



Blue Pride

Homer Elementary School

November 2015

Our Blue PRIDE moment for this month directly connects to our building vision statement. Our vision is:

In Our School Community:

We build the foundation for a life-long learning - Teachers and staff are continuing to build upon learning pathways and approaches for all students to better enhance student learning.

We create opportunities that enrich young minds and hearts – All students have been exposed to many learning opportunities that include learning about others, being responsible and kind to others, and being respectful to themselves and others.

We nurture compassion and tolerance in a safe learning environment – All of us recognize the diverse population of students and parents that are a part of our building. Each day we strive to make a difference in all students' lives and identify areas to become more conscious about.

We foster independence and leadership- Students have taken on independent responsibility in recycling milk during our lunch times, to making good choices in walking in the hallway and helping one another out.

We celebrate Blue PRIDE – A total of 45 students have been recognized in the first two months of school for their outstanding achievement in the areas of responsibility of respect. Many of our students are making positive choices in attempts at earning the student citizen of the month award. Our award recipients continue to be positive role models for all of our students after earning this recognition.



Blue Pride Spotlights

November 16, 2015

1. On 11/6/15 the SCA hosted a movie night in the Bonne' Auditorium. The families were treated to the new release "Home." Thanks to the volunteers for making a free, easy night out for families. SCA volunteers also offered parents the opportunity to pick up the Save-Around fundraiser books so students were not required to carry heavy loads home.
2. On November 10 the Intermediate School hosted 14 veterans of all ages and level of service for a celebration of Veteran's Day. Each classroom was given the book H is for Honor to share with veterans or as a classroom. Several classrooms made special welcome displays for our guests and the PRIDE Council has made a wall of honor for students to share their special veterans' names.
3. Mr. Kirkwyland hosted a Family Math Night in cooperation with the SUNY Cortland MST students for families in grades K-5. There were five math models (ten frames, number lines, tape diagrams, number bonds, and area models) included in the stations for families to learn math concepts. Dinner and child care was provided for all families. Thank you volunteers and families for attending!
4. Ms. Priscilla from the Phillips Free Library secured a grant to allow Shane Peacock to visit with grade 4-5 to talk about his writing craft. Students were treated to two days with Mr. Peacock and were able to ask questions about his life and writing. Thank you to Ms. Priscilla for applying for the Myrtle Dee Nash Memorial Fund to bring this exciting author to our school.
5. Our SUNY Cortland students will be presenting their action research on December 14th at the Intermediate School for anyone that would like to attend. Please email me for a specific time- we are still working out many of the details. We are so happy to have been chosen to be a PSD School in partnership with Cortland College.

Homer Junior High School
Blue Pride Spotlight Items
11/24/15 Board of Education meeting

Balloon Car Project

8A Science students are wrapping up the first of a series of new problem solving projects being introduced this year with "Balloon Car Race Day". In this project, students are challenged to take a small number of parts including straws, popsicle sticks, rubber bands and balloons and create a working car. No directions are given as students are encouraged to create their own designs while keeping in mind concepts being concurrently learned in class such as Newton's Laws and forces. Opportunities are given for students to test, modify, adjust, and redesign to find both strengths and weaknesses in their design choices. In the end, all of the students have moving cars of varying speed and reliability designed from their own knowledge, imagination, and perseverance. Students are having a great time completing the project and are already looking forward to their "Tiny House" project that will take place during their Energy unit.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-Teacher conferences were conducted November 16th at the Junior High. The conferences are scheduled after requests are made by parents of students in the building. 136 student conferences took place on Monday. That equates to nearly 29% of our grades 6-8 population. This is not the only time of the year that conferences are conducted. Over the past few years, the number of conferences scheduled during team meeting times have increased drastically and tend to lessen the number of the more formally scheduled meetings.

Sudan Refugee Visitation

All Junior High students will have the opportunity to meet with a visitor in two presentations on Thursday, December 3rd. Sebastian Maroundit is one of the "Lost Boys" of Sudan who was less than ten years old when war came to his village in the South Sudan and separated him from his family. His nomadic life since that time has now brought him to the United States, where he currently attends college and speaks to groups about his experience as part of the Building Minds in South Sudan organization. It is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing educational opportunities to African villages affected by war in the Republic of South Sudan.

Staci Heyer has spearheaded our building effort to bring Sebastian here. The topic of refugees and the refugee experience is directly aligned with our ELA study in the Junior High. The goal is to bring some context for students as they study this topic...and Sebastian will help us in that endeavor.

High School Blue Pride Activities for November- 2015

FFA Convention

FFA traveled to the National FFA Convention on October 26th through the 30th in Louisville, Kentucky. On the way out they toured Lincoln Welding, learned about designing prototypes for specific robotic functions and all tried our hand at "virtual welding"! We also toured Fair Oaks Farm below Chicago. This farm has agricultural education down to entertainment science with tours of their dairy & hog businesses from birth to finished product geared to the average consumer. We also enjoyed the Louisville Zoo with its impressive array of animals- from rhinos, grizzlies, & gorillas to lions and giraffes! Students spent a lot of time at the National FFA Convention Career Show - exploring hundreds of career options available to them. Hearing top notch speakers, networking with over 55,000 other FFA members, attending leadership workshops, music concerts and a rodeo, along with a tour of Churchill Downs made this a "trip of a lifetime"! Mrs. Pratt and Homer FFA would like to thank our Board of Education, our superintendent, Mrs. Ruscio and our High School Administration and teachers for their support!

