

# grade school groupies

## Friend groups formed in elementary school still thrive

Psychologists say if a friendship lasts seven years, it will last a lifetime. Myth or fact? For several groups of friends, so far it's true.

Somewhere between third and sixth grade, these friends met at Wickham Elementary. The group included Alex Infelt, Jenna Mott, Lyndsey Dahm, Spencer Wiskus, Abbie Schuchard, Emily Baum, Nicki Shilling and Claudia Tait.

Meeting new people, especially at school, can get uncomfortable. For Emily Baum '16, it was petrifying.

"I was scared because I moved there that year and I didn't know anyone," Baum said. Luckily, she met a group with whom she'd end up spending most of her elementary school years.

When they were younger, they'd go swimming in Muddy Creek behind Wickham School and play night games at Wickham or the Wiskus' house.

"Claudia and I got leeches in our toe one time from the creek," Mott said. "I had to get it off with a stick!" Tait said.

Nowadays, they prefer to go night sledding, attend football and basketball games together, hang out during their open hours or watch movies.

While most friends go through ups and downs, it's mostly ups for this group.

"We all talk and see each other around all the time," Mott said.

"As we got older, our group kind of expanded," Schuchard said.

Swiss tennis pro Roger Federer said, "You have to have respect for your opponent, because your opponent might be your friend." That's true for juniors Maddie Fay, Ali Tauchen, Darby Donovan and Emily Halverson, who met in Swarm basketball.

One way they've kept their friendship strong is by carpooling, since they live in nearby neighborhoods. They attended Weber Elementary but never had one class where they were all together.

Their friendship is easy, they said, because they share common interests and make each other laugh.

"We're not that kind of group that fights and gets mad over silly little things," Tauchen said.

All but Donovan were Girl Scouts, and played volleyball in junior high. When the others competed, Donovan would cheer.

"They still do, and I'm their No. 1 fan," Donovan said.

Drama is rare for this group.

"We never split up, but I think we are closer now than we were," Halverson said.

"[I] always remember hanging out with

them and having an awesome time and laughing until we cry," Fay said.

Sophomores Liam Kieffer, Nathan Hinkley and Daniel Liera became friends as fifth and sixth graders at Horn Elementary. They like similar music and share a sense of humor. But their friendship started out a bit rocky.

"Nathan messed up every kickball game," Kieffer said. "[But] I eventually thought it was fun to be that type of person."

Kieffer didn't recall when he met Liera. "[It] seems like we were always friends."

"We hated each other at the beginning, but we got that out of the way for us to be friends," Hinkley said.

"We played video games and sports," Hinkley said, adding that Dane's Dairy was their hangout.

Ask freshmen Sidney Kout, Kennedy Hochstedler, Rachel Olson, Emma Koch, Molly Klutts or Emma Jennings what keeps a friendship going over eight years.

"Knowing that I can go to them with and for anything because we've been close for so long," Jennings said.

"Our memories from [Weber] and the fact that we've been in school together for almost eight years," Kout said.

"Everyone was welcoming and friendly, and I knew would always be able to count on them," Klutts said.

Is ball actually life? For a group of senior boys, it was when they were in elementary school. JD Goodfellow, Logan Carter, Connor Gast, Alex Henderson, Wali Parks and Bo Nock have been together since their days at Weber.

"We don't have a lot of very conflicting personalities," Carter said. "Even though we love to give each other hard times, we get along pretty smoothly."

When did they first meet?

"I don't remember a damn thing," Parks said, laughing. "I've know y'all all my life."

Goodfellow added, "Alex [Henderson] was crazy when playing sports."

Will things change with graduation?

"A lot of us are going to Iowa, so we will continue to meet up," Henderson said.

But nothing will change their memories. "Me and Connor always used to get in fist fights but made up after 30 minutes and would keep playing," Henderson said.

"We'd get put on the wall for recess because we would play tackle football," Parks said.

"We all got put on the wall during recess one time except for Connor," Goodfellow recalled.

Henderson piped in, "For running under the swings."

—By Josey Gale & Val Ramos

**HORN BFFS** Sophomores Liam Kieffer, Nathan Hinkley and Daniel Liera pose during lunch Jan. 27.

**WEBER SQUAD** Seniors JD Goodfellow, Logan Carter, Wali Parks, Alex Henderson, Connor Gast and Bo Nock gather for a photo after school Jan. 28.



PHOTO BY VAL RAMOS



PHOTO BY JOSEY GALE



**WEBER BUDDIES** Current Freshmen Rachel Olson, Sidney Kout, Kennedy Hochstedler, Emma Koch and Molly Klutts pose in the fall of fifth grade.

# 48 student life/longtime friends