



Page editor Kaeleigh DeWaard

Building renovations begin in spring

by Journey Reynolds

As the years go by, things change. Some things change for the better. This year the administration of the school has discussed making new renovations to the Pella Middle School.

One of the main reason of these new renovations is for safety. The building committee has discussed several things to improve the middle school. All mobile walls will be eliminated which means the metal walls will be extended to the roof for fire safety. The entrance of the building will also be redone to increase the safety of the building. The building committee have also discussed getting rid of the closed halls, they're near Ms. Hasso's, Mrs. Brand's, Mr. Anderson's and Mrs.

Schulz's rooms. The walls will have materials which will help increase better acoustics which means there will be less sound from other classrooms.

Susan Lyons, teacher and building committee member, said, "It is exciting to update our building to provide extra learning opportunities for our students and teachers."

This project is roughly assumed to last one year, but it will likely begin this fourth quarter. Students and teachers will have to be put in temporary classrooms.

Scheduling, creating temporary classrooms, and spacing will be some challenges during the renovations. The outside of the school will not look

different. The seventh grade hall will look tremendously different and the eighth grade hall will look slightly different.

"I think the renovations will be good because it will be less confusing and more convenient," Lily Roozeboom, 8th grade student said.

Right now there will be no additions to the school. In the future there is a plan to expand the FCS room and the art room. The current cost of the renovations is 3.5 million dollars and that is under the budget which is 3.7 million dollars.

Josh Manning, principal, said, "It's gonna' kinda' bring some new life to a building that was built in 1978."



Mr. Manning, principal, and Mr. DeVries, associate, discuss the changes to the building as they look over the blueprints for new renovations. Building changes are planned to begin in the spring.

(photo by Journey Reynolds)

Students create time capsules in eighth grade- four years later memories unleash emotions

by Brynn VanderBeek

This year, the eighth grade students will be making a time capsule as an assignment. The time capsules will be made in English class. The students will get the time capsules back when they are seniors in high school.

On December third, the current seniors of Pella High School received their time capsules that they had assembled in eighth grade. The items in the time capsules ranged from just blank sheets of paper to pictures, writings, and notes from friends.

Shaylynn Reed said, "I remember making my time capsule. It was really fun and very chaotic because we were writing notes to each other and throwing them across the room."

Peter Swank, said, "I don't really remember making my time capsule but I do remember putting the date and time that I printed off what was going into my time capsule." Other students had "interesting" things in their time capsules also. Klaire Wisniewski, almost brought to tears

after opening her time capsule, found that she had included a Hello Kitty lip gloss ring, some pictures, notes from friends, some princess band-aids, and other things in hers.

"I really leave it up to the kids on what they want to put into their time capsules," says Mrs. DeHaan. "As long as it fits into the envelope, it's okay." Some time capsules were

stuffed full of eighth grade artifacts and some had very little. "I know that there are one or two kids every year that just put a blank sheet of paper in their time capsule," said DeHaan.

The time capsules leave a legacy and bring back memories for many people.



Mrs. De Haan prepares to take time capsules to the current seniors. Students created the capsules when they were in De Haan's 8th grade classes.

(photo by Brynn VanderBeek)

Students adapt to 1:1 lap tops

by Tessa Campbell

When the middle school students were given lap tops, a few rules came into play; one rule was

about the gaming that students can and cannot do on the school computers at home or during study hall.



Ava Rowe uses her lap top to complete school work in a study hall. (photo by Tessa Campbell)

Christian Williams, an 8th grader, used to play *Minecraft* on the computers using a flash drive that he used to download the game. William had only one remark on the situation, "If I could make the rules, games would be allowed."

The games are restricted to chess during study hall. After school some web sites are unblocked until eleven p.m. such as, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and a few other social networks.

Gaming is a distraction for some and a time filler for others.

Lap tops have also been used for homework uses. Some students said they use it more for homework than anything else, but others said that homework is easier to do on a sheet of notebook paper with a pencil.

Meet Ethan Bandstra

by Kaeleigh DeWaard

As a student it is easy to care only about who people hang out with and their friends, but people do not pay very much attention to the other students. This article is about a student named Ethan Bandstra. He is a joy to many around him, and he is a great person to get everyone's day started off well.

Ethan has some mental disabilities. When he was born he only weighed two pounds. The reason for that was Ethan is a triplet with a brother ,Lucas, and a sister ,MaryKate. When he and his siblings were in their mother's stomach ,Ethan was on the bottom, so he did not get all the food and nutrition that everyone is supposed to get.

As a student with special needs, he tends to not want to do his work much like all students. Unlike every student, Ethan is amazing in reading. He will search hours on end for movie and book facts.

"If Ethan asks me a question on a movie, and I get it wrong, he will automatically correct me and keep listing off facts. It is just amazing how

much he knows," Deb Sunderman, assistant worker, said.

Ethan had an amazing opportunity this summer. He got to go with his friends and family to Orlando, Florida at Disney World. He made a wish that he could go anywhere he wanted. He chose to go to Florida so he could see all the characters in the shows he loves so much. He saw all the characters and where they make the shows and movies. While he was there, he stayed in a house with other special needs kids. There he met many new people.

Ethan would not be able to have this opportunity or anything else without his family. Ethan has three siblings two of which he is triplets with. He has two sisters and one brother. His younger sister ,Ella, can be a joy to him, but like all siblings, they have their ups and downs. Ethan gets along with his sister ,MaryKate, the best. They mess with each other in a friendly manner, and they know how to cheer each other up. Ethan and his siblings are there for each other no matter what. If any of them are down,

they know how to cheer each other up. Ethan is also supported by his mother and father, Anne and Ryan Bandstra.

Ethan is an excellent reader and speller. He loves working on the computer or iPad. When he is on the computer he is always searching facts for movies. If you name a movie or character he will list facts off for hours.

"He loves working with videos. It's not just watching them but he loves organizing them. He has over 2,000 movies that he goes through everyday," Anne Bandstra, his mother, said.

"Ethan is my buddy! I love working with him. Once you get to know him he is awesome to be around! I love working with Ethan, he makes my day awesome!" Carrie Blommers, assistant worker, said.

Ethan is a joy to be around and always makes people laugh. Whenever you need a good lift up in the day he is the one to go to. Now everyone knows more about Ethan and how great of a kid he really is. He is a good organizer, student, kid, and friend. Once everyone gets a chance to know him, he is an amazing person to be friends with.



Ethan Bandstra and teacher, Kelly Dykema, work on their daily assignments. (top) Ethan rides a bike in the halls. (left)

(photos by Kaeleigh DeWaard)



4 Sports

7th grade volleyball girls compete against 8th grade in food challenge

by Gabrielle Heerema

In November the 7th and 8th grade volleyball teams had a food challenge to see who could collect the most food for the food shelf located at Peace Lutheran Church in Pella.

