



SPARTA AREA SCHOOLS

BELL RINGER

Home of the Michigan Blue Ribbon Exemplary School

www.spartaschools.org

Vol. 30, No. 2 • Nov./Dec., 2010

Parent - Teacher Conferences

- Ridgeview Elementary..... Nov. 22 & 23 (3:30 - 7:00 p.m.)
- Applevue Elementary Nov. 18 & 22 (3:30 - 7:00 p.m.)
- Middle School..... Nov. 9 & 11 (4:30 - 7:00 p.m.)

3 R's Service Learning Projects

By Renne' Wyman

Sparta High School students in the Mild Cognitively Impaired Program create and implement Retail, Recycling, and Recreational Service Learning projects to benefit their school and community. These 9-12, plus students manage two retail stores, an ice cream shop and school store, to job-coach younger and/or more impaired students to improve their vocational skills while improving their own communication, problem solving, money, and job skills. These same students have launched and expanded a district-wide recycling program. Initially they collected, sorted, and transported recycling material from all the district buildings. Now they job-coach other special education students in the various buildings to collect their own recycling. They enjoy educating elementary students about the materials we recycle and the benefits of the 3 R's. Yet the most inspiring expansion is the collaboration these students have made with community businesses in order to reduce costs of the program and expand city-wide recycling. A favorite enlarging project that has also reduced in cost as community groups join in on the project, is the creation of two dances, Homecoming Harvest Dance and Prom, which are offered to Kent County adults and high school students with special needs. These students organize and plan the events requiring collaboration with a DJ, Knights of Columbus, photographers, District Administrators, area businesses and many teachers and parents from districts outside our own. Overall, a population of students in Sparta, Michigan, who most would think need the services of others, have demonstrated a spirit of giving while showing everyone around them just how truly capable they are.



Sparta students enjoy an evening with friends at the Homecoming Harvest Dance.



Sparta High School cross country runners pose for a picture with Coach Smith and chaperones, after a day of biking near the Continental Divide in Wyoming.

Spartan Athletes visit the Continental Divide

By Ted Smith

Not since 1998, have Sparta athletes had the rare privilege of hiking along the Continental Divide in the great state of Wyoming. The summer of 2010 saw Sparta High School Teacher/Coach Ted Smith and group Safety Coordinator Mike Hull organize the trip of a lifetime. Along with the support of Sparta Teacher Paul Groh and former graduates of Sparta High School, Joe Skripka and Brent Nelson, chaperones gave Sparta parents and athletes a trip they will not soon forget. The trip saw the Spartans tucked into the base of the Continental Divide for seven days of hiking, sight seeing and fishing in some of the most secluded and pristine country that the Wind River Indian Reservation has to offer. The Spartans caught many fish, climbed to the Divide and saw both moose and elk on the excursion. As said by one student-athlete, "This was the toughest thing I have ever done but it was worth every minute!"



Members of the Spartan soccer teams along with their dads take time out for a picture at the Continental Divide, Wyoming.

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Sparta Area Schools 2010-11 Calendar

Thanksgiving Recess (No School)November 24-26 W-F
 Last day of School for StudentsDecember 17 F
 Christmas Vacation (No School) December 20-December 31
 School Resumes.....January 3 M
 Teacher Work Days (No School) January 20-21 Th-F
 Teacher Work Day (No School).....March 31 Th
 No School April 1 F
 Spring Break (No School).....April 4-8 M-F
 Good Friday (No School).....April 22 F
 Teacher Work Day (No School).....May 20 F
 Memorial Day (No School)May 30 M
 Englishville Graduation June 1 W
 High School GraduationJune 2 Th
 Last Day of School.....June 9 Th

The above calendar shall be limited by and subject to the provisions of state law governing the make-up of days missed due to emergency closing. Days not required by law for make-up shall not be added to the calendar year. School days which must be made up for State Aid purposes will be scheduled at the end of the school year. Further, any change in State law which negates the make-up of days missed due to emergency closing shall be in immediate effect in regard to the calendar, and days missed shall not be subject to make up.

PTC News

General meetings are held 6:15-7:15p.m. in the High School Media Center on the following Mondays: November 8, December 13, January 10, February 14, March 14, April 18, May 9.
 Contact Kristin Armock, President (KristinArmock@aol.com) with questions.

School Closings and Delays

A possible two-hour delay or closing of school due to inclement weather is a difficult decision and is always based on student safety. It is not a decision which is taken lightly or made without considering all available information. We try to make the decision as early as possible in order for the media to alert students/parents and staff. Decisions are usually made by 6:00 a.m. so that the media can broadcast information no later than 6:30 a.m. We are also going to continue posting delays and closing information on the Sparta Area Schools website, www.spartaareaschools.org as added communications.

With the changing weather comes the possibility of school closings and delays. Please listen to your local radio, television stations or check the web page:

TELEVISION STATIONS	RADIO STATIONS	WEB SITES
WZZM 13	93.7 WBCT	WWW.WZZM13.COM
WOOD 8	95.7 WLHT	WWW.WOODTV.COM
WWMT 3	96.1 WVTI	WWW.WWMT.COM
	96.9 WLAV	
	97.9 WGRD	
	100.5 WTRV	
	1300 WOOD AM	

IN THE EVENT OF A TWO HOUR DELAY:

- There will be no AM kindergarten, ECDD or preschool.
- No morning breakfast programs will be held.
- Those students who are transported to other districts for special programs will also be delayed two hours.
- The Before and After School Care programs will be held at their regular time.

IN THE EVENT OF A SCHOOL CLOSING:

- There is no transportation to other districts.
- The Before School and After School Care program will be available at Appleview. Child care at WECC will be open.

