

SHANNON ROBERTSON

A Passion for Telling Stories



Courtesy photo

Wood River High School senior Shannon Robertson.

BY JONATHAN KANE

Shannon Robertson, a Wood River High School senior with a 3.7 grade point average and a member of National Honor Society, likes to tell stories and has found an expression for her talent in drama.

When asked what her passion is in life, Robertson said, "Telling stories – whether it be in film, theater or television."

Robertson grew up in Wisconsin in a suburb of Milwaukee and moved to the Wood River Valley in the middle of her freshman year.

"Wisconsin was pretty different. There were a lot more trees, it was a lot bigger and you didn't have to drive an hour to get to a Walmart," she said with a laugh.

"Milwaukee has about 600,000 people in it and my high school had 2,200 students. It was also a lot more competitive. For example, we took physical science in eighth grade instead of freshman year. I was the only freshman in biology here at Wood River."

Already at Wood River High School, Robertson has taken Advanced Placement Language and Composition, Calculus, Economics and Physics.

Making the move

Where Robertson lived in Wisconsin was somewhat remote.

"We were near Lake Michigan and there was no next-door neighbor to hang out with and there weren't as many kids around," she said. "Unfortunately, I have a fear of water and I was surrounded by it – although it kept the weather temperate."

In the middle of her freshman year, Robertson's mother got a job as city administrator for the City of Sun Valley and the family moved to the Wood River Valley.

Robertson said the family visited the Valley prior to the move

and "I liked it here."

"Also, I wasn't too upset because I only had two close friends in Wisconsin. But at first it was a real culture shock because I'm not that much of an outdoorsperson."

"My first summer, I really fell in love with the north Valley because I like looking at the mountains, but I still miss being so far from stores. But I also have more freedom here and can walk to a friend's house."

"At first I was relatively shy and I didn't have friends for a while," Robertson said. "Then I blurted out a reference and a girl knew what I was talking about and she became my first friend and she introduced me to all my friends in the theater."

It's in the theater that Robertson has found a home. She had acted in a sixth-grade production in Wisconsin before moving to the Wood River Valley.

"My friend Allison said come do this with me and it was fun," she said. "Opening night I was really sick and I went on anyway and was really into it. I had no speaking part but it didn't matter, and I had no problem performing."

In her freshman year, Robertson gravitated to the technical side of the stage.

"I fell in love with putting sets together," Robertson said. "I also worked with lights and I really liked the people and felt useful there."

"Then I came to Sun Valley and just fell in and entered the Performing Arts Academy. Then it was on to stage managing, which I still do to this day. Basically, I'm on book for the actors and record the stage blocking, and I'm in charge of the props. It's stressful, but I also love to run the light board."

"Theater can be very consuming," Robertson said. "But it's a true passion."

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