

BRIDGES

MSD of Boone Township LATE WINTER 2009

MSD Boone Township
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Junior Doug Breuckman, senior Kelli Matheny and senior Stacy Blank show their Hebron pride at collecting so many coats for local agency needs. (See the article on page 6.)



SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Our rapidly changing world of technology continues to provide advancements for MSD of Boone Township.

During the 2008–09 school year, MSD of Boone Township is partnering with the Porter Township School Corp. to provide technological services to the district. The components of the joint agreement include:

- Sharing a technology director.
- A local technician who provides services for issues involving computers in the classroom and/or labs.
- A local technician to assist the technology director to correct network problems and/or provide suggestions for improving our overall networking program.

This arrangement allows our corporation to fix technology problems more quickly, which ensures student access to computers for various instructional purposes.

Another technological addition to our program is the Alert Now software, which automatically calls the homes of parents when we have a cancellation or delay of school events. This software allows teachers and coaches to call a select group of homes to provide information that must be sent quickly and cannot wait for a note to be distributed the next day. In addition, surveys and data collection can be done with Alert Now. We are extremely excited about this software becoming an important component in our overall communications program.

Finally, Boone Township schools purchased a new student management system (SMS) that will allow teachers and parents to have better access to a student's grades and thus provide current information to the parent. You soon will have the capability to access your child's grades through the Internet on your home computer. We will send home instructions on how this will occur in the near future.

This software also will provide administrators and teachers with the following data:

- Scheduling
- Attendance records
- Gradebook
- Transcripts
- Discipline records
- Health records
- Textbook fees

We must remain focused on providing students with a challenging and relevant educational experience complete with opportunities to extend their learning through dual college credits, Advanced Placement (AP) courses, internships and the acquisition of 21st-century skills. Technology literacy, collaboration and work ethic combined with content, and oral and written literacy are necessary to ensure that students have a well-rounded education.

To that end we need you—parents and patrons, as well as the business community—to continue to challenge us by giving us your honest comments and ideas. Without your input, we run the risk of hindering progress and missing opportunities for improvement. We need everyone within the school system and community to work together to ensure that the educational process continues to improve.

I encourage you to continue to talk with your child's teacher, principal and parent organization (PTG) at each building, as well as to complete and return school surveys that are distributed periodically. Together we are building a strong foundation of knowledge, skills and experiences for our students.

—George Letz, Superintendent



Getting down to brass tacks in rehearsal are junior Jamie Sherman and senior Matt Gorby, members of the Hebron Jazz Ensemble.

And All That Jazz

The Hebron Jazz Ensemble, under the direction of Rick Cheek, was invited to participate in the 19th Annual Purdue Jazz Festival in West Lafayette on Jan. 17. It provided an opportunity for students to hear jazz, from big bands to combos, and learn about jazz from educators and professional musicians.

With more than 100 big bands and combos from 59 schools in Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio and North Dakota performing, there was more jazz to the square foot on the Purdue campus that weekend than in the jazz mecca of New Orleans. Instrumental jazz ensembles performed throughout the day in eight locations on the Purdue campus.

Two soloists from the Hebron Jazz Ensemble were recognized for their outstanding performance: Matt Gorby on trombone and Jamie Sherman on baritone saxophone. Members of the Jazz Ensemble performing at the Purdue Festival were:

- John Pauer, Krista Cheek and Jamie Dowdy—alto sax
- Alex Lewis—tenor sax
- Jamie Sherman—baritone sax
- Brittany Largent, David Lucas and Ryan Patz—trumpet
- Matt Gorby, Kyle Mezmarick, Myles Popjevach—trombone
- Mitch Stalbaum—piano
- Brent Tomb—bass
- Taylor Stokes—guitar
- Mike Zaharias and Blake Woodward—drums

The remainder of the day was filled with workshops and listening to big band jazz performances by other participating schools. The Charlie Mingus Rhythm Section and the Allen Vizzutti clinics were exciting and informative. It was great to see top professional artists share ideas with students, answer questions and perform in a workshop setting.

