

Changes at the top for two Valley schools

By **Judy Hoyle**
IVN Contributing Writer

Two Illinois Valley school principals will move on to new challenges this year. Lorna Byrne Middle School Principal Rachael George will be moving with her husband to the Portland area and Illinois Valley High School Principal Casey Alderson has accepted a position with Three Rivers School District administration.

In an email response to the Illinois Valley News, Alderson wrote, "I have taken a position as Director of Secondary Curriculum and Alternative Education for Three Rivers. I am excited about the new role and continuing our work at the high school level, but it is bitter-sweet leaving Illinois Valley High School. It is a wonderful school that is filled with tremendous staff and students. I have been blessed to be there for four years and build relationships with the community that will help our schools continue to move in the right direction. There is no school around that truly cares for its kids more than I.V. High School. It is a special place!"

Three Rivers School District board member Kate Dwyer said she's happy for Alderson.

"He'll make an excellent director and I know he'll be missed at Illinois Valley High School," Dwyer said.

Jamie Ongman, whose previous position was as the assistant principal at Hidden Valley High School, has been selected to replace Alderson at IVHS.

Rachael George has experienced a whirlwind of accomplishment and change over the past two years. She completed her Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership last summer and also married John George. They met two years earlier when she interviewed for the position as principal of LBMS and he was on the district's search committee.

George had previously earned a Master of Arts in Teaching, Master of Science in Mathematics, a Special Education Endorsement and an Administrative License. In her time at LBMS, the school earned the Oregon Department of Education's "Outstanding School" rating in 2012 and a Level 5 "Model School" rating in 2013, making it one of only five high achieving Model middle schools in Oregon.

George will now work for the Oregon Trail School District as principal of Sandy Grade School. Regarding her move, George stated, "I will miss the families, students, and staff at Lorna Bryne."

George worked through the end of July to help the school make the transition to new principal Scott Polen as smooth as possible. Polen previously worked as the Crook County High School athletic director and also taught at the Bend area school.

In anticipation of her new position, George said, "In reflecting on how I could have the most impact as an educator, I wanted to focus on the earlier grades and help create a passion for learning that will stay with students throughout their education."

The George's move was precipitated by John George being named Oregon Middle School Principal of the Year by the Oregon Association of Secondary School Administrators and the Confederation of School Administrators. He was honored for his work moving Fleming Middle School from "Persistently Dangerous" to "Outstanding" and he also served as principal of the Merlin Alternative School at the same time.

Regarding the award, Three Rivers School District Interim Superintendent Patricia Adams stated, "This recognition is a tribute to John's leadership and the great staff and students at Fleming Middle School." Class sizes at Fleming average in the mid-thirties, with 28 percent of students living with extended fam-

ily rather than a biological parent, 16 percent of students are in foster care and the student homeless population hovers at 14 percent.

After receiving the award in April, he was contacted by three school districts with job offers and accepted a principal position at Dexter McCarty Middle School in the Gresham-Barlow School District. The advantage for the couple includes the opportunity to live near John's two adult sons in the Portland area and having their jobs located only ten miles apart, rather than at opposite ends of Josephine County.

John also acknowledged that school district administrators are being impacted by the current turmoil among the school board and those problems had a significant impact on their decision to leave the area to seek employment elsewhere.

Regarding the George's decision, Kate Dwyer stated, "Rachael and John are such superstars that of course the rest of the state wanted them elsewhere. I'm concerned that losing that caliber of talent is part of the fallout we're only beginning to see from board-level dysfunction."

Oregon bans medical pot for day-care providers

Jonathan J. Cooper
Associated Press

SALEM, Ore. (AP) — Home-based day care centers are no places for medical pot, Oregon has decided.

That decision on Wednesday by a state board was prompted by revelations that the owners of at least five home-based day care centers had medical marijuana cards and were allowed to use the drug on the premises.

One center was already shut down for unrelated potential rule violations, but the owners of four others will have to choose between their child-care businesses or their marijuana cards.

The state had long viewed medical marijuana as a private health matter and did not disclose the

presence of marijuana to parents, but officials changed course after media reports highlighted the issue.

Democratic Gov. John Kitzhaber has also taken heat from his Republican rival, state Rep. Dennis Richardson.

"There's a question about whether or not somebody who's under the influence of cannabis can really provide that quality early learning experience," said Pam Curtis, chair of the Early Learning Council, which was appointed by Kitzhaber to oversee early childhood education. "What the council said today was, 'We don't think so.'"

Advocates of the medicinal-pot program objected to Wednesday's move, saying child care providers

an advocate for medical marijuana patients. "You don't make these kinds of requirements for people who are using methadone."

The rule takes effect immediately and lasts six months. The Early Learning Council will consider a permanent rule in January, after voters decide whether to legalize marijuana for recreational use.

The rule allows others who live in the home — but aren't licensed child-care providers — to hold medical marijuana cards, but the drug can't ever be stored in the home. It also bans use of smokeless tobacco and electronic cigarettes on the premises

while children are present.

Applicants for child-care licenses are not currently asked whether they have medical marijuana cards, so the state knows only about those who volunteer the information, state officials have said.

State child-care licensers will not be able to check whether child care providers have medical marijuana cards because state law restricts access to the Oregon Medical Marijuana Program database, said Cindy Hunt, a lawyer for the Department of Education, which oversees child care.

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"You don't make these kind of requirements for people that are using Vicodin,"

"You don't make these kinds of requirements for people who are using methadone."

Anthony Taylor,
Advocate for medical marijuana patients

aren't prohibited from using medications, including narcotics.

"You don't make these kind of requirements for people that are using Vicodin," said Anthony Taylor,

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