

The Middle Ground

Pella Middle School
Pella, Iowa 50219

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Page editor Alaina Klyn

Pella Middle School, Pella Christian - two schools are both friends and rivals

by Molly Rietveld

"Maximizing Life's opportunities for every child" -Pella Community Motto

Rivalries and differences between two schools in the same community make the schools who and what they are. These two schools are not so different, after all.

"When you put almost 500 sinners in one building who are taught and are led by sinners, you get a lot of sin," said David De Jong, Pella Christian Grade School principal. Therefore Christianity is taught throughout every subject at PCGS.

This is what an average day at Pella Christian might be like. They started the day off in prayer, continuously talking about God in every classroom and subject.

The bell rang and students piled in the classrooms. During homeroom in the morning, students talked among themselves. The teacher read the daily devotion to start off the day. The teacher talked and joked around with the students, and she asked the students for any prayer requests they might have. Then she said a prayer to end the period.

As the second bell rung, students came and went through the classrooms; next it was Bible time for the students. The teacher showed a short clip of Matthew West on writing his song "My Own Little World" then they

watch the music video of the song. They talked about how Christian music tells a story about God and how he worked throughout lives of people. This doesn't usually happen at Pella Community, although, some teachers share their faith and beliefs.

Some eighth grade students go to art class where they were painting their version of the Mona Lisa. This is not an extracurricular for them. Pella Middle School students get to choose what they take for an extracurricular activity.

Then came English class for some students. This is like any other English class on this day. They wrote about an illustration of what they thought would happen in the story.

Next is lunch for the eighth grade students. That day they ate cheesy bread, fruit cocktail, vegetables with dip, and a cookie. PCGS students eat in their classrooms while PCSD eats in lunch rooms.

PCGS has a chapel, where the whole school gets together and is taught by different staff about God. PCSD has assemblies about different things throughout the year.

"My faith is the central to who I am, and I believe that I have been blessed to be a blessing in a public school. I believe I have no right to preach, but I can live out what I believe. In current events I can share my thoughts and opinions while still respecting my students. I hope I can be a person of integrity and will model that. As Americans disagree on many

things, we should still see each other as people of worth and value," said Karl Korver, eighth grade teacher at Pella Middle School.

"My most important role is to serve others. I know all of the administrators at Pella Schools and at Pella Christian Schools, and I believe all administrators have that same mentality," said De Jong. "The best part of our job is to see teachers achieve their goals."

The curriculum the students learn throughout the year is similar. The PCSD motto is "Maximizing life's opportunities for every child". The motto at PCGS school, De Jong said, is, "Challenge students to develop their individual God-given gifts for a life of service in God's Kingdom."

Pride is the same at both schools. Andrea Carballo 8th grader at PCGS, said, "We are in the same town, so we want each other's respect." PCSD comes together with PCGS in basketball for breast cancer awareness in the winter, even though PCSD is a 3A school, and PC is a 2A school it's to raise money for the cause.

De Jong said, "I have served in both schools, and I love how much passion that people have for serving at Pella Community Schools and at Pella Christian Schools. People in our community love children so much, and they are passionate about where they serve. This is a great attribute of both schools."

"Challenging students to develop their individual God-given gifts for a life of service in God's kingdom" -Pella Christian Motto



The school lunches causing trouble

by Kobe Diers

On Friday August 24th, Pella Middle School eighth graders, led by Ben Tysseling and Lukas Bruxvoort, staged a boycott of the new school lunches by telling everybody to bring cold lunch. They decided to boycott because of the new school lunch policy.

'Boycotting school lunch. Bring cold lunch tomorrow.' That text message was sent around to many students on the Thursday night before the boycott. Ben Tysseling said, "I heard people complaining about having to get a certain amount of fruits and vegetables and I thought it was a ridiculous rule."

Tysseling said that he talked to Jason Seo and Lukas Bruxvoort, 8th graders, and they thought up the idea to boycott the lunches. "We just started telling people and told them to spread the word. We also sent out a bunch of texts and told them to forward it to others," said Lukas Bruxvoort.

This is not the only time there has been a boycott of the new school lunch requirements. Last February, at Milby High School in East Houston, there was a four day long boycott. Hector Sanchez, the leader of the boycott, said, "I was thinking about the kind of food they give us. The teachers

and students, they won't eat it. It's nasty."

Around the same time, at Tivoli Middle School in Texas, many seventh graders, led by class President Mckenzie Simmons, staged a boycott because they were getting the same lunch over and over. "We wanted more choice in what was served, as there was a lot of repetition in what was going on," said Simmons.

Bruxvoort and Tysseling said their reason for boycotting was because of the new school policy that limits the amount of food one person can have, and also makes everybody take two fruits or vegetables. Bruxvoort said, "We wanted more to eat, and we wanted to be able to choose what we take by ourselves."

On the day of the boycott, at least 30 people brought cold lunch because they had heard of the boycott. Everybody was enthusiastic, but some thought that it was all pointless. "I personally didn't believe that it would work. I'm not saying not to try, but I just didn't think it will work," said Caleb Rietveld, 8th grader who participated in the boycott, when asked about what he thought about the boycott.

Bruxvoort and Tysseling do

admit that their plan didn't go as they expected. Tysseling said, "I heard that the lunch ladies had a lot of extra food after lunch because of the boycott, but it did not change anything." Bruxvoort says, "If we ever do it again, we'll have to make it go nationwide so everyone would do it. I think it would work better if that happened."



8th grade boys enjoy their home-made lunches (photos by Kobe Diers)

First Lady makes difference

by Alaina Klyn

First Lady Michelle Obama's goal is "to eliminate childhood obesity in a generation." By trying to accomplish this, she started the "Let's Move" act. This act encourages children to live a healthy and active lifestyle.

The requirement of ½ cup of fruit and/or vegetables has now become something that the lunch providers must see on students' trays. Healthy lunches at school are important when 30-50% of one's body calories are consumed at school. Michelle Obama has been pressing for healthier choices everywhere, including stores like Walmart. She has been trying to persuade store owners to lower prices on healthier food choices so that families can afford to make wise choices when it comes to eating right. Mrs. Obama has also been influencing other organizations such

as the Department of Agriculture, by limiting what may be sold in school vending machines and a la carte lines.

