

**Volume 8 Issue 3**  
**Spring, 2013-2014**

**District Events:****April 18**

No School-Good Friday

**April 21**

Regular School Day -  
5th Snow Make-up Day

**April 21**

School Board Meeting -  
Independence 6:00 p.m.

**April 23**

1:00 Early Dismissal

**May 7**

1:00 Early Dismissal

**May 12**

School Board Meeting -  
Independence 5:00 p.m.

**May 30**

Last Day of School  
1:00 Early Dismissal

**August 14**

Grades 2-6 Orientation/  
Open House 5-6:30 pm

**August 15**

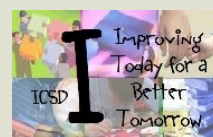
Grades 7 & 9  
Orientation 1:30 pm

**August 18**

**First Day of School -**  
Grades 2-12  
1:00 Early Dismissal

**August 19 & 20**

1:00 Early Dismissal



### *From the Desk of Jean Peterson, Superintendent*

As of this writing we are half way through April. This is a really busy time of year for everyone in our school district. There are many things to get done in our classrooms before our students depart for the summer. There are also several activities occurring each night with track, soccer, tennis, and golf happening now as well. It will not be long now until we say good bye and best wishes to another graduating class!

I again want to extend my sincere appreciation to all of our staff members here in the ICSD. The work they do in our school district and with our students on a daily basis is so very important. Like the saying goes: "To teach is to touch a life forever"!



**Jean Peterson,  
Superintendent**

**Needs Assessment**

As I mentioned in our last newsletter, we facilitated our Needs Assessment Survey for our school's community this past November. We worked with the Iowa Association of School Boards to help us with this Needs Assessment.

School Board Policy 105 instructs us to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment once every five years. By analyzing the results of this Needs Assessment, we will be able to determine our long range goals for the next five years.

This Needs Assessment addressed the following characteristics common to high performing schools:

- ❖ Clear shared vision, purpose, and goals
- ❖ High expectations for student learning
- ❖ Leadership and teamwork at all levels
- ❖ Rigorous content standards and a comprehensive assessment system
- ❖ High quality instruction
- ❖ Professional Development focused on improvement
- ❖ Family and community connections

*Continued on page 2*

**Inside this issue:**

Curriculum/	3-4
Student Services	& 6
ECC/East News	5-9
West Elem News	10-11
Junior High News	12
Senior High News	13
Activities	14
Volunteer	
Mentor Program	15

## *Continued from page 1*

When you look at the results of this survey, you will see that it is broken up into the characteristics listed above. The indicators for each area are listed first. These indicators are what we want our school to look like. The strengths of our district and the recommendations for growth are also listed. Remember, too, that the strengths and recommendations listed are people's current perceptions of our school district.

Now that we have the results of this Needs Assessment, we will be working with our school board, our staff, our administrative team, and our school improvement advisory committee to determine our long range goals for the next five years.

This Needs Assessment is posted on our school's website under the Announcements Link.

### **School Nurse Appreciation Day**

The School Nurse Appreciation Day is May 9<sup>th</sup>. Rhonda Jasper and Teri Schloss are the nurses in our school district. Rhonda is at the Jr/Sr High School and Teri travels between East and West Elementary. Lois Johnson is a medical assistant who helps Teri at both East and West.

I would like to offer my sincere appreciation to these three individuals. They all have to juggle many issues throughout the school day in regard to both medical and social issues.

Many of the issues they deal with on a regular basis are: immunizations, health screenings, hearing and vision testing, dealing with accidents that may happen at school, diseases such as diabetes and asthma, and any mental, emotional, and social problems that may arise.

Please take some time during the first full week of May to thank our nurses for all of the support they give our school district!

### **Affirmative Action Plan**

Under the District Tab on our school's website, you will find our Affirmative Action Plan. Every school district in Iowa is required to have such a plan.

