

Long-time Sisters educator retires

Barbara Turner, of Little Frog Learning Center, moved to Sisters in 1985 with her husband and children from McMinnville. She will be retiring this winter after a 44-year career in education and 30 years serving the Sisters community.

Barbara's first job in the community was at Sisters Preschool, where she worked for five years. While teaching at Sisters Preschool she would walk her children down to the old library behind the Sisters Area Chamber of Commerce Visitors Center for story time with Peg Bermel. Billie Franks worked as an assistant for Barbara during this time. She also taught gymnastics at the gymnastics club at Sisters Middle School and ran the gymnastics camp during the summer which included bowling lessons and swimming at Conklin's Bed & Breakfast.

This led to her work with SOAR when that program, which evolved into Sisters Park & Recreation District (SPRD), launched.

“I was always drawn to working with children.”
— Barbara Turner

“I was always drawn to working with children,” Turner said. “I started in high school taking child development classes.”

She and her family were drawn to the quiet life of Sisters, the people, and the community — and they put down roots.

Barbara worked at the Black Butte Camp Sherman School as a teacher's assistant to the kindergarten through second-grade classrooms. She was one of the first of three staff at SOAR in the mid-1990s working in the after-school program, where she remained until 2007. Barbara has albums of photos from these years documenting the early days of SOAR/SPRD

and her Black Butte Camp Sherman years, showing the hundreds of children she worked with and cared for.

She then began working for the Charter School Academy of Arts in Sisters and began working with Evelyn Brush at A Joyful Noise as a kindergarten and after-school teacher. In 2012, she bought the business from Brush and opened her own business: Little Frog Learning Center, becoming a full-time preschool teacher and director.

In her time at Little Frog Learning Center, Turner showed her continued dedication to the field of early childhood education. She took over 600 hours of training, as well as education-related college courses. She completed Oregon's Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) process and was recognized as a program of quality, becoming one of the top-ranked preschool centers in the state.

Passionate about early childhood education and seeing the need in the community, Turner helped advocate for adding a preschool program to SPRD.

She worked 50-60 hours during the week with the children, her true passion, and spent her weekends tracking business records, shopping for supplies, food, preparing meals, cleaning, and landscaping.



PHOTO PROVIDED

Barbara Turner.

After her many years of hard work, she is looking forward to stepping back to spend time with family, friends, and traveling.

Barbara isn't quite done yet. Her love of working with children lives on. She will continue her work part-time with Little Frogs on the Go.

She will be available to families who need help with part-time childcare, transportation to soccer or dance, or who need a night on the town. For more information, contact her at 541-419-2314 or littlefrog88@msn.com.

Becky Mallon of the new Mountain Montessori program will be filling the space at the former Little Frog Learning Center. For more information call 541-549-0000 or visit www.mountainmontessorisisters.com.

CHIMPS: Project is a big classroom favorite at Sisters Middle School

Continued from page 3

to encourage the animals to play with and explore each item. Others have used different sensory items — focusing on things that make a variety of noises or have different textures. All have one thing in common: they work like a puzzle, encouraging the animals to try many different ways to get each to open, close, move or allow access to a treat inside.

Students Madison Symonds and Sydney Wilkins created a massive “Treat Roller” for the two lynx as their enrichment project. Made from a wire spool and other found items the students have drilled large holes and stuffed plush animals and treats inside. The lynx are challenged to remove the plush toys to access the treat. In it's description, the students have said “(the Treat Roller) rolls and can be pushed up on its side to be laid on.”

When the projects are delivered, Chimps, Inc. volunteers place one enrichment project at a time with the animals and video the interaction. Videos are posted to www.YouTube.com so students can follow up on what

they created and see how the animals enjoyed and explored each project.

In addition to making items for the seven chimps on site, students have also made activities for the two lynx housed at the sanctuary.

Sixth-grader Teegan Hess made a large cat-scratcher out of wood and carpet. Her project came complete with different herbs for the lynx to enjoy. She packaged extra catnip for volunteers to use at the sanctuary if the smell started to fade.

“I loved making this project for Linky and Alfonz,” says Hess. “My cat at home opened the extra bag of catnip for my project!”

Every trimester Packard has different optional take-home projects available for students. This is by far one of the classroom favorites.

“I could never pick a favorite student project that someone did for Chimps, Inc.,” Packard says. “The students and even the parents really get into this and are very creative in developing unique ideas.”

The public can view videos of the chimps playing with enrichment activities on the Chimps, Inc. YouTube channel. Other enrichment toys and donations are always accepted at the sanctuary. A complete list of acceptable donations is available at www.chimps-inc.org.

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