

Kalamazoo Public Schools

EXCELSIOR

www.kalamazoopublicschools.com

December 2024 • Volume 27, Issue 11



Lower Costs Expand WMU Dual-Enrollment Opportunities

(STORY AND PHOTOS ON PAGES 8-9)

KPS Mentoring Program seeks volunteers to impact students' lives

pg. 6



Holiday Books 2024
KPS librarians' holiday book recommendations

pg. 12



NonProfit
Organization
US Postage
PAID
Kalamazoo, MI
Permit 709

**** ECRWS ****
RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMER

Kalamazoo Public Schools, 1220 Howard St., Kalamazoo, MI 49008

In This Holiday Season, I Want to Say Thank You

THERE is much to be thankful for as the superintendent of Kalamazoo Public Schools.

I am thankful for a tremendous group of colleagues, who are dedicated to educating and caring for our children. This includes senior leadership, administrators, teachers, and all of those who work directly with children every day: paraprofessionals, activity helpers, tutors, social workers, librarians, nurses, and more.

There are hundreds of KPS staff who help care for students throughout the district. These include dedicated food service workers who prepare hundreds of thousands of meals each year, office staff who answer your questions, bus drivers who safely transport students, facilities personnel who clean and repair our buildings, technicians who care for your child's musical instruments and technology, and the mailroom staff who deliver supplies to keep the schools running.

There are so many people dedicated to this venture of educating your children, please join me in taking a minute to thank them this season.

I am thankful for our families, who support the work that we do by reading to children in the evening, reviewing homework, attending conferences, providing treats for bake sales, tending gardens, working book fairs, checking in with teachers, offering their expertise to organize career fairs, or supporting our sports teams. We know that this work of educating our children is a collaborative venture, and every effort by a caring adult amplifies the work that we do during the school day.

I am thankful for the community, which continues to astound me with its generosity of talent, collaboration and financial support. We know that schools cannot survive without the involvement and support of community members who understand the vital importance of raising children who are educated, critical thinkers, imbued with the skills they need to go out and do great things when they leave our schools.

But mostly, this season, I want to say how thankful I am for our students. They are a constant source of amazement. It is one of the delights of

being an educator to walk into a classroom of engaged students, with their minds soaking in the day's lessons, to hear their questions, to read the spark of imagination in their writing, to see them overcome challenges and to find success.

It takes a lot of work to be an educator and to inspire learning, but let's acknowledge that it also takes a tremendous amount of work to be a student. Learning is not passive or easy. It is among the most challenging, intense, and rewarding work we do in our lifetimes. Our students do their best to give us their best on a consistent basis. And for that, I am grateful.

But I am grateful for more than that. I am grateful for who they are and for all of their energy and enthusiasm and potential. As we get older, it's sometimes difficult to remember to greet the day with that kind of joy. But, there it is every day in our schools. Our students bring the promise of the day to us like a gift.

In this season of light, it is important to acknowledge that your children are the greatest source of joy, delight, and inspiration.

Thank you for sharing your joy with KPS.

A Message from the Superintendent



Dr. Darrin Slade

NEED HEAT? WE'RE HERE TO HELP!



If you find your furnace is in need of repair or replacement, **Community Homeworks** is here to help! We offer no or low-cost support to income-eligible homeowners in the **Kalamazoo County**, such as plumbing, electrical, and other health and safety issue repairs. Call or email us today to see if you are eligible at **(269) 998-3275** or **info@communityhomeworks.org**.



Community Homeworks provides additional critical home repair services for homeowners, such as plumbing, electrical, and other health and safety issues. Visit CommunityHomeworks.org for more information.

This activity is brought to you in partnership with the City of Kalamazoo, LISC, Kalamazoo County, and support from other grant funding partners.

KALAMAZOO RESA
INSPIRING EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Kalamazoo RESA serves over **35,000 students**

We strive to collectively develop anti-bias anti-racist knowledge and skills to foster inclusive and equitable learning environments and provide the highest-quality services to all.



kresa.org



@kalresa



@kalamazoo-resa



@kalresa



@kalresa



KALAMAZOO RESA

ABAR

ANTI-BIAS, ANTI-RACISM

*Transforming Education Through
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion*

Middle School Choir, Music Students Earn Honors

CONGRATULATIONS to the following Kalamazoo Public Schools middle school students for their achievements in choir and band.

MSBOA DISTRICT XI MIDDLE SCHOOL HONORS BAND

Seven KPS middle school students performed Nov. 5 at Marshall High School with the Michigan School Band & Orchestra Association District XI Middle School Honors Band. Students went through an extensive application and recommendation process to be selected for the honor. Ninety-one middle school band students were selected from District XI's four counties: Kalamazoo, Calhoun, St. Joseph, and Branch. The students represented 26 middle schools.

Special congratulations to bass clarinetist Liam Ross from Milwood Magnet, who earned section "first chair" honors in the band.

