

Ione preschool puts creativity into early learning

If you've ever wondered what your children do when you drop them off for preschool, you might be surprised to find the answer is pretty amazing.

For Creative Care Preschool in Ione, the structure of the day starts with some free play. This is a time when the magic begins; children learn to make choices for themselves, gaining some autonomy in a world where they are too small to choose much. During this time they also are encouraged to learn to problem solve, get along, share and be polite.

As the preschool day continues, children learn to listen—a skill many adults have not perfected.

These skills may seem pretty basic, and one might be tempted to cast them aside, but many years ago a man named Robert Fulghum wrote a famous essay, "All I really need to know I learned in Kindergarten." This essay spoke of the

skills referenced above. With core curriculum standards placed on kindergarten, children now are expected to know these skills along with their letters, numbers, colors and shapes prior to beginning school, making preschool important in the larger academic picture.

Parents and staff say the preschool in Ione meets those expectations. In just one day children learn social skills, art, math, handwriting, reading and singing, and even incorporate imaginative play.

In addition, while learning about the letter "E," children recently engaged in a science lesson about eggs. Children were asked to pick a bag containing a variety of materials including water, cereal, cotton balls, paper towels and lentils, to name a few. Each child picked a different material in which to encase and protect their raw egg. The child then dropped the



While learning about the letter "E," children at Creative Care Preschool also engaged in a science experiment, using plastic bags full of various materials to see which would best cushion a raw egg. -Contributed photo

egg inside a zipper storage bag to see if their egg would break. Through the activity, staff say the children learned to predict, to ask why, to change how they conducted the experiment to change the outcome—and had a lot of fun.

"It's fun whether or egg breaks for not," said Alison Ogden, lead preschool teacher, adding that this simple experiment is helping to build a foundation of quantitative thinking and,

perhaps more importantly, a love of learning that will hopefully last a lifetime.

This preschool, like many others, relies on community support. The preschool policy is to provide scholarships for children who would not be able to otherwise afford to attend. Anyone who would like to make a tax deductible donation, contact Ogden at 541-422-7003 about sponsoring a child.

Students selected for D.C. trip

Sydney Qualls from Heppner and Piper Jamieson from Condon will act as student representatives for the Columbia Basin Electric Cooperative NRECA Youth Tour in Washington, D.C. June 9-16.



Sydney Qualls

While at the nation's capital, the students will have a chance to speak with Oregon's state representatives, learn about electric cooperatives, listen to motivational speakers and tour national landmarks includ-

ing the Smithsonian and the Vietnam War Memorial.

Sydney is an Associated Student Body council member, plays varsity basketball and varsity softball, is a Big Sky Scholar Athlete, a member of National Honor Society, and is on the honor roll at Ione High School.

Sydney also volunteers for The Dalles Veteran's Home coin drive, Haiti toy drive, and helps raise funds for the Wounded Warrior Project.

She is the daughter of John and Doashea Qualls.

Piper is the junior class president of Condon High School, a member of the Chemistry Club and Gilliam County 4-H, and competes in Oregon Battle of the Books. Piper also participates in volleyball, basketball and track for the Condon/Wheeler Knights. Piper is also a member of the National Honor Society, which puts on a blood



Piper Jamieson

drive and trick or treat for the food pantry. Piper has recently been certified as an EMR and volunteers on the ambulance crew. She is also very active in her church and volunteers at vacation Bible school in the summer, as well as being a 4-H camp counselor and a kitchen volunteer at Summit Springs Retirement Home. Piper is the daughter of Leslie and Andrew Jamieson.

Meeting planned for Fourth of July committee

The first planning meeting for the 2016 Ione Fourth of July celebration will be held on Thursday, Feb. 11, at 7 p.m. at Route 74 restaurant in Ione. Anyone interested in any aspect of the event is welcome to attend.

