

Two RCHS students balance school, own business

BY JENNY SMITH

There are many RCHS students who work part-time in restaurants and grocery stores, or at perhaps another type of job.

Like most student employees, junior Steven Powell and senior Chris Robbins juggle a job. Unlike most students, both operate and control their own business.

Powell Dry Wall was created nine years ago.

"Everyone in my family is a dry waller," said Powell, "so it inspired me to follow in the family tradition."

So far, his hard work seems to be paying off.

"I own one car, two houses, two trailers which I rent out, and three trucks. I make roughly \$23,000 yearly," Powell said.

Running a business does have a down side. Powell doesn't have time to do much of anything except sleep and eat.

"I work every day during the summer and during the school year I work every other evening and most all weekends," said Powell.

He plans on going to college before deciding if a dry waller is what he wants to be.

"I'm not sure if a dry waller is what I want to be," he says, "I'm going to go to college first and afterwards I want to see how the business is holding up."

Chris Robbins knows the work life all too well. At the age of 14, Chris Robbins' new hobby was

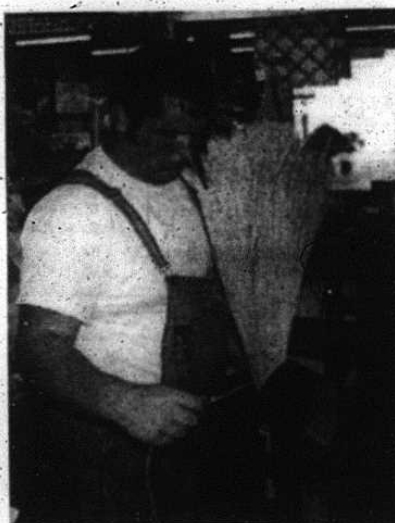
born, and later became his business.

"I discovered my hobby of making brooms by working in the broom shop at the Bittersweet Cabins in Renfro Valley," said Robbins. "I enjoyed it as a hobby and wanted to turn it into a business."

In the summer of 1999 that's just what he did.

"Mr. Jim Harman, a master broom craftsman from Springfield, Kentucky, provided me with the equipment in order to make brooms," he said. "I spend roughly \$2,000 to get supplies needed to make the brooms, and I get them in the mail UPS by a company called R.E. Caddy in North Carolina," Robbins said.

During the week, Robbins works hard during school and then goes home to co-op and run his broom business.



Chris Robbins has run a successful broommaking business since 1999.

"In June 2002, I was juried into the Kentucky Crafted Marketing Program and was one of the youngest craftsmen to be awarded this honor," said Robbins proudly.

So while RCHS students work hard, Powell and Robbins work and maintain the necessary qualities it takes to run a business successfully.

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disappear in a cloud of chalk. Her story is told on "Unsolved Mysteries."

Ben Taylor- Decides to become a librarian due to the influences of Pat (Janet Wells).

Danny Taylor- Moves to the deep south where he joins a band and plays the jug.

Natalee Taylor- Is elected Governor of Kentucky but can accomplish nothing as she cannot find the capitol building in Louisville.

Zach Taylor- Campaigns for Rockcastle to go-wet and allow gambling. After success he opens a casino called "The Barn"

Jessica Thacker- After graduation goes off the visit her friends in Berea, but she is never seen again. There are only "sightings" of her walking the streets of Berea.

Larissa Thomas- Opens automatic car washes across America.

Jennifer Thompson- Goes off to college where she goes wild and comes home with a tattoo, a tongue ring, and blond hair.

Junior Thompson- Invents the world's smallest tires so he can lower his truck to almost touching the ground.

Dallas Todd- Collects Hot Rod cars and becomes famous for collecting the most.

Joseph Wagers- Becomes a regular on the Grand Ole Opry.

Jackie Weaver- Takes up basket weaving and soon his baskets become more popular than Longeneberger.

