



Page editor Mikhail Shepperd

Students make difference

by Sarah Yoder

One might think that they can't make a difference, but anyone can make a difference, even if it is just holding open a door for an elderly person. When people make a difference, it can be like a chain reaction. The people around who saw the difference want to do the same thing, and find ways to make a difference. Making a difference is an inspiration to others to make a difference, as well.

In the past, Mrs. Schulz and Mrs. Knight have assigned work sheets called problem solving. This year, both teachers decided they wanted to go a little farther. The 7th grade students at Pella Middle School have been assigned to find a problem they care about and go help fix it.

Schulz said, "This all started

when we studied about the United States. While studying the United States, we identified problems in our own country. Then the idea was to use our problem solving skills to find solutions to the problems. Then go out and make a difference through a service learning project. I hope this encourages students to be more service minded."

Some students are making a difference by doing the following: food drives, picking up trash, working at veterinary clinics, helping Mrs. Belding raise money for kids with diabetes, working with organizations to raise money for other countries, writing articles, and planting trees.

By noticing all these concerns, the Pella Middle School 7th graders

will be making a difference and changing the world. Alexis Bugera-Brown raised money for the Central Iowa Shelter and Services. Alexis raised enough money to feed two kids for two whole weeks!

"It made me realize how much I have while other kids aren't as fortunate," said Alexis.

Another student, Ryan Van Wyk, together with Keegan Poole and Trevor Nelson, raised 120 dollars to give to the organization, Heartwork, which will help build an orphanage in Uganda, Africa. Ryan felt this experience changed his life as well as others. Ryan said, "I felt like it made an impact in other people's lives as well as mine."

Cornelder aims for retirement



Mrs. Cornelder is completing her 25th year of teaching in Pella and her 30th year in all. She is excited to garden this summer, and she looks forward to traveling to visit her children and grandchildren.

Mrs. Cornelder said, "My favorite memory is the students! I love it when I have a student that I had a long time ago come back with their kids who are in 8th grade."

Manning dedicates life to kids

by Christian Boriboun



Mr. Manning is the principal and leader of Pella Middle School. Before becoming the principal of Pella Middle School, Joshua Manning first was a teacher. Along the road, he decided to try something new. Caring about children led him to be a principal.

Manning stated, "I wanted to make an impact on students and the community,". I love kids!"

So far Mr. Manning's year has gone well. He stated, "There have been challenges and a lot of changes, but I have a supportive staff who really cares about kids. Students are the best, second to none."

There have been many events that occurred this year such as homecoming, dances, and the upcoming culture fair. Mr. Manning's favorite was the Turkey Bowling in the gym the day before Thanksgiving break. He's also proud of the little exciting victories

happening every day.

Mr. Manning's typical day consists of trying to get out to classrooms to visit with students and staff. Individual meetings with staff members and conversations with students come occasionally. He has also been continuously working on plans for next school year.

Mr. Manning said the most difficult part of his job is dealing with the unknowns, the things about students he doesn't know about. He wants to know about kids' lives so he can better help them.

When asked if Mr. Manning plans to continue his job as principal, he replied, "For sure, if I'm allowed to."

Thousands view eagles

by Ben Tysseling

The warm weather, green grass, and the birds in the air might not make it hard to believe that spring is here! Spring came early for this eagle family in Decorah. Late March, three new baby eaglets were hatched.

Late January, a webcam was set on two bald eagles who were starting a new family in a nest. With views reaching 6.3 million, the eagles are getting loads of attention on the internet. As the mother and father switched shifts on the incubation, they would always have one incubating the eggs and the other would hunt for

food.

As March was approaching time was ticking for the eggs. Late March, the eggs were starting to hatch, one slow peck at a time.

"[the eaglets] were so cute and tiny, and I wanted to keep one," said seventh grader Spencer Prinsloo, who watched vigilantly in Mrs. Kilby's 3rd period class.

"We were studying birds at the time, and we had been studying nature all year, so it went with our big idea that we were doing," seventh grade science teacher, Mrs. Kilby said. Mrs.

Kilby let the seventh graders watch the eagles during science class.

Those interested in learning more about the eagles, can go to a countless number of websites. Websites include: www.ustream.tv/decoraeagles, sportsmanparadiseonline.com, and whotv.com. One can see the eagles anytime. There is even night vision on at night. Students are enjoying watching the eaglets grow and seeing what happens next.

Girls try out, make Forte dance team

by Kelcey Blommers

Forte or Pella dance team has been in the Pella school district since 1998. The purpose of Forte is to instill a program of dance that promotes respect, commitment, loyalty, morals, and determination of members. Forte competes in competitions and also perform at games during football and basketball season.

Girls 8th thru 12th grade can try out to make either the JV squad or varsity squad. During try-outs, the girls

must complete a routine they learned as a group. They must also be able to do right and left splits, a double pirouette, a toe touch, a le seconde turn, and a handstand.