SPARTA AREA SCHOOLS

OUR PURPOSE is to teach children the **skills and attitudes** needed to be productive members of society in order to improve the quality of life for all.

WELCOME New Sparta Teachers & Staff!

Name: **Nicole Blain**

Position: **Ridgeview Special Education
Teacher Assistant**

Nicole likes to knit, run and play with her dogs. She is excited to help support the kids at Ridgeview.

Name: **Angie Christians**

Position: **White Early Childhood Teacher**
 Angie enjoys spending time camping with her husband and kids, scrapbooking and reading. She graduated from Sparta in 1991 and is proud to be a Spartan again.



Name: **Kia Eisenga**

Position: **Middle School
Special Education Teacher**
 Kia spends her free time with family and friends, she likes to work out, read and travel. She is looking forward to teaching at Sparta Schools.



Name: **Lauren Henderson**

Position: **White Early Childhood Teacher**

Lauren enjoys running and spending time with her family. She is excited to become a part of the Sparta community.

Name: **Nanette Hersberger**

Position: **Part-time Kindergarten Teacher**
 Nanette loves to cook, read and spend time with her family. She is excited to join the Sparta team.



Name: **Sarah Kieft**

Position: **Young-5's Teacher**
 Sarah loves to be outdoors hiking, biking and kayaking. She thinks Sparta is a wonderful community filled lots of caring people.



Name: **Sarah Owens**

Position: **High School Science Teacher**
 Sarah enjoys sports, traveling and the outdoors. She is looking forward to many great experiences at Sparta Schools.



Name: **Ashley Seth**

Position: **GRPS Teacher Aid**

Ashley likes to camp, fish and watch NASCAR. She is looking forward to work in Sparta.

Name: **Ashley Shelner**

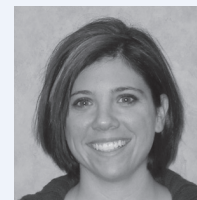
Position: **Appleview Part-time 5th Grade Teacher**

Ashley likes to read and watch movies. She loves to travel. As a student teacher in Sparta schools, she loved the community. She is glad to be back.

Name: **Kristi Wolfe**

Position: **GSRP Teacher**

Kristi likes to cook, read and spend time with friends and family. She is impressed with the community involvement in the schools.



Bell Ringer Due Dates

The *Bell Ringer* communicates with the residents of the school district five times per year. If you wish to have an article or "Community Corner" notice considered for publication, please email it to amie.bitely@staff.spartaschools.org. Please use only MS Word or Corel WordPerfect for your format.

The *Bell Ringer* is distributed in the first issue of the *Advance Newspaper* in November, January, March, June and August. If you are not receiving the *Bell Ringer*, please contact the Advance at (1-800-439-0960). Issues of the *Bell Ringer* are also available for download at www.spartaschools.org.

Deadlines to submit information:

January 4, 2011 issue.....due December 8
 March 1, 2011 issue.....due February 2
 June 7, 2011 issue.....due May 4
 August 2, 2011 issue.....due June 22



Peter Pan Flying into Sparta

Sparta High School students will present *Peter Pan* on **December 1-4 at 7:30 p.m. in the High School Auditorium and on Sunday, December 5 at 1:30 p.m.** You won't want to miss this exciting performance, with actual flying actors, courtesy of Flying by Foy - the company that developed the system allowing for soaring aerial choreography that has thrilled audiences since the 1950s.

Peter is played by Lucas Kane and Miss Grace Kelley portrays Wendy Darling. Bring the entire family for a night of swashbuckling adventure - little Pirates, Fairies and Indians will be welcomed in the audience. Call 887-8213 ext 1353 for tickets or purchase at the door.

Life is Full of Challenges

By Kent Swinson

No one said it was going to be easy. Just when you think you have overcome one challenge, another one quickly comes along. It is no different in education than it is for individuals, families, businesses, or communities. The choice we have is our attitude in working with others to find solutions to the problems we face. Those attitudes create the culture of each organization, family, and community. The Sparta Area Schools is very proud of our school culture realizing the importance it plays in the lives of all the students we serve.

Based on our culture and values, last year at this time the district set out creating a "Vision for the Future" by asking for input from all educational stakeholders. Feedback from parents, staff, school organizations, and members of the community were an important part of the decision making process used by the Board of Education. Efforts will continue to look at innovative ways to re-structure education in order to address instruction, finances, collaboration between districts and ways to better prepare our students for their futures.

We are thankful for your support of our schools. That too is a part of the culture of Sparta. Challenges are going to come and go. This district is fortunate to count on all of us to be a part of the solution. The next time you attend a school activity or event, take a look around and witness the high level of support and sense of culture. That is what makes Sparta School special.


GOBBLE UP GOOD BOOKS!

By Emma Kauffman

November's here and, along with the fallen leaves, comes **Gobble up Good Books**, which is a reading incentive program sponsored by Mrs. Hahn and the Sparta High media center. High school students need to read up to two books to receive a participation prize of a free backpack. At that point he/she will also be entered into the drawing for the grand prize at the end of the month. Books that are required reading for classes are also acceptable in the drawing. The only restriction is that books must be 100-pages long to qualify for prizes. There are bookmarks available in the media center that serve as raffle tickets. Students should pick one up, write the titles of two books read in the month of November and have a teacher sign it. After that, students should drop the slip off in the library to qualify. No one said to stop at two books, though. The more books read, the more raffle tickets entered into the drawing and the more chances to win the 4th generation iPod touch, which is this year's grand prize. It has 32 gigs of memory! Other prizes include gift cards to Best Buy, Schuler's and Target.



Sparta Education Foundation is selling CALENDARS this fall!



Calendars will be sold at the Parent/Teacher Conferences in November!

