

FOCUS

Ashland Independent Schools

Superintendent's Letter

Providing for the Present.....Preparing for the Future

School Leadership....from our Board of Education...from our Superintendent, must strive to provide the strongest, most effective level of instruction in every classroom, every day. The students we are providing for now are deserving of our very best efforts and resources! However, we are also morally and ethically responsible to continuously plan for generations to come. This is a charge for all entrusted to oversee the services to school children while ensuring that the public trust, the public expectations, and the public revenues.



Providing the strongest educational system possible is a shared responsibility of those in charge as well as those who must share in continuing to provide for the needs of school students, even when they may not have any direct relationship with the current school population. It is one of those sacred responsibilities that comes with being a community. Many of our families are facing tough times, challenging times, but this is specifically the reason we cannot lose sight of the significance of making the investment in our children's futures.

Those entrusted with the leadership of school systems must exemplify dedication and commitment to, not only those under our current charge but also those for generations to come. Instructional programs and facilities must meet the demand of ensuring that our students are prepared for their place in society and in a changing world. We have proven to be fiscally responsible in not only utilizing existing revenues to provide the best that we can, but we have also done our part in running a school district efficiently and effectively with diminishing funds from state and local resources. Decreasing property values on homes, businesses, and local industry have had a direct impact on the existing tax base for school support. The shutting down of some operations at AK Steel have an impact, the closing of the Coke Plant, losing families, small businesses closings, along with more and more properties purchased by non-profit or not-for-profit agencies removes them from the rolls of school support.

Over the past two years our Support Educational Excellence in Kentucky (SEEK) funds have been reduced or frozen nearly \$650,000. Additionally, reductions in various state-funded programs were cut another \$260,000, for approximately \$909,000 in total funds that are necessary to provide for the general programs within the district. The state revenue forecast for the immediate future still remains quite bleak with notices to prepare for further reductions.

In 2009-2010 due to the financial strain, the state budget placed on school districts throughout Kentucky, we reduced 12.5 staff positions and eliminated General Fund expenditures in the amount of \$958,000 within our own district budget. These district reductions that are unprecedented in the district's past history but became a necessary action to take. In 2010, an elementary school was closed that had been listed by the Kentucky Department of Education as a "transitional site" for a number of years and in fact, has been discussed for closing by former Boards over the last twenty-five years. The continued decline in enrollment did not require keeping this school in operation, so the students were orderly transitioned into the five other elementary buildings.

The Ashland Board of Education has been responsible. They have made tough decisions; they have practiced "doing the right things" for our students and also for our citizens, our tax-paying public. The Board has been fiscally responsible, and they have been diligent in committing to providing programs and facilities in the best interest of our student population. We all have a sacred trust to not only care, nurture, and educate our young people, but an enduring trust and responsibility to continually ensure that the future for all those we will be receiving....the next generation of learners, will be provided the very best educational environment possible. Good schools, instructionally and facility wise, are the hallmark of a solid community, a community that exhibits a strong support for its school system. It is a progressive community; it is a community that draws people, business, and industry. Schools are the single most important factor in the economic development in any area of the country.

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District News

Student Technology Leadership Program Celebrates Success

Rebekah Williams, Technology Integration Specialist

On Wednesday, November 30, one hundred twenty members of Ashland's Student Technology Leadership Program (STLP) competed at the regional Fall Showcase on the Morehead State University campus. Ten projects will advance to the state competition in the spring. Congratulations to the following schools and participants on their achievement:

Charles Russell

Ema-Leigh Forbes, Ivy Hobbs, Tyler Williams, William Zheng, Madalon Burnside, and Madelyn Hamilton

Hager Elementary

Sydni Pierce, Austin Lovelace, Alexis Nichols, Sydney Runyon, Tyriq

Duckwyler, Katelyn Ferguson, Cooper Jordan, and Alexa Craft

Oakview

Luke Alley, Mary Thornburg, Kyleigh West, Haleigh Baer, Mykayla Akers, Lydia O'Nan, Kade Dye, and Maddie Reihs

Poage

Olivia Short, Trinity Kittle, Alexis Smyser, Savanah Gifford, Scott Busch, Caleb Keelin, Adrianna Johnson, and Chloe Whitlock

Verity Middle School

Marshall Heath, Ashley Carpenter, Jessica Hunley, Dillon Lucas, Ashby Foutch, Savannah Hammond, Emily Hollingsworth, and Landry Paluch.

