressions of Laurel" choir always brought a life of smiles and tender tears to all of us who were touched by Karen's music.

Katie Hardin taught 6th grade with Ogie and Karen Streeter. She was truly one of the most memorable characters of Laurel. She was a Bette Midler look alike and a bundle of energy, creativity and humor. Her walk down the halls was unmistakable as was her quest for a husband. She now has two beautiful daughters.

ECO Week provided a lifetime of memories: late nights, early mornings, long hikes, bad weather, winding bus rides, bad smells, sick kids, campfires, lunch at Kelly flats, air chairs, Connie Brown and foot in mouth, Tom Sherman's trombone to wake everyone up, square dances, sleeping in a bunk under Dan Hudson and fearing for my life, Ogie in his Drill Instructor outfit, singing at meal time to forget the terrible food, never finding the stars Owen Smith pointed out, hoping no student got lost on a hike but wishing I could, wondering why hot water never came out of the hot water faucet, wondering how one student walking around on the second floor of North Dorm could sound like the whole Russian army, wanting to erect Burma Shave signs on Mummy Pass to answer the endless "How much longer" questions?, and pretending to see beavers in the pond at night when it was just the red lines in my eyes from lack of sleep. I have enough stories to tell my grandkids forever.

My memories of Laurel would not be complete without mentioning my special friendship with Jim Ogan...Ogie to all. I guess we needed each other to help with all the struggles that come with school. It's like Hawkeye Pierce once said on M.A.S.H. "You have to go crazy to keep from going crazy". We identified with that saying and the staff and students tolerated it all. "Bless them forever!"

My most special memories are those of my children, Corey, Erin, and Eli, receiving a wonderful learning experience at Laurel. What a special gift for me to share in their education. But most of all, my memories are of wonderful students who gave so much of their lives to all of us. I feel so honored and blessed to have been able to teach at Laurel. It truly changed and shaped me beyond belief. My memories, my heart and my love will always be with Laurel.

The Many Memories of Laurel 1906-1992

Robbie McGuire Teacher-(1972-1978)

During the time I was at Laurel, we held the first ECO week. Mrs. Schnorr and I worked very hard on this program, because not only did we have to convince everyone to spend the night with kids, we also had to teach, play games and do all the shopping and cooking. It was a long three days at the girl scout camp but a trip I will never forget.

We also put together the first Science Fair held at the old Laurel. It was a mess with the projects all displayed in the main hallway, but we had a great turn out.

Our staff also had the first enrichment classes. Mrs. Schnorr and I taught the wood working class. We had excellent help from a jr. high woodshop teacher, Mr. Reimer. We made many wood items that I still have today.

Things I remember about the old building on Laurel Street include: sewer problems, painting murals on the classroom walls, an office in the corner of the basement, and basement bathrooms.

The most important thing I remember about the old building on Locust Street is moving in the middle of the year. The students had to carry all their own supplies and books to the new building. We moved the rest of the materials in four days. The first rain storm was a nightmare. The roof leaked everywhere, and we had buckets and pools of water in every room. The main hallway had so much water we put up a sign that said "Gone fishin". In the first few years at Laurel many hours went into the nature center and that really paid off.

Laurel was a great place to work it has always had a wonderful staff and the best students in Poudre R-1. I really miss it!

Shirley McKenzie Secretary-(1968-1987)

The staff at Laurel was always like one family. We all had a good time together. I have many, good memories of Laurel - staff, students and parents.

Katy Kuhnen Student-(1986-1991)

My favorite teacher was Mrs. Greenwood, my 6th grade teacher. That was also my favorite year because I had so much fun preparing for 7th grade. I loved Laurel because it was fun to learn and it was NOT BORING!

Frances Logan Computer Lab-(1990-1992)

It has been my pleasure to work at Laurel for the past two years. The students are a wonderful challenge and, together with the staff, make for many fond memories. I look ahead with eager anticipation to many more.

