

Richards finds success as young entrepreneur

by Carly Buskirk

Imagine being just fifteen and starting your own business. Now imagine for that business you spend about 40 hours a week working on your laptop while being surrounded by huge

friends', and my dad's friends' race cars, then the business grew from there," Richards said.

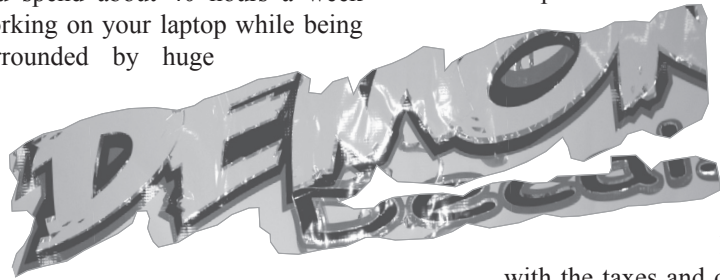
He runs Demon Decals mostly by himself, but occasionally his dad will step in and

patterns for various signs, Richards also has to take care of taxes and profit/loss margins on the computer program Quick Books. "A lot of my spare time gets used up, and I put money I make from other jobs into the business, hoping it will grow," Richards said.

Richards said he'll probably keep

Demon Decals just as a hobby for now because of the competition against Slick Graphix here in David City. "Maybe after I graduate college, I'd love to have it full time," he said.

Richards also encourages others to start their own business. "Go for it! It is expensive and hard work, but it's also a fun learning experience," he said.



machinery and giant vinyl rolls. That's an image that senior Damon Richards knows all too well with Demon Decals, his own vinyl sign business.

Richards started his business two years ago and it's grown ever since. "I've made around \$5,500 and done 26 race cars this year alone," he said. He started the business because he liked lettering race cars, but now he ends up doing a variety of things. "I started lettering my own, my

help with the taxes and other paperwork because it's a lot of work. "The older I've got, the more I've learned, and the less Dad has helped," Richards said. He also maintains a website where others can get information about their business as well as contact information if they're looking for service. That website is www.demondecals.com.

Even though running his own business can be very rewarding, there are some hassles to face. Besides the lettering and designing

Cutting out the excess vinyl from his design is senior Damon Richards. He started his own vinyl sign business when he was only 15.

Photo by Michael Buresh



Teachers' past interests influenced career paths

by Danielle Divis

Can you imagine business teacher Kristi Griffiths as a little girl heading to a country school where there were only six students in the entire school? Or how about speech and English teacher Jarod Ockander working at a radio station as a sports announcer? Then there's Spanish teacher Teri Messerer playing saxophone in her high school band. To students, it may be hard to imagine their teachers living "other" lives outside the classroom.

Several of the teachers grew up on farms or ranches. "I grew up on a ranch south of Valentine, NE. I liked living on the ranch riding my horse and moving cattle," physical education teacher Connie Lentz said. Science teacher Amy Sander shared similar experiences. "I grew up on a farm and having three brothers, I soon learned to hold my own. We had livestock chores to do and spent most of our time outside, creating our own games or working," she said.

In high school and college, the teachers participated in sports, band, student council, and one-act just like the majority of students now. "I participated in football, wrestling, track, baseball, and swimming when I was in high school," history teacher Chad Mattox said. Fine arts activities also interested some teachers. "I played saxophone in band and sang in the choir," Messerer said. There were also some unique extracurricular activities that teachers

were involved in. "I was a member of the high school rodeo club," Lentz said. Ockander was a radio station DJ and sports announcer during his college years.

Becoming a teacher and helping kids learn has always been on the agenda for several teachers. "I knew in sixth grade that I wanted to be a teacher and coach," Lentz said. Griffiths agreed. "I've always wanted to be a teacher. I always enjoyed school and had some excellent teachers." Having a teacher as a role model also helped make others decide to become teachers. "I had a close friend of the family as my second grade teacher whom I admired. I also had great science teachers in high school," Sander said.

The teaching profession didn't always interest some teachers, including Ockander. "I went to college to become a lawyer. One of my professors recruited me to volunteer at a school for a few hours a week. I handled the teaching duties within the classroom and the rest, as they say, is history," he said. Math teacher Amy Backstrom had mixed emotions about teaching. "I was an accounting major my first year of college, but I decided I wanted to work with people, not just numbers, so I changed my major to education." Griffiths also had interest in other careers. "I would have liked to work for the FBI, but I figured I was too big of a chicken for that," she said.

Stress affects teens' lives

by Emma Mattingly

"Ugh! I'm never going to finish this project on time. How am I supposed to? It's nearly impossible!" Does this sound familiar? A huge impact on teens today is the amount of stress they carry.

Whether it be school work, activities, or problems at home, teens many times have difficulty dealing with everything they go through.

But what is stress? According to the dictionary, stress is a state resulting from tension on someone's physical or mental being, making teens more vulnerable to stress.

According to teenhelp.com, a test in Baltimore claimed the top five stressors on teens were school work (68 percent), parents (56 percent), problems with friends (52 percent), along with romantic relationships and influences of drugs and alcohol (48 percent). For junior Sean Kibodeaux, stress is caused by "anything that seems to be putting a lot of weight on my shoulders."

Causes and effects of stress also vary due to gender. The Baltimore

testing said boys and girls handle stress differently. For boys, 25 percent avoided or refused to deal with stress, 23 percent sought ways to distract themselves from stress, 17 percent looked for support, and 35 percent actively tried to reduce their stress. For girls, however, 19 percent avoided or refused to deal with stress, 14 percent sought ways to distract themselves from stress, 22 percent looked for support, and 45 percent actively tried to reduce their stress.

Although stress may seem a temporary problem, long-term effects can occur, one being depression resulting from too much stress. A study of students across Minnesota revealed that although 61 percent of students don't suffer from depression and handle their problems well, 39 percent do suffer from depression caused by stress.

Undoubtedly, stress will continue to affect teenagers, but it doesn't need to have major negative effects. With support from family and friends, stress can be handled in a positive way.