Blazer High School

Aryssa Damron, Sammie Smith, and Courtney Castle



Charles Russell STLP Students Win International Competition

Cynde Elkins, Charles Russell School Technician



ThinkQuest is a collaborative educational web site sponsored by the Oracle Education Foundation of Redwood City, CA. Any school can freely join and use the site to allow students the opportunity to create their own web pages, interact with other students from all over the world, and enter the annual TQ competition. Last year six Charles Russell 5th grade STLP members formed a team, chose a problem, and created a project to help solve it. This team, that included current 6th graders Madalon Burnside, Ema-Leigh Forbes, Madelyn Hamilton, Ivy Hobbs, Tyler Williams, and William Zheng, chose the topic of childhood obesity and named their project Obesity Weight Awareness Project (OWAP). With the help of their STLP coaches, Cynde Elkins and Sheila Meade, they were able to develop a project that all CRS third and fifth grade students could participate in. By partnering with the Kentucky Heart Foundation, the Boyd County Health Department, school nurse Lori Baier, 5th grade health teacher Becki McDavid, and 3rd grade teachers Amy Ledford and Cheri Rowlett, the students learned how to be aware of how daily food choices and physical activity affect their weight. Out of 7,603 teams and over 30,000 participants from 52 countries, the team was notified on June 24th, 2011, that they were one of 27 winning teams. Winning first place in the 12 and under project category, each team member won an all expense-paid trip to ThinkQuest Live San Francisco in October 2011, a Lenovo laptop, and a backpack with goodies. They spent four jam-packed days of attending educational workshops, making new friends from eleven different countries, touring sights in the Bay Area, eating lots of food with an international flavor, shopping, and listening to several motivational speakers including Australian Matt McFadyen, who told his survivor story of an amazing trip to Antarctica by yacht. In addition, Oracle presented the team with a \$5,000 grant for the school that will be used to purchase fifteen Xbox 360 Kinect gaming systems (one for each classroom) to encourage the healthy theme of staying active. While there the team got the chance to achieve celebrity status by being recognized at an Academy Award style banquet dinner with paparazzi and Oracle top brass and be cast members in a lip dub video called "It's a New World." The project can be utilized and viewed at www.thinkquest.org and the movie at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pQA8ex5MbT0>. The entire experience has been an opportunity of a lifetime that will have a lasting effect on the OWAP team and the whole school. It's a new world, indeed!

In Memoriam



Ashland Independent Schools lost a dedicated worker and a good friend in the passing of Sherry Wagner. Sherry touched the lives of so many in her 28 years with Ashland schools. Sherry did it all, from substitute teaching, to cheerleading sponsor, to her role as instructional assistant at Hatcher and Crabbe. She was a skilled assistant to who was loved dearly by staff, students, and parents. Sherry left behind a precious daughter, Leighanne Wagner. Leighanne is a former student in Ashland schools and is loved by all who know her.

Ashland Head Start

In researching several resources for the true meaning of Patriotism, I finally arrived at the decision that Ashland Head Start/ Kentucky Preschool has the key.

In the eyes of a child, there are many things that bring a smile, a tear, and just a complete and total look of awe. On Tuesday, November 15, 2011, our very young children were offered a glimpse of just how we acknowledge our love and loyalty to our country.

The afternoon began with all of the classes assembled in the gym and several adults in attendance from the Central Office staff. Ms.

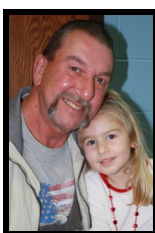
Thornburg gave the directive for all to stand as the color guard from Paul Blazer's JROTC marched into the gym.

Everyone turned to the large American flag displayed on the wall, with hand over heart, voices in unison in a loud chorus of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Commander Paul D. Royster, Paul Blazer High School, issued commands to four cadets; Timothy Runyon, Nicholas Clark, CJ Hudson, and Andre Taylor as they stood at attention with rifles and flags. Our children seemed to be spellbound with these activities.



Austin Hammonds, a member of Blazer's band, played an outstanding saxophone rendition of the National Anthem.

A request was sent to any relative of the children who served in the military to be in attendance for special



recognition. Mitch Sherman, a veteran and the grandfather of Jayden Odell and Brian Lauenburg, just home from active duty in Afghanistan, the father of Keyli Morris both answered that call.



Hannah Vance, a student from Blazer, sang "Hero" for our finale and what a fantastic job she did.!

How do we define "Patriotism", it is freedom — understanding it, living it, teaching it, and supporting those

who are educating others about it. That, my fellow Americans, is what patriotism should mean to each of us today. It does at Ashland Head Start/ Kentucky Preschool.



Kimberly P. Johnson visited out Head Start program on November 17, 2011. She is an accomplished children's book author, speaker, motivator and educator. With a background that spans radio, television, motion pictures and early childhood education, she is also an extraordinary example of the benefits of the **Head Start** program because she is a Head Start graduate. Kimberly knows that reading and writing are the foundation of a strong literacy-based education. It is our hope that through continued joint efforts that children and adults will be inspired by reading, writing, and learning. Kimberly assists with and supports the Head Start goal of increased literacy for all children and families.

Our Head Start parent workshop with Kimberly was a creative and interactive experience, one that showed parents techniques on how to motivate their children at home in the areas of reading and writing. Ten families attended the workshops. The methods she uses also gets parents excited about reading with their children. Kimberly's methods are developmentally appropriate, challenging yet fun. Sets of Kimberly's children's books are available in every Head Start/Preschool classroom.

Mrs. Abbott's class finished a unit study on fall. Throughout the past weeks we have made scientific observations about changes in the environment and the weather. We have examined leaves and done activities with pumpkins. We also talked about Thanksgiving and all of the things that we are thankful for.

We invited family members to join us for a celebration with songs, a story, and a family craft activity. The children especially enjoyed painting the family members' hands with different colors to make turkeys!



