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LYNNE AND BEV AT BEV'S HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION IN 1988.



THEIR FIRST CHRISTMAS TOGETHER, WHEN BEV WAS 11 YEARS OLD.



A SURPRISE SCHOOL ASSEMBLY WHEN BEV WAS NAMED COUNSELOR OF THE YEAR.

## "I love you, Ms. Kincade."

That's what you hear as children swarm around Beverly Kincade, guidance counselor at the School of the Osage Upper Elementary in Osage Beach, when she enters the room.

Bev has been working to improve the school experience and the lives of her third through sixth grade students since August 2007. Included among her many responsibilities are therapeutic sessions with individuals, small groups, and families; managing school records, overseeing and administering standardized testing programs, and consulting with various agencies to provide services to students and their families. Clearly she is an expert at her work: Bev received the Central Missouri School Counselor of the Year Award in 2008.

Bev attributes her success to a positive attitude and strong work ethic. She feels she acquired these, at least in part, from her association with her "Big Sister," Lynne Best, through Big Brothers Big Sisters of America.

When Bev was 6 years old she lost her father to leukemia. Her mother, a special education teacher with five children to support (the youngest mentally challenged), looked to the community for assistance. Enter Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS).

BBBS reaches out to children ages 6 to 14 who need extra support, guidance and encouragement. Their mission is to positively influence the lives of these children by uniting them with caring and committed volunteers. A child is

matched with a stable person who serves as a special friend and role model, a "Big Brother" or "Big Sister."

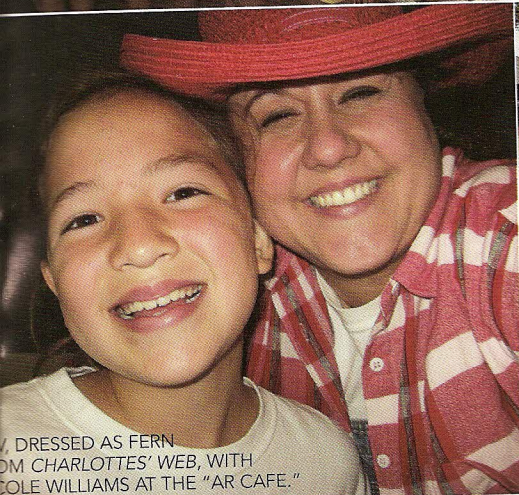
Lynne Best became Bev's "Big Sister" when Bev was 11 years old and Lynne was 26. Lynne truly lived up to her name. Each weekend she took Bev on day trips; they biked, sewed and did homework. Lynne encouraged Bev to be the best that she could be.

"Lynne didn't have much money to spend," Bev says. "She gave me the gifts of her interests and her heart."

While Bev's high school friends were experiencing all of the confusion and challenges of their teen years, Lynne was a consistent force in Bev's life. She cheered Bev through college at Southwest Missouri State University, where Bev received a BS degree in International Studies in 1993. They kept in touch while Bev taught in Roatan, Honduras in 1998. When Bev earned her MSE in Counseling and her Missouri Certification as an Elementary and Secondary Guidance Counselor, Lynne was proud.

Both Lynne and Bev are Catholic, and Lynne reinforced Bev's Christian values by serving as Bev's confirmation sponsor. When Bev graduated from college she spent a year working as Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries for St. Joseph Parish in Los Angeles, coordinating outreach ministry and programs for Hispanic youth. She returned to Missouri to serve for seven years as Director of Youth Ministries in Independence, leading spiritual retreats and other character development opportunities. She presented faith formation and adolescent development activities at local





BEV, DRESSED AS FERN FROM CHARLOTTE'S WEB, WITH MRS. WILLIAMS AT THE "AR CAFE."

BEV WITH HER FRIEND KAREN BLEVINS RIDING IN THE MS150 BIKE RIDE (HERE AND AT RIGHT).

conferences, and coordinated mission outreach trips within the U.S. and Mexico for St. Marks Church.

As for Lynne, she says she had great parents. When she heard about Big Brothers Big Sisters she decided she wanted to pass on to a child some of the care and concern she received from them growing up. While Bev gained so much from her "Big Sister," Lynne, too, gained one of her greatest friends. Bev was a great support to Lynne when her mother died, and now Bev returns to Lynne the gift of her time, keeping in regular touch with her "Big Sister" through all of the challenges of her life.

When Bev learned that her mother was diagnosed with diabetes and her sister with cancer, she moved back to the St. Louis area to be near them. Bev continued to share her talents with an inner-city, at-risk population as a guidance school counselor and teacher at Loyola Academy Middle School in St. Louis. There, in addition to other responsibilities, she implemented a peer mentoring program where she trained student leaders.

Bev's "Big Sister," Lynne, was part of the Big Brothers Big Sisters community-based program, defined as a commitment of two hours each week for a period of at least six months, where the "Big" and "Little" enjoy activities together anywhere within an hour of the child's home. The Lake Area Big Brothers Big Sisters has an active community-based program, and also matches mentors with children through its school-based program, a project very dear to Bev.

Currently, the school-based program involves contact between "Bigs" and "Littles" at the Upper Elementary School for approximately 45 minutes per week. High school students and adults come into the school cafeteria and meet with their matched young students to talk, go over homework and play games. There is little or no financial commitment, but the commitment of time must be honored.

"One of the largest problems in our schools is attendance," Bev says. "Knowing that he is going to see his 'Big' is often the motivation necessary to get a child to come to school in the morning."

Although the Upper Elementary has a strong Big Brothers Big Sisters union with the high school, Bev encourages members of the community to become involved.

"Our area has so many worthwhile charities that seek contributions in the form of money," she says. "Being a Big Brother or Sister requires nothing more than a bit of time. And it makes such a huge difference to a child to know that he or she is important to someone."

Bev states that it is unlikely she would ever have become interested in bicycling were it not for her "Big Sister" Lynne. Thanks to those childhood rides, Bev is now an avid biker. Last fall she took her love of the sport to school during the first week to share some important lessons with her students. She wore her bike clothes and rode her bike into classrooms to demonstrate several points: the importance of a good foundation; how without direction one merely spins his wheels and gets nowhere; and if one looks backward he doesn't get ahead.

Clearly, Bev employs all of these lessons when she bikes. She recently spent two days completing the MS 150 bike tour through Amish country to raise money and awareness for Multiple Sclerosis. The lessons also have certainly become a part of her daily life.

According to Bev, everything happens for a reason. Our job is to make the connection and bring forward the good. She says she is working in a school district that truly cares about children and feels that she is surrounded by family. The Lake area is home; she recently bought a house here. The students love Bev and she truly loves her job—and that is evident from the smile on her face. ●