The team performs a minimum of eight routines a year. The season starts in August and finishes the week before spring break. Each year dancers have to re-try out for the squad whether they are returning members or not.

There is a lot that goes into Forte. Dancers have to put in the time and effort, which includes going to practices and competitions. They also must keep their grades up. The girls who made next year's squads for either JV or varsity are Macy Nossman, Jessica Pottridge, Elyse Parisee, Aletta Verhey, Molly Kellar, Jazz Van Hemert, and Sarah Coppock.

Students prepare for next level of education

7th grade students reflect on year

by Jaiden VerSteeg

This past semester, the eighth graders have been doing bits and pieces to get prepared for their upcoming years of high school. On February 8, the eighth grade students took a trip to the high school, and the juniors showed the students the elective classes that they could learn more about. That way they would get a good idea of what classes they wanted to register for their freshman year.

A couple weeks later, in certain classes, the eighth graders completed their “I Have a Plan”, a program used to help kids plan their four years of high school.

After that, Mrs. Thompson, the high school counselor, came to the middle school to help students sign up for classes that they were interested in taking. All the preparation for next year got eighth graders excited. Some shared how they feel about the big move from middle school to high school.

Hilary Brummel said, “I am nervous because I don’t want to get bullied, but I am ready to have more freedom in my daily school life.”

Brad Bortscheller mentioned, “I feel good about it, because here in Pella Middle School we hardly have any freedom. In the high school, we will definitely have more freedom and a lot more fun. I can’t wait!”

Payton Shull stated, “I am very confident about going to high school. I must mentally and physically prepare myself first. Otherwise, it shall be fun and easy.”

Lucas Hileman shared, “I am nervous because I have to deal with my brother as a senior, which is nerve racking, but I think it should be fun.”

Aletta VerHey replied, “I’m excited, actually. I’m not really afraid. I’m pumped for Forte! That’s basically all I am looking forward to.”

Brady Cox told, “I’m going to learn and party!”

Molly Kellar remarked, “I am super excited for high school. We will have so many more freedoms and opportunities! I am also really excited for Forte to start!”

by Angela Ball

For 7th grade students, it’s the first year being in a middle school. Middle school is very different compared to Jefferson.

Brook Morgan, 7th grade student said, “It’s cool. There are a lot more options, and more opportunities. There are sports you can play with your friends. There is ala carte for lunch. There are so many more options students have that they never had at Jefferson. They can use electronics at lunch, also.”

There are also middle school dances. Allison Musgrove 7th grader said, “I like the dances; it’s just, they need more things to do. Like laser tag in the gym or something.”

The school year is coming to a close. Many kids are excited for the break, but some can’t wait for the new year ahead.

- Congratulations to the following teams for moving on to Knowledge Bowl Finals at Merle Hay:
- Team 7: Mando-lin Holmes, Tatyana Khapochkina, Reid Leidigh, Cameron Blom, Ryan Van-Maanen
- Team 3: Sara Tall-man, Sara Maakestad, Lucia Martisovitso-va, Emily Dux, Jake Speltz
- Team 4: Sarah Cop-pock, Megan Kooker, Adam Sievers, Ben Vogel, Duncan Brum-well

Missoula Children’s Theater brings musicals to towns

by Sarah VanNorden

Missoula Children’s Theater is on organization that brings costumes, scripts, and directors to a town and auditions kids for the parts. The kids have one week to learn the play and will preform twice at the end of the week. Once on Friday and the other on Saturday.

Missoula Children’s Theater was founded by Jim Caron and Don Collins and has been providing a week to practice acting and train anyone’s memory for 40 years. The first play with Missoula Children’s Theater was Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. They got the idea for a traveling children’s theater came after the two thought about taking seven kids 500 miles to an audition.

Caron and Collins weren’t comfortable with the idea of taking the kids so far, so the two decided to audition some kids close to home for those kids’ roles in the play.

Caron and Collins thought there wouldn’t be many kids who

would try out, but then 450 kids showed up to audition. Caron and Collins then auditioned the huge group and found their seven actors. They have auditioned and put on traveling musicals ever since.

The most recent production in Pella was Alice in Wonderland based on the book by Charles Lutwidge Dodgson.

Middle school actors include the following: Rachael Meinders, Kara De Bruin, Sydney Wiskus, Mackenzie Becker, Meghan Hartman, Payton Phelps, Jake VanGorp, Sarah Peterson, Lauren Ashworth, Mariah Kooyman, and Mallory Wheeler.

“I love how all the directors always have a positive attitude,” said Meghan Hartman, who has played a card in the latest Missoula Children’s Theater production, Alice in Wonderland.

“I was Cheshire Cat Number Two, and I loved being in the play. The cast all had so much fun, and I loved the chance to act I will definitely go back next year!” said Kara De Bruin.

Gingers seek to be treated with equality

by Mikhail Shepperd



Pictured above are some of the many middle school students who proudly display their ginger hair.