Helen W. Woodard Media Assistant-(1968-89)

Two score and minus five years ago my association with Laurel school began with the enrollment of my oldest daughter in the first grade at the old building on E. Laurel St. My other three children attended the old Laurel in subsequent years. I have many memories, mostly good, of the two Laurel schools, both as a parent and later as an employee. I remember a little girl who requested the book At The End Of The Road when what she really wanted was the ever so popular Where The Sidewalk Ends. Some students would request books based on size and color, but no title. As a Media Assistant, one of my greatest satisfactions was the expression on students faces when they succeeded in locating books after having instruction in the use of the card catalog. Gathering materials for students and teachers for special units was one of my favorite duties.

I still laugh when I think of XX and his use of foul language on the playground. I asked him if I should bring some soap to school and he looked at his hands to see if they needed washing.

I always had fun playing in the student-faculty softball game at the end of the school year. I felt privileged to have been a member of the Laurel family.

The Many Memories of Laurel 1906-1992

Karen Streeter
Teacher-(1976-1989)

I remember:

6th grade ECO week trips to Pingree Park that included bumpy bus rides, mountain hikes, campfire singing, stuffed animal parade and delicious midnight snacks.

Expressions of Laurel choir winning accolades at Cluster concerts, C.S.U. dorms, shopping malls, nursing homes, State Music Conventions.

Earning and wearing the Laurel ABCD buttons to reinforce the code of expectations and discipline...the blue "dots" that were issued IF the code was not followed.

Principal Luisa Vigil's touch of class! She made a difference at Laurel!

The unforgettable "Who's on First" by Mr. Sid and Mr. Ogan.

International Day "Happening" held on United Nations Day...students had passports and "visited" different countries to hear speakers and share cultures.

Laurel Talent Show, especially the "Pointer Sisters".

"This is your Life" baby snapshots shown at 6th grade recognition.

Eating potato pancakes or "latkes" on Hanukkah.

The dedicated early-risers who participated in before-school sports program and the coaches and refs. who supported them.

"Martha" the snake, who lived in my room along with "Guinness", the guinea pig.

Policeman Joe Clingan and his dog Smoke, came to school to talk about safety.

The "Skip-Its", jump rope experts from Boulder, who inspired kids to Jump for Heart with Mr. Hill.

Student Council elections...everyone had to vote!

Bronco cheers and all-school rallies on "Orange Mondays" (Susan Minck and her Bronco cape!)

Pride Press newspaper; designed, produced, published BY Kids FOR Kids!

All the creative work of Laurel students published in periodicals like Reflections, Chart Your Course, or 1-2-3 Contact.

What's Right, What's Wrong published essays.

James Dewitt winning the Governor of the Year award for Colorado in 1983.

The many options at Laurel ...Science Fair, Colorado Math League, Spelling Bee, National Math Olympiads, Sates and Capitals Competition.

The Creativity Fair in December when students shared their latest toy inventions.

Annual PTA Carnival where everyone had fun plus money was earned for special projects like playground equipment.

Artist-in-Residence who found a home at Laurel: Poet Cynthia Tremblay, Storyteller Bonnie Phipps, Journalist Ken Trainor, Humorist C.W. Metcalf and Engineer Joe Nesheim.

Partnerships with Leshner and Ft. Collins High so that secondary students taught foreign language and drama classes to Laurel students.

Recycling efforts by 5th graders to raise money for ECO-Week.

LLBN (Laurel Longhorns Broadcast Network).

The many VIPS who visited Laurel: CSU football stars, Terry Nugent, dancers to politicians to Stagehands (Sign language group from Laramie), Channel 9's Ed Sardella, Perry Conway, biologist.

Student Council's partnership with the Four Season's Nursing home that included Jr/Sr. Olympics, making valentine cards, doing interviews with residents on the "good old days".

News Bowl competition that inspired 6th graders to keep current with the news.

Career Day when community people shared their expertise with students.

Olympics of the Mind Competition when students had to create "Omer"...who moved via plungers.

