



waconia edible classroom

A community garden takes root

On May 6, students, parents, siblings and community members gathered outside Clearwater Middle School to celebrate the opening of the Waconia Edible Classroom. Dark clouds and rain may have kept some people home, but those who came were rewarded. After an hour, the wind subsided, the sun came out and it turned out to be a beautiful evening. The event included garden and tree planting, a petting zoo, rope making, face painting, music by Clearwater's show choir band, "Microwave," and a healthy supper. The Minnesota Landscape Arboretum Plantmobile was on hand, where kids could plant sunflower seeds to take home.

Clearwater Principal Peter Gustafson and Superintendent Dr. Nancy Rajanen recognized District 110 teachers, staff, students and other volunteers who have already contributed time, talent and resources to get the project growing.

The Waconia Edible Classroom is a hands-on learning experience spearheaded by Mr. Gustafson and developed for the students of Waconia Public School District 110. Located on the former Jerome Brown farm next to Clearwater Middle School, the outdoor garden will teach students about the seed-to-table progression. Students will learn about the connection between what they eat and where it comes from, with the goal of fostering environmental stewardship and healthier eating habits. The project will also help transform the school lunch program.

When school is out for the summer, Kids Company, part of District 110 Community Education, will care for the gardens as part of their programming.

Waconia's efforts are based upon the Edible Schoolyard concept, founded by chef and author Alice Waters, of Berkley, California. The project will provide students with the opportunity to grow vegetables for use in the classroom, as well as in the school lunch program. The orchard will provide apples, pears, apricots and plums.

Nurturing Community Involvement

The Edible Classroom promises to be a community-wide endeavor. The public is invited to volunteer, and donations are needed to help with the development of the site, preparation of curricular materials, gardening supplies, equipment and plants. The Carver County Soil and Water Conservation District has helped with soil testing and preparation. The Minnesota Landscape Arboretum is providing advice and master gardeners to volunteer. Braunwarth Well contributed the digging of a well at no cost to the district. Mackenthun's Fine Foods will give a nickel off each time a customer reuses a shopping bag and will donate those nickels to the Edible Classroom. Ridgeview Medical Center is interested in partnering to promote healthy eating.

Seed Money Needed

The Waconia Edible Classroom will not be built with tax dollars, but with donations. The budget for the district is very tight for 2009-2010 (see article on page 2), so no funds have been allocated to this project. But as Mr. Gustafson points out, "The timing and opportunity are too good to pass up."



The most costly item needed—land—was already purchased for the 2008 expansion of Clearwater Middle School. Due to the presence of asbestos, a farm house is scheduled to be razed, but most of the out-buildings will be kept and utilized. About 3 acres have been designated for gardens, and another 1.25 acres for orchards.

Mr. Gustafson hopes that a greenhouse structure can be built to extend both the growing season and learning experiences, but funding will need to be secured first.

Dozens of business owners and volunteers have stepped up immediately and enthusiastically in support of the Waconia Edible Classroom. The Clearwater PTO has pledged \$3,000.

All in all, hundreds of people are catching the bug to grow plants, grow young minds and grow the Waconia Edible Classroom.

To find out how you can help, or to make a donation, contact Jessica Kilian at 952-856-4514 or jkilian@waconia.k12.mn.us.

Spring-Summer Calendar

- May 25 Memorial Day
No School K-12
- May 31 Graduation
- June 5 Last Day of School
- June 8 Teacher Workday
- September 8 K-9 First Day of School,
9th Grade Transition Day
- September 9 10-12 First Day of School