Our first family game night of the year was on November 10, 2011. Twenty families participated. This sends a good message about family priorities. It's a fun way for families to spend time

together. Games allow you to show off skills and learn sportsmanship. They encourage family communication and literacy. It doesn't really matter what games are played. We make sure that every family leaves with a new family game and continue to build upon our family partnerships and strengthen the home-school learning experience. Family game nights are scheduled throughout the year.

Crabbe Elementary School

Crabbe elementary students, grades 3-6th, will again be participating in the "Bringing Up Grades" or B.U.G. program sponsored by the Kiwanis Club. The program is focused on providing incentives to students for raising their grades or maintaining current grades from one nine week grading period to the next. Prizes are awarded to every student who raises a grade without dropping in another area. Those who become super BUGS and remain in the program all year are eligible for a new bicycle and helmet at the end of the year. The Kiwanis Club partners with area businesses to support this program and the student's at Crabbe. We are very appreciative for their interest in the success of our students.

On Friday, November 11, the DOME THEATRE visited Crabbe Elementary for the first time. Individual classes, grades K-6th, selected educational programs that were grade and content appropriate. Classes were shown a 30 to 40 minute program on the ceiling of an inflatable igloo-type structure. Our primary students experienced "The Secret of the Cardboard Rocket" as they climbed aboard a rocket with two animated adventurers and experienced an up-close look at our solar system's planets. The intermediate students were able to travel in the carotid artery, explore the eye, brain, ear, and heart and then shrink into a cell to see the nucleus and DNA of human life. It was a great experience that students really enjoyed.



Run, run, as fast as you can, if you're a kindergartener at Crabbe you can't escape from the gingerbread man... or boy, or girl, or baby, or cowboy, or pirate!!! Kindergarten students have been knee deep in gingerbread activities! They have read, acted out and compared stories, made books, practiced sight words and rhyming words, made patterns, graphs, ornaments, and much more with the help of their gingerbread friends! What a great learning experience! Hey, is anyone else hungry?

At Thanksgiving, the first graders participated in an authentic Thanksgiving meal. The children dressed as Native Americans, Pilgrims boys, or Pilgrim girls. Although venison was not served, the children enjoyed vegetable soup, bread, and dessert. The dessert was tasty cookies decorated as turkeys and Pilgrim hats. The meal completed the unit about the early life of a Pilgrim.

Second grade had the opportunity to help with the Thanksgiving program. They told the history of the special day in word and song. Above all, they counted their blessings and checked their attitude of gratitude.



November was Diabetes Awareness Month. Ms. Clemons's class showed its support by having a classmate, Kylie Pack, explain, answer questions, and demonstrate the process of checking her sugar. Ms. Clemons read the book called Taking Diabetes to School by Kim

Gosselin while the school nurse, Marli White, was on hand to answer any questions from the students. The book explained what life is like for a student living with juvenile diabetes. Ms. Clemons, Mrs. Moore, and Ms. Wagner also showed their support by wearing Cure Juvenile Diabetes t-shirts on Fridays throughout the month.

Fourth graders at Crabbe traveled back in time to discover past Appalachian life and culture. Students experienced life like it was "back then" through a guided tour and hands-on activities. The students took their seats



in a 19th Century, one-room schoolhouse and walked through a literal timeline of dramatic changes made in the Appalachian region through the ages in the Progress of Appalachia Museum. In the activity barn, students fed and petted ducks, chickens, goats, sheep, llamas, turkeys, turtles, and crawdads. Using a washboard, milking a cow, grinding corn into meal, and pumping water were some of the farm chores experienced by the students in the activity center. A professional glass blower demonstrated his craft as did a glass bead maker. An iron leaf was created right in front of the wide eyes of these fourth graders. Squeals and cries were heard from not only the animals but the children (and teachers) as the tractor ride crossed a bumpy covered bridge and throughout the farm's grounds.

Mr. Fleming's class is creating Christmas books to read to the kindergarten classes during the week of December 12---16. They are also working on feature articles about a foreign country. They will compare the cultures of their assigned country and that of the United States. String art Christmas trees are being made for display in the hallway.



Hager Elementary School



During the week before Thanksgiving break, kindergarten students in Ms. Bevis's class read stories about Thanksgiving feasts. Students discussed agriculture, hunting, and gathering. They culminated

their lessons by eating homemade bread and butter that students actually made at school!

First graders decorated their "Family Christmas Tree" over Thanksgiving break. Their family trees were used to represent family and friends who are special in their lives. When we returned from break, each student shared his/her "Family Christmas Tree" with his/her peers. We had a great time learning about special family and friends.



Students in second grade were able to Skype with Mr. Calhoun (Connor Calhoun's dad) while he was working in Wales. Students used Google Maps to locate Wales and developed questions to ask Mr. Calhoun and his business associates. Students learned about the weather, schools, sports, and foods of this region while experiencing communication and technology skills.

Second grade students have been learning about different animals, their classifications, and adaptations in science class. To extend their learning, students researched a chosen animal during library. They had to classify their animal, identify its habitat and food source, and provide other interesting facts. In computer lab, students took their research and created a PowerPoint slide about their animal that included their research. They presented their PowerPoint slides in science class.

Third grade students have been studying what communities are and the differences between them. As a culminating activity, they are creating projects about their community.