There have been many additional changes to the school lunches this year. All grains must be rich in whole grain. All milk must be low-fat (1%) or fat free. Chocolate milk must also be fat free.

"The new requirements irritate me because it's one area where the government is taking over decisions that shouldn't be theirs - what we eat and how much," said Brenda Becker, mother of Mackenzie Becker, eighth grader. Many opinions have erupted because of these changes.

Many people feel that the school should provide healthy choices, but not make students have it on their plates. About thirteen million children are obese in the

world, and 14% of 6-11 year olds and 17% of adolescents are overweight. "There's no effective way to force children to eat healthy," said Becker.

Many different opinions have been shared. One might say that if this is really helping, the obesity rate should go down. One might even say this is ridiculous. Everyone is unique and has different views on these new requirements.

New, healthful school lunches

Production cost per meal: About \$3.50

School charge per meal: \$2.10

Federal reimbursement: \$2.77 for each child that is on a free and reduced lunch.



<http://www.post-gazette.com/>

Lunch adjustments cause opinions to soar

by Kayleen Van Dyke

"I think it is sad that the government is doing what the parents should be," said Darla Beller, Pella Middle School lunch service provider.

The new changes in the lunch program at the Pella Middle School are causing a numerous amount of opinions to arise. These new changes regulate that each student must take a half cup of fruit and/or vegetables in order to count as a required lunch. By doing this, the government is hoping to encourage healthy eating.

There have been various changes to the lunch program this year due to First Lady Michelle Obama's "Let's Move" act. The government now sees fruits and vegetables as two separate food groups instead of only one food group as it was in previous years. It is now mandatory that students have a total of at least three food groups on their tray. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture new standards also include that milk needs to be either low-fat (1%) or fat free. Chocolate milk is also required to be

fat free. However, Pella Middle School has already been providing only these kinds of milk in the past.

The amount of bread has also been cut down this year. Students may only take one dinner roll or one piece of garlic bread instead of two.

"Right now I see more negative consequences than positive consequences concerning the new lunch requirements. There is a lot of food being thrown out by students and much more paper and plastic products are being used and then thrown away. However, a positive consequence is that better food is being offered," said Karl Korver, social studies teacher at Pella Middle School.

As students go through the lunch line this year, the lunch service providers will be checking to make sure each student has at least a half cup of fruit and/or vegetables.

"I think the government should require that healthy options are offered, but I do not think they should mandate exactly how much of each item is

placed on kids' plates, especially at the middle and high school levels," stated Lindsay Blair, math teacher at Pella Middle School.

Students like Sarah Downs said, "I think the new changes are good because the food being offered is a lot more healthy, but more kids are bringing their lunches this year compared to last year."

One might wonder if this will actually hurt the school lunch program. Like them or not, right or wrong, for now these mandates are here to stay.



Much waste, even a whole, uneaten banana, is being created at lunch-time due to the new regulations.

(photo by Kayleen Van Dyke)

Hard work pays off

by Julianna Wimmer

Over the summer and throughout the school year there have been many improvements and upgrades, both abstract and concrete.

During the summer, all Pella Community Schools had every paper towel dispenser and soap dispenser taken down and replaced with brand new ones. Two out of three of the main bathrooms in the middle school had the old orange counters taken down along with the sinks. The counter wasn't replaced, but the sinks were replaced with motion activated faucets. The wrestling room had storage space added. The gym floor was completely refinished and sections of the roof were replaced.

Chris Wimmer, Pella Community School's maintenance director, says, "The school improvements aren't major, they are just standard, regular summer improvements; they are no big deal. The new faucets will save money since they are automatic. They are also better for the environment because they use less water. The sinks won't trans-

mit diseases or illness since they don't have an on/off lever. The roof added more insulation and will prevent many leaks. We need to replace some other exterior doors and frames and we need to replace the air conditioning units on top of the gym. We also need to replace a few windows. I think we should also do some lighting upgrades and use LED lights."

A school isn't all about appearance, though. Schools have to consider the environment they place the kids in, how classes are taught, and more. In school, students, and even teachers are taught many morals and life lessons that can impact their futures. Students are taught characteristics that will help them and give them good reputations. Schools strive to give their students amazing opportunities and help make their futures successful.

Mr. Manning, Pella Middle School principal, says, "We want to teach students to take pride in what they do. We are a character counts

school. In everything we do, we want to maximize life's opportunities for every student. That is our backbone for everything we do and how we do it. I try to think about what is the best for the kids' with every decision I make. We also like to recognize students, teachers, bus drivers, maintenance, etc. when they show good character counts and citizenship."



New sinks in the Pella Middle School bathrooms are just one of the many new improvements the school has made.

(photo by Kayleen Van Dyke)

Students take to stage

by Elizabeth Lovell

Have you ever wanted to be on stage, the lights bright in the actors' eyes, the crowd cheering wildly for one? Well, Missoula Children's Theatre helps one accomplish that.

Every year, volunteer directors travel around the 50 states and 17 other countries.

This year, the play was *The Tortoise vs. The Hare*. *The Hare*, Cutesy Curly, was played by 7th grader Lauren Miller, and the tortoise, Coach Shelly Bowl-

back, was played by 8th grader Hannah Emmert. Other Middle School students in the play were Tessa Campbell, Sammy Winslow, Elizabeth Lovell, Rachel Meinders, Tatyana Khapochkina, and Mandolin Holmes.

The final performances, after just 5 days of practice, were on Friday the 21st and Saturday the 22nd. In Pella, this year's directors were Allison and Brian Epperson. It was an amazing production, considering the week before,

Allison's toes had been crushed, and she was on crutches the whole week. They told many people that they owed a big thanks to Pella Thrift, as they loaned them a wheelchair for the week.

If people want to be part of a play, the next Missoula Children's Theatre auditions, *Betty Lou and the Country Beast*, will be held on Monday, April 15, at 4p.m. Final performances will be Friday, April 19, at 7p.m., and Saturday, April 20 at 10:30 a.m.

