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CATHERINE JEAN "JEANNIE" SHANAFELT

Thirty-three years ago, the Lord blessed us with an angel, a jokester, a painter, an educator, a fisherman, a football fanatic, and an animal lover. Catherine Jean Shanafelt showed us how to walk by faith and not by sight.

Saegert Principal Don Hastings says Shanafelt will definitely leave behind a void at the local campus.

"Jeannie was a strong member of the Saegert family," said Hastings. "It's been a hard few days. She's an incredible role model -- never had a down day, was always very interested in what the kids were doing, always took a leadership role in the campus activities. She was someone that was truly respected."

Hastings, who had an opportunity to observe Shanafelt in her classroom, says the woman was clearly talented.

"(She) truly had the ability to make kids be interested in learning. She had a love of reading and when you walk into her classroom, you can see that. She's outstanding in the history/social studies (area) -- me, personally, I'm going to miss the opportunity I had to talk with her. She spent a lot of time working with us closely in the office. She was the leader of our site management team, which is the guiding post of the school. She took on the leading role this year and has done an incredible job." said Hastings. Shanafelt has been employed with the Seguin ISD since 1998 and also taught students at the Erskine Sixth Grade Center at McQueeney Elementary. According to Dr. Irene Garza, Seguin ISD superintendent, Shanafelt treated her students with respect and felt it was her role to both teach the subject matter and aid their families in customs, cooperation, and appropriate behavior in the democratic society. The philosophy she espoused and practiced was that students should be able to "express opinions without recourse, develop without limits, and understand each other without prejudice."

During the past week, Jeannie spoke to her mother of many different things, including her most recent visit by angels. She talked about her students. She loved to teach. She commented how she hoped that she had made difference in their lives. We know her life affected them because she certainly affected us.

She spoke of unconditional love. She was so thankful for her family and friends who loved her and took the time to visit with her.

Anyone who was close to Jeannie knew of her favorite things: 1. Fishing-she had quite a competitive streak about her. She didn't want Samuel to catch a bigger fish. 2. Movies-she couldn't watch a movie unless she had popcorn. 3. Yellow cake with chocolate icing, she couldn't get enough! 4. Nina's shrimp dip. 5. Monday night football: Her grandmother, Nina, complained that she could hardly pay the telephone bills during football season because Jeannie and Poppa would call each other after each touchdown and discuss the play. Poppa and Jeannie were addicted to their football. Where will Poppa find a finer partner? 6. She loved her neighbors at the condo. 7. She loved Red Lobster. She and her teacher friends would eat there everytime they went to San Marcos for school supplies. 8. She loved the Lord. Her walk with the Lord was one all of us should emulate.

Jeannie was not a shy retiring type. If you asked her an opinion, be prepared. She wouldn't hesitate to express her feelings. She entered a room talking and left the room talking. You always knew where you stood with her.

Jeannie was not handicapped. She had physical problems which slowed her down at