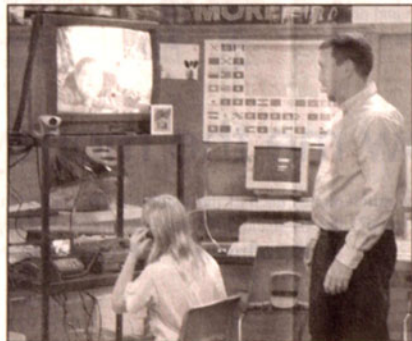


CCA sees classroom connection

Videophone donated to school to help transplant patient interact with classroom

TEXT and PHOTOS
By ABIGAIL MCWILLIAM

Clear Creek Amana Elementary's classroom 109 has added a technological detail that will dramatically improve the quality of education for one student.



Clear Creek Amana Elementary teacher Jeremy Berger, right, communicates with student Abbey Johnson via a videophone. Johnson, who underwent a stem cell transplant, is able to keep up with classroom studies through the videophone while recovering at home.

A videophone, which allows a student recovering from a stem cell transplant to interact with her classroom, has been donated to Jeremy Berger's Intermediate fourth and fifth grade classroom.

Abbey Johnson, High Amana, was diagnosed with CML, an adult form of leukemia in May 2002. She has been out of the classroom since last January and received a stem cell transplant in April.

Since leaving the classroom, Berger has made a strong effort to keep Abbey involved with school. After concluding his regular classes, Berger went to the Johnson home to teach her the daily lessons.

Now Berger won't have to make the home visits as often. He and the children can see a live picture of Johnson on the television and communicate with her by microphone throughout the school day. Abbey can listen and talk with Berger while she follows the lesson at home. Students can partner with Abbey to do reading assignments.

Berger's classroom began using the videophone last month and Johnson was able to participate in a Halloween party. Johnson was all smiles, all day, her mother, Traci, reported.

The communication tool was donated by the Talia Seidman Foundation, a nonprofit organization that provides educational services to seriously ill, hospitalized and homebound students. The equipment was installed by South Slope telephone company free of charge.

Johnson is the daughter of Jim and Traci Johnson, High Amana.



Melanie Eckman, above photo, partners in a reading assignment with Abbey Johnson, below photo, who is recovering from a stem cell transplant she received in April. The girls communicate with the use of a videophone.

