

Leyton volleyball succeeding with Wauneta family values

Written by Wauneta Breeze

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Jodi Craig, far left, stands with her team after defeating Hays Springs in D2-6 district title game this fall. The win was part of a 30-2 season and earned Leyton its third straight trip to the state tournament. (Courtesy Photo | Sidney Sun-Telegraph)

By Diane Stamm

The Wauneta Breeze

There are probably many new teachers starting off at small schools who look at their first jobs as stepping stones. This was the case for Wauneta-Palisade High School alumnus Jodi (Smith) Craig when she began teaching at Leyton (Dalton and Gurley) High School.

Still at Leyton 16 years later, “Well...the bigger and better things came to me and I haven’t looked at leaving since,” says Craig.

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Craig “jumped in with both feet” after the teacher she student taught under in the spring of 1998 decided to move. In the fall of 1998 Craig found herself in the positions of business education teacher and head high school volleyball coach. Currently, she is also head girls track coach, speech sponsor, junior class sponsor and teaches some PE courses.

She says her high school coach, Gary DeWester, shaped her attitude about the game of volleyball, teaching her and her teammates respect for the game and each other.

“A lot of my coaching techniques and philosophy started with what I learned during my high school experience.”

Coaching against veterans, Craig says she’s grateful for all the personal and professional support she’s found along the way.

“I have been able to learn so much by watching good teams, good coaches and attending coaching clinics where I could pick the brains of very talented coaches.”

Whatever her tactics, Craig has found success, racking up a 208-42 record over the past eight seasons.

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BRONCO TRAILS

**A series featuring stories
of Wauneta and
Wauneta-Palisade Alumni**

This story is part of an ongoing series focused on telling the stories of Wauneta and Wauneta-Palisade High School Alumni who have made an impact on their communities, within business or in the lives of others.

Those who would like to suggest other alumni to feature in the series should contact Sheri Hink-Wagner at waunetabreeze@bwtelcom.net or 308-394-5389.