The 7th graders collected about 310 cans, and the 8th graders collected almost 150 cans. The 7th graders won by more than 150 cans. The total for all of the cans the girls gathered was about 450 cans for the food shelter.

Amy Belding, P.E. teacher and volleyball coach for 7th grade, decided to do this because she heard the food shelf was getting low on some of the foods they needed. Belding thought that it would be a fun little challenge

and would help the people out.

When Belding went to go drop off the food, she saw Melisa Zula, one of the people who helps run the food shelf.

Zula said, "God has heard my prayer and has sent you to answer it."

"Her face looked so happy and lit up to see all of the cans," Belding said. "Melisa was so thankful, and it felt so great to help out!"

Belding took the food on a Thursday, and the next Tuesday people would come to get food they needed. When she got there, the food shelf was just about out of everything.

The most common foods given

were soup, chili beans, and peanut butter.

"Those were great ones because the food shelf needed them the most," Belding said.

The least common one was birthday cake.

"That was still a good one because if there is a birthday for one of the kids they can have cake," Belding said.

Thanks to Belding, the founder, this challenge has been going on for three years.

Fewer wrestlers take to the mats

by Jake Heerema

The 2013 wrestling season started early November with 16 wrestlers hoping to have a great season. The wrestlers have been working hard having morning and after school practices. The coaches have had some tough practices but have also thrown in some fun things to make practice enjoyable.

There are eight wrestling meets this season. Two of those meets are home meets at Pella Middle School. The home meets are on December 3 and on December 10.

One may wonder how

leadership can be present with only having five eighth graders out for wrestling.

Reece Schnell, eighth grade wrestler, said, "Leadership is still shown by us even though we are short in numbers, and 7th graders can still look up to us when it comes to things like how to take a loss or how to act when you win."

Spencer Boots, 7th grade wrestler said, "The eighth graders still show good leadership, and they know what to do. It is different with there only being five 8th graders because

when everyone needs help and you don't get as much one on one with the eighth graders."

It is good to have large numbers in sports, unfortunately there will not be many wrestlers moving up next year for high school.

High school coach, Joe Burch, said, "I am not very happy with the low numbers out for wrestling this year. The few number of wrestlers are still getting extra one-on-one attention from the coaches which is good."



Coach Atwell plans attack with Reece Schnell.



Nate Kissinger takes down his opponent.

(photos by Bronwyn Metcalf)

The Middle Ground is a tabloid produced by the Pella Middle School students to serve as an informative, educational and entertaining communications media and to provide an open forum to students and readers. Submissions are welcomed and encouraged. The Middle Ground reserves the right to edit grammatical errors, libelous content and length due to space limitations. Not all submissions will be printed.

New coaches start off new season

by Patience Dykstra

The seventh grade girls have started basketball this year with new coaches. The two coaches are Matt Schulte and Mitch Foster.

One of the seventh grade coaches from last year, Coach May, moved up to coach eighth grade and Mrs. Brandt does not coach middle school anymore, making the girls fortunate to have two new coaches.

When asked if the teams are going to be successful, Molly Wheeler said, "We have good people who joined this year and we are all interacting with other players."

The girls are split up into three teams, A,B, and C, depending on skill level. The girls have two games a week and practice every day. The practices alternate every week in the morning

and in the afternoon depending on other activities. The seventh graders' first game was at home versus Knoxville. All three of the teams won their games. The seventh grade girls have six home games and six away games.

When asked how the year is looking success wise Coach Schulte said, "We have a long way to go, but so far the girls have won all of their games. Success is not just games

won, but how much we improve from game to game,"

If they work hard and push themselves to become the best they can be, the seventh grade girls could have a



Team members share a humorous exchange during game.

(photo by Brynn Vander Beek)

8th grade girls basketball season tips off



Girls show team spirit following a time out.



Coach May and Dutch develop game plan before game.



Kare Wichhart shoots the ball during warm ups.



Kelly Murphy drives to the basket against Oskaloosa.

(photos by Patience Dykstra)

8th grade boys hit the court

by Luke Pavlat

The 8th grade boys basketball team is trying to defend their great season last year. The 8th grade boys basketball team is starting the season coming off the great year from last year. But, this year is a new year to see if they have what it takes to have an even better season then last year. Their first practice was November 4, 2013. That was opening day to start off what should be a great season. There are twenty five guys out this

year, most of whom were on the team last year.

The coaches this year are Caleb Bonjour and Chad Whitten. Whitten said, "We lost some guys and we gained some guys this year and I think this year is going to be a great one."

Kolton Kiser said, "I think the coaches are a little pushy at times, but overall they are pretty nice."

Their first game was Monday November, 25th against Oskaloosa here in Pella. The first game went well with the A team winning, B team lost, and the C team won.

Keaton Brenizer said, "I think we will win more games this season because we have all improved this year and we are prepared better then last year."

Avery VanZee said, "the drills are my favorite thing so far because they bring the team together as one."

To conclude, the team may not be huge and they may have their work cut out for them but they are looking to have one the best seasons Pella Middle School has ever had.

Lucas Warner shoots a freethrow against Oskaloosa. (photo by Jake Heerema)



Basketball season tips off for 7th grade boys

by Curtis Ware

The Pella 7th grade basketball team started off what might be a great season on November 4, 2013 at the Pella Middle School. They are led by their great coaches Ryan DeVries and Gary Konfrst. This will be Ryan DeVries and Gary Konfrst's first time as coaches for the 7th grade boys basketball team. DeVries has coached another team in an AAU league.

Coach DeVries's said, "This group of kids are great leaders and that they all have good

sportsmanship." He would like this team to be successful on and off the court. He said that his favorite part of coaching is building relationships with the players and that he likes the physical exercise.

Both the team and the coaches are looking forward to their game on 11-25-13. Ben Nelson, a 7th grade basketball player, decided that he, like many others, would like to go out for basketball this year.

He said, "I went out for basketball this year because I love

to shoot and play the sport with my friends."

Nelson also said, "I went out for basketball this year because it is one of my favorite sports that I've been playing for a long time."

Nelson has played the game of basketball for the last 6 years of his life. Nelson's one thing that he hopes for this season is to score 7 points a game. Nelson, his team mates, and the coaches are excited for this season and the many more to come.

Reid McGinley plays defense against Norwalk.

(photo by Luke Pavlat)



Students dive into a different sport

by Bronwyn Metcalf

Some students are ready to dive into this winter with the Pella Swim Club. More and more students every year have been reaching out of the Pella School sports system into the Pella Swim Club. Some of these students have been swimming for years, while others have just started. The swim season is just starting to kick off with meets.