Students sing, dance in show choir

by Sarah VanNorden

As some students know, there is a program in our school called show choir, directed by Mr. Tangen. Show choir is a place where dancing and singing meet with friendly competition. These dancing and singing students are in both the seventh and eighth grades. This show choir is one of the only non-auditioned show choirs that competes in these different competitions. Lexy Hutchinson is an eighth grader who

was in show choir last year and plans to do it again. "Show choir is a fun way to hang out with friends and experience something new," said Hutchinson. There are two choices for eighth graders. The first choice is a dance leader. The eighth graders with more boldness can be a dance leader who stands in the front, guiding the dancers behind and even teaching the others at times. Every other person is placed in a spot and follows along, giving the seventh grad-

ers and the eighth graders who don't want to lead, the experience. As the seventh and eighth graders don't have to audition to participate, so performers don't have to begin as an awesome dancer or singer, Mr. Tangen and the dance leaders of the year will help performers out with that. All performers need is a smile, a great attitude, and a little hard work to join this show choir.

Students use their voices

by Dakota Curtis

Along with just the basic choir there are many other choices that middle school students can enjoy.

First of all there are boys' and girls' choir, which is two separate choirs. There is also honor choir. Mr. Tangen chooses the best students that do well in vocal performances and in choir lessons. Opus is when choir students have to try out for it, the singers record the song that the singer chose to sing. For the guys, Mr. Tangen actually chooses who goes through using a certain set of directions, he doesn't just choose his favorite students. For the girls, Mr. Tangen sends those recordings into somebody else. The last choice is show choir, which is a mixture of both singing and dancing. Singers get to compete and go to different towns and just have a lot of fun.

Concert dates for this year are set for Saturday, December 8th, 2012 and Tuesday, April 3rd, 2013. This year there are 80 eighth graders and 101 seventh graders. The eighth graders actually have almost the same amount of boys as there are of girls.

As of right now the eighth graders are singing "Remember Me", "Elijah Rock", "Island Noel", "Cantical of Praise" and another one that is undecided. The seventh graders are singing "Tue Tue", "Gloria", "Winter Moon", and another one that is undecided.

Every middle schooler has to have a choir lesson once a week. In choir lessons there are three main things that Mr. Tangen is looking for: technique, sight reading and reading lots of different music.



The Middle Ground is a tabloid produced by the Pella Middle School students to serve as an informative, educational and entertaining communications media and to provide an open forum to students and readers. Submissions are welcomed and encouraged. The Middle Ground reserves the right to edit grammatical errors, libelous content and length due to space limitations. Not all submissions will be printed.

FCS benefits students in the real world

by Nicole Schnebbe

Some students may have thought about taking Family Consumer Science, better known as FCS, but hesitated because it's a "girl's class." Many don't know that they will learn many life skills that will benefit them now and in the future.

There are two types of FCS, FCS 1 and FCS 2. In FCS 1, students will learn about child development, nutrition, personal development, textiles and sewing, fashion and interior design. In the FCS 2 class, students will learn personal finance, housing and interiors, textiles and clothing, and foods and nutrition.

Personal finance is an important skill that students will need to have as an adult; students will need to know how to balance their check book, whether or not they can afford something, and how to pay bills. They will need to know how to cook because someday they will be the parent cooking for their kids. Learning the basics of child development now will also help them if they choose to take the expanded child

development in high school. Knowing proper nutrition will help them to be a healthier person and they will be able to be stronger also.

Ms. Aden, the FCS teacher at Pella Middle School, feels that the lessons she teaches will be carried into the future. Aden said, "My lessons benefit students because at some point in their lives they will have to prepare food, be responsible for their finances or care for a child. FCS truly prepares kids for life!"



Students practice the skills they learn in FCS.

(photos by Kayleen Van Dyke)

Bullies must be stopped

by Alex Weers

Bullies hurt people in all different ways; a girl was bullied from the time she was in elementary school. She thought it was getting better because she wasn't being bullied as much anymore, until she was in middle school. She got teased by a bully and the bully's friends to the point where all her friends, but one, turned against her. They didn't want to hang out with her anymore because they were embarrassed to be with her; she feels she has no one to turn to.

"I have seen it happen in every grade I have worked with, 4th-12th grade. In most cases bullying happens when adults are not around. There is not one gender that gets bullied more than the other, and sometimes a bully might pick on someone just because they are different. During the school year I see between 25-50 students that want to talk about being bullied," says Mrs. Pentico, the Pella Middle School guidance counselor.

Cyberbullying is another way that bullying happens. Cyberbullying happens over the internet or even over the phone. Somebody won't know if it is happening unless they talk about it. Others don't see the bruises, people won't know what is going on. They can't see it happening, the only way they can tell is by how the victim looks.

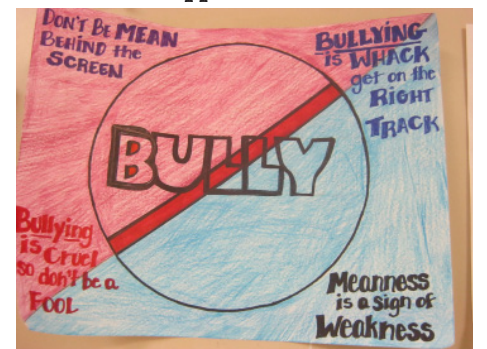
Bullying is different for everyone. A bully bullies for different reasons that are unknown. Maybe how they grew up or who they hang out with. "Some look for and gain power over others. Some have a personal history of rejection from others or family issues," Pentico said.

One person can make a difference. The only way someone will do something about it is if they know bullying is happening. Students need to speak up when it's happening, even if they feel scared or nervous.

A student might feel like no one will believe them, but if he/she

talks about it to an adult the adult will do something to help. "I really mostly on my students to make me aware. When I see it happening, I approach the student and handle the situation with appropriate consequences," Pentico said.

Bullying is all around. Together it can be stopped.



Bailey Van Gorp creates a poster to stand against bullying.

