

Follow-up

Students establish fund for critically injured teacher

By BRENDA SCHORY
Kane County Chronicle

BATAVIA — The mood at Batavia High School was tearful and somber Monday and Tuesday, as students and faculty learned that a popular, well-liked Spanish teacher was hospitalized in a coma in Costa Rica.

Principal David Booth said he visited Joy Vaughn's five classes, where there were tears, concerns and questions. "They are very upset," Booth said. "She is a popular teacher. Most of the concern is, is she going to get better, how soon is she going to get better."

The students started a fund to help defray her medical expenses. Booth said donations can be sent to his office at the high school, 1200 Wilson St., Batavia, Ill., 60510.

Vaughn, 24, a teacher for two years at Batavia, was injured in a white-water rafting accident Saturday on the River Reventazon near the city of Turrialba.

She was with foreign language teacher Julie Johnson and nine Batavia students when the boat they were riding in collided with another boat that capsized after it hit a rock.

A Costa Rican man was killed in the accident, but Johnson and the other Batavia students were unharmed.

"The nine students who were



VAUGHN: Batavia teacher remains hospitalized in Costa Rica after a boating accident.

on the trip are handling it pretty well, some better than others, but they were in school (Monday and Tuesday)," Booth said.

"I give them a lot of credit. They witnessed a terrible thing and though they are taking it very seriously, they seem to be handling it."

He added, "The students and their parents asked me not to release their names. They just don't want to retell the story over and over. They have trouble sleeping at night. They saw something pretty gruesome." When the boats collided, ap-

parently, all was confusion, Booth said. "They were not all in the same boat. Everybody was scrambling so no one knows the exact details of what happened to Joy because they were busy getting themselves back into the boat. Whether she hit her head or exactly what happened, I don't know and we may never know. They were wearing vests and helmets."

The school is providing counseling to the six girls and three boys who were on the trip.

Booth said as a teacher, Vaughn was "very professional, very hardworking and the kids appreciate that. Yet, she's very personable. The key word (to describe her) would be lively. She has a lot of energy and she shared that with the kids."

Booth said Johnson is staying with Vaughn and her parents in Costa Rica. "I talked with her, she's trying to keep me posted on Joy's medical condition. She's staying by her side," Booth said. Though Vaughn is still in a

coma, Johnson reported to Booth Tuesday that "there is a slight improvement, she's breathing 70 percent on her own, 30 percent is the machine."

Frances Sullinger, director of the U.S. Information Agency for the consulate, said the Costa Rican newspaper La Nacion reported that Vaughn was found face down in the water and unresponsive. The Red Cross provided cardiopulmonary resuscitation, "but it took a very long time to revive her. She was in the water a long time."

Vaughn was first taken to William Allen Hospital in Turrialba, and then was transferred to La Clinica Biblica in San Jose.

Sullinger said the accident is unusual, as there haven't been any on that river. She said someone was videotaping when the accident occurred and police are trying to get the video so they can see how it happened.



Batavia High School Spanish teacher Joy Vaughn was injured in a white-water rafting accident Saturday on the River Reventazon near the city of Turrialba in Costa Rica.

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