(photo by Elyse Parisee)

Ginger, cherry bomb, carrot top, daywalker, red, Bloody Mary. These are the most common names of what is commonly known as a redhead. There are days of the year put out for them such as Kick a Ginger Day, Hug a Ginger Day, etc. So redheads are very big in our society, but they are usually jokes instead of icons. Redheads are about 1% of the population; in other words, there are approximately 70 million redheads that are left. That is very small. According to *National Geographic*, red heads will be extinct within 100 years due to natural selection.

Redhair started in Northern Europe as a mutation of pigments in the

skin, but they have adapted to living in places that get very little sunlight.

In most cases, people call redheads names. It's just for fun, not to be mean. Just to mess with them not to make them cry or worse. People might take it seriously but they should not. When asking Dylan Tighe if he liked being called ginger, Dylan said, "Being a redhead or called a ginger doesn't affect me."

Some people not only are called ginger but have actually been beaten because of it. There is actually a Kick a Ginger Day. There were four cases of hospitalization in 2007 because of how kids were kicked so badly. Now in big cities on Kick a Ginger Day, police

have to escort the kids around for the day. Although these mean people have tried to be forgiven by Hug a Ginger Day, they will never forget the insults.

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.

Stereotypes hurt

by Jayda Robinson

Blondes are stupid. Asians are smart. African Americans are great at basketball and really fast. All guys are jerks. Guys like to play video games all day long. All girls like to do is shop and are only concerned about physical appearance. All Iowans live on farms. Anyone who wears all black and acts depressed is gothic. These are all stereotypes.

Stereotypes are generalizations, or assumptions, that people make about the characteristics of all members of a group, based upon an image about what people in that group are like. Stereotyping can lead to bullying from a young age. “Jocks” and “preps” pick on the “nerds and the geeks”, etc. Many stereotypes can be very offensive and not true.

“I don’t like when people stereotype others, especially when others are hurt by it,” said Vanessa Chapman.

There are many stereotypes.

There are stereotypes based on hair color, size and height, race, girls, and guys. Stereotypes are everywhere.

“I think people that make fun of African Americans, Mexicans, Jews, gingers, and Chinese people are low life people who need counseling and mental help. They just annoy me,” said Jordan Zemanek.

People who stereotype others or joke about it often just think that it is funny. That is what Keegan Poole said, “Some stereotypes are funny, others are just mean.”

There are hundreds of blonde jokes out there. When Alex Finn was questioned about being offended over blonde jokes, he denied the fact that he is blonde. There are also a couple stereotypes on gingers.

Sarah Coppock said, “I am offended by the stereotype that gingers have no souls, because it is a very mean thing to say and it is not true.”

There are also many stereotypes

related to size: taller people are great runners and maybe even basketball players, short people can’t run fast and can’t hurdle, bigger people are lazy, and smaller people are anorexic.

“People think since I am so small, that I am anorexic! That’s not true,” said Courtney Gritman, who happens to be very small.

“A lot of people think that short people can’t jump hurdles in track, but I enjoy practicing hurdles and can get over them easily,” said Emily Dux, who is also pretty small.

Most people have heard stereotypes about girls and guys: girls care so much about makeup and shopping, and guys care a lot about sports and video games.

“Guys think that girls are worse at sports. Which is not true all the time. Some girls are better than most guys at some sports,” said Diana Romero.

Not all stereotypes are true and not everyone fits their stereotypes.

Staff changes for next year



Mr. Hellbush has resigned in order to meet his family needs. He may still do some coaching and subbing.



Mrs. Fynaardt has resigned her math and science position. She plans to continue to substitute teach.



Mr. Pabich has resigned and will be teaching in another district.

What is your favorite thing about sports?

- Girls Track:

South Tama:

8th grade, 1st

7th grade, 1st

Pella Invitational :

8th grade, 1st

7th grade, 1st

Knoxville:

7th grade, 1st

8th grade, 1st
- Boys Track:

Grinnell: 7th grade, 2nd

8th grade, 2nd

South Tama: 7th grade, 2nd

8th grade, 1st

Oskaloosa: 7th grade, 1st

8th grade, 1st



Jonah Sinclair practicing for the upcoming games.
(photo by Carlee VerHelst and Jazz Van Hemert)



Micheal Buma getting ready for a meet at practice.
(photo by Elyse Parissee)



Alex Bragg hitting home runs.
(photo by Carlee Ver Helst and Jazz Van Hemert)

“The competitiveness and being able to hang out with my friends.”
-Cameron Miller

“Getting to have the great experience and trying something new.”
-Diana Romero

“Is being with my friends and having a good time and having fun at the same time and beating people.”
-Evan Armstrong

“I like to do it because it helps me get away and I like to play sports.”
-Marlen Ramirez

“All your friends come together and play as a team, and you get to play for Pella.”
-Carter Terpstra



Pella track girls Sara Tallman, Kayla Langstraat, Lydia Dingeman, Emily Dux, and Paige Anderson hanging out during the Pella track meet.