The Pella Swim Club decided to join the USA Club Charter after YMCA dropped their teams in Iowa. Some of

the parents from the recreational swim program in Pella began forming the Pella Swim Club. This gave the swimmers a more extended season and more competitions. This gives the swimmers opportunities to compete with other teams all across the U.S.A.

Though some students have been struggling with clashing school and swim schedules.

Lucas Warner, 8th grade swimmer, said, "I have to switch

on and off with my basketball tournaments and swim meets."

Warner has been finding time for one of his favorite sports, but it is also getting in the way of another favorite sport.

Hedrick helps a lot with helping me get better, and pushing me to the best of my ability,"Warner said. Jennie Hedrick, head swim coach, is known to push the kids into being the best they can be.

Cheerleaders pump up crowd

by Bri Lamb



Bailey Van Gorp, Destiny Brown, and JordanMarie DeArmond cheer at a recent basketball game.

(photo by Tatum Brandt)

This year the cheerleaders will back after taking a break last year. The girls who signed up this year are very excited to be a cheerleader and to show Pella Pride at the Pella Middle School.

Ms. Sheets, the coach of 8th and 7th grade girls, coached cheerleading for two years in Montezuma before coming to Pella. Sheets started a competition squad at Montezuma and did that for three years. She also cheered for six years in her hometown and cheered three years at Central College. The reason why the middle school has cheerleading this year is because Sheets has coached before.

Sheets said, "I am very excited to work with such an awesome group of girls, and I am happy to see so many interested in participating."

Coach Sheets loves cheerleading because of positive attitudes, teamwork, and the passion girls have for cheerleading. Her biggest challenge as a coach is teaching the girls all she would like to teach them in the little amount of time she has with them.

A tip she has for current as well as prospective cheerleaders, is it is never too late to learn.

Sheets said, "If it is something you want to try, give it a shot! You will never know unless you try."

Coach stated the most important things that make a team successful are communication, accepting differences, challenging each other to get better, and lastly, to always be willing to try new things.

Being a cheerleader can be a challenge, but as long as you're having fun with the other cheerleaders and with what you're doing, it gets easier.

Kortney Van Wyk, an 8th grader, said, "Our first practice was kind of a struggle, but we got through it, and we get better throughout every practice."

Another cheerleader, Destiny Brown, wanted to be a cheerleader for the experience and to help show school spirit. She stated that she can be loud so cheering is easy for her. Even though cheerleading can be a tough sport, the girls work through it. Cheerleading takes a lot of time, practice, and determination.

Girls attend a day of STEMS

by Anika Faro

On October 24, 2013, 19 seventh and eighth graders traveled to Iowa State University with Jackie Kilby, the science teacher, to Taking The Road Less Traveled. There they learned more about careers in STEMS, or Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math.

The activities all had something to do with certain careers in STEMS. Iowa State University does this activity every year in the fall and in the spring to get more girls interested in STEMS.

There were over one-hundred girls from schools around the state who went this year. They had four activities that would show them different careers in STEMS.

Tanvi Shingade, a 7th grader said, "It was so fun. We actually got to solve a case that the speaker was working on in real life! We solved it for her! We also got to see how they make artificial pancreases. I am so excited to go again next year!"

Rebecca Piersma, another

7th grader who went said, "We had to learn about chicken insides. It was very disgusting," Piersma also said, "The only fun part about that activity was making the chicken insides out of play dough."

The girls were all there bright and early to have a great day with lots of involvement with STEMS. They will now have an idea for their future of what they will end up having as a career.

Student council attends conference

by Hanna Blom

On October 16, the seventh and eighth grade Pella student council attended a conference at the Hawkeye Community College in Waterloo. Accompanied by their guidance counselor, Anne Pentico, they took a three hour bus ride to get to the conference that was themed on bullying. They arrived in Waterloo at 9:30 and were seated in the auditorium where the main part of the conference took place. Their guest speaker was Jim Jelinske, who is a very well liked speaker on the topic of bullying.

Jelinske had a very eye-opening and touching presentation. With magic, humor, touching stories, and props, he was able to keep everyone on the edge of his or her seats and emotions. After Jelinske had finished, the different councils split and went to different stations. One of the stations

was writing letters to the veterans for Veterans Day. Then, the kids went to lunch and heard Jelinske speak again.

"The part that I liked the most was definitely when we got to hear Jim Jelinske speak about bullying. He really stirred up emotion in the crowd and created a passion for all of us to follow," said Emily Scheur, a member of seventh grade student council.

"I was really impressed by the speaker and I think that he had a really good message and communicated it really well to the students who were there. He didn't do it in a lecturing way, but he did it in more comical or funny way that was entertaining but still got across a really serious message. I've seen or heard about a couple different situations where student council members have implemented his

suggestions," said Pentico.

Jelinske's presentations were the highlight of the day. He made things interesting and fun to watch and listen to, but he also had a way of getting into people's hearts. The stories he told were heartbreaking to hear and made the students want to act on the problem right away. He was a former counselor so he had perspectives that most kids do not get to see when bullying goes on. He was able to bring the heavy reality of bullying to life and he ignited a spark of hope and a passion for kids being able to make a difference.

The whole day had a very positive effect on the students who attended from all over Iowa. The kids came back with new ideas and fresh perspectives on bullying. Students from Pella enjoyed it and said they would love to do it again.

Pella Middle School 2013-2014 Student Council Members



Isaac Zeimetz, Tyler Vander Molen, Olivia Vander Leest, Natilie Henry, Brynn Vander Beek, Emily Kriegel, Mackenzie Meyer, Erica Nossaman, Linsy Blommers, Bryce McCain, Austin Adrian, Emily Schreur, Bailee Meyer, Caroline Henry, Travis Aldrich, Ben Hones, Hanna Blom attend a conference about bullying.

(photo by Anne Pentico)

Field trip inspires students

by Bailey Van Gorp

Mrs. Lyons along with her 7th and 8th grade robotics classes went to accu-mold with some central science education students.

The field trip was to show students how robotics is used in real life outside of the school buildings. The students got to walk around and look at all the parts and machines.

Accu-mold specializes in making small parts that other companies can not. They have a building near Des Moines. Accu-Mold makes pieces that are 0.5 cubic inches small. Accu-Mold first started out in a rented garage in 1985. Now they're in a building, and they have nearly 82,000 square foot. They plan on making it 200,000.

They are one of the oldest if not the oldest Accu-Mold company still going. One can find Accu-Mold parts in many things such as cell phones, optic

devices, surgical tools, hearing aids, medical devices, antennas, connectors and more.