Hillside Middle School

Quinn Brzezina, Cullen Fakler, Elizabeth Miller-Dubrish

Maple Street

Charlie Duffy, Ian Sneddon

Milwood Magnet

Damian Bailey, Liam Ross

MICHIGAN SCHOOL VOCAL MUSIC ASSOCIATION MIDDLE SCHOOL REGIONAL HONORS CHOIR

Fifteen KPS sixth, seventh, and eighth graders were selected to participate in the Regional Honors



Hillside and Maple Street Band Director, Craig Freeman, left, and Milwood Magnet Band Director Aaron Mirakovits, right, pose with students, from left, Charles Duffy, Ian Sneddon, Quinn Brzezina, Elizabeth Miller-Dubrish, Cullen Fakler, Damian Bailey, and Liam Ross at the MSBOA District XI Middle School Honors Band concert.

Choir concert in Jenison on Oct. 12.

Linden Grove Middle School

Tyga Burton, Brooke Tiffany

Maple Street Magnet School for the Arts

Journi Alexander, Jordan Ash-Buck, Zoe Bolden, Eleanor Bryce, La'Zaria Calahan, Brianna Felix, Jocie Hickman, Ja'Rae Johnson, Etta Poer, Chloe Reed, Naomi Reed, Emma van der Westhuizen

Milwood Magnet School: A Center for Math, Science and Technology

Amara Crouch

WMU MIDFEST: MIDDLE SCHOOL HONORS BAND

Three KPS middle school band students were selected to perform at Western Michigan University's "WMU MidFest: Middle School Honor Band" on Nov. 12 at Miller Auditorium. The selected students were:

Hillside Middle School

Jonah Drake

Maple Street

Charlie Duffy, Ian Sneddon



THE CLINICAL PRACTICE OF WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
HOMER STRYKER M.D. SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Don't forget a flu shot for you and your family!
It's the first step in keeping you safe this flu season.
Call for your appointment today!
ACCEPTING NEW PATIENTS • 269.337.4600



wmed.edu • Find us on Facebook @WMedHealth

BOARD OF EDUCATION

President

TiAnna Harrison

Vice President

Carol McGlinn

Secretary

Jennie Hill

Treasurer

Karla Murphy

Trustee

Takisha Johnson

Trustee

Juanita Yvonne Payton

Trustee

Patti Sholler-Barber

KPS SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Darrin Slade

**Excelsior is mailed to every
household in Kalamazoo.**

**For information about
advertising, please call
Encore Publications.**

(269) 383-4433

NOTICE

Kalamazoo Public Schools welcomes all students and staff of any religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy, gender identification, height, weight, familial status, marital status, sexual orientation, and disability.

The District will not tolerate or condone any act of bias or discrimination toward any person on the basis of religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy, gender identification, height, weight, familial status, marital status, sexual orientation, and disability in any of its activities, hiring practices, programs or services.

Inquiries by students and/or their parents/guardians should be directed to:

**Director of School Improvement,
Title I and Assessments**
Kalamazoo Public Schools
1220 Howard St.
Kalamazoo, MI 49008
(269) 337-0180

All other inquiries should be directed to:

**Director of
Human Resources**
Kalamazoo Public Schools
1220 Howard St.
Kalamazoo, MI 49008
(269) 337-0177

District Directory at :
www.kalamazoopublicschools.com

Recipe

from the KPS Food Service, Chartwells



Kirsten Strong,
registered dietician
nutritionist

White Grape Holiday Punch ‘Mocktail’

MOCKTAILS are trending with the growing interest in spirit-free drinks. Maybe you want to cut back this holiday season on alcoholic beverages or maybe you have family members that are going spirit-free this year. Either way, this mocktail is suitable for anyone, kids and adults alike!

And look at its festive visual appeal! It's almost too pretty to drink! This recipe takes very little preparation but is impressive all the same. Please enjoy this mouthwatering punch and have a joyous and safe holiday season!



INGREDIENTS

- 1 c. cranberries (fresh or frozen)
- 24 mint leaves
- 2 c. white grape juice
- 3 c. seltzer/soda water
- ¼ c. lime juice (from about 3 limes)

DIRECTIONS

1. For the ice: Divide the cranberries and mint among the holes of a large ice cube tray. Fill with water to cover the fruit and herbs and freeze until solid.
2. For the punch: Before serving, mix the grape juice, seltzer and lime juice in a large pitcher. Put a few ice cubes in each glass and pour in the drink.

Serving Your Community Since 1944

Harding's

FRIENDLY MARKETS

Over \$1,000,000 Donated to Our Communities!

**Harding's
REWARDS**

**EARN MONEY FOR YOUR SCHOOL,
CHURCH, OR FAVORITE NON-PROFIT
EVERY TIME YOU SHOP AT
HARDING'S MARKETS!**

Sign Up Today
Hardings.com/community-rewards

Gift EXPERIENCE This Holiday!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

**Winter Break
Family Fun Days**
Dec. 26-27 & Jan. 2-3

Sponsored by
charles river
adams

**Countdown
to Noon!**
Dec. 31st

Free Copilot Pass!

