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Renee reaches the end

Geoff Wessendorf
Staff Writer

As of the beginning of next year, Open School will have a new counselor. Renee Ransom, our current counselor, will retire at



the end of this school year to be with her husband. Renee, who will be 56 in June, said that she will retire "because my husband is

retiring. He worked nights, and we really want some time together."

Renee first set foot in Open School in January of 2000, when she replaced Gary

Vettleson. That was not her first counseling experience, however. Renee has been a counselor for over 25 years, and works with the district as one of only eight emotional trauma specialists. "I may still help the district with the trauma work after I retire, and I'll volunteer here at Open a bit too," she said.

Renee has enjoyed her time here at Open. When asked what she liked most about the school, she said "I really like the advisory system. It is nice to get to know the kids and their families." Besides the advisory system, Renee liked the fact that "Open acknowledges learning in many forms. Not just sitting in class and listening to a teacher."

Nobody knows who will replace Renee after she retires. She will be sorely missed.◇

High altitude heroics

Ananda Wold
Staff Writer

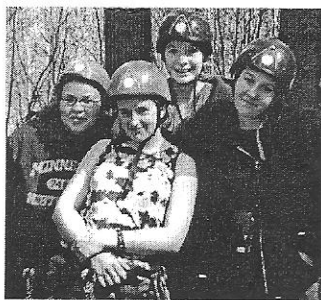
This year, with a swervy takeoff, Open's Outward Bounders headed off to Leadville, Colorado for a six-day service project. After five hours of airport announcements, the group left the Denver airport, in search of adventure in the pursuit of service and adventure.

With Leo as their chaperone, the female-dominated group of 18 students were stationed about 10,000 ft. above sea level, near the two tallest mountains in Colorado, Mt. Massive and Mt. Albert. After getting used to the altitude, the group worked on various projects that helped the base camp get ready for the busy summer season. "We got to put up Quonset huts, it was most bodacious," said tenth grader, Mary Henke-Haney. Other projects included cleaning out vans to transport the Outward Bound students, as well as sweeping, mopping and supplying the various buildings on the site.

They did service in Leadville until Thursday, when they then headed down to Denver to work in an Outward Bound supply warehouse. There they began preparing things to be sent to Alaska. Some people

boxed food supplies, others tied ropes, or made repair kits. On the final day of the trip, many students helped inventory the supplies left at the warehouse. How many people can say they've counted 512 packets of aspirin?

As part of their trip, Open Schoolers also
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Connected to Iraq

Jon Sherman
Staff Writer

Open School senior Aaron Holland has special reason to pay special attention to the news from Iraq. His 22-year-old brother Jesse is one of many American soldiers serving on the front lines.

First, there's Private First Class Jesse McClain Holland, Aaron's brother (he's not allowed to disclose exact unit for "personal reasons.") Trained in Fort Jackson, South Carolina, the Private was launched from Darmstadt, Germany. It's been two months since Aaron talked to him and although his parents have received calls from him, Aaron's never quite been able to catch him.

Evelyn, Jesse Holland's best friend's wife, recommended that Aaron to begin saving money to ship him Hustler Magazine. Apparently Holland isn't swanky enough for Penthouse.

"He ain't been home since last May," Aaron said. "He calls about once a week. At his going away party were friends. The only family there was me, Jon couldn't make it."

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HOLY HOLLAND! From 1

Aaron referred to "Jon" as Private First Class Jonathan Dondlinger, a very close friend of the family who, at the time, was already stationed in Germany.

Aaron continued, "Jon's a rough kid who's got the manners of a God. I haven't talked to him in a long time. I don't even know if he's still around or not."

Dondlinger and Holland signed up together and Aaron wouldn't consider anybody else worthy of being kin. "Sort of like brothers in arms, so to speak," Aaron said.

Daniel Garendor, also a friend of Aaron's, is said to be doing pretty good, "One mean and tough Sicilian son of a bitch," Aaron remarked, "And about my brother; proud? Of course I am. Worried? A little, but he'll make it. A Holland has never fallen in any American battle."

Plain common sense and somewhat of an obligation told Aaron to keep to secrecy his brother's exact location, expressing his respect for our armed forces. If Aaron could talk to his brother, he'd tell him to fight as hard as he could until the last bullet. Jesse Holland should be home for the holidays, between Thanksgiving and Christmas. The original plan was for Holland to be home by August 1, his birthday. However, the war changed all that.