"Our mission is to be an innovative, sustainable, fast, high-tech manufacturing solutions partner that will exceed the expectations of our customer. We will employ our core values and our brand standards, Smart People, Working Fast, Customer Focused, to the betterment of our worldwide customers, our employees, our shareholders and our community," said Accu-Mold.

Teejay Brackin, a 7th grader here in the Pella Middle school, said, "It was fun but it was weird, there was such little pieces but huge machines."

There were 39 7th graders: Ben Akers, Brandon Beyer, Teejay Brackin, Caroline Bradley, Evan Buckingham, Brandon Cole, Kristopher Cooper, Mark

DeBruin, Chris DeMoss, Luke Diers, Cayden Dingeman, Erin Duenwald, Matthew Etnyre, Jan Hernandez, Gavin Klein, Makayla Kruse, Josie Lickteig, Braden Messer, Cameron Mitchell, Zachary Rhinehart, Joshua Rivers, Lindsey Roose, Logan Ruth, Jacob Shemm, Hunter Tooley, Olivia Vander Leest, Tyler Vander Molen, Charles Vander Velden, Dreyton Vander Werf, Davin Van Haaften, Drew Van Hauen, Jared Van't Sant, Elizabeth Van Weelden, Matthew Widmar and Jerred Wilborn.

10 8th graders also went: Paighton Bogaards, Keaton Brenizer, Brayton Douma, Gavin DuBois, Brayden Duinink, Garrett Johnson, Kaden Miedema, Annika Pingel, Newton Yee and Hailey Stock.

Students learn life lessons

by Bronwyn Metcalf

On October 15, 2013 four students, Kara Wichhart, Erica Bossard, Adam Davis, and Avery Van Zee, went to a Character Counts meeting at Drake. These four students were given an amazing opportunity to go learn with a hundred other high schoolers.

In this meeting these kids learned multiple skills that they could bring back to the school community. They learned that people need to have good character to be looked at like

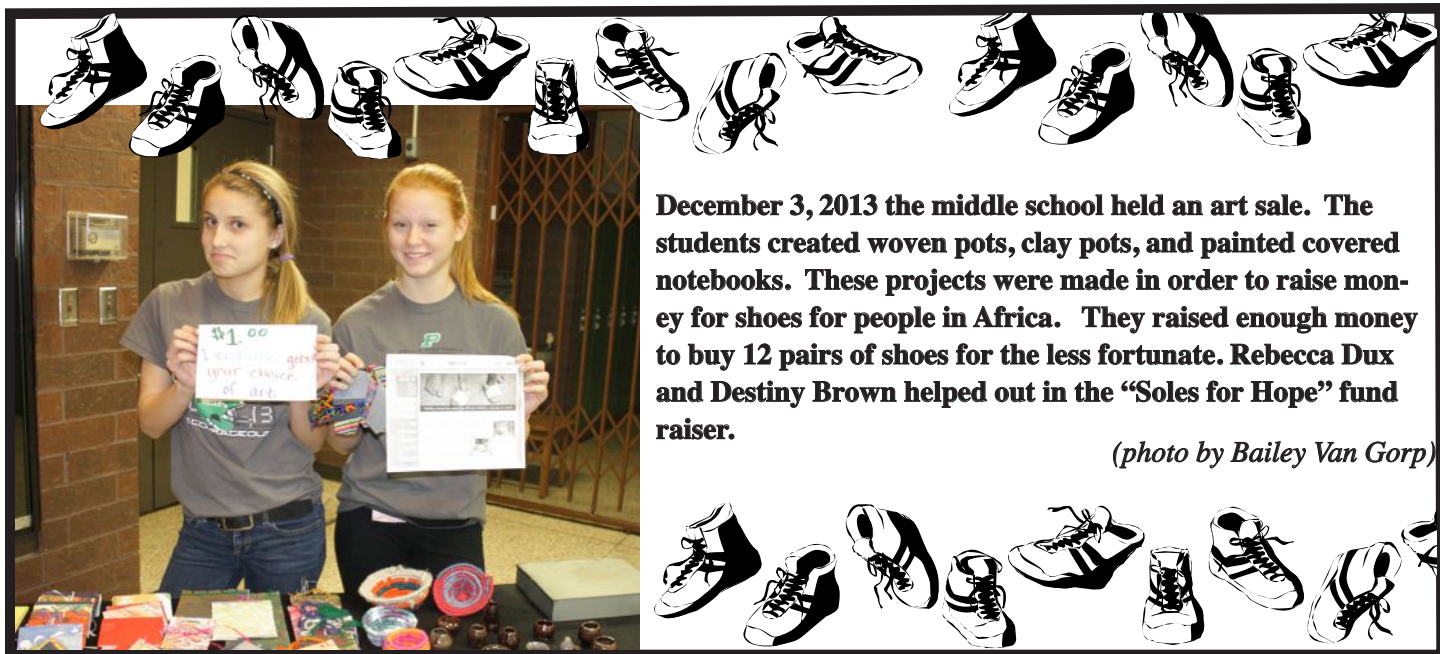
a leader. The speeches given to the students helped them learn what it is like to be a real leader. They need to take charge and work hard at everything they do.

Wichhart, an 8th grader who attended the meeting said, "I learned that to be a good leader you need to show good character. Without good character people won't look up to you as a leader."

Four other 7th grade students

were chosen to attend the meeting, but the organization did not let the Pella School system send that many students. They are Tyler Vander Molen, Nathan Leathers, Elizabeth Bruxvoort, and Jaclyn Wieser.

Teachers from each grade nominated and chose four students for seventh and eighth grade, two girls and two boys.



Concession stand runs for winter sports season

by Tatum Brandt

7th grade social studies students have begun to run a concession stand during home games this winter just outside the school gym.

The purpose of doing the concession stand is so the students can learn what it is like to run a business. 7th grade students divided into groups. Each group made their own business plan. The students included the menu, how much they would charge for their products, a profit sheet, how much they will need for a loan and various other things in their business plan.

Kristin Schulz's 7th grade social studies classes wrote business plans. Schulz selected the best plan. In Dana Sadler's class, each group presented their plans to the class, and the students and Sadler voted for the group they thought had the best plan.

The group whose plan was chosen in Schulz's class consisted of Jackie Wieser, Lindsey Blommers, Kara Da, and Cheyanna Sheaffer.

'I think our concession stand will be successful because of our

selection of products and staff and the generosity that the school boards grant for us," Jackie said.

The group that the students and Sadler chose in her class consisted of Evie Armstrong, Cameron Mitchell, Ross Karnowski, Charles VanderVelden, Mandee VerHelst, and Elijah Medley.