(photo by Jayda Robinson)

“The feeling of winning because we are Pella Dutch.”
-Alex Bragg

“Enjoyment just playing sports.”
-DeAngelo Wise

“Having fun.”
-Caleb Ferguson



Emma Thoreson reaching new hights at the Pella track meet.

(photo by Alexa Dingeman)



Evan Armstrong setting up to win track meets during practice.

(photo by Elyse Parisee)

“Hanging out with friends.”
-Levi Vos

“I like it because it is a social event for me.”
-Amber Morgan

Building's past holds surprises

by Carlee Ver Helst

The Pella Middle School building has an interesting history. Mrs. DeHaan and Mr. Korver, two teachers at the building, shared some memories about the building from the past.

The building used to have open classrooms. This meant that there were no walls or classroom doors. Students in one room could listen to what was happening in the other room. Students would have to walk through one classroom to get to another classroom. The long hallways with the extra classrooms at the end weren't there, and none of what is now the eighth grade wing was there originally. This was okay at the time because there were only about half the number of students as there is now. Sixth grade was in the building at the time, as well.

Another teacher at the time, Mrs. Nikkel says, "The classes were

constantly being disrupted."

One surprising change is that some of the teachers used to smoke in the building. First, they were allowed to smoke in the teachers' lounge, then the boiler room, then they could only smoke outside. Now, no one is allowed to smoke anywhere on the property.

At one time, some teachers taught in white portable classrooms in the field behind the school. The lack of money was the reason for not building a new wing quickly. Eventually, there was a new addition onto the school which included the eighth grade section of the building. Then the portables were used for storage.

Although there have been many positive changes made to the school, there will likely be more changes made in the future. Current changes for improvement are being explored.



At one time, portable classrooms were used to accommodate the overflow of students.

New construction builds bright future

by Jazz Van Hemert



This crew works hard to keep things safe and working.

(photo by Carlee Ver Helst)

The Middle School has had many changes throughout the years. In fact, the whole 8th grade hallway wasn't there at one time. Many other structural changes have happened too.

The maintenance supervisor and superintendent have identified issues and concerns, and then the Pella Community School District's school board and superintendent determine the future building plans and have the final say. Nothing has been decided yet. The 10 year Facility Planning Committee are still in session, and they will determine the needs for the Middle School. Safety and needed improvements will be acted upon first, but there are no specifics at this time.

Some small improvements will go into action over the summer; the Planning Committee are talking over big future projects. Some rooms or items are outdated, there is equipment that needs attention if it doesn't work properly, and safety concerns. A couple projects in the works right now include the air handling system and the beginning stages of making improvements to the restrooms.

The school officials are always looking for improvement ideas from students and staff. Suggestions which seek to improve learning and teaching are always welcome. Some of the final decisions are not always seen to be the most popular, but the decisions are mostly made with importance and cost in mind.

Mural demonstrates healthy food choices

by Kristin Rundle

Recently, Mrs. VanWyk and her art classes have been working on a 3-D art mural. The mural will represent smart food and active choices. It is still a work in progress, but when finished, it, will replicate the MyPlate organization's logo.

"I hope that this mural inspires the kids to eat healthy and stay fit," said Mrs. VanWyk.

The mural shows all of the food groups: fruits, vegetables, grains, protein, and dairy. Under each of the food groups, it has many foods that would be good choices.

The whole mural is made of ceramics, which includes all of the food and the table service. Around the outside of the plate, there will be more ceramics that show people being active through sports such as basketball, baseball, tennis, soccer, volleyball, swimming, dancing, and many other physical activities.

"I think that it will make our school a little more colorful," said Lizi Jansen.

"In my mixed salad bowl of thoughts I think that it will be a real spicy addition to our sub-par lunch room. I am astonished at the creative thinking that has been bestowed upon the student body to make a masterpiece such as this neat mural," said Ross Vande Weerd.

The kids participating in creating the mural are the 3-D art classes that have been going on during the whole school year, as well as Mrs. VanWyk's 10th period study hall. The mural will be placed in the lunchroom on the north wall. It is scheduled to be finished by the end of the school year which is May 24th.



Students are creating this mural to illustrate healthy choices.

Activities promote healthy hearts

by Ryan Van Wyk

This year in P.E., middle school students participated in Hoops for Heart. Hoops for Heart is an organization run by the American Heart Association to raise money for people with heart diseases and problems. It is meant for middle school and high school age students.

Mrs. Belding runs the Hoops for Heart program and this year Pella Middle School proudly raised a total of \$199. Over the past six years the students of Pella Middle School have raised over \$6,000.

"My favorite aspects of the American Heart Association's programs are the educational pieces. It is important to me that the students have an idea of how heart disease/conditions affect people of all ages and the research that is being funded to help with such situations," said Mrs. Belding when asked about the best part of having the American Heart Association.