(photo by Alex Weers)

P.E. taken to a whole new level

by Jessa Bokhoven

Peer P.E. is a class for special needs students that goes on year round. This year, Peer P.E. is seventh period on Mondays, Thursdays, and alternating Wednesdays. And yes, the gray shirts are nowhere to be found. In Peer P.E. the shirts turn green and they get washed every day.

Peer P.E. was created on September 4, 2004 in New York by a group called Project PEOPLE. Today it has been well documented that over 93% of children with disabilities are included in their neighborhood schools and general physical education as of August 8, 2011.

To participate in Peer P.E. one must fill out a form that asks basic questions about his/her character. Mrs. Belding will then choose who she thinks would be a good helper. She will



Maggie Wichart and Ethan Bandstra having a good time in Peer P.E. (photo by Jessa Bokhoven)

usually choose ten to fifteen boys and girls for the class.

This year there is a total of thirteen helpers and eight participants

in Peer P.E. “My favorite things about Peer P.E. is getting to meet new people and knowing that I make a difference,” said Kara Schaudt, 8th grade helper. “My partner is Jonathan Pham and he is very fun everyday and usually has a positive attitude everyday.”

Everyday in Peer P.E. is an accomplishment, whether it’s running a lap or even just making a new friend. “I wanted to be in Peer P.E. because my older brother told me about all the fun people and things they did in Peer P.E and it sounded interesting,” said Mary Sales, 8th grader. Peer P.E. is a very fun place to just be yourself and and have fun.

Peer P.E. is a fun way for special needs kids to have fun and get exercise.



Aimee Dieleman and Kristin Rundle in action against Newton.

(photo by Brook Morgan)

8th Grade Volleyball Schedule

At Knoxville
At Oskaloosa
Vs. Pella Christian
Vs. Newton
At Grinnell
Vs. Knoxville
At Pella Christian
Vs. Grinnell
At Newton
Vs. Oskaloosa

7th Grade Volleyball Schedule

Vs. Knoxville
Vs. Oskaloosa
At Pella Christian
At Newton
Vs. Grinnell
At Knoxville
Vs. Pella Christian
At Grinnell
Vs. Newton
At Oskaloosa

7th grade volleyball preparing to play their game against Knoxville.

(photo by Alexis Bugera-Brown)

Cross country runners shoot for a great year

by Kara Schaudt

When someone says cross country, what's the first thing that comes to mind? Everyone thinks differently about different sports. No matter what you think, everyone is allowed in cross country.

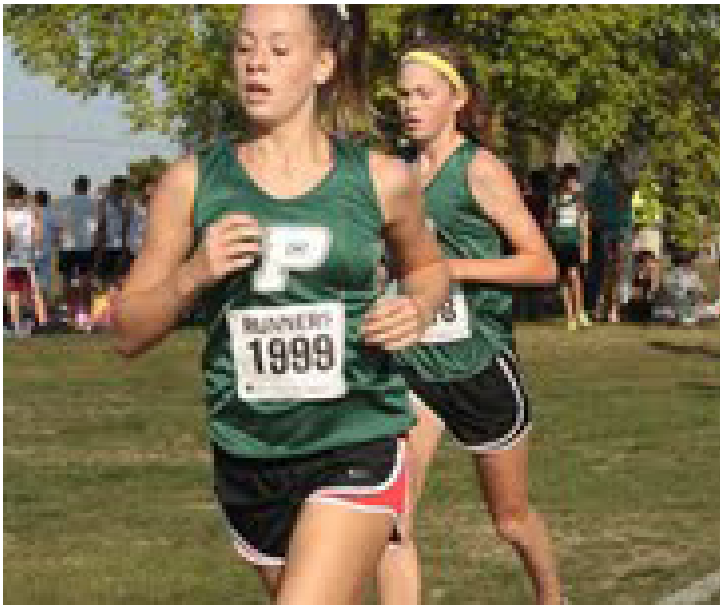
Kinzi VanWyk, 7th grade runner, says, "I like cross country because I love to run. I think that cross country is really fun and you have a great time. I think other people should do it because it's a great way to make new

friends and get closer to the friends you already have. Also, people should try it because it pushes you to go further than what you think you can do.

The most valuable thing I have learned from cross country is don't just settle for good enough, go beyond what is said to be possible, do the impossible. Also, that you have to keep pushing through the pain or rough times because in the end, you'll have a good result and it'll make you stronger," says

Van Wyk.

Cross country this year has the theme of Everyone counts. They have a grand total of 64 runners and 2 coaches. Their coaches are kind and very encouraging to everyone. As a team they truly believe it is important to have everyone trying their hardest and just enjoying the season. They all strive for excellence and work hard in their practices after school and their few early morning practices too.



Kelcey Blommers and Tess Roorda race to the finish line. Roorda finished in first place, while Blommers came in at a close second place. (photo by Micah Hammann)

7th and 8th Grade Cross Country Schedule

At Grinnell

At Marshalltown

At Oskaloosa

At Newton

At Knoxville

At Norwalk

At Oskaloosa

8th Grade Football Schedule

At Carlisle

At Norwalk

Vs. Oskaloosa

At Knoxville

Vs. Newton

Vs. Grinnell

8th grade football celebrate after scoring a touchdown. Pella won the game 36-0. (photo by Alaina Klyn)

7th Grade Football Schedule

Vs. Carlisle

Vs. Norwalk

At Oskaloosa

Vs. Knoxville

At Newton

At Grinnell

The Dutchmen make the tackle against the Carlisle Wildcats. (photo by Molly Rietveld)

New exploratory teachers move in

by Abbey Ehrhardt

Past exploratory teachers are moving out and new exploratory teachers are moving in. There are three new exploratory teachers for the year 2012 at the Pella Middle School. We have new FCS, French, and health teacher.

Miss Aden is the the new FCS teacher. Aden decided to teach FCS because she loves the content she gets to teach. The lessons she teaches are things she enjoys doing in her free time.

She was also very active in 4-H and a lot of the things she did in FCS can relate directly to things she learned about through 4-H.

When Aden was in elementary school, she knew she wanted to be a teacher. She would go home and “play school” after being at school all day because she enjoyed it so much. For Christmas and birthdays, she would get teaching books, worksheets, stickers, etc. to use in her pretend classroom.