Deb Donlea, our Director of Curriculum/Student Services, is our district's Equity Coordinator. Her role as the Equity Coordinator is as follows:

- ❖ Has knowledge of Federal and State Civil Rights Laws
- ❖ Makes sure Board Policies and Administrative Procedures are up to date
- ❖ Disseminates information (notifications) to both the staff and community
- ❖ Provides professional development opportunities
- ❖ Facilitates the grievance process
- ❖ Monitors and analyzes the disaggregated data and diversity on advisory committees

We do a workforce analysis each year and share that data with our school board. We also try to target our recruitment efforts to boost the representation of applicants in underrepresented categories. We do post our vacancy notices in the local newspapers, on our district's website, on the National Schools Application Network (IAREAP) and on Teach Iowa.

Board Policy 401.2 deals with the rules for Equal Employment Opportunity in our school district. Board Policy 106 was also put into place to give an overview of our Anti-Bullying/Harassment guidelines. There are more specific procedures and forms in regard to bullying/harassment prevention in each of the building's student and staff handbooks.

If you have any questions or need further clarification, do contact Deb Donlea. Her email address is [ddonlea@independence.k12.ia.us](mailto:ddonlea@independence.k12.ia.us). She can be reached by phone at 319-334-7400.

## Curriculum/Student Services by Deb Donlea, Director of Curriculum/Student Services



**Deb Donlea, Director of  
Curriculum/Student Services**

### Dropout Prevention

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states that every child has the right to an education that develops their “personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential.” I couldn’t agree more. As educators, parents, and community members it is our job to work together to encourage and guide our youth to become knowledgeable, responsible, socially skilled, healthy, caring, and contributing citizens. In my years in education, I have been privileged to witness some of the most phenomenal mentors for our youth and because I tend to “dream big” when it comes to student success, it would be my wish for all of our students to have that special someone who would guide them on their path to success whatever their dreams may be. Unfortunately, this is not always the case.

Dropout Prevention has been a hot topic for a number of years, but unless you are aware of the need or work with students who may be at risk of dropping out, you may not know what is being done to prevent our students from dropping out. Below is a list of risk factors that may contribute to students dropping out of school. As you look at this list ask yourself, “What can I do to make a difference or contribute to dropout prevention?”

### Significant Risk Factors for School Dropout

#### Individual Domain

##### **Individual Background Characteristics**

- Has a learning disability or emotional disturbance

##### **Early Adult Responsibilities**

- High number of work hours
- Parenthood

##### **Social Attitudes, Values, & Behavior**

- High-risk peer group
- High-risk social behavior
- Highly socially active outside of school

##### **School Performance**

- Low achievement
- Retention/over-age for grade

##### **School Engagement**

- Poor attendance
- Low educational expectations
- Lack of effort
- Low commitment to school
- No extracurricular participation

*Continued on page 4*

## *Continued from page 3 (Dropout Prevention)*

### **School Engagement**

- Poor attendance
- Low educational expectations
- Lack of effort
- Low commitment to school
- No extracurricular participation

### **School Behavior**

- Misbehavior
- Early aggression

### **Family Domain**

#### **Family Background Characteristics**

- Low socioeconomic status
- High family mobility
- Low education level of parents
- Large number of siblings
- Not living with both natural parents
- Family disruption

#### **Family Engagement/Commitment to Education**

- Low educational expectations
- Sibling has dropped out
- Low contact with school

### **What Are We Doing to Prevent Dropouts?**

Independence CSD Dropout Prevention Program is designed to provide support to all students identified in our school district as potential dropouts and/or returning dropouts. These students may not have been successful with core instruction in the regular class setting. Some may not be involved in existing school services or activities or may not have access to community agencies and support programs to meet their needs.

The district uses multiple methods to identify students as At-Risk. Once students have been identified, support services that have been put in place are explored for each individual student to meet their immediate and/or long term needs. These support services include:

1. At-Risk Teachers/Academic Interventionists
2. District Wide Student Assistance Team
3. Behavioral Interventionists
4. Title I/Reading Recovery

*Continued on page 6*

## Principal's Corner

by Mary Jean Blaisdell

Hopefully spring is finally here to stay! It is hard to believe that the school year is nearly at an end. We are looking forward to an active month of May and the excitement of the upcoming summer!

