

# STURGIS SCHOOL NEWS

SPS's Blessings  
Fall Sports Wrap-up  
Kiwanis Parenting Fair  
Cyber Safety Workshop  
Technology Gifts

Winter 2010-11





Great Start Readiness Preschool teacher, **Alicia Wilber**, works on a pattern activity with students **Lily Holton** and **Dymitri Casault**

## Mission Statement

The Mission of the Sturgis Public Schools, in partnership with parents and community, is to ensure each student has the knowledge, skills, and behaviors necessary for a successful transition to the next educational stage ultimately leading to a productive and satisfying life.

## Board of Education\*

- LeeAnn McConnell.....*President*
- Geoffrey D. Smith.....*Vice President*
- Tom Robertson.....*Secretary*
- Ann Bird.....*Treasurer*
- Ray Sterling.....*Trustee*
- Frank J. Kalasky.....*Trustee*
- Kerri Millett.....*Trustee*

*\*The public is welcome to attend the monthly Study Sessions and Regular Meetings of the Board of Education. The Board meets at 5:30 for the Study Session at the Sturgis Central Commons Board Room on the second Tuesday of each month. On the third Tuesday of the month the Regular Meeting is held at 5:30 p.m. in different schools in the District. Please see the schedule of the meetings posted on the Sturgis web page at [www.sturgisps.org](http://www.sturgisps.org) under the Board of Education menu listing.*

**Cover: Wenzel students, Thad Hahn, Daniel Nava, Isaac Benites, Mersades Hagaman, Michale Combs, Jakob Campbell, Aileen Blas, Joanna Villefuerte, and Brenda Garcia, demonstrate healthy eating as part of the new Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program offered at Congress, Wall, and Wenzel Elementary schools.**

## The Blessings are Many at SPS

Thanksgiving is one of our nation’s most treasured holidays and traditions. It provides us with an opportunity for contemplation of, and reflection on, the many blessings we have in our lives and in the lives of our loved ones. It is no different for the many agencies and organizations that work to serve the public in so many different ways. The Sturgis Public Schools is but one entity that has so much for which to be thankful.

First and foremost, we are so fortunate to have a community that values education. There are a great number of supporters every year who give of themselves in so many different ways. Literally hundreds of volunteers show up in our schools on a regular basis to tutor students, help them with job skills, read to them, and still find time to raise money for worthwhile projects. From the parents volunteering time in classrooms on a daily basis to the helpers who make our special events a success for participants as well as patrons, our community “makes it happen” in a big way!



*Robert Olsen  
Superintendent*

We have booster clubs that contribute tremendous financial support and enthusiastic encouragement for our students involved in a myriad of programs. Our building and district parent advisory groups are constantly promoting our schools and looking for ways to help improve what we already have... individual supporters help make our campuses more inviting and create a sense of pride in those who use the facilities on a regular basis... a local medical community that provides constant support for our athletic programs, not to mention supporting families in need of assistance... and there are many who have given thousands of dollars to establish scholarship funds and grant opportunities for our students, faculty, and staff.

In addition to the many community members who give of their time, we have a great number of businesses that give to the school through donations of equipment, money, and facilities. There are also many individuals providing mentoring and apprenticeship opportunities in our work and career development programs through their gift of time and expertise.

The City, through its Department of Public Safety (DPS... Fire and Police Departments), supports us by making this a safe, secure school and community in which to attend and live.

see “Blessings” on page 3

# News

## Estate Planning Workshop

Local attorney **Bob Brothers** will present a free workshop entitled *Everything You Wanted to Know About Estate Planning*, on Tuesday, December 7 at 7 p.m. in the Sturgis Central Commons in the Board Room. Brothers will discuss general information about common estate planning documents and changes in tax laws coming in 2011. There will be time for questions. Seating is limited, so please call the Community Education Office at 659-1540 to register.

## Fresh Fruits and Veggies

Students at Congress, Wall, and Wenzel Elementary are enjoying the new **Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program**. These snacks are served in the classroom throughout the school day as a way to introduce fresh fruits and vegetables as healthy snack options. In addition to “familiar” fruits and vegetables, students have also been introduced to unique items like mottled pluots (a cross between a plum and apricot), apple pears, and radishes. The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program is available through the USDA.