“One year, a school closed down and had an auction where I got textbooks and an overhead projector. Talk about exciting!” said Aden.

Aden got inspired by all her elementary teachers to start teaching. She thought they were so nice and smart plus they taught her so many different things.

“I knew I wanted to be just like them,” said Aden. Her first day teaching at the middle school went by fast. Her last school had a block schedule, so the 41-minute class periods made the day seem to fly by. She teaches 27 sixth graders, 20 FCS 1 students, and a little over

50 FCS 2 students for this quarter. Aden has taught sixth through twelfth grade FCS at Panorama Schools in Panora, Iowa.

Aden enjoys teaching FCS. Her favorite things to teach are Foods and Nutrition and Child Development, which are probably the most popular units she teaches.

Mrs. Glasnapp is the new French teacher. “I wanted to teach French because it is a beautiful language, and I have always appreciated the cultures of the French-speaking world. I thought I could use my talents to help others realize theirs and open the world to young people,” said Glasnapp.

Glasnapp decided to make a career change from being a journalist to a french teacher, when her husband and she started their family. She was inspired to teach when she realized that what she did as a journalist, basically presenting information in a meaningful and understandable way to an audience, matched what teachers do daily in the classroom.

On her first day at the middle school, she was nervous and wondering what to expect. She began her teaching career at Kennedy High School in Cedar Rapids. She also taught French at the middle school and high school in Hampton, Iowa, and also at the University of Northern Iowa when she was a graduate assistant there.

Glasnapp has thirteen eighth grade students in the exploratory French. Throughout the entire year nearly fifty eighth graders will partici-

pate in the Exploratory French. “I love teaching French! When you get to do something you love, you have to be having fun. My students give me something to laugh with them about every day!” said Glasnapp.

Miss Noble is the new health teacher.

“I wanted to teach health because I think it is important to motivate and educate teenagers on the benefits of leading a healthy, active lifestyle. By creating a fun and safe learning environment, teens can see the importance of being active and how it can benefit them in the future. Also, health is a part of everyday life, so it’s vital to understand why you should choose to be healthy,” said Noble.

She decided she wanted to be a teacher and a volleyball coach in middle school. “I always enjoyed the environment and thought this is where I want to be and this is where I am in my element,” said Noble.

Her favorite subject in school was senior physical education. She was dodgeball queen.

Noble was inspired to teach by her high school volleyball coach, who also was her teacher in middle school. She has always idolized her in coaching, teaching, and in life.

“On the first day I was so nervous! This is my first year teaching, so I think that added to my nerves. By the end of the day, I loved it! I enjoy coming to school everyday and impacting the lives of teenagers,” said Noble.



Miss Aden



Mrs. Glasnapp



Miss Noble

The new exploratory teachers share their expertise with students.

(photos by Abbey Ehrhardt)

New students adjust to life in Pella

by Payton Phelps

People are constantly moving from apartments, homes, neighborhoods, from the city to the country, and even moving out of states into new environments. This can be stressful, starting life over with new people in a whole new places, or a relief to get away from an environment with a negative impact. Pella receives some of those people as new students in our schools each year.

People are moving so often because of parents' job changes and relocations. The students that come to Pella start at the beginning of the school year, to make it less stressful on the students, as well as the teachers. Even though, our school receives students throughout the year.

Anne Pentico, the Dean of Student Development, greets the new students with a smile and a helping hand. Before school even starts the new students meet with Pentico to set

a class schedule and tour the building. In addition, the new students get paired with a current student that Pentico picks for them. Pentico makes sure to pick people with the same classes and interests, while also being in the same grade.

Beginning school at the start of the year is just the same to a new student as to any other student, starting with the regular registration at the office. The office also helps to set up accounts for lunch, library, and computer use, along with their various passwords for other

accounts on computers. Tips on how to use a planner are given, and the new students are free to ask their middle school buddy any further questions.

When school has started, Pentico holds a new student social group to get all the new students together, and talk about the experiences they have had so far. Pentico encourages students to join in school extracurricular activities or exploratories, like music and athletics, to meet more people. Even outside of school, new students are given opportunities to make friends by joining a church group or club, going to activities at the library or community center, and other service type groups in the community.

Pella is always happy to receive new students in our schools, and people in our community.

Pictured are new students who have enrolled this year.
(picture by Payton Phelps)



Associates make difference

by Brook Morgan

Associates are people who are joined together as partners or colleagues. In Pella Middle School we have two new associates, Kelsey Boot and Angie DeWaard.

Kelsey Boot is a new associate at Pella Middle School, and she loves working here. Boot says, "My favorite part about working at Pella Middle School is working with students and

with the faculty and staff members. I did part of my student teaching with Mr. Korver my last semester at Central and loved being in the school."

Her favorite subject is social studies and psychology. She is from Pella, Iowa. Her favorite colors are blue and green, and her favorite pizza topping is taco or supreme. Boot has a dog named Bryant and a cat named Jasper.

Angie DeWaard is also a new associate at Pella Middle School. DeWaard says, "Pella Middle School is a great environment for me to work in. I worked at a school in Nicaragua for two years and loved the school atmosphere." She decided to work at Pella Middle School when she came back from Nicaragua; it seemed like a great place to start working. Her school year has started out great and she is always happy to answer any questions or help students in anyway she can. DeWaard says, "It's a great school system to be in and I am looking forward to the year here at Pella Middle

School."

Her favorite football teams are Central Dutch and Chicago Bears. Her favorite books to read are anything by Janet Evanovich. She likes Matt Damon the actor and her favorite season is fall because she loves the transformation from hot to cold. When she was younger she wanted to be a teacher when she grew up.



Kelsey Boot is one of the new associates at Pella Middle School.



Angie DeWaard is another new associate at Pella Middle School.

(photos by Brook Morgan)

Meet the student

by Brook Morgan

Lindsay Kamerick is one of many 8th grade students at Pella Middle School. "My favorite subject in school is English and I like to help people with their homework because if they're struggling it'll make them feel better," says Kamerick. She loves going to school because she can see all of her friends, new teachers, and old

teachers. Kamerick likes to do her homework in her room while listening to music. Her birthday is November 4th. She likes to hang out with her friends in her free time. Her favorite sports are cheerleading and swimming. She is enjoying her eighth grade year at Pella Middle School.