See page 4 for the 2009-2010 school year calendar

Edible Classroom photos by volunteer Mark Kiefer of VIP Gallery in Waconia



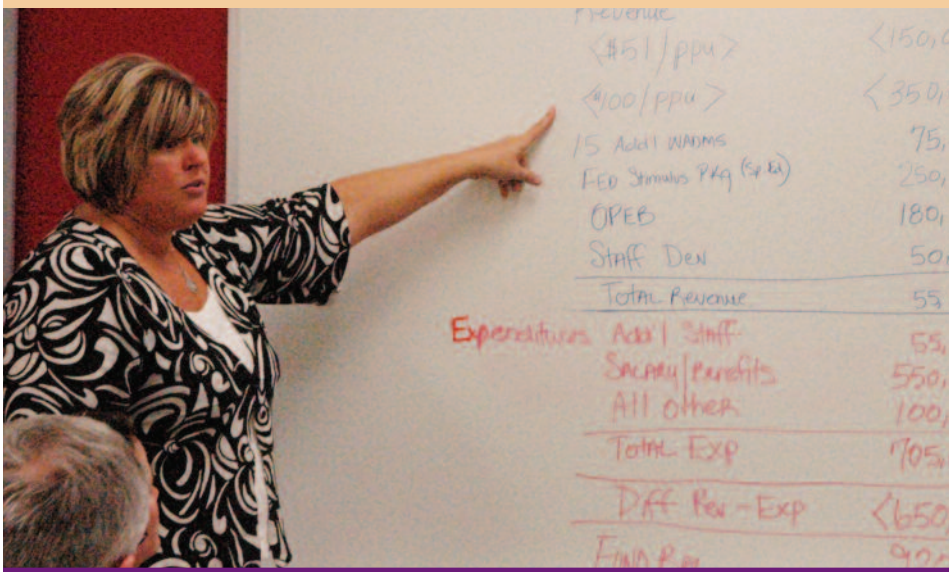
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District 110 Superintendent Nancy Rajanen, Ph.D., Board Chair Teresa Kittridge and Board Member John Wienland listen to a budget presentation by Julie Cink (below) at a Board of Education work session March 23. The Board heard preliminary recommendations and is expected to approve the 2009–2010 budget in June.



Scrutinizing the budget

On March 23 at the Bayview Media Center, the District 110 Board of Education listened as Director of Finance Julie Cink outlined the preliminary 2009–2010 school year budget and made recommendations. The final budget is scheduled to be approved by June 30.

According to Superintendent Dr. Nancy Rajanen, President Obama's economic stimulus plan provides the district with about \$300,000 in one-time funds for 2009–2010. These funds will offset reductions and shifts in state aid.

The Board agreed that no building or operating levies would be placed on the ballot in 2009. "Asking taxpayers for more money in this economy is not an option," noted Board Member Jim Sanborn.

Over the next two years, Cink predicts that the Board will need to make expenditure cuts totalling over \$1.4 million, representing about 2% of each annual budget. Members discussed what might be cut, and what would not.

"We are focused on keeping class sizes small—a maximum of 30 for sixth grade—and minimizing cuts that negatively affect students," stated Dr. Rajanen.

Possible transportation changes were revisited. Historically, the district's transportation costs are high, because every District 110 student has the option of riding the bus, including those attending private schools. Other districts designate areas where students can walk to school, saving transportation costs and promoting daily exercise. The Board is exploring the possibility of developing safe walking zones, implementing transportation fees or utilizing both.

Activity and athletic fees at WHS will likely increase from \$125 to \$150 per activity.

The Board will also negotiate new teacher contracts this year. Chair Teresa Kittridge noted, "I am looking forward to a more positive working relationship with the teachers, and the development of a new approach—interest-based negotiating. This strategy focuses on the interests of both sides, and the result is often creative, integrative solutions, which potentially can satisfy everyone."

In tough economic times, it is difficult to make cuts. The Board of Education seems up to the task, examining every expenditure, seeking creative ways to save and always placing student needs first. Public input is welcome, via phone 952-856-4514 or by e-mail: jkilian@waconia.k12.mn.us.

Shaping Lives

In this column, we recognize outstanding teachers, past or present. In this issue, some of the 2009 valedictorians write about teachers who have impacted their lives. If you attend, or once attended Waconia Public Schools, we welcome your story of a teacher who has made a difference in your life. Please indicate "Shaping Lives" in the subject line and e-mail your story to: jkilian@waconia.k12.mn.us.

Mel Berg and Mark Grundhofer

Jared Pawelk

Through the couple classes I have had with Mr. Berg, I have become very fond of his teaching style and character. Mr. Berg is a teacher that is always straightforward and tells you what he expects from your class work and behavior. He is always prompt and dependable; when he says he will be at school an hour before, I have complete faith that he will follow through. Mr. Berg has impacted me by always reminding me that it is the character of oneself that truly makes someone great. As he lives by this ideal, he has been a tremendous role model throughout my high school career.

