

**Volume 2 Issue 8**  
**April, 2008**

**District Events:****April 2nd**

CCC Meeting 4:00 p.m.

**April 9th**

Full Day of School;  
In-Service Cancelled

**April 11th**

Snow Make Up Day  
Full Day of School

**April 16th**

CCC Meeting 4:00 p.m.

**April 17th**

Tips and Tools Night for  
Parents 5:30 - 8:00 p.m.

**April 21st**

School Board Meeting  
7:00 p.m.

**April 22nd**

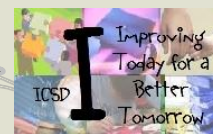
CCC Meeting 4:00 p.m.

**April 23rd**

1:00 Dismissal  
Staff Development

**May 1st**

High School Parent-  
Teacher Conferences  
3:45 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

**STATE AUDIT RESULTS** *By Devin Embray, Superintendent*

Late in the summer of 2007 we were on the watch list from the Department of Education at the state level as a potential district in need of assistance in the near future. By the time school started we were taken off of the watch list by the state. In looking at our history of being on the watch list or not, we had indications that we had been off and on the watch list since NLCB (No Child Left Behind) legislation passed. In an effort to be proactive, we asked the Audit team from the Department of Education to come in and audit our district enabling us to design and implement action plans to assist our district in staying off of the watch list.



The Audit team, comprised of Lou Howell and Theresa McCune, came in and interviewed staff, had staff take a perception survey, and asked the district for many different documents for further review. Upon analyzing the huge amount of documents that we provided them, compiling the data from the staff surveys as well as condensing the information from the interviews, Lou and Theresa came back to share out the results of the audit. One note; the Department of Education stated that they would come and do the audit only if we agreed to go through the complete process from collecting the data to designing and implementing action steps to address the areas that they saw as potential improvement areas. We agreed.

In the share out session from the state, Lou and Theresa were extremely impressed by what they found in the audit results. They in fact ranked our district a nine out of ten for what forward moving districts do. In fact, they were quoted as saying, "You have in place what MOST districts do not have in place [Iowa or the Country]" They were very impressed with what we do have for processes and structures in our district and encouraged us to stay the course and to make sure that decisions were being made on what is effective verses popular.

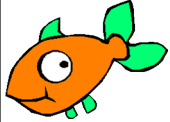
In addition to the many strengths that were mentioned we also had areas for further study. Now, it would have been great had they told us what exactly we needed to do to improve, but that didn't happen, rather, they asked us reflective questions about things that we could be looking into. Our Curriculum Coordinating Council along with the building leadership teams will be analyzing the audit findings and will decide on an action plan for next year. There will be much work to accomplish in a very short time in order to have a plan in place for the beginning of next year.

The State Audit team will be at our April 16<sup>th</sup> CCC meeting at Bill's Pizza. They will share out the audit results to our CCC and Board of Education. If you would like to attend please feel free to do so. The meeting is set to begin at 4:00 P.M. and run until approximately 6:00 P.M.

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## March Fish! Nominees



Jackie Berryhill ó 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Math Instructor

Mary Jean Blaisdell ó East Elementary and Early Childhood Principal

Jenny Beatty - Kindergarten Instructor

Angie Bonefas ó East Elementary Special Education Instructor

Dianne Ossman ó Early Childhood Education Center Secretary

Linda Hanna ó West kitchen

Ellie Zieser ó Early Childhood Education Center Associate

Penni Gaul ó Early Childhood Education Center Instructor

Mary Ann Crawford ó West Elementary Special Education Instructor

Jan Reed ó 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Science Instructor

Karl Kurt ó HS Principal

Nikki Matthiesen ó 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Instructor

Kay Grover ó 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Instructor

Dave Ross ó Middle School Principal

Holly Mueller ó 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Instructor

Leah Martinson ó Middle School Special Education Associate

Billie Herriage ó Middle School Special Education Associate

Dennis Corkery ó East Elementary Custodian

Josh Lyons ó West Elementary Principal

Virginia Lake ó East Elementary Media Specialist and TAG Instructor

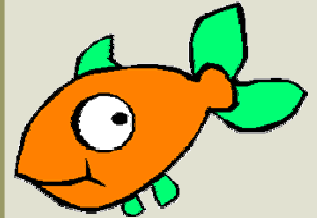
Renita Wieland ó West Elementary and Middle School Media Specialist

Judy Olsen ó High School Media Specialist

Steve Noyes ó Technology Director

Mary Cooksley ó Curriculum and School Improvement Director

Nancy Black ó 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Instructor



**Nominate your  
child's teacher  
or ICSD  
colleague for  
membership  
in the  
Fish! Philosophy  
Community!**

**Call Mary at  
334-7400**

**Fish  
Philosophy  
Principles**

**Choose  
Your  
Attitude**

**Play**

**Be There**

**Make  
Their Day**

**3<sup>rd</sup> and Last  
T - n - T Night  
For the year  
April 17th**

## Helping Your Child Succeed

### *A Single Behavior Doesn't Define Your Child*

By Mary Cooksley, Director, Curriculum and School Improvement

Remember the time when you, as an adolescent, you were embarrassed to walk with your parents, or didn't want to go to the store or the movies with them? Well, we would like to think our children are different then we were because we are "cooler" than our parents and we "care" more for our children more than our parents were when we were that age. Well, not so much, I am afraid to say.