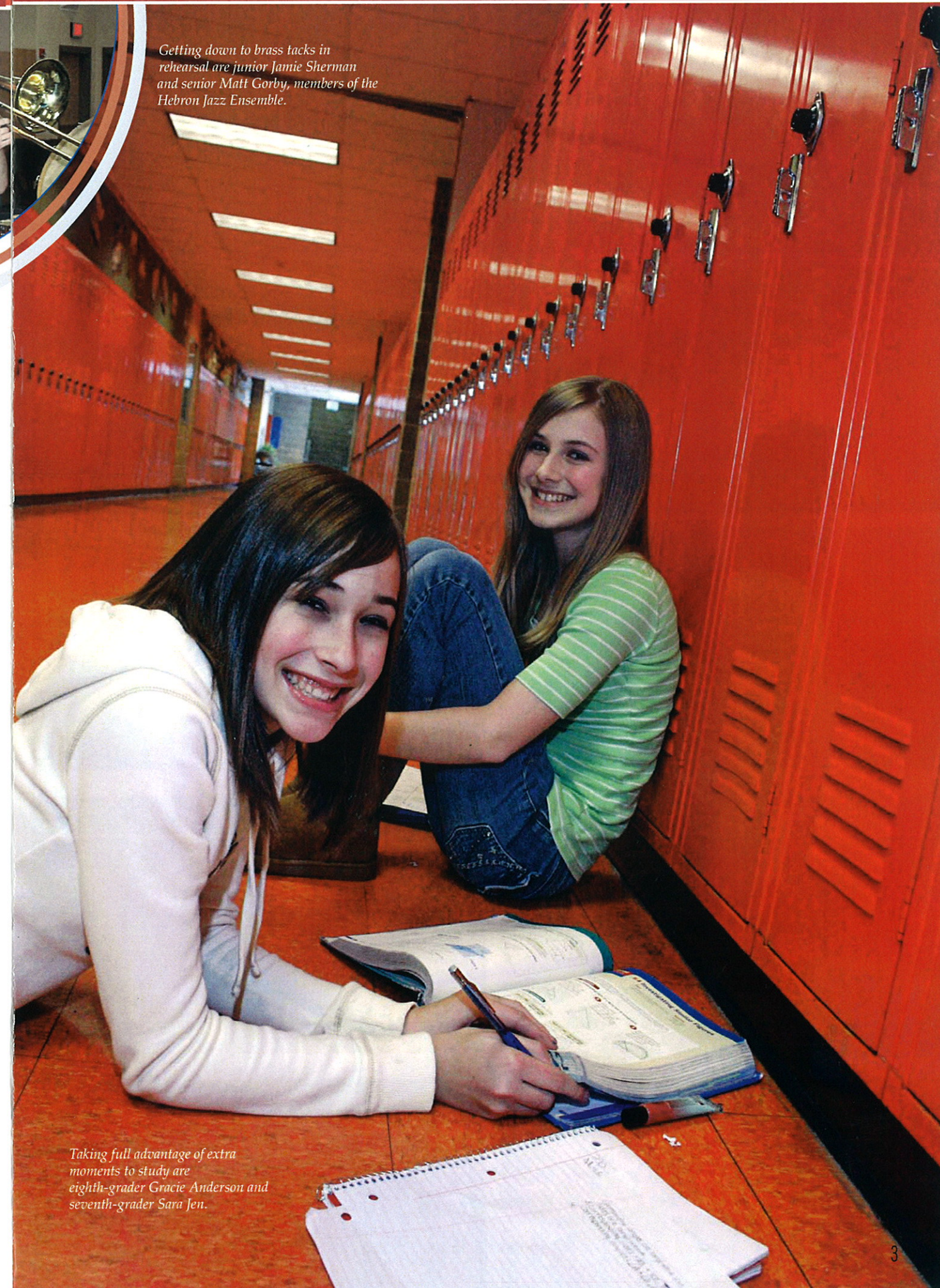
The festival concluded with an amazing finale concert featuring the Purdue Jazz Ensemble with guest artists baritone saxophonist Gary Smulyan and trumpeter Allen Vizzutti.

The Hebron Jazz Ensemble is now looking forward to its performance at Valparaiso University's annual Jazz Festival on April 14 at 6 p.m. in the newly completed student union.

Hebron Schools Achieve Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

Hebron Elementary, Middle School and High School all made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), a statewide accountability system mandated by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

The staff and administration are very proud of this achievement. By continually assessing our objectives and implementing new programs, we will achieve our mission: to ensure that students and educators are prepared for the choices and challenges that lie ahead. We will ensure exemplary education for all of our students and support growth to foster the development of the entire educational community.



Taking full advantage of extra moments to study are eighth-grader Gracie Anderson and seventh-grader Sara Jen.



