

Dream to teach began early



BY JOHN HAUER

For the Daily Call
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PIQUA — There was no big career dilemma for Bennett Intermediate School social studies instructor Marcie Anderson. “I knew at a young age that I wanted to be a teacher,” she said. “Two of my aunts Avonelle Phelps (Aunt Polly) and Ester Beckstedt were teachers. I remember helping Aunt Polly grade papers and make bulletin boards.”

Anderson graduated from Troy High School in 1989. She was a peer counselor, naturally, and she pitched and played outfield for the Trojan softball team. She enrolled at the University of Findlay and earned her bachelor's degree in Elementary Education in 1993. Later, she received a master's degree in the Teacher Leader program from Wright State University.

Not able to find a teaching position in the area, Anderson subbed for five years in the Troy, Piqua, and Sidney school systems. “I worked for many summers for Tipp City Parks,” she said. “And, I

See Early/Page 2

Early

Continued from page 1

coached freshman softball at Troy for seven seasons.” Finally, she landed a spot at High Street School teaching art and music. “That lasted for five weeks, and a more pressing need moved me to South Street to teach 5th grade,” she said. “When South Street closed, I went to Bennett.” She taught 5th grade for 13 years and, this year, moved to 6th grade social studies.

“It is a change because 5th grade was United States history, and 6th grade is World History,” she said. “So, I am learning a lot just like the kids,” Anderson uses hands-on learning and special projects to keep the students interested. “We are studying the Mediterranean area,” she said. “The students will be making and sampling different foods from that region.”

Besides her four sections of social studies, Anderson teaches one class of Character Education. “The class is designed to boost a student's self confidence, to help them take control of their lives, to provide them with skills they can use to organize and interact with others,” she said. “I have seen a real, significant difference in the stu-



MIKE ULLERY/STAFF PHOTO

Bennett Intermediate School teacher Marcie Anderson works in her classroom last week.

dents' behaviors and performances.” Anderson uses stories and storytelling to motivate students. “I can see the wheels turning in their heads as they are thinking about how they can make a positive change.”

A spin-off of the character education is the ‘It's All About Me Gazette’ bulletin board in Anderson's room. Every two weeks, a different

students decorates the board with things that represent what the student likes and stands for. “The students really get excited about sharing this with others,” Anderson said. “They do a good job of describing themselves through words and pictures.”

The 6th graders work with career education and research what they might

want to do later in life. “We just visited the Upper Valley Career Center,” said Anderson. “Students look into three career paths that are of interest to them, and what classes they will need to take to do that career.”

Anderson is part of the Math Intervention team at school. “I help 8-10 students with math skills that they will need for the Ohio Achievement Tests,” she said. “We focus on a skill a week for ten weeks.” Other extra duties Anderson has done are serving as a building rep for the Piqua Education Association and being a member of Bennett's Continuous Improvement Committee and the district's Calendar Committee.

At home, Anderson enjoys working in the garden. She and her husband Greg, a paraprofessional at the UVCC in the Auto Collision program, have been married six years. Marcie follows NASCAR drivers Dale Jarrett and Tony Stewart. But, she is a Kentucky basketball fanatic. “I have a UK basketball bulletin board in my room,” she said. “The kids bring in items for the board, and we have some lively discussions during basketball season.”