One group in Sadler's class, Miranda Wheeler, Ainsley Gross, and Brandon Cole, were on the radio for their business plan. Wheeler emailed the radio station first. Then the group called the station. After that the people at the radio station came to the school and interviewed the group. The interview was on the radio.

Something new that the students decide to add to the concession stand this year is cotton candy. They have granola bars for the athletes, and they also have popcorn, pizza, and many of the things that have been at the stand in the past.

Both Schulz's class and Sadler's classes do not know what they plan to do with the money earned.

Once they are finished with the stand, they will see how much money they made. Students will then vote on what they want to do with the money. They will use some of the money to donate to causes.



Students sell popcorn and other treats at the concession stand.

(photo by Luke Pavlat)

Students make difference

by Ally Erhardt

Pella Middle School 7th grade students have been doing a project in social studies to go make a difference in the community. This project has to be done by May 1 so it can be done at any time. Some students were really excited to do so they have gotten it ready. They could choose from lots of things to help out with, for example to help stop bullying, animal abuse, child abuse, cancer, hunger, and obesity.

A group of students wanted to try and stop bullying by going to speak at schools and churches to help give reasons about bullying and how people can help stop bullying.

"We want to help stop bullying," said Elly Cairney, seventh grade student.

There are other students that are helping too because they feel bad about bullying and they don't want to be the ones getting bullied.

Another group of students went to an animal shelter to help clean the place and help make the shelter feel like a home to the animals.

A worker at animal shelter said, "You can help the animals by having one on one time with people so the animals can trust people again."

After some students went to

help they had so much fun they want to help again.

"Helping is fun and good for me and others," said Claire Corbin, seventh grade student.

Some people haven't helped yet, but they know what they want to do and what their plans are.

Cairney said, "I feel inspired and helpful to do this project even though I haven't gone and helped yet."

This project is a good lesson for the students to help about the things in our community, and it helps us take responsibility.

IMPORTANT DATES

DECEMBER 20- LAST DAY OF SEMESTER, BEGIN BREAK

JANUARY 6- THIRD QUARTER BEGINS, BACK TO SCHOOL

Gaining Ground 11

Students plan activities night

by Tiffany Van Gilst

A Pella Middle School group of girls planned a dance for November 22, 2013. This group of girls were a part of the Go Make a Difference. Go Make a Difference is a problem solving assignment that the seventh grade class had to do. This group of girls chose the topic child abuse. The girls came together from different classes to form this group to help kids.

The group of girls, at first, had no idea how they could get the dance organized in a little bit more than one week. They had to consider how much time it would take to do everything in just a few days. The group decided that they would all bring a snack, assign jobs to everyone, send out emails to parents, quickly create posters, and have someone bring music.

When they had all of that planned they went to talk to Mr. Manning. After they got the dance approved, they decided to have more than dancing; they thought that they should have dodgeball, movies, and board games, as well.

"Kids get abused everyday and my group wants to help out," Kara Da said.

Da is one of the girls in the Go Make a Difference group.

The group worked to get toys for abused kids in Iowa. Da thinks that the group's idea is a good way to have fun, spend time with friends, and an easy place to work.

"Kids can do anything they set their mind to," Mrs. Kirsten Schulz said.

for the kids to get together. They help the sponsors, like parents or groups, to fundraise money. Schulz prefers to have them in the cafeteria instead of the gym. Schulz thinks it is too dark in there.

"I did enjoy the posters, but they could've added a little more information like what type of music," said Kaleb Nguyen.

Nguyen, a seventh grade student, thought the dances were a nice way to hangout with friends in a safe place.

The seventh grade class of 2019 was able to have the ability to experience school dances for the first time this year. Around 80-90 kids came that night and it was a success. The girls fundraised \$238 and received three bags of toys. The girls are planning on taking the toys to Crossroads of Pella and using the money to buy more toys for them.

Jackie Wieser, Tiffany Van Gilst, Kara Da, Hanna Blom, and Lizzy Bruxvoort held an activity night to make a difference.

(photo by Bri Lamb)



Schulz helped out the girls that planned this dance.

Schulz believes dances are fun

Students motivate, encourage in Peer P.E.

by Rebecca Piersma

Kids in Peer P.E. love to have fun activities and lots of encouragement from their helpers. The kids love to just have fun and be "Happy Happy Happy". Peer P.E. is a P.E. class for kids who have specific needs, and the peer part is that kids in 8th grade help their peers in the class. The students encourage others and learn to be good friends.

Amy Belding is the Peer P.E. teacher. Eighth grade students are selected to help with the Peer P.E. class. The kids in Peer P.E. do the same things as other P.E. classes do but with modifications so that the activities meet the kids' safety needs.

The activities help the kids

learn the same things kids in all P.E. classes would. Belding also teaches the same way she would teach any class, just with a modification of directions and more demonstrating.

"I love to see the kids interact with each other, and I love to see the smiles. I love to see the helpers figure out how to be a good friend, and it's wonderful to see the kids spending time together in a movement class," Belding said.

The favorite activities the kids like are the fishing and the bicycle unit. Sometimes the kids are very hesitant to do some of the activities, but most of the time, the helpers get them motivated and pumped up to do the activities.

There is a fun side to Peer P.E. The funniest moment they have had in peer P.E. happened when a student was in the hospital. The kids in Peer P.E. wanted to send a picture to him. Right before they were going to take a picture, one of the kids said, "Happy Happy Happy," It made all the kids laugh, and now they all try to be "happy, happy, happy."

Belding said, " Sometimes I just get goofy. You will see me, the goofiest, in Peer P.E."

Peer P.E. is all about having fun and making relationships, and that is definitely what they do.

Teachers, students watch high school play

by Brynn Vander Beek

An actress is on stage in front of a full house. All of the audience members are waiting for a good show. She has been preparing for this for a little over two months. Finally, after all of her hard work, it is time for the show.

This is what it may have been like for some of the high school actors in the play, *Don't Drink The Water*. On October 29th the middle school students and staff headed to the high school to see the high school students' production of *Don't Drink the Water*.

Don't Drink the Water is a play written in 1966 by Woody Allen. It is about a family of three Americans who go on vacation behind the Iron Curtain. They are caught because they are accused of spying when really, they are only on a family vacation. The play takes place in American Embassy which is where the tourists ran to get away from the police. Now they are trying to plot their escape to get back home. With the help of the ambassador's son, who is not the smartest, considering he has been banned from the continent of Africa, they will have to be creative

and work together to get home during this comedy.

With practices that could be a couple of hours long every night, the play was a large time commitment for the actors and the director. It took hours of practice and hard work to make the play a tremendous success.