Aaron stated, "Anybody that says they didn't sign up for war when joining a mili-

tary service is a God damn liar. Most recruits were likely picked up after September 2001 to the present. We knew we were going to fight somebody."

His opinion on the war remains as it does on World War 2. He says that they both need to happen. He also asks that if the United States isn't the police of the world, why does everybody come to us with their problems? Aaron explained, "We are not the kings of the earth, but have high responsibilities as the strongest nation. Our trade agreements alone support half of the world."

Understanding and respectful of pacifists, Aaron commented on Saddam and Iraq, "I realize the turmoil brought up by this war, but I also realize that a man with the ambition of genocide should not be allowed to practice his goal. They have found the weapons. They have found the torture chambers, and yet I have not seen a decline in the protesters. This merely proves my point. They're in it not for peace, but because they just hate Bush. I hate Bush myself, but I hate Saddam and his regime of murderers even more. I am disgusted by whiny Bush-haters who jumped on the bandwagon just to get their faces on television." He then urged them to "grow up and go to work."

Good luck USA! And as once told to me by a peg-legged Haitian, let's represent our nation!◇

TALLY-HO From 1

got to participate in some of the activities Outward Bound offers. After working on team building skills by working around "Leadville Lava" and doing the elephant walk, as well as working on the low ropes course, everyone tried the high ropes course.

"Watching Shelby's creative interpretation of the 'leap of faith' was the funniest thing I've seen in a while," said eleventh grader Sierra Blakely.

Before the group headed off to Denver, they also did some natural rock climbing. They drove about half an hour, past the collegiate mountains, to Buena Vista, to a climb site near Split Rock. There they learn belaying and climbing skills and had a day of fun in the sun climbing rocks. "The best part for me was the rock climbing because my knuckles were all bloody and that was super sweet!" said tenth grader Sean Keith.

After dinner, it was free time. Some people went back to the dorms for an early bed-

time, and others played Risk. One of the most popular things to do was play Coloraquetball. The game was the creative invention of Leo and Sean. Not finding an adequate space to play Fraquetball, the two made a make shift court that due to the surroundings ended up evolving into a totally new game. With the paddlin' rule instituted by Mary and Ananda, the game became something truly unique. "It's a fast paced, vein-pumping game just like Fraquetball, only add thin air, rough carpet and paddlin's," said co-inventor Sean.

After students got over the altitude sickness and lack of radio, everyone loosened up and had a great time. They worked as a team, encouraging each other through "challenge by choice" events, and even simple things like dishes. They helped people get work done quick and correctly. Above all, they had a great time. "It was rockin' good times bottled up like toothpaste!" said Mary.◇



FREE STUFF From 7

Why is this on the list? Well, where would you be without mailing supplies? You can get FREE shipping labels, priority mail or express mail. They cost nothing, and they pay for the shipping. And the thing is, the item makes it to your house in less than a week! But, if you don't need shipping labels, I guess this site isn't for you. I give it three stars, because it is only shipping labels, but the quality and probability of it coming to your house is great. <http://shop.usps.com>

Markal. ****- Markal offers industry stuff. But the industry stuff includes markers, paint, bags, boxes, containers and such. The quality of the stuff is great, but to get the stuff is complicated. After you figure out what you want, you have to write down the product name and color. Then you have to go to http://www.laco.com/html/customer_service and type in everything you wrote down. They get to you in a week or two. So overall, it gets 4 stars, because of the quality and probability. <http://www.markal.com>

Global Sources. ***** This has got to be the best source of free online stuff. But the only thing is that you have to write a letter to get what you want. The trick is, you go to what you want, you write to the company and tell them you're interested in their product and ask for a sample. We sent these things to an address that didn't belong to us, but someone who was willing to let their address out. I was able to get from this a DVD player, a paintball gun, a backpack, and a whole lot more. It works, and it gets five stars, even though you have to kind of go through a lot to get the thing. The selection is wider than anything, and you can get almost anything you want. Try it at home, kids. <http://www.globalsources.com>

Now, some advice to everyone who is seeking free stuff online: Don't Give Up. That's the golden rule. If someone refuses to send you something, tell them again how much you're interested in their product. Another thing is to act like a merchant. Say, "I'm a merchant from St. Paul, Minnesota. And I'm interested in your product." Use that as a last resort.

This has been your guide to free stuff online. But, remember this, if you don't get anything or if anything goes wrong, I am just the messenger, so don't blame me. But don't worry, nothing should go wrong if you go with the rules I supplied.

This has been an aLr production.◇