

The Fitz-Herald

November 2016

The Newsletter of Fitzgerald Public Schools



Fall Fun at Fitzgerald Public Schools

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District News

Message from the Superintendent

All is in full swing, and the holiday break is just around the corner! In the spirit of the season, I'd like to give thanks to our parents and families for the important role you play in ensuring your child (or children) have the support they need to succeed. Your presence at open houses, parent/teacher conferences and the many other school events is important. Your role in making sure the kids get to school every day and on time, picking them up from their after-school club or practice, and making sure their homework is done does not go unnoticed. I am truly grateful for your continued commitment to the success of your student or students.

On a related note, I am thankful for your hard work in raising kind, caring, responsible students. At Fitzgerald High School, our students are required to do 40 hours of community service as a graduation requirement. By "giving back" and "giving forward" to the community, our students learn important lessons about kindness, being role models for younger students and siblings, and respecting the unique personal stories of elders and those they are helping. Our students enjoy their community service experiences so much that many of them go above and beyond the 40-hour benchmark. That's something to be commended — and it's clear that they get their spirit of giving from you. In this issue of the Fitz-Herald, we have included many stories where our students are "giving back" and "giving forward" to the community. We hope you enjoy these stories and realize that we are continuing the spirit of giving that you began at home.

I hope your family enjoys the last few weeks of the year, and have a relaxing holiday break!

Sincerely,

Barbara VanSweden

Barbara VanSweden

Fundraiser for Classroom Mini-Grants a Huge Success

Our inaugural fundraiser for the Fitzgerald Foundation for Educational Advancement in mid-October was a huge success! The event took place at the MRCC Banquet & Convention Center in Warren. Attendees had the opportunity to have dinner, play games, participate in a 50/50 raffle and win one of 39 donated baskets of prizes, which included tickets to Red Wing and Pistons games. About 175 tickets were sold, and the fundraiser raised \$18,000. The money will be used to fund mini-grants for staff and students to use for classroom projects and field trips. Teachers will be able to apply for these mini-grants, and the grants will be awarded in early 2017. Thank you to the staff, parents and community members who joined us and helped make the event a huge success!



Thank you to the following sponsors:

Platinum Level (\$1,000)

- Partners In Architecture (PIA)
- Edgenuity
- Aramark

Gold Level (\$500)

- Flippen Group

Silver Level (\$250)

- John Mueller/Proforma
- FHS Spartan Shop
- KSS Enterprises
- Nova Environmental
- Patrick Griffin (Entertainment Services)
- Dr. Jim and Guri Edoff
- Fitzgerald Athletic Association (FAA)

Blue/Gold Level (\$100)

- Vista Maria (Community Partner Sponsor)

Preschool and Elementary Highlights

Preschoolers Learn About Things That Grow

Preschool students in the Early Childhood Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) and Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) recently began studying "things that grow." To engage students in the subject, students, teachers and parents walked to Kutchey Family Market, a local community business on E. Ten Mile Road. They were greeted by Farmer Dave, who has a variety of fruits and vegetables in his market. Students and parents learned about various fruits and vegetables and compared colors, sizes and shapes. They also talked about whether those fruits and vegetables grow in the ground, on a vine or on a tree. At the end of the visit, each child received a small pumpkin to take home.

Hot Lunches Offered to Afternoon GSRP Students



Hot lunch is now being offered to all afternoon Early Programs and ECSE students at Westview Elementary. Children are served family-style in their classrooms to build community and make lunch time a learning

experience. Teachers assist with passing and distributing the food to the children. Students are served a variety of hot entrées, milk, fruit and fresh and hot vegetables. Children attending the morning Early Programs and ECSE sessions will continue to be served a healthy and nutritious breakfast daily.

