

► Connections

Community and Staff Newsletter - March 2014



The thrill of March Madness is alive and well in Neenah with exhilarating tournament runs by both our boys and girls basketball teams! The school spirit displayed at these events by fans young and old is second to none and

certainly raises the excitement in our schools and community after a long, cold winter.

The sound of our tremendous pep band playing the school song gives me goosebumps every time and it's always fun to see the hard work of our dance team during their halftime performance. Seeing students from all grades in our District filling the stands and united in their red and white brings about a tremendous amount of Neenah pride.

Admittedly, sometimes we put too much emphasis on sports, but there are also times athletics can unite a school and a community. There's been an undeniable energy in our buildings the past few weeks and it's so neat to have people in our community talking about the success of our teams at coffee shops, grocery stores and barbershops. We will continue to support our students in their activities while maintaining a proper perspective of where it falls in the educational framework.

I'd be remiss if I didn't salute our state champion girls powerlifting team and state boys diving champion, Draven Feustel. Their accomplishments are just as noteworthy and add to the incredible success we experienced last fall.

Hopefully many of you will have the opportunity to travel to Madison this weekend to cheer on our boys at the state tournament. It would be great to see a big turnout for our girls sectional game on Thursday in Appleton as well. If you can't make it, hopefully you can support both of our teams by watching on TV or listening on the radio. This is such a fun time of year and, even better, spring break is just around the corner! Go Rockets!

Dr. Mary Pfeiffer
Superintendent of Schools

► Hoover Students Learn Basics of Engineering During STEM Day



Students from Hoover Elementary School had a unique opportunity to learn the basics of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) from Neenah High School students and engineers from Bemis Company, Inc. on March 7. The event featured a welcome from Bemis Chairman and CEO Henry Theisen.

The all-day event engaged students in hands-on problem solving skills, engineering design process and teamwork.

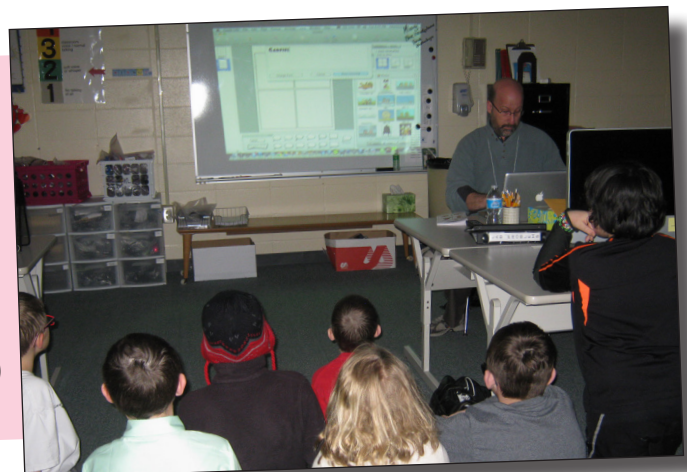
Hoover students were divided into seven groups and rotated through the following stations that were designed by Neenah High School students:

- **Lift Challenge** – create a machine to lift a tennis ball the highest
- **Bridge Challenge** – build a bridge between two desks that holds the most weight
- **Catapult Challenge** – create a launching device to shoot a pompom the farthest
- **Tower Challenge** – build the tallest tower which is also stable upside down
- **Boat Challenge** – build a boat that will hold the most weight without sinking
- **Bemis Technology Demonstration** – learn about the science of flexible packaging by creating a candy wrapper and shrink wrap labels for water bottles (donated by Copps)
- **At-Home Learning** – experiment with different engineering apps on iPads

The kindergarten through fifth grade students rotated through seven stations.

Every participating Hoover student received a t-shirt and souvenirs from the technology demonstration. Awards were presented to the top team in each of the five challenges. The high school students also had lunch with the Bemis engineers.

Students in grades 3-5 from around the District came to Lakeview Elementary on March 4 for a "Graphic Novels and Beyond" event. Students experienced the joy of reading while creating artwork and designing comics as inspired by the classic and popular novels. Mr. Todd Hintzman (right) was one of the presenters.



► Around the District

► Neenah Students Featured in Fox Valley Glass Show

The Fox Valley's best high school glass art exhibits are currently on display at the Bergstrom-Mahler Museum of Glass in Neenah throughout the month of March.

Neenah had three students win awards at the show. Nicole Stefenson's glass mosaic, *The Flower*, won the Oshkosh Fine Arts Association Art Achievement Award, while Alex Wendt's flame worked glass, *Hangman*, and Andy Charniak's cement and glass, *Chaotic Spiral*, each won honorable mention awards.



The maintenance staff at Neenah High School helps assemble a mural created by the Freshman Seminar classes in the hallway of the Conant wing. The mural includes tiles created by freshman students with all of their names on them. The tiles were glazed into a large tree and landscape, including many birds, fish, and other animals. The words "Neenah With Pride" are embedded into the leaves and branches of the tree.



