

Diandra Bridges

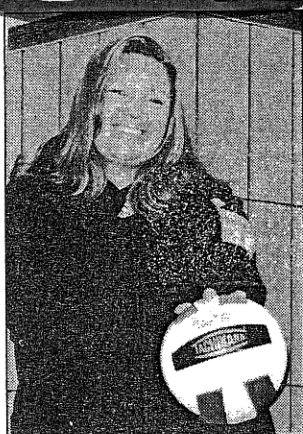


Photo: Elisabeth Heslop/
Calgary Journal

Diandra Bridges coaches Sr. Boys volleyball and Sr. Girls basketball at Ernest Manning High School. She has coached three seasons of volleyball and

four seasons of basketball, and

this is her fifth year at Ernest Manning. She also teaches math, physical education and dance.

Her basketball teams have won three silver medals at the City Championships and one League Championship. Her volleyball teams have won two League Championships and one gold medal at the City Championship. Six of her seven teams have earned a medal or won a League Championship.

Q: What was the most rewarding experience you have had as a coach?

A: Definitely the bonds that I make with the students. Last year, on my boys' team, there were five boys that I coached through grades 10, 11, and 12, and on my girls' basketball team there were nine girls that I had (in) grades 10, 11, and 12, so those 14 students I feel like I created this amazing bond. I write reference letters for them, they stay in touch while they're in university, and I just think I'm really close with these students. And in turn, there are a couple students that need some help with life issues and they felt that they could turn to me and ask for help and advice and I was able to be there for them for those reasons.

Q: Have you had a particular child that you coached that influenced you in your everyday life?

A: Three years ago, almost at the exact same time I had two kids in the Children's Hospital. One had brain surgery and one had cancer. And their positive outlook and the way they fought through — both of them have recovered and they're doing well — but neither of them did the "why is this happening to me" or "it's not fair" or anything. They just accepted that this is happening and they had to figure out a way to get through it and that really showed me that people shouldn't sweat the small stuff because there are a lot bigger things happening out there in real life that are far more important. And if these kids can overcome those challenges then adults should be able to do the same and let go of the little things that don't actually make a big difference in life.

Q: What was the biggest upset or loss that you have faced as a coach? How did you talk

to your team after it was over?

A: My biggest disappointment was losing out in the semi-finals by one point when I felt this was the strongest team I'd had and the best chance to win a gold medal at the City Championships. After it was over the biggest thing I had to say to the team was that I had never seen a team play with more heart than I'd seen that team that day. Those girls would not give up until the last buzzer; we actually scored eight points within the last minute to come within one point of the game. They just didn't give up, not even in the last 60 seconds of play. They were just fighting so hard and I knew that they wanted it just as badly as I wanted it. I was disappointed *with* them, not *in* them. I wasn't disappointed with how they played; I thought many of them played their best game ever. I was really proud of how much heart they played with that day.

—Elisabeth Heslop

FORMER E.M.H.S. TEACHER

CALGARY BESTSELLERS

THIS
WEEK

FICTION

LAST
WEEK



A local book reading helped propel Roberta Rees — along with fellow City of Calgary W. O. Mitchell Book Award nominees Glen Dresser and Diane Guichon — onto the bestseller list.

5 **Long After Fathers.** Roberta Rees. A collection of short stories set in the Crowsnest Pass by the Calgary author.

MANNING GETS NEW PRINCIPAL

For the third time since Manning was built, we have a new principal, Mr. Morley McDougall. He was formerly director of Vocational Education at the School Board, before that a teacher at James Fowler, and before that, part of a team that attempted to evaluate and improve High Schools in the Edmonton Area.

The coming of a new principal to this school should give us all a chance, both students and teachers, to make a fresh start at things which we may not have been able to do under the former administration. It gives us a chance to see how we affect the administration and influence its decisions.

In an interview done with Mr. McDougall last year before he had formally accepted office, I had the opportunity to see how he feels about some of the issues that will affect you as students. Knowing a little bit about your principal and how he feels about different things will help you to understand the administration and to avoid some of the misunderstandings that occur.

On the issue of attendance, Mr. McDougall said that a non-compulsory attendance policy was almost impossible in the public school system. However, he did say that if students are compelled to cut classes, the reason would have to be looked into. "If education is worthwhile, ... it has to be relative to what the students want, this is important from a teaching point of view." It would seem now, that the teacher has a responsibility to make you want to come to his or her classes rather than just make you come. He also said that students should not just consider attending classes for what they can learn, but for what they can contribute to the learning of others in the class. "School has to supplement so much that we gain from outside activities."

When asked about growing student alienation, Mr. McDougall said that even while things today are growing more and more impersonal, there was no need for this to happen in the school. "I think there is a time through educa-

that would kick people out like that.
Teachers like to teach, kids like to
learn."
Abble came closest to reaching the
crowd when he talked about American im-
perialism. About U.S. imperialism
he said, "The United States of America
is one sixteenth the world population."

education the students are receiving. He also said that the teachers and administration should "help" the student make decisions for themselves.

Our principals attitude seems to be one encouraging students to work with the administration within the system. He agrees with the set up of the system as it stands and would like to see the students working within it to improve the quality of the education they receive rather than trying to go against the system. He mentioned the fact that for the bulk of the student population, these are the last years of their education and he wants to make them as meaningful as possible.

Mr. McDougall is a man who is fairly easy to talk to and is not condescending or lecturing in the way he talks to you. Once the student body realizes this some of the problems that occur because of misunderstanding may be avoided. The change or difference between administrations will not be a physical change. As was said before, our new principal believes in the system that we are now in and does not want to change it much, what he does want to do however, is make full use of the system as it stands. When the change comes, it will be in the form of a an attitude in which students and teacher are encouraged to take a more active part in the educational system that they are a part of.

The opinions expressed in this newspaper are not necessarily those of the administration, newspaper staff, teaching staff, schoolboard officials, aldermen, the mayor or anyone else.