Mound Park Students Learn the Importance of Voting

In October, Warren City Clerk Paul Wojno visited Mound Park Elementary to discuss the voting process and teach 4th and 5th grade students about the importance of voting



and civic engagement. Students asked Mr. Wojno many questions about the process of voting and his role as a state representative from 1997-2002. Students got a "real feel" for the voting process by participating in a mock election using real voting machines and sample ballots that were provided by the City of Warren. Thank you to 4th grade teacher Lori Stone for setting up this valuable learning experience for our students!

Elementary Highlights

Teacher Wins Grant for Take-Home Google Chromebooks

Third grade teacher Karen Willet was awarded a grant valued at \$6,000 to purchase 35 Google Chromebook laptops for her classroom. The grant was awarded by the Intra Michigan Consortium with the goal of transforming students from consumers of information to creative producers and owners of knowledge.

"Google Chromebooks provide students with access to educational tools that help them engage with classroom material in new ways that will help information 'stick.' By having educational videos and interactive learning material at their fingertips, students will learn to be self-motivated in their own education and feel empowered to be curious about the world, ask new questions and seek answers."

— Mrs. Willet

Earlier this spring, the Fitzgerald Public Schools Board of Education approved a multi-year plan to implement Google Chromebooks and Google for Education platforms at all district schools. A highlight of the initiative is providing a Google Chromebook laptop for every student in the district. The Chromebooks will be assigned to students and will stay in classrooms, to be stored in carts at the end of the day. Mrs. Willet's grant award will free up the budget while allowing the district to pilot a program allowing students to bring the Google Chromebooks home.

If the program is successful, the district may allow more students to bring their Google Chromebooks home. Studies have shown the replacement rate for Chromebooks is very low — even in classrooms and districts that allow students to take technology home. The take-home program will allow Mrs. Willet to develop strategies to ensure her students properly care for their laptops, which will help other teachers learn how to minimize damage to the devices, should the program expand.



Donor Generosity Brings Innovative Technology into the Classroom

Thanks to the generosity of anonymous donors, students in Becky Girling's 5th grade class at Mound Park Elementary are able to listen to podcasts about science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) while learning healthy exercise habits. A \$3,500 grant supported by anonymous donors has enabled Mrs. Girling to get WalkKit audio devices for her students to use this year.

"The WalkKit audio devices will strengthen my students' mastery of STEM concepts while promoting a healthy, active lifestyle. The devices make content accessible to students who learn differently and will help all students develop better listening skills, become actively-engaged in lesson plans and find joy in learning in a new way — while taking steps against childhood obesity."

— Mrs. Girling

Each WalkKit podcast is about 15 minutes and begins with a health literacy message. The podcasts benefit students who have ADHD, dyslexia, high energy levels or behavioral challenges, are English-language learners or struggle with reading. The Walking Classroom allows students to develop better listening skills, and particularly benefit students who are auditory and kinesthetic learners. Research has shown that walking increases endorphins in the body, which helps students wake up, feel more settled once they return to the classroom and be more receptive to information.



Westview Students Donate Necessities for Socktober

Westview Student Council participated in Kid President's Socktober. During the month of October, Westview students brought in basic essential needs such as toothbrushes, socks, deodorant, combs and brushes. Items that were collected were donated to the local Salvation Army.



Westview Students Learn Anti-Bullying Skills

In all school assembly, "PROUD LIKE A LION," took place at Westview in October. Two representatives from the Detroit Lions Education Department presented an exciting, interactive character education program to teach students about bullying. Students learned about what bullying looks like, the different types of bullying, what to do when bullied or witnessing a bullying situation.

With the help of Roary, the Detroit Lions mascot, students recited the "Proud Like a Lion" anti-bullying pledge, called S.T.A.N.D.:



1. **STAND** tall and walk in a way that shows you are a person deserving of another's respect
2. **TELL** an appropriate adult
3. **AVOID** putting yourself in harm's way
4. **Say NO** to a bully's demands
5. **DEVELOP** friendships

The assembly is one of many assemblies and lessons we incorporate into our classes to encourage a culture of kindness at Westview.

