

Prominent North Douglas teachers set to retire

North Douglas School District will say goodbye to three longtime educators next year. Retirees include Jeff Davis, High School Athletic Director and girls basketball coach, who has been with the district for 28 years. Jean Harrod, fourth-grade teacher, has been with the district for 17 years, and Sharon Ruud, ND High School business teacher, FBLA advisor, has been with the district for 30 years.

North Douglas High School Athletic Director Jeff Davis knows how much sweat fueled the Warriors' March 2016 trip to the girls basketball state championship game in Baker City.

The Warriors didn't prevail over the Country Christian Cougars, but they triumphed by earning a ticket to the third title game in school history. Yet there's another aspect to his job Mr. Davis will miss perhaps even more as he plans his retirement after 28 years with North Douglas School District. "I'm very proud of the teams with lesser talent that have overachieved and worked so hard to be successful," he said. Three decades of coaching and teaching have produced a lot of memory-triggering material. Davis coached high school baseball for 24 years, girls basketball for 12 years, boys basketball at NDH for 10 years and cross country for a year.

As any dancer can testify, body memory is a powerful force. And as any jingle writer will affirm, catchy lyrics stick in the brain.

Jean Harrod knows these truths as well. So she harnesses these and other tricks in her fourth-grade classroom at North Douglas Elementary.

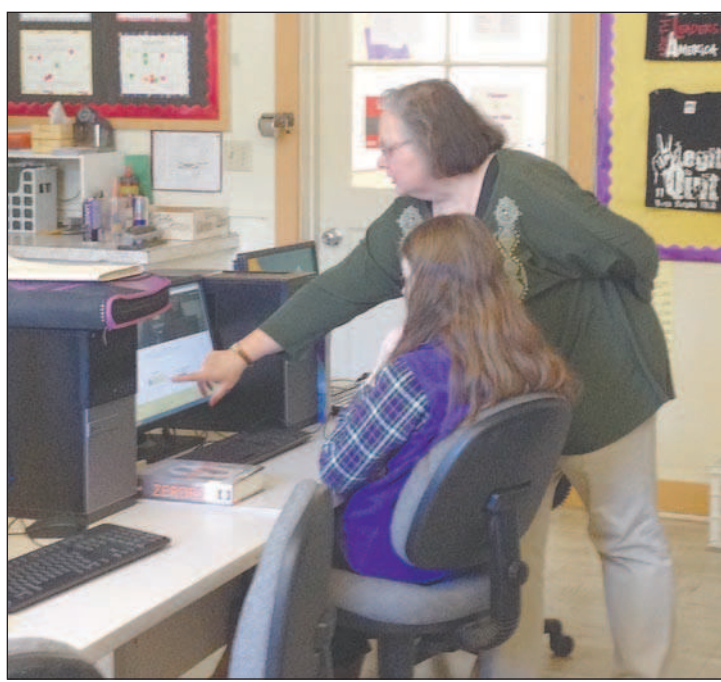


photo by Tricia Jones

North Douglas High School business teacher Sharon Ruud helps juniors explore scholarship forms in a recent careers class.

For math lessons, everybody stands up with arms out, fingers pointing, to mimic figures as Mrs. Harrod calls out, "I want a right angle! I want a line segment! Show me an acute angle! An obtuse angle!"

Not all of Mrs. Harrod's teaching strategies are physical or tuneful. But most are effective. North Douglas Elementary Principal Jody Cyr says that Mrs. Harrod's imminent retirement means the district will be saying goodbye to a dedicated employee who is consistently one of the best educators in the district.

Like most towns, Drain has its ongoing community improvement projects. Workers scrub the metal rails on the Cedar Street bridge. Painters wield brushes on school basketball courts. People don gloves to weed, plant flowers, rake leaves

and collect trash in public spaces.

When those doing the toiling are teenagers, there's a good chance they are Community 101 students under the direction of North Douglas High School business teacher Sharon Ruud. Mrs. Ruud has taught a multitude of subjects and led an extensive list of projects since joining the high school staff three decades ago. Her curriculum includes careers, personal finance and related topics. She's guided students through activities and achievements linked to Future Business Leaders of America, GEAR UP and Pathways to Excellence, among others.

Her departure at the end of the school year, which follows a 30-year career at North Douglas High, will leave a large gap in a crucial school program. "Aside from athletics, FBLA is the biggest school activity for kids here, and Sharon Ruud has put the bulk of her time into it over the years," said North Douglas High Principal Scott Yakovich.

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