

Local Schools



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Retiring Educators Honored at Bearcat Event Center

MAY 06TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Retiring Educators Honored at Bearcat Event Center

Dexter, Missouri – Each year a Retirement Tea is held at the Bearcat Event Center for retiring teachers at the Dexter Public Schools. Six well seasoned educators with 158 years in the field of education will leave the halls of Dexter and enjoy the life of retirement.

Andrea Backfisch will retire with 23 years in the classroom and is a first and second grade resource teacher at Southwest Elementary. She first served for a two-year period as a remedial reading aide at Central School, and in August 1992, she began teaching first grade at Southwest. Six years ago, she moved to a resource classroom. Her entire teaching career has been spent in the position of first grade teacher at Southwest.

Anita Joyner received her teaching certificate in July of 1984 and began her career in January of 1985 as a Title 1 Remedial Reading aide at Southwest Elementary. She accepted an elementary fifth grade teaching position at Desloge, Missouri for the 1985-1986 school year and remained there until returning to Dexter Schools in January 1988 to fill a vacancy as a Middle School Math teacher. She has served in that position since that time and retires with 28 district years and 30 career years of service to education. Joyner was also selected the Dexter Chamber of Commerce 2014 Educator of the Year.

Julie Garner was employed by Dexter Schools in January of 1994 and will retire with 22 years of service to Dexter. She was hired to complete the remainder of

the 1993-1994 school year teaching Special Education at Southwest Elementary. The following year, Early Childhood Special Education was implemented and she has served as a teacher of that program since that time. This successful program has benefitted many students as a result of her dedication to the special needs of special children within the local school district.

Paula Jarrell will retire with 22 years of service to Dexter School District. She was employed in August 1993 as a Learning Disabilities teacher in the Special Education Department of Dexter Schools. During her first five years of employment, her time was split between Southwest and Central Elementary, but in 1998-1999, she was reassigned exclusively to Southwest.

Sherry Dukes taught Special Education at Bloomfield for two years before coming to Dexter Schools in August 1987 as a special education teacher at Dexter High School. She has continued to provide educational services for special needs students at Dexter High School for the past 28 years. Dedication to her career and empathy for her students lends credence to the term "Special" education teacher. She retires with 30 career years of teaching experience.

In addition to the certified staff members retiring, support staff member Gale Simmering will be stepping down.

Gale Simmering was employed in August 2006 as an elementary library aide. She worked in collaboration with the elementary librarian whose day was split between Southwest and Central. She has served in that position for nine years and will retire at the end of the school year.

Shown in the photo from left to right are: Andrea Backfisch, Anita Joyner, Julie Garner, Paula Jarrell, Sherry Dukes, and Gale Simmering. Not present was Central Elementary retiring principal Cindy Bowman.

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Gavin Miller Selected as Dexter Middle School Asst. Principal

MAY 06TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Gavin Miller Selected as Dexter Middle School Asst. Principal

Dexter, Missouri – The Dexter Board of Education have selected Gavin Miller as the new T.S. Hill Middle School Assistant Principal.

Miller graduated from Dexter High School in 1988 and earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Business from Evangel University in 1993. He earned his teaching certificate in 1996. Miller went on to earn a Master's degree in Education Administration from William Woods University in 2011 and is currently working on a Specialist Degree from William Woods University.

He has 18 years of education under his belt. Two years he taught PE and Business classes at New Madrid County Central and coached football, wrestling, and baseball. He was at Dexter High School for eight years teaching marketing/COE class, coached football, girls basketball and was Athletic Director. He moved away for six years teaching personal finance and computer apps for four years at Smith-Cotton High School in Sedalia and then finished with two years as Assistant Principal. He recently joined the Bernie school district as high school and junior high principal where he has been the last two years.

He is married to Kristin Miller of 12 years. She is a 7th grade science teacher at T.S. Hill Middle School. They have three children, Madelyn who is 19 years old, Maddox age 11, and Jaxon age 6.

"I love spending time with my family, being outdoors, riding 4-wheelers, going to the beach and attending as many St. Louis Cardinals games as possible," commented Miller.

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Richland Seniors Receive Scholarships

MAY 05TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

[Richland Seniors Receive Scholarships](#)

Essex, Missouri - Four Richland R-1 School seniors recently received scholarships from the SEMO Electric Foundation Board.

Each student will receive a check for \$800 to attend a university or college of their choosing.

Joe Foster and Aime Whitney have chosen to attend Southeast Missouri State University in the fall. Nickol Tilley will attend Three Rivers College.

Receiving the scholarships are from left: Joe Foster, Regan Manes, Nickol Tilley, and Aimee Whitney.

Photo by Skyler Harper, Richland High School senior.

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Retirement Tea Set to Honor Teachers

MAY 04TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

[Retirement Tea Set to Honor Teachers](#)

Dexter, Missouri - Dexter Public School educators who are retiring this year will be honored at the district's Annual Retirement Tea scheduled for Tuesday, May 5th from 4:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. at the Bearcat Event Center.

Retiring this year are Andrea Backfisch, first grade teacher; Sherry Dukes, high school special education teacher; Anita Joyner, middle school math teacher; Paula Jarrell, elementary learning disabilities teacher; and Cindy Bowman, Central Elementary principal.

Among the classified staff retiring are Gale Simmering, elementary librarian and Lisa Moore, high school secretary.

The public is encouraged to attend this even and honor those that are retiring.

Congratulations to all those retiring!

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Softball Team Honors Dakota Silliman on Senior Night

APRIL 30TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

[Softball Team Honors Dakota Silliman on Senior Night](#)

Dexter, Missouri - Dakota Silliman is the daughter of Chad and Dena Silliman and is a senior at Dexter High School.

She participated in basketball her freshman and sophomore years, volleyball her sophomore year, and softball all four years of high school. This year she is playing at 1st base.

Dakota is member of Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Future Teachers of American, Future Farmers of America, Pep Club, Honor Society and is the treasurer of DECA.

She has earned awards as an all-county softball player and all-tourney softball athlete and the Highest Batting Average Award.

Her future plans are to attend Southeast Missouri State University and major in Radiology.

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