

Learning center's director prepares for new year

By Sharon Corcoran
The Goodland Star-News

There's new paint on the walls, the furniture has been rearranged, files organized, computers waiting — now all that's needed are the students.

Lori Graybill took over as director of the Goodland Learning Center on Aug. 1, and classes will begin Wednesday, but she says her job started before that.

Graybill, who used to teach computer skills to the handicapped in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area, gave the center a makeover (with help from her family) to get it ready for the school year.

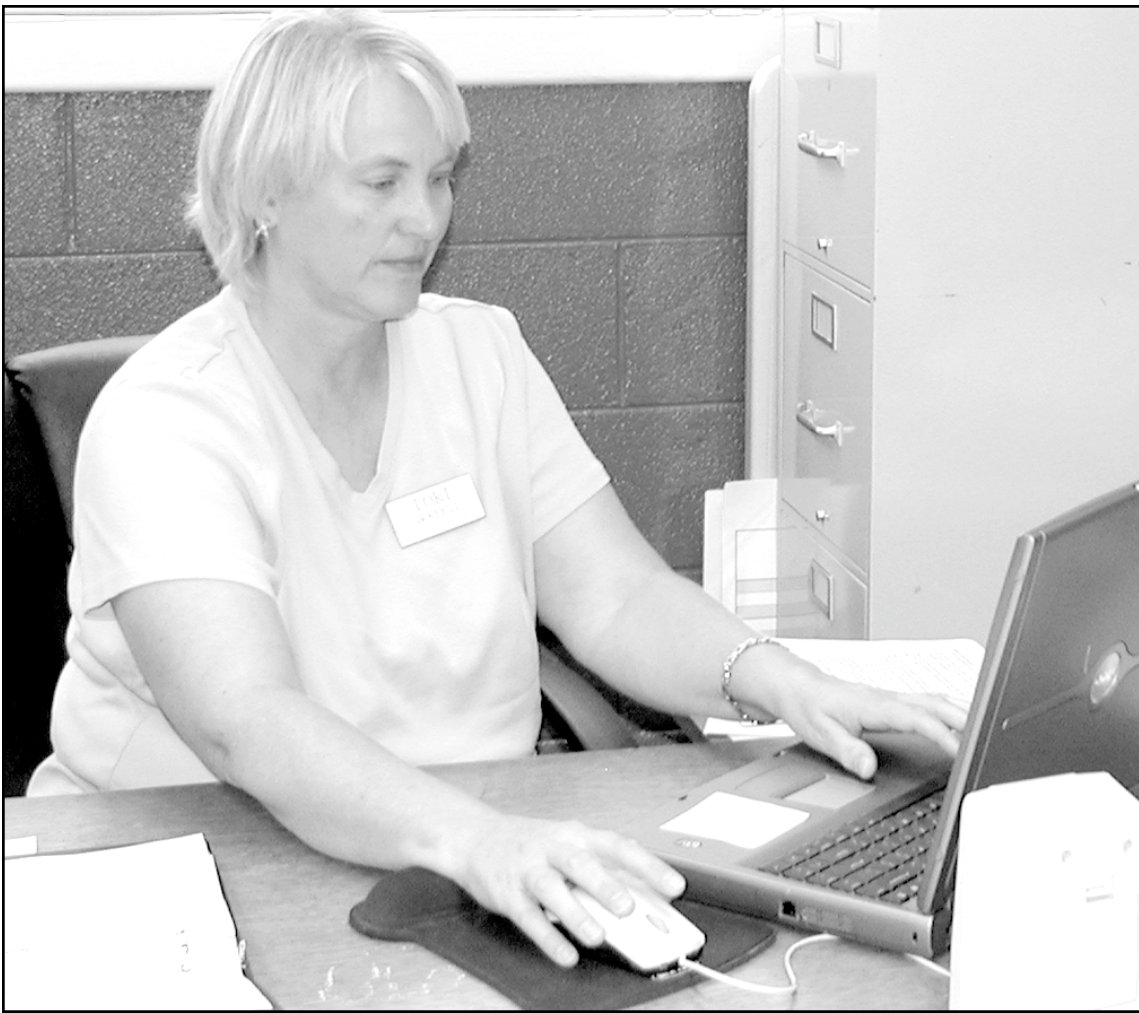
"I wanted students to feel at home here," she said. "Hopefully, this is a place that is fun and a good learning experience."

Graybill said she and her assistant, Peggy Klinge, have been busy sending out letters to last year's students and those who didn't graduate from high school, getting organized and enrolling students. Now they are ready for school to start.

Adults can go to the center to complete their high school diploma, she said, high school students can make up credits for failed courses, and anyone who just wants to take a class can stop in and learn.

