

March Spotlight on Support Staff: Judy Engebretson, Community Education Coordinator

Education is for improving the lives of others and for leaving your community and world better than you found it. ~Marian Wright Edelman



Judy Engebretson was born and raised in Clearbrook. She graduated from Clearbrook High School in 1974 and Bemidji State University in 1979 with a teaching degree. Judy has been a part of Clearbrook-Gonvick school, as either a student or an employee, for most of her life. She did teach and coach in Fertile-Beltrami for two years and milked cows for several years for Brendalen Farms, but the majority of her time has been in the school system. She subbed at Clearbrook and Gonvick and coached basketball, volleyball, track at Clearbrook, Gonvick, and then Clearbrook-Gonvick. She became the

Community Education Coordinator in 1999. Judy has been the Summer Recreation Director for about 40 years and coordinated/coached elementary basketball for many years, as well.

Judy lives in the area and loves being near her family which includes her brothers Gordon (Roxanne) & Dennis (Jacky), nephews Nathan (Rosie), Andy (Megan), Brian, Philip, nieces Maria, Diana (Jared), grand-nephews Ben, Caleb, Ethan, Daniel, David, William, and grand-nieces Anna, Abigail. But if you ask people, some might actually think she lives at the school!

Why did you choose to work at school? I loved sports but high school girls sports did not begin until my senior year, so I only had one year to compete. I found that I liked to coach, so applied for coaching positions while I was attending college. I enjoyed passing on what I knew to the next generation, and then seeing them grow as ball-players and as people. With my experience working in Summer Recreation and Elementary basketball, I was encouraged to apply for the Community Education position and was fortunate to be hired.

What did you do before coming to Clearbrook-Gonvick? I taught and coached at Fertile-Beltrami for two years.

What is the best part of your job at Clearbrook-Gonvick? The variety! My job involves many different areas, so there is rarely a dull moment! My favorite is Summer Recreation, but I love any chance to provide opportunities to our youth. In doing the web site and our Facebook page, I have the

privilege to share with our community, friends and alumni the wonderful things our staff and students accomplish at school. One unique aspect of my job is the many questions I receive from people looking for information. Many times the question has nothing to do with my job but if I can answer it or give them the direction to find what they need that is a lot of fun. The other “best part” is working with the wonderful kids, parents, staff and communities that we have here at Clearbrook-Gonvick.

What is the biggest challenge of your job? Juggling many different events/activities/classes at once. Planning ahead is a key to my job, and sometimes it is a challenge to stay ahead of everything.

If you could have any job in the world - what would it be? Why? Most parts of my job are just what I want to be doing. Having even the smallest opportunity to influence someone in a positive manner is why I do what I do. If we all contribute our time and talents we can make good things happen!

What do you do when you are not at working at the school? I love to go home to my little log cabin that my family built for me! Spending time with my family is very important to me.

What are your favorite aspects of the Clearbrook-Gonvick community? It is my home! I have spent nearly all my life here, and I love the small town support and pride that is so evident. I have always said that the best part of living in a small town is that everyone knows everyone and the worst part of living in a small town is that everyone knows everyone! For me, the positive part of that far outweighs the negative!

Any other favorites you would like to share? I would like to thank everyone in the school and community for all the support you have given to our programs over the years. We could never have the success we have without you! Your support is deeply appreciated!

And now a few words from the students and staff about Judy...

“As a new staff member, Judy sat down with me and taught me how to use the staff website and get my teacher page up and running. She helps us promote our activities in the music room with the weekly announcements and stories for the school website. We appreciate her VERY much!!”

“Judy is helpful, especially with mailing labels!” “Judy has been a faithful employee of this district for many years. Her consistent follow through for the summer rec program has been an asset to our community. She builds community in many ways not only in her role as Community Ed Director, but as a human being giving to the Clearbrook-Gonvick staff and students consistently. Her positive attitude is always on the lookout on how to build students up as she brings them into her world and gives them opportunities to volunteer.” “I think Judy is a wonderful person- she does so many things for our youth behind the scenes. She runs Kloster league in summer. She organizes the elementary basketball programs in the winter. She has dedicated her life to supporting our community. Her work helps our youth in so many ways. She spends hours making sure that our youth have opportunities to succeed.” “Judy is a person who has loved this district forever. She is always willing to lend a helping hand, and believes in the team concept when it comes to doing what is best for the staff and students

of Clearbrook-Gonvick School District.” “Judy is very resourceful, kind, funny, and willing to help when someone is in need!” “Judy is quick to respond when a person has a question or a request. She works hard to keep things up to date on the school website as well as the Facebook page, which is beneficial for many people.”