

Andersons help children with supplies

By
Judy Hoyle
IVN Contributing Writer

David and Darlene Anderson celebrated their 43rd wedding anniversary in February. They hold the same values, including a commitment to sharing their good fortune with others and giving back to the community.

David volunteers annually for the I.V. Lions Club Labor Day Festival. He's currently serving as president of the organization. And for each of the past 9 years, Darlene has run her own special booth where she hands out free school supplies to Illinois Valley grade school students.

"The first year, it was just one table. Now it's grown to a full booth of school supplies," she laughs. "It's a lot of work, a lot of time, but it's really fun."

"We know some kids are embarrassed that they don't have the supplies," she explains. "Dave didn't get a chance to finish school, so we do what we can to help them

out."

"We don't solicit donations," she explains. "Most of the credit goes to my husband. It's his thing. He pays for everything. He has an excavation business and has been successful."

The couple has lived in the Illinois Valley for 50 years. Darlene graduated from I.V. High School and met Dave then. They lived out of state for awhile but were glad to move back here.

The way Anderson engages the kids is to ask them to entertain her. "I've heard the ABC's done every possible way over the past years, forward, backward, in other languages. Some I ask to whistle for me. Some are shy, so I ask them to show me if they're missing any teeth. I hear "Twinkle, twinkle" a lot. One little girl in 3rd grade belted out a Journey song. She was really good!"

"After they perform, I say, 'Ok what grade are you in?'" she continues. "At the booth I have a big poster that shows what each grade needs. They get to choose what they want. I let everybody do it once a day through the 3 days,

so they can potentially get 3 items. I ask them "What haven't you filled on your list? It's a lot of fun, very rewarding to see the kids and how happy they are."

"One year, we had a backpack giveaway. We drew names for the backpacks that were filled with supplies, but we decided it was better to do it this way, so everybody can get a little something."

"My grandkids, my daughter-in-law and I run the booth. I research the school supplies and we shop the bargains. We have everything on the list, except the items the school district supplies. We set it up. You'd think Staples blew up! The kids all have a ball!"

"We have some special items we put on the table as well," she states. "Something that they wouldn't buy for themselves, like giant pencils. The kids love those! On the final day, I know there's some families that have 4 or 5 kids, so I set things aside for them."

Darlene feels it gives her something to do while David is busy with the festival. "It fills the time," she smiles. "David has been the booth chairman for the past few years. He's in

charge of all the set up and tear down."

"This booth is for everybody, there is no distinction about whether kids are low income or high income. We just do not care about status. Our booth is meant to provide for all kids what we can while also providing a little fun for the kids and for us. Stop by the booth and watch what happens. It can be very rewarding to see a child walk away in amazement with such mundane items as "school supplies."

She asked that if parents are experiencing real financial struggles to get school supplies, that they not hesitate to let David know. "He can be found during the festival wandering around the park or at the Lion's Club announcing booth near the greased pole."

She concluded by stating, "It's a great weekend for the community to come together in celebration."

Please come out and enjoy this weekend of food, fun, and laughter with us at the 42nd Annual IV Lions Labor Day Festival."

Lloydeen Davis honored as Grand Marshal of the IV Labor Day Parade

By
Annette McGee Rasch
IVN Senior Contributing Writer

Cave Junction's sweetheart and super-volunteer Lloydeen Davis will serve as Grand Marshal of the 2014 Illinois Valley Lion's Club Labor Day Parade, which starts at 10 a.m. on Monday, September 2. Davis will help lead the parade, sitting in a convertible, just behind the color guard.

"Being the Grand Marshal is an opportunity to show people that everyone can get out there and do things to help others," Davis said. "Though I hesitate to call it a reward. The biggest reward comes from God. But this honor highlights how someone in wheelchair that folks might think cannot do things for others, really still can. It's all in the attitude."

"The only way someone is disabled is if they label themselves that way," said IV Lion's Club member Steve Lyons. "Lloydeen is not disabled, she just gets in her wheelchair and goes."

Many are familiar with the sight of Davis, 74, in her electric wheelchair, motoring down Highway 199 between Kerby and Cave Junction, in all kinds of weather, so she can volunteer at Evergreen Elementary, helping young children develop their reading skills.

"Reading is a critical skill that is so very important to success in this life," Davis said.

Davis's commitment to childhood literacy goes back to the early 1980's. Generations of Valley kids have been tutored by Davis, who ran her own kindergarten and preschool program in Kerby while also working for the school district. After that period, she carried on her mission by tutoring children at Evergreen Elementary.

"Teachers can be challenged to give each kid the individual attention they need. There are always some with lower reading levels," Davis said. "These are the kids I help."

This fall, Davis will volunteer in Sally Clements's second-grade class at Evergreen.

"The kids always light up around Lloydeen," Clements said. "They really respond to her and her methods. She teaches with phonetics, and it's magical, the way she helps 'emerging' readers become beginning readers. She possesses a gracefulness, an

innate ability that empowers kids to feel successful, which enables them to develop a critically important foundation in education."

Clements added that Davis also sets an awesome personal example because she never allows her physical disability slow her down.

"That's a lesson in itself," Clements said.

Each year, the IV Lion's Club compiles a list of suggested candidates for the Grand Marshal and Lyons said many notable volunteers have been honored over the years.

"We had about eight to ten candidates to choose from this year and they're all great, but this choice was easy," Lyons said. "Lloydeen's an unsung hero to so many people, for so many reasons. She has touched and improved countless lives here in the Valley."

Davis is quick to point out that it's a family commitment and her husband, Ted, and daughters Katrina, Trinalyn and Lynsta, have all been involved in mentoring, tutoring, supporting, feeding and clothing those down on their luck. The family has also volunteered with emergency services.

The Davis's moved to Kerby from California in 1972. As practicing Quakers, they've always lived by one of the religion's key precepts, which is to help others.

"We believe you can always find the good in people and help that grow," Davis said. "Communities are like gardens of humanity, it just takes nurturing."

Over the years Davis has also been a scout leader. She has also stocked her van with unwrapped gifts and wrapping paper so needy parents and children could exchange presents at Christmas-time; handed out free clothing; volunteered with Southern Oregon Rescue Ambulance Service as an EMT and Driver; and served with the Illinois Valley Fire District for almost 20 years.

In addition to tutoring at Evergreen, Davis also volunteers at Kerbyville Museum and bakes cakes and other goodies for the IV Senior Center.

Davis is always on the lookout for good yarn and old candle wax which she donates to a group at her church that makes comfort blankets for child victims of domestic abuse and trauma. People can drop these items off at Kerbyville Museum.

Davis recently endured a rough patch, first catching the flu, and while barely recovered, had a wheelchair accident and suffered a broken rib and two broken teeth. Then, another mishap resulted in broken bones in her hand, but Davis remains cheerful.

"My body was battered and bruised I couldn't lay down in my bed for weeks," Davis said. "Since I couldn't do my normal service activities, instead I called people to let them know that someone cares about how they were doing."

"It's important, especially when things are hard, to keep good cheer and count your many blessings that God has given you, because as hard as things may be, someone else has it worse," Davis said. "We can make ourselves feel better by helping others. Then our own troubles seem

trivial."

Now, Davis is looking forward to parade day, and if she's able, she'll be throwing candy to the kids. Davis usually sits on the sidelines and when the bigger kids shove ahead to snap up the treats, she has a stash of candy to

toss to the smallest ones nearby. She never stops thinking about others.

"It'll be nice to ride in the parade this time," Davis said. "I'll be waving to all the wonderful folks of our Valley."





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