

Motivational magic amazes children at Irvine School

By Heather Heinrichs
Commentator/Courier

The rules are simple, when something funny happens - laugh, when something amazing happens - clap, and if you want to get picked to help the magician - be respectful.

Those were the guidelines Steve Harmer laid down before he started his motivational magic show at the Irvine School last Friday, teaching the kids his courage, character and caring presentation.

"The magic touches their heart and the message gets into their head, and that's my whole purpose," said Harmer.

During his hour and half of magic and teaching, Harmer rode a six foot tall uni-cycle, pulled a rabbit out of a box, and freed a dove from a newspaper all the while involving the kids in learning about how to be self-confident, a good friend, and courage under peer pressure.

Although the older teens didn't seem interested in the message, when Harmer tore up a newspaper and magically made it whole again, they were amazed just as much as the younger children were.

It was obvious how much Harmer enjoyed seeing all the smiling faces looking up at him from the crowd of enthralled children, and the former principal doesn't deny that he loves his job.

"My job satisfaction is way up here. Somebody once said that when you're living your passion, you never work another day in your life. . . and that's kind of where I'm at."

Although he only started teaching with motivational magic four years ago, Harmer was a principal, counselor and teacher with the Calgary Board of Education for 21 years and has been a professional magician for 25.

"It's a dream come true to do this program, and I get to deliver a message in a way that makes kids understand because they remember the magic and they tie the message to it."

Harmer has four different shows: courage, character and caring; don't laugh at me; be aware and care; and decision, deception and drugs.

The courage, character and caring program dares kids to be decent, to believe in themselves, to be different, to take a stand, to play

fair, and to be a friend.

The don't laugh at me program teaches respect - Right or wrong (the choice is yours), Encourage others, Safe from ridicule, Promise keeper (dependability), Excellence (doing your best), Caring about others, and True friends.

Be aware and Care is a bully prevention program teaching kids about being aware - understanding bullies and victims, being yourself - how positive self-esteem can prevent bullying, being a super kid, being caring - how to help a victim, being courageous - doing what's right even when it's not popular, being a friend - getting involved in the lives of others.

The fourth program is decision, deception and drugs, which is a smoking and drug prevention program.

It teaches the kids to choose to have fun, choose to be cautious, choose friends carefully, choose habits wisely, choose to be drug free and what it best.

He has a new show for the kids each year. Taking insight from his years as a teacher and principal, and from the information he gathers from other princi-



The crowd of children in the Irvine School gym gasp in amazement as Steve Harmer pulls a dove out of a newspaper.

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pals, Harmer decides what problems he needs to address in his magic shows.

The professional enter-

tainer and teacher takes his motivational magic to all of the Calgary schools, many

Southern Alberta schools has even done one show in B.C. and one in Saskatchewan.