Photos from top left:
1. Hebron Boys C team
2. Hebron High School wrestling team
3. Varsity girls basketball team
4. Boys eighth-grade basketball team
5. Hebron boys varsity basketball team
6. Boys sixth-grade basketball team
7. Hebron girls JV basketball team
8. Boys seventh-grade basketball team
9. Hebron High School cheerleaders and lifters
10. Girls sixth-grade basketball team
11. Hebron boys JV basketball team
12. Girls seventh-grade basketball team
13. Hebron High School dance team
14. Girls eighth-grade basketball team
15. Sixth-grade cheerleaders
16. Girls fifth-grade basketball team
17. Boys fifth-grade basketball team
18. Seventh- and eighth-grade cheerleaders

National Honor Society Gets Involved in Community Service

When temperatures are below the freezing mark, it's always a concern that someone out there won't have an adequate coat to wear. So the Hebron High School Nation Honor Society has done its part to help. When the Valparaiso Salvation Army said it "couldn't keep up with the demand for coats" and the Caring Place expressed a need for women's and children's coats, the Hebron NHS members stepped up.

To help meet this demand, the group sponsored a coat drive. Students and staff were encouraged to clean out their closets and donate gently worn, clean coats in good condition. As an incentive, the study hall that collected the most coats received a pizza party.

At the end of the drive, a total of 179 coats were collected. The Hebron High School National Honor Society thanks the staff, students and families whose donations made this an extremely successful project.

New Testing Tools at Hebron Middle and Elementary Schools

Hebron Middle School and Hebron Elementary School are recipients of a two-year grant from the Indiana Department of Education that will provide formative assessments each quarter throughout the school year.

The grant allows for full use of the wide range of testing, teaching and reporting tools provided by Acuity, a division of CTB/McGraw-Hill, the nation's leading provider of achievement tests.

Formative assessments occur at regular intervals. They identify strong and weak performance areas to allow teachers to modify instruction in a timely manner. Assessments are tied directly to the Indiana Academic Standards and the local curriculum. Reports are available to the district, school, class and even the student, thus providing teachers with a clear picture of an individual student's strengths and weaknesses.

Students in Grades 3-8 are given diagnostic tests in English/language arts and mathematics. The middle school also has begun testing students in science and social studies. All testing is currently being administered online, providing 24 hours or less turnaround time for reports.

Eighth-graders Cory Cox and Allison Lewis are engrossed in a science experiment. This kind of hands-on learning is common in many Middle School classes.



Learning happens better in twos for sixth-graders Kalei Barrett and Kelly Steffan.

Homework Hotline Keeps Everyone Informed

In order to improve communication among parents, students and teachers, Hebron Middle School launched a homework hotline on Jan. 26. The hotline allows parents, students and staff to access information pertaining to assignments, upcoming tests, projects and other deadlines.

Information is updated every Monday afternoon for science, social studies, math and English classes. With information available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, students not only have access to missed work but also to upcoming assignments.

There are two ways to access information:

- Visit our school website at www.hebronschools.k12.in.us/schools/middle_school.html to find information that can be printed in PDF format.
- Call 996-4771 and follow the prompts.

Your feedback is very important to us. Please feel free to contact us to share positive comments and/or concerns throughout the school year to ensure that this is a viable resource for students and parents. If you have a question about a homework assignment, please contact the classroom teacher directly.

Taking a photo break from recess are first-graders Christian Rojas, Rhyker Schatz and Ethan Garcia.



Today's Students Are Tomorrow's Consumers

Hebron Elementary fourth-grade teacher Chris Robbins recently was awarded a \$10,000 A+ for Energy Grant funded by British Petroleum (BP). The grant, written by Robbins and fourth-grade teachers Pat Marshall and Julie Stalbaum, recognizes teachers for innovation and excellence in teaching about energy conservation.

By providing these funds, BP, a global producer of energy, helps students learn the most up-to-date information about energy and prepares them to make informed decisions about the energy-related opportunities and challenges they will face. Learning about energy conservation and efficient use of energy not only will benefit students, but their families and the community as well.

The grant money has been used to purchase:

- Supplies for an experiment to show the layers of the earth and how natural resources are made.
- Supplies to make model coal mines.
- Kits containing electricity and magnet experiments.
- Kits to test for energy efficiency in schools and homes.

With the help of the Hebron HS Child Development class, fourth-graders will make draft dodgers to place along the bottom of doors or windows at home to keep out cold air. Students also will engage in units of instruction concentrating on the fossil fuel, coal: how it occurs in the earth and how it can be conserved. Students will research early inventors of electricity and the processes developed to use coal to make electricity.

Using PowerPoint presentations and videos, students will then share their knowledge about energy, electricity, conservation, safety rules and recycling with their peers, families and community members at an Earth Day program.