Class lists for the 2014-15 school year will be developed during the summer and will be posted at East Elementary on August 1st. Parents will, however, know the name of their child's teacher at registration time online. It is important that your child has a successful year. Teachers will be giving input on students' needs and abilities. This information is used to try to find a good match with a teacher and to create a good balance in classes with other students. A lot of time and effort will go into this process. If you, as parents, feel you have valuable information about your child that should be known for this process, let me know by June 1st by completing the form available in the office. Requests for individual teachers will not be acknowledged due to the impossibility to grant all of these requests. Thank you for your patience and support in this process.

Fall Registration will be ONLINE ONLY beginning mid July!



**Mary Jean Blaisdell,**  
**Principal**

## Preschool in Pictures

It seems that spring has finally sprung and we are getting out to enjoy this much nicer weather. The kids are all very excited to be enjoying the playground equipment again! We can leave snow pants and boots at home, but it is sometimes a good idea to still have hats and mittens for some of those colder mornings.

We are finishing up our Jolly Phonics sounds and will be reviewing for the remainder of the year. We will have a really good start to kindergarten having gone over most of the letter sounds already!

We have also been busy naming letters and numbers, rhyming, sorting, patterning and putting numbers to groups. All of these things you can keep working on all summer long just by looking outside or going for walks. Learning happens all day long, all year long. Have fun with it!

**PK5 kids went out hunting for letters on the pavers at the football field entrance.**



The following students placed in the Eastern Iowa Reading Council creative writing and poetry contest.

### Poetry Winners

Kindergarten 3rd Place- Cael Troutman  
1st Grade 1st Place- Brooke Eddy  
1st Grade 2nd Place- Talan Conrad  
1st Grade 3rd Place- London Clendenen  
2nd Grade 3rd Place- Abby Peyton

### Creative Writing Winners

Kindergarten 1st Place- Ellie Fangman  
Kindergarten 2nd Place tie- Izaac McKinney  
Kindergarten 2nd Place tie- Connor Goldenstein  
Kindergarten 3rd Place- Ava Blaker  
1st Grade 2nd Place- Alec Larson  
1st Grade 3rd Place- Talan Conrad  
2nd Grade 3rd Place- Carter Homan





## Kindergartner Corner

Kindergartners look forward to an activity filled Fitness Day in May and our Awards Assembly. The kindergarten class has also been asked to escort the seniors for Baccalaureate on May 21. Friday, May 30th will be the student's last day of school.

Kindergarten students are well on their way to becoming First Graders! They will need opportunities and encouragement this summer to help them maintain the skills they have learned. Practice identifying letters & sounds, writing words, and READ, READ, READ! Don't forget about fundamental math skills, too: count out loud to 100, count objects to 30, name and print numbers to 20.

Thanks for a great year and have a terrific summer!



**Mrs. Beatty's kindergartners building 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional shapes.**

### ***Continued from page 4 (Dropout Prevention)***

5. Computer Based Instruction
6. Second Step
7. Summer School
8. Title III
9. Mentoring
10. Counseling
11. Response to Intervention (RTI)
12. Attendance Intervention
13. Buchanan County Success Center
14. Administrators
15. Juvenile Court Liaison/K-12 Truancy Officer
16. AEA Personnel
17. Home Visits

Like most programs in the district, the Dropout Out Prevention program is evaluated annually using student data. From this data changes/enhancements are made to meet all student needs.

## First Grade Focus

Spring has sprung! You always know it is truly Spring despite what Mother Nature or the weathermen say, when you see Mustang First Graders sporting their Easter Hats at their Spring Concert. Thanks to Music Teacher, Mr. Dalton, for another fine performance and to our first grade families for your help in making the wonderful hats! Other signs of Spring are our East Elementary's annual Earth Day programs presented by Angie Auhl and Sondra Cabell, Fontana Naturalists. First Graders



learn how recycling works and then practice what we learn, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Restore!

**First Graders perform at the Spring Vocal Music Concert, showing off their Easter hats.**



## Second Grade Scene

In April and May our students will have the opportunity to learn about their community through the Junior Achievement Program. Volunteers from our community will be teaching this unit to our students on a weekly basis. The students will also get to take part in a math lesson taught by some UNI math students.

As we finish up our school year, we will take a journey into our community's past. Thanks to a grant from the Independence PTO, we will be able to tour Heartland Acres and the one room school house.

