

TEACHER

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an elementary classroom,” Judy said. “But it’s good to have a break from books and lessons and work with glue and papier-mâché. They can make anything they want as long as it’s appropriate. We do our regular classwork and then spend a few minutes at the end of class working on them. They get them done right before the Christmas holidays and then they can bring them home and fill them with candy and incorporate them into their Christmas holiday.”

Tereshinski has also incorporated other elementary-school traditions into her high school classroom.

“I love food so when it is your birthday you can bring treats to share in my class,” she said. “I had a few students who were perplexed about the disappearance of cursive writing so we decided to revive it. We do sentences on the board and then we rate who has the best cursive handwriting.”

Because Spanish is an elective, Tereshinski is blessed to have students in her classes that really want to be there.

“There is no mandate that they have to take Spanish,” she said. “It is one of the requirements for the state scholarship and many out-of-state colleges require two years of a foreign language and of course there are parents who think they need it but for the most part they want to learn. I have heard many times over the years that the students at Yankton High School are the most prepared students in a lot of areas not just Spanish and I think that speaks well of YHS.”

Tereshinski also enjoys knitting and has started an informal Knitting Club at the high school.

“I wore a scarf to school one day and someone asked me where I got it and I said I had knitted it,” she said. “A few students were interested in learning to knit so for the past four years I’ve had kids come in for knitting club. I let the kids knit sometimes when they are done with their lessons and then once a week I have a session after school.”

Surprisingly the knitting club is pretty popular among the boys at YHS.

“Last fall, I had four football players and a wrestler,” she said. “The girls start out coming and then once they get the hang of it they stop coming to the club and just continue on their own but the boys come for quite a while. The wrestler said he wanted to learn to knit to keep him busy. It was something he could do to keep his fingers busy when he was trying to avoid eating to make weight.”

Tereshinski said when she was growing up her mother encouraged her and her two sisters to choose a career to make sure they could provide themselves with an income in case something should happen to their husbands.

“One of my sisters became a nurse and the other a secretary,” she said. “Back then there weren’t many careers to choose from for women. I could have been a beautician but I chose teacher. I think it was a good choice. I do like snow days.”

She said each year she is asked when she’s going to retire.

“I always say not yet, I think I’ll do one more year,” Tereshinski said. “I’ll just take it one year at a time. I love being with my students and I’m just not ready to sit at home just yet.”

■ Story and Photos by Tera Schmidt



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