At the conclusion of the series, each student will receive a CD containing his or her PowerPoint presentation and all the photos and videos taken this year that relate to the study. Through this entire process, students will gain understanding about how energy conservation will make a difference to future generations.



Young Author Project Spurs Interest in Writing

Hebron Elementary students participated in the Young Author Project for the 10th consecutive year. This year's project was kicked off by Janet Riehecky, author of the popular *Red Door Detective Club* mystery series.

Classroom work involved brainstorming and planning the beginning, middle and ending elements of an initial rough draft of a story. Students learned the six simple rules for writing:

- Stick to the topic.
- Check for logical order.
- Include interesting words.
- Use different sentence patterns.
- Write descriptive sentences.
- Write for an audience.

The rough draft was sent home for parents to edit. Students then were given hardcover booklets with their story to take home and complete with illustrations. The completed books are due by April 17. On April 20, all K-5 classes will get together as the young authors share their books with one another.

PalmPilot Technology for K-2 Teachers

Hebron Elementary School K-2 teachers are using PalmPilot technology to implement mCLASS reading and math assessments, thanks to a grant from Wireless Generation. The mCLASS reading assessment consists of two main parts:

- Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) concentrates on specific skills used in English and language arts.
- Reading Record puts these skills to use in authentic reading and writing.

The DIBELS assessment enables teachers to target instruction to each student's specific needs and to monitor progress toward mastery of each skill. The Reading Record portion helps teachers track and identify problem reading areas and gives insight about a reader's comprehension and reading strategies.

The math assessment enables teachers to identify at-risk students, reveals more about students' mathematical thinking processes and allows teachers to monitor student progress toward mastery.

These individual assessments are performed three times a year for each student. Teachers work with each student individually, recording responses on the PalmPilot. Assessments are then uploaded to the mCLASS website where data is tracked and analyzed, ranking students as at risk, emerging, on level or proficient in each area tested. Reports can be printed for whole class comparison or for individual evaluation.

"If you don't read, you won't succeed." Fourth-graders Keyha Gibson, Christy Gierman and Tracy Kiel are grasping the truth of that statement during their library time.



You're Invited!

You are welcome to attend meetings of the Board of School Trustees of MSD of Boone Township. These sessions generally are conducted the second Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. in the Boardroom, located in the Elementary School, Room B-122.

Board of School Trustees

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Feedback Is Welcome

Boone *Bridges* welcomes its readers' letters, comments and critique. Write to us at Editor, *Bridges*, MSD of Boone Township, 307 S. Main St., Hebron, IN 46341, or call (219) 996-4771.

Our Phone/Fax Numbers

Superintendent's Office 996-4771
 Fax 996-5777
 Hebron High School 996-4771
 Fax 996-5777
 Hebron Middle School 996-4771
 Fax 996-5777
 Hebron Elementary School 996-4771
 Fax 996-5777

Our Website Address

www.hebronschools.k12.in.us



No matter how you cut it, kindergartner Nathan Hoyt is getting a good start in his educational career at Hebron Elementary School.

Show Your Commitment to Education

The Hebron community is encouraged to "give Garfield a ride and public education a lift" by purchasing the Garfield Education License Plate. When you receive your automobile registration, ask for the license plate with Garfield that reads "Committed to Education." Of the \$40 cost for the Garfield Plate, \$18.75 goes to the designated school of your choice, \$6.25 to the Indiana School Counselors Association and \$15 for administrative costs.



How to Order Your New Education Plate

- If you currently don't have an education plate and want one:
- List the current number of the license plate(s) you have now.
 - Include \$40 for each plate, in addition to normal registration and excise fees.
 - Return the form, available online or from the BMV, with your registration renewal form.
 - Your plate will be mailed to you promptly.

How to Renew Your Current Education Plate

- If your vehicle already has an education plate:
- The cost of your plate is included in the total on the registration renewal form.
 - Pay the total amount due to reorder the plate.

**Be sure to designate our school corporation as the recipient of your contribution:
 MSD Boone Township (Hebron Schools)**

Questions? Call your local license branch or the Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles at (317) 233-6000, or go to www.doe.state.in.us/garfield for an online form.

All-School Calendar, March–June 2009

March 4 Teacher In-Service
 March 23–27 Spring Break
 April 10 Makeup Day; School in Session
 April 24 Teacher In-Service
 May 25 Memorial Day; No School
 June 2–4 Makeup Days; School in Session
 June 4 Last Student Day; Graduation



MSD of Boone Township
 Administration Office
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