Three Beta Alpha Psi Accounting Honorary students came from the University of Kentucky and spoke to the 4th grade classes on November 11. They were Harrison Swinney, John Baldock, and Logan Collins. Harrison and John were former Hager students! They taught an economics lesson to the students and discussed the importance of saving money. The class concluded with each student receiving his/her own book mark and piggy bank. This was a great learning experience for the students!

Hager's 5th grade students participated in a SKYPE conversation with Petty Officer First Class Nicholas Wall of the United States Navy on November 18th. Mr. Wall shared with the students his daily duties, what it is like going to war, and his experiences being aboard the U.S.S. Enterprise on September 11, 2001. The students were actively engaged, asking him thought-provoking questions! It was a great way to show our appreciation for our U.S. Military.



Hager's sixth graders are "head over heels" about figurative language. Students have been creating idioms, similes, and metaphors. Students were challenged to use this type of figurative language throughout the school day amongst their peers and staff. Students received a point for using these phrases to create a vivid image for the listener. The challenge came "down to the wire" as our "fountain of knowledge" increased.

On Monday, November 14, 2011, Hager's Junior Beta Club inducted 30 new members. Congratulations to our new members: Elizabeth Adkins, Tanner Davis, Zandrya Gabris, Robby Krick, Abby Lumpkins, Lexi Tygart, Grace Burgess, Avery Childs, Annabelle Clark, Parker Clarke, Trey Coburn, Jacob Cox, Rachel Craft, Reed Daniel, Shelby Foutch, Abbey Greene, Isaiah Hanks, Madison Jervis, Emma Johnson, Isabella Johnston, Courtney Lewis, Aristos Mitropoulos, Jacob Peach, Emily Potter, Megan Redman, Kylie Rhoton, Emma Spade, Kyla Umberger, D'angelo Ward, and Devin Willett.

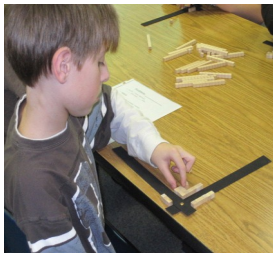


Hager's first and second grade classes performed "A Time To Give Thanks" on November 18. Students sang beautifully about the history of the first Thanksgiving, having a grateful attitude, and remembering the importance of the holiday. The second graders provided a narrative guiding the audience through the songs and performed a play about the first Thanksgiving.

Congratulations to Hager's STLP for earning high scores at its regional competition in Morehead. Hager will send two projects, A Cause for Paws and Hager Energy Challenge to the state competition in March.

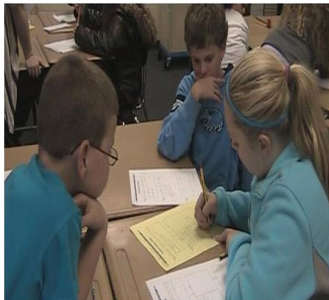
Oakview Elementary School

The second grade classes of Miss Ryan, Ms. Mann, and Mrs. Baker presented a play based on the book, 'Twas The Night Before Thanksgiving by Dav Pilkey. Parents, grandparents, as well as K-3 Oakview students enjoyed this Thanksgiving tale about a bus load of school children who felt sorry for a friendly batch of turkeys and decided to save them from the farmer's ax. The second graders sang songs directed by Mrs. Boyer, accompanied by Mrs. Shattles on the piano, as they acted out the character parts of the book.



Fourth grade students in Mrs. Price's class used multiplication sticks and base-ten blocks to multiply whole numbers. This practice follows our Math in Focus curriculum and the activities learned from professional development opportunities.

Mrs. Justice's 5th grade classroom has been a flurry of activity the past couple of weeks. Among many other things happening in this class, Mrs. Justice and her student teacher Mrs. Belcher have been working with the students on reading texts written in special ways in an attempt to improve reading comprehension. Since the information offered in texts can be presented in different ways depending on the point they are trying to make, it is important for students to be able to recognize different types of text structures. compare/contrast texts, chronological/sequential texts, cause/effect texts, and problem/solution texts are all text structures that the students have been exploring through looking at sample texts and placing the information they read in graphic organizers. The study of these text structures has proven to be very useful in aiding comprehension of informational texts for these 5th grade students and will be something they will be able to use throughout their academic career.



Ms. Mann's 2nd grade class decorated Christmas trees as a family art project called "Tree-mendous Trees".

Two second graders, Mathew Edwards and Cannon Sanders, have finished two typing programs, Paws and Typing Instructor. This is a huge accomplishment in Mrs. Bowling computer class. The following is a guideline that shows the words per minute (WPM) that students are expected to type at the end of the school year.

1st Grade	5 WPM	4th Grade	30 WPM
2nd Grade	10 WPM	5th Grade	40 WPM
3rd Grade	20 WPM	6th Grade	50 WPM



Students in Mr. Anderson's math class have been studying fractions as well as positive and negative numbers. The students enjoy using manipulatives when exploring new concepts and gain a deeper understanding through this practice. Everyone has been working hard and having fun while learning!

