



Inside Track

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



Erica Kanan and Mike Konopacke from Baker College of Owosso came in to speak with all of Mr. Dunavant's Business/Computer classes on Thursday, December

18. The focus of the presentation was "Building a Plan" for their future. They addressed 3 questions: Should you go on for more training after high school? What should you go into? And where should you go? They explored the Employment Outlook and recognized what careers are in demand, what their earning potentials are, and would they be something that the student might be interested in making a career of vs. just a job. The students' eyes were opened to many facets of getting out on their own - prices of automobiles, average price of homes, and the cost to raise a child until they are 18 years of age. Finally, the students were advised on 8 different things to look for in a college/university if they choose to attend. The students gained a lot of insight into what implications will be before them from the decisions that they make in the near future.



The Durand High School Symphonic Band earned a Division 1, or Superior, rating at MSBOA District 5 Band Festival on Saturday, March 14. The band was praised by all the judges for a "well-prepared, very challenging program." The High School Concert Band earned a Division 3 rating, while the 7th and 8th Grade Bands both earned Division 2 ratings. The band's next concert is Wednesday, May 6 at 6:30 p.m. in the Durand High School Gym. This concert will feature music of the British Isles, and will feature a variety of Irish, Scottish and Celtic music. Selections will include music from Disney's "Brave," Ralph Vaughan Williams' "English Folk Song Suite," and "Lord of the Dance." For more information about the band program, please visit <http://www.durandbands.org>.

The following students have been chosen by staff members as Railroaders of the Month. Congratulations to 8th grader Joshua Austin, 9th



grader Kyle Godley, 10th grader Hannah Ford, 11th grader Janelle DeClerg, and 12th grader Bonnie Emmerling. We appreciate your hard work!

College and Career Readiness

On March 3rd, juniors across Michigan took the ACT. To provide an optimum testing environment for juniors, Durand Area High School organized various activities for non-juniors. Eighth graders watched a character building movie with a focus on bullying and community members spoke to the students about careers. Freshmen visited Michigan State University campus, which included the library, a lecture hall, a lab, a greenhouse, and the Brody Building's residential and hospitality areas. The sophomores visited Baker College and Agro-Culture Liquid Fertilizer. At Baker College, students received a tour of a college classroom, the campus, and the Career Technical Education facilities. At Agro-Culture Liquid Fertilizers, students received a tour of the facility and visited the IQ hub while learning about agriculture history, exploration and innovation. Finally, seniors had the opportunity to visit the college of their choice or job shadow a career of their choosing.



Jody Neumeyer, Kindergarten Teacher at Bertha Neal, wrote and received a \$500 grant from Delta Dental for all of our kindergartners to attend the "Chew on This" exhibit at Impression 5 Science Center. This is a new children's oral health exhibit that provides highly engaging, interactive learning activities. The exhibit is designed to help children understand what goes on inside their mouths and how healthy mouths are directly connected to having healthy bodies. At Bertha Neal, we promote making healthy choices and living healthy lives!



The Durand High School Choir went to District 3 Choral Festival on February 27th and earned an Excellent rating which enables them to participate in State Choral Festival in May. Go Singing Railroaders!



The Durand Area High School Independent Art students have been busy creating artworks to donate to the Bowling for a Cure fundraiser at the Durand Lanes bowling alley. All of the artwork went up for auction with the proceeds going to the Susan G. Komen Foundation to help fight breast cancer.

The February Student of the Month is Clara Henry. Clara is the daughter of Ben and Julieann Henry. Clara is a peer mentor and she is involved in 4-H and basketball. She is planning on playing softball this spring. Her future goals include attending MSU and becoming a large animal veterinarian. Her love for working with animals was evident as she placed 2nd in showmanship for cattle at the Genesee County Fair last summer.



On Tuesday, March 10th, 18 members of Durand High School's student government traveled to the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan along with students from Mt. Morris, New Lothrop, Bendle, and Beecher to participate in the GAC student council's day of service. Over 100 students worked side by side sorting food, moving boxes, and helping with other odd jobs.



Robert Kerr has magically been transformed into a fairytale, folktale, and fable land for March Reading Month's "Once Upon A Time" theme. Students enjoy activities throughout the month that include, dress like your favorite character and the most popular PJ day! Students also enjoy D.E.A.R. (Drop Everything And Read) time especially when they can visit other classrooms for teacher reads!



Senior Citizen Luncheon Returns! Senior Citizen Luncheon Bertha Neal Elementary Wednesday, April 22, 2015 1:00 pm

Cost: \$3.00
Please RSVP to the BN office at 989-288-2016 by Friday, April 17th

Menu

Chicken Salad on a Croissant
Bowl of Potato with Bacon Soup
Tossed Salad
Slice of Apple Pie
Coffee / Milk/ Ice Water



Superintendent News

A fantastic opportunity recently presented itself to the community of Durand and the school district. In the fall we began investigating the potential option of refunding bonds that date back to 2005 and 2006. These are two separate bonds that created a debt of \$10,315,000 from the 2005 bond, and \$13,570,000 for the 2006 bonds. Refunding bonds is similar to the concept of refinancing a home. The idea is to consider the cost savings by going from a higher interest rate, in our case, the bonds had an interest rate of 4.59%, to a lower interest rate in order to save money on the interest that would have accrued.

With near record low bond interest rates, we took advantage of this refunding opportunity and combined our two bonds, and the new interest rate came back at 2.99%. As always, the districts goal is to be as fiscally responsible as possible. The result of the refunding will, over time, have the potential to save \$6 million in interest to our taxpayers.

Given that we were able to take advantage of this opportunity, the next potential opportunity for the district is to consider presenting to the community an option of a no-mil increase on a future ballot, likely in November. This would keep everyone's current taxes the same, but allow the district to utilize the savings from the refunding process to

address district needs. The most easily identified needs that have become problematic are in the areas of technology and building maintenance. In short order, we'll have an assessment done not only by the district's buildings and grounds committee, but also we will be bringing in an outside professional company to conduct, free of charge, a complete assessment of the district's facilities.

Please stay tuned... this will be an ongoing topic of conversation for our community over the next several months.

Very sincerely yours,
Craig McCrumb,
Durand Area Schools Superintendent.