



# EAGLE EYES

Volume 2, Number 2

Autumn, 1994

## REFLECTIONS ON A YEAR

by Robert Burkhardt

Eagle Rock School and Professional Development Center emerged from a series of 1989 discussions inside American Honda Motor Company concerning corporate responsibility. A year later American Honda Education Corporation (AHEd) was created. In 1991 AHEd identified the site on which construction has now neared completion. Two years ago we broke ground. A year ago the first small group of students enrolled. Today more than one-third of our projected ninety-six students are enrolled (representing 12 states), and we have held our Grand Opening. We have established participating relationships with almost twenty school districts and recently named our first Director of Professional Development. And there's more.

Last year, several students designed the climbing wall for our Human Performance Center. Another group adapted Homer's *Odyssey* as a play and presented it to thunderous applause. Still another class produced our first yearbook. Student service learning projects have occurred in Rocky Mountain National Park, a homeless shelter in Boulder, and a nursing home in Estes Park. A week dedicated to exploration of the arts offered classes

in batik, painting, and theater. And our new student-built outdoor volleyball court has provided much excitement whenever the houses have duelled on the sand. Slowly, carefully, through every day's activities, the culture of Eagle Rock School is emerging.

The highlight of each trimester comes in its final days when each student makes her/his Presentation of Learning. The form and content of each presentation varies as individual students reflect on, construct and display learning from their varied experiences during the fourteen-week trimester. It is difficult to put into words the richness of emotion and revelation which suffuse the presentations, but it is not difficult to share the sense of triumph as Eagle Rock students rise one after another to assert their learning.

Many individuals have worked tenaciously during the past five years to achieve this promising beginning. They have created a legacy that challenges future Eagle Rock students and staff. All of us now here are responsible for ensuring two things: that we leave Eagle Rock better people than we arrived, and that Eagle Rock is a better place for our having had the privilege of being here.

## SERVICE IS A GIFT TO OURSELVES

by Amber Carpenter, ERS Student

*Amber wrote this description of her service learning experience in a nursing home for her May Presentation of Learning.*

You walk into the building. Everything is white and it's cold. You see older people sitting around watching TV or just sitting, not making a sound.

They look lonely. You can tell they want to talk to you. You can feel somebody watching you. As you turn around, you see an older lady sitting by herself. You walk over and say, "How are you?" She just stares with an empty face. You're not sure

if she heard you, so you ask again, "How are you?" She just keeps staring and then turns her head and begins to read a book.

You wonder if you said something wrong. The nurse taps you on the shoulder and says, "Miss, she can't talk." You feel embarrassed and stupid. You get up, and the lady grabs your hand. You jump, not expecting anything.

She points to a piece of paper that says, "Thanks for talking to me. It's been such a long time since I had a friend."

As a tear falls from her eyes, she

squeezes your hand. She begins to write more. You feel a little uncomfortable, but the next time you look at your watch, it's time to go. The last thing she writes is, "Thanks for being a friend. Please come again."

Two weeks later you go back to see her. The nurse at the front desk tells you, "Sorry, but Mrs. Laggs passed away last week."

As you sit thinking about her death, you're glad that you could at least make her smile and know somebody cares. Then you feel somebody watching you. As you turn around, you see a lady, just sitting there.

**A publication of  
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## STAFF PROFILE - DEBORAH EADS

*Instructor in Environmental Studies, Wilderness Program*

### *The Whisper of the Mountain Spirit*

I know that times have changed when I sit down to a computer and flip through my stack of disks in an effort to discover some hidden insight as to what I, Deborah Eads, am all about and who I am.

In the eighth grade I remember drawing flow charts in algebra class to learn computer programming. Our school owned only one computer, so the closest we could come to computer literacy was drawing the way a computer works. Now, I can't imagine how I would make it through the week without one.

Times have changed in other ways, too. I've grown, and my world has expanded. And, what I've learned about myself is that I need to touch, feel, smell, taste, hear, and experience things for life to happen. I'm not a good vicarious learner. I want to do everything. I need to do things, even if I have a hard lesson to learn when I'm doing them. I'm one of those people who falls on her face a lot. The power of learning lessons, however, is the power that comes from getting back up and facing the challenge through to completion.

It doesn't matter how many times you fall down, as long as you're willing to struggle back onto your feet. I do that. Maybe it's turned me into an overachiever, but quality is important to me. If a job is worth doing, it's worth starting poorly and then learning to do it well. That's why I find myself out of my comfort zone a lot—living on the razor's edge both personally and professionally. I attempted to learn how to kayak this summer. I didn't drown, and I still maintain a healthy respect for water, one acquired in junior high with my first successful cold water rescue.

