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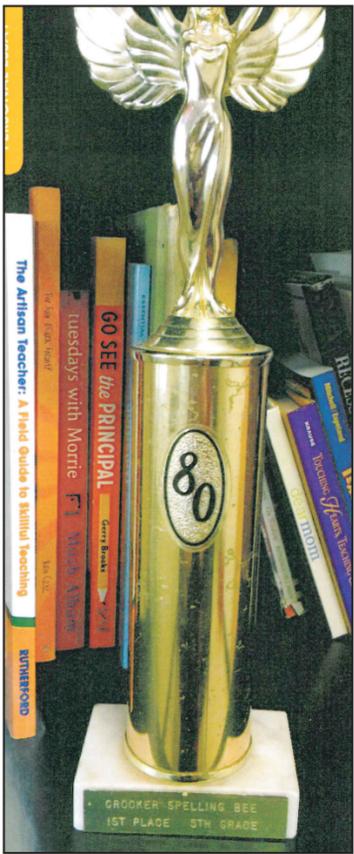
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Old trophy filled with meaning



Tammy Allen's spelling bee trophy. Photo submitted

By Tammy Allen

It's just an old trophy from a spelling bee dated 1980. Most people would leave it in the attic or stored in the basements of their parents' homes, collecting dust and forgotten. It proudly sits in my principal's office on the top shelf displayed with my books.

It represents me and who I am today.

I was raised in poverty. That's hard to say, but I have come to face it over

the years. My dad was the only one with a job and my mom never got her driver's license which made being involved in after-school activities nearly impossible. We lived in a trailer on approximately five acres and I didn't realize I was "poor" until I got to middle school. We had a roof over our heads, food on the table, and love that sustained our family of five. We got by on what we had and looking back, it was all I really needed.

In the early 70s, as a young child, I had severe asthma attacks that would usually keep me down and out for several days. We had no medical insurance and my parents couldn't afford a doctor, so I would lay around the house until I felt better. I had two younger siblings that got to enjoy the great outdoors while I was stuck inside. Books became my friend. Nancy Drew and I solved many mysteries together and I even joined the Hardy Boys and the Bobsey Twins a time or two. I found a fascination with words, and as I read, if I didn't know a word, I looked it up in the dictionary. I also liked completing crossword puzzles and word searches.

Flash forward to 1980. All through school, I was an introvert and my head was always in a book. I visited the library often and had an eclectic reading appetite. That being said, I was not outgoing and didn't have a lot of friends. Then it came time for the annual spelling bee. My fifth-grade teacher (at Dixon Elementary), Mrs. Terri Gillette, saw something in me that I didn't see in myself: my hidden talent for spelling. She nurtured that talent, and I won the spelling bee that year. I was so happy, and my parents were so proud. After winning the spelling bee, my self-confidence grew and I started engaging with people. I had several teachers after Mrs. Gillette that inspired me and without them, I would not be where I am

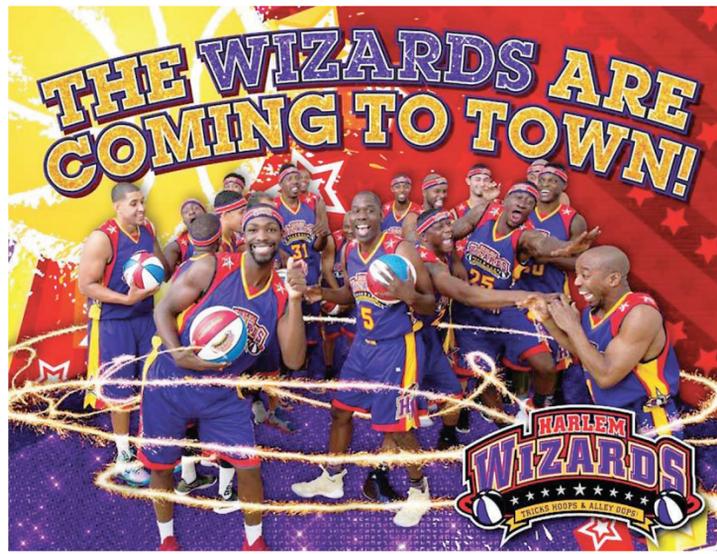


Dixon Elementary Principal Tammy Allen. Photo by Bobbie Overshon

today (Mrs. Crews, Mrs. Hauck, Mrs. Brandt, Mr. McPherson, Mr. Campbell, just to name a few). I want to thank them for taking the time and inspiring that nerdy young girl that is now a principal in the same district where she grew up.

I often get teased about my spelling bee trophy and asked why I still have it. I usually joke back about spelling and how jealous they must be, because they don't have one, but the truth is the matter is, I keep it because it reminds me that all it takes is one person, just one, to fan the flame and ignite a spark within a child. That old spelling bee trophy from 1980 sits proudly on my bookshelf reminding me to fan the flame of the students I encounter each and every day.

Tammy Allen is the principal at Dixon Elementary School. (Reprinted from Missouri State Teachers Association Community Magazine, January 9th, 2020.)



The Harlem Wizards are coming to Dixon High School for a rematch on Thursday, April 16, 2020. Photo submitted

Harlem Wizards returning to DHS April 16th for rematch with Dixon R-1 Dream Team

The Harlem Wizards are coming back to Dixon High School, Thursday, April 16th for a rematch with the Dixon R-1 Dream Team. Game time is 6:30 p.m. This event is again hosted by Dixon Elementary School. DES brought the Wizards to Dixon in February 2019, and it was such a huge success, a return match was scheduled for 2020.