When you purchase or renew your membership between Nov. 29 - Dec. 31

MORE INFO AT
airzoo.org

AIR ZOO
Aerospace & Science Experience

**Memberships, Gift Certificates,
and Air Zoo Store Gifts!**

6151 Portage Rd. Portage | 269.382.6555 | Open 7 days a week

KPS Mentoring Program Seeks Volunteers to Impact Students' Lives

MENTORS have one main goal: Help students believe in themselves.

The KPS Mentoring Program is recruiting caring adults, who want to help students succeed by giving them the basic skill of confidence.

“We’re trying to help students believe that they can do it. That they can be what they desire to be,” said Jesse Herron, the KPS Mentoring Program specialist. “Mentors can help by showing them other careers, talking about it, developing that relationship, that connection.”

Herron began volunteering with KPS about a decade ago, becoming the mentoring program specialist five years ago. For him, deciding to mentor students was inspired by the adults who made a difference when he was growing up.

His family moved from Chicago to Michigan when he was a child, and he can remember that one teacher in particular who took time to really connect with him.

“There was a teacher that impacted my life by talking about education and doing well in school,” Herron said. “They inspired me to believe in myself, that I could do it, that I could go to college and



Mentor Johnny Lee brought fresh apples and oranges for Spring Valley students, clockwise from bottom center, Ja’Kell Kent, Deangelo Kirk, Jordan Brown, King Scott, and Giovanni Reyes-Vargas.

get an education. They built up my self-esteem.” He did go to college and received a bachelor’s and a master’s degrees before launching a 25 year-career

with General Motors as a senior quality engineer. When he was working at General Motors, he knew that he wanted to give back. He started mentoring at Milwood Elementary by himself. He’d take his lunch to school and spend his lunch hour with a student.

Now, he’s looking for community groups and individuals who are interested in sharing their lunch and wisdom with students as KPS mentors. Herron said Superintendent Dr. Darrin Slade wants to expand the program. Last year, the program had 33 volunteers who worked with more than 70 students in 10 elementary schools. This year, the goal is to have at least 50 KPS mentors.

Mentors commit to meeting with students once a week for about 45 minutes

during their lunchtime. The program runs from the late fall through the end of May. The program involves volunteers of all ages and professions, both men and women. Current volunteers include, Western Michigan University Homer Stryker Medical
(continued on page 7)



METRO
KMETRO.COM • (269) 337-8222

TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS FOR STUDENTS

- Ride to & from School
- Extracurricular Activities
- KVCC/WMU/VoTech Programs
- 21 Bus Routes
- Metro Connect
- Travel Training



Visit us at Kmetro.com for information on transportation options to increase student access to educational opportunities throughout the community!



.....LET'S GO METRO!



ON SALE NOW!

Disney
THE LION KING

THE WORLD'S #1 MUSICAL

JANUARY 29 - FEBRUARY 9

millerauditorium.com 269-387-2300

Groups (10+): 269-387-2253

Mentoring (continued from page 6)

School students, engineers, managers, retirees, and staff members from The Kalamazoo Promise.

“These are people who just want to give back,” Herron said.

Donte Hudson, alumni coordinator for The Kalamazoo Promise, and Johnny Lee, a custodian and a deacon at New Life Church, are mentors at Spring Valley Center for Exploration.

When they meet with a group of about a dozen boys, the gathering is noisy and casual. The students obviously feel comfortable with their mentors, chatting about everything from sports, to what they want to be when they grow up, to making sure they talk about their moms with respect. Lee brings them extra apples and oranges for lunch and offers advice on athletic training for one boy who says he wants to get faster.

Hudson said he can tell what it means to the students that adults in the community are making time to just be with them.

“They like being able to say, ‘I’m about to go with my mentor, or Big Brother or Big Unc,’” Hudson said. “It’s a positive thing that they get to hang out with us. So, everything you say to them holds a little more weight, because they feel privileged to be able to hang out with you.”

And, that is the power of mentorship, Herron said. Mentors are not tutors. They are not there to specifically talk about academics, but the relationships they build can help impact a student’s trajectory in school.

“You’re there to build relationships with the child to help them develop self-esteem to see the world from a different perspective,” he said. “You’re there to encourage them to work together and respect each other. It helps them think about different careers, just because you help them believe they can do it.”

Being a good mentor does not take special training or skills, Herron said. The main thing is to be consistent, to show up for mentoring sessions every week, and to show a real interest in the students, their lives and their interests, so the students don’t feel like you’re there, just to be there.

“What makes a good mentor? Following through with your word, passion. You have to be a role model that the child can look up to without question. Be that example that kids need.”

i For more information about becoming a KPS mentor, contact Jesse Herron at herronjt@kalamazoopublicschools.net or (269) 251- 3515.