It is a frustrating time to go through it not just for them, but for parents as well. You may even be embarrassed at times when your child speaks to you inappropriately when they are in front of people you know and respect. But wait a minute. It isn't just that that is bothering you it is you think your relationship with your child is deteriorating. You feel as if you can't get a straight answer from them anymore. They don't want to be around you, they are rude, and they don't mind embarrassing you in front of others. It seems like their friends' kids don't do this it they are polite when they come to your house. So what have you done wrong?

### **TAKE A DEEP BREATH!**

Ask yourself some important questions before you jump to the conclusion that you have failed, somehow, as a parent.

- Other than this, does my child seem happy and well-adjusted?
- Do others tell me that they enjoy and appreciate them for being them?

If you can answer yes to these two questions, then your problem is minor, but one that needs to be addressed immediately, nonetheless.

### What you need to do:

- Begin an open dialogue with your adolescent
- Tell them how their behavior makes you feel
- Tell them how your child can please you by using appropriate behavior and model that behavior by giving your child compliments and telling them what they have done to please you.
- Don't let a single behavior upset you too much (I know it is difficult)
- Remember your child looks to you for love and support and for someone to listen, guide and teach them.

### **Quick Tips:**

- Begin an open dialogue with your child now!
- Believe it or not, even adolescents want to please their parents!

## Parent Needs Assessment Given in February

By Mary Cooksley, Director of Curriculum and School Improvement

Each year the Independence Community School District asks parents to complete a needs assessment survey. This survey helps the district make decisions about programs and policies. The results from the survey also help determine what we are doing well and what changes need to take place from a parent's perspective. The district asked parents again this year to take the survey during the spring Parent Teacher Conferences at each building.

Whenever a survey of this type is given, statistically, a certain percentage of participants must complete the survey for the results to be reliable & meaningful generalizations are able to be formed around the results. This year we did not have a large percentage of parents complete the survey, leaving the results less than reliable. A total of 107 parents took the survey which is approximately 13% of all parents in the district.



Even though the results are not statistically reliable and we can not make any generalizations based on them, we still can use the information to increase effectiveness in our buildings. Teachers and students are being surveyed this month and the results of those needs assessments will be published in next month's newsletter.

The following graph and chart display the results from the parent needs assessment survey. The areas highlighted in blue appear to be strengths across the district with the parents who participated in the survey in February. If you are interested in seeing the results by building, see your child's building administrator.

	Strongly/Agree	Strongly/Disagree	Not enough information to respond
Block scheduling is meeting my child's need	50%	50%	
The HS curriculum is varied	70%	30%	
The HS prepares students for after HS	60%	40%	
The activities program is well-balanced	61.1%	19.4%	19.4%
I access Power School regularly (grades on-line)	52.8%	48.9%	
My child's school is open to input and is welcoming	85.1%	11.2%	3.7%
Teachers or the school keep me well informed of academic progress	91.6%	6.5%	1.9%
GLE's have been adequately communicated to me	79.4%	17.8%	2.8%
My child is safe at school	91.6%	6.5%	1.9%
I know what is happening in my child's classroom	82.3%	12.1%	5.6%
Technology is up-to-date and skills taught	74.8%	13.1%	12.1%
The schools are clean and well-maintained	88.8%	8.4%	2.8%

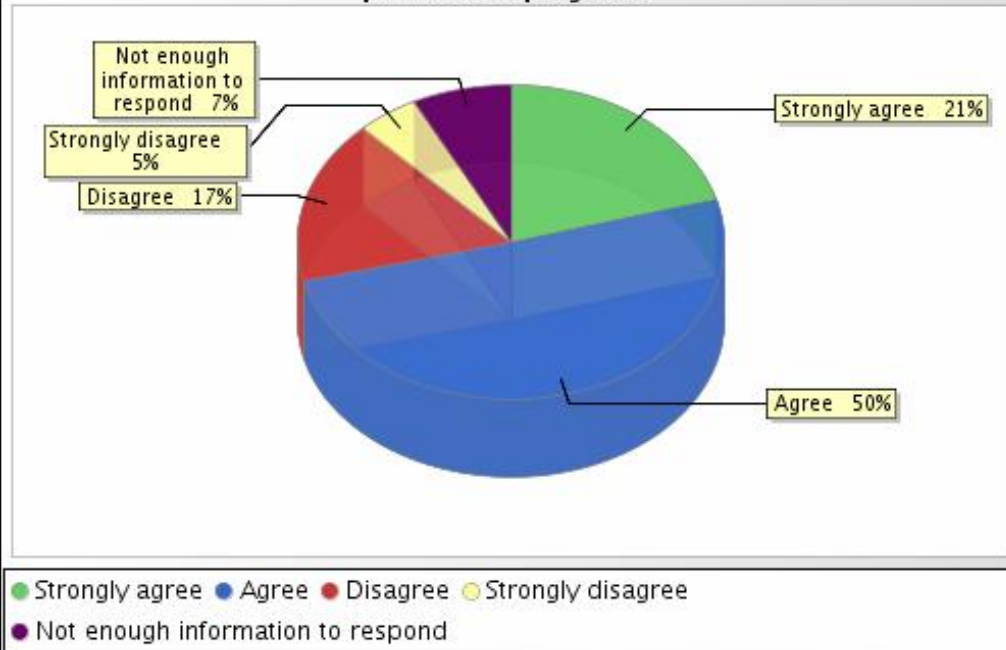
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## Parent Needs Assessment Given in February