## Mustang Roots and Shoots School Garden News

The School Garden is being used as a teaching tool. Starting this spring and into next Fall, Kindergarten students will work on a Project-Based Learning Activity about planting sunflowers as bird feed, 1st will continue to concentrate on developing a butterfly garden, and 2nd will utilize the raised beds for growing food for making Stone Soup, based on a classic story. Any and all help is always appreciated in keeping the garden maintained and developed. Please contact the East Elementary Office, if you and/or family would like to volunteer.

## Summer Reading

Let books take you ANYWHERE this summer. No matter if you plan to travel this summer or stay close to home, books can take you all over. You can make reading books an adventure with your kids this summer. All you need is a map, some dot stickers or a marker, and BOOKS! Every time you read a book with your student talk about where the book took place and put a sticker or draw a star on the map. (If the book takes place in a made up place or outer space create a spot on the map to put those dots or marks.) You can use the map as a learning tool to find some books or go online to read and learn more about the places you mark. Add more to it and make your own scrapbook with photos and information about the places in your book. With the magic of online photo editing you could even put a picture of you reading the book on a picture from where the book takes place. Let your imagination be your guide! At the end of the summer you can even measure on the map how many miles you read in the books.

## WANTED!

### 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 the PE teacher, Brian Loughren at 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:

#### Substitutes

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

### We need YOU!

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

We continue to collect Pizza Ranch Wagon Wheels, Donuts to Dough, 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.

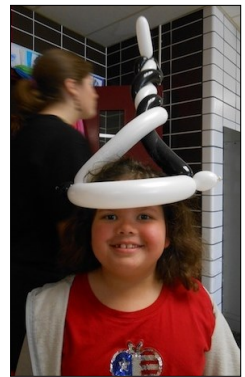


## The Guidance Gazette - Career Day 2014!

On April 7th the Kindergarten classes at East Elementary had their 2nd annual Kindergarten Career Day! Each class had the opportunity to hear 5 different presentations on different careers in our community. The Kindergarten staff and students would like to give a big THANK YOU to Dr. Harvey (Podiatrist), Dr. Troutman (Dentist), Dr. Peterschmidt (Veterinarian), Mrs. Allen (Florist), and Coach Krusey (Football Coach and Teacher) for presenting. The students were all very excited to learn about these different careers and really enjoyed meeting some members of our Independence Community.



## PTO Carnival a Great Success!!





## Nurse News

by Teri Schloss, RN

As the temperatures start to rise, so does the amount of time our children spend outside. Children need protection from the sun's ultraviolet rays anytime they are outdoors. Just a few serious sunburns can increase your child's risk of skin cancer later in life. 80 percent of your lifetime sun exposure is thought to occur before the age of 18. Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer and accounts for nearly half of all cancers in the United States. Some easy ways to protect your children from the sun include:

- Wearing a hat which covers their face, scalp, ears and neck.
- Covering the skin with clothing such as long sleeves and long pants.
- Protecting their eyes with sunglasses that block both UVA and UVB rays.
- Avoiding the sun during the hours between 10:00 and 4:00 and seeking shade whenever possible.
- Using sunscreen correctly. Apply 30 minutes before going outside if possible and reapply during the day. Sunscreen should be at least SPF 15. Use a lip balm that contains sunscreen to protect your lips.

If your child does get sunburned they can experience pain, a feeling of being hot, or even feel sick. Help your child relieve these symptoms by:

- Taking a cool bath or apply wet compresses to the skin.
- Apply pure aloe vera gel to the sunburned areas.
- Consider giving pain medication such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen (follow package or physician's directions).
- Apply moisturizer to skin.
- If the sunburn is severe and blisters develop, call your physician.

Remember, being a role model by practicing these tips will help yourself as well as teach your child about sun safety.

Teri Schloss RN

## Buy One Get One Free! Scholastic Book Fair

Both East and West Elementary will be hosting a second **Scholastic book fair** **May 5<sup>th</sup> – May 9<sup>th</sup>**. This book fair is a “**Buy One Get One Free**” book fair. This allows families to choose a **Free Book of equal or lesser value for Every Book** you buy.

