

NEWS



November 2017

A wild time

Stick horse barrel racing, a cow lasso and a tin can shootout were among the activities at the recent “Wild West-” themed Fall Family Literacy Night at Centerville-Abington Elementary School. Most of the teachers helped at the family event to allow parents to attend the event with their children. Principal Kelly VanWinkle and Sean Stevenson, assistant principal, were among the staff jailed for charges such as chewing gum and dancing in the hallways. National Honor Society members earned community service hours by volunteering at the event.

The Scholastic Book Fair was open and Centerville Public Library staff read aloud "Wild West" books. A photo booth was open for family photos. Games, activities, crafts, and food were free for students. Papa Johns provided pizza and DOT foods donated drinks, cookies and chips for the free event.

“We had a fabulous turnout,” said Mrs. VanWinkle. “It was a night filled with literacy, fun and food!”



Giving students

Hurricane help

As Casandra Kohn's fourth-graders read about hurricanes earlier this year, part of the school curriculum, it took on special meaning as hurricanes began hitting around the country.

"As a class we knew schools would need help, and I found a website that would pair a classroom with a classroom in need of support in Texas," Ms. Kohn explained. Her class, along with students in other classes, collected classroom supplies for two weeks.

Laurie Shadle's sixth-graders adopted Justin Tim's Texas class. He sent an email after he received the supplies.

"I was flabbergasted to see how many boxes were on my front porch when I got home today," he wrote, adding that he is grateful for the generosity of our local children. "I am very blessed to receive such a gift from people who are a thousand miles away with beautiful hearts."

Mrs. Shadle appreciates other teachers who encouraged their students to help out: Pam Cochran, Tiffany Leger, Teresa Downs, Denise Scalzo and Tonya Paxton. She said she shipped more than nine heavy boxes of supplies to Texas.

Patti Sharp's and Diane Luken's classes provided funds for a Houston classroom to purchase several books from Scholastic. In addition, Cheryl Oesterling's class will be purchasing books for its adopted Texas class for Christmas.

Little Bulldogs help big Bulldogs

Debbie Cox's preschool class started the school year off with units on friendship, kindness and peace. They took up the challenge of helping to secure a junior/senior high school Community in Schools representative. The littlest Bulldogs helped the big Bulldogs by collecting change in the Giving Jar. The collection grew by pennies and nickels. The children had a good time trying to lift the jar as it began to get heavier. On October 17, Becky Murray, executive director of CIS, came to the classroom to receive the heartfelt donation of \$138.80.

"The smallest acts of kindness can make change for the good," said Mrs. Cox.



New bike puts smile on student's face

Alfredo "Freddy" Calderon's bike was stolen from his front porch in July. Freddy, a junior, used the bike as his main source of transportation to school and work.

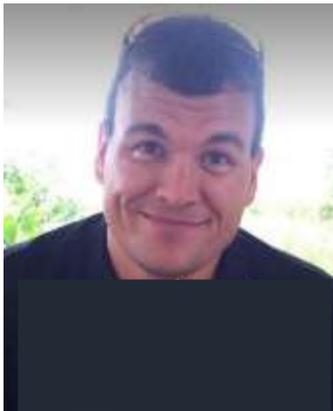
Senior Shaw Halcomb approached the football team captains about raising money to buy Freddy a new bike. The captains had a team meeting while Freddy was at band practice and spread the word about raising the money. Within two days the team had raised over \$250 to buy Freddy a nice bike and a chain and lock to keep it safe.

Freddy was a prop man for the high school band during the summer competitions. Coach Kyle Padgett said the football team went to Indianapolis to watch the band's final rehearsal before the state fair competition, and they surprised Freddy with the bike after the band completed a performance.

"It was a pretty cool moment, and there wasn't a dry eye in the area," said Coach Padgett, noting that the band and football team have had an incredible bond since that time. "Moments like this bridge whatever polarization and divides our society creates."



New teachers have local connections



Keith Morey is the new eighth-grade science teacher. Before coming to Centerville, he held the same position at Richmond's Dennis Intermediate School.

Mr. Morey grew up in Richmond and graduated from Richmond High School. He earned a bachelor's and master's

degree from Earlham College.

Mr. Morey said things are going well.

"I'm adjusting to the block schedule and am really enjoying getting to know all of my students and coworkers," he said.



Antonio Fioritto is a new special education teacher, theatre director, and class of 2020 co-sponsor at Centerville Senior High School.

Prior to assuming these new positions, Mr. Fioritto held several other special education positions: Special Education Specialist in the Indianapolis Public Schools; a

special education director at Andre Agassi College Preparatory Academy in Las Vegas, Nevada; a special education teacher at Pinecrest Academy in Henderson, Nevada; and a special education co-director at Coral Academy of Science in Las Vegas.

Mr. Fioritto said he wanted to become a part of the Centerville community. He has family in the area, including a niece and cousin in the Western Wayne Schools and a nephew at Richmond High School.

"I am looking forward to the fall play, *The Pink Panther Strikes Again*, November 17 and 18, and the classes are going very well," said Mr. Fioritto. "The students, staff, and parents here have been very welcoming."