Mrs. Sparks had an exciting treat for Oakview students when they came to the library Dec. 5th and 6th. Kindergarten through sixth grade students enjoyed a visit from D. W. (aka Kim Brown), Marc Brown's sister. Students enjoyed stories about how the Arthur series came to be and some inside information only a sister can tell.



On December 3, Oakview's 6th Grade Academic Team competed in the Kentucky Colonel's 6th Grade Showcase at Fallsburg Elementary. Many students placed in written assessments. In language arts, Ingam Acha placed 3rd. In math, Connor Hutchison placed 2nd, and Ingam Acha placed 3rd. In science, Wren Jenkins tied for 2nd place. In social studies, Connor Hutchison placed 2nd, Lydia O'Nan placed 4th, and Evan Billips placed 5th. In arts and humanities, Wren Jenkins placed 1st, and Lydia O'Nan placed 3rd. In composition; Ashby Johnson tied for 2nd place. Oakview's quick recall team won 1st place over Louisa Middle School, Charles Russell Elementary, Boyd County Middle School, and Lakeside Elementary. That team included Wren Jenkins, Connor Hutchison, Kade Dye, and Ingam Acha. Oakview's team won overall with 58.5 points. Go Comets!!!!

Bailey Grubb and Alexis Perkins represented Oakview in the Ashland Youth Ballet performance of "The Nutcracker." Oakview's third graders attended this performance at the Paramount Arts Center.

First Grade

Our class collected items for our 15th Annual Animal Rescue Christmas Drive. Staff and students brought in food, treats, blankets, brushes, shampoo, and chew toys for Ashland Animal Rescue Fund (AARF) to use during the winter months while finding foster and forever homes for abandoned, abused, and neglected animals from our area.



We learned about Christmas celebrations around the world in such countries as Germany, Mexico, and Sweden. We also learned about Hanukah and Kwanzaa while sampling traditional foods eaten during these holiday celebrations. As we studied economics, our class learned about goods and services while making gingerbread men ornaments and cookies. The students listed the types of resources and ingredients used as we made these items.

If you take a stroll down our hallway, you will see several festive class poems displayed showing examples of the parts of speech we are learning. We used adjectives and verbs to describe Santa, and the elves. To describe the reindeer and Christmas trees, we used a lot of prepositional phrases and adverbs!

Second Grade

Mrs. Hill's second grade students have been reading December Secrets by Patricia Reilly Giff. In the book the students are asked to choose a secret December person to be kind to. Everyone in Mrs. Hill's room has also chosen a special December person to be kind to this month. We are focusing on "random acts of kindness." The children are keeping journals of their kind acts, and our classroom mailbox is filling up with sweet letters the children are writing to one another. We also kicked off this month with our Gingerbread Economic unit. The students are learning all about choices, decision making, cooperation, resources, bartering, and production. At the end of the unit, the students will be producing gingerbread men ornaments while working as a part of an assembly line. They will also enjoy bartering in order to obtain the items they wish to use to decorate an edible gingerbread cookie.

Third Grade



Charles Russell Elementary School

Three Things—Mrs. Foster had her 5th grade language classes bring three things that represent themselves to share with the class and write about. People brought things like footballs, basketballs, stuffed animals, and other items. Mrs. Foster wanted to know more about us and also to practice our writing skills. Mrs. Foster said they were awesome and colorful, then hung them in the hallway. -Preston Hughes

Fire Safety—In October during Fire Safety Week, the kindergarten classes went to the Ashland Fire Department to, as Luke Herrman says, “So we can see what’s going on and know more about fire fighters.” The kids saw a movie with Sparky the Fire dog and toured the station to see where the firefighters sleep, relax, eat,



exercise, and work. While there, the alarm went off, and they got to see the fire truck get ready and leave for a real fire. After each student got to go in a truck, each class had a class photo made with the firefighters in front of the fire truck. -Makenzie Lucas

Imel’s Pumpkin Farm—Mrs. Bonner, Mrs. Geyer, and Mrs. McDowell’s kindergarten classes went to Imel’s Pumpkin farm in October. Wanda Imel, co-owner, led the kids around the stations: feeding the goats, tractor ride, tricycle races, and the playground. She taught them about the vegetables they grow on the farm and how long they take to grow. Each student picked out a pumpkin and gourd to take home. -Sarah Ratliff



UNICEF—Melanie Grimm, Kaleb Kohut, Lakin Mays, Tyler Miller, Josh Thomas, Katie Turner, and Taylor York helped Miss Rowlett collect and donate \$100.00 to UNICEF. UNICEF helps provide clean drinking water, basic childhood medical attention, and immunizations for children around the world. -Cheri Rowlett

Spiders—Mrs. King’s 2nd grade classes had a special lesson about spiders led by Mrs. Janice Ledford. They worked on a spider fact sheet, made a spider mobile, and a spider treat with Oreos, pretzels, and candy eyes. Last they got a color by letter sheet. Can you guess what it turns out to be? The 2nd graders had a fun time learning about spiders. -Makenzie Lucas



Mr. Gilmore’s Visit—On October 12, Mr. Steve Gilmore, Superintendent, came to Miss Hood’s 4th grade class to talk about when he was mayor of Ashland as part of our studies on government. He said it was the most exciting job of his life. He was mayor for four years and was elected by the people and had to swear that he did not break any laws. He said he loves doing assignments and being superintendent. -Anna Heineman