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By Mary Cooksley, Director, Curriculum and School Improvement

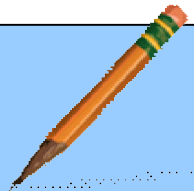
**Overall, I understand and agree with the direction of the school district's policies and programs.**



According to the survey results, 71% of parents either strongly agree or agree with the direction of the school district.

### Strengths At-A-Glance

- ICSD schools are open to input and are welcoming
- Teachers or the school keep parents informed regarding academic progress
- GLEs have been adequately communicated to parents
- Parents feel students are safe at school
- Parents feel as if they know what is happening in their child's classroom
- Technology is up-to-date and the necessary skills are being taught
- ICSD schools are clean and well-maintained



**Join us for the  
3<sup>rd</sup>  
T - n - T Night  
"Tips and Tools"  
For Parents**

**April 17<sup>th</sup>  
Middle School  
5:30-8:00**

•Internet Safety•, •The Plug-In-Drug•,  
•Introduction to Digital Cameras•, •Making  
Sense of Test Scores•, and •Healthy Snacking for  
Your Kids•!

Food • Prizes • Free Babysitting - Tips and Takes



## Principal's Corner - Mary Jean Blaisdell

Is it safe to say it's spring yet? Whether or not it's here to stay, as spring approaches, students are often shedding their warmer clothing for lighter jackets. It is at this time of year, however, that we need to be watchful of weather changes. Please see that your child is dressed in layers of clothing so that, as the day warms, outer layers can be removed or put back on as the day cools. Boots and snow pants will still be required while the ground remains soggy. Students are asked to stay out of wet areas but as the snow continues to melt and the ground begins to dry, this may be difficult to totally avoid. An extra pair of pants and socks is a good

idea for students to have on hand in case they get a little wet during recess.

April brings several things to our calendar. Students will celebrate Earth day on April 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> with various activities related to our environment. At the end of April, we begin our last round of assessment for the year.

**Looking ahead...**  
**The last school day**  
**for students is**  
**Tuesday, June 3.**

Thanks,  
Mary Jean Blaisdell



## Kindergarten Corner

Kindergarten Round-Up was so much fun at East Elementary! We were excited to have the students attend. We look forward to seeing them again this fall.

April is a month filled with signs of spring. Earth Day is April 22. Sondra Cabell, the naturalist from Fontana Park, will be coming in celebration of this special day on April 24-25 at East. We will study the rain forest and how our actions influence our environment. We will encourage our families to do their best to recycle!

## Second Grade Scene

Second grade students are working full speed ahead as we are in our last trimester. The winter was challenging with so many school schedule changes, and we are looking forward to fewer interruptions.

Students continue to work on addition and subtraction facts. They are doing subtraction with and without regrouping. Knowing the basic subtraction facts makes this process much easier. We are looking forward to a presentation from Bank Iowa to celebrate Teach Children to Save Day. Several Earth Day activities will also take place toward the end of this month. Hopefully spring like weather will allow us to do many of the activities outdoors.

### Mileage Club Volunteers Needed!

If you would like to devote 15-30 minutes each week outside at recess to help students reach their goals in the Mileage Club, please call East Elementary to volunteer your time!

### Mentors Needed!

If you are interested in being a mentor and volunteering your time to work with a child for approximately 30 minutes each week on a regular basis, please call and let us know!

### Wanted: Substitute Associates:

If you are available to substitute occasionally as a classroom, office, or library associate (duties vary), please call 334-7425.

**We need YOU!**

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### April

**Apr 9 FULL DAY OF SCHOOL**  
**In-Service**  
**Cancelled**

**Apr 11 FULL DAY OF SCHOOL**  
**In-Service**  
**Cancelled**

**Apr 17 Lifetouch: Spring Pictures for East**

**Apr 23 1:00 Dismissal**  
**In-Service**

**Apr 28 - May 2**  
**Spring Testing**

**May 13 Farm Safety Day**

**May 14 1:00 Dismissal**  
**In-Service**

**May 26 No School**  
**Memorial Day**

**June 3 Last Day of School**

Box tops for Education/  
Pop Can Tabs/Milk  
Moola for Schoola

We continue to collect General Mills Box Tops, Pop Can Tabs & bottle caps and bag tops from Kwik Star products. This is a good way to help us earn extra money for things we need. Thanks!

If you are interested in spending time at school or at home sorting/cutting and redeeming these items for our school, please call 334-7425.