What I bring to Eagle Rock School and Professional Development Center is a background that varies from collecting sharks' teeth along the shore of Calvert Cliffs to spending my twentieth birthday on Mt. Rainier. I also bring the experience of climbing an 8,000 meter peak and being recognized as the International Practitioner of the Year in 1992 by the Association for Experiential Education.

My passions are running through high alpine meadows and mountaineering throughout the world with people I care deeply about. But life feels isolated at 14,000 feet and even more desolate at 24,000, so I bring the lessons of the high country to a school where students challenge themselves at a similar level to that of mountaineers and do it with more vested interest than just "be-

cause it is there." At Eagle Rock the "mountain" is to be climbed because climbing it will make a difference.

In the second grade, I got a nurse's uniform and remember spending my summer riding around the neighborhood playing nurse to everything. I knew then that I wanted to have a career in the sciences. Since then, I did my undergraduate work in Natural Sciences, Secondary Education and Outdoor Education. My graduate work followed in the same vein in Social and Multicultural Foundations of Experiential Education with an emphasis on science, and my post graduate work was in Community Health. My education experience ranges from thirteen years of classroom experience in a public school setting to seventeen years of working wilderness programs, both of which allowed me to incorporate the environmental sciences into field work and community building.

What I really want out of life is to be remembered as someone who cared for life, loved life, and shared life. I want to create the most effective Environmental Studies program possible and pass on the passion of caring for and thriving in the environment in which we live.

*NOTE: Deborah Eads is leading two Outward Bound courses in Nepal during Eagle Rock's fall trimester. She will return for the January 1995 trimester.*

## PEACE MEDIATORS

*by Philbert Smith*

Israel and the Palestinians had them. The ANC and the South African government had them. Russia and the United States had them. Haiti had them. Bosnia needs them. Now Eagle Rock School has them.

"What are they," you ask. The answer: mediators.

On May 11 - 13, Joelle, Khalif, Kelly, Billy, Claire and a former student were trained as Peace Mediators. They accepted the responsibility of mediating the interpersonal conflicts that arise at Eagle Rock. They were trained by four students from Centennial High School.

The training taught them how to focus on needs rather than positions of each disputant. It

*(Continued on Back Page)*

## STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS, OCTOBER 1994

		GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION	
MALE	5 African American	4	California
	7 Caucasian	2	Illinois
	4 Latin American	2	New Mexico
	2 Native American	2	Pennsylvania
	1 Chinese American	1	Washington, DC
FEMALE	1 African American	1	Michigan
	11 Caucasian	20	Colorado
	1 Latina	1	Utah
	1 Native American	1	West Virginia
	1 Hawaiian/Caucasian/Chinese	1	New York
	1 Hawaiian/Caucasian	1	Massachusetts
	1 Filipino/Caucasian		

### MENTORS OFFER A SHOULDER UP

by Rick Penner

The mentor-mentoree program at Eagle Rock School was established to help all students adapt to their new location of education (that's LOE). It is the student mentor's obligation to introduce the mentoree to the geographical layout of the campus, go over the student handbook, answer any questions new students might have, introduce the new student to the "culture" of the campus, and explain the mathematical expression  $8 + 5 = 10$ .

Also, and possibly most important, the mentor talks first hand about the transitional gate students are traveling through at this point of their LOE. Issues such as homesickness, non-negotiables, community living, work responsibilities, dorm life, and just plain adjusting to the high level of expectations are also discussed.

As with all learning situations in life, the challenge is to take the first step, evaluate the process and the desired outcomes, and improve where possible. The mentor-mentoree program is working so far because mentor Eagle Rock students have taken the challenge of helping new students succeed at Eagle Rock.

### PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES OF STAFF

Last year, many ERS staff participated in a variety of professional activities. A description of some of them follows:

Sally Duncan, Director of Operations, presided over a workshop, "Fundamentals of School Management," at the National Association of Independent Schools in Orlando, FL. She also served on the steering committee for the annual meeting of the Western Boarding School Business Officers at Verde Valley School in Sedona, Arizona. She also attended the Association of Business Officers in Independent Schools Conference in Boston and was elected to serve on the Executive Committee.

Chef Tim Phelps helped with "Much Ado About Chocolate. . . and Other Delights," for the third year in a row. Proceeds went to the Arts Council.

Rick Penner, Human Performance Instructional Specialist, is a member of the Colorado State Task Force writing Physical Education Model Content Standards.

Judy Gilbert, Director of Curriculum, has continued her work on the SADI Council (State Standards and Assessment Development and Implementation Council) as well as her work as Co-Chair of the Reading and Writing Model Content Standards Task Force.