I have had the pleasure of being coached and taught by Mr. Grundhofer. To me, his name will always be "Grundy" on the football field, and Mr. Grundhofer in the classroom. He is a teacher that gives a student respect as long as the student returns the favor. Mr. Grundhofer seems to understand the life of his athletes and students simply by being around them. He is probably one of my closest and favorite teachers I have had at Waconia High School. Mr. Grundhofer has always been there for me to talk about school, sports, and personal interests—especially nutrition and weightlifting. I will sorely miss him both as a coach and teacher.

Stephanie Kappel and Mel Berg

Mary Polding

Although I have only had Mrs. Kappel during my senior year of high school, she has made a strong impact on me, both in character and in my education. In the past I have not enjoyed reading school-required books, but after having her as a teacher, I know have a strong interest in reading and literature. Mrs. Kappel is very talented in the way that she manages to relate whatever we are reading or working on into our everyday lives. She makes her students enjoy what they are reading, as well as encourages and inspires them to read deeper and really understand what an author may be trying to get across. Mrs. Kappel also inspires students to discover their strengths, as well as challenge themselves to their full potential. Although her classes are usually more difficult, I have enjoyed them more than any other English class I have taken due to her unique teaching style and fun classroom atmosphere. Mrs. Kappel is one of those teachers who truly has a passion for what she does.

I have never come out of a science class feeling more accomplished than when I took one with Mr. Berg. His direct form of teaching offers students a challenge to retain information as well as work hard on their study habits. He provides a great balance

between teacher and student responsibilities, offering guidance, but also challenging self-sufficiency. He has developed a great classroom environment that provides for a student to succeed as well as have fun.

John Pohland

Matt Gibbs

When I first met Mr. Pohland, he was a temporary substitute band director. Fortunately, for every student in band, he eventually became a permanent part of the Waconia band program. Always encouraging, Mr. Pohland has been a constant source of inspiration throughout my musical career. He has supported my attempts to learn more about music, and made it possible for me to rent and learn to play the upright bass as an independent study. Mr. Pohland has also made music more fun and enjoyable to play, and his passion for music has influenced me into becoming a lifelong musician. He has made playing music more than just notes and pitches, and has turned it into something that I will continue for the rest of my life.

Heather Prondzinski

Scotti Moats

Ever since I was in middle school, I have always enjoyed math classes. I have taken most every math class available. The most influential teachers to me are in the math department. They are excellent teachers, and have always taken the time to help me understand the material. My favorite teacher is Mrs. Prondzinski. She has always been encouraging to me, and helped me further my math education. In ninth grade, I had Mrs. Prondzinski for the first time. I enjoyed her classes so much that after that year, I decided I wanted to be a math teacher. In

my mind, I always knew I wanted to teach, but it was after her class that I decided that I wanted to teach math. I like her style of teaching, and her calm attitude in the classroom. As I continued on with math classes, I came to enjoy the subject more. I always tried to get Mrs. Prondzinski for my math teacher whenever it would fit into my schedule. Overall, I have enjoyed all the teachers that I have had in the math department, but to me the most influential was Mrs. Prondzinski.

Lauren Leshar

Emily Cook

All of the teachers in the Waconia school district are great. From the kindergarten teachers who start us off to the high school teachers that prepare us for the real world, they have all work very hard to get us to where we are today. The teachers at Waconia seem to really care about the students. They are great at motivating us to be interested and pushing us to do better.

For me, the teacher who has had the greatest influence on me is Lauren Leshar. Before I even entered the High School, I had Mrs. Leshar as a soccer coach. She was very supportive on the field and she knew exactly how to get each girl to play her best. Once I was in the high school, I had Mrs. Leshar as a math teacher, and just as she was on the soccer field, she was great at motivating students, and she always made sure that everyone understood the really hard concepts. She is one of those teachers that connects very well with all of her students.

I hope to study engineering in college, and her classes, especially AP Calculus, have better prepared me for that. I appreciate everything I have learned from her, in and out of the classroom.

Grandpersons' Day spells fun for first graders

District 110 first graders recently invited their grandparents to school for fun activities, and many were able to attend. They came from the district, the Twin Cities, across Minnesota and around the U.S.

On April 24 at Southview, students and grandparents planted seeds together, read books in the Media Center, and visited the computer lab and classrooms. On May 1, Bayview first graders and their grandparents made May baskets, read books in the Media

Center, visited the computer lab and classrooms and enjoyed an outdoor recess. Both schools welcomed the grandparents with lunch and a program.

Students were proud to demonstrate the skills they are learning in school, and the visitors were happy to help with art projects, planting seeds and other activities.

