

# The Mayflower Log



FALL 2020 VOLUME 20, NUMBER 4

## A Conversation with Steve

The Mayflower Community is home to about 250 residents who are notably susceptible to the COVID-19 disease caused by the novel coronavirus. From March until the end of September, no residents or employees have been infected with the exception of one health care center resident who was asymptomatic and two employees who have re-turned to work. This is an amazing fact that the editors of the *Log* do not think is an accident. This issue of the *Log* explores the character of Mayflower and the outlooks and actions of the Mayflower staff in relationship to the COVID-19 crisis.

We hope to move into our future as a retirement community by holding up and building on our strengths implicit in the acts and commitments reported herein.

*Following is an interview with Steve Langerud, Executive Director, by Gene Wubels, Log staffer and President of the Mayflower Residents Association:*



**Steve Langerud meets with staff (from bottom left) Scott Gruhn, Christy Kaisand, Pam Vosburg, Kellie McGriff, Bob Mann, and Jack Morrison.**

**Gene:** The COVID-19 pandemic has had disastrous health consequences for many life-plan communities, but not so far for Mayflower. Have we been lucky? *(continued on p. 5)*

### INSIDE: MEET NEW RESIDENTS:

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# Mayflower staff works hard to keep

*Life at Mayflower has changed significantly since the pandemic hit, that's for sure. But the community has hummed along, albeit at a different pace, thanks in large part to the special services and accommodations provided by the staff. Here is a look at what each department has done to make that happen.*

## Dining Services

The two biggest changes for Scott Gruhn and Mayflower's Dining Services can be summarized by one word—delivery. When the Buckley Dining Room was closed from March to August, residents were able to order meals for home delivery without a delivery charge. The dining room reopened in August with socially distant tables—two chairs to a table—and the delivery fee was reinstated October 1.

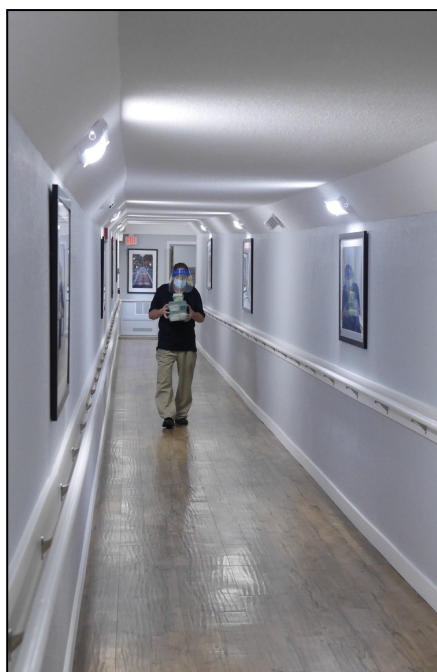
In addition, instead of the Lester bus taking residents on weekly grocery trips, residents can now call grocery stores with their orders and have them delivered to the campus, where the staff delivers them to their apartments or homes.

Along with the home delivery of meals has come another change: online ordering of meals in the kitchen. Scott had debated

the electronic ordering program even before the pandemic arrived but had wondered whether it would be used. He can now report that it has become an essential part of the dining operation. Online ordering reduces the number of orders placed by phone, a practice that can result in misunderstandings and mistakes.

Scott said his staff's experience of delivering individual meals to the Health Center during past quarantines there when residents were confined to their rooms prepared them well for the meal delivery program.

He has been contacted by colleagues at other facilities asking about using a computer software program like the Mayflower delivery system, specifically how to keep cold food cold and hot food hot.



**In the Buckley kitchen, Jacque Kirby (photo at left) reviews orders. Sue Allen (center) takes a completed order, and delivers it to Eugene McCaw at his Edwards apartment.**



# residents safe and comfortable

## Health Center

Jacki Hicklin, a nurse at Mayflower for 18 years, has seen her job change drastically since the pandemic began. Before COVID, she was in charge of admissions, wounds and general infection control. Six weeks after completing the latest regulatory training for infection control, COVID hit.

Now, working with Mayflower Associate Director Kellie McGriff and others, Jacki focuses mainly on implementing the ever-changing COVID regulations from the government and documenting how well Mayflower is following them. Violating the PPE and frequency of testing for the virus can bring hefty fines.