In P.E. class each person votes for three boys and three girls that they think could do the best in a basketball tournament. Then the boys and girls that were voted on the team get to play in the tournament. The Hoops for Heart tournament was set up by Mrs. Belding and she organized who played whom. The games were held 10th period, and boys and girls who were not on a team were invited to watch.

The winning team of both 7th and 8th grade got the wonderful chance of playing the teachers. The 7th grade team did pretty well against the teachers, and it was a close one that went down to the wire. However, the "mighty" teachers pulled out a victory in a game that could have gone either way.

Then, it was the eighth graders' turn to try to defeat the teachers. This game wasn't as close, and the teachers won with ease. Hoops for Heart was very competitive, and each game brought excitement!

Many Hands for Haiti lends hands

by Kara De Bruin

Many Hands for Haiti (MH4H) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the life of Haitians. Many Hands for Haiti has done several projects for Haiti and is continuing to help.

Many Hands for Haiti was started in 2009. Their mission is to make God real to the people of Haiti. MH4H has worked with a hospital feeding program because many Haitians don't get enough to eat. They have also done some building projects. They are currently working on building an urban school and have already built the well and latrine. MH4H is also hoping to add more feeding programs.

Life in Haiti is very tough for the people. Many Haitians don't get sufficient food or clean water. "Conditions are poor. It's difficult to provide for families, but the people are strong and have lots of hope for their country's future," said Mrs. Brand who is a part of MH4H and has gone to Haiti.

MH4H had been selling t-shirts to the students recently. Several students purchased them and the proceeds went to help Haiti. "I got a shirt because I wanted to make a difference. I also like the bright colors of the shirts," said Ariana Guereña who purchased a MH4H shirt.

Things are very hard in Haiti, but there are many people willing to help. This summer many groups will go to Haiti and complete different projects to help. The people of Haiti have hope, and MH4H is working hard to keep their hope alive and strong.



These MH4H t-shirts are sold as a fundraiser.

Meet the Musician

by Austin Hill

Ben Vogel is one of the many musicians at the Pella Middle School. Ben plays three instruments and has been playing instruments for four years.

Ben was first introduced to the baritone when he tried out for band in the 5th grade. He was introduced to the sousaphone when he tried out for marching band. The sousaphone could be described as a marching band tuba that wraps around one's waist. It can weigh up to 22 pounds.

Ben thinks that everyone should play one musical event, because it can give college advantages, and it looks better on a college record. The most fun activity in band to Ben is marching band because they play very familiar and catchy songs.

Ben's family is also involved in music. Everyone in his family, excluding his dad, has played or is

playing at least one instrument. His mom used to play the drums when she was in school, and his sister plays the viola.



Ben enjoys music a lot, and thinks everyone should do it, but he doesn't want to pursue a career in music. He has a much greater interest in engineering and video games, which he says are one of his biggest interests in life.



Ben Vogel enjoys being a musician.

(photo by Austin Hill)

Meet the Artist

by Megan Kooker



Mandolin Holmes has a hidden talent: drawing. Mandolin doesn't believe she was born with it, however. "I definitely learned the ability to draw," she says. Mandolin started getting into drawing last year.

It took a lot of practice and hard work. She began watching many tutorials on YouTube which showed how to draw Manga, Japanese style comics.

Mandolin gets inspiration for her drawings by writing short stories and drawing the characters that are in the stories. She draws about a whole hour every day.



Mandolin Holmes uses her skills.

(photo by Megan Kooker)

Meet the Athlete

by Elyse Parisee

"I like being involved in athletics because you get to spend time with friends and you just feel good when you are in shape," said Duncan Brumwell, an eighth grader at Pella Community Middle School.

Duncan has lived in many places in his lifetime: he born in Worcester, Massachusetts and has lived in Iowa since the beginning of last school year. Duncan moved here with his mother, Mary, his younger brother, Aiden, and his step-father, Charley. So far, Duncan's only complaint about Pella is that there should be a middle school soccer team.

Duncan reported that soccer is his favorite sport because it is less complicated and there are fewer rules to remember than in other sports. Duncan joined his first soccer team the summer before sixth grade, and he still plays to

this day. He plays as a defender for the U-14 Pella Boys Club Team.

In addition to soccer, Duncan is involved with other sports, including track and swim teams. He runs track because running is fun. During the track season, Duncan runs short distance and does the high jump. He likes track because he likes to be with friends, but he doesn't like having to wear sweats. When it comes to swimming, he also likes short distances such as the 50 free style.

Despite being an athlete for most of his life, Duncan has had zero sports related injuries. Sports have given Duncan many opportunities such as returning to his previous team in Minnesota last fall to play against the eighth ranked team in the nation.

Duncan's thought on going professional one day is that going pro is way too much work so he wants to

focus on things that come easily to him, like school. Duncan shared that he is honored to be part of Pella's student athlete program.



