

The

Middle Ground

Pella Middle School
Pella, Iowa 50219

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Page editor Treyten Brown

Beloved teacher retires

by Bailey Van Gorp and Alexis Franzen

Mrs. Mary Lundgren, resource teacher, will be retiring at the end of May.

Lundgren has been teaching for a total of 38 years, 28 of those years have been in Pella. Lundgren loves being a teacher, but she has decided she wants to spend more time with her family, particularly her grandchildren.

Lundgren didn't originally intend on teaching; she originally started teaching because she needed a job. She stayed teaching because she thought it was fun.

Lundgren has also taught in Appalachia, Lexington, Kentucky, and Newton, Iowa.

Lundgren hasn't always taught 7th and 8th grade; she has taught kindergarten through 8th grade. As a teacher, her favorite class to teach is English.

Lundgren loves when students make her laugh. Her favorite memories as a teacher are all the days her students made her laugh. Teachers influence students, but students can also influence teachers.

When it comes to Lundgren, her students influence her life by making it happier, more fun, and less boring.

Lundgren tries to influence her students by getting to know them. She lets them know that she cares, that she is there for them.

"Mrs. Lundgren influenced me by showing me how to make the right choice. Her teaching helped me a lot too; she showed me how to use great grammar," said Marlen Ramirez, an 8th grader.

Lundgren pushes her students to do their best and to not give up if they don't succeed. "Mrs. Lundgren has really helped me over the past year to become a better student. She has helped me get to where I am right now. She has helped me with everything I have needed help with, and she has inspired me a lot," said 7th grader Dalton Waddell. After a while, teaching becomes a big part of a teacher's life.

It's not just a job; teachers get to come to school everyday and see their students' progress, and they get to see how much they improve their students' lives.

"I call my students 'my kids' because in our year together, they aren't just kids on my class list- they become a part of my heart," said Lundgren.

It's not just students that will miss her, the middle school staff will also miss her dearly, as well. "After 25 years of teaching with her, I will miss her happy smile in the morning," said Mrs. DeHaan, 8th grade English teacher.

"Mrs. Lundgren has been a very important teacher at Pella. I have



Mrs. Lundgren sits in a chair reading a Kindle.

loved working with and learning from her. She will be missed," said Mrs. Jodi Knight, 7th and 8th grade teacher.

"Mrs. Lundgren has been very good to me for the last five years. She is an amazing woman and a fabulous teacher. I will miss her dearly. We make an awesome team. Even though I don't agree with her leaving me, I do understand the need to start the next chapter in her life. I want to thank her for the support and love throughout the years. She's the best," said Mrs. Vander Wal. When Lundgren leaves, she advises her replacement, "Have fun and enjoy each and every one of your students!"

Mrs. Lundgren won't be in the school anymore, but she will remain in her students' hearts, and her students will always be in hers.

Bond passage means school improvements

by Donovan Holterhaus

Students are excited for the changes to many Pella schools that will take place in the future, along with some other renovations.

Some changes that are taking place at the Pella Middle School is taking out three classrooms that do not match the fire code. The middle school is also getting security enhancements on some entry ways. A learning pod will also be put in,

"I think the changes to the middle school are necessary because some of the classrooms don't match the fire code," said Mr. Korver, the eighth grade social studies teacher at the middle school.

All schools are changing the entry to the schools by making all visitors enter through the main office for more security. Other safety and security issues will be addressed,

such as security cameras, door access/card readers, and interior door locks.

The reason for all these changes is to get more efficient and secure buildings in the school system. These changes will let the schools be safer and more protected. The total cost for all construction will not exceed \$29.1 million. This money comes from taxes that go to the city.

2 News

Pella's preparation for Tulip Time

by Grace Fisher

Tulip Time this year takes place on May 2-4 here in Pella. Pella's citizens and its tourists enjoy all the attractions Tulip Time has to offer. Every year it comes and goes, but do many of the citizens know how much work goes in beforehand to make Tulip Time a success?

Tulip Time doesn't just happen on an instant, it takes a many months of preparation. For the Tulip Court, it starts as far back as November 10, at the Queen's Announcement Party. It was hosted by Pella High School. Many senior girls of Pella were nominated to have a chance to be Tulip Queen, but only one would have to be selected. The Tulip Queen of 2013 is Marlee Bokhoven. The Royal Court members are Erica Schulte, Kate Roozeboom, Heather Van Wyk, and Elizabeth De Wolf. The pages are Maddie Canfield and Juliana Van Gorp. The flower girls are Lauren Mace and Claire Westerkamp.

The Tulip Court doesn't just stop after being chosen in November. The Court goes as spokespeople promoting Tulip Time. The most well known, at least by the people of Pella, is the

court's presentation at the Tulip Time Royalty Party. It took place on March 19 at the Community Center. The court entertained the audience with a presentation of "Tulip Time's Top Ten." The court also travels to other towns to speak about Tulip Time in Pella.

"We take pictures which is pretty fun," said Maddie Canfield, one of the pages, "We have an event where we speak to the Orange City people at a breakfast during Tulip Time. Mostly, we try to have fun."

The Tulip Court is not the only people who do much of the work before Tulip Time, there are also many volunteers. One that is under appreciated is the Royal Seamstresses. Each year she has the court wear a different style of Dutch costume. The Royal Seamstresses who hand-make the court's attire are Jackie Craver and Phyllis Zylstra. The Dutch costumes of this year are mid 1800s Friesland.

The Historical Village is also a key part of Tulip Time's success. In the fall, the workers plant thousands of tulips throughout town. They also run the wagon tours that go throughout the town, which show visitors the main

places in Pella. During Tulip Time, they show the Vermeer Windmill and village. Unpaid volunteers run the mill within the Windmill to show visitors how a mill works. Tulip Time's success is a result of the Historical Village's work.

A big funding comes from generous people who donate both their time and their money. Many donations are taken in to help cover the costs of Tulip Time. These go towards running the various activities across Pella at Tulip Time. Volunteers help make sure that all the activities run smoothly and try to keep the town in order throughout the chaos.

Much of Pella's citizens contribute to the Tulip Time success without realizing it. People who have done Dutch Dancing, scrubbed streets, or help someone who might be lost at Tulip Time have all helped out. Being friendly and helping a newcomer out through the new area could bring them back next year.

Tulip Time is here again this year. Everyone has been preparing and getting ready for these three big days in Pella. So let the festivities begin again.

Klompen Classic uses new route for 2013 Tulip Time

by Erin Mace

The Klompen Classic is an annual kickoff to Tulip Time where many people come to Pella to run in a three mile race. It is considered a tradition and an important part of Tulip Time to many people.

The Klompen Classic has been a Tulip Time tradition since 1993. It starts downtown and continues through the streets of Pella. This year there was a new route. The city decided that this year would be different from the other years, since this year was the annual run's twentieth birthday.

Kids could run in the two block race and anyone who is able to run or walk three miles could do the actual race.

Klompen are wooden clogs that are worn by people in Holland and classic means the highest quality and most outstanding. The race could be called a race of the highest quality wooden shoes.

Around two thousand people come to Pella every year for the kickoff of Tulip Time, the Klompen Classic. Many of these are from Pella, while others come from surrounding

towns. There are many things that are enjoyed about the Klompen Classic and some are that people like to do it with friends, some want to challenge themselves, and others just love running. Sarah Downs, an eighth grade student, said, "I like to cross the finish line."

The Klompen Classic is a Tulip Time tradition that is important to many of the people that run it. Tulip Time would not be the same without the annual run and it would be missed if it were ever taken out of the festivities.