The evening promises to be a fun filled event that is great for kids and adults and will guarantee to put a smile on your face! Dixon Elementary School is bringing The Wizards into town to help raise funds for school improvements.

The Harlem Wizards have a unique tradition: create awe-inspiring events throughout the country. At a Wizards game, fans will witness amazing basketball talent combined with hilarious comedy. It is two hours of family time where parents, grandparents,

and kids can all laugh together. When you're in the stands, you're more than a spectator; you're part of the show with loads of audience participation. Throughout the game, fans will experience a magical display of tricks, coordinated ball handling, fancy passing and aerodynamic athleticism combined with high-energy comedy and audience interaction. The experience can be summed up in one word: SLAMTASTIC!

Tickets can be purchased in advance at harlemwizards.com or online at DixonElementarySchool/schedule-tickets. Tickets will also be sold at the gate, if available. Kids 3 and under will be admitted free.

Don't miss this SLAMTASTIC event!

Fort Leonard Wood tax center to open January 27

FORT LEONARD WOOD, Mo. (Jan. 15, 2020) – The Fort Leonard Wood tax center is scheduled to be open Jan. 27 through the end of April, and offers free tax return preparation for active-duty service members, retirees and their dependent family members.

Appointments are encouraged, but walk-ins are welcome during operating hours. The tax center is located at 316 Missouri Ave, Building 315.

All tax center staff are qualified to the advanced level on the IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program. In 2019, they filed a total of 4,159 returns resulting in a total refund amount of \$4,333,356.

Customers who would like to file jointly with a spouse should know that both individuals must sign to file electronically.

While the tax center's goal is to assist as many eligible individuals as possible, there are certain types of tax returns that the tax center is not authorized to handle. Taxpayers with complex situations, such as owning rental properties, should call for advice on how to proceed.

All customers should bring:
– Proof of eligibility for services;
– Social Security Cards for everyone named on the tax return;
– Birth dates for everyone named on the tax return;
– Wage and earning statements from employers;
– Interest and dividend statements from banks;
– A copy of last year's federal and state returns;

See Tax Center Page 2

Mahurin joins Thrivent Financial

DIXON, MO (January 16, 2020)

– Jeremy Mahurin of Dixon, Mo. has joined Thrivent Financial as a financial professional. Mahurin supports Thrivent members by helping them develop sound financial strategies so they can prepare for retirement, ensure their families are financially protected and live generous lives – at home, church and within their communities. He recently passed his FINRA Series 7 and 66 exams

“Jeremy is a valuable addition to our office's field staff,” said Lance Wiley, regional development director

of the Missouri -Kansas -Illinois region of Thrivent Financial. “We look forward to the energy and dedication Jeremy will bring to the team. He will play a key role in serving our members' financial needs throughout mid-Missouri.”

Before joining Thrivent Financial, Mahurin worked in real estate, property management, mortgage origination and construction. Mahurin attends Living Water Worship Center in Rolla, MO. You can reach Jeremy by phone at (573) 528-9598 or Jeremy.Mahurin@thrivent.com.

Thrivent Financial is looking for talented individuals to join the organization. Those interested in a career with Thrivent Financial can visit www.thrivent.com/careers.

About Thrivent Financial
Thrivent is a not-for-profit financial services organization that helps Christians be wise with money. As a mission-driven, membership-owned organization, it offers its more than 2 million members and customers a broad range of financial products, services and guidance to help them obtain a life of contentment, confi-



Jeremy Mahurin. Photo submitted

dence and generosity. Thrivent and its subsidiary and affiliate companies offer insurance, investments, banking and advice over the phone, online as well as through financial professionals and independent agents nationwide. Thrivent is a FORTUNE 500 company with \$134 billion in assets under management/advisement (as of 12/31/18). For more than a century it has helped Christians make wise money choices that reflect their values while providing them opportunities to demonstrate their generosity where they live, work and worship. For more information, visit Thrivent.com. You can also find us on Facebook and Twitter.

See A Year In Review Page 5

Highlights of Events in Dixon 2019: A Year In Review Continues

Highlights of Events in Dixon 2019: A Year In Review Continues

The Dixon Pilot concludes our annual Year In Review this week, featuring highlights from 2019.

October 2019

-- Dixon School Board approves funds for new sign at Dixon Elementary School, hiring of teacher and safety director at their monthly meeting September 19.

-- Dixon VFW Post 4238 hosts free flu shot clinic, breakfast and Medicare seminar October 12.

-- Pilot runs feature on the Atwell Brothers: Archie, Austin and Anthony

as Someone We Think You Should Know. The Atwells are the owners of Tri-County Hardware and Lumber in Dixon.

-- During Fire Prevention Week, October 6-12, readers are reminded that this is an ideal time to make your home safe for heating season and approaching holidays.

-- FLWFD Fire Captain Bryan West, a Dixon resident, assists with rescue of five people on the Gasconade River September 15, who found themselves sinking in an inflatable raft.

-- Dixon City Council discusses

trash service payments, updates on city code, computers, nuisance ordinance at regular meeting October 7.

-- Carmen Hartwell, general manager of Gasconade Electric Cooperative in Dixon, was appointed president of the Executive Committee of the Association of Missouri Electric Cooperatives (AMEC) in Jefferson City.

-- The City of Donna and Ron Leymaster is the Dixon Chamber of Commerce October Yard of the Month.



Let Your Love Show Grandparents

Grandparents, you have until Noon on Friday, February 7 to submit your grandchildren's photo to the Dixon Pilot to be included in the special Valentine's issue February 12. See ad in this week's Pilot for cost and more information.