Touchdown for a Cure—Three Blazer girls visited the girls in Mrs. Minton’s health classes to talk about breast cancer. They are part of an FCCLA project to raise funds and awareness by making and selling suckers, t-shirts, key chains, and having a walk. Their names were: Kelly, Maya, and Emily. -Carrina Hensley



Pumpkin Pie—Mrs. Bocook & Mrs. Schirtzinger’s 1st grade classes made pumpkin pies in November as part of their study about Thanksgiving. They used pumpkin filling, vanilla pudding, spices, butter, sugar, graham crackers, and milk. After refrigerating for an hour the pies were eaten by the students. -Jake Damron



Veterans’ Day—On 11-11-11, CRS had a Veterans’ Day program. Capt. Nick Palmer of the US Army spoke about the history and what Veterans’ Day means. All visiting veterans and enlisted military personnel were recognized, and a moment of silence was held in memory of those who had died. The patriotic music performed by the students included 6th grader Hattie Killin singing the National Anthem, and the kindergarten students playing handbells. -Alex Banfield



Mrs. Cain—Mrs. Lydia Cain, CRS ESL assistant, talked to the 6th grade classes about South American and Chile where she used to live. She showed us a copper dish and a special cup for drinking hot cocoa. She had pictures of Chile and told us about life there.

Hershey Trip—Mrs. Ledford’s 3rd grade class took a virtual field trip to Hershey, PA, to learn about Milton Hershey and how he made chocolate bars. After the trip, the students got to taste the difference between dark and milk chocolate. They had a YUMMY day at Hershey! -Preston Ledford



Verity Middle School

Kamron Horton (Trumpet) and Shelby Street (French Horn) earned membership in the 2011-2012 KMEA District 8 Honor Band. Both students earned 1st chair on their respective instruments.

The 7th and 8th grade Theatre classes performed a variety of Christmas- and holiday-themed scenes and one-acts on Friday, Dec. 16th for the students at Verity Middle School. Scenes included *"All the Other Reindeer," "The Last Meeting of the Holiday Icons," "The Ladies Speak," "The Trial of Donder and Blitzen (Who Ran Over Grandma...)," "Jack In the Box's Song," "Rudolph's Nose," "The 12 Days After Christmas," "Christmas Negotiations,"* and *"Scrooge Has Left the Building."*

Eight Verity String Orchestra students participated in an all-day string orchestra event at Morehead State University on Saturday, November 5. Despite a rocky start to the day (a bus breakdown), violin players Caleb Geyer, Hayley Deal, Lauren Fazenbaker, Autumn Hoffman, Jake Clark, and Raeanna Diehl and cello players Caroline Geyer and Amber Williamson rehearsed under guest artists who were alumni of the Indiana University School of Music and performed on stage that evening with approximately 100 other middle school string students from central and eastern Kentucky as part of MSU's Tri-State Honors Orchestra Festival.

Both the Verity Beginning String Orchestra (December 1st) and the Verity Intermediate Orchestra (November 29th) performed with the Orchestras of Blazer on their respective winter concerts.

Builders Club/FCA teamed up to make Christmas bright for needy children around the world by participating in Operation Christmas Child. Gabby Ingram, FCA Huddle leader, challenged her peers asking, "Can you pack your Christmas in a shoe box? We all have a lot to be thankful for." Inspired by Gabby's words, the students filled over 30 shoe boxes that will be shipped overseas to needy children. Jordon Boston, Builder's Club sponsor, and Anna Rogers, FCA sponsor, are thankful Verity has such giving students.

Students in Mrs. Williams's web page design class recently learned how to edit school and teacher web pages, using the School Pointe website management system. To demonstrate their understanding of the material, students created enhanced podcasts using iMovie. First, they used storyboards to plan their podcast. Next, they used iMovie to create the enhanced podcast by inserting screenshots, recording narration, adding transitions, and embedding music. The podcasts serve as tutorials for teachers that need assistance updating their websites and can be viewed by visiting Mrs. Williams's teacher web page.

The Discovery Team and Beta Club members are participating in Empty Stockings. They are collecting items to give to those less fortunate.

Ms. Frame and her library aids assisted FCCLA with the "A Coca-Cola Christmas" tree for the Festival of Trees. The tree received 2nd place overall for school trees in the 7-8 division. The tree was purchased for \$200 which will help support the Paramount Arts Center. Mrs. Gullett dedicated the tree to her mother, the late Judy Yates. Mrs. Yates had collected Coca-Cola items since the mid 1960's.



The students in Mr. Chaffin's third and fourth period classes are putting the finishing touches on a book of short stories called "Imagination Released." Students have been writing both fiction and historical fiction stories for the book which will be published in early March. Ashley Bradshaw from Mr. Polley's 2nd period class was the winner of the cover design contest. Ashley's design will appear on the book's cover. Although the selection process for the stories to be included in the book has not been completed, Mr. Chaffin anticipates at least ten stories for the new book.

On Dec. 2nd the entire student body went to see the Ashland Youth Ballet's morning performance of the "Nutcracker." Students came back to school and watched a video, a basic overview of dance. They completed a packet and took part in three different rotations around the building where they learned ballet (artistic dance), an Indian harvest dance (ceremonial or ritual dance), and the Cupid Shuffle (recreational dance).