The center is a high-school dropout recovery program, Graybill said, but adults can come in for individual classes as well, including Spanish or English as a Second Language.

Most of the curriculum is on the



Lori Graybill spends a lot of time on the computer in her new role as director of the Goodland Learning Center.
Photo by Sharon Corcoran/The Goodland Star-News

computers, she said, so students with high speed internet service can work from home. There are com-

puters available at the center as well, and students can work at their own pace.

The class work is individualized, Graybill said; students can come in after work, do the work whenever

they want from home, even bring their children in with them. There's an area where children can play or watch videos.

"We do all we can to accommodate," she said, "so they can get a diploma."

The center keeps about the same schedule as Goodland High School, Graybill said, closing for holiday breaks and for weather. And it has a similar curriculum to the high school, with students earning credits for classes, she said, and students who graduate from the center get a diploma through the high school.

Students can begin classes throughout the school year, she said, but the center's enrollment is only counted through Oct. 1, so it's best if they enroll early. The money comes through the school district, she said, and is based on how many students the center has.

That also means there is no charge for taking the classes. The only ones who have to pay, Graybill said, are high school students who come in after school to make up a class they failed.

Graybill is a licensed teacher with a degree in grades 7-12 math. She lived in Minnesota for 20 years, teaching in school for five, then did computer training at a rehabilitation center for five years and after that on her own. She went to people's homes and worked with people with disabilities, including the visually impaired.

Graybill said she did a lot of voice training to help people use their

voice to control the computer if they had a spinal injury or carpal tunnel syndrome. It was a good business, she said.

"This is just as big a challenge," she said of the learning center. "I will use a lot of what I learned there. A lot of people coming here will have learning disabilities. I will be able to accommodate them."

She said her husband Arnold was a diesel mechanic in Minnesota but always wanted to be a farmer. His grandparents and uncle lived on a farm north of Kanorado. When they died, the couple decided to sell their home in Minnesota.

"We were tired of the city," Lori Graybill said, "and were ready to get back to a simpler life."

There are trade-offs to moving to the farm, she said. It was handy, she said, every day driving past Best Buy, Home Depot and the Mall of America. But here, she said, there is peace and quiet here, and she can see the stars at night.

They lived in the suburbs around the Twin Cities, she said, and put 150 miles on their car each day. And then there was rush hour traffic.

"Sometimes I miss the lakes and how green it is up there," Graybill said, "but I do not miss the traffic."

Also moving to the farm with them are her parents, Rolland and Shirley Schunk. Her father's skills with installing tiles and plumbing came in handy in remodeling the center, she said.

Bible contains laws, stories, songs, prophecies, even a love story

Reading the Bible cover to cover is a journey through diverse subjects, recorded by people with vastly different lives.

The Bible contains God's laws, stories of people both faithful to God and not faithful, songs, proverbs, prophecies and even a love story. The Song of Solomon was written by King Solomon about a love he couldn't win. Despite being Israel's king and having wealth beyond compare, he could not win the love of a simple country girl because she was already in love with a shepherd boy.

The song is expressed through a series of conversations between Solomon and the girl, a Shulamite, and between the girl and the shepherd boy she loved, between her and her brothers, court ladies and women of Jerusalem.

A conversation between the Shulamite and the shepherd is recorded at Song of Solomon 2:1-4: "A mere saffron of the coastal plain I am, a lily of the low plains."

"Like a lily among thorny weeds, so is my girl companion among the daughters."

"Like an apple tree among the trees of the forest, so is my dear one among the sons. His shade I have passionately desired, and there I have sat down, and his fruit has been sweet to my palate. He brought me into the house of wine, and his banner over me was love."

This likely seems sappy to many, but this is a love so strong it prevented the young woman from being swayed by the king's wealth, prominence and power. She didn't



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- use it or lose it

to the Christ."

Song of Solomon is followed by the book of Isaiah. The first six chapters describe conditions in Judah and Jerusalem and relate the people's guilt before God and Isaiah's role as a prophet to warn the people of Judah about the consequences of their actions.

The next six chapters contain God's pronouncements against many nations and salvation by the Prince of Peace. Historic events of Hezekiah's reign and the release of Jews from Babylon and their return to restore Zion round out the information in the book.

Isaiah 1:2-4 says, "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, for God himself has spoken: 'Sons I have brought up and raised, but they themselves have revolted against me. A bull well knows its buyer, and the ass the manger of its owner; Israel itself has not known, my own people have not behaved understandingly.'

Notice to readers

The column "From the Vault" has not been in The Goodland Star-News because its writer Marcia Smith has been busy moving. The column will resume soon.

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