Duncan Brumwell enjoys track.

(photo by Elyse Parisee)

Meet the Actress

by Kaytline Schroder

Sarah Peterson is a 13 year old girl who excels in acting. When Sarah was younger, her parents took her to the Des Moines Children's Theater where she always loved watching them.

Sarah has been participating in an acting career since she was in elementary school. She was in sixth grade when she tried out for her very first non-school related play. That very first non-school related play that she tried out for would be The Princess and the Pea. It was put on by Missoula Children's Theater at the Pella Opera House.

Sarah decided to join an acting career because all of her friends were doing plays. She tried out and made it, she's been doing plays ever since. She loves every second of it.

Acting isn't the easiest to get into. It's not something one signs up

for and automatically makes it into the play. One first has to go through an audition. Usually during an audition, the director calls actors in and gives them a bunch of lines they'll have to say.

Depending on the play one might have to sing some lines also. After the auditions, there are the callbacks. During callbacks one will go back and read more lines for the director. After the callbacks the director will inform them on if they got a part. If the director does not inform one, then they didn't get a part. If you make it into the play there will then be many practices and dress rehearsals before the actual showing of the play.

"The performances are always so much fun, especially when you are backstage," said Peterson.

Sarah does most of her acting

at the Opera House with Missoula Children's Theater in Pella. Sometimes she does her acting with the Union Street Players at the Community Center also in Pella. Sarah thinks about going to try plays somewhere else.



Sarah Peterson loves acting.

(photo by Kaytline Schroder)

Band director retires

by Megan Kooker

Mr. Steve McCombs, the fifth through twelfth grade band director is retiring at the end of this school year. "When I went to college, I knew I wanted to be a band director," said McCombs. Ever since then, he has been teaching for a total of 38 years, 24 of them being in the Pella School District. After he retires, he is planning on staying in Pella, but he will still be working part-time teaching percussion at Simpson College.

Many students remember Mr. McComb's sense of humor and his sayings such as, "7:08 don't be late!" and "Only if you bring me cookies!"

Students appreciate him for many different reasons. 8th grader Ben Vogel, who is very active in band said,

"He (McCombs) was a funny man with great patience that can make any kid smile. He was a great teacher."

Percussionist Camille Henry said, "I will miss him definitely! I loved being taller than a teacher!"

Adam Sievers, another percussionist added, "He is a great mentor and man who will be missed."

McCombs has made a positive impact on many students' lives. "I will miss all of the students," said Mr. McCombs, and it is evident that many students will miss him, too. Out of all 38 years of teaching, Mr. McCombs had some advice to give to future band students, "Enjoy what you do and then you need to work hard at it to be successful."



McCombs sets his sights on new adventures.

7th grade concession stand money goes toward good causes

by Alexis Bugera-Brown

During the basketball and wrestling season, the seventh grade has been working hard running a concession stand. Every seventh grader has had to work in some way to participate in the concession stand.

The seventh graders will have put money towards the world, the domestic, the local community, the school, and for fun. For the global category they donated \$200 to Many Hands for Haiti. The money is going towards building a school in Haiti.

For the domestic category, the seventh graders have decided to give \$200 to The American Heart Association. That money is going to them to help with heart surgeries and patients.

For the local category, the seventh graders gave \$500 to Blake Van Vark's memorial fund. This money is going to the mission Baha 101. The money will be used to build houses in honor of Blake.

For the middle school, the

seventh graders purchased a Cricket to use for the culture fair.

They still have the fun category to find out what to spend their money on. Ms. Schulz thinks that if the seventh graders rent the pool, it will have to be from 6:15- 8:00 p.m on Saturday June 2. To rent the pool for that long will cost around \$600. The seventh grade isn't sure what to do with their money yet. Some kids want to have a lock in, a

cook out, or a water fight at school.

Ms. Schulz said, "I am proud of the seventh grade class; they worked really hard. For so many kids, there weren't any issues, and everyone worked their share of time. Everyone was responsible and took care of business."

Pearl Doty added, "The concession stand was a good experience to show us leadership roles. It was also a good way to represent the Pella Community School District."



Students donated much of the money earned in the completely student-operated concession stand overseen by Mrs. Schulz.

5-3-12

Page Editor

Jaiden VerSteeg

Around the Grounds

13

Lunch crew serves up big job

by Austin Hill

Lunch ladies are sometimes an overlooked part of our school. Darla Beller, one of the main lunch ladies here at Pella Middle School, was interviewed. Beller said she enjoys working as a lunch lady very much. She enjoys the hours, the kids and working in the kitchen.

One of the biggest challenges of working as a lunch lady, according to Beller, is the fast pace of trying to serve the kids on time and not get too far behind on your work.

"I wouldn't ever take back being a lunch lady," said Beller.

She wishes that she would've started it earlier so she would've been able to see her kids more often than she did before she was a lunch lady. Beller's mom had been a lunch lady when she was a kid, and she knew that the hours were very good.