Mrs. Whitt's class is participating in the Opportunities for Children to Help Others (OCHO) project. It is a character-based, service-learning program dedicated to exposing children to the joys of reading while teaching them that, through reading, they can help others less fortunate than themselves. The prime objective of the program is to have students read, not only to expand their own knowledge but also to help "earn" books for their fellow students who have few or no books of their own. OCHO builds character traits such as empathy/ caring, respect, responsibility, honesty, cooperation, tolerance, perseverance, citizenship, self-esteem, courage, fairness, patriotism, self-discipline, courtesy, trustworthiness, integrity, kindness, and pursuit of excellence.

Verity Middle School hosted an art exhibit and auction at the KYOVA Mall and Lifestyle Center. Proceeds benefit a scholarship fund for children who desire art lessons and who may not be able to otherwise afford them. Altogether there was a total of 34 pieces of work in the show, all of which sold and brought in \$300.00. The highest bidder of \$25.00 received a free art class from the Huntington Museum of Art.



Paul Blazer High School

Kentucky Counseling Association
54th Annual Fall Conference
October 11-13, 2011

Galt House Hotel
Louisville, KY

Kentucky Counselors Inspiring Resilience Everyday

Students in Mrs. Spade's digital design course are gaining real world graphic design experience with hands on design problems. Kelsey Biggs's winning design was chosen to be on the cover of the Kentucky Counseling Association's fall conference program.

The art club won first place at the Festival of Trees with its cupcake-themed tree. The festival's theme was "A Storybook Christmas." We drew our inspiration from the book, If You Give a Cat a Cupcake by Laura Joffe Numeroff. The Environmental Club entered a tree in the Paramount's Festival of Trees and Trains. The theme was "The Story of Ashland." The tree was comprised of various old pictures and new pictures that showcased the history of Ashland, Kentucky. The tree won 2nd place in the 9th – 12th grade school division.



Members of the Human Relations Club participated in the Shelter of Hope's Night Without a Home event. Students met with other participants at 9:30 P.M. and stayed until it was over at 2:00 A.M. It was a cold night, and students were able to identify with the homeless by sleeping with only a blanket and cardboard as protection from the elements.

Nine Blazer String Orchestra students participated in an all-day string orchestra event at Morehead State University on Saturday, November 5. Violin players Destiny Carte, Sophie Nishimoto, Kelsey Biggs, Carlie Geyer and Emily West; viola player Levi Kouns, cello player Kevin Mullin, and string bass players Slater Swift and Thaddeus Stambaugh spent the morning and afternoon rehearsing with guest artists who are members of the Cavani String Quartet based at the Cleveland Institute of Music and later performed on stage with approximately 100 other high school string students from central and eastern Kentucky as part of MSU's Tri-State Honors Orchestra Festival. The program started with selections by the middle school orchestra and continued with the Cavani Quartet's performance of the first movement of Antonin Dvorak's "American Quartet" and concluded with the high school orchestra performing the first movement of Wolfgang Mozart's "Divertimento III in F Major" and the finale of David Stone's "Miniature String Quartet."

Mrs. Hieneman's Biology II classes performed a lab on the ubiquity of microorganisms. The students picked various locations around campus and swabbed them to test for bacteria. The students incubated their bacteria plates and observed the growth at 24 and 48 hours. They also observed various types of microorganisms under the microscope including; *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, and *Streptococcus pneumonia*. The lab exercise brought awareness that bacteria can be found everywhere, not just in hospitals or laboratory settings.

Ms. Wireman's 12th grade English classes have been working diligently on their 2011 fall poetry projects. Each student has compiled a collection of poems with an analysis for each poem.

Poetry collections will be on display in Ms. Wireman's room. The students presented their projects with presentations that ranged from partner readings to dramatic and musical interpretations.



The Marshall University Black Alumni Association named Dr. Macel Braxton, Blazer Latin teacher, the Marshall University Outstanding Black Alumni for 2011 at their annual meeting during Marshall's homecoming festivities. Dr. Braxton, a native of Charleston, West Virginia, received her B.A. degree in Latin and Spanish from Marshall University. She received her M.A. in Educational Administration from California State University, East Bay and her Ph.D. in Spanish and English as a Second Language from the Ohio State University. Dr. Braxton was the second participant to receive her doctoral degree through the Carter G. Woodson Faculty Initiative at Marshall University. She taught in the Oakland Unified School District for 21 years, served as the Director of Minority Student Affairs at Marshall University and later taught Spanish there. She is now in her fifth year teaching Latin and Spanish at Paul G. Blazer High School. This is Dr. Braxton's second award this year as Governor Steve Beshear named her an official Kentucky Colonel in July!

Blazer senior Clay Woford received the President's Volunteer Service Award 2011. He received certificates of recognition from the Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership foundation, the President's Volunteer Service Award, the Corporation for National & Community Service and Points of Light Institute for completion of 138 volunteer service hours in his community. Among Clay's awards was a letter of congratulations and thanks from President

District News

Friends of the Children



Friends of the Children is Ashland's oldest charitable organization. Since 1903, members have provided time and money to clothe the needy children in the Ashland schools. The group's remarkable longevity has been aided greatly by generous patrons within the community who have provided the means to take students shopping for school clothes.