## West Elementary Update

By Josh Lyons, Principal

As the winter season comes to an end and the snow begins to disappear and replaced by the colors of spring, West Elementary continues on its way to being a great place for all of our students to continue to grow and learn.

The Iowa Test of Basic Skills was given in February and finally wrapped up during the first week of March. The goal was to have the testing completed during the first week of February.

However, with snow days and illness sweeping through the building, the testing took much longer than expected.

We hope to receive these results back in our hands by the middle of April forwarding scores on to parents soon thereafter. Our district and staff will utilize these test results to assist in the decision making process for continuous improvement in curriculum and instruction.

West Elementary will still require students to wear the appropriate attire outside for recess. As the snow melts on the playground, the grounds are becoming water logged and extremely muddy. We want students to be able to play on the playground area; however will still require students to wear both snow pants and boots until the ground dries out a bit more. If students do not have the required clothing to play on the playground, they will need to play on the paved road behind West.

West Elementary continues to enforce the attendance policy. With a difficult winter season and a number of illnesses, we are aware that students have needed to stay home. If your child has missed school due to illness on consecutive days, we would please ask that you provide a doctor's note to excuse your child from school. The attendance policy states that an absence is considered truant unless it is approved by the principal, nurse, or a doctor. If you have questions regarding any absences of your child, please feel free to contact the school or Mr. Lyons.

With spring upon us, the warmer weather tends to affect student behavior and not always positively. We tend to see a rise in misbehavior during school and students having difficulty concentrating on schoolwork. We continue to enforce expectations of positive student behavior, however must at times enforce consequences for misbehavior. Student behavior continues to be monitored by classroom teachers and consequences enforced at that level. At times the principal becomes involved due to behaviors being issued as level three behaviors. Consequences handed out by the principal are always communicated to parents and usually remove a student from activities during the school day such as recess, lunch, or other classroom activities that are non-academic. We continue to implement the Respect and Protect program and continuously trying to improve its effect on students.

We welcome you to stop in to have lunch with your child or attend activities your child is involved in. Please be sure to check into the office when you visit. As always, if you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call your child's teacher or the building principal, Mr. Lyons at 334-7430.

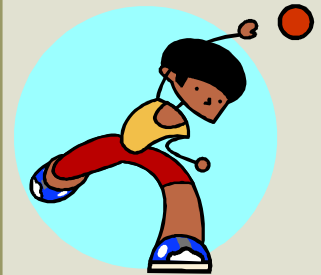
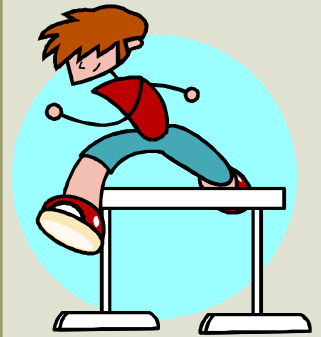


**Josh Lyons, Principal**



## WEST ELEMENTARY FIELD AND SERVICE DAY SCHEDULED FOR MAY 29<sup>th</sup>

This year's Field and Service Day at West Elementary will take place on Thursday, May 29<sup>th</sup>. West Elementary students will participate in a service project within the community in the morning and will spend the afternoon participating in different track events. Community service projects are currently being lined up and focus on students being out in the community. If you know of a good community service project, please contact Mr. Donnelly. We are encouraging parents to join in these activities and then stay around to eat lunch with their child/children. We hope to see you in the afternoon to watch students participate in the track and field events. We want to make this a fun day and an opportunity for students to give back to the community. If you have any questions about the day's events, please contact Mr. Donnelly at 319-334-7430. Friday, May 30<sup>th</sup> will be the make-up day if there is rain on Thursday the 29<sup>th</sup>. We will watch the weekly and daily forecasts closely during the week of the 29<sup>th</sup>. We may postpone this event to the 30<sup>th</sup> as early as the 28<sup>th</sup> so please be on the look out for a note stating this information prior to the 29<sup>th</sup>. More information is soon to come.



## An update from Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northeast Iowa

It's time for an update! We currently have 106 matches meeting in the Big Brothers Big Sisters mentoring program in Independence! A big "THANK YOU" to all of those that mentor in the School Based, School Based Plus or Community Based programs. We also appreciate all the support we receive from the teachers, parents and school staff. We couldn't do it without you.

This month we are meeting with the Littles in the School Based Plus and Community Based programs to ask how their match is going. And we are preparing for the end of the year survey.

However, it's not too late in the school year to be a mentor! We still have 21 Littles to be matched. Many male mentors are needed.

If you or someone you know would like to be a mentor, call me today at 319-334-3353, Val Maximovich

It's a wonderful way to make a difference in the life of a child.