NATIONAL TEEN DRIVER SAFETY WEEK

Homer HS Celebrated NATIONAL TEEN DRIVER SAFETY WEEK October 26-30, 2015. Homer High School worked with the NYS Department of Health in conducting activities to get teens to buckle up and help reduce teen driving related deaths and injuries in New York State. Buckling up keeps teens from being thrown out of cars in a crash where they are 24 times more likely to die or suffer a severe injury.

Below were the activities held the week of October 26th – 30th.

- 10/26 Monday: AM and PM announcements regarding statistics and activities for the week!
- 10/27 Tuesday: Obstacle course with impairment goggles.
- 10/28 Wednesday: Battle of the belts.
- 10/29 Thursday: Safe Driving Facts at lunch in the Cafe. Students would be able to win prizes and gain knowledge at the same time.
- 10/30 Friday: Seat Belt Crash simulator with the NYS Police.

AMATEUR FILMMAKERS GET SPOTLIGHT

In an effort to promote culture and local creativity, the Cultural Council of Cortland County teamed with the Central New York Living History Center to create the first ever Reel CNY” This was a Festival of Shorts, a film festival highlighting amateur adult and youth filmmakers. The event was held Friday (11/6/15) night the Living History Center on Route 11 with nine entries from seven filmmakers in Cortland, Ithaca and elsewhere in Central New York. Congratulations to Homer High School Senior Mel Videto who was a participant in this event. Mel noted she became interested in filmmaking last year after attending a workshop at Syracuse University. Her film, “The Escape,” follows the adventures of her dog that got off of his leash and ran into the woods. This event was paid for by a grant from CNY Arts. Great Job!

Syracuse Tech Garden and Brazzlebox Small Business Summit

On Wednesday November 4th, Kayla Calkins, Business Teacher and Joseph Cortese, Business Economics Teacher, took a handful of their students to Syracuse to attend a half day workshop in the morning at the Tech Garden and a half day small business summit in the afternoon sponsored by Brazzlebox.

At the Tech Garden students were posed with the challenge to create a business concept around randomly chosen (and quite odd) items in 45 minutes. They then presented their business ideas to a

small group of professionals who work with the Tech Garden. Students were put on the spot and forced to thinking critically, work collaboratively and be as creative as possible! It was quite a learning experience for students but they LOVED the challenge. They are still gushing about how much fun they had and ideas they have now that would have made their presentations better!

In the afternoon they attended a small business summit sponsored by Brazzlebox (a local social media based communication company for small businesses). The summit consisted of a panel of local entrepreneurs with a Q&A session, and guest speakers: Juli and Jim Boeheim and Daymond John (from Shark Tank). All of the speakers were fantastic and provided a lot of food for thought for the students.

Overall a great learning experience outside of the classroom for the students and allowed them to make many connections to curriculum they are learning in the classroom! A special thank you to HEF for providing the funds to make this trip possible.

Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA)

Future Business Leaders of America raised \$802.77 through various means (donation collection buckets, hat day and ribbon sales) for breast cancer awareness to be donated to the Carol M. Baldwin Research Fund. This was done with only 22 students as members.

Powder Puff Game

The Powder Puff Game (Coaches v/s Cancer) was held Saturday, November 14th here at the High School and raised \$870.00 all to go to the Upstate Golisano Children's Hospital, Syracuse, NY.

Shakespearean Society Play

Through the help of OCM BOCES, the Homer Shakespearean Society performed A Midsummer Night's Dream at the Mc Evoy Center Auditorium. The group wishes to thank the staff at Mc Evoy for the support of the performance.

Homer Senior Signs National Letter of Intent

Hannah Casey signed her national letter of intent to attend Tiffin University as a member of the Class of 2020 and to play Women's Lacrosse. Hannah's mother looks on as she signs. Tiffin is a private, coeducational university located in Tiffin, Ohio, and a NCAA Division II member of the Great Lakes Conference, We congratulate Hannah and wish her good luck in her senior year and beyond!

Upcoming Events:

- FFA is holding a can food drive this month for our local food pantries to help combat food insecurity a National FFA initiative.
- November 27th – Prior to the teams' games in Chittenango, Boys & Girls Varsity Basketball to collect donations for the More Than a Game foundation to benefit the Golisano Children's Hospital in Syracuse.
- December 3rd - High School Instrumental Concert Bonne' Auditorium at 7:30pm
- December 4th - Christmas on the Green, Homer Village Green at 6:30pm
- December 10th – High School Vocal Concert Bonne' Auditorium at 7:30