

# *A Day in the* **ADVENTIST**

**S**chool Blends Christianity With Traditional Education," the headline read. In an article for the *Great Falls Tribune*, Starla Seaton, teacher at Shining Mountain Adventist Elementary School, a multigrade school in Lewistown, Montana, summed up the philosophy of her school: "Children are created in the image of God. They are of infinite worth and we want them to reach the maximum potential that God created in them."

We were intrigued. The article went on to say that Mrs. Seaton's school stresses reading, incorporates some of the most modern teaching aids, uses a computer in teaching spelling, and includes many extracurricular activities. At Shining Mountain, science "is not just another reading class, but a 'doing' class." Resource people teach water colors, stained glass

*In a multigrade classroom, the students help one another.*

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painting, and bread dough art. Other special classes include racquetball, swimming, music, and drama.

The article stressed the fact that Mrs. Seaton has state and denominational certification, and that the students in the school take achievement tests each year to measure their scholastic ability.

The school also emphasizes service to others. Children collect canned goods for Thanksgiving baskets and visit a nursing home to do wheelchair exercises with the patients. Last year they prepared a Thanksgiving dinner for their grandparents and older friends in the community.

So how is this different from any high-quality private school? We got a hint from the introduction, but further evidence appears in Mrs. Seaton's statement that

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self-discipline is a goal of the school. "We have only three rules here," says Mrs. Seaton. "We don't hurt each other, we don't hurt things, and we don't hurt ourselves. That covers everything." She adds, "We want to encourage each child to be the best that he can be."

We asked a photographer to use Mrs. Seaton's classroom to illustrate the differences in Adventist education. She followed Erin Joy Donovan, a fifth grader, through her day at Shining Mountain Adventist Elementary School. With the photographer, let's see how Erin, her teacher, and classmates make Adventist education a reality.—Eds. □

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*Roberta Donovan, a free-lance photographer from Lewistown, Montana, produced this photo essay. The primary model, Erin Joy Donovan, is her granddaughter.*