

Sesquicentennial

As you may know, a few days ago it was Acushnet's one hundred fiftieth anniversary since being established. In honor of this event, Acushnet Ford Middle School students, who were either in the National Junior Honor Society or on Student Council, were assigned a position in our town government for the day. Some were the Board of Health, Selectmen or women, a Secretary, Assessors, or on the School Committee.

We started off the day with a rainy bus ride to the town hall where once there we were sworn in by Kellie, who was secretary for the day. Next, we all divided up into our groups, so I went with the other students on the School Committee. After climbing up a few flights of stairs, we arrived in the room where we would discuss different topics with the members of the School Committee, which were Mr. Frank Kuthan, Mr. David DeTerra, and Mr. Donovan.

We discussed many topics and asked many questions, but to start off we talked about the basics of the School Committee. It consists of a total of five members who meet on the first and third Tuesday of every month and serve as a term for three years. Their main responsibility is to make policy, like budgets. I learned that the majority of hiring for school employees is actually done by the superintendent of schools (Mr. Donovan), who is also responsible for making suggestions to the committee in the best interest of our schools.

One of my fellow student School Committee members asked, in my opinion, an excellent question, "Why did you run for School

Committee?” First off, they don’t get paid, so why would they spend their time doing this? They answered that they simply love helping kids and find it satisfying to be able to start new programs to assist children. Frank Kuthan said, “It’s the satisfaction of seeing us [the kids] succeed.” That says it all.

One question was, “What’s the most frustrating part of being on the School Committee?” Their answer to this was the fact that because of the recession we are currently in, it’s difficult to get the adequate resources for the schools, and having to cut out certain programs. This just goes to show that they honestly do enjoy helping the children of Acushnet.

To wrap up our day, we all, students and officials, climbed onto the bus and headed over to the Century House for lunch. All in all, it was a very educational and interesting experience for me, and I hope they continue to do this so future eighth graders can see for themselves how dedicated our town officials are.