

## A final good-bye to a good friend

In the fall of 1994, a quiet, unassuming man came to WHS to fill the east room in the woods building. He came with knowledge about engines, had a head for designing and welding what one might need to do a special job. His creations were not ones that would be considered 'pretty'; instead, a machine worked better, ran more efficiently or fulfilled a niche.

That talented man was Marvin Thayer.

Although he was never much of a talker, Thayer had a way of getting his point across so that it was remembered. He did it with kindness, with few words and a look through the top of his thick glasses. Students took to him quickly; he was selected as Teacher of the Year by the Class of 1995.

This was one tough man. In December of 2003, Thayer had a toothache that just wouldn't go away. Instead of going to the dentist, he pulled it himself! However, that didn't solve the pain issue. When he finally got checked out, he had throat cancer. Thayer suffered through surgery and radiation treatment in January and February of 2004. When he was finally able to return to his classroom, much of his energy and enthusiasm had been zapped. Eating and swallowing were difficult and his voice was raspy. However, his tough demeanor pulled him through and he continued his job missing few school days.

Finally mind and body issues won out over stamina and persistence. Marvin Thayer ran his last bead, tuned his last engine, teased his last student and caught his last fish. He died Monday, March 29, 2010, at his home in Wheatland.

Thayer will be missed by students and teachers alike. He never complained, never foisted his opinion on others. "He came down hard on students who deserved it," said Zack Rose. He just went about doing what he was supposed to do, watching high school sports especially when his children were participating, enjoying the kids with whom he came in contact--and going fishing!

My classroom was just a few steps down the hall from Thayer's. When I needed a listener, when things got hectic in the journalism room, I could go into his room and get some quick solace from a man who never judged or thought he was better. He'd grin with that cocked-up corner of his mouth and say, "It's almost Friday."

Mrs. Pat Mitchell

