

# School therapist embraces valley

Psychologist at Davey Jackson Elementary coaches soccer and climbs in his spare time.

By Brielle Schaeffer

In the two and a half months that Brad Dickey has lived in Jackson, he has ascended the Grand Teton, participated in a half Ironman triathlon and coached a Jackson Hole Youth soccer team.

And that was all before beginning a new school year at Davey Jackson Elementary.

It's been a busy summer for the Minnesota native, who moved here to take the job of school psychologist at the kindergarten-through-third-grade school.

"It's my dream job and where I want to live," he said.

Climbing the Grand was "one of the scariest things I've ever done in my whole life," Dickey said. But it's one of the many things he loves about living in the area.

"I've been coming out here ever since I was 6 years old for family vacations," he said. "I've had a lot of experiences hanging out in this town, and I absolutely love it."

So far, he fits right in, sporting leisure gear like a Pearl Street Bagels trucker hat, flip-flops and puffy down jacket.

Besides climbing, the towheaded 28-year-old loves skiing. He had wanted to get out of the Midwest for a while.

When he saw the opening for school psychologists in Teton County School District No. 1, he jumped at the chance, booked a ski trip for when he had the interview and then got the job the next day.

"I feel really lucky," he said.

It's just an added bonus that his older brother, Chris Dickey, lives in the valley.

At a soccer practice Aug. 31, coaching a team of 5- to 7-year-olds in the Grassroots Academy soccer program, Brad Dickey encouraged his team with his boyish grin, enduring patience and infectious good nature.

"Who wants to play a game?" he asked his players, trying pump them up. "You guys got to say it louder. Who wants to play a game?"

The kids, easily distracted by their soccer balls and teammates, perked up when Dickey organized a game of sharks and minnows.

He wanted to coach the younger teams because he'll be working with that age group in the school system, he said.

As a school psychologist, Dickey will focus on early intervention and prevention, working with students with different learning and behavioral disabilities. The symptoms of those disabilities can be improved if children are helped early enough and given the support they need, he said.

Part of Dickey's job is assessing students and matching them up with the appropriate services.

"I basically justify the services and coordinate the services," he said.

School psychology is pretty empirical, with curriculum-based measurements, behavioral observations and other data used to make decisions to help district kids, he said.

Because Wyoming funds educa-



Brad Dickey works with young soccer players Aug. 29. Coaching is a spare-time pursuit. He's the new school psychologist at Davey Jackson Elementary.

tion so well, it's a rewarding place to work, he said.

"There are a lot of resources and funds for the school psychologist to be effective," he said. "We're able to get the services the child needs to make a difference."

Becoming a school psychologist was fitting for Dickey, who enjoys working with children as well as learning about people's motivations.

"I was always really fascinated by understanding human behavior and why people do what they do," he said. In college, "I didn't mind going to the library for four or five hours and reading about it, because it was so fascinating to me."

Dickey is so captivated by school psychology he's been studying it for 10 years, having received a master's in school psychology from the University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire and an education specialist degree in school psychology — 30 credits less than a doctorate — from there as well.

Now, he is finishing up his board certification in applied behavior analysis from St. Cloud State University.

"I've been in school my entire life," Dickey said. "The more that I learn, the more effective I can be at my job."

He has worked with children as a camp counselor and outdoor educator, even taking a group of students backpacking in Australian with Jackson-based Wilderness Ventures last summer.

"It's something different every day," he said about working with youth. "There's always a new challenge."

Dickey gets a kick out of working with the younger boys and girls, who are so uninhibited it can be humorous.

"They're so hilarious," he said. "I see really funny things every day."

But that doesn't mean he's not serious about his job.

"I felt like it was one of those jobs I would never become too relaxed [in]. ... There's always a kid at stake," he said.

He said he knew he would always work hard, because if he didn't, it would "ultimately affect a child's life."

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— Brad Dickey  
SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST

In addition to working at Davey Jackson, he will be a consultant at Jackson Hole Middle School and perform special-education evaluations at Journeys School.

When he's not working, Dickey will be playing outside, hanging around town listening to music or taking part in other area cultural events.

"I'm just really stoked to become part of the community here," he said. "I'm excited to meet people and make this my home."

## LOOKING BACK



### 45 years ago ...

On opening day, Teton County schools welcomed a record number of students: 1,151. ... Friends of Gov. Cliff Hansen decided to kick off his campaign for the U.S. Senate with a free barbecue at the grade school football field. It was "hoped and expected that nearly everyone in the county will attend to wish him success," the Jackson Hole Guide reported. ... Jackson Hole Ski Corp. advertised season passes for sale for \$77.25. Passes for those younger than 18 cost \$41.25. ... The body of Elmer Silburn, who had disappeared two days earlier while fishing with his wife, was found about five miles south of Wilson near the Snake River. Teton County Sheriff Carl Roice said Silburn apparently collapsed while he was working his way upstream from the spot where he had left his wife. ... Water levels in the Palisades and Jackson Lake reservoirs continued to drop after a summer with almost no rainfall. Palisades, with a capacity of 1.2 million acre-feet, was down to 395,000. Jackson Lake reached a record low of 630,130 acre-feet, about two-thirds of its capacity of 847,000.

### 30 years ago ...

Radio station KMTN advertised it was playing "all the best new music," like hits from the albums "Tattoo You" by the Rolling Stones, "Shot of Love" by Bob Dylan and "Nine Tonight" by Bob Seger. ... "Rarely have I seen Teton County so unanimous on anything," said Sen. Malcolm Wallop as he analyzed residents' opposition to a proposed oil and gas well being drilled up Cache Creek canyon. A Jackson Hole News editorial urged folks to tell Congress to permanently withdraw the area from mineral exploration. ... Jackson Hole High School's football team romped over Pinedale, 20-6, in the first home game of the season. However, both Broncos tailbacks, Tom Bayse and Rod Robison, were injured during the first half. ... Teton County School District trustee Roberta Seaton decided not to run again. She asked her supporters to vote for Hal Richardson, because "there are six women and one man — we need another man's viewpoint." ... Jackson's only professional bicycle shop, Teton Cyclery, advertised that it was not having a sale, "but this time of year, we'll give you some kind of deal if you ask nicely."

### 15 years ago ...

A strolling tourist who noticed something odd and a Jackson cop who happened to be passing by on foot combined to help nab a burglary suspect who had been hiding in Jack Dennis Sports. Police realized that anyone in the store had an assortment of guns and ammunition at his disposal, and a standoff of almost three hours ensued before the Twin Falls, Idaho, man surrendered. ... The Bridger-Teton National Forest unveiled a plan to manage the increasingly crowded whitewater section of the Snake River. Commercial rafting would be reduced, parking fees would be charged, and a shuttle bus would be provided under the new plan. ... "Priority Online," a work of art by Audrey Roll-Preissler, was finally hung in the new U.S. Post Office. Former Postmaster Al Berglund had commissioned the large, colorfully painted plywood piece, apparently without consulting higher-ups and the U.S. Postal Service's interior decorators. They refused to display the painting for 10 months. Then, a compromise was reached: The artwork was hung in the mail sorting room, and the public could ask to view it.

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