"It was definitely a big time commitment," said senior, Sydney Swanson, who played the part of Marion Hollander. "I was also involved in marching band as a ghost marcher because a clarinet player broke her foot. I was very busy and could be at school for 13-14 hours everyday. But, I wouldn't change a thing because it was so fun!"

Many of the actors were involved in other activities. The directors and cast members were very considerate when it came to other cast members being in other activities. They even had to change one of the performances from a Friday to a Tuesday because of the state cross country meet. There was still a great turnout that Tuesday night and the show went on! Many of the cast members

were involved in cross country. Many of them were also seniors.

"I loved the other cast members! The majority of the cast members were seniors, and it was great to have one last show with my class!" Swanson said.

The play also caught the eye of middle school students and staff. Eighth grader, Grace Larson, said, "I liked the play. It was funny and had a lot of funny parts, and it got the audience's attention."

FCS teacher Megan Aden said, "I liked the play. I didn't like the ending though. It was very exciting and then it all of a sudden just ended. I think that I liked last year's play better."

Librarian Carrie Blommers said, "I liked the play! The acting was very good and because the acting was so good, it made the play funny!"

Don't Drink the Water showed at the high school auditorium on October 29th, October 31st, and November 2nd.



High school students, in full costume, performed a life show for the middle school students.

(photos by Ava Rowe)

Motorcyclists should wear helmets

by Jake Bruxvoort

Motorcycles have been around since 1867. At that time they ran off steam and went slower than what motorbikes today are able to do. Speeds of bikes now exceed the amount of horsepower greatly, if riders want to go fast that is a good thing; if you want to be safe, most states have laws on wearing helmets.

Three of the states are Iowa, Illinois and Vermont. The other states have helmet laws but only directed at a certain age group. The majority of the states have helmet laws until the age of 18. Motorcycle helmets are the most important safety feature for a motorcyclist, and most times the only safety feature. "Full face helmets are the best to buy and most protective and comfortable," according to STREET DIRECTORY. Half-face helmets are good for protection, but if you can, you then

should be wearing a full-face helmet. Bikers should wear helmets because wearing a helmet on a motorcycle is like wearing a seatbelt in a car, except in a car the riders are inside the car, and on a bike the rider is on the top of the bike.

Some people say that bikes are safer than cars, and others say the opposite, and some say it is based on the experience. But you have to go to the facts, almost all of the deaths from crashes on motorcycles since 2010 could have been prevented by wearing a helmet. Since 2010, 4,300 people have died in accidents. About 67% of of all the crashes since 2010 resulted in brain damage which could've been prevented by just simply wearing a helmet. This information was retrieved from the Iowa DOT.

Helmets in Iowa has been a

big problem this year, we need a law protecting riders from wrecks and possibly death. Since January, 2013 there's been 35 motorcycle crashes in Iowa. 38 people in those 35 crashes have died since January. 28 of them were not wearing a helmet. In 2012 there were 54 total crashes in Iowa containing motorcycles. There were forty-two people who didn't wear helmets in these fatal accidents. 56 people died last year from motorcycle accidents in Iowa.

Once motorcycles started to have severe power, they became dangerous. Wearing a helmet seems to be the best way of protection since. Therefore I believe that it should be mandatory that bikers and anyone should wear their helmets or be fined.

Student speaks out about homework

by Brandon Dingeman

I know teachers, and other school staff think homework helps students, but research shows that it doesn't at all. Sites show that homework is given because the teacher wants kids to help students to review, or because she/he thinks low of them. Well it can help with review, but it can cause stress and bad sleep. Students don't have much time to be a kid, and are stuck in a big horrible routine. In this paper, I will be giving evidence of why we don't really need homework, and how it affects students.

My first statement is the fact that homework doesn't even help your skills, or benefit your learning. According to Eutopia.org, there are no records of homework helping you at all, so why are teachers making kids waste time on homework? Many teachers give homework because they want people to practice it, get better, and review it for a test or something. That could benefit, but you could also do that during a class period, playing a review game, like jeopardy. This could remove the homework, and give them

more time to live life. This can also relieve stress, and keep kids happy, which leads me into my next topic.

When stress gets to students, it can destroy them and cause depression, cancer, heart attack, and many, many other things. Depression can cause a loneliness, even suicide. It can also lower your grades because of overloaded homework. From a website called factualfacts.com, research shows that the more homework kids get, the worse they do on grades. This tells me that homework can cause problems with student's confidence, and down the long run, could cause depression. Depression can cause suicide, and bad grades, and trouble that we could eliminate with less, or no more homework.

My last support for stopping homework and giving kids relaxation is allowing kids to be kids. Most high school students end up with at least 2-4 hours of homework a night. Too many students have a routine of waking up, going to school, extracurricular activities after school, eating, doing

homework, and going to bed; with no time for going outside, and being a kid. This can keep students down, kind of like they are in a military school. If you don't give kids time do their thing and have fun, they won't be focused, and in sync at school. Kids need time to be a kid, and live their life.

All these things that support giving up homework are all true, and it would make many students happy, and on board with school. Take homework out of the equation, and stress in the world would go down. There could be limit on the amount of homework that students get a day, so that would still make kids happy. Teachers could even make homework optional because the only way it helps students is to review, and help them with a test.

If students didn't do it, that would be the reason they wouldn't be ready for a test, an exam, a quiz, or any assignment. Teachers could be giving students frustration with homework, or they could give students happiness, and good grades by not giving as much homework.

Turkey bowling tradition amuses students, staff

A long standing tradition of Turkey Bowling continued just before Thanksgiving. The staff takes on the current 7th grade students in a bowling tournament. Instead of using balls, a frozen turkey is tossed. Another tradition is that the staff wins, and that tradition was again carried out.



Mrs. Lyons participates in Turkey Bowling.



7th graders watch and cheer on their classmates during the turkey bowling competition.

Bowling Game Score Sheet												
2013 7th Grade Turkey Bowling												
NAME	HDCP.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	TOTAL
1	Teachers	9-	9-	1-	8-	9-	7-	6-	-3	8-		80
2	7th graders	9	18	19	29	38	45	51	54	72	80	43
3		7-	1-	-	-	54	7-	-	1-	1-	-1	
4		7	8	8	15	24	31	31	32	42	43	



photos by Bronwyn Metcalf and Curtis Ware

Orchestra students depart for Oskaloosa

by Triston Langstraat

The fun and peaceful sound of violins, violas, cellos and basses fill the air of the Oskaloosa Middle School. The 7th/8th Pella Middle School Orchestra show "Pella Pride" this year as they have already been to one concert and one special event in Oskaloosa called the South Central String Orchestra Festival.