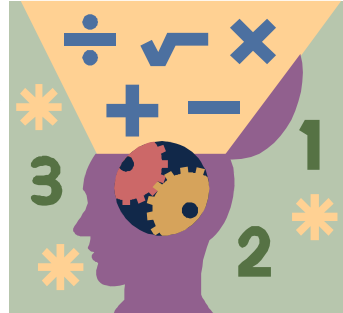
Big Brothers Big Sisters  
of Northeast Iowa



## Exercise – It does a body *and* mind good!

By Teri Schloss RN

Physical exercise does more than just build and maintain strong muscles and bones. Exercise in children has been linked to development of better motor skills, increased energy expenditure, and promotes healthier lives with a lower risk of cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, Type II diabetes, obesity and some cancers. It also can provide an outlet for releasing tension and anxiety, give children an opportunity to assume leadership roles, cooperate with others, become more assertive, independent and self controlled, enhance socialization and allow children to accept responsibility for their own actions. Add to that the enhancement of academic performance and you can see why physical education is so important in school!



Obesity in children has more than doubled in the last twenty years. Currently 12% of American high school youth are considered overweight while another 15% are at risk for becoming overweight. Here in Iowa, 66% of high school students do not currently meet the recommended levels of daily physical activity. Daily moderate activity lasting 30 minutes or 20 minutes of vigorous activity is currently recommended.

So what can we do to help our youth get fit?

- \* Eat smaller, healthier meals.
- \* Eat more fresh fruit and vegetables.
- \* Limit fruit juices and soda.
- \* Sit down as a family to eat.
- \* Discourage eating in front of a television or computer.
- \* Limit the number of times you eat out, especially at fast food restaurants.
- \* Keep television time to fewer than two hours a day.
- \* Encourage activity not just exercise.
- \* Be active yourself. You are the best role model for your child!



## Hello from the Middle School! By Dave L. Ross, Principal

After another month of snow, ice and cold the middle school still stands! More importantly, it looks as if spring may be in the air! The middle school has completed the second trimester and had parent/teacher conferences on March third and fourth. While all teachers did not have as high a percentage of parents visit them, roughly 1/3 of the teachers at middle school met with 23% of their student's parents. Given the weather conditions at the time, this figure is a testament to the commitment for education that middle school parents possess. Assuming all goes as Mr. Noyes has assured me it will, we will be having a first and second trimester awards assembly on March 27th to celebrate student attendance and honor roll recipients.

The 5-8 Band concert on March sixth proved popular. The bands were outstanding and guest soloist Mr. Devin Embray did an exemplary job as well. On March seventh 6th and 7th/8th grade Concert Bands received



**Dave Ross, Principal**

superiors at contest and on March first 7th and 8th grade Jazz Bands both received superiors at contest.

The Spring Vocal concert on March 18th was enjoyed by a large audience as well. Mr. Purdum played the accompaniment while Mr. Barloon directed. JAM, a percussion group opened the concert and was followed by 6th Choir, 7th and 8th Women's and then Men's Choir. These large groups were interspersed with solos, duets, and trios. The night ended with the 7th and 8th combined choir taking the stage.

Final results for the AEA 267 Math Bee held on Friday, March 7, 2008 are exciting as well. A total of 45 teams participated and both Independence teams placed. Team Indee

placed 7th. Team Mustangs placed 3rd, and they move on to the State Math Bee on Friday, May 9th in Fort Dodge.

Boys basketball has run its course and the IMS is now looking forward to Track. Girls open the season at West Delaware on Tuesday, April 8th and boys begin their season on April 15th at West Union. The girls Indee relays are on April 24th and the boys Indee relays are on April 22nd.

Don't forget that spring pictures are on April 7th and 6th grade DARE graduation is on April 11th.

*The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* opens on March 28th and 29th at 7:30 p.m.! Don't miss it! Follow the yellow brick road, watch out for the monkeys and as always!

**YOGOWYPI!**

Dave L. Ross

## April Calendar

- 7  
Spring Pictures
- 8  
GT West Delaware  
@ Manchester 4:00 pm
- 9  
Regular Dismissal Day  
In-Service Cancelled
- 11  
SNOW MAKE UP DAY  
FULL DAY OF SCHOOL
- GT North Fayette  
@ West Union 4:00 pm
- 15  
GT West Delaware  
@ Manchester 4:00 pm
- BT North Fayette  
@ West Union 4:00 pm
- 17  
BT Benton Community  
@ Van Horne 4:15 pm
- 18  
GT Benton Community  
@ Van Horne 4:00 pm
- 22  
BT Indee Relays @ 4:00 pm
- 23  
1:00 Dismissal  
Staff Development
- 24  
GT Indee Relays @ 4:00 pm
- 25  
BT Quad @ Indee 4:15 pm  
Holmes, Waverly & Jesup
- 28  
GT Beckman  
@ Dyersville 4:00 pm
- 29  
BT Vinton-Shellsburg  
@ Vinton 4:15 pm

## Independence Middle School Girls Track 2007-08

Coaches: Audra Kaiser & Diane Kinseth

		Time	Bus
Tues., April 8	West Delaware @ Manchester	4:00	2:45
Fri., April 11	North Fayette @ West Union	4:00	2:45
Tues., April 15	West Delaware @ Manchester	4:00	2:45
Fri., April 18	Benton Comm. @ Van Horne	4:00	2:30
Thur., April 24	Indee Relays (Kevin Long)	4:00	
Mon., April 28	Beckman @ Dyersville	4:00	2:45
Fri., May 2	WaMaC @ Center Point	4:30	3:15
Tues., May 6	Vinton-Shellsburg @ Vinton	4:15	3:00



