

IRRIGON ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

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 three children will all be attending school in the area as well—one fifth-grader at Irrigon Elementary School, as well as a second-grader and third-grader at AC Houghton Elementary School in Irrigon. The family is currently in the process of finding a home in Irrigon.

Even though Joyce has remained in Eastern Oregon, she says it feels good to be back in her home county.

"It's been wonderful; I've reconnected with a lot of people that I knew from when I was a child," she says. "I've been able to work with a very supportive district. The principal I work under, Craig Bensen, has been an amazing and supportive principal. The staff at the school has been wonderful. They've been very warm and welcoming."

"We've got a lot of good things going on," adds Joyce. "It's nice to come back home and work with a supportive staff and a school that is showing some successes."

Joyce says she is looking forward to the school year, but says she wants to make sure she stays focused on open communication, which she expects to be her biggest challenge.

"(The challenge will be) Gaining an understanding of the patrons of the school—which may be the community, students, parents—making sure I'm being proactive and keeping open lines of communication," she says. "Sometimes we get bogged down in the negatives, like truancy and discipline, so trying to focus on the positive, as well."

Joyce must like a challenge, though, because she also says communication is what she is excited about as the school year begins.

"I look forward to the school year, working with the staff and students, in the community itself. Building a positive relationship between the community and the school, and increasing that relationship so students are successful not only in

school but out of school, as well," says Joyce.

"I really want to see some open communication. We work so closely as a district, and I want to continue to highlight things that are happening in the district," she adds. "I think it's good to promote and see the good things that are happening in our schools."

One of the good things she listed was GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) grants. She says Irrigon Jr/Sr High currently has two GEAR UP grants, one from Oregon GEAR UP and one from Washington State University. These grants are intended to help to promote college readiness for the students at Irrigon Jr/Sr High.

Another thing that has Joyce excited is the college credit opportunities at the high school. She says Irrigon Jr/Sr High is offering seven classes this school year through the Eastern Promise Program, in which students enrolled in those courses can receive

college credit for the classes they take. The school's Agriculture Department also offers dual credit through Blue Mountain Community College, and Senate Bill 300 has made it possible for the school to offer classes online, such as sociology, medical terminology and others that are not included in the regular curriculum.

All in all, Joyce seems happy to be where she is and thrilled to be back in the school district, though as an administrator rather than a student.

"This district is amazing; they're very much supportive of their staff," she says. "I've felt nothing but a welcoming presence."

Ione wraps up summer reading



The Ione Library recently wrapped up its Summer Reading Program for children grades two through six with an ice cream party. There were 10 participants this year; certificates and prizes were awarded to all who participated. Pictured (L-R): Bryce Rollins, Josalyn Nichols, Librarian Kristy Crowell and Taylor Rollins. —Contributed photo

Archery hunters face fire restrictions, closures when season opens Saturday

SALEM, Ore. — Deer and elk archery seasons begin Aug. 24, and bowhunters will be facing high fire danger and some closures and access restrictions as the season opens. Hunters are asked to use extreme caution and follow all fire restrictions while in the field.

Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) says the fire danger this season is unprecedented and record resources are tied up in firefighting. So far for 2013, close to 80,000 acres of land protected by ODF have burned, which is eight times the 10-year average. More than 4,000 firefighters have been deployed at one time to fight fires.

Public land managers are aware of archery seasons. Land managers are continuously re-evaluating

the fire situation and will restore access to restricted areas as soon as they are able.

Check with the national forest where you are headed or Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for information before heading afield. Hunters travelling should also check for any road closures.

At this time, many private forestland owners that normally allow hunters on their land have closed access due to the high fire danger.

"Landowners may have no other choice but to restrict access as a fire prevention strategy," explained Mike Dykzeul, Director, Forest Protection for the Oregon Forest Industries Council (OFIC).

OFIC keeps a list of their members' current

public access status on the Oregon Department of Forestry website. Hunters should check this list (see "Corporate Closures in Effect") or contact the landowner before heading afield. This list is updated whenever there is a change, so check back frequently.

Hunters and others planning trips into Oregon's wild areas should be prepared to be flexible with their plans if they encounter access restrictions. ODFW does not close hunting seasons due to fire danger. Hunters may need to hunt in a different area if their favorite hunting spot is the site of an active fire or if a private landowner has closed access due to high or extreme fire danger.

ODF, OFIC and ODFW also remind archery hunters to follow all fire restrictions.

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