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Reading with Mrs. Frick



Volunteer Mary Frick's multiple sclerosis and walker help teach lessons at Racine Christian. First grader Gracie Friesema reads to Mrs. Frick, at right, as teacher Kris Noe looks on.

Racine Christian School first grade teacher Kris Noe has a secret weapon for teaching reading. On Tuesdays, volunteer Mary Frick comes to help the students read books.

Mrs. Frick worked as a kindergarten teacher's aide until her multiple sclerosis put her on the sidelines. But her lifelong friend and fellow staff member Kris Noe knew how to harness Mary's special gift of working with children.

Every Tuesday, Mrs. Noe picks Mary up on the way to school. Mary spends the morning helping one student at a time with reading. "I listen to each of the 15 first graders read me a book," says Mary, "and I encourage them. I help them sound out a new word or pronounce a difficult word. This way, we ensure each child has one-on-one attention; they really respond to that."

Along with learning to read, the students are learning that Mrs. Frick's disability from MS is not a scary thing. "The children are used to seeing my walker. They understand that I have a disability, but I'm just a regular person like anyone else. Students can remember that lesson when they see other people with disabilities."

Principal Dave Van Swol says, "Volunteers are part of the school family at Racine Christian – helping the students grow in grace and knowledge. Mrs. Frick is teaching them about disability as she helps teach them to read. She is a great asset to our school."

Home, church, and school come together at Racine Christian School, located at 912 Virginia Street in Racine. For information on K-8 enrollment, call Principal Dave Van Swol at 262/634-0961. www.RacineChristianSchool.com.

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