

# Meet Cristin Nicodemus

Fifth grade teacher passes her love of reading to students

By **Becky Hammar**

When Cristin Nicodemus came to Pleasant Hill Elementary in 2004, she felt as though she'd found Utopia.

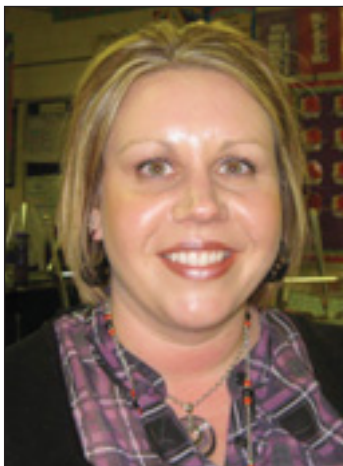
"I've been a fifth grade teacher for seven years and love it," she says. "The kids want to be here. I teach them reading strategies and pass on that passion to want to read. I want them to truly love it."

Nicodemus' journey to Pleasant Hill began in Austin, Texas, with a stint in Olathe, Kan. The family moved to Ankeny when she was 13. During her childhood she traveled to all the states but Hawaii and Alaska. The traveling enriched her life, and the seed was planted to see the United States.

Nicodemus earned an academic scholarship at Grand View College for elementary education. She has three endorsements: reading, early childhood and language arts. She also met her future husband in college and had a romantic courtship.

"As a freshman, I met my husband, Mike Nicodemus," she says. "We took Intro to Literature together, and the rest is history."

"Mike asked my folks permission to marry me. Then he climbed up a ladder and knocked



*Cristin Nicodemus teaches fifth grade at Pleasant Hill Elementary.*

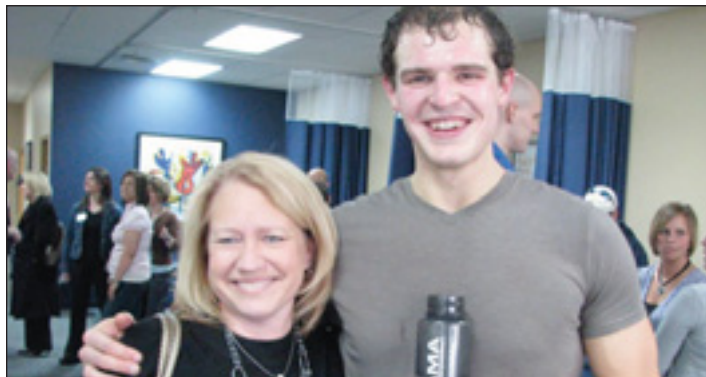
on my bedroom window carrying roses and an engagement ring. I thought it was a burglar — I was scared. I woke up my folks. They came in my room and looked out the window, and then I realized it was Mike."

Her teaching career and marriage started at the same time.

"On my honeymoon, I got a call from Newton to teach at Aurora Heights Elementary as a first and second grade reading interventionist," she says. "A year later, I went to Wallace Elementary as a literacy leader."

Nicodemus and her husband live in Indianola with their two children, Brett and Kendall, and their miniature dachshund, Snickers.

"Some day, I would love to rent a camper and get my kids to experience some of those traveling adventures," she says. **PHL**



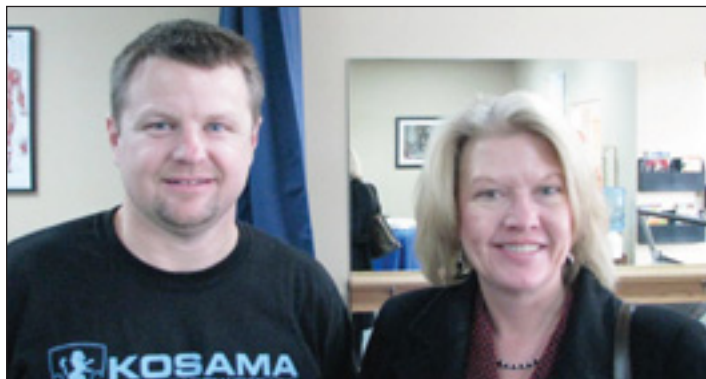
*Cathy Jensen and Craig Neiderheiser at Accelerated Rehab Center's open house on March 31.*



*Melissa Horton and Jill Meyer at Accelerated Rehab Center's open house on March 31.*



*Hilary Dunn and Amanda Bailey at Accelerated Rehab Center's open house on March 31.*



*Kevin Mosher and Mary Simon at Accelerated Rehab Center's open house on March 31.*

## What do you like best about Mrs. Nicodemus?



**Storm Cutwright:**  
"She's a very good math teacher."



**Morgan Clark:**  
"She helps you in math."



**Alyssa Ayersman:**  
"She lets us do a lot of different activities."