Jamie Weaver- Becomes the first person to land on Jupiter's rings.

James Wheat- Can be found parked in a silver mini van in Richmond chain smoking

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goal. This August, he will be taking a trip to Hartford, Connecticut to take part in the 5K National Championship.

"I believe this will be a great challenge," he said. "It'll make me a better runner, though."

Both runners take their sport very seriously, putting out more effort in a week than many people do in six months.

"A week of practice typically means running around 40 miles a week," they said.

That's 160 miles a month and over 2,000 miles a year. They run so far, so often their running shoes typically have to be replaced four to five times a year.

"They're awesome," said junior Lauren Clontz.

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Thacker: This honor has provided me with scholarships also and has helped my efforts to be accepted into college.

AC: What has been your most memorable moment here at the high school beside your awards?

Brain: Being executive assistant to Governor Aaron Abernethy at the Kentucky Youth Assembly in November 2002.

Thacker: Being apart of the Journalism staff and watching the paper take shape. Also the social experiences that opened my eyes to how to be a true partner.

AC: What was your least favorite moment of high school?

Brain: The immature gossip and drama.

Thacker: The petty people that make high school almost not enjoyable.

AC: What will you miss most about high school?

Brain: I will miss seeing my friends, hearing the gossip and drama, attending the Friday night football games, and the all-around good time that we had.

Thacker: I will miss my friends, especially Travis Burton (my rock and my friend).

AC: What is the thing you look forward to the most in college?

Brain: I look forward to the independence and freedom of

being on my own while striving to be the best I can be.

Thacker: I look forward to meeting new people and being my own boss.

AC: Who is the one person that you can depend on when you need help?

Brain: My mom is always there whenever I need anything, especially with homework help and filling out applications for college and scholarships.

Thacker: My mother is the one person I can count on to be there for me through all the drama.

AC: What is your favorite flavor of ice cream?

Brain: Cookies and Cream

Thacker: I don't like ice cream.

AC: What is one memorable quote that you would like to leave all the students?

Brain: Don't cry because it is over, smile because it happened.

Thacker: Be good or be good at it.

These young ladies have worked very hard to become the individuals they are today. They have striven to be the best and to do the best in whatever they did. These honors show that hard work pays off. And in the words of Brain, "Study, study, study cause school is your buddy, it is high school students, I mean it is."

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Powell fought her illness and continued teaching, demonstrating a strength few people knew she possessed.

She received much support from arts & humanities teacher Allene Cornelius, who also happens to be a registered nurse.

"She has given me advice about my illness throughout our friendship," says Ms. Powell.

Ms. Cornelius benefited from the friendship, and Ms. Powell's generous nature, as well.

"She has been my best friend since I came here," said Cornelius, who began teaching here in 1996.

"She took me under her wing and helped me during my first year."

Cornelius believes Powell is a giving and caring person who has been like a second mother to some of her students.

Ms. Powell's giving nature is demonstrated in simple ways that students, and many teachers, are probably unaware of.

Every spring teachers complete budget requests in order to purchase teaching materials for the next year.

Powell never asks for money. Instead, she pay for her supplies.

out of her own pocket, "so she can enjoy them, as well."

She says she doesn't feel right taking school property home. Instead, she would rather purchase it, and enjoy it along with her students, then donate it at a later time.

Before retiring Powell will extend her generosity one last time by donating her classroom supplies to the next Spanish teacher.

"I won't be using them, so there is no reason to keep them just because I bought them," she said. She is in the process of donating videos to the library.

"She is cleaning out her house and giving us lots and lots of videos. Some of them are Spanish related and some are from her years of teaching English. We are very appreciative of those," said Janet Wells, RCHS's media specialist.

Ms. Powell would like her students to see her as a caring person who made them think, and who was honest and respected them. And in the end, Ms. Powell proves she is definitely a teacher at heart.

"I wish the best of luck on CATS testing. I hope the scores rise tremendously."