Pictured here are participants from both schools. Photos are not captioned with names for reasons of privacy.



Honored for their many years of service are Mary Wegehaupt (left) and Marie Erickson.



Two Outstanding Teachers Retire

Two teachers were honored at a retirement open house on May 11. Retiring at the end of the school year are Mary Wegehaupt, a Clearwater fifth grade teacher who taught all subjects, specializing recently in science. Mrs. Wegehaupt has served the district for 36 years. According to Principal Peter Gustafson, "Any organization as complex and dynamic as a school relies on experienced and talented

persons to provide the bedrock foundation for those who follow on. Mary has achieved that status at Clearwater Middle School." WHS unique learner teacher Marie Erickson has served the district for 32 years. Principal Mark Frederickson commented, "Marie has been active and professional every day of her career; always putting the needs of her students first."

WHS bids farewell to '08-'09 Exchange Students

Eleven foreign exchange students attended WHS this year. Top row, L-R: Silje Ericksen of Norway, Carlos Prada of Spain and Luis Velasquez of Guatemala. Middle row, L-R: Jana Ruegg of Switzerland, Thea Fyrileiv of Norway and Caroline Torgersen of Norway. Bottom row, L-R: Gitte Hansen of Denmark, Zane Kunsteina of Latvia and Leire De La Fuente of Spain. Not pictured: Laura Baldy of Germany. Louise Irvine of Australia attended for the fall semester only.



Class of 2009 valedictorians, top row, L to R: Mary Polding, Scotti Moats and Emily Cook. Bottom row, L to R: Jared Pawelk, Shane Ewalt and Matt Gibbs.

WHS grads achieve excellence and plan for the future

On Sunday, May 31, Waconia High School will graduate its second largest class, with 212 students. The WHS class of 2009 includes 92 Honor Students: 55 with Highest Honors (3.75–4.0) and 37 with Honors (3.5–3.74). In addition, 15 students graduate with National Art Honor Society recognition.

Six students achieved a perfect 4.0 grade point average and are named valedictorians. They shared their college plans for this issue of the *CommuniCAT*.

Valedictorians' College Plans

- Emily Cook*
University of Wisconsin/Madison
- Shane Ewalt*
University of Arizona/Tucson
- Matt Gibbs*
University of Minnesota/Twin Cities
- Scotti Moats*
Bethel University/St. Paul
- Jared Pawelk*
Macalester College/St. Paul
- Mary Polding*
Bethel University/St. Paul

2009–2010 Calendar

September 2	Bayview Elementary Open House 4–8 p.m.
September 2	Southview Elementary Open House 5–7p
September 2	Clearwater Middle School Open House 4–8 p.m.
September 2	Waconia High School Open House 4–8 p.m.
September 8	Grades 1–9 First Day of School
September 9	Kindergarten Extension, 10–12 First Day of School
September 10	Half Day Kindergarten First Day of School
September 14	Clearwater Curriculum Information Night
October 12	WHS p.m. Conferences
October 15–16	Statewide Professional Development No School K–12
October 22	WHS p.m. Conferences
October 23	2–Hour Early Release K–12
October 29	Clearwater p.m. Conferences
November 5	Clearwater p.m. Conferences
November 19	Southview p.m. Conferences
November 24	Southview p.m. Conferences
November 25	Flex Day/ No School K–12
November 26–27	Holiday/ No School K–12
December 3	End of First Trimester
December 4	Teacher Workday/ No School K–12
December 10	Bayview p.m. Conferences
December 15	Bayview p.m. Conferences
December 23–January 3	Winter Break/ No School K–12
January 4	School Resumes
January 18	Flex Day/ No School K–12
January 21	WHS p.m. Conferences
February 11	WHS p.m. Conferences Clearwater p.m. Conferences
February 12	Staff In-Service/ No School K–12
February 15	Flex Day/ No School K–12
February 16	Clearwater p.m. Conferences
March 4	Southview p.m. Conferences
March 11	Southview p.m. Conferences End 2nd Trimester
March 12	Teacher Workday/ No School K–12
March 15–21	Spring Break/ No School K–12
March 22	School Resumes
March 25	Bayview p.m. Conferences
March 30	Bayview p.m. Conferences
April 2	Holiday/ No School K–12
April 22	Clearwater p.m. Conferences
April 29	WHS p.m. Conferences
May 6	WHS p.m. Conferences
May 7	Teacher In-Service K–4/Flex Day 5–12 No School K–12
May 28	2–Hour Early Release K–12
May 31	Holiday/ No School K–12
June 6	Graduation
June 10	Last Day of School

