

First I will begin with the main thing: I miss teaching at Gavilan Hills Academy.

I had been teaching sign language at GHA for a number of years when, in the summer of 2006, a real estate agent took me to look at a house that had been built recently in a distant town. My husband and I had been house hunting off and on for five years, but the day I saw that house my husband bought it. All of a sudden, it hit me that I wouldn't be returning to teach at GHA in the fall.

Because it was the middle of the summer, GHA Director Maggie Kennedy was out of town so I couldn't arrange a personal meeting to tell her my news. Before I contacted her, I drove out to GHA and walked the grounds trying to internalize that I would not be coming back in the fall.

As I walked around GHA thinking about how much I would miss the first day of school, which I enjoyed so much each year I was teaching, I thought back to specific students and how I was sure each had grown taller over the summer, matured, and was ready to begin the new school year. I was sad to think I would miss that exciting first day of school.

I truly miss teaching the students and talking to them about some of my experiences as a deaf person. I taught them how others treat us, communicate with us, or ignore us because we are deaf. As each school year progressed, situations would arise where the students became aware that I could not hear all the information. My students learned how a deaf person functions, and they learned to communicate in sign language. It was very heartwarming to see how sensitive the students became to my needs and how willing they were to make adjustments so that I could get the information I needed.

My classes were very structured, but at times some of the funniest things happened and how the students expressed themselves in such a humorous way was ever so much fun. I enjoyed the students at GHA more than I can express and I miss them so very much.

I have not taught again since leaving GHA, and there have been moments when all I have wanted to do is move back "home" to Gilroy where I could teach at GHA because I was happier there than I have been for a long time. The students made teaching at GHA a joy and not just a job.

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