### Girls Invite:

Indee, Starmont, Vinton, CPU, Wapsie Valley, Oelwein, Cascade, North Fayette

## Independence Middle School Boys Track 2007-08

Coaches: Paul Brown & Garry Anderson

		Time	Bus
Tues., April 15	North Fayette @ West Union	4:00	2:45
Thurs., April 17	Benton Comm. @ Van Horne	4:15	2:45
Tues., April 22	Indee Relays (Kevin Long)	4:00	
Fri., April 25	Triangular or Quad @ Indee	4:15	
	Holmes, Waverly-Shell Rock, Jesup		
Tues., April 29	Vinton-Shellsburg @ Vinton	4:15	3:00
Fri., May 2	WaMaC @ Center Point	4:30	3:15
Tues., May 6	Marion	4:00	2:45



### Boys Invite:

Indee, Oelwein, Starmont, Benton Comm, Wapsie Valley, Vinton, North Fayette, Union

## 7th Grade Math – Filling & Wrapping

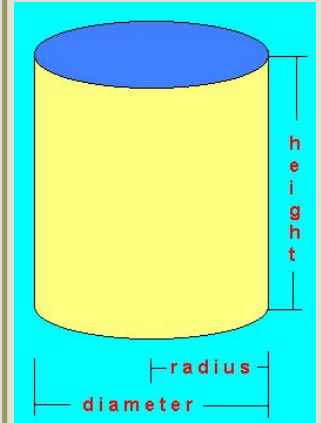
By Sara Thome

Our current unit in 7th grade math with Mrs. Thome is titled Filling & Wrapping. The ðFillingö part refers to volume and the ðWrappingö part refers to surface area. We begin by studying surface area and volume for rectangular prisms (boxes), and then we move onto cylinders. The students are not merely given a formula and asked to ðcrunchö numbers. The lessons for this unit build an understanding first:

ÉSurface area is the combined area of all of the faces (sides) of a box. We work ðhands-onö creating different ðflat patternsö or ðnetsö that would wrap around centimeter cubes as the surface area, making the understanding a very visual experience. The kids work with the cubes to create the boxes and flat patterns. We first understand that surface area can be figured by counting the squares on the flat pattern, and then we discuss how we can figure out the surface area from the dimensions of the box, coming up with the formula together. ( $L \times W$  plus  $W \times H$  plus  $L \times H$ , all doubled).

ÉVolume is first understood as the number of unit cubes that would fit inside (capacity). ðHands-onö we see that we can count the number of cubes on the bottom and then see how many identical layers there are to determine the total number of cubes. This leads us to the formula of taking the area of the bottom layer (length times width) times the number of layers (height.) ( $\text{Length} \times \text{Width} \times \text{Height}$ )

This is a unit where traditional math of ðgive me the numbers, the formula, and let me crunch awayö is not used. Rather, the students understand why and how the formula makes sense, what volume and surface area mean for their understanding, and can therefore understand the formulas. This holds much more meaning than memorizing the formulas and just punching away numbers.



## 8th Grade Language Arts

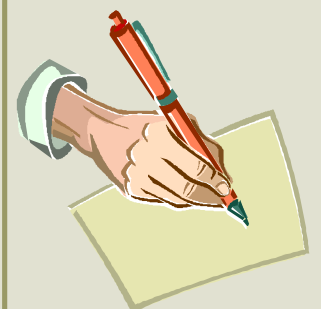
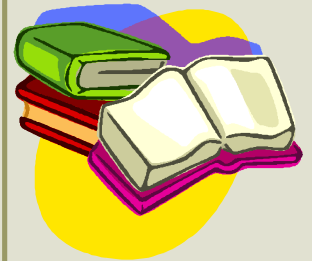
By Mr. Bill Heubner

It has been a fun-filled and exciting year thus far in 8th grade Language Arts. We have focused our learning in three key areas: reading comprehension, language usage, and writing. It is my hope that our students will enter their high school years with a solid foundation in these areas. This foundation will serve as a springboard for greater academic success.

Our year started out with an in-depth study of the elements of the short story. Our students read many short stories by a variety of authors as we studied this literary genre. We also spent time reading a dramatic adaptation of ðThe Diary of Anne Frank.ö The students enjoyed learning about the structure of drama and about a key time period in our history. The students also spent time reading a science fiction novel titled Z for Zachariah by Robert C. O'Brien. This novel focuses on the survival of a teenage girl after a nuclear war. Each student is also required to read nine reading level appropriate novels during the year.

In the realm of language usage, the class has studied sentence structure. The students learned how to identify and write simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences. We also spent time on our editing and proofreading skills. The eight parts of speech are currently being covered. A yearlong spelling curriculum is also being studied.

Our focus for the last trimester will be on writing. The students will be writing several personal essays, a short story, and a research paper. The hope for our writing units is for the students to integrate the learning from the previous language usage units into a quality product. Instruction will focus on choosing a topic, considering the purpose and audience, and the revision process.



