

THE SHERIDAN PRESS, Friday, Sept. 3, 2010

www.thesheridanpress.com

District 2 Teacher of the Year

The Sheridan Press



Sheridan High School reading specialist and instructional facilitator Carol Stewart helps sophomore James Argeris with a question about Roman and Greek mythology during class this morning at the high school. Stewart was named Sheridan County School District 2 Teacher of the Year for the 2010-11 school year.

Reading specialist Carol Stewart honored by peers

By Michael Pearlman

michael@thesheridanpress.com

Sheridan High School reading specialist and instructional facilitator Carol Stewart has been named Sheridan County School District 2 Teacher of the Year, according to a news release from Superintendent Craig Dougherty.

“I was really surprised. There’s so many talented teachers in this district,” Stewart said, describing her reaction after learning she won the award. “Teachers here really care about their students and about being knowledgeable in their subject areas. I think Sheridan is a tremendous place to teach.”

Stewart has taught in District 2 (Sheridan/Story) for 31 years, beginning as a kindergarten teacher and also teaching first, fourth and sixth grades before moving to the high school in 2007. She now works with freshmen and sophomores to improve reading skills and assists with classroom reading instruction.

I personally love to read, and it’s hard to separate writing for reading,” she said. “It’s exciting to read what kids write and to see their thinking.”

Stewart said that teaching students at different ages over the course of her teaching career has helped keep her job interesting and allowed her to develop different approaches to teaching language arts, her specialty.

“As my son grew up, I became interested in changing grade levels,” she said. “I think it keeps me really fresh and enthusiastic to take on new challenges.”

A Douglas native, Stewart received her bachelor’s degree from the University of Wyoming, eventually earning a master’s in curriculum and instruction from UW. She began her teaching career in Sheridan in 1979 at Meadowlark Elementary School.

Stewart was approached by SHS Principal Dirlene Wheeler, who asked her to consider applying for the Teacher of the Year award last spring. This morning, Wheeler praised Stewart for her focus on lifelong learning and said Stewart’s efforts and commitment have created dramatic changes in student reading skills at the high school.

“I’ve never seen anyone so dedicated in my entire life — she’s so student-focused and the students absolutely love her,” Wheeler said. “She has helped in revamping the English curriculum and every content area focusing on reading comprehension.”

Stewart keeps busy with professional involvement outside the classroom as well. This past spring, Stewart was appointed to the Wyoming P-16 Education Council, a nonprofit group composed of state leaders from business, education and government.

The group’s goal is to improve the state’s public education system and better prepare students to move from one level of education to the next.

Stewart also spent several semesters as an adjunct faculty member for Sheridan College and teaches continuing education classes for education professionals for the University of Wyoming. Each Wyoming school district's Teacher of the Year will receive \$1,000, and the Wyoming Teacher of the Year will receive \$5,000, according to the Wyoming Department of Education website.

Ten finalists for Wyoming Teacher of the Year will be interviewed this fall with the winner announced in early 2011, according to District 2 Human Resources Coordinator Cody Sinclair.

The goal of the Wyoming Teacher of the Year program is to “provide for the creation of a network of teachers who are skilled, dedicated leaders who promote student performance and foster a commitment to community involvement by example,” according to the Wyoming Department of Education website.