Hoover Elementary students celebrated Read Across America Week with a breakfast of green eggs and ham in honor of the Dr. Seuss book. The eggs were donated by Pick 'n Save and staff did all the cooking and serving. Thanks to Amy Monka for coordinating the event.

► Coolidge Goes All Out to Promote Reading Week

A principal dressed and danced like a chicken, state legislators, community members and state tournament-qualifying basketball players read to students, and the hallways were decked out to promote reading. It was all part of Coolidge Elementary's activities during Read Across America Week.

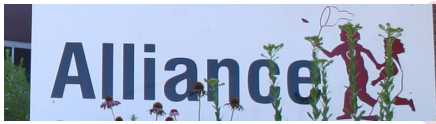
Principal April Keepers promised to wear a chicken suit and perform the chicken dance in classrooms if students met their reading goals for the week. Both sides held up their end of the deal and enjoyed some feathered fun on Friday. Meanwhile, State Senator Mike Ellis and State Representative Dean Kaufert visited the school and read to children. They were among many volunteers, parents and community members who contributed as the school put on a breakfast and a read-in three times during the week with family members and friends.



In addition, Coolidge welcomed 44 UW-Oshkosh education majors who collaborated during February to create art installations throughout the hallways. The partnership introduces UW-Oshkosh students to collaborative, alternative ways of working in studio art and gives them a unique opportunity to use their talents to delight the children with artwork during Read Across America Week. Coolidge teacher Rhonda Buchanan and UW-Oshkosh professor Mary Hoefflerle facilitated the partnership for the fifth straight year.

Other events during the week included spirit dress down days, trivia, Dr. Seuss related lessons in art, music, and wellness, a bookmark exchange featuring book suggestions from fifth graders, a book swap and a visit from Wisconsin Timber Rattlers' mascot Fang. The entire week was coordinated under the leadership of Coolidge teacher Debbie Rosera.

School-by-School



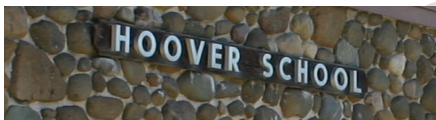
Several Alliance students have their artwork displayed at the District Administration building during the month of March. Congratulations to Braiden Blank, Taylor Kazik-Sieck, Elizabeth Jungwirth, Bethany Krostue, Brenna Freier, Anna Hallett and Grace Randall. Also, Alliance recently celebrated Montessori Week with a Pennies for Peace fundraiser to benefit the Children's Hospital.

Clayton had a variety of activities for Read Across America Week that included former staff members and veterans. Four former Clayton teachers came and read with the students last week and a veteran came to school to read. A former staff member also excited the students by dressing as the Cat in the Hat and reading Dr. Seuss books to the students.



Fourth and fifth graders at Coolidge were given the opportunity to participate in Trivia Night on March 7. Coolidge teachers sponsored teams and the teams used their research skills to find the answers to trivia questions. Teams also participated in several challenges and team building activities such as making banners, completing puzzles, alphabetizing things, decoding secret codes and making paper airplanes.

Neenah High School had two teams compete at the Wisconsin VEX Robotics State competition on Feb. 22 at Xavier High School. The team of Jordan Altekruze, Andrew Belot, Adam Burkett, Matt Karmann, Erik Metzger, Alex Mootz and Rob Schmidt placed 14th and won the "Think Award," while the team of Mitch Harter and Tyler Rupnow finished 31st.



Staff and students teamed up to set a Hoover record in the Jump Rope for Heart as they combined to raise \$4,458 for the American Heart Association during the month of February. Hoover also had record participation numbers with 122 staff and students taking part. Congratulations to all of the Hoover Huskies on their impressive achievement.

Horace Mann's student council recently held a fundraiser to benefit the local animal shelter. Students donated a dollar on four different days during the week of Feb. 24-27. The dollar went to buy an animal shelter bracelet, wear their pajamas to school, wear a hat to school and wear an adhesive mustache. Thanks to all who participated in this event.



Lakeview is participating in a "One Book, One School" program. Recently, all students were sent home with a copy of *Nim's Island*. Parents are asked to read a chapter of the book each night. Discussions about the book are taking place in classrooms and students are excited to find out what happens next each day. Twice per week, students are given a chance to answer questions about the chapters assigned.

Several Roosevelt classes were able to experience performances at the Fox Cities Performing Arts Center recently. The fifth graders, along with Alliance fourth and fifth graders, were able to see "Tao: Phoenix Rising" and kindergarten and first grade classes had the opportunity to see "The Ugly Duckling" and "The Tortoise and the Hare."



