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New Children's Librarian at Lafayette Library and Learning Center

By Cathy Tyson



Jenna Skinner and her special friend Buck Buck in the Children's section of the Lafayette Library and Learning Center. Photo Cathy Tyson

finishing early or reading beyond the requirements. Things like that make my day. Our readers have a lot to be proud of!"

Another big part of the job is story time, "My favorite time of the day, I try to make it age appropriate and have a theme - recently it was three different books about animals."

Back to back story times, on Mondays and Thursdays, accommodate an ever growing group of participants, keeping her plenty busy. In addition to stories read aloud, there are songs and fingerplays. Mother Goose story time is geared toward kids up to three years old, sessions are held at 10:15 and 10:55. Preschool story time follows Mother Goose at 11:30. For this group, "Miss Jenna" focuses on kindergarten readiness - things like raising your hand and counting.

From her early childhood days in southern California, Skinner has always been a big fan of the library, "My parents are huge readers." Both of them are teachers - her father is a college professor and her mother teaches middle school.

For the past dozen years she's lived in northern California, getting her Bachelor's degree from San Francisco State and a Master's in Library Science from San Jose State University. The specialized SJSU program focuses on developing early literacy skills like narration, vocabulary and sound recognition; "It's all about preparing the kids to read," said Skinner.

Although she just started at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center in mid-June, she's already getting to know quite a few of the regular pint-sized patrons. Prior to this position, she was the Youth Services Librarian in Oakley.

A new book club for tweens - fourth through sixth graders - is on the drawing board, and Skinner is hoping to expand story times to include family members. The Lafayette Library and Learning Center has so much to offer toddlers to grown-ups, starting with air conditioning and a food-friendly policy (check out the convenient Book Mark Caf•next door), even an adult summer reading program with prizes, what's not to like?

Reach the reporter at: cathy@lamorindaweekly.com

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