

March Spotlight on Support Staff: Verlyn Strenge, Bus Driver



"Dear Lord guide me and help me to transport my precious angels to and from school safely. Amen."

Verlyn Strenge has been driving school bus for the Clearbrook-Gonvick ISD 2311 for twenty-one years. He grew up on a farm in South Dakota, but now lives in the area with his wife, Merry. They have three children Scott (Stacey) Strenge, Jamie (Devon) Nelson, and Linda (BJ) Engen and seven grandchildren: Emma, Sierra, Ella, Ava, Abby, Vincent, and Mya.

Why did you decide to drive bus for the school? To help with a little extra income and for the love of children.

What did you do before driving the bus? Farmer, construction worker, logger...many of the same things I do now. I am still a pastor and help out where needed.

What is your favorite part of your job? Working with the kids and getting to know their parents.

What is the hardest part of your job? When the kids don't follow simple, basic rules: sit in the seat, do not fight, and enjoy the privilege of riding the bus.

If you could have any job in the world, what would it be? Why? I love what I am doing. First, I love greeting the kids and praying for them. The greatest gift I have is being an ambassador for the Lord Jesus Christ. So doing what I am as a pastor, teacher, and mentor, is the best job.

What do you do when you are not working? When I am not driving bus, I am helping by visiting, counseling, preparing messages, trying to help folks, hobby farming, and fishing.

What are your favorite aspects of the Clearbrook-Gonvick community? The people, the children through the years, the teams that play, and the fun watching basketball, football, and volleyball, and trying to encourage where I can.

Any other favorites you would like to share? I love watching children that grow up and become leaders and make a difference in life, changing our world for the good.

And now a word or two about Verlyn from the students...

Why do you think Verlyn decided to become a bus driver? “Maybe because he likes to drive and he's a good man.” “Because maybe he enjoys it and maybe there was a spot open to do it and he took it.” “So that he could be with a lot of kids.” “Because he likes being a bus driver.” “To have a good relationship with kids.”

What is the best thing about Verlyn? “He's a nice man and he always says ‘good morning’ and ‘good afternoon.’” “He is so kind. Sometimes he gives us candy.” “He is a good friend to all of us.” “That he is nice and he says nice things to the kids.” “He gives us candy when we leave.”

What do you think Verlyn was like when he was in school? “He was a good person.” “I think he was kind to everyone, a nice student.” “A good and hardworking student.” “A nice student and hard working.” “A nice, smart kid”

What job do you think Verlyn would have if he was not a bus driver? “He would be just a pastor.” “ He is a pastor and that might be his only job then.” “A teacher so he could see a lot of new kids.” “A pastor.” “Taxi driver.”

If Verlyn was a leprechaun, where do you think he would hide his pot of gold? “In the bus engine or under the bus.” “ Probably either his house, car, or in the church in Clearbrook.” “On the bus” “On the bus, obviously.” “Under the bus seat.”

If you could send Verlyn on a vacation anywhere in the world, where would you send him? Why would you send him there? “To Heaven because he is a pastor.” “To SeaWorld or Disneyland I have not been there and it might be fun to see all the things.” “New York, so he can relax, go shopping and have a lot of fun!” “Montana because you can see the Grand Canyon.” “Florida because he drives in this cold weather.”

What is one thing Verlyn ALWAYS says? “Good morning and good afternoon!” “Have a nice day, thanks for coming!” “Have a good day!” “Good Evening/See you later/Goodbye.” “Welcome or hi.”