Plan to attend one of our **Family Nights!**

**East Elementary: Tuesday, May 6<sup>th</sup> from 3:00-7:30 in the East Media Center**

**West Elementary: Thursday, May 8<sup>th</sup> from 3:00-7:30 in the West Media Center.**



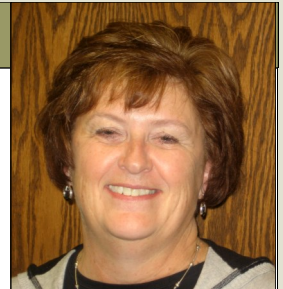
**This is a great opportunity to make some purchases for summer reading!**

## Happenings at West Elementary by Sandy Merritt, Principal

### Time to Say Goodbye

After a good deal of thought I have decided to retire this year. I have really enjoyed my six years in the district and the opportunity it has given me to know and work with a great group of parents, staff, and families. I have greatly appreciated the support everyone has given me while at Independence. I leave with many great memories and relationships! I wish all of you the best of luck and success as Independence continues to grow and thrive!

It is hard to believe that we are down to the last two months of school already. It has been a great year full of lots of great learning activities for our students. We will highlight a few of the more recent ones in this newsletter.



Sandy Merritt, Principal



### 3rd Graders Are Excited About Spring & Learning

Third graders are excited to finally have warm weather! It has been a long, cold winter and we are all ready to get outside and play. In math, we have been working on fractions. The students are learning about numerators, denominators, and equivalent fractions. We also continue to work on multiplication and division. We recently finished our

nutrition and digestion unit in science. We were very excited to have Miss Emma Cornwell, from Food Corp, join us for special lessons focusing on nutrition. The students had a wonderful time exploring various foods and were able to make a special snack at the end of each lesson. She was an engaging and entertaining guest teacher.



## Honors for ECLIPSE Students

The sixth grade Future Problem Solving Team will compete at the State Bowl on Friday and Saturday, April 11 & 12. The team consists of Jacob Kurt, Makenzie Homan, Connor Davison, and Jenna Smith.



Alaina Butters (6<sup>th</sup> grade) received first place in the Eastern Iowa Reading Council Creative Writing Contest and third place in the State Poetry Contest for her poem, "Autumn." Jazlyn Smith (5<sup>th</sup> grade) received first place in the Eastern Iowa Reading Council Creative Writing Contest and first place in the

Creative Writing State Contest. Jazlyn will be honored at the annual Iowa Reading Conference in Ames on June 24, 2014. Jazlyn and Alaina were honored at the Eastern Iowa Reading Council Banquet on Monday, March 31, 2014. Many parents, grandparents, teachers and students enjoyed a night of entertainment (creative stories and poetry) as well as a delicious meal. Also honored at the banquet was Sydney Schwartz (3<sup>rd</sup> grade) for achieving first place in the Eastern Iowa Writing/Poetry Contest.



## 4th Graders Are Working Hard

Fourth graders are currently learning about division and fractions in math. When multiplication facts are mastered both of these units are a lot easier for the students so continue to practice multiplication facts around the house. Lub, dub, lub, dub...the heart, blood, and blood vessels in the circulatory system are proving to be very interesting in science. The students have so many questions about their bodies and how they work. Keep your heart healthy by exercising, eating right, and getting plenty of sleep! The mid-west region is very familiar to the fourth graders. Many of them have shared about their travels to these states. Reading needs to be a priority at school and at home. Keep bringing back the weekly reading logs. The April incentive is an ice cream party!

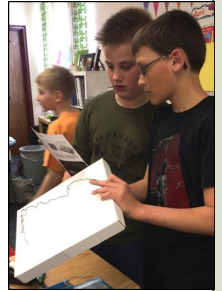
## 5th Graders Are Working on Projects

The 5th graders have been very busy this spring. Mrs. Holtzman's class has been working on using visual models that are student designed in order to represent multiplying and dividing fractions. They have also been working on reading and writing biographies within literature circle groups. The discussions have been a lot of fun to listen to.

Mr. Abildtrup's class has just concluded their biography unit where students read, researched and then summarized the life of a person they were interested in learning more about. In math, students have continued to work with comparing, adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing fractions as well as mixed numbers. Colonial America is coming alive in Mr. Abildtrup's class. Students are actively researching what life was like and the hardships many faced during that time period.