Lauren Miller, Rebecca Dux, Paighton Malek, and Piper Klyn getting ready to run the Klompen Classic. (photo taken by Sarah Yoder)



Mr. Manning competing in the Klompen Classic.

(photo taken by Sarah Yoder)



Aimee Dieleman and Jordan Rempke strive to finish the Klompen Classic.

(photo taken by Sarah Yoder)

Blake Van Vark continues to inspire

by Joy Van Wyngarden

Blake Van Vark continues to influence all of Pella and many other communities ever since his death on February thirteen. He has greatly impacted people's lives and changed outlooks on life. Many fundraisers and projects have raised money to support different causes. Kyle Korver generously donated 3,000 Seer t-shirts during Tulip Time. Several people from Pella and tourists that came for Tulip Time supported this event and bought a t-shirt. All profits went towards the new Pella Sports Park. This park will contain several baseball and softball fields.

When talking about the Korver

family's generous donation, Halle Van Vark said, "We are good family friends with them and they wanted to help my family out in any way they could."

There was also a basketball shootout at Central College in October. All seventh graders and above were welcomed and were able to participate in different basketball events. All proceeds and donations went to Third Church's Baja Mission to build homes in Mexico.

When asked about the shootout, Tyler McKibbin said, "I participated in the Blake Van Vark shootout because I thought it would be a really cool experience and basketball

is my favorite sport, so it was another way for me to participate in an activity."

An upcoming benefit will be held at Pizza Ranch on the twenty-third of March. All the workers at Pizza Ranch will donate their wages to go towards building a home in La Mision, Mexico. People have been graciously signing up and volunteering their time to help with this great cause. Blake Van Vark has been responsible for many beneficial organizations.

Halle Van Vark said, "We know that greater things are yet to come and we are working on something really big."

Concert held in honor of B. Van Vark

by Kloe Lambert

On February 13, 2012, Blake Van Vark died. The Van Vark family has taken that tragedy with an optimistic attitude. With that tragedy came an idea, which later turned into reality. Their idea was to have a concert. The concert is being held in Blake Van Vark's honor.

The concert will feature John Mark McMillan. It will be May 17, 2013. The doors will open at 6:00 P.M. The concert itself will not start until 7:00 that night. The tickets were sold at Pizza Ranch March 23. Those interested can also get tickets

at the front office of Third Church or at www.itickets.com. The concert is sponsored by private sponsors. The proceeds will go to Third Church Youth Ministries.

Halle Van Vark, sister of Blake and eighth grade student said, "I'm super excited! I think that Blake would've loved it! We chose him (McMillan) because he wrote the song "How He Loves" which was Blake's favorite song."

John Mark McMillan actually wrote that song after he lost a good friend in a car accident. VanVark said, "We are pumped

and definitely looking forward to see what's yet to come!"

In 2002 John Mark McMillan released his debut album *Hope Anthology, Volume 1*. In 2005 he released his album *The Song Inside the Sounds of Breaking Down* which features the hit song "How He Loves". The song has been covered by many well-known artists such as David Crowder Band, Kim Walker, and Todd Agnew.

As a result of Blake passing away, the Van Vark family has turned their tragedy into something positive to keep giving back to others.

Impact World Tour comes to Pella

by Sarah Yoder

Impact World Tour came to Pella Community schools on April 11, 2013. The team shared some of their life hardships and how they overcame them.

Along with sharing about themselves they did some cool tricks. Some of the things they did were skateboarding acts, martial art acts, tore phone books,

and other cool tricks. Overall *Impact World Tour* was a great experience to have fun and learn how to fail forward.



A skateboarder with *Impact World Tour* jumped over Pella School teachers. After the jump the teachers were glad to be all in one piece.

(photo taken by Sarah Yoder)

Boys track strives for strong season

by Sophia Steenhoek



Avery VanZee practices high jump.
(photo taken by Sophia Steenhoek)

Track, the sport that many know and love, started many years ago. The earliest track event dates back to 776 B.C. in Olympia, Greece. Then they ran on dirt tracks which are no where near the same as what is used today.

Pella has been a top competitor in track throughout the history of the town, and many middle school records continue to be broken. Middle school is a time to try almost anything one wants. There are a lot of boys out for track this year, there are 32 seventh grade boys out this year, compared to 25 eighth grade boys.

Weather has had an impact on the season, and especially on training. At the beginning of this season, it was hard to get outside to run and get times for people. "Getting behind on training means slower times, and less success at meets," said Coach Jay Murphy.

"I love working with the kids and love the strategies of making the best line-up I can to win track meets," said Murphy.

Eighth grader Reid Leidigh said, "I like being with my friends, and I like participating in hurdles."

Track is not only enjoyed by runners, but also spectators and fans. Scott Tjeerdsma, Athletic Director and a long time track fan, said, "My grandpa and dad both ran track in high school and college so I have been going to track meets my whole life. I love watching meets because everyone who competes can have a great day! Even if you get last place in your event, you can still celebrate if you ran your fastest time ever. It's a sport where improvement, not just wins and losses, can be celebrated."

Girls race for successful meets

by Tess Roorda

When runners hear the words, "On your marks, get set, go," they know it is time to run like they have run never before. In track and field, athletes are competing against other teams, other people, and themselves. They may be trying to get a personal or a team record.

All of these things happen when athletes participate in girls Pella Middle School track and field. The girls' track team has been practicing and preparing for track meets since the beginning of April. The girls are scheduled to have seven track meets throughout the 2013 season. They have been practicing passing a baton, jumping over hurdles, and throwing the discus and shot. The girls also



Samantha Boetger competes in long jump. (photo taken by Alice Lickteig)

have been given different workouts each day. Sprinting workouts consist of doing several short speed and agility exercises to help the runners speed in events such as the 100 and 200 meter dashes. Distance workouts consist of doing several laps around the track to help build the runners' endurance in the 800 and 1500 meter runs.

"My favorite thing about track are the meets," said Kristin Rundle, an 8th grader at Pella Middle School. "I enjoy being competitive and being the best I can be individually when I run," said Rundle.

"I like being outside and staying competitive as a coach during the track season," said Bob Boots, the 7th and 8th grade girls track coach. "I enjoy watching the athletes grow through middle school and high school as they run." Boots has worked with high school and middle school athletes for many years.

Baseball players live out passion

by Treyten Brown

Pella students are getting outside and working to be fit for spring activities, one which is baseball. The middle school students condition to play baseball in tournaments that can last for two or even three days.

Students juggle baseball between many activities. Caleb Piersma, one of the players, uses his time wisely by doing homework before practices and games.

One of Piersma's teammates is 8th grader Austin Bragg, and he has been practicing since he was in kindergarten. He was pulled into baseball because his father wanted him to play.

Both Piersma and Bragg play in Babe Ruth and AAU leagues. Bragg is an outfielder, a catcher, and a pitcher so that means he works hard on keeping his positions. If he doesn't do this, then the team coach, Larson, will assign him a new position which wouldn't be as fun as what Bragg likes to play.

Bragg said, "Baseball isn't just a game; it's my life."

The coaches of the AAU team are Coach Rich and Coach Larson. Coaches draft the players for the team.

The players have a division by Babe Ruth which means that they are split by grade groups of only 7th graders and 8th graders.

Babe Ruth has double headers or two games in a row with four to five innings and ten minute breaks between the games. They play and practice whenever and wherever their coach tells them in emails he sends to each player. The players play on the high school fields unless there are high school players using the same ones. They usually play and practice during the week.