Jacki got into nursing because she loves taking care of people. But she now spends at least 75 percent of her time documenting Mayflower's compliance with the rules. The stress of the pandemic has affected Jacki and her family. Her hus-



**Nurse Jacki Hicklin executes a trial run on Mayflower's new Covid-19 testing machine**

band, a paramedic who takes care of COVID-positive patients every shift, have lived separately since the beginning of the pandemic. She and her husband are worried that their children, now back in school, may be exposed to the virus. For Jacki, it's not just that her job has changed—so has her life.



## Housekeeping

The entire housekeeping staff have had a challenging time working to keep the coronavirus at bay at Mayflower. Their regular schedules have been changed around many times to allow more time for cleaning and disinfecting with a Clorox 360 machine in order to keep everything disinfected every minute of the day—the first line of defense against the virus. With all this, the added requirement of wearing masks and shields does not make their job easy—but absolutely vital to residents' safety.

**Shirley Parrott disinfects a hallway with a special Clorox 360 machine.**

## Technology and Risk Management

Joe Derby stepped into his new position as head of the Technology and Risk Management Department, just as the coronavirus was emerging across the country. He had no idea that his new job would include, among other things, technology like Zoom, Facetime and Skype. all the while wearing a mask!

"This was a learning curve at first since personally I had not used these services very much," Joe said, "so

much research and several headaches later, we started to run like a well-oiled machine. I have learned a tremendous amount in a short period of time."

With restrictions on meetings and social gatherings not only at Mayflower but throughout much of the country, everything had to go virtual. Joe has helped record weekly worship services. At the Health Center, where most things go on for Joe, he set up courtyard stations where residents and family members can meet for limited visits.



**Joe Derby prepares to set up a staff meeting**

## Facilities

For Jeff (Ollie) Oliver and Justin Routier, both members of the Facilities staff, their normal routine was initially upended when Mayflower initiated safety measures to guard against COVID-19. In order to reduce face-to-face contact, their usual days of popping in and out of homes and apartments to fix everything imaginable were altered to responding mainly to emergency repairs. By mid-summer, as Mayflower gradually opened up a bit more, their days also returned to a more normal pattern. With masks in place, however.

Keeping them both very busy is delivering packages from UPS and FedEx. Those packages are all delivered to the Facilities Building, so the drivers do not have to go all over campus, where Ollie and Justin pick them up and make the deliveries. With the increase in online shopping, as expected, this has greatly increased.

Ollie and Justin both say that Mayflower residents have been patient, understanding, and concerned about their well-being. "They've been great," both agree.



**Replacing lights is part of Justin Routier's normal work day.**

## Conversation with Steve

(continued from p. 1)

**Steve:** I suppose we have, but luck doesn't seem to me to explain things that depend on execution. The Mayflower staff, with the help of residents, has performed amazingly well across the board to keep us virus-free. Fred Smith, my 8th grade basketball coach, pointed out that good performance requires three things: aptitude, coached technique, and practice. The staff qualifies and strives in all three aspects all the time. This requires hard work over a long time to get where we are today. I think the staff will tell you that good luck, such as we have, tends to happen to those who work hard.

**Gene:** What facilities and operations of Mayflower have been impacted by COVID-19, and what changes do we need to think about for the future?

**Steve:** The loss of use of the Carman Center, Obermiller Center, and the clinical and service spaces in the Health Center is huge. The impairment of our use of the dining facilities is also important. Eating together was one way we lived. A healthy community demands activities that used to occur in those spaces. Depending on how the pandemic evolves, we need to be thinking about new spaces and about new ways of carrying on our social and personal interactions. We have made some promising starts such as the shrimp boil dinner and the Scottish dinner, which featured limited socializing (at a distance), some shared writings, and the roving bagpipe band. It also required extraordinary effort by the staff to make, package, and deliver the single meals.

**Gene:** What changes in our means of

communicating and interacting as a residential community are being thought about and acted upon?