Colton Williams thinks that the lunch ladies are one of the biggest parts to our school, and without them we wouldn't be able to focus. The lunch ladies are well liked around our school as they serve us warm food everyday, and always have a smile on their faces. The lunch ladies are Kim Systma, Elaine Struik, Donna Van Ee and Darla

by Tate Petty

In recent times, a craze for a new movie has sparked up the urge to read a certain book entitled, The Hunger Games. Seventh grade lit students won't have to wait on reservation lists or buy the book themselves.

Seventh grade literature students now have the option to pick up and read the book that's now a very successful movie. Students also have the option to read The Giver if they don't

would read the books assigned,.

They are also reading the novel Boy Who Dared, a story of a Hitler youth during WWII.

This year in literature, kids have been learning about their values and what they mean. They have done various projects and have had in-depth discussions about living own's values. Students are learning to connect themselves with the stories they read in

class, and then try to feel how the characters feel.

Mrs. Knight said to the class, "The Hunger Games is a good choice to read, because it really shows our big idea in the story." The big idea is "Do our own values



feel comfortable reading The Hunger Games, or if they have read it and want to read something new.

Seventh grade students will now be replacing their 4th quarter A.R. reading by reading assigned books throughout the fourth quarter. They can still read other books for extra points, but the only requirement is that one

clash with society's values?" She and Mrs. Nikkel want kids to ponder this question. They want the students to learn more about their own values and live them to the fullest.

Iowa's weather breaks records

by Austin Bragg

On the channel 13 weather report, they have been talking about the record breaking warm temperatures in Iowa.

Meteorologist Ed Wilson from Channel 13 news said, "On March 14, 1975, it was only 77 degrees, today it is a record breaking 88 degrees!"

Some say that the temperatures are related to what the Mayans said about Earth losing orbit this year. Losing orbit means that everyone on Earth will be launched into space. It is widely believed that the heat is due

to global warming. Most think that man has caused this by burning fossil fuels.

Some say that it is just the way the weather works. Weather patterns go in cycles. A few years ago, it was thought we might be going into a cooling cycle or an "ice age".

Pella middle school student, Meghan Hartman, commented on this year's temperatures saying, "I enjoyed being able to feel warm in the winter not freezing all day."



Dalton Bauman learns about prepositions in the sun on a warm day.

The Goddess Test

El Charro serves good food

sparks readers’

interest

by Candace Mitchel

The Goddess Test is the perfect book for a cold day in front of the fire, with a cup of hot chocolate, and sitting in your lazy chair covered by a blanket.

The Goddess Test has an appealing cover and a really good description on the back. I liked this book because it had a good, easy to understand story that was both adventurous and romantic, and I really liked how it left you expecting more. I hope this book is the first in a series.

It captivates the reader from the beginning with a man named Henry talking to his friend above a dead girl wondering how she was mysteriously killed, and how they only had twenty years left to find another girl to take her place.

It then goes into a girl driving to a town in the middle of no where with her mother in the back seat sick with cancer. The mother makes her daughter pull over by a mysterious gate on the outskirts of the mysterious town.

Later on, her mother enters the hospital. Then, a mysterious man shows up. He tells her that she must come with him to his mansion for the fall and winter months like she promised, or her friend will die. Then, her friend dies and she goes to his mansion begging him to bring her back again, and that she would keep her promise.

What happens next is for me to know and you to find out so READ THE BOOK!! This book is a mixture of Greek mythology, mystery, and paranormal romance. I say once you start you won’t be able to stop until the very end. I couldn’t put it down. It left me waiting for more to just magically appear in the book, but sadly it never happened. I’m serious when I say it is ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS I’VE EVER READ!!!! I really think everyone should read this book.

by Ally Canfield

El Charro, the best Mexican food around! They have delicious food that is cooked to perfection. I demand you to go to El Charro.

El Charro has indoor dining, and a long parking lot that is shared with the restaurant next door. It is a clean restaurant. It has nice clean facilities. I have never noticed any dirty dishes or dirty glasses. Sometimes restaurants can be slow and some can be fast. El Charro is in between, because it depends on the day of the week, what time you’re going, and how big your party is. If you go on Friday at around 6:30 PM with a group of 5, it is probably going to take awhile because they already have a lot of customers.