Salute to class of 2009 activities leaders and stars

According to Activities Director Dave Kuehn, the class of 2009 was loaded with outstanding leaders on the field, in the spotlight, in the classroom and behind the scenes. On May 26, seniors, parents and community members gathered in the WHS Auditorium to honor graduates and award scholarships. Dr. Rajanen, Mr. Fredericksen and everyone at District 110 congratulate the class of 2009, and recognize the following seniors for their outstanding contributions:

Leadership & Dedication

Minnesota State High School League Arts, Academics and Athletic representatives: Melanie Grangaard and Jared Pawelk.

Student Council officers: President Justin Ratzlaff, V.P. Emily Halvorson and Secretary Melanie Grangaard.

National Honor Society Executive Board members: Melanie Grangaard, Sarah Northrup, Cassy Norton and Justin Ratzlaff.

Yearbook editors: Kjerstin Haugsby and Jeremy Reichenberger; Jessica Vogel – senior section editor.

Newspaper Editors Lynn McMullen and David Butz.

Cassandra Norton achieved the prestigious Gold Award in Girl Scouting.

National Art Honor Society senior officers were Hannah Kimyon, Jessica Hunter, Jeremy Reichenberger and Kyle Niebeling.

Sports

Individual qualifiers for state tournaments included Ariel McCullum and Christina Rupp (swimming); Jared Pawelk, Brian Broll and Eli Stangret (wrestling); Amanda Sinnen (gymnastics); Chris Leivermann (golf); Cassy Norton (golf); and Melanie Grangaard (track).

Twenty-two seniors were named Wright County All-Conference Selections (Fall & Winter): Football: Brian Broll, Chris Leivermann, Derik Noeldner and Jared Pawelk; Volleyball: Kara Pioske and Margo Schwartz; Cross Country: Gattlin Miller; Boys' Soccer: Alex Osborn, Carlos Prada and Nick Hennen; Girls' Swimming: Ariel McCullum and Christina Rupp; Boys' Basketball: Jon Heimdal and Tom Kortuem; Girls' Basketball: Amanda Iverson and Scotti

Moats; Wrestling: Brian Broll, Dan Herrmann, Jared Pawelk and Eli Stangret; Boys' Hockey: Chris Leivermann; and Gymnastics: Amanda Sinnen.

Scotti Moats joined the prestigious 1,000+ point club in basketball.

Kara Pioske joined the prestigious 1,000+ kill club in volleyball.

Wildcat Award

The following seniors received the Wildcat Award at the Senior Banquet held May 26: Shana Froehling, Hali Germond, Amanda Iverson, Gattlin Miller, Kyle Pigeon, Nick Ramm and Steven Wert.

The Wildcat Award is presented to seniors who have participated in activities throughout their school career and demonstrated commitment, dedication and leadership.

Fine Arts

The vocal music department had several seniors serve as outstanding leaders this year: Power Company was led by seniors Mary Polding, Kyla Smith, Nick Ramm and Gattlin Miller, who served as dance captains, and Josh Goergen, who served as a section leader. Megawatt had terrific leadership from Tyler Stevenson, Kyle Niebeling and Clint Borka. The Current was led by dance captain Kelly Munson. The Select Chamber choir was led by Nick Ramm, Josh Goergen, Hannah Kimyon and Mary Polding. Two seniors were selected to perform with Minnesota All State Choirs: Melanie Grangaard sang with the Women's Chorus and Josh Goergen sang with the Mixed Chorus.

In instrumental music, seniors also made impressive achievements. In the Region 2AA Solo and Ensemble Contest, Dusty Hanson achieved "Best in Site" with a perfect score (40 out of 40). Superior ratings were awarded to Kelsey Connor, Shannon Curtis and Ken Miyamoto. Matt Gibbs, Kyle Niebeling and Rebecca Mueller achieved Excellent Ratings.

At the Lamberton Jazz Festival, Kyle Niebeling was awarded "Outstanding Performance."

The 2009 Marching Band is led by Senior Commanders Maddie Brown, Lucy Tongen and Steven Wert.

Well done, class of 2009!