Mound Park and Westview Students Snack on Fresh Fruits and Veggies

The Food Service Department is excited to announce that Mound Park and Westview students are participating in the Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Program (FFVP). Students in grades K-5 are given a fresh fruit or vegetable three days per week as an afternoon snack in their classroom. Some examples of items that will be offered are plums, sweet peppers, blueberries, pea pods and strawberries, to name a few. The goal of the Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Program is to promote a healthy diet and encourage students to develop healthy eating habits both at school and home.



The program will continue through the school year, and new options will be introduced based on freshness and seasonality. The first day of the FFVP, children were offered plums provided by a local produce vendor. Westview teacher, Kim Lazzara told Food Service staff, "You would've thought the plums were gold balls!" based on her students' excitement. Food Service staff even received a round of applause from one classroom when their vegetables were delivered.

Chatterton Highlights



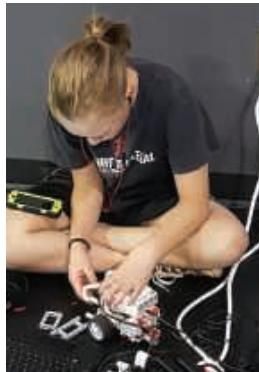
Chatterton's Junior Honor Society Cares

For the second year, the Chatterton Junior Honor Society made candy necklaces and handmade inspirational cards to donate to families with a loved one in hospice. Saying goodbye to a loved one is never easy, and students make these necklaces and cards in hope that it might put a smile on the faces of family members going through a very difficult

time. The candy provides a sweet treat to munch on, and the card serves to let families know someone is thinking of them. We deliver the candy and the cards to Ascension Health Care in Clinton Township. Ascension then delivers the gifts to families at the hospital. Our students feel a great deal of pride in knowing they are helping to ease the sadness families are feeling and bring them a ray of light.

CMS Supports the American Heart Association

Every February, middle school students participate in "Hoops for Heart," a three-on-three basketball tournament to raise money for the American Heart Association to fight heart disease. Students are asked to raise a minimum donation of \$5 or gather a team of three students for \$15 and participate in the tournament during their physical education classes. The students truly enjoy this experience and helping those in need. The American Heart Association is thankful for the generosity of CMS students!



CMS Robotics Club Outreach

Students in the Summer Robotics Academy classes for 8th grade students had an opportunity to enhance their skills through hands-on projects with LEGO MINDSTORMS robots. The campers were mentored by members of Chatterton Middle School's FIRST Robotics Team 9572 and Team 9496. The Summer Robotics Academy emphasizes STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) education and allowed participants to learn about the engineering design process as they built and programmed robots to complete a variety of tasks.



Local Church Sponsors

Community Dinners for Chatterton

Cross Lutheran Church has partnered with Chatterton Middle School to provide Community Dinners for CMS families. The church has been providing dinners during school-sponsored events, such as the 8th grade celebration, for the past two years. The Community Dinners have been a wonderful way for students and parents to meet with others in the Chatterton school community.



Capturing Kids' Hearts Program Impacts Student Learning

Chatterton Middle School teacher Joe Chasney has been teaching "Teen Leadership," a new class at CMS. Teen Leadership is a 10-week required course for 8th grade students. The class helps students develop leadership, professional and business skills. Students also learn about fostering a healthy self-concept and healthy relationships, as well as self-awareness, self control, self motivation and social skills. The class covers the effects of peer pressure, techniques to counteract peer pressure and bullying prevention skills. The class also covers personal responsibility, including being responsible on social media. Students also develop important life skills such as public speaking, problem solving and making responsible financial decisions.

"We are only 5 weeks in, and many of my students are making transformations that are more remarkable than I would have ever hoped. I am excited to see what comes next as we continue our amazing journey!"

— Mr. Chasney

The student response to this class has been overwhelming. Their comments include:

"I love Teen Leadership. I love having it 1st hour because it helps me start off my day right. I feel that Teen Leadership is a class where I feel at home. It is a class where you can feel open and not afraid to share things; personal things."