The students in Ms. Larson's class have been busy learning about magnets and electricity. Students are currently creating games and projects that require electricity. They are having a lot of fun creating their projects! In social studies, students are learning about the thirteen original colonies. They will focus on the New England Colony, Middle Colony, and the Southern Colony. Students have also been working on positive and negative numbers as well as



exponents and line graphs. In literacy, students finished their historical fiction books and book reports. There were a lot of creative reports this month! We are now reading realistic fiction books and starting new book reports.

Fractions, fractions, fractions! Mrs. Kineth's class is busy learning about fractions this trimester in math. We finished our Grand Encounter in March and are now learning about the colonists of early America in social studies. We will culminate this unit with a colonial fair. We are learning about expository writing in literacy class as well as reading several books in literature circles. We are also learning about the human eye in science. We will dissect a cow's eye once we learn all the parts of the eye and their functions.

Every year the 5th graders from West Elementary and St. John's learn about Fish Iowa. This is a program developed by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. This year we will have our Fish Iowa field day on Thursday, May 1, as part of our Iowa studies unit. We will be traveling to the Buchanan County Wildlife Association Club located on the Quasqueton Diagonal Blvd., three miles north of Quasqueton. More information will be coming in the next couple of weeks.



## 6th Graders Love Science

Science has been full of much experimentation and observation in 6th grade, just like real scientists! To begin the year, we changed variables to explore pendulums and catapults. Following that, we learned all about plant parts, their functions and processes all while growing our very own Wisconsin fast plants. This even included manual pollination and harvesting of the seeds for next year's students. Recently, we discovered that simple machines, specifically levers, make work easier. We have begun studying ecosystems and have been observing milkweed bugs. An interesting piece of this unit has been learning about Jane Goodall's work with chimpanzees in Niambi Wilderness Reserve. Throughout all the science units this year, it's easy to see we have many budding scientists in 6th grade!





## Junior High News By Rob Arnold, Junior High School Principal

As we near the end of the school year, it is a good time to reflect on what it means to be successful in Junior High. Junior High is a time of unmatched growth and development as your adolescent matures and develops into an adult. At no other time in a child's development do the changes happen as rapid or suddenly as it does with this age group. Due to this ever-changing landscape, identifying what makes a successful Junior High student can shed some light into the challenges and successes that work with this age group.



**Rob Arnold, JH Principal**

During Junior High, we work very hard to expose our students to a wide variety of instruction, activity, and assessments. In doing so, the students can see what style, activity, or assessment works best for them. It also provides them the experience they need to be successful as they transition into high school. Now some students will immediately excel, while for others, it takes time to practice how to prepare. Does this mean that those students are more successful? Not necessarily. In Junior High we offer the variety of assessments to allow all students an opportunity to experience that success. For some this takes a little longer than others.

Junior High is a time to allow students to develop all the necessary skills needed to achieve in High School. It is important to allow students to try new things and be comfortable with the challenge. Junior High can be a time of frustration for some students who school came very easy too because our staff is pushing high order thinking skills that require the student to generate an answer. This can be different for some students who excelled at learning through notes and lecture. Some students also struggle with this due to a lack of experience knowledge or background information. This frustration is ok. Students will learn to work through it and will be ready for the advanced questioning and assessments of high school.

During Junior High we also encourage students to try all of our extracurricular activities. This is a crucial element to a well-rounded education. Students have opportunities through those activities to pursue their passions. We also have students who find passions for an activity that they never knew they had. This is a critical element to a successful Jr. High experience!

So while this time period is always one of great uncertainty for both students and parents, it is important to remember that the experience is the true measure of success. Students, who work hard, try what the teachers, coaches, sponsors ask of them, and stay with it will be success in what ever they choose to do. And for those who struggle in Junior High, give it time. They will discover their passions and that is the greatest motivator there is.

## The Fortune Cookie

The fortune cookie is a wonderful treat at the end of a great meal. It is always fun to read the fortune. The fortune cookie first appeared in Japan and the cookie made its way to America in the late 1800's. The Golden Gate Park's Japanese Tea Garden claimed to be the first restaurant to serve a fortune cookie in the United States. The Hong Kong Noodle Company of Los Angeles made the same claim. The two companies fought over the claim for decades. The controversy was taken to the Court of Historical Review and a federal judge determined that the cookie was introduced to the U.S. in San Francisco. A big fight over a small cookie.