## Adult Education Classes

Registration for the second semester of night classes for earning a High School Diploma, GED Certificate, or ESL Skills begins on December 13. Classes begin on January 25, 2011 and are held on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6-9 p.m. ESL classes meet from 6-8 p.m. Free child care is provided for children ages 2-11 while parents are in class. **There is no cost for any of these classes! Stop in at the Community Education Office in the Central Commons Building or call 659-1540.**



Alternative Education math teacher, **Bryan Boughton**, watches students **Laura Luna** and **Mario Reynel** use objects to better understand how to balance algebra equations.



**Sarah Cropsey** works with her parents at Congress School's *Partners in Art* night.

## “Blessings” Cont. Page 2

The constant contact we enjoy with DPS continues to make a difference for our students and our staff. While problems can certainly exist for students who find themselves in challenging situations, all you have to do is observe our local police officers interaction with students in a helping role and there is little doubt left about the significant and positive impact on our young people.

While we are so very fortunate for the thousands of citizens who support our students, attend our many events, and finance our wonderful facilities and programs, we continue to be blessed with the leadership of a great board of education. Sturgis Public Schools is the envy of the entire area due to the work of the very best board of education any community could want or expect. Our Board members donate their time, talent, and energies to understand the issues and make decisions that benefit kids. I have literally never seen a group of leaders as committed to their constituencies and their community as this Board of Education.

So, Sturgis... on behalf of the faculty and staff of the Sturgis Public Schools, please accept our thanks... for all the contributions you have made and opportunities you've created... and, in advance, for the many contributions you will make this year and in the many years to come.

## Tis the Season to be Jolly...

Music is in the air...please join us for any or all of our upcoming winter concerts.

### **SMS & SHS All Bands Concert**

Thursday, December 9, 2010 at SYA at 7:00 p.m.

### **SMS & SHS All Choirs Concert**

Sunday, December 12, 2010 at SYA at 3:00 p.m.

### **SMS, EW & SHS All Orchestras Concert**

Monday, December 13, 2010 at SYA at 7:00 p.m.

## Wall Elementary

**Alan St. Jean**, author of the *Daydream Collection* and *Aiden of Oren* books, recently visited Wall School. St. Jean led writing workshops emphasizing teamwork and story structure with the Wall and Jerolene second grade students. The kids especially enjoyed the new *Spooky Mooky* music video. Everyone agreed that writing definitely can be fun!

## Congress School

### School Walks A Million Steps

Thanks to a spook-filled parade, Congress School reached its goal of walking a million steps towards healthy living. Students and teachers had been keeping a log of steps for a couple of weeks hoping to hit the million step mark by Halloween.

### Partners in Print

Congress recently held a *Partner's in Print* night for its Kindergarten parents and students. Parents came and rotated through four sessions to learn about activities they could do at home to help their children with reading. The sessions were hosted by the Congress K-2 staff. There were also ESL sessions provided.

## Eastwood School

Eastwood Student Council opened a school store that sells healthy snacks and student-designed sweatshirts, featuring an eagle and an American flag, every Friday morning. It will add other non-food items soon. The Student Council plans to use the proceeds from the store to help purchase all fifth-grade students shirts to celebrate their years at Eastwood.



Eastwood student council members (L-R): **Nicholas Ware**, **Jimena Garcia Carmona**, **Lynda Unterkircher**, **Morgan Bowers**, **Grace Bean**, **Madison Bowers**, and **Austin Stemen** show some of their store menus.



Congress School recently hosted a *Partners in Print* night for kindergarten parents and students. (L) **Claire Holtz** and her mother **Katie**. (R) **Jasmine Vanhoozer** with her mother **Amber**.

## Wenzel School

Wenzel School is participating in the Healthy Initiatives Snack Program that provides fruit or vegetables throughout the school day to the students. Instead of sugary or fatty snacks, the students have had cauliflower, broccoli, grape tomato, pears, plums, apples, and much, much more.



Wenzel students (L-R) **Breanna Crueta**, **Savannah Timms**, and **Anna Wickey** enjoy some apples during snack time.