ERS Student Claire Gayton and Deborah Eads, Environmental Sciences Instructional Specialist, participated in the Regional Association for Experiential Education Conference. They put on a four-hour workshop on Environmental Studies and the integrated approach at Eagle Rock.

LeeAnn Wehr, Foreign Language Instructor, was selected to attend the Summer Foreign Language Leadership Institute of the University of Northern Colorado sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities and Department of Education in conjunction with the American Council of Foreign Languages. She also was asked to write curriculum for foreign language activities at the University of Denver for the Center for Teaching International Relations. She was chosen as Young Career Woman of the Year by the Business and Professional Women's Club of Estes Park, CO, and Woman of the Year in Conservation by AAUW of Estes Park in 1993.

Eagle Rock School  
(Continued)

**Yee-Ann Cho**  
Admissions  
Specialist

**Sally Duncan**  
Director of  
Operations

**Deborah Eads**  
Environmental  
Sciences

**Lois Easton**  
Director of  
Professional  
Development

**Judy Gilbert**  
Director of  
Curriculum

**Garth Lewis**  
Career and  
Service Learning

**John Oubre**  
Director of  
Students

**Rick Penner**  
Outdoor  
Education  
and Athletics

**Tim Phelps**  
Chef, Instructor

**Norrie  
Rothenberg**  
Society and  
Social Studies

**Philbert Smith**  
Life Skills,  
Wellness &  
Counseling

**Michael  
Soguero**  
Science and Math

**Audrey Stevens**  
Administrative  
Assistant

**Bonnie Vavra**  
Business  
Assistant

**Bob Van  
Der Wege**  
Learning  
Resources and  
Information

## STUDENT TEACHERS AND INTERNS ENRICH LIFE AT EAGLE ROCK

by Lois Easton

Reciprocity is a value for the Professional Development Center at Eagle Rock School. It is important that those who are gaining so much from their experience here also give something back to Eagle Rock. The student teacher and interns working at Eagle Rock this trimester are already demonstrating that value--they are learning at the same time that they are contributing to Eagle Rock life.

Louis Cohen, a student teacher from CU-Boulder, is working with Norrie Rothenberg, Society and Social Studies Instructional Specialist. A Wisconsin native, Louis works with students on a variety of activities as well as in the classroom. Brandi Clark, a graduate of Yale who hails from Texas, is working with Judy Gilbert, Director of Curriculum, and with me in professional development. Brandi is working on a curriculum project that will establish an Eagle Rock economy to give students first-hand experience in the ways of money.

Jackie Wind, a graduate of James Madison University in Virginia and a New York native, has shared her art expertise with students in the course "The Culture of Science." She also writes a newsletter for all of the interns and arranges regular meetings so they can share what they are learning. She directs tours for visitors and is developing an orientation package for interns.

Sheli Clapp, a Colorado native who graduated from Colorado State University, is working at the Human Performance Center with Rick Penner, Human Performance Instructional Specialist. She, too, works with students, particularly on their physical well-being and strength. Louis Hernandez, formerly a member of the California Conservation Corps, is working with a variety of students and staff on outdoors and service activities. Miriam Tapia, from Denver and a graduate of Metropolitan State College, is establishing a life exploration coun-

seling office through which students will get information on what they can do after they leave Eagle Rock--go to college, achieve internships, find meaningful work, or travel abroad.

In addition to these full-time interns, we have several interns who are on campus for only a few hours a week. These interns are earning course credit towards a degree through their work here and are contributing to Eagle Rock through some special aspect of that work. For example, Bonnie Spencer is working with Philbert Smith, Life Skills, Wellness, and Counseling Instructional Specialist. In addition to her regular work with Philbert, Bonnie is conducting a follow-up survey with students who have left Eagle Rock. Estes Park resident Susan Signs is working with Michael Soguero, Science and Mathematics Instructional Specialist, on designing a biology curriculum that will make use of the biosphere in the Science Building.

Interns and student teachers learn a great deal during their experiences at Eagle Rock, but they give a great deal, too. In fact, we call the projects they do "legacy" projects because we know that, even after they leave Eagle Rock, their work will live on.

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### *PEACE MEDIATORS continued*

also equipped them with a viable problem solving method. At the end of each mediation, there is always a written agreement signed by the disputants.

Mediation works. Our society at large, more and more, is using the mediation process to solve many issues. At Eagle Rock we are taking one more step towards living in respectful harmony with each other, thanks to the efforts of these students. Khalif, Kelly, Billy, Joelle and Claire are making contributions towards keeping the peace.

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