



Student enthusiasm makes education fun for Doak

BY JOHN HAUER

For the Daily Call
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PIQUA — Becky Doak, instructor at Favorite Hill Primary School, really enjoys teaching her third-graders. "They are willing to try just about anything," she said. "When they get excited about something, the kids' enthusiasm makes education fun and rewarding." It might be closer to the truth to say Doak's energy level and encouragement are reflected in her students' successes.

Doak graduated from Piqua High School in 1974. Music was her interest at PHS. She sang in the choir and the Girls' Ensemble

and played a variety of instruments in the marching band and concert band including clarinet, bass clarinet, and flugel horn. Doak was active in Rainbow Girls, a girls' organization sponsored by the Masons and Eastern Star. She held many offices and was a state appointed page.

"I wanted to get into education," she said. "Miss McCorkle, my high school teacher, told me I should think about teaching because I would be good at it." Doak entered Miami University and majored in elementary education. "I chose Miami. I loved the campus, and my brother had been a student there," she said. Doak earned a bachelor's degree in



MIKE ULLERY/STAFF PHOTO

Favorite Hill teacher Becky Doak works on math problems with Lotus DeLance in her classroom last week.

1978. Later, she received a master's degree in the Teacher Leader program from the University of Dayton.

During her Miami years, Doak volunteered at the McGuffey

School, an elementary school associated with Miami University. "I tutored, did bulletin boards, and helped in the library," she

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said. "The experience reinforced my desire to become a teacher."

Another important mentor shaping Doak's career was Gretchen Roeth, a fourth-grade teacher at Nicklin School. "Gretchen opened up her classroom for me to observe while I was in college," Doak said. "I was able to see what she did, and I got many ideas that would help me later on. Gretchen was also very encouraging and supportive."

After Miami, Doak was hired by Piqua City Schools to teach kindergarten at Favorite Hill. Her second year, she moved to first grade which she taught for 17 years and before moving up to third grade. She has been

at Favorite Hill the past 34 years. She is currently paired with Kristen Mitchem, an intervention specialist. "We are called co-teachers," Doak said. "This allows us to meet the needs of all our kids who have different skills levels. We can provide varied lessons tailored to each student."

Doak and her colleagues at Favorite Hill have developed a list of 'I Can' statements that are posted on the walls of the classrooms. "We wanted something that our students could easily understand that dealt with the Common Core standards set by the state of Ohio," she said. "These statements are simple and to the point and show our kids what they need to accomplish."

Doak is busy outside the classroom, too. She has been a student council advisor, a member of the Library Committee, a grade level chairperson, an Intervention Assistance Team co-chair, part of the Family Night committee, and she is active in Reading Is Fundamental. She works on a statewide group that devises grading rubrics for the Ohio Performance Assessment Project. And, she recently joined Delta Kappa Gamma, a group of female educators who discuss current issues in education.

Her efforts and dedication have been recognized nationally and locally. She was named a Martha Holden Jennings Scholar, and she has been nominated twice for Piqua City Schools Teacher of the Year.

At home, she and her husband Paul, a custodian at Piqua High School,

have been married 27 years. They have two daughters. Katy, a graduate of PHS and Defiance College, is living in Toledo. Sarah, also a PHS graduate and recent graduate of the Kettering School of Medical massage, works at Journey Salon in Piqua. For the past 15 years, Becky has helped with Music Warehouse during the summers. She is a seamstress and serves as a trustee for the group headed by Piqua choir director Tom Westfall. "I really enjoy musicals," she said. "My husband and I have traveled to Dayton, Toledo, Columbus, and New York City to attend plays."

