

## Esther Moses takes on Dupre Elementary kids as her own

By: Kate Hutson

Although she has none of her own, Esther Moses has given the last half of her life to our community's children.

After teaching in Washington, D.C., and serving nine years in the U.S. Air Force at now-closed Reese air base, Moses decided to embrace the Lubbock community.

And its children.

For 15 years, this woman with a master's degree in guidance and counseling worked with the Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts in East Lubbock. She learned Spanish and worked in outreach to Hispanics in the community. Including children.

Then, about five years ago, as a member of Asbury United Methodist Church, Moses began leading the after-school program for Hope Community of Shalom, a neighborhood ministry of the church that uses its building at 19th Street and Avenue T.

Thirty to 40 students from Dupre Elementary, just across the street, come to the program on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3 to 5 p.m. Moses coordinates the work of volunteers who guide activities for different age groups.

On this Tuesday, Moses helps Jean Koch and Shirley Eason serve hot chocolate to the first- and second-graders under their charge. Seven kids, down today from the usual 15, sit around a table, squirming in their chairs and talking all at once.

Then, it's over to the piano, where 91-year-old Lucille Tune, a lifelong music teacher in Lubbock, plays while the kids sing songs that require arm motions and bouncing around. Just the ticket



**Moses**

for after school.

Later, they'll have a silent reading time. Moses said that early in the term, the kids can't read alone for five minutes. But by the end, they're lasting 15 or 20.

Around 4:30, the children get a meal supplied by South Plains Food Bank and their Kids Caf? program.

Moses knows these kids. And their school. She's at Dupre almost every day, volunteering in classes, doing something with the PTA or attending programs that involve her students. (That is, when she's not overseeing the GED and English-as-second-language computer tutoring programs at Hope.)

Moses' concern is obvious as she talks about the needs in the neighborhood. She wants Hope's program to offer an atmosphere conducive to study, creativity and fun.

And a safe place to be after school.

Society has changed, Moses says. People don't look after each other like they used to.

"The church needs to go beyond the four walls into the community, be active not just on Sunday but all through the week."

Like the Old Testament one, this Moses is leading by example.

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