# Happenings

## Sturgis High School

### CAD Classes Design Wall of Fame

The Sturgis High School computer-aided design (CAD) students are busy designing an Academic Wall of Fame Wall next to the cafeteria that will feature Sturgis High School alumni. Students will use pictures, words, and mounting details in hopes of honoring former Sturgis High School graduates. The competing designs will be displayed outside the high school office in the next couple of weeks.

### Freshman Visit Western Michigan University

Earlier this month the entire freshman class toured Western Michigan University's campus in Kalamazoo. The Western staff and mentors had a great agenda, starting with "What Western Michigan has to offer." Next was a student panel discussion in which Sturgis students had the chance to ask WMU students questions about campus life. This was followed by a wonderful interactive presentation on "How to succeed in your Freshman year." After the presentations, they toured campus and ate lunch in a student residence hall.

This tour was provided and funded by Sturgis SUCCESS, our local college access network, as part of the Freshman Focus class. Freshman Focus instructors, **Steve Savage** and **Patricia Davidson**, work with Career Preparation Coordinator, **Claudia Pahls**, to prepare students for future career paths.



Sturgis High School freshman visit Western Michigan University. (L-R) **Shelby Hall Thompson**, **Lucy Blesch**, **Mallorie VanWormer**, **Cierra Conklin**, **Olivia Miller**, **Logan Spahr**, and **Andrew Nielson**.

## Sturgis Schools Parent Involvement Plan

*Parental involvement means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring that parents are meaningfully involved in:*

- *Developing and implementing appropriate strategies for helping their child achieve the learning objectives that lead to accomplishing desired learning outcomes.*
- *Providing a mutually supportive school and home environment which encourages learning.*
- *Their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child*

### Action Plan

- 1) The District/School will form Parent Advisory committees with representation from parents (including representation from significant sub-groups), teachers, and administrators to review parent involvement policy and how parent involvement dollars will be spent.
- 2) The District/School will educate teachers, pupil services personnel, principals, and other staff about communicating, and working with, parents as equal partners.
- 3) The District/School will provide the necessary coordination, technical assistance, and other support to schools in planning and implementing effective parental involvement activities to improve student academic achievement.
- 4) The District/School will provide assistance to parents of children served by the school district or school, as appropriate, in understanding topics such as the following: *the State's academic content standards, the State and local academic assessments including alternate assessments, how to monitor their child's progress, and how to work with educators.*
- 5) The District/School will provide materials and training to help parents work with their child(ren) to improve their child(ren)'s academic achievement.

## Technology Wish List

Are you looking for technology-related Christmas gift ideas for your student? Wondering if the newest gadget could actually help them in school? Here are several suggestions that could help with organization and school work. **None of these items are required for any of our students.** They are just suggestions.

- **Ear buds or head phones:** They're available to borrow here, but some parents like their children to have their own.
- **MP3 player:** We're beginning to offer down-loadable e-books for our students to check out of our library and access on their MP3 player. A 2 GB device will hold hundreds of books and audio files.
- **iPod Touch:** These devices have tons of applications that your child can download via a wireless connection to the Internet or through iTunes. **Remember to get free engraving for it to help prevent theft.**
  - Our new SPS Access program (found on the *Resources* tab of our website) allows students to access their network resources, such as the data in their home drive, **from any device** that has Internet access.
  - The newest 4<sup>th</sup> generation 8 GB model does not have voice or recording capabilities but is more than sufficient for younger students. The 4<sup>th</sup> generation 32 GB model includes a microphone on the ear buds to record your voice and make free voice calls via Skype or Google Talk.
- **iPad:** This is basically a big iPod Touch with incredible graphics and applications relevant to education..
  - The **Wi-Fi** model will connect to any wireless hot spot, including the filtered Internet access at our schools. Access to this type of Internet connection is only available in limited areas of the building.
  - The **Wi-Fi/3G** model can use a cell tower connection to access the Internet for an added monthly cost. You **can** turn the 3G on and off on a monthly basis if needed.
- **Cell Phone with Internet and a data plan:** Our district policy allows cell phones (to be determined by a teacher's discretion) in school for educational purposes, such as taking quick surveys, looking up information on the Internet, or entering organizational data on a personal calendar.
- **e-book Reader:** Books are downloaded to a device like Kindle or Nook via an Internet connection. E-books can also search the Internet on the black and white screen.
- **Laptop or Netbook Computer:** Look for laptops with a battery life of at least 6-8 hours, at least 2 GIG of memory, and a Windows 7 operating system . <http://cnet.com> has a very nice Laptop Buying Guide you can reference.