**Steve:** We can do quite a lot by meeting outside with protective equipment for brief times, and we will continue to progress on this front. We also need to recognize that Mayflower must make information technology a priority for all residents. We must communicate and share our lives, news, and activities, and meet for talk. The means for this now depends on internet connection. The recent successful MRA Executive Council and Town Meetings, as well as the Chapel and Sunday Services online, book clubs, and coffee groups, are examples of new ways of interacting socially by electronic means.

**Gene:** Financial and other relationships in retirement communities must of course be transactional. Is there another dimension of Mayflower important for our future that is not transactional?

**Steve:** What I have spoken of as the "Mayflower Way" goes well beyond the identifiable transactions. I think it shows up in the nuances of the services of the staff. It shows up in a member of the housekeeping staff helping clean the refrigerator of a resident, a worker in the kitchen correcting the meal of a resident because they knew the resident did not like rutabagas, and innumerable checks on whether sump pumps worked during big rain storms. The staff know the residents, and the residents know and trust the staff. These intangibles show that a deep commitment to each other underlies what goes on at Mayflower. I am glad to see this issue of the *Log* dedicated to celebrating our great staff.



## WELCOME BOB AND KEIKO BUTTERFIELD

Bob Butterfield and Keiko Tashiro met on August 4, 1973, in Hinsdale, Illinois. Bob's friend Barbara was giving a picnic for some Japanese visitors and asked Bob for help. Bob enjoyed the visitors so much that, within two days, he announced to Barbara that he was in love with one of them.

When the group returned to Japan, Bob got busy studying Japanese and wrote to Keiko in Japanese (with *kanji!*). Bob then quit his job and traveled to Japan in December 1973. Keiko and Bob were soon married in the traditional Japanese style.



Keiko comes from a hard-working farm family in Chiba Prefecture, just east of Tokyo. She has three brothers. Their mother raised them as a single mom. Because of the family's financial hardship, Keiko was the only sibling to attend high school, which in Japan is not free. She was a very good science student and played clarinet in the marching band. After graduation, she worked as a teacher's aide in the biology department, saved some money, and took a trip to the U.S.

Bob grew up in LaGrange, Illinois. In high school, he was obsessed with language study: first Latin (4 years), then French, and at Knox College more French and German. Then he transferred to Roosevelt University, where he added Italian and

Spanish. After four years of doing French literary criticism in grad school at the University of Chicago, he left to take a high-paying but boring job at AT&T, paid his debts, saved his money, and in the summer of 1973 was ready to meet Keiko.

After a year back in the U.S. (1974-75), Bob and Keiko returned to Japan, where Bob taught English. While there, he got the idea of studying religion at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. And so, with their nine-month-old daughter Sarah, they went to Chicago in the fall of 1977, and soon had two more children, Kenji and Rachel. After doing M.Div. and Ph.D. (Biblical Studies), Bob joined the UCC and served congregations in Illinois before Bob and Keiko were called by the Presbyterian Church (USA) in 2004 to be missionaries in the Northeast of Brazil (Salvador da Bahia). Bob taught in an ecumenical institute, and Keiko worked in its library. After serving two UCC congregations in Iowa (Milford and Urbandale), Bob and Keiko were again called to mission, this time in Portugal (2010-2015).

Keiko is a Japanese citizen and remains quite Japanese. She loves gardening, yoga, and tai-chi. She is very attached to her family, the one here and the one in Japan. Bob is still nuts about languages.

Bob and Keiko are happy to be part of the Mayflower Community.

*Story and pictures submitted by Bob Butterfield*

## WELCOME CAROL GRAFF

Rural Malcom, then Brooklyn, and now Mayflower in Grinnell. The places that Carol Graff has lived are one way of telling her life story. But her addresses don't say anything about what is most important to her--her family. "I've always been family-oriented," Carol says. "They mean everything to me."

Carol moved to Altemeier 103 in mid-May. Interviewed for the *Log* in late August, she said her apartment was beginning to feel comfortable, "but it's not home yet." She has become acquainted with most of her immediate neighbors. (Dot and Bob Anderson were especially welcoming) but because of the COVID-19 restrictions on group activities, she has not experienced the feeling of the larger Mayflower community. "You do what you have to do," she says.

Carol has two sons, Jason Hall and Jeff Hall, both of whom live in the area. There are four grandchildren. Jason owns and operates a tiling business. Jeff has his own trucking firm. "Both of them have done very well. They have worked very hard," Carol says.