Lindsay Kamerick is an eighth grade student at Pella Middle School.

(photo by Brook Morgan)

MEET THE ATHLETE

by Alexis Bugera-Brown



Adam Davis is the running back for the 7th grade football team.

(photo by Meghan Hartman)

He is running to the touch down. The fans cheer. Adam Davis has just made a touchdown.

Adam Davis is your average 7th grade middle school student. Davis gets good grades and works hard, but also loves football. One might think that every boy likes football, but not as much as he. Davis plays running back for the Pella Dutch 7th grade football team.

Davis has been playing football since third grade. His skills have been learned from former 7th grade running



back, and brother Sam Davis. "I don't think I would be that great if I didn't have [Sam's] help," said Davis. He has also been coached by his father.

Davis explained that football lets him meet friends, get stronger and work as a team. "Football helps me get faster and work on my stamina," said Davis.

Davis says that football helps in life by teaching him how to work to the fullest. He also said that if they win or lose, they are still a team and they are all together.

Meet the teacher

by Micah Hammann

Jason Anderson is the teacher of Second Chance Reading here at the middle school. He is also the academic coach. Anderson's career in teaching has consisted of 12 years. Anderson taught at Oskaloosa for one year, Linnville-Sully for eight years, and three years here at Pella. Anderson's family currently has 5 other members: his wife Melissa, Reagan 4 years old, and triplets Ryker, Brecken, and

Brooklynn who are all 8 months old.

When Anderson has spare time he reads, and coaches football and track. "I teach because I enjoy students and I enjoy seeing them get stronger in reading," Anderson said. "I wanted to be a teacher when I was a struggling student in junior high. I wanted to make school fun for kids like me who didn't enjoy it."



Jason Anderson is the teacher for Second Chance Reading at Pella Middle School.

(photo by Micah Hammann)



A group of 7th grade students show off their finished box.



A 7th grade student helps construct a wood duck nest.

The 7th grade students had the opportunity to help promote wildlife conservation during their field day at Lake Red Rock. The students built wood duck nesting boxes with supplies donated by Central Iowa Delta Waterfowl. The students' boxes will be part of the Iowa Nesting Project being promoted by the newly formed Delta chapter. The nesting boxes will help insure the future of Iowa's wood duck population by providing safe homes for mothers to raise a brood of ducklings. The boxes will be hung by Central Iowa Delta Waterfowl in suitable habitats. If you would like to donate to the Iowa Nesting Project or adopt a wood duck nesting box, visit Central Iowa Delta Waterfowl on Facebook.

article and photos by Mr. Knight

Students master foreign languages

by *Paloma Mate-Kodjo*

It's being said in the hallways, but some will never understand it. One can hear it in the lunchroom, but several won't appreciate it. 'Uno... Dos... Tres...'

It is the foreign languages that have permeated Pella Middle School. Spanish and French are now offered here at the Pella Middle School. It is the first year French is provided. Spanish has been taught here for 6 years. Although, this is the first year high school Spanish 1 is provided. Currently teaching is Ms. Donna Hasso and Mrs. Elizabeth Glasnapp. Hasso started learning Spanish in junior high,

as many here at the middle school are doing. Glasnapp did take Spanish in junior high, because French wasn't provided, and because she knew it would help her in French when she took it in high school. The students are lucky to have both languages now, here in Pella Middle School.

"The younger a person starts to learn another language the easier it is. However, it is never too late to begin," said Hasso.

Glasnapp said, "I don't believe there is a 'must' or 'best' time for learning a foreign language that eliminates a person's ability to learn a

foreign language at any time throughout their life."

Kim Doty, mother of Pearl Doty, currently enrolled in Spanish, says that Pearl wanted to take Spanish and French, but they "encouraged her to take Spanish because it is more useful." Spanish is the second most used language in the United States.

Knowing more than one language opens many job opportunities but the choice is of the students. When it comes to be in either Spanish or French, the choice is manageable, but middle schooler's decision making isn't always 'parfait'.

New music staff reaches out to students

by *Meghan Hartman*

Kim Benson and Kelilah Brown are the new additions to the music staff of the Pella Middle School. Mrs. Benson comes to us from Southeast Polk Junior High and Oskaloosa and before that North Mahaska. Ms. Brown graduated from Central College.

A band student, Molly Pfitzenmaier, who plays trumpet said "I likes the the new band staff. They have a real passion for music also that they are very energetic, and the they do not just sit down while we play our music." Benson and Brown both can play the majority of the instruments. Benson's main area of expertise is in the percussion section, were at Brown's main area is the violin, bassoon, and the oboe.

When teaching Benson said,

"My most favorite part of lessons is the 'ah ha' moments when the student lights up with understanding and/or pride in what they have accomplished. My most favorite part of large group band is when we make music together, not just play the notes. Those magical moments when we can feel the music as well as hear it."

Brown said, "Many people use music to express themselves, and I enjoy teaching them an instrument so that they can do that." That is her favorite part about teaching music.

Brown knew she wanted to teach music after she auditioned and made All-State Band on bassoon in high school. After that she went to Central College and thought the classes were very close knit and liked that they

encouraged her to keep going even when her classes got difficult.

Benson had always admired the excellence of the Pella Community Schools' programs. There seemed to be a sense of excellence in all areas and a real sense of pride throughout the community. The staff and students here are great. Benson is very excited and grateful to be a part of Pella Community Schools tradition of excellence.



Kim Benson directs the band.

(photo by Meghan Hartman)

New math teachers welcomed

by *Alexis Bugera-Brown*

As many of the Pella students know, we have welcomed two new math teachers into the building. They are Mr. Blythe and Ms. Blair.

Blair is now teaching Math I and eighth grade math. She went to school to be a doctor. But then she discovered that she likes working with others and likes that no day is the same at Pella Middle School. Blair is getting married soon; she will be getting married on October 27 to her fiancé, Josiah. Blair is also into sports. She will be assistant coaching the high school tennis team. She will also be the assistant coach for the 7th grade basketball team. Blair plays tennis,

basketball, soccer, the piano, and ran in cross country.