Not only does El Charro have a nice place, but they also have delicious food and beverages. To start eating at El Charro, a waiter comes and ask you what you would like to drink. The many choices include water, lemonade, coke products, beer, margaritas, strawberry daiquiris, and other alcoholic drinks. Then you are brought a basket of fresh homemade tortilla chips served with a side of delicious salsa. You also have the choice to pay for a side of queso or guacamole. After a little while your waiter comes back to ask what you

would like to eat. Some extraordinarily delicious food to try is the happy burritos, quesadilla fajitas, and the regular fajitas. Happy burritos are two tortillas that are filled with steak, lettuce, and cheese topped with more cheese. On the side you get rice and beans, but if you only want rice or you only want beans, then you should ask the waiter for no beans or no rice. Fajitas come hot to your table and it has grilled green peppers, onions, tomatoes, and your choice of chicken, beef (steak), or mixed (both chicken and steak). You also get a plate with 3 tortilla shells, rice, beans, and some lettuce. You can put some of the veggies, chicken (or beef or mixed), and lettuce into your tortilla shell to enjoy the magnificent meal. A quesadilla fajita is a fajita, but the stuff comes already in a shell, that is like a tortilla chip. It is served with rice, lettuce, and cheese on the side.

I highly recommend you to go to El Charro. You can experience fulfilling Mexican food, perfectly cooked Mexican food, and amazing Mexican food. So will you eat at El Charro or will you choose to eat a boring meal cooked by your mother? Which will you choose?

3rd trimester’s amazing *Middle Ground* staff



Technology changes impact many people

by Maggie Mortimer

People see it everyday, others texting on their cellphones, eating lunch with their ipod headphones in their ears. Everywhere people go they see it, but what will happen to the stuff that doesn't use electricity? What will happen to the parks, trees, and lakes? What will happen to the camp grounds, hiking trails, bicycles, fishing, and outside activities that don't need electricity?

Don't get it wrong, technology is great, but people use it too much. There is a commercial where a boy is sitting in his room in front of his computer drinking a grape soda. When the soda ran out, he used his phone to call his grandmother who was in the other room to ask for another one. What the heck, why didn't he just

get up and ask her? Is this what the world is coming to? The commercial was made to bring awareness to the problem of laziness.

Since iPods and ther technology products have come out, people have been ignoring other things. Instead of going to camp in the summer, they want to sit and play with their iPods instead. If this keeps up, they'll gradually lose the need for things like books and parks. They'll just press a button and something more advanced will replace it, so they don't have to do anything but sit there.

Also, kids are just coming home after school and watching T.V., which wouldn't be so bad if it weren't for the shows. Some of the shows are okay, but others are really violent

and inappropriate. Some of the kid shows on Cartoon Network have been banned from houses because of what is said and done on them. Some kids from our school have had Spongebob banned from their houses because their parents don't approve.

There are also much better things to do than watch T.V. anyway, people can go outside, spend time with their families, play with their siblings, put down the iPod, and get active. In the health textbook it says that humans need to have relationships with others in order to maintain well-being, but they can't do that if they spend all of their time on electronics. Technology is a good thing, but too much of a good thing isn't such a good thing in the end.

Culture Fair increases awareness of world's cultures

by Alexa Dingeman

Some people say the culture fair is not fun and boring, and some people think that the culture fair is fun and there is a lot to do. Eighth grade students remember many things about the culture fair last year.

"The drums were petty cool. There was so much stuff to do," said Ben Vogel.

It was not just the drums and things to do that people in eighth grade remember it is also what they ate.

"It was fun getting to eat yummy food," said Sara Tallman.

When some people walked into the room they went, "uh, ahh and, wow this is nothing like I expected it to be like." The culture fair this year is located in the Pella Middle School gym on May 17.

There is a lot more behind the culture fair than just setting up and taking down. The teachers and staff are a big part of it, too. The teachers Mrs. Knight and Mrs. Schulz had to

plan where every person's country and every person's table is set up. They also monitor the making of the projects.

"I have been helping with the culture fair for 10 years. I get to set up where the kids' tables go and help the kids get their displays ready to go. I also help hang flags. After all that I listen to their presentations and grade. I help clean up after it is all done. Things like mopping the floors, taking tape off the walls, and taking the rope down," said Mrs. Schulz.

When students were asked what they are most looking forward to the most common answer was food.

"I am most looking forward to talking about the Holocaust," said Spencer Prinsloo.

In the end the students have a good reaction of the culture fair and the background is good.

Mrs. Schulz said, "The culture fair gives the students a platform to dig deep into one country, and a chance to

show others in a celebratory setting.



Students work on story boards for the May 17th Culture Fair.



Seventh graders take a bow following performing plays in 7th English class.



Eighth grade G & T students think hard as they undertake Knowledge Bowl.



Students act out the story of the Christmas Carol during 7th lit class.



FCS students enjoy Tulip Time early this year by cooking up favored treats.



Kids travel to and compete in Math Counts. Remember math really does count!



English classes go back to the past and read their stories, written in English class, to children in lower grades.

Moving Up

by Ashlynn Johnston

Summer is near
As we are
approaching the end of
this school year
As we end this
year of school and
move up grade
We will take with
us the friends and
memories we have
made
We have done
many things that we
will always remember
And then take
with us to this next
September
As we leave this
journey of our life
behind
We need to
keep in mind
That there are
still memories to make
And risks to
take
In our hurry
we must not forget
School is ^{not}
quite over yet



Rainbows light up all over Pella.