Calendar features:

- Student artwork on every month!
- 75+ candid pictures of students from all the school buildings!
- Important school dates, parent/teacher conferences, testing dates and vacations
- Sparta community event dates too!

Also listed in the back:

- School district phone numbers, school building hours & drop-off time
- School organization information; such as PTC, PSA, Sports & Band Booster contacts, plus middle school and high school meeting dates.
- Directory of village & township services
- Plus, ads from supportive businesses

Calendars are only \$10
Cash or check (payable to Sparta Ed. Foundation)

Also available at all school offices, township office and several local businesses.

Sparta Sports Boosters

"Committed to Sparta Athletics"

Over the last 3 years the Boosters continued their tradition by raising more than \$120,000.00 for the Sparta sports programs.

These funds were used to buy equipment, uniforms, maintain fields and other team requests.

Become a member or volunteer to help at any of the many sporting events during the school year. Meetings are held on the third Monday of each month at the High School beginning at 7:00 p.m.

For more information:
Contact us at
SPARTAMISPORTSBOOSTERS@YAHOO.COM

or visit our link at
WWW.SPARTASCHOOLS.ORG



**Thank You For Supporting
The Sports Boosters
And Sparta Athletics!**

WRESTLING NEWS!

**Sparta High School is celebrating
50 years of SPARTAN WRESTLING!**

Former Sparta wrestlers and coaches please plan to be our guests on Wednesday, January 26th as our 2010-11 wrestling team takes on the Red Hawks of Cedar Springs (match times - JV/6:00pm and Varsity/7:00pm). We need you there to make this a real CELEBRATION of Sparta's wrestling tradition.

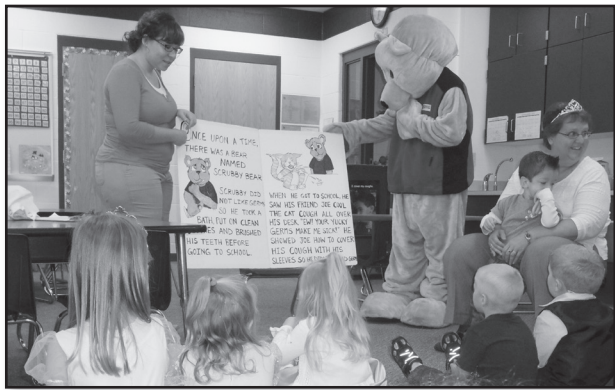


SPARTA PRESCHOOL NEWS

Scrubby Bear Visits Preschool

By Heather Lasbuay

Scrubby Bear from the American Red Cross visited the Early Childhood Programs at Ridgeview Elementary and White Early Childhood Center in September. He sang songs with the children and read them a story. The children learned a song about handwashing and germs and learned ways to keep their bodies healthy including covering coughs with elbows, and proper handwashing techniques.



Preschool Plus

Ask any kindergarten teacher and she will tell you of the benefits a preschool experience offers to a young child. The difference between those students who've been to preschool or in a childcare setting where preschool is infused, and those who have not, is great!

Sparta Schools offers tuition preschool and preschool infused into childcare to sixty seven 3- and 4-year olds at White Early Childhood Center. Students may attend the half day preschool program or the all day, extended preschool/childcare program.

At preschool, students learn to share, to help out, to use their words rather than gestures, to be self sufficient (hang up your coat, put away your materials). They learn good health habits like flushing germs by washing your hands, or caring for teeth by brushing after eating. They enjoy creative play and use their imaginations as they build, perform, dance and create artwork. They also learn kindergarten readiness skills like the alphabet and counting. These skills are taught through play and not as a singular curriculum item.

Sixty four more 4-year olds get a preschool experience at Ridgeview through the state funded readiness program which serves at-risk students. The highly trained staff at both buildings use the High Scope curriculum and formally assess students in several areas. Mary-Rose Johnson, preschool teacher/coordinator, has helped to oversee the hiring of several new preschool staff this fall and is excited about the program. "The restructuring of the preschool program has been a great success this fall. We are looking forward to a great school year with many happy, smiling faces".



Fine Motor Fun

With the help of Mrs. Hazzard and Mrs. Markosky, the students in Mrs. LaVancher's class have fun working on their fine motor skills each week. Fine motor skills include writing, cutting, opening things, pinching, and using our hands to help in everyday life.

This week to keep with the fall theme, we shelled ears of corn. The students had to work very hard to pick all the kernels off the corn cob. When we were done, we had a big pile of corn. The students then had to pick it all up with their hands and fingers and put it in a bowl. The corn will be used to fill our sensory table where the students can explore and further work on their fine motor skills. To complete the activity, we air popped popcorn to have as our snack.



SPARTA RIDGEVIEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Important Dates at Ridgeview

NOVEMBER

- Nov. 5.....PTC Music Concert, Jeff Kagan, 7:00-8:00 p.m.
- Nov. 10.....Picture Make-up Day
- Nov. 17.....Early Childhood Progressive Thanksgiving Dinner
- Nov. 22 & 23 ...Parent/Teacher Conferences, 3:30-7:00 p.m.
PTC Scholastic Book Fair, 8:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m.
- Nov. 23.....PTC Fundraiser Pick Up, 12:00-8:00 p.m.
- Nov. 24-26.....Thanksgiving Recess

DECEMBER

- Dec. 72nd Grade Fine Arts Program, Ridgeview Gym

Holiday Party Schedules

- Dec. 15.....M/W/F Kindergarten, 1:15-2:15 p.m.
- Dec. 16.....Early Childhood, 9:30-10:30 a.m. & 1:30-2:30 p.m.
Kdg. AM & 1st Grade, 10:00-11:00 a.m.
Kdg. PM, 1:15-2:15 p.m.
2nd Grade, 1:30 - 2:30 p.m.
- Dec 20 - Jan 2..Christmas Vacation

For more information about upcoming events, visit www.spartaschools.org, click on your school, then "calendar" to see the district wide calendar.