Her three granddaughters and one grandson range in age from 22 to 16. The eldest, Amber, is married and lives in Ames. Jaylene lives in Nashville, Tenn. Grandson Austin attends Haw-

keye Tech in Waterloo. The youngest, Janae, is a sophomore at Grinnell High School.

In rural Malcom, Carol and her husband farmed and raised feeder pigs. She did her part on the farm and helped when needed with baby-sitting for her young grandchildren



As the children grew and became involved in school activities, Carol attended countless school events, especially sports. Basketball, football, volleyball – Carol was a faithful (and proud) fan. "I don't think I missed many of their games," she said. "I enjoyed watching whatever they did. That has kept me going."

Carol's husband, Kenny Graff, passed away in 2014.

A circle of good friends in Malcom and Brooklyn has also been an important part of Carol's life. She hopes to maintain those friendships as well as create new friendships at Mayflower.

*Mary Schuchmann*

## WELCOME FRED AND PATTY JOHNSON

Fred and Patty Johnson are moving to the Mayflower, but they are not far from where they began: tightly connected with the Grinnell Community. Both Fred and Patty are from Grinnell, and both attended Grinnell High School. They were married

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## Fred and Patty Johnson

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in 1957. Fred is the son of two Grinnellians, LeRoy and Helen Johnson; his sister Darlene (DeeDee) farms with her husband Jim Shope in Toledo, Iowa. Patty is the daughter of Grinnellian William (Bill) Peak and Frances McIlrath Peak. Patty's sister, Jean Kinnaird, lives in Grinnell, and her brother Bob Peak, formerly of Honolulu,



now also lives in Grinnell. As she grew up, Patty had lots of Peak cousins who were like siblings to her.

The three children their marriage produced (Shelly Greiner of Adel, Iowa; Gigi Burkett of Waukee, Iowa; and Stan Johnson of Grinnell) have resulted in 11 grandchildren and 18 great grandchildren, who range from 3 months to 15 years.

Fred started his work life working in what he calls a filling station, then moved to car sales. He ended up in partnership in the Eisenman Motors dealership with Al Eisenman; he enjoyed working with Al, Slim

Flanagan and Kirk Halstead. In his work, he loved the opportunity to meet people. Patty began her work life at Grinnell Mutual Reinsurance, did in-home child care, and then spent 30 years working with the Physical Education and Athletics department at Grinnell College. She treasures the relationships she had with John Pfitsch and Dee Fairchild, both of whom she describes as "great bosses" who became "special friends."

Patty and Fred love to travel, and their trips have taken them to Hawaii, Great Britain, Ireland, Spain, and Portugal. They have wintered in Florida and made escapes to California, Texas, and Arizona. Perhaps their favorite is the summer week at Lake Okoboji with their children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren, a gathering that has been happening for 29 years.

Fred and Patty are family oriented, both toward immediate and extended family. In addition, Fred loves detailing cars and watching sports (especially following his grands and greats as they participate). Patty enjoys reading, walking and using her imagination in her sewing, quilting, and playing with art. Both are glad to be rid of the need to maintain their three-story house, and both appreciate the location and the people of the Mayflower. We are lucky to have them.

*Judith Hunter*

## WELCOME JOHN LANDKAMER

Before John's birth, his mother, Joan Brand Landkamer, had decided that he would be "the musical one." In the late 60's when John was 8, his father, Leo, (who had an adventurous streak) joined the Peace Corps and took the whole family to Ethiopia. For John, it was "a fabulous experience." From 1970 to '73, he attended a school for missionary children, where he played trumpet in the orchestra and piano for other events.

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## John Landkamer

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Coming back to the states was challenging, but as a freshman in high school, he took lessons from a college student at the University of Washington, who instilled in John a permanent passion for later Beethoven. He spent the next three years studying with Helen Tabernitie, a charismatic, domineering, forceful teacher.

