

Denton is KMIS Teacher of Year

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER
Staff Writer

Susan Denton asks her fifth grade students for examples of similes and metaphors.

"I need to see every hand go up," she tells the class.

Denton then asks for examples of personification.

"The trees waved in the wind," one student answers.

"Our country wept for its dead soldiers," another offers.

Onomatopoeia is the next term. Words which sound like what they mean, Denton reminds the class.

A review of alliteration, repetition and hyperbole and the lesson ends.

Denton is Kings Mountain Intermediate School's teacher of the year. An honor she says is especially meaningful since this is the last year for Kings Mountain District Schools before becoming part of a merged system. Denton attended district schools through graduation, did her student teaching and has spent her entire 23-year career here.

It was in Jackie Blanton's third grade classroom at East Elementary that she first began preparing for a career in education. Denton would literally watch every move her teacher made, down to how she opened and closed the window blinds.

Daily, Denton would come home and play school, pretending to teach. That year her parents gave their aspiring educator a chalk board.

Denton describes the profession as a "calling."

After graduating from Gardner-Webb, Denton student taught at North under Margaret Spratt. Then her dream came true, her own fourth grade classroom at West Elementary.

For years she happily taught there but two decades into her career Denton realized it was time for a change. She spent a year teaching science and social studies at Kings Mountain Middle School in preparation for a move to the newly created intermediate school. There she teaches her favorite subject, language arts.

"It's never the same. We never get bored with the genres," Denton said.

Students learn fiction, poetry, non-fiction, drama and reading practical instructions. Denton admits teaching fiction with its characters and plot developments is her favorite part of the curriculum.

The figurative language of poetry is new to her students who often grapple with the non-literal for the first time.

"They're trying. They're working really hard at it," she said.

Drama first appeared on state end of grade testing last year. Denton took her students to Owens Auditorium in Charlotte to see Edgar Allen Poe's work performed. She's confident the field trip was a learning experience.

"They're going to ace the drama part," she said.

Students in Denton and

her fifth grade colleagues' classrooms have created illustrations of what they've studied this year. The work hangs in the hall outside the cafeteria. Class pauses for a quick review on the way to lunch. Fourth grade teachers tell the fifth grade faculty that their students also have benefited.

That type of teamwork characterizes the intermediate school, according to Denton.

"It's wonderful. That helps to have co-workers to talk to about what works and doesn't work," she said.

Denton and her sister Allison Carswell, a seventh grade language arts instruc-

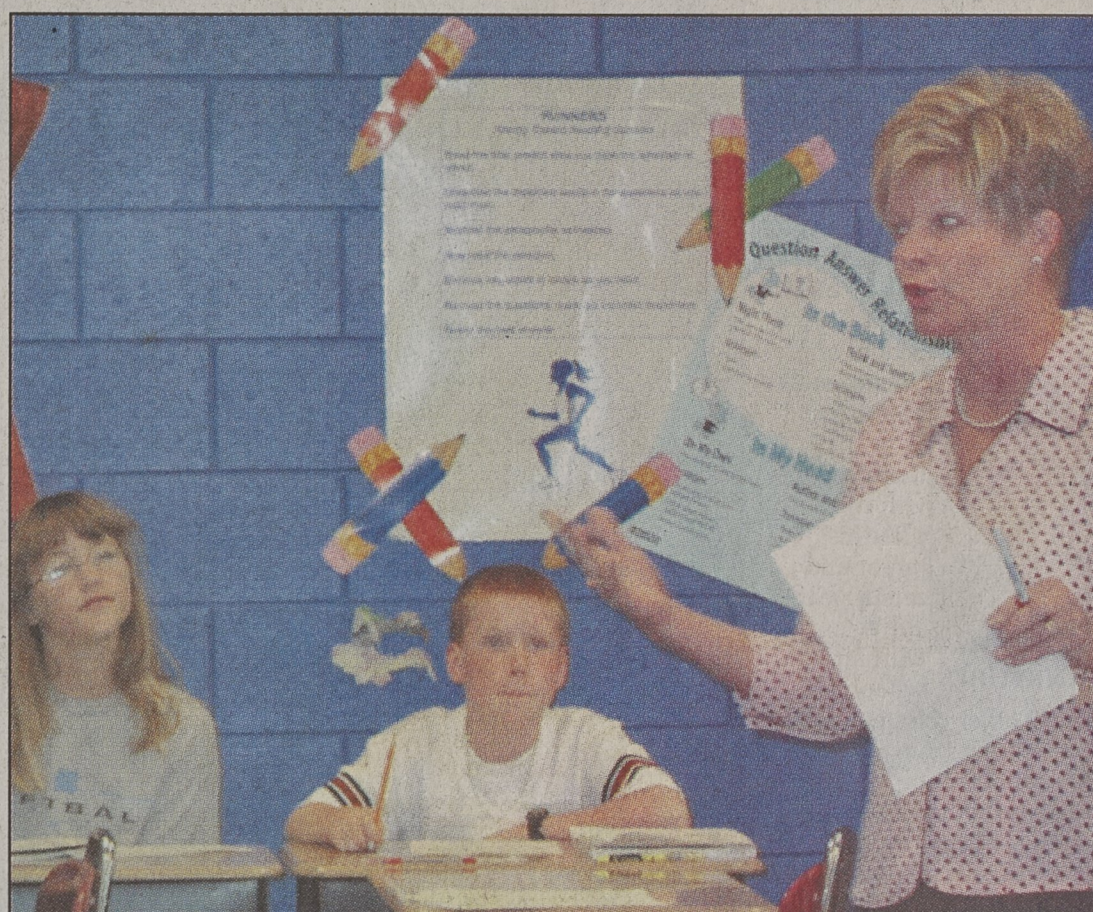
tor at Burns Middle School, have engaged their classes in competition over end of grade test scores.

When the sisters were teaching fourth and eighth grades which both include North Carolina history, they toured the state one summer filming segments for the classroom.

When she isn't at school, Denton enjoys reading and spending time with her nine-month-old granddaughter Olivia Clare.

"She's my heart. I love her so much," she said.

Denton and her husband Dan Denton have two children, Holly Denton Wall and Seth Denton.



ANDIE BRYMER / HERALD
Susan Denton makes a point to her class at Kings Mountain Intermediate School

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SALES HOURS:
Mon.-Fri. 9am-7pm
Saturday 9am-5pm

Volleyball camp at KM High School

A volleyball camp will be held June 7-10 from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at Kings Mountain High School.

Rising sixth through ninth graders may participate.

For more information call Suzanne Grayson at 734-5647 ext. 34 or 482-5284.