Austin Bragg bats at a home baseball game. (photo taken by Treyten Brown)

Archery gains in popularity

by Reid Leidigh

In the past few weeks the eighth grade class has been practicing archery in P.E. All of the eighth grade students in both physical education classes are participating.

The P.E. teacher, Mrs. Belding says, "I like to see the faces of the kids who have never shot before. I also like to see the improvements and confidence grow."

The students worked on their skills during class time in the gym. How does archery benefit people's health? The answer is simple: it builds arm, chest, back, and shoulder muscles. All of these are used, and needed, to accurately and safely fire a bow. Archery also helps a person learn balance and coordination.

Both of which are needed to aim and get consistent hits on the target.

Archery was originally started a long time ago, about 2800 B.C. The first bow was made by the Egyptians. The bow and arrow were originally used as a hunting weapon. It was also used for military purposes. It was light, compact, and easy to carry, so it was a perfect weapon for flanking. Flanking is a fighting tactic in which one goes around the sides of the enemy. Both the bow and the arrow were made from wood. The arrow was tipped with an animal horn and fastened with animal sinew and glue. However, the bow is now retained as a hunting weapon, and archery is practiced as a sport.

Though archery has lost

some of its popularity since it was first created, it has started to make a comeback due to movies and books like *The Hunger Games*.



Students in P.E. class learn to shoot arrows with bows.

(photo by Kiara Schnoebelen)

Several soccer options offered in community

by Alice Lickteig

Soccer is one of the most popular sports in the world. The sport is very popular in Europe and America. The first occurrence of soccer was in China during the second and third centuries B.C. The modern day soccer was established in 1863. Now soccer is the most watched and played sport in the world.

In Pella, there are several teams with a wide spread of ages throughout the players. There are club teams and premier teams. Club opens up to all players within the age groups to be on the team. Everyone is welcome onto a club team.

Premier teams are a little different than club teams. Premier is a higher level club for players to compete at a more competitive level. Premier only has two different teams. To be on one of

the teams, one is required to tryout.

Soccer is played in the spring and the fall, and tryouts are before each season. The head coach, Kyle Halfpop, manages to coach each team. After tryouts the players are notified later whether they made it on the team or not.

Everyone from the coaches to the parents to the fans make premier the best experience that it could be. When Deann Thoreson was asked what her favorite part of premier soccer was she responded, "The girls on the team!" Deann's two daughters are a part of the teams.

"I choose to be on premier over club because I think it is more and better competition. It also brings new experiences like traveling to Kansas City and Lincoln Nebraska for tournaments," said Kloe Lambert, a player on the U14 team.

Kyle Halfpop has been coaching the teams for five years. Kyle was a player on the Central College soccer team throughout college.

"My favorite thing about coaching the premier level is working with the kids and developing and educating them. When I see players improve off and on the field, that is the most gratifying part of my job," explained Halfpop.

"The premier teams are dedicated to playing their best and with all their heart. The U12 and U14 teams will have a strong showing in the upcoming seasons. They are quick and move the ball well, they all play with a lot of heart!" Thoreson said.

Overall premier provides many opportunities and learning experiences. The team will strive for many victories this year.

Softball girls work on skills

by Cassie Cairney

Softball first started in 1887. It became known as indoor-baseball. It was a way for baseball players to play during the winter. At first the fielders didn't have to use gloves because the ball, a boxing glove, was soft. The game soon moved outdoors and official rules were published in 1889. There were many different things people called it, kitten ball, lemon ball, and diamond ball. The name softball spread in the 1930s.

Practice includes a variety of skills. Normally, practice begins with several warm up exercises. They usually include jogging, high

knees, karaoke, sprints, and lastly throwing. When everyone's arm is warmed up, the team splits up into groups and participates in variety of stations. The stations usually include soft toss, fielding, and sometimes sliding. At the end of practice the team usually scrimmages.

Hannah Emmert, an 8th grade softball player said, "During softball season my schedule is very chaotic. I have to work all of my other activities around it."

The season runs throughout the month of June, and there are games almost every morning during the week. The first softball game was scheduled

for the 31st of May, however, due to many snow days that is the last day of school. They play a total of 20 games in the season. Some of the games could be canceled due to weather, if it is raining or the fields are wet. Half of the games are away, and the other half are home.

"I like everything about softball; it's such a rush! From pounding the ball, to getting that out at first! It's such a great experience," said 7th grade softball player Bailee Meyer.

Many other students are excited for softball season to start. Meyer said, "Softball is also fun to be able to bond with your teammates."

Student council attends conference

by Bailee Meyer, Brynn VanderBeek, Lily Roozeboom, Erica Nossaman, Austin Adrian, Issac Zeimetz, Emily Kriegel, and Elizabeth Lovell

On April 10th, 2013 all of the student council members headed to Marshalltown for the 2013 Iowa Junior High State Student Council Spring Conference. While there, the Pella student council members and the student council members from other schools were split into three groups to attend different stations.

During the first station they learned about the traits of a good leader.

Erica Nossaman said, "I thought it was a good way to learn about leadership firsthand."

The second station put teamwork to the test by doing various activities with a group. All of these



Some of the students took a break between activities at the conference.

activities required a good amount of leadership.

8th grader KiKi Pingel said, "I thought it was fun to interact with other student council members and work together to accomplish our tasks!"

The last station was one that took a stand on bullying using various

songs and skits. Bailee Meyer commented, "I thought it was a very fun experience, and I thought it was a very good idea to get us engaged by singing. It was fun!" Guidance counselor, Anne Pentico, said, "I think it was a fun day for student council members to get together with student councils from other schools. At the same time it was good to learn leadership and ways to show that in our schools."

7th grade "catches" fishing fever

by Luke Pavlat

For the past eight years the Pella Middle School seventh graders have gone fishing. Fishing trips are a good way to explore the outdoors. This year, the 7th grade P.E. classes went fishing on Thursday, April 25, 2013.

Mrs. Belding said, "We will be going to the pond by the Pella Nursery two times in the day and Dutch Meadows pond one time in the day. The reason we are going on this fishing trip

is to put in all things we learned in class into real life fishing. Also, observing the fish gives a science aspect to the trip."

Eighth grader Mark Sutija said, "On the fishing trip it is luck of the draw on catching a fish." The fishing trip is fun for many of the seventh graders, and they hope to catch a big fish.

Seventh grader, Jake Heerema said, "The thing that I am most excited for is catching a fish."



The seventh graders fish for P.E.

(photo submitted by Amy Belding)

7th grade travels to prairie



On April 8 and 9, the seventh grade students traveled to the Neil Smith National Wildlife Refuge.

Choir anticipates upcoming trip to Adventureland

by Jarod Martens

In the hall of Pella Middle School, one may hear the distant chatter of six, seventh, or eighth graders waiting for Joseph Tangen to signal the beginning of a song. His eleven years spent at the district have made many students acquainted with him. His teaching skills, by far are unique, and greatly effective towards most of his students, really shape the sound of his choirs.

"I really try to think, after every day of school, how I could improve? What did I do wrong? What did I do that helped a student? How could I do better, and enhance their experience?" Tangen said.

Tangen has been dedicated to the district ever since he started here.

For eight of his eleven years teaching, he has taken the eighth grade students on a field trip to Adventureland.

"It's a reward. A last hurrah. For the eighth graders moving the choir in the high school, it's the last time working just as the eighth graders. I just want one last fun outing before they become high schoolers," Tangen said.

Tangen plans on going to Adventureland on May 11, from ten to five. Many eighth graders are excited to go to the amusement park.