KPS mentors Johnny Lee, left, and Donte Hudson, right, visit once a week with students from Spring Valley Center for Exploration, front row, from left, Deangelo Kirk, King Scott, Jordan Brown, Giovanni Reyes-Vargas, and Donovan Campbell; and back row, from left, Elijah Campbell, Ja’Kell Kent, and Scott Ford.

THE ARTS CONNECT US.

Please consider supporting the ARTS this gift-giving season, so we can continue to promote, create opportunities and support artists and art organizations through funding, grants and technical assistance.

72% OF AMERICANS BELIEVE THE ARTS UNIFY US REGARDLESS OF AGE, RACE OR ETHNICITY.*

ac
arts council
of greater kalamazoo

Donate today at **Visit KalamazooArts.org/donate/**

* Source: Randy Cohen, Americansforthearts.org, March 2021

FIND YOUR JOY

The Y is a place for families to grow and get stronger together. Join in December for the best savings value as you plan for a year of learning new skills, getting your exercise in, and priceless family bonding.

December Promo: Free InBody scans for adults AND \$0 Joiner’s Fee (\$75 value!)

JOIN NOW
YMCA of
Greater Kalamazoo

New Dual Enrollment Plan Expands Opportunities at WMU

KALAMAZOO Public Schools and Western Michigan University are launching a new dual enrollment partnership that will provide KPS students with more access to classes at WMU.

Western has reduced their dual enrollment fees to less than the state reimbursement for dual enrollment classes, meaning KPS students can take the classes without incurring additional out-of-pocket costs.

“The new dual-enrollment agreement removes financial barriers and provides more equitable access to higher education, especially for first-generation students,” said Dr. Tracy Miller, Coordinator of Post-secondary Pathways, Instruction, & Student Services.

Providing access to dual enrollment is essential because, Miller said, “Dual enrollment supports a smoother transition from high school to college and increases college readiness and success skills. Students can also save time by earning college credits early, which promotes early degree comple-

tion and attainment, positioning students for early entry into the workforce.”

One KPS program that will be taking advantage of the tuition change is the Multilingual Learner Services program. The KPS-WMU agreement, aimed at enhancing student learning and creating new academic pathways, opens doors for students to earn college credits in Spanish while still in high school.

The program was unveiled Oct. 31 with a celebration that included a small group of KPS students observing a Spanish class at WMU and touring the campus.



Dr. Pablo Pastrana-Pérez, chair of the WMU Spanish Department, spoke to students in Spanish.



Wessam Abdelaziz, the coordinator of KPS's multilingual learner, talks about how the lower cost dual enrollment classes will open opportunities for KPS students to complete credits that can count toward a college minor in Spanish.



KPS Superintendent Dr. Darrin Slade talks about the importance of exposing student post-secondary educational opportunities



"The partnership between Western Michigan University and Kalamazoo Public Schools will expand learning opportunities for our students, allowing them to challenge themselves, gain exposure to college life, and envision their next level of educational success," said Dr. Darrin Slade, superintendent of Kalamazoo Public Schools. "The expanded dual enrollment program in Spanish will prepare students to graduate from high school with skills that will help them thrive in a global society."

This program allows eligible students to work toward the equivalent of a Spanish minor at WMU by the time they complete high school. During the 2024-25 academic year, dual-enrollment courses will be offered on WMU's Kalamazoo campus.

"We are thrilled to offer this partnership to KPS students, helping them gain valuable college experience

while expanding their language skills," said Dr. Jason Glass, associate vice president for teaching and learning at WMU. "This program aligns with WMU's mission, 'So that all may learn,' fostering equitable access to education and promoting pathways for student success."

Dr. Pablo Pastrana-Pérez, associate professor of Spanish and chair of the Spanish Department, added, "We look forward to providing KPS students with an engaging, university-level experience in Spanish that not only challenges them academically but also gives them a head start on their future careers."

Kalamazoo Central sophomore Antonio Nunez was one of the students who participated in the presentation and campus tour. He plans to try the dual enrollment program.

"I think it's a good opportunity to get a minor in Spanish. They're really willing to help you," said Nunez,

ON THE COVER:

Fiona Hagan, a Western Michigan University sophomore, third from the right, guides KPS students, from left, Amairany Arevalo, Taliyah Hanks, Alia Alvarez, Madison Luchies, Antonio Nunez, and Nancy Mejia-Garcia through the halls of Brown Hall as they learn about WMU and KPS's new dual enrollment agreement.

KPS students Alia Alvarez, Taliyah Hanks, and Madison Luchies leave Brown Hall to tour the rest of the WMU campus.



WMU Spanish professor Dr. Mercedes Tasende, left, and Dr. Irma Lopez, dean of the Lee Honors College, right, speak with KPS student Antonio Nunez about the opportunities for dual enrollment.

who noted that the reduced costs will be very important for students. "That's a really big deal. Most students don't have the money to pay for dual enrollment."