John began college at Washington State University, then transferred to the University of Victoria in British Columbia, where he continued studying piano. Deciding to explore other venues, he went to stay with his dad in Sudan,



**Actuarial Action Photo: John at work for Grinnell Mutual**

where he worked in an office as an intern and became interested in math. He took classes in a community college and earned a B.A. on the subject. In 1989, he took a job as an actuary in Bellevue, WA. Realizing he had more money than he'd ever had, he rented a small house and bought a piano. Eventually, he decided he'd like to explore a new place and a new job; he applied for and accepted an actuary job at GMRC in Grinnell.

John had been playing with a music group at St. Mary's Catholic church when he decided he needed a new project. Then he began hearing of an exceptional organist—Bill Tinker—and soon Bill became John's teacher. John says that as a youngster, he wasn't the best student, and he regards his time in Grinnell as a 'Do-Over.' He LISTENED to Bill—and learned music.

John still practices and plays at St. Mary's, alternating between piano and organ, which he regards as an 'awe-inspiring' instrument. He is very interested in teaching piano—and maybe organ—himself, and would welcome students of any age. He says it would be like 'training his own replacement at St. Mary's.'

We are delighted to have John Landkamer join the Mayflower Community.

*Betty Moffett*

## WELCOME TOM AND EMILY MOORE

The Moores, Tom and Emily, changed location when they moved to Mayflower in April 2020 from their home in Grinnell, but their many active contributions to the community have not changed.

Emily organizes the Sit N Knit group that counts many Mayflower residents among its Thursday afternoon attendees. Each year, she helps to organize a VITA group that helps community members file taxes. She is a founding member of the Poweshiek County Dental Coalition, which helps provide dental treatment to children across the county. And before the pandemic, she and Tom volunteered at the MICA food pantry each week.

Tom keeps similarly busy as a volunteer. In addition to his work at MICA, he has long been the main organizer of the Mayflower Poetry group. He stays involved with many activities at the First Presbyterian Church.

The Moores met and married when they were both students at Carleton College in Minnesota; after a stint in high school teaching, they earned advanced degrees at Dartmouth College and the University of Iowa, before coming to teach in the mathematics department at Grinnell College, where they taught for 29 years.

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## Tom and Emily Moore

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Tom's field is statistics, and he helped organize a group of statistics professors from small liberal arts colleges who met annually for more than 30 years to work on various projects. Emily's research is in combinatorics, including graph theory and difference sets.

In their retirement, they both enjoy reading, sometimes aloud to each other. Tom particularly enjoys reading poetry and biography. Emily knits and gardens, and both are avid walkers. They are also enthusiastic bird-watchers!

Both Moores enjoy their extended family. Their daughter Amy, married to former Grinnell physician Dr. Andrew Broadmoore, is a photographer living in Duluth with children Jack, Edie, and Ian. The Moores' son Phil, a musician and software developer, lives in



**Emily and Tom are ardent bird watchers**

Raleigh NC with his son Autry. Mayflower is fortunate to welcome the busy and talented Moores to this community.

Judy Hunter

## WELCOME BONNIE SCHLESSELMAN

Bonnie Schlesselman moved to Mayflower in July from the family farm near Deep River (although by way of a hospital stay after a stroke). She and her husband Carl owned the farm that had belonged to his family. Along with crops, they raised cattle, hogs, and some sheep. When they discontinued actively farming in the 80's, their son-in-law farmed the place for a few years. Carl unfortunately died 15 years ago and now the entire farm, in Bonnie's name, is in the Conservation Reserve Program.



After Carl graduated from high school, he toured the country with the John Beecher band. Carl had taught himself to play the guitar and loved all kinds of music, especially jazz. After three years of touring, he came home to farm. He soon started his own band, before he and Bonnie were married, and played all over east central Iowa. When their children were older, Bonnie was able to travel with him

When they discontinued actively farming in the 80's, their son-in-law farmed the place for a few years. Carl unfortunately died 15 years ago and now the entire farm, in Bonnie's name, is in the Conservation Reserve Program.

Bonnie and Carl were married in 1963 and raised two children on the farm. Mike now lives in Arkansas and works on small airplane engine repair. Most of these planes are used for crop dusting. Daughter Kris Kiernan lives in Des Moines and works in the office at Des Moines Central High School. Between the two families, there are five grandchildren, and it is obvious that Bonnie is proud of all of them.

Carl had also operated a lawn-mowing repair business. Bonnie says she enjoyed all aspects of farm living, including taking care of a big yard and a big garden.