"I think Mr. Tangen is making a good choice. He's giving us incentive to sing. We'll be able to have fun and improve as singers," Sarah Killoren, an eighth grade choir student said.

Tangen's choirs are very large and have grown rapidly, with the eighth grade choir of 80, seventh grade with 95, and the sixth grade with about 115.

Tangen's choirs all have upcoming performances. The sixth grade choir is going to an Iowa Cubs game to sing the national anthem, the seventh and eighth are going to be hosting the Pella Choral Festival, and the eighth grade choir performed for the fifth graders at the Jefferson Intermediate School.

With Mr. Tangen's years as a music teacher, he has developed techniques that help the students. He cares for the students and tries to make their years with him fun.

Students participate in Children's Theater

by Elizabeth Lovell

On Monday the 15, 2013, auditions were held for Beauty Lou and the Country Beast. 73 people, ages five through sixteen, auditioned, including some students from the Pella Middle School. Out of the 73 people, 60 were cast, including Bailee Meyer, Lauren Ashworth, Sammy Winslow, Brenna Hildebrand, Rachael Meinders, Bryanna Dawson, Riley Burton, Tessa Campbell, and Elizabeth Lovell.

Beauty Lou and the Country

Beast is a musical based off of the classic tale, Beauty and the Beast. The main character, Beauty Lou, is disgusted by the ungrateful behavior of a young miner, who won a blue ribbon for his "red, red roses." She wishes for him to be a beast, so that no one would ever speak to him again. Many years later, Beauty Lou's mother, Buckeroo Bonny, meets the beast, and gives Beauty Lou to him in exchange for enough gold to save their farm, but Beauty

Lou is able to look past his horrible appearance, and is able to befriend him. She wishes him back to his former self, and they get married in the end.

After auditions, practice started right away. Practice was all week long, from 4 to 8:30. The final shows were Friday night and Saturday morning. Tessa Campbell said, "It was definitely one of the best plays that I have ever done. It was pretty fun, but practice seemed endless!"

7th, 8th grade prepare for marching band

by Marlen Ramirez

7th and 8th grade started practicing for marching band on Friday, March 18. Mr. Derek Stratton is the 7th grade director. Mrs. Benson is the 8th grade director.

Band students are also getting to know their music and the direction signals they have to follow.

8th grade has color guard for the time, and they are taught how to use them during their song. Nine girls are chosen to carry the flags from fifteen who tried out.

Marching band practices in the band room. They focus on achieving perfection and playing the songs by memorization. Band teachers also teach

students how to march in time and start on the left leg. The students practice staying in step and being together.

Percussion practices alone in the choir room. Their band teachers have also taught them how to march in time and start on their left legs. It is important that the percussion section is on the right rhythm because if they are not, then the whole band gets out of rhythm. The percussionists have to pay extra attention to their band director to get everything right.

7th grade student Brayton Douma enjoys being in band. Douma said, "I think it's (marching band) pretty cool since it's my first time being in a

marching band. It's also hard because I have to carry my instrument in my shoulders through the whole parade."

For 8th grade students, this Tulip Time marks their last middle school marching parade.. 8th grade band student, Ryllianne Burton, said, "I am going to miss the uniforms because they are not as hot (warm) as the ones in high school."

The directors have enjoyed having them in class, teaching them to love playing music, keep going with it.

Director Mr. Stratton, said "I look forward to hanging out with all you guys and gals, making music. What could be more fun than that?"



7th graders practice marching for Tulip Time.

(photo by Jarod Martens)

Home-schooled students lead busy lives

by Hannah Emmert

Parents choose to home-school their children so they can teach their children how they want them to be taught.

Brooke Walz, a home-schooled eighth grade student, has been home-schooled for two years now. Before she was home-schooled, she went to the Pella Community schools.

"Homeschooling was hard for me at first because I hated being away from all my friends. I love sleeping in. I also love doing sports with my friends at the school," said Walz. She was involved with volleyball and basketball at the Pella Middle School. "I like being home-schooled because I get to be with my family a lot, but I do miss school, and if I had a choice I would go back."

On an average day home-schoolers do what students at the

school buildings do. "I usually get up at around eight-thirty to nine o'clock. I do some math and sometimes my mom has a science lesson planned for the day. When I get home from choir on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, I have basically a study hall until I get all of my work done," said Walz.

When asked why she chose to homeschool, parent Posthuma answered, "We desired quality time training our children in the prime time of the day that home education offered. Now we enjoy the academic excellence we've found in a variety of curriculum for science, math, writing, history, literature, reading, and languages."

Many students at the Pella Middle School don't mind having home-schooled students participate

in school activities, such as music and sports. Grace Fisher, an eighth grade student, thinks that it is great for home-schooled students to participate in school activities. "Everyone needs the chance to do school activities home-schooled or not," said Fisher.

In fact most home-schooled students participate in extracurricular activities at school buildings. "We enjoy the freedom to schedule time for extracurricular activities such as piano, choir, band, sports, dance, or swim team," said Posthuma.



Brooke Walz joins lunch after choir.

(photo by Hannah Emmert)

4-day school week is option for some areas

by Zion Miller

Last year, over 300 schools tried a new way of doing school. They only had four days of school per week; Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday.

They let students have Monday off to help manage their decreasing budgets, let students go to doctor appointments, visit colleges, do internships, and volunteer around their community. The results of this experiment were reduced absences and fewer disciplinary issues. It also gave them more money in their budget. Doing this saved one school in Georgia over \$800,000.

U.S. Secretary of Education,

Arne Duncan, said that a four day school week is a bad idea. Some districts have shot down attempts to change to a four day week because of this. However, teachers who have been a part of the four day week schedule say that kids are usually more focused after a three day weekend.

"I think the kids are more attentive [in class]. They know that there's not as much downtime, so we've got to get in there and do it," said Elanor Brown, a newly retired robotics teacher. This schedule has also allowed athletes a day where they can go to their events without missing any school.

The four day week has allowed for more staff development time as well. However, many schools have had teachers say that so much time is unnecessary. It cuts into the real learning time and the extra prep and training time does not make up for it. However, most test scores went up after using the four day schedule.

"It would be better for students because they would be rested up. For teachers it would be good if it allowed them to get more work done, and not just busy work. If it had practical purposes I would be for it. The school day would need to be longer though," said Mr. Korver, 8th social studies teacher.

Schools explore year-round options

by Morgan Schulz

The debate has been going on for a while about whether schools should have year-round school. In the United States, around 3,181 school districts have year-round schooling. Around 10% of children in public school are enrolled in year-round schools.

Year-round schooling has advantages, but it also has its disadvantages. One of the advantages is that there are smaller class sizes so each student is given more attention. While a disadvantage is year-round schools have very high utility bills because their school days are longer.

"I don't think we should have year-round school because children should have time to just be kids," said Sophia Steenhoek.

Year-round schooling first began in the 1800s. It first appeared in urban areas because children were not tied into farming schedules and work. The first cities that had year-round school were Chicago, Boston, Washington D.C, Cleveland, Buffalo, and Detroit. Since then, Vermont has dropped year-round schooling.

Year-round schooling came about because some school board

members wanted school to last longer. They wanted this because they thought over kids having really long summers after every school year then the teachers had to spend half of the next school year reviewing. So if they had year-round schooling they wouldn't have the really long summer. Yet year-round schools still have a summer, though it is a lot shorter than those of typical schools.

Year-round schools still go to school 180 days a year, which is the same amount that other schools go to school a year.