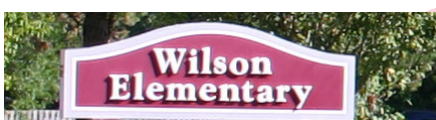
The middle school musical will have five shows of *Seussical, Jr.* coming up. The cast and crew includes over 100 students from Shattuck and Horace Mann. Shows are March 13-14 at 7 p.m., March 15 at 2 and 7 p.m., and March 16 at 2 p.m. in the Shattuck Auditorium. Tickets are \$5 each and can be purchased at the Shattuck office or at the door before each performance.

Spring Road students will have the opportunity to learn a variety of topics in the school's Career and Hobby Day on March 28. About 30 individuals will present a variety of careers and hobbies over the course of three 25-minute sessions. Also, Spring Road held its annual choir concert on March 11 in Pickard Auditorium. Congratulations to all on a wonderful event.



Taft students are invited to participate in the Movin' and Munchin' program to promote healthy eating and increased physical activity. A variety of activities and nutrition choices have point totals assigned to it and the points are added daily and weekly. For instance, going for a walk or jumping rope results in points along with eating fruit or avoiding soda. The program runs from March 3-31.

Tullar has begun a "One Book, One School" program where all students are reading *Nim's Island* with their families. Students do activities at school that correlate to this exciting book. Staff are also reading the book and offer lunchtime read alouds for students that don't have the ability to read at home. Books were funded through donations from the Tullar PTO, a Carol Tipler Grant and a Neenah Educational Foundation grant.



Wilson held a Dr. Seuss Spirit Week recently to promote Read Across America Week. Days included a pajama day for "The Sleep Book," a crazy socks day for "Fox in Socks" and a hat day for "Cat in the Hat." Students also wore jogging gear to promote "Reading jogs the mind" and were encouraged on the final day of the week to wear a shirt that contained as many words as possible.

► What's Happening

► Fifth Grade Test Approaching

During the first few weeks in April, all fifth graders will be given the opportunity to take a test to help determine if an acceleration to seventh grade math during their sixth grade year would be appropriate. This will be a challenging test designed to comprehensively measure computational math skills, problem solving and understanding of mathematical concepts.

The test is multiple choice and covers skills addressed in fifth grade. Those students who show a high level of mastery will be invited to take a short answer test that allows staff to see how well a student understands sixth grade skills and determine readiness to move on to seventh grade math. The testing will be completed within the month of April and results will be shared in early May. If parents have concerns, they should contact classroom teachers.

► Thanks to Our Unsung Heroes

There are lots of behind-the-scenes individuals who make significant contributions to our District, but perhaps none endured the winter like our operations and maintenance staff. This hard-working group had the task of keeping our entryways salted and clear while often working in sub-zero temperatures. Those working inside didn't have it easy either after a full day of wet shoes trampling through the hallways.

This group often has its hours dictated by Mother Nature and when there are issues in the middle of the night or a snowstorm hits, they are on call to make sure our buildings are safe and clean for our staff and students. It also doesn't end with winter as every season brings its own challenges.

When you see these individuals, be sure to thank them for all they do, especially after the most recent long, cold winter.

March-April 2014 School Calendar

March 18.....Wind Symphony Concert (Pickard), 7:30 p.m.
20.....Young People's Concert (Pickard), 9:30 a.m.
21.....End of 3rd Quarter - Early Dismissal Grades K-8
24-28No School - All Levels (Spring Recess)
April 8Rocket City Jazz Festival (Shattuck), 7:30 p.m.
10.....Classy Fiddles Concert (Shattuck), 7 p.m.
23.....Early Dismissal - All Levels (Professional Learning Day)
24-26NHS Spring Drama (Pickard)
25.....NHS Diversity Fair (Fieldhouse)



Community members assisted Neenah High School students in making financial choices at the annual Reality Fair on March 12. Students were given a monthly income and needed to visit various booths to pay expenses that come up during the month. At each booth they make the choices on how much they will spend and, in the end, they will find out if they have any money left.

► Basketball Teams Continue State Title Chases This Week



The boys and girls basketball teams were honored prior to their big week ahead at a pep assembly at Neenah High School on Wednesday.

The Neenah boys and girls basketball teams both continue their pursuits of state championships this weekend as the boys head to the state tournament in Madison and the girls look to earn a spot at state when they compete in sectionals.

The boys team will face Mukwonago on Friday at 8:15 p.m. at the Kohl Center. The winner will play for the state championship on Saturday at 8:15 p.m. Tickets are available at the gate at the Kohl Center. All games are televised on WACY Channel 32 (Cable channel 83 or 1013). Any Neenah games will be broadcast on WHBY 1150 AM.

The Neenah girls take on Oshkosh West on Thursday at 7:15 p.m. at Appleton North High School with the winner playing for the sectional title on Saturday at 1 p.m. at Stevens Point High School. The state tournament is March 22-23 in Green Bay. Thursday's game will be televised on Time Warner Cable Sports (Cable channel 32 or 1332). Go Rockets!