## News from the IHS By Karl Kurt, Principal

### TECHNOLOGY

At the last Board of Education meeting (3-17-08) there was a proposal from our Technology Director with the input from staff to update and improve the computers throughout the district. In addition, there was discussion about funding peripheral equipment to fully utilize the information that is now available at your fingertips. I am excited about this discussion and the approval of the technology recommendation not only for our students but for our teachers as well. I found an excerpt from an article I wanted to share that may help to answer some questions about how technology affects learning.

\*Please note: The money used to purchase technology comes from a different funding source than the general fund. Unfortunately, this fund cannot be used to help eliminate the need for reductions. In essence, the different funds are the reason why you can be making technology purchases while there are reductions in other areas.

### *How does new technology affect learning?*

The prevailing technologies of a particular place and time have always been intimately linked with education, because a society's tools are both the subject and the means of its learning. Today, the fact that technology pervades almost every sphere of life from home to work to play results in profound

implications for learning, both in schools and throughout life. Students are able to connect and create with their peers, and with the wider world, in ways that were unfathomable just a few years ago. Learning tools and media, telecommunication, and networked technologies coupled with learning science are rapidly evolving into a powerful support system for acquiring the skills needed for modern life.

These technologies also change our relationship with information and thus, suggest changes in educational goals. With instant access to facts, for instance, schools are able to re-conceive the role of memorization, and focus more on higher order skills such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Technologies also change the ways in which learning takes place. High-bandwidth networks, sophisticated simulations, and adaptive software are all creating new opportunities for collaboration and innovation in and among schools and places of work. Software that adapts to the needs of the individual learner may enable teachers to more effectively blend instruction and assessment.

The article is from the Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills.

Karl Kurt  
Principal  
Independence High School

### April Calendar

- 1 ó BTR at West Union  
GTR (H) Jesup
- 3 ó GG at Oelwein
- 4 ó BSC (H) Benton Comm
- 5 ó BSC at Hudson Tourney
- 7 ó BG at Marion  
BTR (H) Jesup
- 8 ó GG at Anamosa  
BSC at Dyersville Beck.  
GSC (H) Dyersville Beck  
BTN (H) Oelwein  
GTN at Oelwein  
GTR at Anamosa
- 9 ó BG at W. Dubuque/Vinton  
GG (H) Marion/West Del.
- 10 ó BSC (H) Decorah  
BTN (H) Decorah  
GTN at Decorah  
BTR (H) ó Indee Invite
- 11 ó BSC (H) Central DeWitt  
GSC at Central DeWitt  
BTN at Hudson  
GTR at Benton Comm
- 12 ó BG at Ben Comm Invite
- 14 ó BTN at Maquoketa  
BTR at Oelwein  
GTR at New Hamp Invite
- 15 ó BG at Columbus  
BSC at Center Pt-Urbana  
GSC (H) Center Pt-Urbana  
GTN (H) Mt. Vernon  
BTR at CPU Invite
- 17 ó GG at W. West/Tripoli  
GTN at Marion  
BTR at Denver Invite  
GTR at W. Delaware Invite
- 18 ó GG (H) CPU/Anamosa  
BSC (H) W. Dubuque  
GSC at W. Dubuque
- 19 ó BG at W. Delaware Invite  
GG at Ben Comm Invite
- 21 ó GG (H) East Buchanan  
BTN at Waterloo West  
BTR at Maquoketa Valley
- 22 ó BG at Columbus/Waverly  
(South Hills)  
GG (H) Waverly/Hudson  
BSC at Columbus  
GSC (H) Columbus  
BTN (H) Marion  
GTR at Anamosa Invite

**High School Calendar  
continues on page 14**

### **\*\*\*HIGH SCHOOL CONFERENCES CHANGED\*\*\***

Due to the extension of 3<sup>rd</sup> term to March 28<sup>th</sup>,  
Parent-Teacher Conferences scheduled for April 17, 2008  
have now been moved to May 1, 2008 from 3:45 ó 7:30 p.m.  
with supper break from 5:00 to 5:30 p.m.



## IHS Speech Team Performs at District Speech Contest

by Dan Putz

Congratulations to the Speech Team on their superior individual performances at the District Speech Contest. 10 out of 14 entries earned 1 ratings and advanced to the State Speech Contest March 8th at Starmont.

Those earning 1 ratings included: Dakota Funk in Prose and Acting, Matt Carter in Spontaneous Speaking and Radio News Announcing, Paige Milbach in Public Address and Reviewing, Nick Erickson in Reviewing and Spontaneous Speaking, Caleb Martin in Prose, and Lisa Keierleber in Storytelling.

Congratulations to all!

## IHS Speech Club Earns 7 “1” Ratings at State

by Dan Putz

Congratulations to the speech students on their superior performances at the State Speech Contest held Saturday, March 8th at Starmont. Of the 10 entries, 7 received 1 ratings.