The Midway 9

Students plan for high school

by Tyler Hillman

Over three million students graduate from middle school each year in the U.S. Many of them are afraid about making their transition from middle school to high school. In this article, tips will be given on how to make that transition quicker, easier, and more enjoyable.

Experts say a first step in making high school more enjoyable is staying true to oneself. Many students will find the urge to try to fit in. Although that urge may look like a good decision, it's not. If someone associates with people with common traits, they will most likely have more fun and stay true to themselves. This may not apply to all students, but it is a tip for those who are having difficulty enjoying the high school experience.

Students at Pella Middle School have used the program ihaveaplaniowa.org. The program helps a student connect interests to job clusters. The program also tries to connect ones passions into choosing between job clusters. The program helps with mapping out one's four year plan and

what classes are necessary to succeed with the plan. I Have A Plan Iowa also shows degrees that are associated with your job cluster. After choosing that degree, the program will show someone which colleges offer certain degrees. Students have found this program very helpful in planning for high school.

"To prepare for high school I am signing up for classes and I am going to study hard in order to get good grades. I will also be training for sports," says Kelcey Blommers.

One of the main things that students need to focus on is time management when they are participating in extracurricular activities.

Another step that would lead one to find people with similar characteristics, is to get involved. Whether it be a club, such as chess club, or getting involved in a sport, such as baseball. When someone becomes involved in activities they meet new people and gain experiences that they can learn from for the future.

Bellara Huang says, "I've tried to choose the classes I feel like I will

enjoy the most and learn from the most." She also stated, "I want to go to a good college and have a successful future."

That is why she is taking valuable time in planning out her classes and extracurricular activities.

Teachers have also been preparing us for high school. In social studies our failing forward unit was based on preparing us for high school and the future beyond that. Teachers have also been preparing us by showing the flexibility and responsibility that is needed in high school. This can be shown by docking points for simply not putting a name on a paper. Dedicated teachers want us to succeed and will help us do that by instilling good study and work habits in our classes.

The last and probably the most important way to succeed in high school is to get good advice from upper class men who have already experienced the classes themselves. They can give one first hand knowledge on what classes to take and not to take.

Students shocked by the spring weather



The dramatic spring weather shows the true personality of Iowa. On Friday, May 3, the town of Pella experienced measurable snow for Tulip Time. Tulip Time was affected strongly because of the dramatic change in weather. Only two out of six parades were held, and many other outside activities were canceled.

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Sophia Steenhoek

10 Gaining Ground

Korver receives hip replacement

by Elisabeth Jansen

In April, eighth grade social studies teacher Karl Korver received hip replacement at Mercy Hospital in Des Moines.

Korver stated that he is recovering well and is gaining more and more strength everyday. According to Korver's doctor, the time that he will return to school is undecided at this point, but they are estimating anywhere from three to five weeks.

Korver goes through ten physical therapy exercises every day, "Two of them make me want to cry!" said Korver.

The physical therapy has been helping Korver gain back his strength. He started out not being able to stand on one foot for more than one second and would have to use two crutches. He can now get around with one crutch, but his balance is still quite bad. Korver was able to sit down for the first time without

pain after the surgery within two weeks.

Korver reported that he enjoys and misses sharing life with



Mr. Daniels, substitute for Mr. Korver, helps a student with homework.

(photo by Kara De Bruin)

all the students everyday, he loves the joy of all the students he gets to see everyday. He misses everyone very much, and can't wait to get back.

Matt Daniels is a long term

sub for Korver. Jordan Rempe, an eighth grade student, said, "Its better than having lots of little subs, like a different one each week." Daniels did student teaching at Pella in the fall, along with coaching Pella football. He is a Central graduate and participated in football and rugby there.

Having Korver gone affects both students and staff members. "He is a get-up-and-go kind of person and you can always tell when he is gone", says Carrie Blommers, middle school librarian.

It's a big change for the students as well. "I had gotten into a routine with Mr. Korver, and it's kind of hard to change now," says Rempe. Korver is missed by many students and teachers, but Daniels is starting to fit in quite well with the Pella staff.

Joy Drive raises funds, awareness

by Ciara Buchheit

This year during basketball season, the eighth grade girls basketball team wanted to do a project that would make a difference for others. After hearing a presentation about doing a "Joy Drive", which was started by a cousin of Emma's, the basketball team knew that this idea was the perfect fit.

Jessica Joy Rees, as a twelve year old, started something called JoyJars. She was diagnosed with pediatric cancer in 2011. Their mission for these JoyJars is to encourage kids to never ever give up, assist families

to never ever give up (NEGU), rally friends and communities to NEGU, mobilize celebrities and athletes to help kids NEGU, and to educate the World on Pediatric Cancer.

"The JoyJars have now become a recognized symbol of hope, joy, and love in over 200 Children's Hospitals, 175 Ronald McDonald Houses, and 11 countries," the Negu organization website said.

Alice Lickteig said, "It's an amazing feeling to give back to other kids."

The basketball team decided to put on their JoyDrive during the parent teacher conferences to help get the attention of parents walking into and out of the school.

Maggie Showman said "I had a fun experience helping kids and sending gifts to kids who need them."

After setting up for two nights, they made a total of 200 dollars and 7 boxes of toys to be shipped to the Joy Factory in California.

Even though Jessie has passed away, her legacy still lives on.



This edition of the paper has been brought to you by the 4th quarter publications staff: (L to R)

Sophia Steenhoek, Tess Roorda, Jarod Martens, Kara De Bruin, Jenny Wieser, Hannah Emmert, Kiara Schnoebelen, Alice Lickteig, Ani Tangellapalli, Sarah Yoder, Treyton Brown, Elisabeth Jansen, Cassie Cairney, and Dallas Brockway.

Lyons's class achieves national recognition

by Ridge McGinley

Pella Middle School

announced that they received national recognition for Project Lead the Way's Gateway to Technology program that has been offered since 2012. Project Lead the Way (PLTW) is the nation's leading provider of STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) education and exists to prepare students for the real world through problem-solving techniques. Students apply what they learn in math and science class to real-life technology and engineering problems and projects.

Susan Lyons, teacher partnered with Project Lead the Way at Pella, said, "The beauty of PLTW is that our kids get to experience how a formula they learned in math applies to a real project. In class, there are no lectures - kids are building, developing, and creating. That is the kind of hands-on experience that will engage more students in fields that they might otherwise not consider."



Students working on the robot to make a compatible code and make the robot the ability to move.

(by Mrs. Knight)

Pella Middle School partners with PLTW to get students more involved in possible fields regarding engineering and technology. These fields are critical to the United States' competition in a global economy. According to the National Business Roundtable, for America to remain competitive in the world economy, the country needs to be graduating 400,000 mathematics, science, engineering, and technology four-year degrees annually, yet in recent years the United States has only graduated around 265,000. Project Lead the Way is offering students a foundation to college and success in these areas Cameron McGinley, who has a four year degree in engineering, says, "What Project Lead the Way is doing is great. Hopefully through their programs our country will keep up to date with the world economy."

Mobile technology affects students

by Ani Tangellapalli

Students are getting more involved with mobile technology in these recent years. Many middle school students have handheld devices or have cell phones that can browse the web. Students have access to information instantly and they use this as an advantage in school for homework assignments or projects. Also they are connected with their parents through email and text.

Scott Tjeerdsma, seventh grade math teacher, said that students are able to communicate with teachers easily if they have

questions on their homework through their phone through email instantly.

"Students can use their cellphones and other mobile technology very effectively. They have a very powerful computer in their hands anywhere and can find it very helpful on homework and other projects," said Tjeerdsma.