He encouraged other students to take advantage of the new program. "It's a really good opportunity," he said. "You should take it. Spanish is a good second language because there are a lot of things you can do with it."

The initiative will give KPS students unique access to college-level courses, accelerating their academic journey and helping them prepare for higher education. Wessam Abdelaziz, coordinator of Multilingual Learner Services and World Languages for KPS, calls it a step forward in equity and opportunity.

"For years, financial costs have limited students' access to advanced Spanish courses, but now, with little to no out-of-pocket expenses, we are leveling the playing field," he said. "This program not only saves families from significant financial burdens but also empowers students to achieve academic milestones that will open doors in college, careers and beyond. This is the kind of access and opportunity that our students deserve."

This partnership underscores the commitment of both WMU and KPS to nurturing the next generation of bilingual professionals, helping students get ahead in their post-secondary plans while enhancing educational opportunities in the community.

All photos courtesy Mark Bugnaski / WMU

Farmers Market Provides Lesson in Good Taste

KPS Food Service teamed up with Tom Maceri & Son Produce, wholesale produce distributors, to hold a farmers' market for Washington Writers' Academy students in October. Students received food tokens that they could use to choose and "purchase" fresh fruits and veggies — including apples, pears, lettuce, peppers and squash. It was a tasty nutrition lesson that the food service department and Maceri & Son hope to replicate at other elementary schools later in the year.



Jha'Novia Charleston, Alazae Parker, and Antonio Duncan purchase a few pears before moving on the the vegetables.



Caleb Howard buys apples from Kimberly Morey, the KPS Food Services manager.



A'Jhon Carver-Turner prepares to pay for her produce.



A'myah Lott shows off her produce pick.



Kingston Bragg bags a butternut squash, while Landon Greenleaf buys lettuce to take home.



DID YOU KNOW?

All recent Michigan high school graduates can earn a skills certificate or degree **TUITION FREE** with the NEW Community College Guarantee

WINTER REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN
CLASSES BEGIN JAN. 13



www.kvcc.edu/myfuture



Corrections

In the October edition of the *Excelsior*, a cutline for a photo of Maple Street Magnet School for the Arts students misidentified Malaika Sow. Here is the photo with the corrected cutline.



Maple Street WEB leaders are ready to help younger students. From left: Marcella Thomas, Malaika Sow, Richelle Jn Baptiste, Liam Ailes, Remi Morcus, and Rosie VanDenBerg.

In the November edition of the *Excelsior*, the article on alum Nick Stamper should have said his mother Dr. Christina Stamper, a professor of management at Western Michigan University, helped him identify a major in logistics and supply chain management to help in his career plans.

Norrix and Central Seek Grads for 2024 Alumni Day

L OY NORRIX High School graduates from 2020 to 2024 are invited to share their post-secondary experiences with current students on Alumni Day from 12:30 to 2:20 p.m on Friday, Dec. 20.

Interested grads should contact Kelly Reimink by Dec. 19. Email Reiminkkl@kalamazoopublicschools.net or phone (269) 337-0200 ext 13601. Share your name, year you graduated from LNHS, your university/program/major/military/trade school and an email and cell phone number.

KALAMAZOO CENTRAL seeks graduates from 2020-24 to meet with students from 8:30 to 11:40 a.m. on Dec. 20. Alumni must pre-register to participate. Alumni are asked to wear college gear, sorority/fraternity letters, or work or armed services uniforms.

Alumni can register at docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSepSFx5ohzklcrPwu17Ge00NU-c6Oyfe9xMKJFsXS2Rtg06O6w/viewform. For questions, contact Principal Valerie Boggan at bogganva@kalamazoopublicschools.net.

FLU VACCINE WALK-IN HOURS

MON-THUR
8 A.M. - 4 P.M.
(CLOSED NOON - 1 P.M.)

📍 311 E. ALCOTT ST

Bring a valid photo ID
and any insurance
cards. Ask us about
financial assistance,
if needed.



KALAMAZOO
COUNTY GOVERNMENT
Health & Community Services Department

Holiday Books 2024

KALAMAZOO Public Schools librarians see hundreds of new titles each year — and always seem to know how to pick the right book for the right kid. Here are some of their picks for you to give as gifts during the upcoming holiday season. Funny, challenging, scary, and exhilarating — there are titles for everyone.



Jill Franz, Maple Street librarian

PERSONAL FAVORITES:



Feed

by M.T. Anderson

Ten years after first reading this book, I still think about the premise and whether we as a society are headed to this dystopian future. In a future where most people have computer implants in their heads to control their environment, a boy meets an unusual girl who is in serious trouble.