Second Graders Start School on a Positive



Second graders: Hannah Postal and Breana Crum

Second graders did a very nice job coming back to Ridgeview this fall. They are the oldest and the leaders of the school. They have been following the **I-Care rules** and filling each other's bucket with compliments. Recess is always a fun way to see old friends and make new friends. Each class has been working on their class contracts. Some of the words used on these contracts are: *responsible, kind, nice, truthful, bucket filler, fair and respectful*. When everyone follows the contracts, school is a safer and a more caring place to be at.



Stop, Drop and Roll

On Tuesday, October 5 and 6, Ridgeview Elementary was visited by the Sparta Fire Department. Chief Jerry Bolen, Lieutenant Dan Olney and other fire fighters spoke to the students about fire safety. They covered many things from making sure your family has a fire escape plan and a meeting place, to what to do if you catch on fire....STOP, DROP, ROLL AND COVER YOUR FACE! The students were also able to see what kind of equipment the firemen use and got a tour of a fire truck and all of its equipment. It was a great reminder, during Fire Safety Month, about the important things we need to be discussing with our children to keep them safe at school and at home!



Important Dates at Appleview

NOVEMBER

Nov. 5.....	Progress Reports PTC Music Concert, Jeff Kagan
Nov. 8.....	6:15 p.m. PTC General Mtg.
Nov. 17.....	Picture Retakes
Nov. 18 & 22.....	Parent/Teacher Conferences, 3:30 p.m.-7:00 p.m.
Nov. 19 & 22.....	PTC Book Fair
Nov. 23.....	12-8pm PTC Fundraiser Pick Up
Nov. 24-26.....	Thanksgiving Recess

DECEMBER

Dec. 3.....	End of 1st Trimester
Dec 10.....	Report cards go home
Dec. 14.....	3rd Grade Music Program, SHS Auditorium, 7:00 p.m.
Dec 17.....	Holiday Classroom Parties
Dec 20 - Jan 2.....	Christmas Vacation

For more information about upcoming events, visit www.spartaschools.org, click on your school, then "calendar" to see the district wide calendar.

Why Did Appleview Plant 3,000 Wildflowers and 45 Trees and Bushes?

People in the United States have already changed 95% of the land for their own use. This could cause the loss of 95% of different kinds of plants, animals and insects that should be here! However, if we plant native plants in our yards and fields, most species will be able to survive by living right next to us. (*Bringing Nature Home, Tallamy*). Appleview is helping save our wildlife. We could not have done it without our caring community. We would like to thank these organizations and businesses:

- GRANTS:** \$2,500 Lowes, "Toolbox for Education"
 \$2,500 Sparta PTC
 \$1,200 Sparta Community Foundation
 \$1,000 MDNRE, "Community Forest Grant Program"
 \$750 Sparta Education Foundation
 \$600 Sparta Chamber of Commerce
 \$465 Sparta Youth Advisory Committee

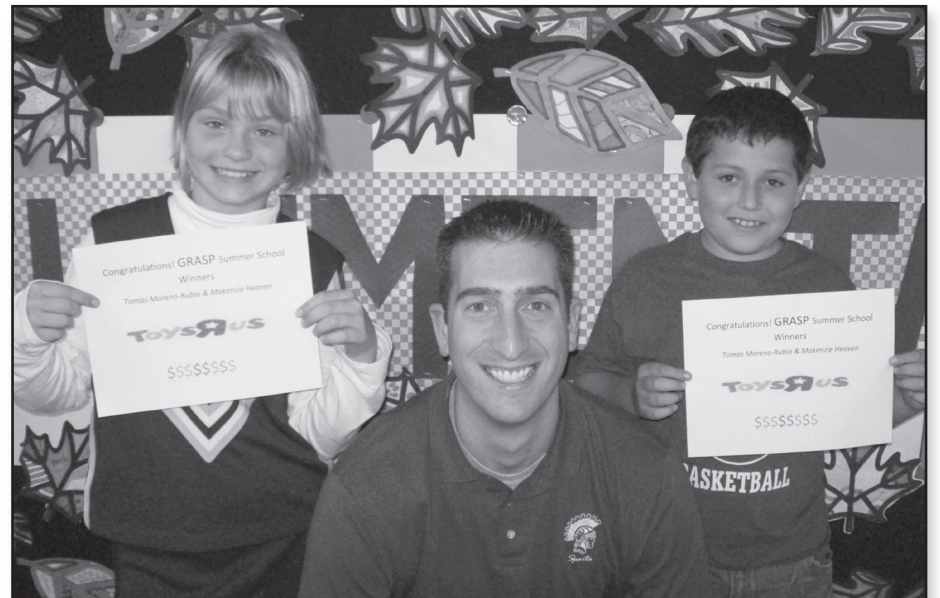
DONATORS (Goods or Services):

- Dianne Anderson Farm
- Antor Excavating
- Appleview Students and Staff
- Atwoods Timber & Lumber
- Belden Brick and Supply Co.
- Brent Beuschel Farm
- Bradford Dairy Farms
- Buck's Tree Service
- Sharon Globig, MSU Master Gardener
- George Goodfellow Farm
- Hessel Cheslek Funeral Home
- Home Depot
- Howard Christensen Nature Center;
- Gerald Kingsbury Farm
- J.K. Masonry Inc.
- Jacobsen's Floral
- Joda Maintenance and Landscaping
- Kent Career Tech Center;
- Ladies North Kent Eagles Auxiliary;
- Mel Trotter
- Reichert Landscaping
- Rogers Hardware
- Saenz Greenhouse
- Shaner Avenue Nursery
- Phil Schneider Farm
- Sparta American Legion
- Sparta Boy Scout Troop 280
- Sparta Elevator
- Sparta Hunting and Fishing Club
- Sparta Lions Club
- Sparta PTC Committee
- Sparta Village
- Vern Stevens, MDNRE and Designs by Nature, LLC
- Mark Vanderhyde Farm; West Michigan Tree Service
- Wright Stump Grinding

Because our community supports Appleview, our children will become citizens who make decisions based on scientific knowledge.

iPad Frenzy!

