

Teacher Feature

Discovering a whole new world

Editor's Note: *This is the fourth in a series of articles highlighting the "Teachers of the Year" at each Yukon public school. The district's "Teacher of the Year" will be named this March.*

**By Alicia Monroe
Staff Writer**

"Most children don't realize there was history before the birth of Christ," said Linda Ommart, Ralph A. Myers Elementary School's Teacher of the Year.

Up through the sixth grade, students study only the western hemisphere, about subjects such as pilgrims and Indians, Ommart said.

"Then they get to sixth grade and they discover a whole new world," Ommart said, noting their excitement about mummies as they study ancient Egypt.

Ommart teaches math and spelling to her homeroom students, and language and social studies to all Myers' sixth graders.

She credited her fourth grade teacher, Mrs. Alverson, for instilling in her a love of social studies.

Ommart earned her bachelor's degree in elementary education at Southern Nazarene University. She did her student teaching at Myers.

Ommart then taught first and sec-

ond grade at Myers for three years before leaving to stay home with her children.

Eleven years later, she returned. She has been teaching sixth grade at Myers for seven years.

"I love a challenge," Ommart said as she rested her cheek in the palm of her hand. "When a child cannot understand something, I love to try to find different ways to make the light come on."

Myers' top teacher said she also believes it's important to do hands-on activities and to make learning fun, or "give them a little sugar with the medicine."

Ommart lives in Yukon with her children and her husband Mike. Their daughter Lisa is a senior at Yukon High School, and son Brian is in the eighth grade at Independence Middle School.

"I really like Yukon schools. I wouldn't have my children anywhere else. As a teacher, I want all parents to feel the same," she said.

For five years, Ommart and several other teachers at Myers have spent each August going to the homes of their students for the new school year.

She said she takes a small gift, such as a pencil, to each child and chats with the parents.

"Your average day is a myth," Ommart said. She cited further examples of grading and helping students after school.

"You have to be prepared to put in a lot of time, but there are a lot of rewards - you have so many opportunities to do good in the life of a child."