Mexikid: A Graphic Memoir



by Pedro Martín

This book made me laugh out loud while I was reading it. Pedro Martín embarks on a trip to Mexico with 11 of his family members in their Winnebago to help move their abuelito to the United States to live with them. However, their grandfather won't move until he finishes a quest that becomes a part of Pedro's unforgettable journey.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STUDENTS:



The First State of Being

by Erin Enrada Kelly

The year is 1999 and 12-year-old Michael is worried about a lot of things, his bullies, his single mom, the crush he has on his 15-year-old babysitter Gibby and Y2K. But when the world's first time traveler, a boy named Ridge, appears out of nowhere, Michael discovers there is more to life than stockpiling supplies and pining over Gibby. It turns out that Ridge is brave, confident and carefree, things Michael wishes he could be. Unlike Michael, however, Ridge isn't where he belongs. And when Michael discovers that Ridge has a book that tells the events of the next 20 years Michael decides he needs that book. But how far is he willing to go to get it?

Tenth Mistake of Hank Hooperman



by Jennifer Choldenko

When 11-year-old Hank's mother does not come home after a week, he and his toddler sister, Boo, seek out the stranger listed as their emergency contact, even though it means social workers, a new school, and having to answer questions about his mom that he has been trying to keep secret.

Impossible Creatures



by Katherine Rundell

Adventure, quirk, wit, imagination, tiny dragons, loss, love, secret doorways to magical worlds

— this book has it all and more! Mal and Christopher embark on a wild adventure, racing from island to island, searching for someone who can explain why the magic is fading and why magical creatures are suddenly dying. They consult sphinxes, battle kraken, and negotiate with dragons. But the closer they get to the dark truth of what's happening, the clearer it becomes: no one else can fix this. If the Archipelago is to be saved, Mal and Christopher will have to do it themselves.



Tonya Colvin, Kalamazoo Central High School librarian

PERSONAL FAVORITES:



Snitch

by Allison Van Diepen

Love the tension between the characters. The love conflict is spot on! Julia DiVino tries hard not to get mixed-up with the gangs at South Bay High School, but when Eric Valiente enters into her life, everything changes.

Vey: the Prisoner of Cell 25



by Richard Paul Evans

GREAT character development. I learned so much science, which was easily explained for the layman in this book. When 14-year-old Michael discovers he has special electrical powers, he and

his best friends become aware that there are other teens with similar powers, but something or someone is hunting them. After Michael's mother is kidnapped, he will need to rely on his powers and his friends to rescue his mom, protect himself, and save the others.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STUDENTS:

Better than the Movies



by Lynn Painter

Movie lovers gobble up this book. The love story is sweet and fluffy. Michael, to whom Liz Buxbaum gave her heart long ago, has returned but to get his attention and, perhaps, a prom date she must scheme with her nemesis Wes, her next-door neighbor. A sequel just came out called *Nothing Like the Movies*.

A Good Girl's Guide to Murder



by Holly Jackson

A television show based on the novel came out recently, so the book has lots of fans! As her senior capstone project, Pippa Fitz-Amobi is determined to find the real killer in a closed, local murder case, but not everyone wants her meddling in the past.



Caraval
by Stephanie Garber

This is not a new book, but it is getting buzz on BookTok. This is the first in a trilogy. Sisters, Scarlett and Tella, leave their cruel father to attend Caraval — a faraway once-a-year performance where the audience participates in the show. Tella is kidnapped and Scarlett is aided by a mysterious sailor and finds herself enmeshed in a game of love, heartbreak, and magic.



Michele Coash, Loy Norrix High School librarian

PERSONAL FAVORITES:



The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay

by Michael Chabon

My all-time favorite. In 1939, two cousins create The Escapist, a comic book character who fights Nazis. Spanning decades through the Golden Age of comics and mid-century New York City, *Kavalier & Clay* shows the effects of World War II on American life.



The Good Luck Girls

by Charlotte Nicole Davis

This is a new fave. Five outlaw girls escape enslavement in the monster-filled lands of Arketta. A great entry into the dystopian genre with a twist. At its core, this is a western complete with horses, narrow escapes, and stagecoach robberies.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STUDENTS:

Clementine Books 1 & 2

by Tillie Walden

Teens try to survive in the world of The Walking Dead. Clementine



(continued on page 13)

Holiday Books 2024 *(continued from page 12)*

navigates normal teen trials of love and rivalry with a zombie apocalypse backdrop. These graphic novels are a sequel for the character from the Telltale *The Walking Dead* video games. Book 3 releases in 2025.



Dungeons and Drama

by Kristy Boyce

What's to say other than it's so cute! A high school theater aficionado hatches a fake dating scheme with a boy who works at her father's board game store. As these things go, they catch feelings for each other. A lot of great references for musical theater nerds and role play game geeks alike!

The Greatest Stories Ever Played: Videos Games and the Evolution of Storytelling

by Dustin Hansen

Gamers can read about the history



of narrative in their favorite video games. Warning: heavy spoilers for *Last of Us*, *Red Dead Redemption II*, *The Witcher III: Wild Hunt*

and many more in case you have yet to work through your Steam wishlist.