Students in Mrs. Molesta's 3rd, 4th and 5th grade class were introduced to a wonderful new learning tool - the Apple iPad! Through a generous grant from the Grand Rapids based Sebastian Foundation, Mrs. Molesta was able to provide the students in her classroom with five iPads. Students were ecstatic at the unveiling on October 1, 2010 and couldn't wait to try them out! Apps were downloaded to help students build phonics, spelling, reading, math facts, money, and time concepts. Contagious laughter filled the room as they learned communication skills through Talking Tom; a cat that repeats your speech in a hysterical fashion. The Apple iPad applications are endless, helping students organize their daily schedule, build basic skills, strengthen their fine motor skills, as well as developing a means of communication. The main goal for using the iPads as a learning tool is to build basic phonics, reading, math, and communication skills. Fortunately, the best part of the iPad is that the students are having fun... and they don't realize how much their learning!



Grand Rapids Academic Summer Program winners Makenzie Heaven and Tomas Moreno-Rubio with Mr. Vydareny.

Summer School Helps

For most students summer fun means swimming, biking, camping and lots of playing outside. For 48 of Sparta's elementary students it also meant time spent doing summer school correspondence work through the Grand Rapids Academic Summer Program. The 9 lessons (available for both language arts and math) in GRASP, provide a good review of grade level materials along with lots of opportunity for practice.

As an incentive to complete the work, students were promised the opportunity to win an MP3 player or gift certificate, should they complete at least 70% of the lesson material. Forty-eight students did complete the lessons and two names were drawn from that group, as winners of the GRASP incentive. A big congratulations goes out to 3rd grader Tomas Moreno-Rubio and 4th grader Makenzie Heaven, the winners, for a job well done over the summer with their summer school work!

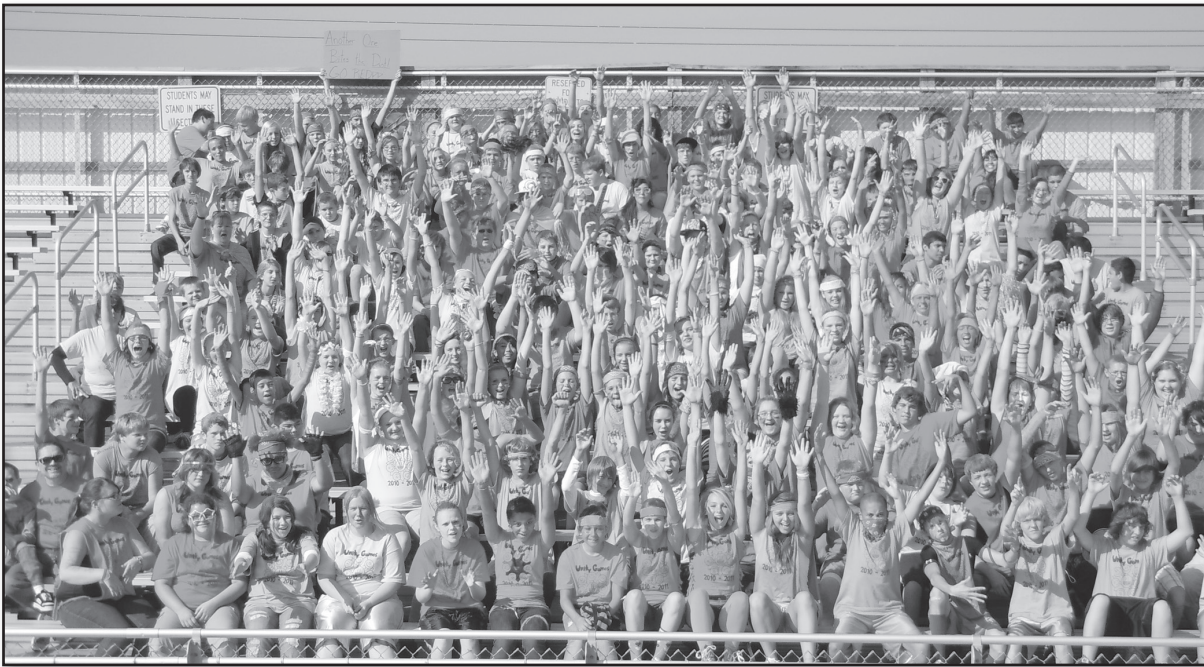
Kindness Illustrated

"An act of love may tip the balance." This was a launch that Mr. Shuneson used in his classroom in September and was illustrated to his class in the kindness shown by three community members and an area business.

Mr. Shuneson signed up with WOOD-TV 8 and Maranda on the "Teacher Wish List" campaign and listed the things that he could use in his classroom to help his students be successful. Three community members saw the list and gave crayons, markers, notebooks, folders, pencils, and snacks for the students. These wonderful gifts to the classroom were gratefully accepted and will be used throughout the school year.

A bigger surprise came when Mr. Shuneson came in to work on the weekend and the front of his room was filled by all the supplies that he had put on his wish list. They included not only the classroom supplies that were needed but also hats, gloves, and a new backpack. This generous donation was made by ASI Automation in Sparta.

