'Taylor's Corner' set aside by students

Children plant flowers to honor a favorite teacher

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By Rita Bleecker
Rancho Santa Fe PTO

"Taylor's Corner" may never be authenticated on Rancho Santa Fe road maps. But any Ranch school student can direct you there.

The triangular portion of school property located where El Fuego meets La Granada was recently beautified with flowers by the third and fourth grade classes, then dedicated to their favorite teacher and friend.

William Miles Taylor ("Bud") had no boyhood dream of becoming a teacher. Not until entering Eastern Oregon College in La Grande, Oregon did he choose his future profession. Now one can just mention the possibility of ever changing fields, even after retirement, and shocked blue eyes appear to ask, "Is there anything else?"

What brought him

Taylor's enthusiasm for scuba diving brought him to Southern California on vacation, and the lure of San Diego's beaches made a permanent conquest. He joined the staff at Rancho Santa Fe School in 1960, teaching the fourth grade.

Ruth Giffin, writing then for "The Village Press" newspaper, interviewed the young bachelor soon after his arrival, playfully printing that he would meet a girl "on the beach" and be married by spring. Ann Taylor, then a Navy nurse, materialized right on schedule and the prediction was fulfilled.

When the Navy transferred Ann to duty in Japan from 1966-68, Bud obtained a leave of absence from the Ranch school and went along. He taught at the famed Sullivan School in Yokohama, named for the five brothers killed in World War II.

For a time the Taylors lived Japanese style in a rented house, sleeping on futons (floor mattresses), eating sushi (raw fish and rice) and other Oriental delicacies. But eventually they moved into Navy housing, where the lifestyle was more familiar.

Whenever possible they spent weekends at charming country inns, and on longer vacations they travelled to Singapore, Thailand, the Philippines, and the Malaysian states.

"Hand check"

Taylor's youthful appearance belies the fact that one of his former fourth grade students is also on the staff at Rancho Santa Fe School. Jennifer Hall, director of the IMC, chuckles remembering the "hand check" every morning (no dirty hands in class), and the year of the Christmas Sing when Taylor broke away from traditional carols and taught his class "I Want a Hippopotamus for Christmas."

Soft-spoken and sincerely dedicated, Taylor is the proverbial rock students and staff can always depend on for help. He serves as Teacher Team Leader for grades three through five; is on the PTO Board of Directors as treasurer; is a math specialist particularly interested in the MAL (More Able Learner) Program; and is respectfully referred to as a "master teacher" by superintendent Roger Rowe.

Taylor has been selected to attend a three week seminar conducted by the Freedoms Foundation of Valley Forge Pa. on a Rotary Club scholarship in July.

Can this be the same "Mr. Taylor" who portrayed the spoiled brat in the Fall Talent Show ("Labors of Love";) whose singular expression was "Phooey;" and who sported Bandaids on knees skinned by romping in short pants like a 6-year-old?

The perpetual crew-cut should have warned you that a very wry sense of humor is submerged beneath all the decorum, just waiting to surface when least expected. Ask Gibson, the shaggy, four-legged member of the family. He knows



Citizen Photo

BUD AND CLASS — Bud Taylor, teacher at Rancho Santa Fe School, takes his class to the gym to play frisbee. Taylor is treasurer of the Parent Teachers Organization Board of Directors, Teacher Team Leader for grades three through five, and a math specialist.

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