Terri Luzenske, MLK-Westwood & Indian Prairie librarian

PERSONAL FAVORITES:



The Night War

by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley

Kimberly Brubaker Bradley creates a new and different story, one with a mystical twist that explores a little-known slice of World War II history, a highly unusual friendship, and the power of choosing courage even when — especially when — there are no good choices to be had. A young Jewish girl who has lost everything but her life must decide whether to risk even that to bring others to freedom.

The Egypt Game

by Zilpha Keatley Snyder

The first time Melanie Ross meets April Hall, she's not sure they have anything in common. But she soon discovers that they both love



anything to do with ancient Egypt. When they stumble upon a deserted storage yard, Melanie and April decide it's the perfect spot for the Egypt Game. Before long there are six Egyptians, and they all meet to wear costumes, hold ceremonies, and work on their secret code. Everyone thinks it's just a game until strange things start happening.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STUDENTS:



The Yellow Bus

by Loren Long

A yellow school bus enjoys carrying children and older adults around town, and when it is forgotten, it still finds joy and purpose providing a home for the unhoused and a playground for goats in a farmer's field. In its final resting place, it

continues to find happiness as a gathering place for new, unexpected friends. With stirring black-and-white artwork and powerful pops of color, *The Yellow Bus* is a story that spans generations with an enduring and poignant message about new beginnings, happiness, and hope.



While You're Asleep

by Emmy Kastner

When the Earth slowly spins and light fades away, animals hunker down for bedtime in this funny, raucous, and ultimately satisfying tale. The narrator's cozy story is interrupted by fireflies flickering, raccoons enjoying chicken dinners, and foxes planning a nighttime festival. The narrator eventually gives up trying to get the nocturnal creatures to go to sleep like everyone else.

(continued on page 14)



Family

Wednesday, December 4 | 5–7 pm | Central
Need a special gift for someone you love? Come use your creativity to make something fun!



Teens

Wednesdays, December 4 & 11 | 3 pm | Central
Come hang out with other manga and comic book fans to chat about what we're reading and watch anime!

Learn more at kpl.gov



**Kalamazoo
Public Library
kpl.gov**

Holiday Books 2024 *(continued from page 13)*



Patsy Richardson,
acquisitions & cataloging
librarian

PERSONAL FAVORITES:



Hummingbird
by Natalie Lloyd
A heartfelt story about a girl who — armed with her snazzy wheelchair — refuses to let

her brittle bone disease stand in the way of adventure. When 12-year-old Olive, who suffers from brittle bone disease and has been homeschooled all her life, finally attends school in person she discovers fitting in is not that easy. Overhearing stories about a magic wish-granting hummingbird that supposedly lives nearby, Olive is determined to find it and make her wish come true. With a group of unlikely allies-turned-friends, Olive learns she isn't the only one who has deep desires and that her differences may be her biggest asset.



The Rabbit Listened
by Cori Doerrfeld
When something sad happens, Taylor doesn't know where to turn. All the animals are sure they have the answer. The chicken wants to talk

it out, but Taylor doesn't feel like chatting. The bear thinks Taylor should get angry, but that's not quite right either. One by one, the animals try to tell Taylor how to act, and one by one they fail to offer comfort. Then the rabbit arrives. All the rabbit does is listen . . . which is just what Taylor needs. With its spare, poignant text and irresistibly sweet illustration, *The Rabbit Listened* is about how to comfort and heal the people in your life, by taking the time to carefully, lovingly, gently listen.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STUDENTS:



Band Camp series
by Brian "Smitty" Smith
The band is getting together in this brand-new, laugh-out-loud graphic

chapter book series starring four musical instruments in their first year at band camp! Cordelia the accordion, Trey the triangle, Kaylee the ukulele, and Zook the kazoo meet when they're assigned to Bunk J — nicknamed "Junk Bunk" by the other instruments. Despite their differences, they become fast friends as they explore the wonders and challenges of the camp, including experiences with nature, food fights, and camp pranks.

The Book that Almost Rhymed



by Omar Abed
What do you do with an interrupting sibling? Especially when she's stepping all over your story with wild ideas that don't. Even. Rhyme. Knights riding rockets? Dancing pirates? Who's ever heard of a fire-breathing armadillo?! But when this big brother realizes his sister just

might be improving his yarn — and doing it with an impressive surprise of her own. Turns out adventure is way more fun when you build it together, rhyme by daring rhyme.

Rise of the Green Flame (Kwame's Magic Quest series)



by Bernard Mensah
Magic, adventure, and friendship come together in Kwame's *Magic Quest*, an action-packed, fully illustrated early chapter book series. The day has finally come for 8-year-old Kwame to start Nkonyaa School and learn magic! Kwame is excited to begin magical training with his new friends at school, but he can't access his magic powers! He starts to worry... what if he has no magic at all?



Need Help with Groceries?