(L-R) **Rachel Smith, Lauren Raifford, and Bryce Airgood** recently performed in Sturgis High School's Fall play, *Comedy of Errors*, by William Shakespeare.

## Kiwanis Parenting Fair

The 19th Annual Kiwanis Parenting Fair will be Saturday, February 5, 2011, from 8:30a.m.-3:00p.m. at Sturgis Middle School. Parenting expert and keynote speaker, **Dr. Mike Thomson**, will address the following concerns:

- **Saving Your Sanity in Parenthood:** Teaching children about responsibility in actions, thinking, and feelings.
- **Parenting for Character:** Teaching children to make good decisions and to have self-responsibility.

There will also be many mini-sessions that deal with other parenting topics and more than 60 exhibits. The Fair is free for all attendees and complimentary, on-site childcare will be provided by the Sturgis Exchange Club.

For more information about the Kiwanis Parenting Fair, check the school website at [www.sturgisps.org](http://www.sturgisps.org), or call the Sturgis Youth and Family Office at 269-659-3664.

*Kiwanis Parenting Fair is sponsored by Sturgis Kiwanis Club, Eastside Kiwanis Club, Sturgis Exchange Club, Sturgis Youth and Family, Sturgis Public Schools, St. Joseph County United Way, Great Lakes Health Plan, St Joseph County Commission, Sturgis Council of the Arts, and Sturgis Area Community Foundation.*

## Wish List Continued

- Sturgis Public Schools does not support any Apple computers on its network, but it allows student to use their own in school.
- **Software for netbooks or laptops:** Through *SPS Access @ Home*, students can access free software they need for school without installing it on their own device.
- Anti-virus software is a must for Windows Operating System devices. You can download a free version AVG from the Internet to protect your new purchase.
- OpenOffice.org provides a free download for a word processor, spreadsheet, presentation, drawing, database program that reads Microsoft Office files.
- Students and staff can purchase discounted software at <http://www.journeyed.com/select>

# Happenings

## Free Cyber Safety

Sturgis Youth and Family, in partnership with Sturgis Public Schools and the City of Sturgis, is hosting a **Town Meeting on Cyber Safety on Tuesday, November 30 from 7:00-8:30 p.m. at Sturges-Young Auditorium**. This program is presented by the Michigan Cyber Safety Initiative from the Michigan Attorney General's Office. Any parents or other interested community members are invited to attend to learn how to:

- Access the Michigan Sex Offender Registry
- Obtain information on parental control software
- Protect your family from the dangers on the Internet
- Search and access your child's social networking sites (MySpace and Facebook)
- View Internet history logs to determine where your children have been online
- Access safe surfing on Internet search engines

There is no charge to attend this seminar and attendance is limited to high school students and older. **There will be no children under high school age allowed.**

## Marching Band Wrap-up

The Marching Band finished a successful season performing their fall show entitled *Spanish Sketches*. They received a Division I rating at the District Festival with comments from the judges including, "nicely designed show" and "fine teaching." They earned a perfect score in all categories of competition, which makes ten consecutive years of Division I ratings at Districts for the Trojan Marching Band!

For the fifth straight year, the Band finished first in Class B at the DeWitt Marching Band Invitational. The Band took home trophies for best color guard, best marching, best music, and best drum line. Drum majors, **Jamey Swarts** and **Kelsay Barker**, received the award for best drum majors.

An 8 X 10 collage photo of the Sturgis Marching Band taken at the DeWitt Invitational can be viewed in the band room. Copies are available for purchase by sending a \$10 check made payable to DeWitt Band Boosters and mailed to **Michael Norman**, DeWitt High School, P.O. Box 800, DeWitt, MI 48820.