Katrina Harris is the new Life Skills teacher for students in junior and senior high school. She held the same position at Richmond High School, her alma mater. She has been a volunteer for Baby Genius, a program for young children, and she was a part of Pedals for People, a community project that involved the distribution of refurbished bikes to children and adults.



Ms. Harris is excited about what is going on at school.

"We run two small stores in the teachers' lounges, cook regularly, and are exploring our community with weekly field trips," she said, adding that it is a joy to see the steady growth of her students and the positive relationships that are being fostered.



Karli Heiderich, a 2005 Centerville Senior High School graduate, said it is great to be back in Centerville as the new junior high health teacher.

A graduate of Anderson University, Ms. Heiderich taught seventh- and eighth-grade health in Richmond at Dennis Intermediate School for the past five years. Prior to that position, she was a physical education teacher for two years in Kampala, Uganda.

Briundle Fletcher, another Centerville graduate, teaches eighth-grade U.S. History. Before assuming this position, he taught seventh-grade geography for two years at Test Middle School. Mr. Fletcher, who received his degree from Indiana University East, said he has always loved Centerville, and teaching at his alma mater was his dream job.



Therapy dog a “paws-itive” addition

Truman has taken on the role of therapy dog brilliantly, according to fifth-grade teacher Erica Tedder.

“He is a reward for several students throughout the day,” explained Mrs. Tedder. “One student starts the day with pictures of Truman on a chart. If that student still has Trumans left on his chart, he comes to play with him.” Mrs. Tedder said Truman loves to play ball and give kisses and hugs. He is trained to put gentle pressure with his head across the lap of students who are anxious. Some students simply like to lie on the floor and read to Truman.

Truman trained for the past two years with Indiana Canine Assistance Network (ICAN). Indiana Farm Bureau made that possible with its sponsorship. Other costs have been paid by volunteers, including Mrs. Tedder.

A letter written by Mrs. Tedder to introduce Truman went home to parents at the beginning of the school year.

“You may be wondering why I will be working in the school,” the letter (from Truman) stated. “Well, when a facility dog is involved, people, especially children, often respond more positively and enthusiastically. I can help students learn empathy, sharing and patience.”

Many parents have expressed their thankfulness for Truman’s presence in the classroom.

“He has definitely been a blessing for all the students who have been able to spend time with him,” said Principal Kelly VanWinkle. “He has really made a positive impact on our special needs students.”



\$10,000 grant to improve seventh-grade curriculum

A grant from the Monsanto America’s Farmers Grow Rural Education program is being used to bolster the STEM components (science, technology, engineering and math) of the existing curriculum for seventh-graders, according to teacher Bill Lewis, who secured the grant with assistance from Vicki DeMao, education consultant.

“For example, we have already purchased photogates for the RIMS (Race into Math and Science) race track, so that students can better evaluate the places on the track where their cars gain or lose speed, thus helping them to improve the design of their cars,” said Mr. Lewis. In addition, he will purchase equipment for the Wisconsin Fast Plants project, so students can evaluate the effect of acid rain on plant growth and seed production. “The changes to the curriculum are currently underway and will continue all school year and beyond to following years,” said Mr. Lewis.

Farmers may nominate rural public school districts for a grant of \$10,000 and \$25,000. The program, established in 2011, awards \$2.3 million in grants annually.

A panel of math and science teachers from ineligible counties reviews each application and selects finalists. An advisory council composed of farmer-leaders considers the merit of the application, need and community support to select the winning grant applications.



Principal Rick Schauss, teacher Bill Lewis and Monsanto representative Mike Dunluay with school board members Renee Westover, far left, and Susan Hamilton. At right are Tina and Kevin Kinsinger and Larry Hamilton, nominating farmers.

Model Legislature

Sophomore **Abigail Davis** believes a mandatory self-defense course should be included in high school physical education classes. This was the content of a bill Abigail wrote this year for consideration by the Indiana General Assembly, at least a student body that simulated that legislative body.

Each year area high school students participate in a simulation of the Indiana General Assembly as part of Eastern Indiana Model Legislature. The students write and debate bills like Abigail's, participate in political party organization and platform building, elect their party leadership, elect a governor and lieutenant governor, and learn parliamentary procedure.

In her story about Model Legislature in the high school newspaper, Katy Stewart noted that Superintendent Phil Stevenson has led the Centerville program for all the years the students have participated. She said the highlight of the program for many students each year is a trip to the Indiana Statehouse.

"Here students get as close as they can to becoming a true Indiana representative," she said, adding that the students get to sit in the representatives' desks and gain experience in debating in front of a crowd.

