

Fresh face over at Evergreen

Jason McMillen
IVN Contributing Writer

There's a fresh face over at Evergreen Elementary School this year with an extensive resume and an optimistic attitude to boot. Tammi Snyder, a second grade teacher, is very excited to become a vital part of the community and loves the area so far. Although the school year started three weeks ago, she had been getting her materials and classroom ready since August, so it is without a doubt that she was eager to get things under way.

Snyder has been teaching children of young ages for over 20

years, with this year being the first year of her third decade, and with such a high level of experience she will no doubt be an outstanding asset to the team.

Before moving on to elementary school she taught for a preschool in California and also worked the odd job while she was progressing steadily towards her bachelor's degree in human development from the California State East Bay University.

Snyder relocated to Wilderville with her retired husband and five children on June 12 from Lofland, California. Both Snyder and her husband's parents live in the surrounding area and "getting closer

to family" was a major factor in deciding where they would settle.

Snyder landed the job before moving to Oregon by vigilantly watching for openings online in both the District 7 and the Three Rivers School District. "I was looking for something in either one of those and Evergreen seemed like a really good fit." Indeed she was correct, because she was hired soon after applying.

Snyder teaches 25 kids in her primary classroom right now as opposed to 21 last year in California. However, she made a point in mentioning that it varies greatly every year and that two years ago she was teaching 30.

She is also responsible for co-

teaching the Smile Program, which is an after school math and science program for fourth and fifth-graders.

So far, Snyder says that the staff has been really positive and that, "The programs that are available are outstanding." She went on further to say that there is an amazing snack program that brings fresh fruit and vegetables for the kids in the morning and that there's, "A great Title 1 program that allows small groups of kids to get extra help in reading." She concluded her point by asserting that, "These programs just aren't everywhere. The school has a tremendous amount of support for kids so that's just really nice to be a part of."

For Snyder, the part she loves best about working in the field of education is that she gets to see the spark in children's eyes when the proverbial light bulb turns on. Or in her words, "I just love it when kids get excited about learning!"

Apart from enjoying the sights and sounds of her new home and getting settled with her new position Snyder enjoys scrap booking and caring for her three cats at home with her family.

Please welcome Tammi to the Illinois Valley.

5th grade transition stays on course

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The transference of fifth-graders, which started in the spring of 2014 from Evergreen to Lorna Byrne, has gone relatively smoothly thus far.

Although there was initially some concern among parents about this younger class of students being in the same location as seventh and eighth-graders most of these concerns seem to have abated permanently after a successful implementation.

However, in its debut year, anxiety over the initial push had to be quelled by open door events and the announcement that two well-loved and respected teachers were set

to transfer over along with the next class of students. Unfortunately, for the fifth-graders, one of those two well-loved teachers was transferred to a different grade over the summer this year. Scott Polen, the principal of Lorna Byrne, has full confidence that this will not be an issue.

Before the kids were transferred in 2014 the employees of Lorna Byrne hatched a schedule which enabled the fifth and sixth grade students to interact with one another without interference from the older classes. "They're well taken care of," Polen assured, "They don't mingle around the school very often unattended." Despite this segregation, Polen continued, "They love it. Fifth-graders are very close, developmentally, to the sixth-graders and a lot of them are ready for 'the deal.'"

The transition of fifth-graders to the middle school was initially sparked because of the lack of space and accommodations available at Evergreen Elementary School and the extra space that sat unused at Lorna Byrne. Although there was enough class space to accommodate this influx of students it was mentioned that a few more members of support staff, in addition to the two new teachers, had to be hired onto the team to make sure things ran smoothly.

Another deciding factor was that handicapped students could be taken care of better at Lorna Byrne since the existing infrastructure and staff was better suited for them. In addition to better basic accommodations Polen said that the kids are generally excited to transfer over since they'll have things to look forward to like music class

and P.E. every day. Lorna Byrne can simply offer things to their students that Evergreen cannot.

The first class of fifth-graders amounted to around 75 new students but this year there is slightly less at 68.

Now that the dust has settled and the majority of the logistics have been worked out Polen is confident that it will continue to work for a long time to come. "I'm still happy with it. We wanted to make sure it wasn't one of those things we're just going to do for one year. Like try it and go back if it didn't work. I wanted to make it work the first year and then keep it."

True to his goal of a permanent solution the fifth-graders of the Illinois Valley appear to be much better off in their scholastic endeavors than they were before.

IVCDO wins grant from Pacific Power Foundation

On Sept. 20, the Illinois Valley Community Development Organization (IVCDO) announced receipt of a \$2,500 grant award from the Pacific Power Foundation. The funds will be used as part of the Redwood Hwy. Historic Signage Project. Beginning at the California - Oregon Border, this new signage project will expand the iconic brand of the Historic Redwood Highway by using the distinctive Cascadia style to identify key locations

and wayfinding for visitors traveling through the gateway community of Illinois Valley.

The award check was presented by Christina M. Krüger, Regional business manager for Pacific Power, who said, "The Illinois Valley truly is a gateway to Oregon. We at Pacific Power are honored to partner with IVCDO in supporting this worthwhile project."

Receiving the award on behalf of the IVCDO was Kenny Houck, business

development manager and Roger Brandt, board chair.

This project follows up on 2015's highly successful Oregon Caves Hwy. 46 Historic Signage Project, which revived the 1930s era Cascadia style to link Cave Junction and the Hwy. 199 corridor to the newly expanded Oregon Caves National Monument and Preserve.

As Roger Brandt explained, "The Cascadia style is noted by the use

of large log posts, heavy metal hardware, and deeply engraved wood sign boards for the strong rustic look that is genuinely authentic and rooted to this part of the Northwest."

This grant award from the Pacific Power Foundation marks the kickoff of funding for the project. Other partners include: National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, Josephine County, along with

I.V. Chamber of Commerce, and the IVCDO. Matching funds for the signage project are being sought from Travel Oregon. The first of the new signs should be in place by mid-2017.

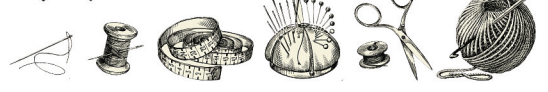
The Illinois Valley has long struggled to establish its identity as a gateway community. The area still fails to capture a fair share of one-day stays from the estimated 2 million travelers passing through each year between Redwood and Crater

Lake National Parks. Kenny Houck said, "As shown by the signs on Caves Hwy. 46, the project partners believe the next round of Cascadia Signs will provide both instant and long term results by creating a powerful sense of place, to help inspire and support lodging and the emerging recreation and nature-based tourism experiences of the Illinois Valley."

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To all the generous folks who donated goods or services to the Raffle Fundraiser for Grandma Agnes Pilgrim!

Due to a family tragedy, Grandma was unable to attend the fundraiser, so the raffle donations will be used in the near future at another gathering to honor her. Date to be announced later.

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