Ione library announces new books

The Ione Public Library is encouraging patrons to stop by the library and check out all the "latest and greatest" new books. Library hours are Monday and Wednesday, 1-6 p.m., and Tuesday and Thursday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Every month the library orders about 30 new books; they encourage patrons to give them ideas on books they'd like to see in the library, as well as the format—books, large print, audiobooks, etc.

GIFT OF LOVE

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she's blond with blue eyes. "But she's also part Native American, and the doctors thought that might have a lot to do with it," adds Skroch, who is herself half Alaskan Native.

The next month she took a trip to Providence Sacred Heart Medical Center Kidney Transplant Center in Spokane, where medical staff again drew blood to confirm a match. The process took two days, and included not only blood work and various imaging tests, but also consultations with the transplant surgeon and other doctors—five total—a psychologist and a registered nurse who worked as transplant coordinator.

"It was nothing like I expected," says Skroch, "having so many people involved in the process of making sure I knew what this meant for me, for my health, for my mental stability.

"One of my worst fears was them telling me I only had one kidney," she adds.

Instead, doctors confirmed a match and cleared Skroch to give her friend the kidney she so desperately needed. On Jan. 12, Skroch and Harding went into surgery at Sacred Heart. Skroch was surprised to find out the surgery was unique in that she, the donor, was still alive.

"I was the only live donor on my floor," she says. "They said it was only their second living donor transplant in eight months," she adds, explaining that potential donors are often turned away because of health issues.

Still, it wasn't clear sailing. It turned out Skroch had two arteries connected to her kidney, which is very rare. A surgery that should have taken two or three hours instead took eight.

"The doctor told us it was the most difficult transplant he'd done in his life," she says.

With the surgery over, Skroch is a month into what could be a long recovery time.

"It was the worst pain in my life," she says. "I've had three kids; I know.

"They tell me I should start feeling better at six weeks," she adds, though recovery time varies from person to person. "Trisha was up and walking before I was. She went from three percent kidney function to 103 percent; I went from two kidneys to one. It's just how things are."

Skroch is now living with her in-laws, Rusty and Cyde Estes of Heppner, while recovering. Her husband has relocated to Portland for his job but their three children are with her, attending school and day care in Heppner during the day.

"Grandma's been a big help," she says. "I'm so thankful for Rusty, Cyde, my husband... This has been amazing in Heppner, all the support we've had."

She is taking time away from work, and says this will be the longest she's ever not worked. She also admitted that her interview with the Gazette was the first time she'd worn jeans since the surgery.

Despite everything, though—despite the pain, the recovery time and maybe even some boredom—she says she doesn't regret her choice.

"I never second-guessed it. People live in their own little worlds and don't realize they could be changing lives," says Skroch. "It forever changed my outlook on life and giving back to other people.

"A lot of people have said, 'I never would have done it,' but I say, 'Would you?'" she adds. "Why not?" she asks. "Why do you do it for your best friend? She has kids. I couldn't imagine her not being around for them.

"I'd do it again."

CBEC director earns gold certification



CBEC Director Lori Anderson with Board President John Qualls. -Contributed photo

Columbia Basin Electric Co-Op Director Lori Anderson of Condon was recently presented with a Gold Level Certificate of Director Education from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association for her continued education as a cooperative director.

The Gold Certificate is the third and final level of director education accomplishment.

The initial certificate, the Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) certificate, is received upon the successful completion of prescribed classes detailing the role of the co-op board and directors in today's modern cooperative.

The Certified Board Leadership (CBL) certificate acknowledges classes accomplished toward training in a board leadership role.

The Gold Certificate acknowledges those cooperative directors who are committed to continuing their education in the industry regarding governance, risk management, communication, rate making and policy development.

Anderson serves as a director and is a former president of the local, consumer-owned electricity provider, Columbia Basin Electric Co-Op. She has been a director with the co-op since 1990.

Bunco this week at Holly Rebekah Lodge

Holly Rebekah Lodge will host an evening of Bunco this Thursday, Feb. 11, starting at 7 p.m. Cost to play is \$5.



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A friendly reminder – It's about that time!

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