Blair went to Truman State University. During that time she earned her bachelor's in mathematics and a minor in music. Blair's parents are retired teachers from Pella. Blair's dad was a band instructor and her mom was a 3rd grade teacher.

Blythe is from Cedar Rapids and was raised in Williamsburg. Blythe's inspiration to teach came from a middle school teacher he had. Blythe wants to follow in his footsteps, and wants to show respect to students like his teacher did. Blythe likes teaching both 8th and 7th grade math, but he

says it is a little hard to transition from 7th and 8th graders thinking strategies.

Blythe has recently graduated this May from Central. He has also gone to Williamsburg. His future goals are to get his Masters in administration, to be an athletic director, to be the head wrestling coach, and to be a role model for middle school students.



Ms. Blair and Mr. Blythe, math teachers here at the middle school.

(photos by Alexis Bugera-Brown)

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Paloma Mate-Kodjo

Homecoming, 2012



For this year's homecoming dress up days, Monday was a Color Face-Off. The eighth graders wore black, the seventh graders wore white, and our wonderful staff wore pink. Tuesday was Twin Day. Wednesday was Superhero Day. Thursday was Throwback Day. Friday was Green and White Spirit Day.

(photos by Paloma Mate-Kodjo)

Illegal fish swimming in waters at Red Rock

by Jonathan VanWyk

Imagine a world where aliens desperately tried to invade a river for the survival of their species in the Americas. Criminals hunt the natives illegally. Two men tried to stop the crime at all costs. The battle will never be over.

Ben Dodd, a biologist assigned to the area of Red Rock, has expertise about these aliens also known, as Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS). ANS includes invasive species such as Bighead Carp and Silver Carp. “Only one bighead carp has been reported in the reservoir but the most troublesome area is below the dam,” said Dodd. It is illegal to transport these aliens while they are alive to avoid spread of the species. The aliens can transfer from lake to lake through flooding. When two areas are connected through flooding, fish can freely swim into either one.

Some would say that the ANS are a big problem, but not Jake Posey.

Posey is a fisherman aware of the Iowa Fishing laws and regulations. “It depends how you control them [ANS], they can be used to control garbage fish,” said Posey. Posey believes gar



Sign warning people of alien fish at Red Rock.

(photo by Jonathan VanWyk)

are a species that can help control the population of other fish species such as carp.

Posey also said, “I think illegal fishing is definitely a bigger problem than invasive species. It makes it so there are less fish to catch for everyone.”

There are many violations going on at Red Rock such as not having a fishing license, illegal snagging of game fish, over-bagging of game fish, and illegal commercial nets. “When a fisher or bystander observes any illegal fishing activity such as these, we recommend reporting it as quickly as possible so that a conservation officer can follow-up with the report and hopefully catch the person or persons committing the violations,” said Steve Dermand of the DNR. “To report these activities we recommend three options. First, contact the area conservation officer directly on his/her cell phone; second, call the ‘TIP’ Turn-In-Poachers hot-line at 800/532-2020, third contact

TIP’s on-line reporting system via internet at www.iowadnr.gov/tip,” said Dermand. Dermand went on to inform that TIP rewards money to those who report information about poaching or illegal fishing.

Iowa State beats Iowa at Kinnick Stadium

by Shounam Ches

Iowa and Iowa State went head to head in a football game to do their best to score the winning touchdown for their team. Both teams played the game at Kinnick Stadium on September 8, 2012, at 2:30 pm.

Iowa was going on a drive towards the touchdown they needed until number twenty, Jake Knott, caught the interception that won the game for the Iowa State Cyclones with a score of 9-6. This win for Iowa State has been the first win at Kinnick Stadium for over ten years. ISU coach Paul Rhoads said, “It’s a great victory; I’m very proud of our kids.”

Iowa has been in twenty-six bowl games with 594 wins and 522 losses, followed by 39 ties. Iowa has had twenty-five coaches in the past, and have been in 123 football seasons. Iowa has been playing football since 1889-2012. Jake Bruxvoort said, “I chose this team over Iowa State

because Iowa is a team that I’ve always kinda grew up with, and have chosen all my life.”

Iowa State has been in eleven bowl games with 499 wins and 595 losses followed by 46 ties. Iowa State has had 41 coaches in the past, and have played 120 football seasons. Iowa State has also been playing football since 1889-2012. Molly Pfizenmaier said, “I chose this team over Iowa because my family loves Iowa State, and that’s what I grew up choosing.”



Students in their Iowa, Iowa State clothing.

(photos by Shounam Ches)

Questions surround Noah's Ark

by Cameron Blom

So God said to Noah, "I have decided to destroy all living creatures for they have filled the earth with violence. Build a large boat made of cypress wood and water proof it with tar, inside and out. Then construct decks and stalls throughout the interior. Make the boat 450 ft. long, 75 ft. wide, and 45 ft. high. Leave and 18 inch opening below the roof all the way around the boat. Put a door on the side and build three decks inside the boat - lower, middle, and upper." Genesis 6:13-16

What is this boat of huge dimensions and where did it go? This boat is called Noah's Ark, built by Noah from the Bible. God instructed him to build it so he could wipe out all the wickedness that had come into the world, but save his followers and the animals.

It is recorded in the Bible and believed to be on the mountains of Ararat, which at the time the Bible was written, the mountains of Ararat were known as the mountains of present day Turkey, a European/Middle Eastern country. If it is found, it would prove the Bible to be completely true.

Many people have claimed to have seen Noah's Ark, and the common belief is that it rests on Mt. Ararat. No expeditions up to Mt. Ararat have brought back real, firm proof yet, or have been able to find their way back a second time. Many stories, although contradictory, agree on sighting the ark on Mt. Ararat in Turkey, on the border with Armenia and Iran.

Most all of the explorers who have "discovered" the ark, or thought to have known where it is, have not been able to do further research due to injuries, politics, or money or their finds have been found to be natural formations. The strange thing is that, many people who have seen it, or attempted to reach it were later killed, or otherwise prevented from doing any further exploring for the ark. What is that all about?