The Pella Middle School orchestra students woke up early on a weekend in the fall and drove to the Oskaloosa Middle School to play with the orchestras from Oskaloosa and Ottumwa in one big group for the South Central String Orchestra Festival. The students practiced together all day and had a big group of kids perform songs for the public as a concert after they had everything mastered.

They have practiced and played many songs and music but still have a lot of work ahead of them. Even so, they are having lots of fun in practices and learning together. Luigi Lopez, 7th grade violin player in the orchestra, commented on orchestra this year "I like orchestra because it's fun and easy. You get to see other people play, and you get to learn from them at the same time."

Lopez explained how a regular night goes for an orchestra student at a concert. "Before the concert, we play and practice our music. Then we go on stage and never talk on the stage or during the concert. Then we walk off the stage and sit with the audience after the concert."

The 7th/8th grade orchestra

this year has three practices a week, one of them being the full group the other is a mix of both groups. The other two practices are the separation of 7th and 8th grade who get together to work on some things that are kind of messy.

They work on the messy parts in their music and practice the songs as individuals at home, which makes the students not only better at the songs, but their performance overall. By the time the students have practiced this for awhile and are good at their songs, the concert rolls around and the students do their best to make the performance good. After the concert at their next practice, they get new music, and start all over again.

Show choir dances and sings

by Lydia Taylor

The name of the Middle School show choir is PELLAdrenaline. Show choir involves dancing and singing in competition.

Joe Tangen directs the group, and Sarah VanWaardhuizen is the choreographer.

This year, show choir has 86 kids participating. This is the biggest show choir group Tangen has ever had.

The songs that PELLAdrenaline will sing this year are "Good Time" by Owl City and Carly Rae Jepsen, "Hallelujah" by Jeff Buckley, and "What Makes You Beautiful" by One Direction.

The show choir season

includes six performances, including one competition hosted in Pella.

PELLAdrenaline will compete out of town twice, and the rest of the events are concerts. When Pella gets to host the competition, all of the other groups perform, hoping to win. When they are done dancing and singing, PELLAdrenaline and the high school's show choir group, AcaPella, perform while the judges decide who won.

Juliana VanGorp said, "Once you learn all the moves to the dance, it's easy."

For competitions, the girls wear a purple and sparkly dress, dance shoes, and their hair is worn up. The

boys wear a black shirt, black pants, black shoes, and a silver tie.

Show choir kids sometimes practice before or after school, depending on other activities. Some practices only involve either the 7th graders or 8th graders, while other practices include everyone. They also occasionally practice on Saturdays.

The group meets in the Pella Middle School choir room, where they remove the chairs and start to practice.

"Show choir is awesome! You get to dance, learn new songs, and go to competitions. I encourage more people to do it next year. Show choir is fun and a good experience," Luigi Lopez said.

7th, 8th grade jazz bands compete

by Elizabeth Van Weelden

The jazz band is a small group of students who play jazz music and compose their own jazzy riffs, which are played solo or with a group. Jazz bands consist of woodwinds (saxophones and clarinets), brass (trumpets and trombones), along with bass guitar or string bass, drums, and piano.

Jazz band students in seventh and eighth grade are pumped up and ready for the upcoming competitions

and performances. However, the real competition is between the two bands. After three months of practicing, all the jazz band students are ready to compete.

Nicholas Schmitz, seventh grade tenor saxophone player, said, "I like the style of the music. My parents listen to it a lot, and I liked it." When asked about the competition, Schmitz said, "I really think we can beat the eighth graders this year."

Jazz band instructor for

seventh and eighth grade, Mr. Stratton, also said, "I believe that it will be a tie. When you go to competitions, you have 2-3 judges with different opinions so, who knows?"

The seventh grade band achieved higher scores than the eighth grade band the last three years in a row. Both bands are scheduled to compete against each other and other schools on Saturday, February 8; Monday, February 18; and Saturday, March 8, 2013.

The wrtings on this two pages are creative writings submitted by eighth graders of the Pella Middle School.



Mutant

by Caleb Gaylor



Chapter 1

Heavy stomping, a loud voice, my name, then a heavy blow to my head, darkness. I woke with a burlap sack over my head; it smelled like potatoes. I don't remember anything. I heard a hammer on a gun being pulled.

Then a voice with a Russian accent yelled, "Get up or I shoot!"

I do as he said. As soon as I get up, he yanks the sack off me. He is a grizzly man with a unshaven beard that looked as if a raccoon had made a nest in it. His teeth were yellow and as far as I could see, four were missing. He was holding a X-29, a six-round laser pistol, in other words some serious firepower. We were in some kind of military bunker with rusted ceilings and floors.

Yellow teeth said, "Get up, we are going to the car." As we walked, my memory started coming back. My name is Josh Winton. I think it is the year 2410. My mental clock says 7 a.m. on a Thursday. In 2100 a nuclear war erupted. Only about fifty countries were left after that horrific day. I am only about sixteen years old. My parents were scientists who invented things the government desired. I lived in a small town in Florida.

As we near a door everything becomes slow. I see the car that is outside through closed doors. It is a newer black Buick that has self-driving capability and as far as I can see is bullet-proofed with diamond. I get really scared and shake my head,

whatever just happened to me fades away.

Yellow teeth says, "Now I don't want any funny business, so stay down in the back while I pass by the grids." The grids were guys in robotic suits. Why they were called grids has been lost in time. We push out the door and I realize that I am not scared at all. The air is gray and dull like it just rained.

I said to Yellow Teeth, "Where are we and who are you?"

He says, "First , our location is classified and second, I am Semond Crooke."

As we walk forward, he trips on a curb. I hear words that I am usually not allowed to repeat. His right leg is hurt pretty badly from the fall. He gets up with some effort and leans heavily on me.

"Why did you capture me?" I ask.

"Classified," he says.

A few grunts as he opens the car and gets in the front seat. He motions for me to climb in the back, then we drive off. The town looks to be decrepit and old. It must have a thriving town before the nuclear war.

Now, the buildings are caving in on themselves. It is evident a bomb went off here. As we drive, we pass ten grids. When we reach the edge of town, we drive by deserted pastures with rickety wooden fences. This whole

place looks as if it hasn't been touched by humans in hundreds of years. It starts to snow and then it hits me. We are in Russiaâ€¦

I ask, "Are we in Russia?"

Semond says, "Why is that of importance to a meek kid like you?"

"Because I want to know." A long sigh from Semond.

"Fine... yes we are in Russia."

Then we pass an old abandoned gas station and everything changes. The faded sign reads 7-11, whatever that means. As we pass by, there is a loud bang and a projectile, probably a missile, shot towards the car.

