

GURNEY

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to really share with her things that they need to share. In our busy lives, sometimes we don't have the time to listen, and that's what Mrs. Gurney does. And it's because of this that Gurney was among the honorees at a ceremony held last month in Sioux Falls. She attended with her daughter Jo Carlson, son-in-law Gary Carlson and grandson Scott Carlson, and son Jay Gurney and granddaughter Emily Gurney.

Jo Carlson said a short biography was read about each of the 10 Honor Roll recipients. "They read a little bit about them, and everyone politely listened and clapped," Carlson said. "And they were starting to read about mom, and she stood

up, and they just read it very nicely. But then when the emcee said, 'And she's 93 years old,' you could hear an audible gasp and every head turned. The photographers couldn't run fast enough. There must have been six people taking pictures."

It was Gurney's granddaughter Emily who inspired her to begin volunteering at the school. "She's now going to be a junior next year in high school," Jane Gurney said. "So I've been going to school as long as she's been going to school."

"I always say she came to first grade with Emily and never left us," said first-grade teacher Lynn Becker.

Gurney comes to school one day a week, although she used to attend more.

"I used to go three days a week," she said. "I followed Emily in first grade, and I followed her in second grade, but I still maintained first grade. Then

"All I do is open up that door and here are these smiling kids. They always come running and hugging me. How can you turn that down? (The teachers) always say, 'Hey, don't knock her over!'"

JANE GURNEY

I went to her class in third grade, but I still had first grade, so I had two classes. So there were times that I went two to three days a week. But I loved it."

She has especially loved her time with the students, and helping them when it was required. In this regard, she mentioned one boy in particular.

"He was a very difficult student — difficult to the teachers and difficult to his classmates — and I saw him in Emily's class in third grade," Gurney said. "They were asked to copy something from the blackboard, and I

watched this little boy, and I thought, 'He can't write. He can't write anything.'"

Gurney arranged to spend some extra time every week working with the boy.

"He was good at ... hard puzzles, so I bought him puzzle books, and we'd work on those together," she said. "We'd take time out to go over some of the words. I spent an hour a couple times a week with him, and I always felt good that I finally made this little child a good classmate for the rest of the kids."

Some of the students have kept in contact with Gurney over the years and visit her periodically.

"(On Monday) I had five of them," she said. "It was just fine. We had a nice visit. Three of them are going to be in fifth grade, and two are going to be in fourth grade, so you see how long they've been coming."

Gurney said she hopes she gives the students as much as they've given her.

"All I do is open up that door and here are these smiling kids," she said. "They always come running and hugging me. How can you turn that down? (The teachers) always say, 'Hey, don't knock her over!'"

Messler said the teachers appreciate Gurney, as well.

"Mrs. Gurney is not only a great help to the students, but she's also a role model for us," she said. "She really models how volunteerism is beneficial to oth-

ers, and how it's also beneficial to yourself. And she's a great role model as far as working with other adults and aging gracefully."

Carlson said, "The family is so appreciative of the relationship mother has not only with the students, but with the teachers. They are like our sisters. It's a blessing to us, and we get to see, 'OK, you can be 93 and productive.'"

"Jane has taught us that age is truly just a number," Messler added.

Gurney said she's just happy to help.

"I probably won't make a difference in each child, but I hope I make it in one or two," she said.

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May 22-23

NFAA Unmarked 3D National Championship & First Dakota Archery Classic

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Schedule of Events

Friday, May 21st

Open practice: 3-D Range, FITA Range at Archery Center
Archers Registration/Check, ESDF Center..... 1pm-7pm

Saturday, May 22nd

1st Round NFAA Unmarked 3-D Casual Start..... 8am-4pm
Manufacturers Trade Show Open..... 9am-6pm
1st Competition Line for First Dakota Classic..... 1pm
2nd Competition Line for First Dakota Classic..... 4:30pm

3-Star Tour Car Shoot Off following last shooting line

Sunday, May 23rd

Final Round NFAA 3-D Competition..... Time to be announced
Manufacturers Trade Show Open..... 9am-3pm
1st Line Final Round First Dakota Classic..... Time to be announced
2nd Line Final Round First Dakota Classic..... Time to be announced
Awards Ceremonies, ESDF Center..... Time to be announced (approx. 5pm)

First Dakota Classic Competition is open to the public, spectators are welcome, no admission fee. Parking available on Archery Lane. For more information, call NFAA at (605) 260-9279.



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