Pick-up and Home Delivery Available

Both Fresh and Non-Perishable Items

No Income Verification or IDs Required

For More Info:

Call
269-343-3663

Email
info@kzooff.org

Visit
www.kzooff.org



Does an Older Adult in Your Life Need Some Help? Milestone is here for you, and for them!

- Meals on Wheels
- Home Accessibility Modifications
- Home Repairs
- Home Safety Assessments
- Companionship
- MI Choice Waiver
- Personal Emergency Response System

Call today
269-382-0515

Milestone Senior Services is a 501(c)3,
many clients qualify for grant-funded services.



ARTISTS' CORNER

Art teacher **Emma Cunningham's** fourth-grade students at Parkwood-Upjohn Elementary School have been working on apple doodle collages this fall. Inspired by autumnal changes and colors, students first learned about the difference between warm and cool colors. Then, students discovered different artistic possibilities by creating patterns. Students drew their apples in pencil, then they used permanent markers to add patterns. Lastly, students cut and pasted their apples on a dark background.



Navaeh Stanfill



Maxwell Wissner



Peyton Patterson



**If your need
help paying your
water bill, help is
available.**

Si necesita ayuda para pagar su factura de agua o alcantarillado, hay ayuda disponible. Para obtener información en español, el llame al 311 o al (269) 337-8000.

WWW.PROTECTYOURWATER.NET



The City of Kalamazoo is making critical investments in our water and wastewater systems. These investments are funded by all of us through the rates that we pay. Rates in Kalamazoo are still low relative to other communities, but we understand rising costs may create a hardship for some households. Financial and other help options are listed below.

Payment Plans & Due Date Extensions are available. Call 311 or (269) 337-8000 for help.

The Community Action Agency of SW Michigan can help low-income households pay overdue bills. Call 211 or 1-877-422-2726 for more information.

Consumers Energy offers a free home analysis that can help customers save money by reducing energy and water usage. Call 1-888-316-8014 for more information.

www.kalamazoocity.org/Residents/Water-Sewer-Service/Help-with-Utility-Bills

City of Kalamazoo
241 W South Street
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE



EVENT FRIDAY, DEC. 6 | 6 P.M. & 7:15 P.M. | FREE



ART HOP: KALAMAZOO MANDOLIN AND GUITAR ORCHESTRA

Experience the magic of the season with two live performances by the Kalamazoo Mandolin and Guitar Orchestra at the December Art Hop. For more details, visit kalamazoomuseum.org.

NEW EXHIBIT NOW - JAN. 5, 2025 | FREE

MYSTERY AND BENEVOLENCE: MASONIC & ODD FELLOWS FOLK ART

Featuring over 80 carvings, sculptures, textiles and regalia, "Mystery and Benevolence: Masonic and Odd Fellows Folk Art" brings to light the histories, symbolism and values of the Freemasons and the Independent Order of the Odd Fellows.



FREE EVENT DEC. 27 - 28, 2024 & JAN. 2 - 4, 2025

WINTER BREAK: MYSTERIES AT THE MUSEUM

Mysteries await you this winter break at the Kalamazoo Valley Museum! Experience exciting hands-on activities, STEM Mysteries, a magician, planetariums shows and MORE!



Winter Break Planetarium Shows | \$3 per person

- 11 a.m. | **One World, One Sky** | Pre-K - Grade 1 | 30 min.
- 2 p.m. | **Polaris: The Space Submarine and the Mystery of the Polar Night** | Grades 3 & up | 29 min.

EXHIBIT LAST CHANCE TO SEE! NOW - JAN. 19, 2025 | FREE



KALAMAZOO STATE HOSPITAL: 165 YEARS OF PSYCHIATRIC CARE

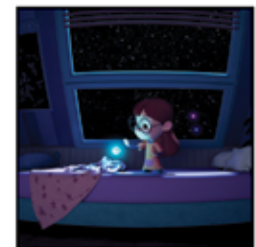
Learn about the history of the patients, employees and buildings on the campus of Michigan's longest-operating mental hospital.

PLANETARIUM EXPERIENCE | DEC. SHOWS | \$3 PER PERSON

Visit kalamazoomuseum.org for details.

Beyond the Sun | 11 a.m. Sat & 1 p.m. Sun | 26 min. | Grades 1 & up

Satellites reveal how interconnected Earth's ecosystems are, helping us understand the impact of human activities on climate change and the delicate balance of our planet's environment.



The Sky Above Us | 2 p.m. Sat & Sun | 35 min. | Grades 4 & up

Learn about some of the "celestial wonders" that can be seen overhead in Michigan in this live, season-focused program.



HOURS: Tuesday - Saturday | 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Sunday | Noon - 4 p.m.

FREE GENERAL ADMISSION

SPECIAL NOTICE: The museum will be closed Dec. 24 - 26 and Dec. 31 - Jan. 1.

The Kalamazoo Valley Museum is operated by Kalamazoo Valley Community College and is governed by its Board of Trustees.



230 N. Rose St., Kalamazoo
kalamazoomuseum.org | 269.373.7990