"Teen Leadership has made me more outgoing and I have made more friends."

"I have learned a tremendous amount from Teen Leadership. More than I ever imagined, and I have only been in this class for 4 weeks!"

"[Teen Leadership] teaches me how to connect with people."

"With Teen Leadership my life has really changed. It has helped me achieve my goals and discover new things about me."

"Leadership is amazing. This is my favorite class. I have learned to like kids in this class who at first I did not think I would like. This class means a lot to me."

"This is a great class for eighth graders and will definitely help us build good relationships. It has made me get many new friends."

"[Teen Leadership] is outstanding and I feel comfortable in this class when I didn't think it was possible. Leadership is helping me to become a better person. I want you to know how much this class means to me and all of the students. I can't wait to see what else this class has to offer. Leadership class motivates me to make good decisions in school and in the future."

"This class has really taught me how to be a better student. [It] shows me the right path. It's an honor to be in this class. [Teen Leadership] will make students do that extra 5%. It can change the world!"

High School Highlights



Homecoming Princesses and Queen Honored at Homecoming Game

Every year, Fitzgerald High School students in each grade level vote for Homecoming Princesses to represent their class, and the senior class selects four Princesses and crowns one of them as Homecoming Queen. To participate, students submit applications that include information about their leadership experiences and participation in school clubs and organizations. Eligible students are placed on a ballot, and each grade then votes to select the Princess to represent their class. The entire school votes on the Queen.

As is tradition, the Princesses read to kindergarteners at Mound Park and Westview and are recognized during halftime at the Homecoming football game. This year's Homecoming took place on October 8. Amelia "Amy" Hunter, the 2015 Homecoming Queen and a 2016 FHS graduate, had the honor of crowning this year's Homecoming Queen. Amy currently attends the University of Toledo, where she is pursuing a Pharmacy degree and is a member of LKS, a Pharmacy Sorority.

Senior Queen:

Kyra Jackson is a Varsity Cheerleader, on the track team and also a member of WIA at FHS. In her spare time, Kyra enjoys spending time with her friends and walking her dog, a Shitzu-poodle named Casey. Upon graduation in June, Kyra plans on attending either Michigan State University or Eastern Michigan University to study Sports Medicine.

Senior Princesses:

Romana Akter is involved in National Honor Society, Multicultural Club, yearbook and TV production. In her spare time, Romana enjoys hanging out with her friends and doing community service. Upon her graduation this school year, Romana is planning on attending college to pursue a degree in the medical field.

Katherine Phommarath is a member of the volleyball, basketball and softball teams at FHS. She is also part of the National Technical Honor Society. In her spare time, Katherine enjoys spending time with family and friends and eating. Upon graduation, Katherine plans on attending the University of Toledo to study Pharmacy.

Senior Princesses, continued:

Ashleigh Wagner is in the Marching Band, color guard and choir. In her spare time, Ashleigh enjoys attending concerts, reading and spending time with her family and friends at bonfires. Upon her graduation in June, Ashleigh plans to attend college but is not yet sure where she will go and what she will study.

Junior Princess:

Kalle Lay is on the softball team and is also a member of the choir. In her spare time, Kalle enjoys playing softball and spending time with friends and family. Upon graduation in 2018, Kalle plans to attend Michigan State University to get a degree in accounting.

Sophomore Princess:

Janelle Jean-Baptiste is involved in softball, volleyball, bowling, student council, Multicultural Club and Marching Band. In her spare time, Janelle enjoys reading, going to church and hanging out with her friends. Upon her graduation in 2019, she plans to go to a university and study business or psychology.

Freshmen Princess:

There was no Freshmen Princess this year.



Marching Band Festival a Great Success

On October 12, the Fitzgerald Spartan Marching Band participated in the MSBOA Marching Band Festival at Troy High School. The FHS band received a 2nd Division overall rating, the 2nd highest rating possible. The band looked and sounded

great, earning a 1st Division from the Music judge.

