

THE MEANING OF GIVING

PAIR HELPS GIVE TIOGUE STUDENTS DICTIONARIES

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COVENTRY— Third graders throughout Coventry will be benefiting from a national program after members of the Moosup Valley Grange in Foster donated dictionaries to the elementary schools in town.

The Dictionary Project, through its Word for Thirds Program, was created in 2002 to assist third graders in the United States in receiving a better education by providing them with their own personal dictionaries.

Since the program began in South Carolina, more than 100,000 dictionaries have been donated to students and Coventry residents Paul and Barbara Rush have taken it upon themselves to add elementary schools in Coventry and Foster to that list.

The Rushes visited Tiogue Elementary School early Wednesday morning as the last stop on their district-wide tour.

“We very much enjoy having the opportunity to bring these books to you,” Paul told the students. “It always feels good when you can help somebody else. The best thank you we can have is if you folks enjoy them, use them and learn from them.”

Paul explained that both he and his wife belong to the Moosup Valley Grange and have been donating dictionaries to Coventry and Foster for 12 years.

While most years they can afford to purchase dictionaries for each student, this year they had to partner up with the Rhode Island State Grange in order to donate to Tiogue and Washington Oak.

“The books cost \$2 apiece — count all the third graders in Coventry and Foster, and it adds up,” he said. “We lost the grange that was helping us do it during the previous years so we weren’t able to do these two schools on our own. We host four roast beef



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Marie Robidoux, Director of the Rhode Island State Grange State Community Service, with a Tiogue student who is reading the definition of thank you Wednesday.

See GRANGE, Page A-3



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Students at Coventry's Tiogue Elementary peruse their new books after Wednesday morning's donation.

Grange helps buy dictionaries

Continued from Page A-1

dinners a year and we have a raffle and the money from the raffle buys the dictionaries.”

Marie Robidoux, Director of the Rhode Island State Grange State Community Service, explained that last year, Rush gave her 50 dictionaries so she decided to return the favor.

“I had enough money to buy dictionaries to service the last two schools,” she said. “The state organization goes where it’s un-served.”

She said all the grange organizations throughout the state participate in the program each year, with the state grange handling cities and towns like Woonsocket, Central Falls and Smithfield.

“I go wherever I’m needed,” she added. “The students love this and the teachers do also; the program made it so the children use it throughout the year and they can take it home at the end.”

Rush explained to the third graders at Tiogue Elementary School what they could do with their brand new dictionaries. He showed them the different sections of the book that would teach them about various topics including state names and information, state flags, countries and planets.

“I know that everything in this book is available on the internet, but you don’t always have a computer available in front of you to look up words and information so this book will come in handy,” he explained to the students.

The third grade teachers expressed their appreciation for the donation, which saves them money on purchasing the books for the students themselves.

Many of the students cheered and told Rush they remembered when their older siblings received the books while at the elementary school as well.