The "missing children" study by Karlyn Komives and Nicholas Montemarano-hallway covered with x's and o's.

Writing letters to President Bush and Colorado Congressmen about environmental issues (oil spill) and educational concerns.

Raising money for U.N.I.C.E.F., the earthquake victims in Mexico City, canned food drive at Christmas, sharing our wealth with others.

Peter Peelgrane landing the Channel 7 helicopter in Laurel's backyard and signing autographs.

The 4th grade Rendezvous Extravaganza in the backyard of Laurel, complete with a constructed teepee and the arrival of a mountain man and his horse.

Throughout the years (1978-1989), that special ingredient that made Laurel special for **all people of all ages** was the genuine CARING that always abided there. Children and adults were valued as unique, creative individuals...who could, would and did make a positive difference in our world.

The Many Memories of Laurel 1906-1992

Esther Parks Instructional Aide-(1868-1978)

I have very fond memories of my time at Laurel. The faculty, staff, and students were all special. It was a very sad day for me when I had to leave due to health problems. I worked with many special teachers. Our principal and secretary were the greatest. I enjoyed all the students too and now often meet students that were at Laurel at that time.

Everyday was special at Laurel. There's one thing I think of from time to time. Linda McNay (6th grade teacher) and I would spend some time after school in the room. Every day one little 4th grade girl would come in to talk to us. I recently attended her wedding.

I started work in the old Laurel building at the same time as Eileen Lebsack. We were happy to move to a nice new building but a little sad to leave the old. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to express my love for Laurel School.

Sandy Kammerzell Secretary-(1987-1992)

When I came to Laurel I replaced Shirley McKenzie who was retiring after many years. Sherry Ritch was the principal. We were getting ready for ECO Week. Wow, what a program! My previous school district had nothing to compare to it. Likewise with our PTA and volunteer parents!

Betty Ellis started the expedition to Crow Canyon Archaeological Center three years ago, which has become extremely successful. And the Discovery program is awesome!

An integral part of Laurel is the noon sports program, implemented by Richard Sadowske and Jim Ogan. Phil Huerta and Val Lima, with the help of many staff members, took up the reins when Richard and Jim left for Webber Junior High. Other highlights include Laurel breakfasts, noon-time burrito runs, lounge duty, etc. I guess it is obvious we're a bunch of little feeders.

Norm Chung was our interim principal for a year when Mrs. Ritch became the principal at Webber. What a wild and crazy guy! In 1990 Mrs. Sherry Workman came from Texas to be our principal and we are enjoying her southwestern angle on things.

One thing is for sure--we're a tight team and I wouldn't have it any other way.

Sherry Ritch Principal-(1985-1989)

My years at Laurel-Harris will always be remembered as some of my most cherished years in education. There was a true family spirit in which we laughed together, played together, cried together, faced challenges together, and learned together. We celebrated all the usual things--birthdays, weddings, babies, chocolate(!), the changing of the seasons, the beginning or the end of anything, chocolate(!), and if there was nothing official to celebrate, we made something up! We shared a great deal of pride in our school and in the many accomplishments of Laurel students and staff.

I will always remember the "crazy" Laurel staff and the extravaganzas created for every occasion. There were the wonderful Halloween themes -- the M*A*S*H unit reincarnated complete with army tents and jeeps, "The Wizard of Oz", the California Raisins, etc, with Mr. Ogan always the "belle of the ball", so to speak, the annual lemming march complete with pageant and "banquet"; the famous Holiday Bowl with a queen, some halftime entertainment, media coverage, and all the trimmings, the "shower" that was thrown for Mr. Sadowske so he wouldn't feel left out during a time when there was a flurry of baby showers in the building and, of course every event included food. We had the mandatory Donna Reidhead brownies, the infinite supply of M&M's as well as other mouth watering specialties appropriate to the occasion.