Seven other bills were written by Centerville students and signed into law this year:

A bill to require charter schools to meet the state average graduation rate in order to receive the same voucher as public schools. (Eiljah McCoy)

A bill to remove state taxes from paychecks to minors under the age of eighteen. (Jolie Rusznak)

A bill to punish mothers of any child born with opioid addiction with either a one year prison term or one year rehabilitation program. (Sydney Whitely)

A bill to establish harsher sentences for committing a hate crime because of a belief regarding ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, disability, or religion. (Corrin Dillon)

A bill to require non-profit charitable organizations to disclose the percentage of revenue spent on administrative cost and other expenses. (Derek Davis)

A bill to amend the Indiana Constitution Bill of Rights to secure the rights of the members of the homosexual and transgender community. (Parker Gray)

A bill to authorize the school cafeteria lunches to support local farmers and agriculture by using locally grown food in school lunches. (Kayla Newman)



The following Centerville students held leadership positions this year: Eli McCoy, Lt. Governor; Parker Gray, Most Outstanding Senate Democrat; Kayla Newman, Most Outstanding House Republican and Most Outstanding Committee Member; Julie Rusznak, Speaker of the House and Outstanding Committee Chair; Corrin Dillon, Most Outstanding Committee Member and Assistant Democrat Floor Leader; Hannah Scales, Assistant Democrat Floor Leader, Committee Chairperson and Most Outstanding Chair; Aubrey Davis, House Republican Leader, Committee Chairperson and Most Outstanding Committee Chair; Chloe Brown, Senate Republican Caucus Chairperson and Committee Chairperson; Katy Stewart, Outstanding Committee Chair; Grace Arndt, Outstanding Committee Chair; Hunter Doty, Outstanding Committee Chair and Most Outstanding Committee Member; Sam Roberts, Outstanding Committee Chair and Most Outstanding Committee Member; Morgan Guenther, Outstanding Committee Chair; Sarah Milligan, Outstanding Committee Chair; Lydia Nevels, Outstanding Committee Chair; and Drew Hester, Most Outstanding Committee Member

Senior named School Winner in scholarship program

Senior **Nolan Whitte** was named a School Winner in October in the Wendy's High School Heisman scholarship program. To apply for scholarships in the program, seniors must have a grade point average of 3.0 or better, participate in a sport and be proven leaders and role models in their school and community. School Winners receive a certificate and a Wendy's High School Heisman patch. From the School Winners, two State Finalists were chosen to receive a \$1,000 scholarship. Two national winners are selected from ten national finalists.

Wendy's and the Heisman Trophy Trust have been honoring seniors in this way since 1994, when Wendy's owner Dave Thomas created the program.

Rose Hamilton the educator remembered



November of this year marks the 50th anniversary of the Rose Hamilton Elementary School building. It was dedicated on November 5, 1967. At the dedication, educator Rose Hamilton, after whom the school was named, said, "I feel in a real sense that this school is not dedicated just to me, but to all of the great teachers who taught in the Centerville-Abington school system. When you think of me or speak my name, think of all the great teachers who have given us such a great educational system."

Following is the story of Rose Gates Hamilton, who taught for 55 years in the public schools of this nation and over four decades in the Centerville-Abington Schools.

Rose Hamilton was born in 1890 in Pennsylvania. As a young girl, she lived on a farm on Gates Road in Centerville, Indiana, with her parents, two brothers and two sisters. She was one of the few young people of her day to attend college. Following her graduation from Indiana University, she became a high school teacher in Abington in 1912. For two years, Rose Hamilton taught in the two-room brick school, the only high school teacher, teaching German, English, geography, history, algebra and geometry. She drove a horse hitched to a storm buggy to and from school. She taught her pupils to play volleyball, skated on the river ice with

them in winter, helped with their Christmas plays and said goodbye the last day of school with a basket dinner.

Except for a few years, Rose Hamilton taught in her home community. She was a teacher in Middletown, Ohio, for three years. She then went to the high school in Bloomington, Indiana, where she married Leland Hamilton, who was also a teacher there in the early 1920s. He became ill and died there. She returned to Centerville in 1922 at the opening of the new Junior-Senior High, teaching English, botany and mathematics. For many years, Rose Hamilton served as high school principal. Because of her loving disposition and understanding of the students, she was much sought after as a class sponsor, director of student plays and a sponsor of student trips to Washington and New York. She was one of the founders of the Psi Iota Sorority in 1931.

Upon her retirement from Centerville, Rose Hamilton went to teach English in the Indian Mission Schools in Cuba, New Mexico. In 1962, the Rose Hamilton Educational Loan Fund was established in the high school to aid students in advanced study. She continued to make a substantial contribution to this fund each year.

After a lifetime of teaching, Rose Hamilton died at the age of 93 on May 31, 1984, in Toledo, Ohio. She left us with this legacy: "I'll take the children that come into my classroom, but what they become depends on the support, encouragement and standards set by their parents."

**You are welcome to attend meetings of the Board of School Trustees.
Meetings are held on the second and fourth Wednesday of
each month at 7 p.m. at the Spencer Administration Building.**

**You are encouraged to contact our schools if you have questions or comments.
Office hours for corporation buildings are from 8 a.m. until 3:30 p.m.**

Superintendent: Philip Stevenson / Assistant Superintendent: Mark Campbell 855-3475
High School Principal: Mikel McCoy / Assistant Principal: Timothy Hollendonner 855-3481
Junior High School Principal: Rick Schauss 855-5113

Centerville-Abington Elementary Principal: Kelly VanWinkle / Assistant Principal: Sean Stevenson 855-5132
Rose Hamilton Elementary Principal: Lee Stienbarger 966-3911