It was the marching band's strongest performance of the year. The Spartan Marching Band also performed at the Grosse Pointe Santa Claus Parade on Nov. 25. The band has become a yearly participant and crowd favorite as they march through Grosse Pointe Village on Kerchival.

Fall Fun at FPS

Homecoming

This year's Homecoming was a blast! Our Spartans celebrated with style during spirit week, the parade, alumni gathering, chili cook-off, halftime show and — last but not least — the football game!



Trunk or Treat

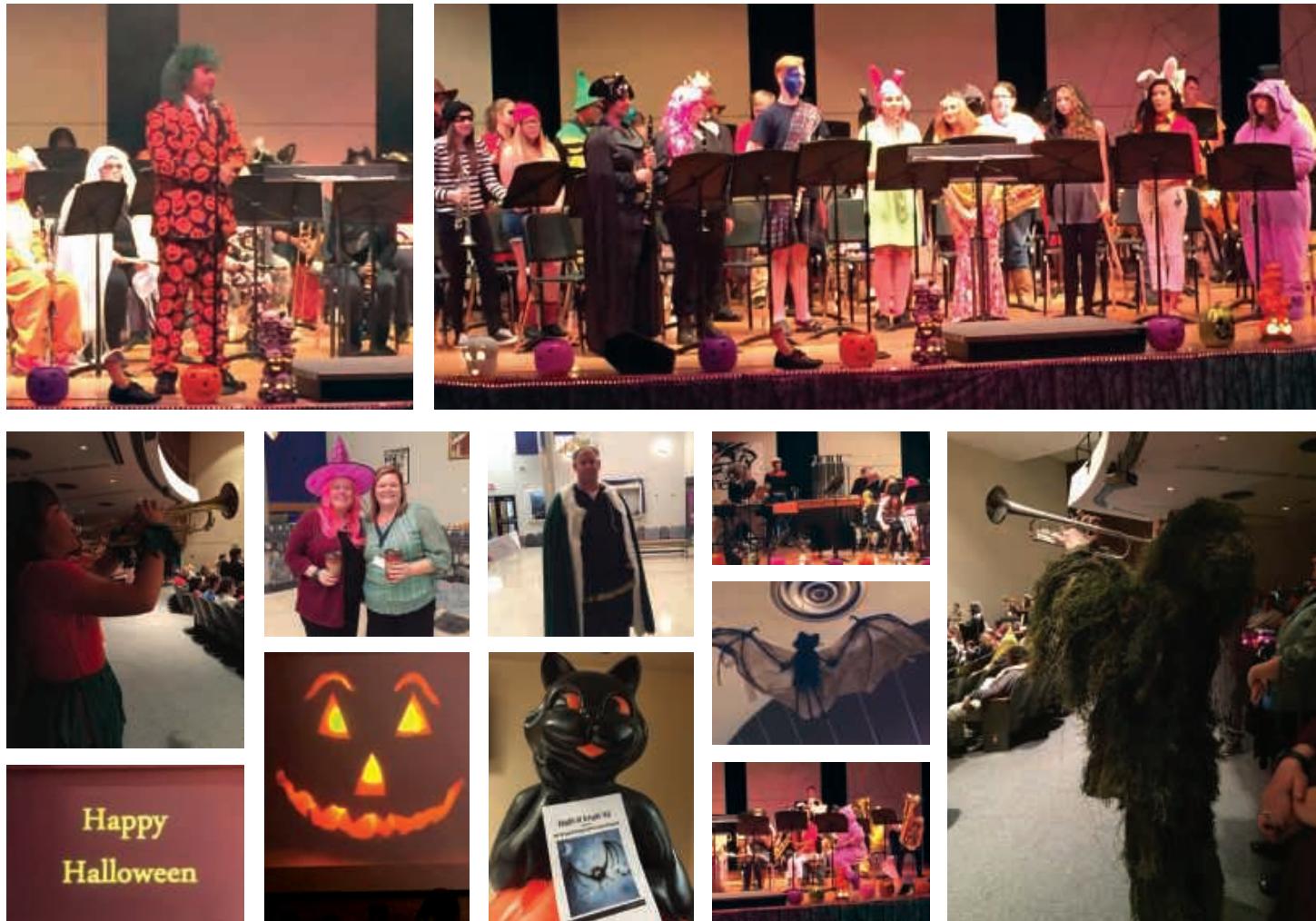
Elementary students and families had so much fun at our 3rd annual Trunk or Treat!