The Laurel community is unique in it's diversity, which I valued greatly, and within which evolved special relationships with caring, supportive parents; dedicated professional teachers and support staff, whose boundless energy and enthusiasm was always directed at making Laurel a special place for young people; and of course, the children whom I will always remember as happy and loving, eager to learn, and so appreciative of the things that made Laurel a special place for kids and adults.

Thanks for the memories!

RayAnn Allen Student-(1988-1989)

I remember dissecting the chinchilla and I remember Angie throwing up on the bus as we went to Estes Park.

The Many Memories of Laurel

1906-1992

Anna Rohrbacker

Custodian-(1976-1979)

I remember Head Custodian, Jack McLoren, putting a lot of work into the Nature Center he and the teachers started, along with the efforts of Keith Johnston, to get groups of students to maintain and improve it.

I also remember in January 1977, when someone broke into the school. (I think it happened over a weekend.) The vandals broke a window in the teacher's lounge and using a fire extinguisher, sprayed foam all over the school. In addition, they poured coffee and dairy creamer on the lounge floor. It took several custodians all day to clean up the mess.

Evie Reuter

Teacher-(1982-1988)

Laurel was an experience in "community spirit" that nurtured teachers and students alike. Just mentioning "Laurel" gives me a flood of warm memories of special colleagues and families. We all sensed our purpose was to care for our students and challenge them to excellence. Although there was little public notice, Laurel had programs going that were at the cutting edge of education.

Probably the most conclusive proof that Laurel was an unforgettable feeling is that I have not lost touch with the people with whom I worked. They remain an important part of my life and always will.

Cynda Adamson

Head Start Aide-(1987-1992)

Head Start opened its classroom in the school year of 1986-87. This is our 5th years in the trailer on the north. The first two years we did not have plumbing or running water. We made many cold trips back and forth to the main building. Noni Viney, Marge Robledo and Cynda Adamson have been here five years. Two other Head Start teachers, Debbie Graff and Margaret Beckman, are now teaching at Harris. Janet Kask is now at Johnson This is Jane Goss' second year.

We have had wonderful support for our program from the Laurel staff. The students have been especially friendly and helpful to our little ones.

Does anyone remember the unexpected fire drill in the spring of 1987? A curious Head Start child pulled the fire alarm. It was an "educational experience" for us all.

Susan Minck

Teacher-(1981-1992)

I worked with a supportive, caring staff that had a way to make things happen for all kids. Eileen Lebsack made special garments to celebrate the opening of a new business. At Halloween Laurel turned into M.A.S.H. inside and out. Tom Sawyer was performed by a great group of 6th graders. I often walked down the hall smiling inside and out.

Laurel led the way with a Personal Safety Curriculum thanks to a caring staff and the support of Social Services and Keith Johnston. Sherry Ritch pulled things together after the Louisa Vigil tragedy.

I'll remember: Peter Pilgrane landing the Channel 7 helicopter on our playground, letters from Tennessee after our Smoke-out balloons were released, roasting Shirley McKenzie upon her retirement (Richard, Susan, and troop at their best), Val dancing on the lounge table, Bronco parties a la Sadowske and Nesbit, Phil's burritos and Sandy's smiles.

Debbie Graff

Head Start, teacher-(1988-1992)

Before I started full time at Laurel, I substituted at Laurel-Harris for three years. I remember it was among my favorite schools. Mrs. Lebsack, an instructional aide, helped me so much. Even though she had a hectic schedule, she was always ready to help. I remember how much the staff at Laurel cared about each child as well as the family. This is still true today. The office staff was helpful in every way. Sandy Kammerzell was willing to stop whatever she was doing to help out.

I taught Head Start for one year (1988-1989) before moving to my present position at Harris. It was a fun year working with Cynda Adamson.

Cheryle "Rita" Haworth

Instructional Aide-(1988-1992)

I will remember all the laughs, hugs, and tears shared with the Laurel staff and children. I've enjoyed watching our students continue on their education journey. It's a great feeling to have former students speak so highly of our Laurel family. I am very proud to be a part of Laurel's history.