Before their children arrived, Bonnie worked in Dr. Kenneth Caldwell's office in Montezuma; after they were older she worked for Brownell's for 25 years. At that time Brownell's was just a small company located in Montezuma. Bonnie still enjoys seeing friends she made there.

Bonnie moved into first floor Buckley until her chosen apartment, Montgomery 7, was ready on August 28. She is quite a regular walker (you can tell she is a very motivated, hard worker!), so you may see her rounding the block in nice weather.

Please welcome Bonnie Schlesselman to Mayflower!  
Marge and John Graves

# DAD AND THE OUTHOUSE

*By Marvel LaCasse*

An outhouse, now known as a kybo, was a well-known fixture on many farmsteads and especially country school properties in the forties and early fifties. It is not an entertaining topic of conversation or essays in polite circles, but bear with me...

I attended a country school for all nine of my elementary school years. Grant #2, located about one-half mile from our farm, was easily seen from our house. For many of the years that I attended the school, Dad was elected to be the director. This was a glamorous way of saying he was everything from principal to maintenance man to water boy. He was the person who hired the teacher, fired the teacher, and the personnel person to whom the patrons would take their school grievances. Dad took his responsibility of caring for the school very seriously; and Grant #2 became his "baby".

August was always a busy month for the director, readying the interior of the school for the up-coming session. He also had to maintain the outside grounds which included the outhouses—both boys' and girls'. The inside was cleared of cobwebs and fecal matter, then scrubbed down and disinfected with a Lysol solution. All of this was done as a volunteer with no outside help--not a task for which people eagerly volunteered.

Then the hard part began--making sure both outhouses remained upright for the year. (Since the school was located near the city limits, it was often the target for vandals.) The boys' was easier than the girls' since it backed up against a fence. However the girls' was free-standing and that required a fence post, hand dug, and then a sturdy fence wire around the post into the building to hold it securely to the post. There was always the thought that a good, stiff Iowa wind and/or vandals could knock it over, so he worked hard to prevent that from occurring.

Inevitably, along about Halloween, someone would come late at night and try to knock over the girls' outhouse, but rarely the boys'. Then he would have to repeat the process of cleaning that had occurred in August. Although, then, it was more of a chore since harvest on the farm was in full swing and he had less spare time to attend to the situation and again, no volunteers standing in line to help out.

So began the quest one summer to make the girls' outhouse "tip-over" proof. When he reset the post, he put it in cement as he would do for a corner post. Then he put multiple wires around the post, securing the post to the building. I kind of imagine he stood back and said to himself, "Just try to upset it now!"

The school was visible from the table where we ate our meals, so Dad would sit down and check the status of the outhouses each morning. He even bought binoculars so he would have a better view.

For several years all was well.

Then one fall morning, close to the dreaded holiday, he checked the outhouse situation, thought something was amiss, and said to my mother incredulously, "I believe it is gone!"

"What, it can't be!" She took the binoculars herself, and saw that it was true—the girls' outhouse was no where to be seen; only the boys' was visible.

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Photos by Bill Pollak

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"Maybe it is behind the schoolhouse and we can't see it," he said. He got in the car and went to survey the dilemma. When he got there, it indeed was totally gone from the property. He did find drag marks going from the school's driveway to the road, and proceeding south.

He came home to report the facts to us and went to investigate to where the outhouse had disappeared by following the marks visible on the road. He followed the scrape marks to the college science building. There, it had been dumped into a pit that had existed before the current renovations and new building. A sign had been posted saying "Vacancy" or some other smart remark. He couldn't believe his eyes! This was the last place he had expected to find it. He had to talk to

someone about getting the outhouse out of the pit and back to its rightful place. The girls needed their outhouse back! He ended up in the dean's office.

They were able to find the culprits who had done such a dastardly deed, and Dad lobbied for the idea that they should be made to pay for the girls' inconvenience of having to use the boys' outhouse for the better part of a fortnight! They did!

One day when we got to school there was a brand new set of the World Book Encyclopedia in our classroom library. The class was excited with the new acquisition and spent many hours using them. AND, the outhouse was returned, relatively unscathed, to everyone's relief!