However, mobile technology can also harm users. Mobile technology has intertwined social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter. People can stay connected with their friends. In addition, it has added a new type

of bullying, cyber bullying. Cyber bullying is a really harmful type of bullying using the internet to post embarrassing, harmful content about a victim. Victims of cyber bullying show distrust in people and loneliness.

On the other hand, the internet is not the only way mobile technology can cause harm. It can lead to physical problems as well. A study said that kids with extensive cell phone use have increased restlessness with more careless lifestyles. Nonetheless, cellphones and devices keep children updated with new trends.



Students use their phones and computers to conduct research.

(photos by Ani Tangellapalli)

Eighth graders read stories to elementary students

by Kara De Bruin

On April 11, the eighth grade students at Pella Middle School got the opportunity to read the children's stories they created to a new audience. The students had been working on writing their own original children's stories since before spring break. They headed to Lincoln or Madison to read to the kindergarten through third grade students. The eighth grade students were put into groups of three or four. Then they were given the opportunity to write about whatever they agreed upon. Stories ranged from zoo animals to candy and trolls to Smurfs. Then they had to get their story to fit on the twenty-one pages and come up with pictures for each page.

"I enjoyed coming up with pictures and sentences that they (elementary students) can understand and how the pictures goes with it," said Marlen Ramirez

an eighth grade student.

After the stories were written, students with younger siblings had first say about which school their group would visit. The elementary schools, Madison and Lincoln, invited the students to read to them. Kindergarten through third grade students spent the morning listening to all the different stories.

"I enjoyed the stories because we got to listen to seven stories then go to recess and only have a little math," said Nathan, a first grader who listened to the stories.

From 8:30 to 10:00 the groups went from classroom to classroom sharing what they had written. "I have students write their stories to get the opportunity to have an audience of a different age than normal," said LuAnn DeHaan, the eighth grade English teacher. Many students enjoyed reading

their stories and came back with different tales of what the students did or said while they were reading.

Writing and reading original children's stories has been a part of eighth grade for quite a while. Some students can remember listening to the eighth graders when they were young. This is a tradition that many look forward to and will continue for many years to come.



Eighth graders read to Mrs.

Vaverka first grade class.

(photo by Tess Roorda)

Holmes and Lovell create winning writings

by Hannah Cutler

Many entered, but only a few would win. The Three Rivers Reading Council's Annual Poetry and Writing Contest is a chance for kids in kindergarten through twelfth grade to express their creativity and originality for all to see, and this year Pella students shone.

Each year, the Iowa Reading Association sponsors and judges this local creative contest. The creative writings are judged on continuity,

creativity and originality, whether it has a clearly defined plot and developed story elements, and technical mechanics. The poems are judged by the interest stimulated, response evoked, creativity and originality, conciseness of vocabulary in creating an image, the rhythm of the poem, and spelling-unless the odd spelling is for effect and appearance. The top three writings from each grade are rewarded. The second and

first place people both get certificates, the first place person reads his or her work at a reception in their honor and move on to the state level contest. This year Pella had first place winners in both seventh and eighth grade.

"I just love writing, that's why I entered. I didn't really expect to win," says Elizabeth Lovell. The two girls, Elizabeth Lovell and Mandolin Holmes both got first in their categories. Elizabeth was first in the seventh grade creative writing category with her story "Falling Down." Mandolin won both the eighth grade creative writing and poetry. Her writing was entitled "Silence" and her poem "Oversized Pants." The two girls went to a reception and read their works for an audience on March 18 at Pella Christian.

"It was a lot of fun," said Mandolin Holmes, "but it was kind of odd how everyone's story was light and funny, and the poems were serious. My story was serious and my poem silly." Both girls thoroughly enjoyed both the writing and the presenting and are excited about the next stage of the competition.



Mandolin Holmes won creative writing and poetry. Elizabeth Lovell won creative writing.

Students raise money for causes

by Kiara Schnoebelen

Every year Mrs. Schulz has her 7th graders raise money for good causes. Mrs. Schulz feels good about how they did with raising the money.

This year's 7th graders have the record for raising the most money. They raised a total of \$2,195. The students raise the money by problem solving and working together. The students raise the money for a global cause, a domestic cause, a local cause, and something for the school. Then the students can vote to find something they want to do with the rest of their money.

Mrs. Schulz has no part in raising the money because this is strictly a student driven project. The only thing Mrs. Schulz does is to help distribute the money out to the places students have chosen to donate their money.

This year the causes students have decided to donate to is \$450 for Many Hands For Haiti, \$250 to Red Cross, \$250 to St. Judes Hospital, \$200 to the Pella Sports Complex, \$200 for Marion County's Habitat

For Humanity, and \$200 to Pella's Food Shelf. For themselves the students decided to spend \$325 for an African drummer and \$320 for a dance and games which will take place in the last few weeks of school.

Mrs. Brand, a volunteer for Many Hands For Haiti, is very happy about the 7th graders donating to a cause that will have a global impact. Mrs. Brand says the money will help greatly. 90 elementary kids will be able to go to school and have a meal at school every day. When the money is needed the employees will quickly transfer the money through a bank. The idea of raising money is a great cause and it can greatly impact many people. Curtis Ware, a 7th grade student, wanted to go to the pool with the money left over. Since there is a dance and games, instead, he's not as excited. Journey Reynolds didn't know what she wanted to do with the money the 7th graders earned. When she voted she didn't know what to vote for. To earn

the money they work at a concession stand set up at basketball games.

It's an amazing thing that kids can take time to raise money to greatly impact people they don't know. Even though it's a school project, it still makes many differences. The impacts students can make are remarkable.



Mr. Tim Brand from Many Hands for Haiti talks about the organization.

(photo by Rachael Meinders)



Mrs. Belding helps raise money for Hoops for Heart.

(photo by 3rd quarter publication student)

Students present different cultures

by Jenny Wieser

There are a lot of different cultures in our world today, but people are not certain about how many there are. This is due to the fact that these social entities are not always distinct enough to clearly warrant their being considered as a separate group. Also, people aren't certain about how many independent countries there are in our world today. Many sources offer different answers.

The 7th Grade Culture Fair provides a cultural experience for 7th grade students and creates a learning environment that comes alive as the students learn about countries from all over the world. They then display some of the things they learned through story boards and artifacts.

The fair also provides opportunities for students to learn from each other. They teach each other about their country, and gain new knowledge on countries they have never heard of before. At Pella Middle School there have been twelve culture fairs. This

year the fair will get set up on Tuesday, May 14. The fair open house will be Thursday, May 16 from 5:30-7:00 P.M.

There were more than 150 cultures for the students to research. They could request a country if they had a good reason, but if not they would draw a country out of a box. The students have been doing a lot of different things to get ready to present their country at the Culture Fair. They had to write a research paper on their country. They also got maps of their country to put on their story boards.

Maddie Canfield, a seventh grade student, said, "I enjoy learning about a country a lot. I am learning a lot about my country. I am very excited for the culture fair. It is going to be a very fun night, and I'm excited to see what everyone does."

Students are given requirements for their boards that they are graded. They also have to complete two different projects. Mrs. Kristin Schulz, 7th grade social

studies teacher, said, "I love seeing all the things students put together. I learn new things from students all the time. It's really fun to see how excited students are once the fair is up and how proud they are of their displays. I also really enjoy talking to former students. All of them remember the fair and what their fair country was. That's why I continue to do it. It's a memorable event for students."



