

My Turn

By Dennis Franks

September 20, 2013

Deputy Brad Parrett has a commanding presence at Pickaway-Ross. As the school resource officer, Brad stands out in his sheriff's uniform when interacting with students.



So when Brad was left speechless – which in itself is a rarity – by an anti-bullying presentation and said our kids needed to hear this message, I took it to heart.



Deputy Brad Parrett

On Thursday, Sept. 26, students and staff members will hear the story of Rachel Scott, told by her uncle, Larry Scott.

Rachel was the first victim in the Columbine shootings in 1999. After her death, her parents discovered in her journals that Rachel would reach out to those who were different, who were picked on or who were new at school.

Her parents created Rachel's Challenge, a series of student-empowering programs and strategies that equip students and adults to combat bullying and allay feelings of isolation and despair by creating a culture of kindness and compassion.

"Her main goal was to help other students," Brad said.

Brad wants Pickaway-Ross students to hear the message and help the student body feel better about themselves and look at things differently.

"I hope it will get bullies to rethink their behavior and for kids who may be considering suicide, I hope they will change their minds," Brad said.

Rachel's Challenge encourages students to "take the challenge" by looking for the best in others; dreaming big; choosing positive influences; speaking with kindness; and starting a chain reaction.

Brad has already embraced "dream big" by bringing this presentation to our school through a Gala grant he and Dana Anderson received from the Junior Civic League of Chillicothe. In addition to the all-school assembly, he's organized a community presentation by Larry Scott at 6 p.m. Thursday at Pickaway-Ross.

Belinda Hollingshead with Rachel's Challenge said it's important for parents to hear the message so kids and adults can work together to create change in their school and community.

I hope you'll accept Rachel's Challenge, too.