The whole world starts getting slow. I take advantage of it and bust the door off of the car with strength that was not humanly possible. When I get out, the projectile is going as slowly as ever, barely even moving. I do not know what is happening. I run as fast as I can towards the gas station and as soon as I am nearing the door, I hear a dull thump and then a terrific explosion.

Even before I turn back, I know Semond is dead. I see the wrecked car in flames, I walk around the building to try to find the source of the missile. The source is a long distance remote controlled rocket stand. Then I feel a sharp pain in my neck and everything fades into darkness.

*Scenes Around the School *Scenes Around the School *Scenes Around the School



Mrs. Benson leads orchestra in practice.



Students prepare casseroles in FCS.



8th grade students confer in health.

The Cliff Hanger

by Lexi Van Haaften

"I'm here!! You hear me? I'm here!" Alyson said.

"Yes, I hear you," a deep voice said in the darkness.

"Now what do you want, I got everything you wanted!" she said.

"Even the girl?"

"Yes. I am the girl."

By this point of the story you are very confused. So I'm just going to start at the very beginning.

Alyson Eaglewood, on the lower side of popular you could say, 5'3, long brown hair, grey eyes that seemed to always change color depending on other people's moods. She has never had a boyfriend. She is now the only child because her sister was murdered last year.

The bell rang for 4th period to end. Alyson went to her locker and found a note inside. It said go the locker room after school and grab the bag that is in locker 406. Alyson had no idea what was going on. She thought it was a joke, so she went. She found the bag with another note on top.

It said, "I know who killed your sister. Please wait until your next note."

Inside the bag was dirt; she dumped out the bag of dirt and saw something shiny. She grabs it; it was her sister's necklace. Alyson was all alone in the locker room crying. She didn't know what to do. Could this be her sister's killer or was he or she there?

Alyson's sister, Hazel, was murdered when she was 16 years old. She was a girl with the prettiest skin that seemed to always glimmer. She was an A student, in all the honor classes. Hazel was out with friends when the murder happened. Her friends say that she just went missing, then the next day her body was found. They say it was just like that they didn't even realize she was gone. No evidence was found to hold the murder against any of Hazel's friends.

Alyson kept the notes and the bag of dirt a secret not even her friends knew. Later that Friday evening Alyson

heard a knock on the door. She opened the door and no one was there. All there was, was a note on the door.

It said "Please come to the back of the school at midnight. It is very important. Come or else. Please bring the necklace, shovel, gloves, and Alyson Eaglewood. Bring myself, maybe he doesn't know who I am" she said to herself. Alyson did as directed.

Alyson went to the back of the school as directed. She had everything thing she needed. When she walked behind the school no one was there.

"I'm here!! You hear me? I'm here!" Alyson said.

"Yes, I hear you," a deep voice said in the darkness.

"Now what do you want, I got everything you wanted!" she said.

"Even the girl?"

"Yes. I am the girl."

No words came after that just an agonizing scream, then she ran, she tripped and fell. There she was hanging by one finger off a cliff.

To Smile

by Jordan Marie DeArmond

IF I WERE TO SMILE AGAIN
IT WOULD BE DIFFERENT
I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO DO IT
RIGHT AGAIN
IT WOULDN'T BE WARM TO
ME BECAUSE I WOULDN'T MEAN IT

MY SMILE IS DIFFERENT BETWEEN
YOU AND ME
MY SMILE, TO ME HAS NO
EMPATHY
TO ME, MY SMILE MEANS NOTHING
TO YOU, MY SMILE MEANS
EVERYTHING

IF I WAS TO SMILE AGAIN
IT WOULD BE FOR YOU NOT ME
WHEN I LIVE AGAIN
I WILL SMILE FOR YOU AND ME



Jordan Marie DeArmond is currently writing her own poetry anthology. She also enjoys music and photography.

18 Featuring You

Bailey's Advice

by Bailey Van Gorp

Dear Readers,

This is just for fun and entertainment. Bailey Van Gorp offers her opinion based solely as her experience in life and does not claim to be a professional life coach of any type.

Dear Bailey,

Please tell me how the people in all the sports and everything (like me) get their homework done and their practice done every day! I am really struggling with this. -The Stressed:

Dear The Stressed,

It's hard to get everything done in the right amount of time. Make a schedule for yourself. Get what you can done in study halls throughout the day.

In sports you can work on the bus, talk to some people and work on it together, then it's not so hard. Make a plan at the beginning of the week when you have time to do it. If you know what needs to be turned in and where, it won't be so hard to get things done.

Sincerely, Bailey

Dear Bailey,

My parents both recently died, and I have a sudden urge to fight crime. What do I do? -Batman

Dear Batman,

If you want to fight crime, then you should. You could help the police department. You have to be careful though. Don't do anything you know you can't do. You must keep in mind you're not a superhero.

Sincerely, Bailey



Happy Holidays

Latest crafts made by kids

by Patience Dykstra

The rainbow loom, the latest craft, is easy and fun to do, according to Mackenna Goemaat. Friendship bracelets are also a favorite. Both crafts can be easy for beginners and advanced for experts depending on the type and style of the bracelets. The bracelets are both fun and challenging to make.

The rainbow loom is a fun and easy craft to make. The supplies can be bought at any hobby store such as, Hometown Variety, just off the square. When asked if she liked friendship bracelets or rainbow loom bracelets better, Goemaat said, "Rainbow ones, because they are more fun and different."

The rainbow loom uses little rubber bands to make a bracelet, while friendship bracelets use thread, which can be bought at Wal Mart or any craft store. The rainbow loom uses a kit which comes with a row of pegs, c-bands, and rainbow rubber bands. The bracelets can also be made with fingers, which are the pegs that hold the rubber bands. The more advanced ones are time consuming, and it may take hours to make.

Friendship bracelets can be a nice gift to give or receive.

When asked what the hardest part of the bracelets were Brooke De Nooy said, "Making it and deciding colors."

Even though some of the crafts can be time consuming, like the rainbow loom, the turnout can be wonderful. Friendship bracelets can be made by just braiding three pieces of string together. Othertimes it may be an advanced one like Greek wave, lady bug, and Shamrock. The patterns for these bracelets can vary. Even though these bracelets can be very hard to make, perseverance is the key. The turnout in the end can be what is expected or a complete surprise.



Second quarter publication students include: Luke Pavlat, Curtis Ware, Jacob Heerema, Kaeleigh De Waard, Tessa Campbell, Bailey VanGorp, Brianna Lamb, Patience Dykstra, Bronwyn Metcalf, Brynn VanderBeek, Journey Reynolds, and Tatum Brandt