Not to prove the idea wrong though, many ancient eyewitnesses have said that the ark could still be seen and existed at the time they were living, even people who did not believe in God or Christianity. There is also

an Armenian monastery in Echmiadzin, Turkey, and there was a monastery on Mt. Ararat called St. Jacobs (6,394 ft. elevation) and both were said to have many relics from Noah's Ark. St. Jacob's monastery at Ahora was destroyed though in an eruption in 1840 and the eruption also destroyed the believed to be village Noah built called Ahora/Arguri on Mt. Ararat.

There is evidence for and against the ark being on Mt. Ararat, and evidence for and against it being upon other mountains. No one currently knows where the ark is, but hopefully it will soon be found.

The big question is though, even if it is found and proves the whole Bible true, would everyone believe it if it was found, fitting all the requirements? Would they then repent and believe in Jesus and the Bible? Sometimes, some things take a step of faith and acceptance. Only further investigation, excavation, and prayer will reveal its landing place.

Students show character

by Aleona Pronina

In the morning announcements names are announced for showing good Character Counts. Character Counts has been going on for seven years now. It teaches students the six pillars. The six pillars are respect, responsibility, trustworthiness, fairness, caring, and citizenship. These pillars that have been encouraged since elementary school still affect us today.

Tell Mr. Manning someone was showing good Character Counts and he will announce them in the morning announcements. "Kids in Pella do a good job for the most part, but there is still room for improvement in showing and recognizing good character," Mrs. Pentico said.



Eighth graders, Hunter Sheaffer and Kent Beyer help out the janitor by cleaning and washing windows around the Pella Middle School.

(photo by Brook Morgan)

Movie review: *The Lorax*

by Brenna Hildebrand

The Lorax is a movie based on the Dr. Seuss book *The Lorax*. It has comedy, life lessons, a little romance, and a little action. It starts with the hero, Ted, a young boy, going to find the one thing that will enable him to win the affection of the girl of his dreams; a real tree.

The reason he wants a real tree is because they live in a synthetic town where everything is plastic and fake. Since there are no real trees, our bad guy, Mr. O'Hare has made a fortune off of selling bottled fresh air. For our hero to find the tree seed, he must learn the story of *The Lorax*, a mystical, grumpy, and annoying creature that is the guardian of the forest. *The Lorax* has the classic topic of being environmentally aware, only in a childlike animation film.

I chose to give *The Lorax* 3 stars because it was very childlike. It was the kind of thing my 6 year old sister would like. Adults really only watched it because their kids wanted to. It's not for middle schoolers.

Book review: *The Maze Runner*

by Emily Kriegel

The world is a dangerous place, full of twists, turns, and dead ends. You can get lost and easily distracted, like a newborn kitten exploring a dark forest, or like a child in a maze. Not the kind of maze that you find at a carnival. The kind of maze that has dark, ominous walls, that rocket towards the sky. The type of labyrinth that has no map to guide you, no trail of breadcrumbs to lead you back to safety. The kind of maze that has no end.

Welcome to the world of Thomas. In the beginning of *Maze Runner*, Thomas wakes up to unusual surroundings, a place they call The Glade. There are other boys his age in The Glade, and none of them remember anything about their past. They do not recall how they wound up in the maze, or how they are going to get out.

As if this isn't strange enough, a girl shows up a day after Thomas, wielding an ominous message. There has never been a girl in the Glade, let alone

one bringing doomsday news. They can only assume the girl has something to do with Thomas. Will this girl unlock the dark secrets of Thomas's past, and reveal a way to get out of the maze?

Maze Runner is a suspenseful book suggested to fans of *The Hunger Games*. "Thomas is a strong role model who does not fall easily into peer pressure or give up his own sense of what's right. Readers will root for him, and for Teresa. The complicated relationships between the other boys will keep readers guessing," says Debra Bogart.

Around every corner of this book, you will find an action packed mystery just waiting to be solved. You will feel Thomas's homesickness, and experience his fear as he is battling monsters within the maze. James Dashner does a wonderful job of including electrifying moments that will drive the reader quickly into the sequel.

Students in Action



Seventh graders have fun at their field trip.



Eighth grade students show Pella pride with a black out.

(photo by Paloma Mate-Kodjo)

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Page Editor
Meghan Hartman

You may contact the staff of *The Middle Ground* at: middle.ground@pella.k12.ia.us

We would appreciate your comments and questions on our newspaper.



Bright shoes lighting up the school.

(photo by Alaina Klyn and Kayleen Van Dyke)

Do You Like to Travel and

Do You Want to Make a Difference in the World?

If so, you may want to be part of People to People Student Ambassador Programs. This summer, 2013, Student Ambassadors from Central Iowa will be traveling to Italy, Sicily, and Greece on the Modern and Ancient Civilizations program.

Parents and students who are interested in learning more about becoming a Student Ambassador are invited to attend an information meeting on:

Saturday, Oct. 20

in the Performing Arts Center at

Urbandale High School,

7111 Aurora Avenue in Urbandale.

A meeting for junior high school students will be conducted at 11:00 a.m.

A meeting for high school students (current 8th graders) will be conducted at 1:00 p.m.

Please see Mrs. VanWyk to receive a card that you can bring to the meeting that has the time and location information.

People to People Ambassador Programs has been providing educational travel for students for the past 50 years. On each program, students build their confidence and awareness of the world while they enjoy amazing activities with new friends. Student Ambassadors find fun and friendship around the world, exploring countries and cultures in depth and behind the scenes. A mission of service is also built into each People to People program.

For more information, visit the website for People to People Student Ambassadors at www.peopletopeople.com.

First Quarter Publications Staff



From left to right) Kobe Diers, Shounam Ches, Jonathan Vanwyk, Jessa Bokhoven, Meghan Hartman, Micah Hammann,

(back row) Kayleen Van Dyke, Brook Morgon, Molly Rietveld, Abby Ehrhardt, Alex Weers,

(front row), Payton Phelps, Paloma Mota-Kodjo, and Alaina Klyn.