

Wilkins excited to serve students at charter school

By Jolene Guzman
The Itemizer-Observer

BRIDGEPORT — Sitting in Christy Wilkins' office at Luckiamute Valley Charter School's Bridgeport campus on a bustling Monday morning, you can hear children playing during recess.

For Wilkins, LVCS' new executive director, it's confirmation of why she wanted to join Luckiamute Valley. For some school administrators, being around students isn't a daily occurrence, she said.

At LVCS, she can just step outside her office and turn a corner and find a class of students on the playground or headed to the cafeteria.

"I like the fact that in my job, I'm around kids," she said. "I'm surrounded by students and reminded every day why I'm here and why I took this job."

Wilkins found early in her education career that she had a passion for helping students navigate challenges in their life and education.

"I started out as a high school English teacher. I loved teaching, but I also loved getting to know the kids," Wilkins said. "I found my students wanting to hang around during lunch



JOLENE GUZMAN/Itemizer-Observer

Christy Wilkins became Luckiamute Valley Charter School's executive director at the Bridgeport campus.

and my preps, and I had the opportunity to get to know the students personally and hear about their lives and be

a source of support for them and their families."

Soon, she went back to school to earn a master's de-

gree in counseling.

"I've worked as counselor at every grade level, elementary, middle and high, and I loved the work and the opportunity to provide social and emotional support for students who were struggling with that issue," Wilkins said.

She's still making use of what she learned as a counselor, saying that experience gives her insight into student behavior and the ability to help teachers with students.

"I think it's great training to move into a leadership role," she said. "The listening and problem-solving, conflict resolution, all of those skills can be applied in my work as an administrator."

Wilkins spent much of her career in traditional public schools, working 11 years in the Cascade School District, 13 years in the Newberg School District, and in schools in Washington state before that.

Making the transition to a charter school has been a learning experience, but one she's welcomed.

"I've always been interested in charter schools and alternative school settings," she said. "I was interested in

working in an environment that provided more flexibility for meeting the needs of diverse learners, more creativity."

Before she arrived, the LVCS board had already committed to bringing in art and science, technology and math enrichments for students with the goal of adding more in the future.

"I was really inspired by that," she said. "I know as an experienced administrator and educator that you need to provide multiple strategies to engage some students, and not every student learns the same."

She said that LVCS' two campuses in Bridgeport (K-5) and Pedee (6-8) allow the schools to provide more outdoor learning experiences without leaving school grounds. Classes can build lessons around exploring the nearby river, and there's space for greenhouses and gardens.

"Because of the location, we have the opportunity to do things that traditional schools do not," she said.

Wilkins said she was pleased to have joined a school with an active board, an engaged parent group and a supportive charter sponsor in Dallas School

District, and what she believes is the key to education: Good teachers and good teamwork.

"Successful schools are successful collaboration with many, many players," she said.

So far in the young school year, Wilkins believes LVCS she's been gifted with that, too.

She gives special credit to Jenneca Crawford and Steve Diehl, principals at Bridgeport and Pedee respectively, for helping her get on her feet since she took over the job in late July.

"They've been my partners while I ride my learning curve," she said.

Wilkins said her goal for her first year with the school is to learn from her teachers and staff members and to increase parent and community involvement in the schools.

Above all, though, she wants to support the school's mission in classrooms.

"I think the classroom is the heart — a teacher and students in a classroom are the heart of both schools," she said. "Anything outside of that zone, we're here to support the teaching and learning that goes on."

Rally

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The Airstream, invented by the late Baker City resident Wally Byam, is a recreational vehicle with an aluminum skin. But they're much more than that, Taylor said.

"They're so incredibly iconic," he said. "They are plain America."

Strangers are always interested in them, he added.

"Probably the neatest thing with Airstreams, people at the gas station will ask, 'Oh, do they still make them?'" Taylor said. "Also, we're often asked, 'Can I look inside?' I actually got pulled over by a cop one time for no infraction, he just wanted to step inside my Airstream."

On Saturday, the participants of Airstreams on Main Street will open their RVs to the public for an open house from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., welcoming visitors to tour the trailers. Taylor said that while they all have the same shiny, aluminum skins, they

are very different on the inside.

"We'll have our 1950s Airstreams there, and there will be trailers that are 3 months old," Taylor said. "People can walk through and see what the trailers are like."

The Wally Byam Caravan Club International started when Byam took an unhappy customer on a road trip from California to Mexico, Taylor said. The following year, Byam invited friends to come make the trip again. About 60 trailers made the trek, which was just the beginning of Airstream caravanning tradition.

"In 1959, Wally took a bunch of trailers and they shipped them to South Africa," Taylor said. "They went from Cape Town to Cairo, Egypt."

The trip was documented in photos and videos by National Geographic and took about a year to complete.

Sudoku solution

6	5	4	3	2	9	8	1	7
9	7	1	6	5	8	2	4	3
8	2	3	1	7	4	5	6	9
7	6	8	9	3	5	1	2	4
5	1	2	4	8	7	9	3	6
3	4	9	2	1	6	7	5	8
4	8	7	5	6	2	3	9	1
1	9	5	8	4	3	6	7	2
2	3	6	7	9	1	4	8	5

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Council approves new license and fee

By Jolene Guzman
The Itemizer-Observer

DALLAS — The Dallas City Council approved a new utility license and fee at Monday's meeting.

The fee and licensing requirements would impact all utilities operating, except for those that already have a franchise agreement with the city: Pacific Power, Northwest Natural Gas, Century Link and Charter.

The new ordinance creates a license requirement and fee on internet modem services. Charter Communications told the council on Sept. 18 that it would pass on any new fees to customers.

Councilor Micky Garus said the council should keep that in mind when considering the ordinance and when it set the fee rate later this year.

"I'm concerned about what kind of fees we would be passing on to our citizens. It's an unknown," he said. "Looking at the bigger picture and some of the things that we are going to

be asking our community to bear in the future, whether it's streets or a public safety facility. This is one of those things we need to really look at and say, 'Is this going to sit well with the community?'"

City Manager Ron Foggin said the ordinance asks utilities to pay for all their use of the city's rights-of-way.

"Back when the internet was being introduced to homes, these companies successfully got internet broken away from telecom," he said. "As they put in this infrastructure, they were able to deliver telephone and cable and internet services, and thus avoiding paying franchise fees for the internet-side of the business."

Councilor Terry Crawford asked what the potential new revenue would be used for.

Foggin said all franchise fees go toward the city's general fund.

The ordinance passed on a 5-3 vote with Garus, Crawford and Councilor Jennie Rummell voting no. Councilor Jackie Lawson was absent from the meeting.

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