Halloween Band Concert a Huge Hit

On October 27, the Fitzgerald High School Bands presented the 11th annual "Night of Fright" concert in the FHS

Auditorium. The Halloween-themed music featuring the Concert Band, Symphony Band, Wind Ensemble and Spartan Marching Band was a huge hit and drew a large crowd. Many audience members wore costumes to the concert.



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Fitz Fact:

Last year, 168 seniors volunteered a total of 13,366 hours of their time through community service. Activities included after school tutoring, sorting toys at the Salvation Army, sorting food at Gleaners and recycling after school.

Employment Opportunities

Fitzgerald Public Schools is hiring! We're searching for qualified individuals for the following positions:

- Teachers
- Office personnel/clerks
- Paraprofessionals
- Custodians
- Bus drivers
- Lunch aides

And more! For a complete list of open positions and to apply please visit fitz.k12.mi.us/human-resources/employment-opportunities or contact the Human Resource Department at (586) 757-1751.

Key Dates

- **Half Day:** Wednesday, Nov. 23
- **Thanksgiving Break:** Thursday, Nov. 24 through Sunday, Nov. 27
- **FHS Theatre Present:** Beauty and the Beast: Thursday, Dec. 1 – Saturday, Dec. 3 at 7 p.m.
- **Half Day:** Thursday, Dec. 22
- **Holiday Break:** Friday, Dec. 23 through Tuesday, Jan. 3
- **First Day Back from Break:** Wednesday, Jan. 4

Fitzgerald Theatre Presents: Beauty and the Beast

December 1-3 at 7 p.m.

Fitzgerald High School Auditorium

On the North East Corner of 9 Mile and Ryan Rd.

Tickets: \$3 for students and \$6 adults



This year's musical *Beauty and the Beast* is a timeless classic that will be fun

for families of all ages! Over 70 theatre students are working hard to bring this exciting production to life. The ensemble has strong chemistry and amazing singers, and students are creating memories that will last a lifetime. We hope to see you there!

FPS is Mobile

Stay informed with text alerts! With winter fast approaching, students will eagerly await word on whether we'll have a snow day. Take out the guesswork by getting an instant notification if and when the decision is made to cancel school.

Text JOIN to 56360 to sign up for:

- School closing alerts
- Parent notifications
- Sports/club updates
- Alumni association updates
- And other exciting news!

FPS is Social

Find Fitzgerald Public Schools on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram!



facebook.com/FitzgeraldPublicSchools



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Board of Education Meetings for 2016-2017

All meetings take place at 7 p.m. at the FHS Automotive and Pre-Engineering Technology Institute located at 23200 Ryan Rd. The meetings for the 2016-2017 year are July 14, Aug. 11, Sept. 8, Oct. 6, Nov. 3, Dec. 8, Jan. 12, Feb. 9, March 2, April 13, May 11, June 8 and June 22. Any person with a disability who may need accommodations and/or assistance to participate in this meeting should contact Superintendent Barbara VanSweden at (586) 757-1750 at least five days in advance of the meeting.

School Contact Information

Have a question or need to report your child's absence? Contact the main office of your child's school.

Early Childhood: (586) 757-3343

Mound Park Elementary School: (586) 757-7590

Westview Elementary School: (586) 757-5520

Chatterton Middle School: (586) 757-6650

Fitzgerald High School: (586) 757-7070