Students work hard to prepare for culture fair. (photo by 3rd quarter publication student)

Pella middle school gets a hydroboost

by Sarah Yoder

“The Halsey Taylor Hydroboost provides a rapid fill of water to quench thirst and reduce plastic bottle waste in the environment! Ideal for education, fitness clubs, healthcare and hospitality,” said by Halsey Taylor on the official Hydroboost website.

With Pella Middle School going green, receiving a Halsey Taylor Hydroboost station was an efficient way to save plastic water bottles from landfills. The Halsey Taylor Hydroboost is an environment friendly creation and has many benefits. It helps control paper cup waste, expensive bottle services, messes from floor-standing coolers, and it is easy to install and maintain.

Pella High School installed a Halsey Taylor Hydroboost station near the office at the beginning of the 2012-13 school year. When the high school bought a Hydroboost station, they got one free. The old water fountain by the middle school gym was needing many repairs so the high school gave the free Hydroboost station for them to try. The Hydroboost station was installed right after spring break and has benefited many people since.

Seventh grader Chloe Van Vliet said, “I am able to fill up my water bottle quicker and more full now, unlike before when the bottle was only filled up half way.” The Hydroboost station is very easy to use and has an efficient

design. The station is made to fill bottles fast and have the least amount of splashing.

The Hydroboost has a sensor which is set on a 20 second timer to fill water bottles.

Once one puts the bottle on the holder, the machine fills the bottle up by itself needing no touch to complete the task. The Hydroboost’s fill rate is 1.1-1.5 gallons per minute, which is more than double the time of a normal water fountain.

P.E. teacher Mrs. Belding said, “I think it is a great, efficient way to fill up a water bottle. It is quicker and much easier than trying to fill one with an old style water fountain.”

One feature the Hydroboost exhibits is that it indicates in the right hand corner the number of plastic bottles that have been saved from landfills. Another quality the Hydroboost has is it shows when the filter needs to be cleaned; a red light means it needs to be cleaned.

The main benefit of Hydroboost stations is that it keeps many plastic water bottles out of landfills. Mr. Manning said, “Everyone benefits from this water fountain, students directly, but everyone. We are helping eliminate water bottles in landfills too.”

As time goes on the station will have saved thousands of water bottles. The high school had their Hydroboost station installed at the beginning of the

year, and they have already saved 14,515 plastic water bottles from landfills (as of April 9, 2013). The number 14,515 bottles saved is 20 to 21 bottles per person. Pella Middle School has saved 935 plastic bottles (as of April 19).

This is an example of what schools around the country do to help make the world a better place. Anyone interested in writing a grant to get a second Hydroboost station for the middle school can contact Mr. Manning for more details.



Zion Miller efficiently fills his water bottle before going to class. (photo by Ani Tangellapalli)

Eighth graders launch balloon into atmosphere

by Rachael Meinders

The near space balloon launch helped eighth graders learn more about Earth’s atmosphere.

Mr. Boots and his eighth grade science classes prepared for the near space balloon launch during their third and fourth quarter. Students learned about the process and the necessary steps of the balloon launch in class with Mr. Boots and Mike Morgan.

Tatyana Khapochkina said, “This experiment is very interesting. It provides us with a different way to learn about the atmosphere without sitting down and reading out of a textbook. Going out and doing an experiment is a fun and easy way to learn.”

In the spring, a 7-foot-diameter, helium and hydrogen balloon

was launched up into the sky at Lincoln Elementary School. Along with the balloon, a microcomputer and sensors were attached to the balloon inside of a tinfoil lined box. The sensors measured temperature, pressure, and humidity every thirty-seconds to give ample information for students.

After the balloon was launched, a group of volunteers from eighth grade joined Mr. Morgan to go chase the balloon. The balloon was located through a GPS attached to the balloon. Once the balloon was caught, data was transferred into a readable graph with data collected by the microcomputer. Students gathered their data from the spreadsheet to answer their questions about near space.

Throughout the process, the goal of this near space balloon launch project was to help students use the scientific method to learn and have fun.



A group of PC highschool students and Pella middle school students line up their expriements for launch. (photo by Elisabeth Jansen)

Around the 15

8th grade party



Kiki Pingel enjoys herself on the dance floor during eighth grade party *(photo by Jenny Wieser)*



Ryan Van Maanen and Tyler Hillman get their gamble on. *(photo by Jenny Wieser)*



Allison Musgrove, Brooke Walz, and Dakota Curtis take a break from dancing. *(photo by Elisabeth Jansen)*



Kloe Lambert, Ciara Buchheit, Kiki Pingel, and Aimee Dieleman getting crazy on the dance floor. *(photo by Elisabeth Jansen)*



Donovan Holterhaus entertains a group of boys on the dance floor. *(photo by Jenny Wieser)*



Nicole Schnebbe and Sydney Wiskus dance together. *(photo by Jenny Wieser)*



Tess Roorda and Molly Rietveld get ready to play dodgeball. *(photo by Elisabeth Jansen)*



The school is transformed into a footloose dancing barn. *(photo by Jenny Wieser)*

Movie Review: *The Princess Bride*

by Lizzy Pettit

Have you ever watched The Princess Bride? It is an old movie from 1987 that is a perfect example of a fairy tale for everyone. Many people after just looking at the title judge and say that it is a chick flick. They don't even give it a chance. Some people just listen to other people's opinions and don't give it a try. This is actually a very good movie and they shouldn't judge the movie by its cover.

The movie is about a grandfather reading his favorite story to his picky grandson. The story is about the most beautiful woman in the kingdom, Buttercup, and her farm hand, Westley. She likes ordering Westley to perform chores for her. Westley's only answer is "As you wish." Eventually Buttercup realizes he really means "I love you", and she admits her love for him.

Westley soon leaves to seek his fortune so that they can marry. She receives word that Westley's ship was attacked by the Dread Pirate Roberts, who is notorious for leaving no victim alive. Five years later, believing Westley to be dead, Buttercup gets engaged to Prince Humperdinck, heir to the throne of Florin. Before the wedding, Buttercup is kidnapped by a trio of outlaws.

They are pursued by two parties: one consists of Prince Humperdinck and a number of soldiers; the other, a single masked man in black who claims to be the Dread Pirate Roberts. You'll have to watch the movie to find out why she was kidnapped, why the Dread Pirate Roberts was following her, and how the story ends.

There are many people that will tell you that it is a chick flick, but they have never watched it. Even the boy in the beginning of the story thinks that, but he gave it a chance and liked it. This book is filled with fencing, fighting, torture, revenge, giants, monsters, chases, escapes, true love, and miracles. Some people may not like it because there are multiple murders and even torture. However, the scenes are not gory and they are

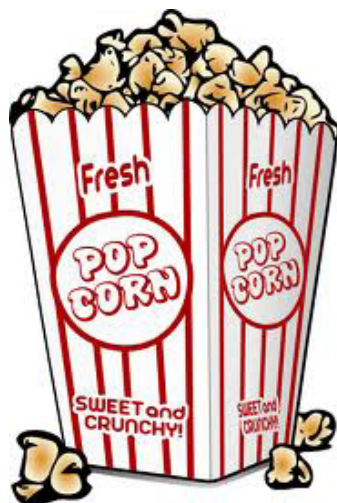
short, they are also much less violent than some of today's movies.

Next, some people may not like it because there is a part where a dead man comes back to life, however there are no zombies or brain eating. The person who comes back to life plays a key role in the movie and it is a necessary scene.