Jennifer Sornson,  
High School Principal

People tend to have fun with the fortunes. They add phrases to the end and have a good laugh. They play the lucky numbers in the lottery. Most of the time it is fun and a good way to end a meal. I had a very unusual event happen to me a couple of weeks ago. I ate Chinese food with a co-worker for lunch. We each picked our fortune cookie. My co-worker had a traditional quote, "Executive ability is prominent in your make up." I cracked open my fortune cookie, it was empty. No slip of paper.

I sat there stunned for a few moments. I have never had that happen. I have never heard of that happening to anyone. It was an unsettling and eerie feeling. So what does it mean? I did what most people would do, I googled it. Most responses were that it is just a manufacturing error. Mistakes happen in any manufacturing process. Ninety-nine percent of the time they are caught before it gets to the consumer.

I thought about it and came to a different conclusion. It is like a freebie. I could write my fortune and fate. When it comes down to it, we all write our own fate. We make our own fortunes. Here is what I wrote for my fortune, "Every life must have balance and you must seek inner peace."

Jennifer Sornson  
Principal  
Independence High School

## Activities Newsletter by Activities Director Rob Arnold



**Rob Arnold, Activities Director**

Spring is an exciting time in the Activities Department. We offer 4 sports for both boys and girls including Golf, Tennis, Track, and Soccer. These offerings allow for the largest participation numbers of the year. This is exciting because students get to participate in sports that they can play for a lifetime in the spring. The weather is cooperating and we are well underway.

Boys Soccer now has a sharing agreement with Jesup starting this season. Soccer has sharing agreements with East Buchanan, Jesup, and North Linn. This has allowed the boys soccer team to field two full teams so that our varsity athletes won't have to sub in during the junior varsity game. Games all start at 5pm unless otherwise scheduled. This is to prevent some very late nights during the spring and to allow the varsity to play during the best conditions of the night.

The girls soccer is also sharing with Jesup, East Buchanan, and North Linn. We are able to share with these schools because there are only three classes in soccer. Without the sharing agreements we would be the smallest 2A soccer school. By sharing with these schools, we are in the middle of the pack in enrollment in class 2A. Much like the boys, the sharing agreement allows us to field two teams each night without having to play a varsity starter on the junior varsity team. This allows us to schedule full JV games when ever possible.

The boys track team is off and running. They have about 21 boys out for track. These guys have been working very hard in the weight room and in speed training. This off-season work has allowed them to be very competitive in their events at the beginning of the season. The goal is always to get as many events to the State Track Meet at Drake Stadium in May as possible.

The girls track team is also running extremely well in the early part of the season. The girls have been working extremely hard in the preseason and it is really paying off. There were many individual and relay champs from the Indoor WaMac meet in March. With the start of the outdoor season, the girls are looking to get many events to the State Meet in Des Moines.

Boys golf has had their first meet of the year as well. Two weeks ago it was looking pretty bleak in trying to get outside. Now the courses are open and the team is ready to compete. The team has 11 golfers out. They are working at achieving a lot of success this year. The boys play golf at River Ridge.

The girls golf team has also had their first meet of the year winning at Oelwein to start the year against Waterloo East and Oelwein. The girls golf has 7 golfers out is preparing to continue the excellent tradition here at Independence with girls golf. The girls golf at Three Elms Golf Club.

The girls tennis team also began competition the first week of April and is looking to continue their streak of State qualifiers. The girls play at the various tennis courts around town. They start at 4pm and make for excellent spectator viewing.

The boys tennis team has also began completion. This team is young but is competitive in tennis. They also play at the various courts around town and would love to have the community come out and watch.

As you can see, Spring is a very busy time of year. We have over 100 kids participating in the various activities. So as the weather changes check the schedule at [www.wamacconference.org](http://www.wamacconference.org), come out and support the Mustangs!