Room 144 at Appleview wants to say a huge THANK YOU to these kind community members and ASI Automation for supporting and encouraging them to be the best they can be.



Unity Games *fun for all*

The 8th Grade Students at Sparta Middle School celebrated the beginning of the year with their annual Unity Games. The Unity Games are a way for students to bond with positive activities and competitions. The games are an awesome experience for the 8th graders as they focus on teamwork and strengthen school spirit. The students had a blast and were blessed with a perfect day! A great "Thank You" to all those who helped organize the event and the super parent volunteers! The day was a huge success!

Important MS Dates

NOVEMBER

- Nov. 1 - 5 Sixth Grade to camp (half week per group)
- Nov. 8 - 12 Scholastic Book Fair
- Nov. 9 & 11 Parent/Teacher Conferences, 4:30 - 7:00 p.m.
- Nov. 22 Meet in the Middle parent meeting, 6:15 p.m.
- Nov. 24 - 26 Thanksgiving Recess

DECEMBER

- Dec. 9 Holiday Band Concert, HS Auditorium, 7:00 p.m.
- Dec 20 - Jan 2 Christmas Vacation

For more information about upcoming events, visit www.spartaschools.org, click on your school, then "calendar" to see the district wide calendar.

Don't Throw Away That Empty Cartridge!

Our school has launched a fundraising project with the help of an inkjet recycling company, *Empties4Cash*. Empty inkjet cartridges can be recycled and remanufactured. Our school will receive up to \$4 for each cartridge turned in. This will directly benefit our school and the students, not to mention it is great for the environment. Bring your empty cartridges in to the media center!

SCHOLASTIC BOOK FAIR at the SMS library

Our Scholastic Book Fair will be held on November 8-12 in the media center. The event will take place during the school day and also in the evening during conferences on November 9 and 11. This fundraiser supports our Accelerated Reading Program at the middle school. Thanks for all your help in supporting reading at Sparta Schools.



Sparta Middle School New Student Luncheon

It is a gift each year to welcome new students and families to Sparta Middle School. One of the best parts of serving as counselors is the opportunity to find new and exciting ways to get to know these students. In an effort to do so, Counselors Karyll Russell and Kathleen Shook, along with GVSU Counseling Intern, Regan Tubbs, hosted a welcome luncheon for students new to Sparta Middle School on Monday, September 20th. The purpose of the time together was to give these students an opportunity to see and meet others who are also adjusting to the new environment, and to provide a "safe space" for them to reflect on their experiences since beginning at SMS. During lunch, students completed a questionnaire providing feedback about these experiences as well as information about themselves. They were also given a chance to ask questions and discuss any issues or concerns that have developed since the start of the school year. The questionnaires helped Mrs. Shook and Mrs. Russell to learn more about these individuals as well as evaluate the current practices in place for new students. Student feedback about the event was very positive and the time together proved beneficial for all.

Ski & Snowboard Club at Cannonsburg Ski Area

The temperatures are falling and soon the snow will be too!

If your student is a skier or snowboarder or would like to learn a great sport they can enjoy lifelong then the Sparta Ski and Snowboard Club is for them. Club nights are Thursdays but your child can enjoy the slopes any time or day they wish. Join with a friend for added enjoyment. Parent passes are available for parents of elementary students. Information is available in the Sparta Middle School office. Money and forms are to be dropped off to Mrs. Switzer at the middle school. Questions, please call Mrs. Switzer 887-7506, ext. 2350 or email julie.switzer@staff.spartaschools.org

Check It Out! Sparta Band Boosters Presents

The easiest fundraiser ever!

Ever wonder how to pay for all those school expenses? Scrip is it...

Scrip night: Every Monday, 7-8 p.m. in the High School Media Center

Purchase gift cards (at face value) and receive funds in your family account. Funds can be used to cover any school related expense.

Visit us on Monday evenings

All Sparta school families welcome!

Visit spartabands.org for more information



SPARTA HIGH SCHOOL



Queen, Kayla Towers and King, Tyler Droski

Sparta Homecoming 2010

By Collin Gibisas

This year's homecoming celebrations were phenomenal. The Falcons of West Catholic defeated the Sparta Spartans, but from the ashes of defeat, a new king and queen was crowned. Tyler Droski and Kayla Towers were named king and queen during an exquisite halftime festival. Runner-ups for the race for homecoming king included Troy Panehal, Brady McInnis, and Dan Norman. Runner-ups for homecoming queen included Autumn Rath, Halley Love, and Grace Tuttle. Homecoming in Sparta is not just about the game to students. Along with football festivities, the students in each grade competed in a week long contest against one another in various contests: whether it was donating to Penny-a-Point, collecting cans for the food drive, dressing up, competing in Friday games, building a float or working on Mock Rock (a dance routine choreographed by each grade). At the conclusion of all these competitions, the senior class of 2011 was victorious, holding the coveted red apple aloft. After all the excitement of the game faded, the students of each grade danced the night away on the following Saturday at the high school dance sponsored by the SHS student council and chaperoned by Mr. Spencer, Ms. Jurek, Ms. Priest, Ms. Owens, and several parent volunteers.