Third, some people may not like it because there is sorcery and magic, and I understand that some people hate that, but it doesn't play a key role in the movie, and they only mention it once or twice. Also, some people may not like it because there is attempted suicide in it, but the suicide never actually happens, and she never even comes close to actually doing it.

Some people may not like it because of the Rats of Unusual Size, and if rats creep you out, you may not want to watch the forest scenes. These are all good reasons not to like it, but some are also reasons you may like it.

Everyone watches movies based on what other people tell them, what the reviews say, and what they want to see. Your watching this movie is not something I can greatly influence. However, I can tell you what it is about and maybe you will like what you hear. Whatever type of movies you like, or your opinion based on this report, I hope you give this movie a chance. Just try it, maybe you'll like it.



Resturant Review: The Cheesecake Factory

by Hannah Emmert

Have you ever been to the Cheesecake Factory in Des Moines, Iowa? Well, you have to go! The Cheesecake Factory is a great place to go to for lunch or dinner. They have everything there to eat from pasta to grilled cheese sandwiches. You can't believe your eyes once you walk through the door.

The whole room glows with light and color. The service is great and everyone has a happy, warm welcome for you when you walk in. Once you have ordered your food, they bring out fresh bread for you to eat until your food arrives. They ask if everything is alright and tell you how long it will be until your food is ready. They have food options for everyone. They have things for people who like salad, meat, pasta, fish, and sandwiches. They even have a kids menu, so you can bring your children along. They serve the food very elegantly. They serve your food in fancy plates and bowls.

They come by every once in awhile to ask how you like the food and to tell them if you experienced any problems. If you are someone who has been there before, you know you have to save room for dessert. It's called the Cheesecake Factory for a reason. They have over 30 different kinds of cheesecake there for you to buy. You can't even count how many of them they make! You can eat it there or take it to go. Either way you eat it, you will be satisfied.

The nice thing is that they let you stay and talk afterward and don't make you leave. It may take you a couple of trips there before you get sick of going there, because every time it is a new experience. You can also just go there for the cheesecake. They will just give you the dessert menu and you can order from that. If you don't like cheesecake, thats okay. They have so many other choices for you to choose from. If you are looking for a new place to eat, you should definitely go to the Cheesecake Factory.

In April the eighth grade students had a poetry unit. They learned about lyric and narrative poems, along with many other styles. Below is Cameron Blom's narrative poem.

The Mountain and the Bird

by Cameron Blom

The day was dawning as the sun's rays
swept through the land.

The clouds were passing and the sky
was brightening.

As the sun rose it made the mountains
glow and it broke the mist.

The land was radiant, and it looked
like a glowing spark in the receding
darkness.

As the darkness was swept away, the
sun fully revealed the splendor of the
mountainous terrain.

Its land was filled with valleys, lakes,
mountains, trenches, tundra, forests,
birds, and grazing animals.

To the animals, this was a daily
routine, but one wise old bird stopped
to watch this amazing event take
place.

The bird saw the sun rise and chase
away the darkness, and the bird saw
the land awake in the golden dew of
the sun's light.

The bird saw the sky change into a
rainbow of colors, and the bird saw the
woods come alive.

The bird heard the creeks and rivers
rush through their paths, and the bird
heard and saw the animals awake and
start their day.

The bird was sitting on a mountaintop
when he saw all of this happen.

The animals took the simple beauty for
granted, but he was wise and watched
the magical transformation every day.

After the sun rose, the bird flew off
the mountain and glided through the
forests and the valleys, swept over
the mountains and over the lakes, and
dived into the trenches.

The bird saw things no other creature
saw, and he knew things that no other
creature knew.

All the creatures and beasts of the
mountainous lands thought the bird a
fool, when he was really the wisest of
them all.

As the bird flew, he saw murder and
death, cowardliness and revenge.
For the mountainous land was dark

and vengeful because the creatures of
the land had not heeded the wise bird's
advice.

Therefore the land was dark and was
soon to be overcome by its own evil.

The bird had seen everything and
knew what was happening and what
could become, but the glory and
majesty of the sunrise reminded him
of the land's past and their creator
God who created them for good, and it
gave him hope.

God had given him hope through the
sunrise, that darkness could be chased
away by light and land and creatures
could have a new beginning.

Because of this newfound hope, the
bird set out to try and save his land.

As the bird flew over the land, the
animals saw him and scoffed at him,
for they had seen him doing this
every morning and knew that he was
watching them.

They had no love or care for the
wise bird, but they all noticed that
something was different about the bird
this morning, that he seemed more
alive.

They returned to their eating, fighting,
and hiding (this was because of
the darkness in the land where the
predators ruled, and almost every
animal always lived in fear) and
ignored the bird.

But one sly fox saw the liveliness
in the bird, and called to his other
devious companions.

"Come," he said, with a evil grin on
his face, "let's follow that old wise
bird and catch him for breakfast. He's
been up on that mountain too long,
and its towering height has made that
bird think that he's better than all of
us. He must be taken care of."

Now, the fox's companions were not
as sly and cunning as this devious old
fox, and they followed him without a
moment's hesitation.

But the fox had a bigger plan than just
a nice breakfast.

He was the one that had twisted the
land with his deceit and lies, and the

wise old bird was his rival.

He wanted to control the land, and
he thought that if the land became
overcome with its own evil, he could
rule; and the only way to rule was to
rid the land of the wise old bird.
As he led the other foxes behind the
bird, he sent his some of them out to
alert the other animals to his plan for
the wise old bird's demise.

But unbeknownst to the cunning fox,
the bird was well aware of his plan, for
he could see their sly procession out of
the corner of his eye.

Then the bird swooped and dived, and
he gave them a good chase without
letting them know that he knew their
plan.

Soon, every creature and beast from
the dark land was giving chase; there
were bears, panthers, chipmunks,
marmots, foxes, wolves, birds, deer,
horses, otters, even fish, and more.
As soon as the bird knew that he had
every creature in the land following
him, he picked a high ledge on a
mountainside, close enough for the
animals to hear, but too far away to be
captured.

The animals all gathered around,
growling, barking, neighing, and
howling.

Then the bird spoke.

What will happen next? Will the
animals listen to the bird and heed his
advice to save their lives, or will the
fox once again weave his lies of deceit
and shadow the land in darkness?

That is for you to decide.

Which path do we choose in our own
life, splendorous light or deceitful
darkness? And who do we listen to and
follow in our lives, the smooth-talking
liars who tell us what we want to hear,
or the wise who tell the truth?

"And if the light you think you have
is actually darkness, how deep that
darkness is!"

-Matthew 6:23 NIV

Maximizing Life's Opportunities...

(photo by Ani Tangellapalli)

“Over-sized pants”

by Mandolin Holmes

This is one of Holmes' creative writings which won in the Three Rivers Writing contest.

I wish I could be in the circus, so that I could wear funny clothes,

With oversized pants, I'd exude romance, and people would adore my red nose.

Oh, I would love to be in the circus, I would walk on a tightrope.

My feet twist and turn, I'd get an awful rope burn, but I'd be more famous than the Pope.

My heart's desire is to be in the circus, I would dance and play all the day,

I'd have a goofy smile, and at least for a while, in a happy mood I would stay.

If I could only be in the circus, I would make people laugh till they cried.

Not the slightest disgrace, would cross my face, as I threw tomatoes and pies.

But alas I cannot be in the circus, I lack humor, or talent on stage.

In my mind I may dream, of a circus theme, but the closest I'll get is this page.

School Spirit



School Spirit

(photo by Cassie Cairney)



School Spirit

(photo by Sophia Steenhook)



School Spirit



School Spirit

School Spirit