"Friends" works closely with the Resource Centers of the Ashland Schools to identify the neediest children, clothing children from Head Start through high school. We are very thankful, that for many years, we have been able to clothe all children referred to us. However, it is becoming increasingly difficult to do so. **Fields Florist has graciously offered to contribute \$5 from every December order of \$35 or more, if the customer mentions Friends of the Children at the time of ordering. Please remember us!**

In these tough economic times, we appreciate any donation. Each dollar contributed goes directly to clothing costs since we are all volunteers. If you would like to aid our mission, tax deductible donations may be mailed to Friends of the Children, PO Box 1128, Ashland, KY 41105-1128.

Trees of Character

*Rose-Linda Stafford,
South Ashland Family Resource Center Coordinator*

'Tis the Season and the Ashland Independent School District celebrated the season by entering six trees in the Festival of Trees this year. Each tree was based on one of the Six Pillars of Character.

A big thanks to the following people for participating in this festive event:

- Cheri Dilego and her girls' group at Verity did a tree based on trustworthiness.
- Heather Kirk and her life skills classes at Blazer decorated a tree themed, "Respect is Golden in Any Language."
- Ashland Independent Child Care Early Childhood Classroom and after school Child Care decorated 2 trees, one focusing on responsibility and one on fairness.

- Geri Willis and Patty Halterman and the Wildcat Jungle sewing group decorated a tree based on caring.
- Krista Payne, Safe Schools social worker, and Lori Baier, Safe Schools school nurse and the girls lunch bunch at Charles Russell decorated a purple tree focusing on citizenship.

The early childhood classroom tree entitled, "Take Turns and Share That's the Way to be Fair!" won a 2nd place ribbon. This tree is on display throughout the rest of the holiday season at the South Ashland Family Resource Center/Ashland Independent Child Care Center. All of the trees turned out beautifully, and it was a great way to inform all of Ashland about the CHARACTER COUNTS! program.

Ashland Autism Cadre

Jamey Sellars, Blazer Special Education Teacher

Kentucky was selected by the National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders to be one of three states to receive a grant for technical assistance related to autism. Kentucky Department of Education and Kentucky Autism Training Center (KATC), located at University of Louisville, will promote the implementation of the 27 evidence-based practices using the statewide network of Special Education Cooperatives.

Some state statistics are listed below:

- In 2000, there were 1,032 children, between the ages of 3-21, identified with autism.
- In 2008-09, the number increased to 3,143.
- In 2009, there were 22 children, between the ages of 3-21, identified with autism.
- As of the December 1, 2010 count, there were 3,927 children, between the ages of 3-21, identified with autism.

Some District statistics are listed below:

- As of the December 1, 2010 count, Ashland Independent School District had 37 children, between the ages of 3-21, identified with autism.
- Between the ages of 3-11, there were 27 children identified.
- Between the ages of 12-21, there were 10 children identified.

The Ashland Autism Cadre was formed to promote district capacity to address the needs of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) learners. A goal of the Ashland Autism Cadre will be to support/train district personnel as well as to serve as a link for resources for parents.

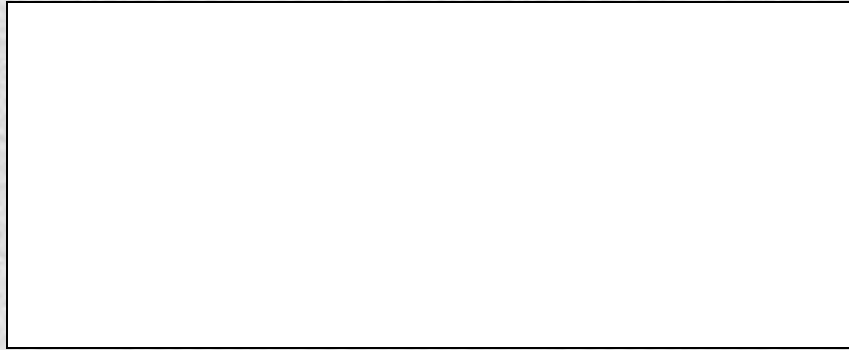


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School Principals

Derek Runyon, Blazer High School
David Greene, Verity Middle School
Brad Greene, Crabbe Elementary School
Phillip Caudill, Hager Elementary School
Nancy McHenry, Oakview Elementary School
Bob Blankenship, Poage Elementary School
Steve Salyers, Charles Russell Elementary School
Jacqui Thornburg, Head Start Director

Central Office Personnel

Steve Gilmore, Superintendent
Linda Calhoun, Instructional Supervisor
Joe Fraley, Director of Transportation/Maintenance
Lisa Henson, Director of Student Services
Janice Ledford, District Consultant
Patsy Lindsey, Director of Pupil Personnel
Richard Oppenheimer, Director of Student Achievement
Tim Walters, Director of Finance
Cary Williams, Director of Instructional Technology



Students in Mrs. Whitt's reading class utilize Verity's new mobile lab to improve their reading skills with Ultimate Speed Reader.

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