Those earning one ratings included: Matt Carter in Radio News Announcing, Paige Milbach in Public Address, Nick Erickson in Spontaneous Speaking, Paige Milbach and Nick Erickson in Reviewing, and Caleb Martin and Dakota Funk in Prose.

Those earning 2 ratings included: Dakota Funk in Acting, Lisa Keierleber in Storytelling, and Matt Carter in Spontaneous Speaking

Thanks to all parents and friends who came to watch the performances.

## IHS Speech Qualifies One Entry for All-State

by Dan Putz

One Independence High School student, Nick Erickson, earned top honors and was selected to perform at the Iowa High School Speech Association All-State Speech Festival from over 10,000 students that started at the district level of competition. Approximately 400 were selected for this honor from the entire state. The festival will be held on the campus of U.N.I. on Monday, March 31st.

Nick, a junior, was nominated in the Reviewing category. His selection was a review of the 1995 movie *Braveheart*. He was part of the speech team that had ten entries at the state speech contest. Seven of those students received 1 ratings.

Special thanks to Mr. TeStrake, Mrs. Deutmeyer, and Mr. Putz whose efforts allowed us to be so successful!

## April Calendar continued from page 13

23 ó 1:00 Dismissal

24 ó GTN at Columbus  
BTR ó Drake Relays  
GTR at Marion Invite

25 ó BG (H) Vinton/Benton  
Community  
GG at Maquoketa  
BSC at Marion  
GSC (H) Marion  
BTN (H) Aplington-  
Parkersburg  
BTR ó Drake Relays  
BTR ó LaPorte City

26 ó BG ó Columbus Invite  
BTR ó Drake Relays

28 ó BG ó Wamac Division at  
CPU  
GG ó Wamac Division at  
Vinton  
JV BTN (H) Wtloo West  
BTN (H) LaPorte City  
GTN at LaPorte City

29 ó GSC (H) Gladbrook  
Reinbeck  
BTN ó Wamac at  
Columbus  
GTN ó Wamac at  
Columbus  
BTR at Marion  
GTR ó Indee Invite



## ON TO STATE!!! Indee Jazz Orchestra



## and Indee Jazz Ensemble



## 2008 NEIBA Jazz Festival Saturday, March 1st Class 3A Competition Results

1. Independence HS Jazz Orchestra (1st Band)
2. Independence HS Jazz Ensemble (2nd Band)
3. West Delaware HS Jazz I
4. Crestwood HS Jazz Ensemble
5. Monticello HS Jazz I
6. Vinton-Shellsburg HS Jazz Band
7. Oelwein HS Jazz I
8. Maquoketa HS Jazz Ensemble
9. Center-Point Urbana HS Jazz Band
10. Independence HS Jazz Band (3rd Band)
11. South Tama HS Jazz Band
12. Central Community HS Swinginø Sabers Jazz I (DeWitt)
13. Union HS Jazz Band
14. Western Dubuque HS Jazz Band
15. Benton HS First Street Jazz Band
16. Waukon HS Jazz Band
17. Mount Vernon HS Jazz Band
18. Marion HS Jazz Band
19. New Hampton HS Spirit Jazz Band
20. Oelwein HS Jazz 2

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## Independence Students Among the Top 5 Outstanding Class 3A Soloist of the Day

Travis McBride, Drums, Guitar  
(Jazz Orchestra)  
Michelle Reck, Vocal (Jazz Ensemble)  
Kevin Mills, Bari Sax (Jazz Orchestra)

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## Outstanding Class 3A Soloist of the Day Plaque

Travis McBride, Drums  
(Jazz Orchestra)

## Indee Middle School Results

**7th Grade Jazz Band - Superior Rating & 8th Grade Jazz Ensemble - Superior Rating**  
**Independence MS Students Among the Top 5 Middle School Outstanding Soloist of the Day**  
**Leah Snyder, Trumpet (8th Grade Jazz Ensemble) & Peter Haverkamp, Trombone (8th Grade Jazz Ensemble)**

**Independence Community Schools**

**Independence Community  
School District**

1207 1st Street West  
Independence, Iowa, 50644

Phone: 319-334-7400  
Fax: 319-334-7404

**District Mission:**

*Educating people to be life-long learners and respectful, responsible citizens*

**District Vision:**

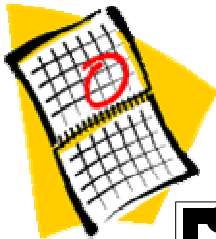
*Creating a climate in which individuals of the ICSD will strive to become effective communicators, problem solvers, responsible citizens, and productive people*

**District Values:**

<i>Compassion</i>	<i>Perseverance</i>
<i>Honesty</i>	<i>Respect</i>
<i>Integrity</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>
<i>Responsibility</i>	

**We're on the Web**

**<http://www.independence.k12.ia.us>**



## **Mark Your Calendars!**

- \* April 9th - Full Day of School; Early Dismissal Cancelled
- \* April 11th - Snow Make Up Day - Full Day of School
- \* April 17th - Tips and Tools Night for Parents
- \* April 23rd - 1:00 Dismissal - Staff Development
- \* May 1st - High School Parent-Teacher Conferences