

Sisters educator retiring after 33-year teaching career

By Steve Kadel
Correspondent

It's a familiar story. Someone visits Sisters Country for recreation, the visits become more frequent, and before long they've found a way to move here.

That was the scenario for Janis Quiros and her husband. They were living in Seattle and longing for a lifestyle that would allow them to ski and be involved in other outdoor activities when they realized Sisters was the answer.

"This area was without a doubt the place to be," Quiros said.

That was more than three decades ago. Since then, Quiros established herself as a vital part of Sisters School District, being hired in 1984 by former superintendent Ron Ball and elementary principal Earl Armbruster to teach seventh- and eighth-grade Spanish and English.

Thirty-three years later, she has announced her retirement from the only district she's ever worked. In a letter to the school board, Quiros called teaching her passion and said "every student touched me in some way."

In accepting the resignation request, which becomes effective June 14, school board chairman Jeff Smith thanked Quiros for her long service.

"She has done a great job and has provided lots of extra services for our kids," he said.

Quiros taught Spanish and French to ninth- through 12th-grade students after the new high school was built in 1992. Girls soccer didn't exist then, so Quiros recruited students to join a co-ed soccer team and it grew into the current soccer program.

There was lots more, too. "During my career I took on the role of Sisters Education Association president and secretary," she said. "I had the pleasure of working with seven principals and eight superintendents. I was a member of the Oregon State Board for textbook reviews, designed world language curriculums, was secretary of the Confederation in Oregon for Language Teaching, and facilitated local committees."

She also teamed with former elementary principal Tim Comfort to design the first bilingual education program in the district, which Quiros coordinated. As tennis coach, her teams competed in three state tournaments.

Quiros has seen lots of changes in education during her career. Technology ranks

as the biggest change of all.

"Having access to hybrid online courses, use of PowerPoint, chat, email, smart phones, and tablets has changed pedagogy and learning styles for students," she said.

Other factors such as non-traditional learning, declining budgets and student-centered proficiency are changes Quiros has seen in the education landscape.

She grew up in the Midwest and graduated from Lafayette Jefferson High School in Indiana. She earned a Spanish degree from Indiana University, an English degree from the University of Oregon, and studied bilingual education at Oregon State University and Portland State University.

Quiros said she was attracted to a teaching career after enjoying teaching

swimming and diving lessons as a teen. She also worked summers and weekends as a nanny. She always enjoyed school and said that might have been a factor in her career choice.

The longtime teacher plans to continue her own learning in retirement. Quiros wants to learn the Italian language, write short stories, and run more half-marathons once she has additional free time. She also hopes to participate in more bike racing, live in Europe, begin to design clothing again, and visit family more often.

Substitute teaching and volunteering are also on her to-do list for retirement.

She leaves the school district with memories that will last forever.

"My most cherished memory is when the first Sisters High School opened,"



PHOTO PROVIDED

Sisters teacher Janis Quiros said advancements in technology have been the biggest change in education during her long career.

Quiros said. "The positive energy, the excitement, interviewing a new staff with different interests from all over the U.S. was powerful. We

provided a wide variety of offerings, five different foreign languages, vocational programs, and photography classes."

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