Spartan Staff Spotlight: Mr. Weiss

By Chelsi Knop



Mr. Weiss' life can get hectic sometimes. He has 3 jobs and other responsibilities that students hear a lot about in his open and friendly classes. Lately, though, students have wanted to hear much about his dramatic pie-eating contest victory at homecoming that secured first place for the senior class. Mr. Weiss enjoys teaching Advanced Placement Statistics and Algebra at Sparta, while being a father to 2 little girls and being a husband to his sweetheart Julie. "My family is every-

thing to me. I'm 100% dad and 100% husband when I get home," Weiss said. The biking enthusiast has been teaching in Sparta for 11 years, but he's been teaching high school for 16 years. He earned his bachelor's degree at Michigan State University. While on campus in East Lansing, Weiss competed in Mixed Martial Arts. He devoted himself to the various disciplines while in high school and continued to pursue excellence in college. Mr. Weiss job shadowed his uncle, an engineer, during his senior year at MSU and that secured his future. After that, he decided that teaching was not as boring as being an engineer. "Money isn't everything," he said.

2009-2010 Yearbooks Available

Graduated Class of 2010!

The 2009-2010 yearbooks, *We Are Sparta*, are in. If you haven't already done so, stop in to pick up your reserved copy. There are only a few extra copies remaining, so members of the Class of 2010 should be sure to get a copy before supplies run out.

Principal's Coffee Hour

Come and join the Principal's Coffee Hour and meet other parents to learn what's going on at the high school. The Principal's Coffee Hour will meet Friday, November 19 at 8:15 a.m. in the main office conference room.



For more information about upcoming events at the high school, visit www.spartaschools.org, click on your school, then "calendar" to see the district wide calendar.



Values of the Month Recap: September and October Respect and Pride

By Alex Woolworth

The month of September brought the focus of "respect" back to Sparta High School, a new senior class and a class of wide-eyed freshman. We transitioned smoothly into the month of October, beginning with the Homecoming festivities. October had the perfect value for homecoming: pride. Students showed pride in the homecoming games, mock rocks, floats, and every other competition that homecoming involves at our school. We also took pride in the ArtPrize recognition our town has received from Civics Teacher David Fix, English Teacher Matt Burrows, and the human statue/entertainer Robert Shangle for their contributions. The month of November has a value focus of compassion. Students are showing compassion through the school play *Peter Pan* as they work together, putting selfish desires aside and finding common ground. *Pan* opens on December 1st and runs through December 5th.

Senior Bash News

Parents, we need your help organizing this event for our children. Your senior should have received a blue "Senior Bash" packet during orientation. It is filled with a lot of very useful information. Please contact us at Senior Bash 616-887-7506 ext. 1304 or Facebook@Sparta, MI - Senior Bash.

We need volunteers for the following events:

- **Spartan Skybox & VIP Parking**
Amy Burmeister 887-8669
- **Bottles for Bash** ~ Rhonda Carlisle 887-8934 or rhonda_carlisle@hotmail.com
- **Spirit Items** ~ Marilyn Momber 887-1370 or cowsmonaut@aol.com
- **Texas Hold'em** ~ Joe McInnis 292-3733 or joem@thermal-tec.com or Lori McInnis 813-0554 or lmcinnis@fhps.us
- **50/50 Raffle** ~ Patty Anderson 887-2399 or suematsu90@yahoo.com
- **Glo Bowl** ~ Heather Auterson 890-4933 or hmauterson@aol.com

Please contact us today.

Senior Class of 2011

Reminder! The yearbook staff set aside several pages specifically designed for seniors and we will need your help to complete these pages. Please contact Kim VanDusen at kimberly.vandusen@staff.spartaschools.org with any questions you might have.

- Please turn in a 2 x 3 vertical shoulders-up shot by Friday, December 17, 2010. (*digital images welcome*)
- Please turn in a baby photo with \$10 by Friday, December 17, 2010. (*optional*)

***The yearbook staff reserves the right to refuse inappropriate images that violate the student handbook.*

Guidelines for Senior Pictures Because contemporary clothing styles and poses change so quickly, Jostens recommends a traditional senior photo pose for placement in the yearbook. General guidelines for a traditional senior photo include: vertical format; indoor lighting with minimal background; head and shoulder position; no name or date printed on the photo. Most of the local photography studios facilitate this type of pose. Please have the photography studio send a copy directly to the high school upon request. Senior photos should be submitted to Mrs. Van Dusen.

Mark your calendars!

Dodgeball is Back!

January 29, 2011
9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Sparta High School

Start forming your teams now!

Age Divisions: 5th grade and under
 6th grade - 8th grade
 Open - 9th grade thru adults

Cost: \$50 per team
 (Teams can consist of 5 to 10 players)

Sign-up sheets and waiver forms will be available starting in December at school offices and online at www.gosparta.com

QUESTIONS: 887-8213 ext. 1319

Funds raised benefit the Sparta High School Cross Country Teams

CONGRATUALIONS to the 2010 Hall of Fame Inductees

All State Wrestlers: Steve VanOeffelen, Class of 1972, Mike Vanderhyde, Class of 1973, Todd Eck, Class of 1981, David Andrus, Class of 1991, and Chad Kik, Class of 1992. Also being inducted is Coach Ron Helmboldt. These former Spartans will be inducted into the Hall of Fame at a presentation to be held on Sunday, December 5th at 4:30 pm in the High School Auditorium with a reception following in the HS Commons. All former wrestlers, wrestling fans and community members are invited to attend.

Anyone with pictures or videos of these athletes or Coach Helmboldt that we can include in a video presentation, please contact Pam Kik at the Community Education office, 887-7321.

