

# Grieving students create memorial: Scrapbook is labor of love for lost friend

BY CATHERINE BAUM STAFF WRITER



COURTESY OF SMITH VOCATIONAL

Students at the Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School in Northampton created scrapbook pages Monday remembering their late classmate, Tyler Hewes of Goshen, who died in a car accident early Saturday.

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NORTHAMPTON - Normally, a high school library filled with students would be noisy, but on Monday, more than 100 Smith Vocational students, faculty and staff were quiet as they created pages about a sophomore's life, which ended suddenly in a car accident early Saturday morning.

Each page will be collected and organized in a scrapbook for the family of Tyler Hewes, a 15-year-old Goshen boy who was known for his sense of humor, passion for baseball and love of outdoor activities. Many students pasted his school photo onto their page, along with stickers and drawings of snowmobiles, four-wheelers and baseballs. The activity is a helpful means of grieving, administrators say.

'Talking just doesn't cut it,' said Cheryl Fish, guidance counselor. 'So many kids have a hard time verbalizing.'

Principal Arthur Apostolou said Monday was tough for students. Some students told him they don't know what to expect at the wake this afternoon because they have never been to one.

'It's uncomfortable for kids to lose someone their own age when they think they're immortal,' Fish said Monday. 'The kids are very aware that an empty chair is not just an empty chair today.'

Two adjustment counselors, two guidance counselors, a social worker and retired counselor walked around the building to talk with students Monday, Apostolou said. Fish, who said Hewes' family members should also find the book helpful in their grief, worked in the library with the scrapbook makers.

'When you're feeling at your lowest, it helps to see what other people say,' Fish said.

Hewes' family, including his father, Goshen Police Chief Jeffrey Hewes, mother, Donna Hewes, and sister Erica Hewes, will learn about their loved one through stories expressed in conversation, writing and drawing.

A student in the carpentry program at Smith Vocational & Agricultural High School, Hewes told friends he was looking to buy a snowmobile.

'It's what he's always talked about, really,' said Dan Larison, 15, of Chesterfield. 'He liked winter, hunting, and being outdoors. He liked riding stuff.'

Hewes also enjoyed the summer, as it was the best season for him to ride a quad, make big splashes at the beach, and wear his favorite item of clothing - shorts. He went quadding and mud-bogging about a month ago with his cousin Chris Roberts and good friends Dan Larison and Cameron Lacey.

'They came back totally, disgustingly filthy muddy,' said Lynn Larison, Dan's mother.

A passionate Red Sox fan, Hewes played baseball for the Chesterfield Hilltown Babe Ruth baseball team, which did not win a game the first two years Hewes was on it. That changed this season when the team was one game away from making it to the playoffs.

'It meant the world to him,' said Bill Zbaniewicz, who was Hewes' baseball coach for 10 years. 'He was a great kid who never gave up. He was not the best athlete but he never missed anything.'

A pitcher for the team, Hewes was happy to hit a home run over the field's new fence.

'The main goal of the kids is to hit the ball over the fence,' said Shiela LaRousch, whose son played baseball with Hewes. 'Tyler was one of the best players on the team.'

Many students drew a 'C' for the Chesterfield baseball team on their scrapbook pages. Eleven Chesterfield baseball hats were left at Hewes' memorial, located where the accident occurred near 73 West St.

'It's pretty touching, actually,' Zbaniewicz said. 'He's going to be sadly missed by all his teammates.'

Besides the activities, Hewes loved a good joke.

He once stuck toilet paper onto the ceiling of his school bathroom in fourth grade.

'It was pretty funny,' Larison said. 'It was kind of his idea.'

Hewes kept the pranks coming as he moved from New Hingham Regional Elementary to middle school at Hampshire Regional.

In eighth grade, Hewes, who had dyslexia, was given tapes to help him read at home. While he kept the reading instruction on one side of the tape, he recorded over the other side with country music.

'His middle school teachers all just said you couldn't be mad at him,' said Tammy Lyons, who works at Hampshire Regional High School and has known the Hewes family for 21 years. 'He was just such a character.'

Lyons said Hewes enjoyed life and spent a lot of time with his 'tight-knit' group of friends, including her son, Jacob Lyons.

'I have a bottle of tabasco sauce here because no matter what he ate he always had tabasco,' Lyons said. 'We didn't use it, but he had his own personal bottle.'

Students will continue to add to the scrapbook for the next couple of weeks. When they started making their pages Monday, many of them used stickers of baseball bats, mitts and balls provided by a guidance counselor, but they also printed photos off the Internet to reveal Hewes' wide array of other interests, like fishing, dirt-bike riding, carpentry, hunting and quadding.

'If there was one word to describe the kids today, it's thoughtful,' Fish said.

Memorial donations may be made to the Tyler Hewes Memorial Fund c/o Goshen Recreation Unlimited, P.O. Box 165, Goshen, MA 01032.

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