

April Spotlight on Support Staff: Jean Naastad, Custodian

“You need to be aware of what others are doing, applaud their efforts, acknowledge their successes, and encourage them in their pursuits. When we all help one another, everybody wins.” -- Jim Stovall



Jean Naastad is serving her eleventh year as a custodian at the Clearbrook-Gonvick School. She grew up on a farm north of Fosston and is a Fosston High School graduate. Jean was one of six children growing up. She began her education at Sunnyside, a first through sixth grade country school. Jean states, “Country school is something all children should be able to experience.”

Jean lives in Clearbrook. She is the mother of four children, Seth, Autum, Nicole, and Nathaniel. She is also a grandmother of ten grandchildren and three step-grandchildren ranging in age from 5 to 18.

What are all of your duties at Clearbrook-Gonvick School? Too numerous to list them all, but I must perform tasks that keep classrooms and the school in a good, clean, and presentable form. We maintain it on a daily basis all year round, inside and outside.

Why did you decide to work at Clearbrook-Gonvick School? I was filling a spot to help out and was asked if I would take it on permanently. In doing so, it made me close to home and the grandkids.

What did you do before working at the school? I was a stay at home mom at first, then I worked for several different companies: Highway Host, Lakehead, Haack Engineering, Gustafson & Goudge, Minnesota Dehydration Plant, Good Samaritan Home, Gourmet House, Jerrick Construction, Murphy Brothers, and Clearwater Rice.

What is your favorite part of your job? The satisfaction of getting all the rooms cleaned by the end of my shift, the smiles on the students’ faces, the funny things they

do to bring laughter into the building, and the daily thank-yous from them for doing my job.

What is the hardest part of your job? Time - managing the completion of my regular duties when there are extra jobs to get done to. And of course, being short is a disadvantage when it comes to jobs like putting up the hoops in the gym!

If you could have any job in the world - what would it be - why?? I have always wanted to be an airline stewardess so I could travel the world.

What do you do when you are not working? I try to spend time with the grandkids. This gives me such enjoyment. Other than that, I work hard in my yard to grow beautiful flowers and take the time to enjoy their beauty. I also enjoy feeding the birds and observing all the different varieties.

What are your favorite aspects of the Clearbrook-Gonvick community? Being in a small community, it is easier to get to know people. I am often amazed with all the kindness that is shown.

Any other favorites you would like to share? It has been great sharing my time around the students. I especially love hearing them call out to me as “Gramma” to get my attention. I feel everyone can use an extra Gramma. In return, I get lots of smiles and hugs from many! Thank you!

And now a few words from the students about Jean Naastad from the staff..

“Jean is always willing to help me out whenever I need something done in my room. I appreciate all the hard work that gets done cleaning our school that goes unnoticed. She is pleasant and in a good mood no matter what my room looks like at the end of the day!” “Jean goes above and beyond in our classrooms. She always takes the time to make sure things are looking good!” “Jean is an ever present gift around here. Her joy and positivity as to how she does her work is amazing. She is not only helpful but so very approachable. Her service with a smile and her delightful delivery of conversations makes our day. We are thankful to have her sunshine poured out upon us!” “Jean is always helpful, happy, and easy to visit with:)” “Jean is incredibly helpful, friendly, and kind, as are all of our custodial staff. If you need anything, she's right there.” “I appreciate the way Jean goes the ‘extra mile’ while cleaning my room by mopping and dusting. She notices the little things that need to be done.” “Jean is faithful to keep our school looking good and she really knows how to drive that big lawnmower!” “Jean always has a smile on her face, no matter what job she is asked to do. She takes pride in her work and makes sure she has done a thorough job cleaning the classroom. The sink is always cleaned, floors swept, mopped, garbage is emptied, and garbage cans put back in place. Thank you Jean!”