BOARD MEMBERS

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 Nick LewisTrustee
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Mr. Kent Swinson.....Superintendent.....887-8253
 Mr. Mark Kasmer Assistant Superintendent887-8253
 Mr. Mike O'Connor..... Director, Adult Education887-7321
 Mr. Matt Spencer.....Principal, Sparta High School.....887-8213
 Principal, Englishville High School
 Mr. Cary Stamas..... Assistant Principal, Sparta High School887-8213
 Mr. Joe Droski..... Athletic Director887-2098
 Mr. Joel Stoner Principal, Sparta Middle School887-8211
 Mr. Steve Johnson..... Assistant Principal, Sparta Middle School887-8211
 Mr. Kris Vydareny Principal, Appleview Elementary887-1743
 Ms. Nicole Peterson..... Principal, Ridgeview Elementary887-8218
 Ms. Marialyce Zeerip.....District Grants & Auxiliary Programs Director887-7321
 Ms. Deborah Dufour..... RTI Coordinator887-8218
 Mrs. Susan Gates..... Special Education Supervisor.....887-7359
 Mr. Tim Kleaveland.....Food Service Director.....887-1744
 Mr. Jerry Gavin..... Transportation Director887-0136
 Mr. Tony Smolinski Operations Supervisor887-0136

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETINGS

Meetings are generally held on the second Monday of the month at the Board of Education offices, 465 S. Union St., Sparta, MI 49345. Meetings are open to the public and begin at 7:30 p.m.

The Bell Ringer is published by the Sparta Board of Education. Please call 887-8253 with inquiries.

The Sparta Area Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability in its programs and activities. In order to protect these rights and assure compliance, the Sparta Area School District has appointed Mr. Joe Droski as Coordinator of Title IX, Mr. Mark Kasmer as Coordinator of Title II, VI, and the Age Discrimination Act and Mrs. Susan Gates as the Coordinator of Section 504.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Sparta Area Schools Community Walking Schedule for the 2010-2011 School Year

SPARTA HIGH SCHOOL

MONDAY, WEDNESDAY, FRIDAY

7:00-7:45 A.M. (Begins November 1, 2010)

Walkers must sign in at the office as they enter the main entrance. Facility usage is limited to the walking track in the field house area. Visitors should not be in any other part of the building and must exit the building by 7:45 a.m. or sooner if they complete their walk. Parking is available in the visitors spaces at the front of the student parking.

SPARTA MIDDLE SCHOOL

MONDAY, TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY,

THURSDAY

6:00-8:30 P.M.

Walkers should enter the main entrance in the front of the building. This is the same format as past years with walking limited to the hallways making the loop around the courtyard. There are adult education classes in session, so visitors are asked to keep noise to a minimum in order not to disturb instruction. All walkers must exit the building by 8:30 p.m.

When there are scheduling conflicts with school activities, walking may be cancelled.

NEW AIM KARATE, GYMNASTICS AND VOLLEYBALL CLASSES begin in January. Look for details in the January/February *Bell Ringer*.

Free Disability Seminar

Do you think you are disabled? Do you think you may qualify for Social Security?

Attend the free seminar on how to file a claim, the stages in obtaining a disability, the basis for obtaining disability and problems you may encounter along the way. Call 887-7321 to register for this free class.

When: Thursday, Nov. 4, 2010

Where: Sparta Administration Board Meeting Room

Time: 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Cost: Free

30 & OVER BASKETBALL

When: Sundays

Where: Middle School Gym

Time: 5:00-8:00 p.m.

Weeks: Ongoing (November - April)

Cost: \$2 per person/per week

OPEN GYM VOLLEYBALL

When: Sundays

Where: Ridgeview Elementary Gym

Time: 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Weeks: Ongoing (November - April)

Fee: \$2 per person/
per week

Must be 18 years of age or older to participate in open gym basketball and volleyball.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Auditions for Sparta Community Theatre!!

Orchestra for Bye Bye Birdie

Show dates: Feb 23-27 (6 shows)

Rehearsals: begin in November

Instruments needed: percussion, violins, cello, bass, saxophones (alto, tenor, baritone), clarinet (also bass), flute, piccolo, horns, trumpets, trombone, guitar, bass guitar, and banjo

Auditions: by appointment only. Please contact Steve Barnum, our orchestra director, to set an audition appointment at 616-292-7338.

We are seeking self-motivated, experienced, volunteer instrumentalists aged 9th grade and up.

Call now! Invite your friends and family to audition too. Join the fun!

Cast for Bye Bye Birdie

Auditions: Tues., Nov. 30 & Thurs., Dec. 2 6:30-9:00 pm, Sparta Middle School café

Come ONE night to audition

We will provide everything you need. Be ready to sing, dance, and act!

We will be casting Ridgeview age through adults. *Students that are 4th grade and lower MUST have an adult auditioning or willing to work as stage crew for the show.*

Callbacks: Sat., Dec. 4 - 9am - noon
Sparta Middle School café

Materials pickup: Mon., Dec. 6 - 6:00-8:00 pm

First rehearsals: Week of Dec. 27

Questions: Call Mar Higgins
453-9720 after 5pm

Check out our BLOG at <http://spartacommunitytheatre.blogspot.com> for more details.

Sparta's Relay for Life Update (American Cancer Society's Signature Event)

On June 11 and 12, 2010, Thirty-seven community, family and business teams worked together to raise over \$117,000 to help fight back against cancer. That is quite amazing for a community the size of Sparta! Joining the teams, were 116 cancer survivors. They represented the HOPE that we have that research will help find a cure.

We are already planning for the 2011 event which will be held on June 10-11 from noon to noon. Next year's theme will be Around the World for a Cure. Teams are already forming and planning for their fundraisers. If you are interested in forming a team, joining a team or looking to participate in some of the fundraising activities, go to our website at www.relayforlife.org/spartami. We will continue to post upcoming events, so check back often.

As our event continues to grow, we are always looking for more members on the planning committee. We meet once a month for about an hour. If you are interested in getting involved, please call Lynn Schaner at 887-7293 or email her at lschaner@aol.com or Jaime Counterman at Jaime.Counterman@cancer.org or call her at 551-4033