



# Inside Track

A Model District Where Students Want To Be Home of the Railroaders!

## Adopt-A-Family



Every year, the Durand FFA Chapter hosts their Adopt-A-Family Program to help support families in the community for the holiday season, and this year was no exception! The 10 Ag classes at Durand High School collected items for six families over the course of two weeks, and the Thursday before break they spent the day in the classroom wrapping all of the gifts. In addition to the Ag classes, we had donations towards the program from a number of sources: Marci Long, an English teacher at the high school, worked with her classes to make a fleece blanket for every family member; Jeff Frasle, a Math teacher at the high school, had his classes collect items for the families as well; countless teachers and community members donated money and food items; local businesses, including Meijer, Walmart, Shaw's Pharmacy and Bert's Lawn Maintenance, donated money to purchase additional items for the families. The help was outstanding, and between everyone, each family we supported took a car load home of gifts for every member of the family, a laundry basket full of household items, a box of food and a ham. "It's my favorite time of the year," says Durand FFA Advisor Torey Birchmeier. "To see the excitement from all those involved in helping members of our community have a more enjoyable holiday season is heart-warming."



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## Movie Night at Robert Kerr!

On Friday, January 8 Robert Kerr once again hosted a very successful "Movie Night". Approximately 180 students from both Robert Kerr and Bertha Neal enjoyed pizza, a drink, popcorn, and a great movie for a small registration fee. The "Movie Night" is usually held on a Friday and takes place from 4-6 p.m. at Robert Kerr. The Robert Kerr PTAC receives all proceeds from this event.

Durand Middle School was one of two schools in the state of Michigan to receive a \$5,000 grant for professional development for teachers. The professional development is offered by Teach n' Kids learn. The professional development will help the school reach our school improvement goals. The grant will give teachers online professional development.



Our student links are in full steam. Our student links are a group of students from 5th, 6th, and 7th grade that were selected to help out other students in our school. This month, the 7th grade links are going to meet and work with the 5th grade links to help them be successful in working with other students. The student links are working with their support buddies to help out students in need. The peer mentors are meeting with their assigned students weekly to assist in organization, minor social issues and any class work.

We had our third Coffee with the Counselor this month. We had several parents attend, even with the snowy roads. They talked about the monthly on track rewards, M-STEP, classroom counseling lessons, mindfulness and upcoming middle school events.



Students at Bertha Neal Elementary are collecting "Box Tops for Education" for their annual Box Top Competition (1/18 - 2/11). The PTAC purchased the book "A Color of His Own" by Leo Lionni for each classroom and stuffed animal chameleons. For every 10 Box Tops turned in, students will be entered in to a weekly drawing to win a colorful chameleon. Please help us reach our school goal of collecting 15,000 Box Tops!



## Students of the Month

The following students were chosen by staff members as Railroaders of the Month for January: 8th grader Nikita Williams, 9th grader Fawn Cameron, 10th grader Lucy Harris, 11th grader Morgan Miller, and 12th grader Meaghan Nanasy. Congratulations!



## DHS Winterfest 2016

Durand High School will have their Spirit Week to celebrate Winterfest January 25-29. Our theme this year is the Red Carpet. Mark your calendars for January 29 as the varsity basketball teams play Lake Fenton beginning at 5:30 p.m. in the high school gym. Go Railroaders!



## Superintendent News

As a follow-up to the December, 2015 Independent article, I thought it would be useful to update the community on a few things related to the potential sale of both Wilbur Bills and Doyle Knight Elementary schools which have been closed since June 30, 2011. The district initiated a bid process on December 15, 2015 with an ending date of January 11, 2016 at 3 p.m. Some changes have occurred since that last article.

The district held informational meetings and walk-throughs on January 4 and during those meetings we hosted individuals and groups who expressed an interest in potentially purchasing one or both of the buildings. During these meetings and in our conversations with folks, we determined that it would be in both the district's, as well as any potential bidders, interest to move back our timeline for accepting bids and having discussion with the villages of Bancroft and Lennon. The new timeline allowed the Durand

Area Board of Education an additional open board meeting to discuss the issues involved and how each community might be impacted by the sale of a building. We are thankful that people are reaching out to us and helping us understand their point of view.

The new dates are these: Bids for both Wilbur Bills and Doyle Knight will be accepted up until 3 p.m. on January 27. At this time the bids will be opened. Later that evening, there will be a board meeting held at the administration building at 6:30 p.m. where an open discussion will take place regarding the bids. It is important to note that no board action will take place during that board meeting. This is a time for conversation and another opportunity to listen to input from the community. The earliest that any board action regarding the sale of either building would be at the February 8 board meeting. Please consider visiting our website at <http://www.durand.k12.mi.us/> where you will find our bid information packet and additional information about both buildings.

It is worth noting that January is Board Appreciation

Month! To honor the Durand Area Board of Education we formally recognized their dedication and hard work during our last board meeting. What is the best way to recognize seven individuals who spend an inordinate amount of time communicating with the community, pouring over budgets and amendments, worrying about state aid and whether there will be support from Lansing, attending school functions, preparing for and attending board meetings, making decisions impacting the financial well-being of the district and focus their energies on doing their best to give our students and families the best experience possible? The list goes on and on, and the answer isn't easy, folks, but I'm starting with a direct "Thank You!" for starters. We all owe our selfless and servant minded board members an acknowledgement of gratitude.

Sincerely,  
Craig McCrumb  
Superintendent, Durand Area Schools