## Independence Community Schools

### **Volunteer & Mentor Program Update by Val Maximovich**

National Volunteer Week April 6-11, 2014

We appreciate the volunteers that come and see us every day, every week throughout the school year. Thank you for being part of the team! The last week in May, the teachers and students will recognize those who have volunteered at the end of the year assemblies.



**SAVE THE DATE!!**

**Annual Mentor Picnic**

**Tues. May 13, 2014**

**5:30 - 7 p.m.**

***Be ready to rodeo!***



*All mentors and mentees come out to the Rodeo at West Elementary!*

*Be sure to wear your cowboy gear!*

At the annual Mentor picnic mentors and students will enjoy food prepared by the Family Consumer Science students, play cowboy games and having their photos taken on **Tues., May 13, 5:30-7 p.m.** at West Elementary Commons. Invitations will be mailed soon!

### **Silver Cord High School Volunteers**

Just a reminder deadline is May 1 for the graduating seniors only. All other students will continue to accumulate hours, however it is recommended to turn in your hours from this school year before summer.



It has been another outstanding year for the students that have participated in Silver Cord. We are proud of all of them that have volunteered for a variety of activities in Independence and surrounding areas. Any students that are interested in being part of Silver Cord be watching for a time to sign up! The fall newsletter will include the total year end volunteer hours for the 2013-14 school year!

Go to the Independence Community Schools website at <http://www.independence.k12.ia.us/> OR log in directly to Silver Cord at

<https://sites.google.com/a/independence.k12.ia.us/silver-cord-program/home>

1. Click on "Activities" on the side or top tab and choose Silver Cord. When on the site you have 2 choices to find activities:
  - a. "Volunteer Opportunities" for the monthly calendars
  - b. "Other Volunteer Opportunities" for general activities

**Be sure to visit the Independence school website for updates on Silver Cord, Mentoring or the Volunteer program.**



Find us on  
**Facebook**

Don't forget to like us on Facebook! Be sure to take a look at the Independence Community School's Mentoring Program Official Facebook page.

If you would like to be a mentor or a volunteer, please contact Val at 319-334-7400 ext. 626 or email [vmaximovich@independence.k12.ia.us](mailto:vmaximovich@independence.k12.ia.us), or download the volunteer registration form at <http://www.independence.k12.ia.us/district-departments/volunteer-information/>



## Independence Community School District

1207 First Street West, Independence, Iowa 50644



### EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

The board will not discriminate in its educational activities on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, gender, socio-economic status, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or marital status.

The board requires all persons, agencies, vendors, contractors and other persons and organizations doing business with or performing services for the school district to subscribe to all applicable federal and state laws, executive orders, rules and regulations pertaining to contract compliance and equal opportunity.

The board is committed to the policy that no otherwise qualified person will be excluded from educational activities on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, gender, socio-economic status, marital status, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability. Further, the board affirms the right of all students and staff to be treated with respect and to be protected from intimidation, discrimination, physical harm and harassment.

### NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

Students, parents, employees and others doing business with or performing services for the Independence Community School District are hereby notified that this school district does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, age (except students), socio-economic status, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability in admission or access to, or treatment in, its programs and activities.

The school district does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, age (except students), socio-economic status, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability in admission or access to, or treatment in, its hiring and employment practices. Any person having inquiries concerning the school district's compliance with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), § 504 or *Iowa Code* § 280.3 is directed to contact:

Director of Curriculum/Student Services, 1207 1st Street West, Independence, IA 50644  
319-334-7400

who has been designated by the school district to coordinate the school district's efforts to comply with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, the ADA, § 504 and *Iowa Code* § 280.3 (2007).

**We're on the Web**

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

### **NOTICE:**

#### **Summer Administration Office Hours**

**Monday - Thursday: 7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.**

**Friday: 7:30 a.m - 12:00 Noon**

## **INDEPENDENCE COMMUNITY**

### **SCHOOLS VOLUNTEER MENTOR PROGRAM**

If you would like to be a mentor or a volunteer, please contact Val Maximovich at 319-334-7400 ext. 626 or email Val at [vmaximovich@independence.k12.ia.us](mailto:vmaximovich@independence.k12.ia.us)

or download the volunteer registration form at

<http://www.independence.k12.ia.us/district-departments/volunteer-information/>