

Patrick Sheehy, longtime speech, English teacher

Patrick (Pat) R. Sheehy, 51, a speech and English teacher in the Wayzata School District for more than 20 years, died of a heart attack Sunday.

He was at a park with relatives in Appleton, Wis., at the time.

He was a friend to students and staff members, and "he allowed you to just be yourself," said John Greupner, principal at Wayzata East Junior High School.

"He had that rare quality of empathy," he said. "He could pull someone aside, and by not even saying much, you knew he was there for you."

He was known for his puns and good humor. But he also touched many students through his hard work with the school's assistance center program, which helped troubled students. He also was a member of the leadership team, a group of teachers that worked on school improvement projects.

From 1964 to 1978 Sheehy taught speech and drama at Wayzata High School. He led speech contests and directed several school plays, including "The Skin of Our Teeth," "The Sound of Music" and "The Jurors." He then took a leave of absence for two years, teaching at other schools and working on several educational projects.

In 1981 he returned to become an eighth-grade English teacher at Wayzata East Junior High.

He was born in Appleton, Wis., and

graduated from high school there. He earned a bachelor's degree in speech and drama from Lawrence University in Appleton and a master's degree in speech and communication from Marquette University in Milwaukee. He taught English at a high school in Pulaski, Wis., before joining the Wayzata School District.

He enjoyed genealogy, and traced his family's roots back to the 1700s. He was a marathon swimmer and contributed hundreds of dollars to the American Heart Association through its annual swim-a-thon fund-raising event. He was on the representative council at Spirit of the Lakes United Church of Christ in Minneapolis and had been a volunteer for the Minnesota AIDS Project.

He is survived by two sons, Scott and Kevin, both of Wayzata; his mother, Lila Blakeslee, of Appleton, and two brothers, Michael Sheehy and Jerry Blakeslee, both of Appleton.

A service will be held at 3:30 p.m. today in the auditorium at Wayzata High School, 305 Vicksburg Lane, Plymouth. A second service will be held at 2 p.m. Saturday at Spirit of the Lakes United Church of Christ, 2930 13th Av. S. A wake will be held at 7 p.m. Friday at the church. Memorials to the American Heart Association or Lawrence University are suggested. Arrangements are by the McDivitt-Hauge-Bradshaw Funeral Home, Minneapolis.