

Repurposed Pup

By Cathy Dausman



Moraga Hardware and Lumber owner Bill Snider with his dog, Wells. Photo Cathy Dausman

The newest employee at Moraga Hardware is a bit on the short side, but bright, friendly and eager to learn. Her name is Wells; she is an 18-month-old purebred black Labrador retriever who made a "career change" from guide dog

to all-purpose pet. Moraga Hardware and Lumber owner Bill Snider took Wells in after the Orinda family who fostered her was notified the dog was up for adoption. Snider said a guide dog family can either keep a career change dog as a pet or place it with someone. They asked him. Wells was already familiar with Moraga Hardware since she used to make the rounds with her foster family. Snider recently lost his aging yellow Labrador, so Wells was a natural fit.

"Last summer I said 'good-bye' to her," Snider said, thinking he'd never see Wells again. "We got her the Sunday after Thanksgiving," he said. Wells is a salaried employee, so she works 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. most days ... a little less on Sunday. She's receiving full benefits (including an abundance of positive strokes from customers) but has no lunch break or pension plan. Her "office" is a comfy crate behind the counter. Snider said after she learns the layout, he'll train her to show customers where the stock is located. Duct tape ... and dog ... on aisle three!

Miramonte Teacher Named 2014 C-SPAN Senior Teacher Fellow

By Laurie Snyder



America learned from the Twitterverse Dec. 11 that Miramonte High School teacher, Meghan Selway, has been awarded a C-SPAN Senior Teaching Fellowship. Image C-SPAN Classroom

The Cable-Satellite Public Affairs Network (C-SPAN) Education Foundation has named Miramonte High School teacher, Meghan Selway, as a Senior Teacher Fellow for 2014. Only those state-certified professionals deemed "expert social studies teachers" at the middle or high school level, who are engaged in the creation of "innovative teaching materials," and who have completed regular C-SPAN Teacher Fellowships may advance to the role of Senior Fellow, according to the announcement.

Selway has been teaching government, law and society, and economics at Miramonte for six years, and was at Las Lomas prior to that. "Kids really enjoy government, and they enjoy economics. They're two classes that really make the students feel empowered," says Selway. She has also been a Curriculum Development and Teacher Training consultant to the University of California, Berkeley History Social Studies Project, and has volunteered as a tutor for the Refugee Transitions Program at Oakland International High School. She was first named a C-SPAN Teacher Fellow in 2007.

"It changed my life," recalls Selway. It got off to a start she still describes with awe. While

standing on the Mall in Washington, D.C. on day one of her fellowship, U.S. Secret Service personnel swarmed as a breathtaking sight unfolded. The helicopter of President George W. Bush was landing in surprisingly close proximity.

Selway's fellowship gave her the chance to learn about how C-SPAN operates and how the Library of Congress digitizes documents. And she helped to create lesson plans that have been used to enable students across the country to better understand America's presidents.

"Every summer they select three teachers nationwide, and they bring them back to D.C. for basically a month to work on classroom materials there," explains Selway's colleague, Cheryl Davis, who was named a C-SPAN fellow herself in 2004 and was profiled by this newspaper in September 2012. Senior fellowships, says Davis, are "all virtual" - conducted from the educator's home district in collaboration with another teacher from a school in a different part of the country. "The really great part about it - when I was working with it, I was with senior fellow Tracey Van Dusen. She's in Ann Arbor," says Davis. "She would do part of the work, and I would do part of the work, and we

would come up with a great lesson."

Davis was one of the early fellows to flesh out content for C-SPAN's "Deliberations" program (www.c-spanclassroomdeliberations.org/), which was recently endorsed by the National Council for the Social Studies for being "a free resource of high scholarly merit for educators nationwide" with a mission that mirrors the NCSS goal of teaching "the content, knowledge, intellectual skills, and civic values necessary for fulfilling the duties of citizenship in a participatory democracy."

In 2014, Selway will collaborate with a teacher from New York to update the Deliberations site further. She will also be busy judging applications for C-SPAN's StudentCam contest (www.studentcam.org/), a national documentary competition which encourages critical analyses by students in grades 6-12 of key issues impacting their neighborhoods and nation.

"There are all sorts of fellowships out there, but we often don't take advantage because we don't have time," says Selway, urging her fellow educators to consider applying for future opportunities. "It really is a wonderful teacher professional development experience," says Davis.


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