More than 200 people supported the Band and Orchestra's *Drive One for Your School* fundraiser this Fall that raised more than \$4,060 for the Band & Orchestra. Everyone had a good time despite the rainy, cold weather - even **Mr. Stitt**, **Mr. Ehlert**, and **Mr. Whitehead**, who all did a stint in the dunk tank.

### No Internet? Find Wi-Fi in Town

If you don't have Internet access at home, the Sturgis District Public Library has computers with Internet available and several area businesses have free Wi-Fi.



The Girls Varsity Cross Country Team: Front (L-R) **Katie Meek**, **Kelsey Keyser**, **Abbie Scheske**. Back (L-R) **Mary Boyd**, **Lauren Schuler**, **Peyton Boughton**, and **Ann Marie Arseneau**.

## Fall Sports Highlights

### Girls Cross Country

- Placed first place in the SMAC
- Placed first in the County Championship
- Placed second at Regionals
- Placed sixteenth at State
- **Ann Marie Arseneau** was named all-state for the second consecutive year with a time of 18:46
- **Kelsey Keyser**, **Abbie Scheske**, **Lauren Schuler**, and **Peyton Boughton** each had lifetime bests for the Trojans State

### Girls Golf

- Finished eleventh at Regionals

### Boys Soccer

- Repeated as East Division Champions

### Girls Volleyball

- Won in the first round of the district tournament, defeating Vicksburg in 3 games

### Girls Swimming

- Sent **Katie Johnson**, **Dannette Schroeder**, and **Alea Penner** to the Diving Regionals
- **Chelsea Day**, **Bronte Stewart**, **Alyssa Blowers**, **Jessica Cline**, and **Katherine York** qualified for State

### Boys Cross Country

- Placed first at the East Division Championship
- Placed first in the County Championship

### Boys Tennis

- Placed second at Regionals
- Placed twelfth at the State

### Boys Football

- Finished with a 5-4 record, their best in six years

# Foul Weather Alerts

When the weather outside is foggy or snowy, be sure to check the school website at [www.sturgisps.org](http://www.sturgisps.org) or listen for school postponements, cancellations, early dismissals, or activity cancellations. All radio announcements will be made on *WBET (99.3 FM)*, *WLKM (95.9 FM)*, *WKZO (590 AM)*, *WNWN (98.5 FM)*, *WTHO (105.5 FM)*, *WKFR (103.3 FM)*, *WVPE (88.1 FM)*, *WZUU (92.5 FM)*, *WFRN (104.7 FM)*, and *WOWO (1190 AM)*. Television announcements will be made on *WWMT (ch. 3)*, *WOOD (ch.8)*, *WSBT (ch. 22)*, and *WNDU (ch. 16)*. You may also sign-up in your child's school office to receive an automated telephone call or follow the links on our district website to receive an email when school is cancelled or delayed. When possible, announcements will occur by 6:30 am.

If a parent disagrees with a decision to keep school open, the parent can keep his or her child at home without penalty. However, when exercising this option, please notify the principal's office so the absence will be excused. To conform with Michigan law, all school closings in excess of two days per year must be rescheduled.

# Tell Us What You Think

*Sturgis School News* welcomes letters, comments, and critiques. All correspondence should be sent to Editor, Sturgis School News, 107 W. West Street, Sturgis, MI 49091. We can be reached by phone at 659-1542 or by e-mail through our web site at [www.sturgisps.org](http://www.sturgisps.org).



# 2010-11 School Calendar

<b>November</b>	
24	End of First Trimester - 1/2 Day for Students
25-26	Thanksgiving Break - No School
<b>December</b>	
9	All Bands Concert (SMS and SHS) 7 p.m. Sturges-Young Auditorium
12	All Choirs Concert 3 p.m. - Sturges-Young Auditorium
13	All Orchestras Concert - 7 p.m. 7 p.m. Sturges-Young Auditorium
20-31	No School - Winter Recess
<b>January</b>	
3	School Resumes
26-27	Parent-Teacher Evening Conferences (Grades 6-12)
28	Mid-Term
<b>February</b>	
11-14	No School - Mid-Winter Break
<b>March</b>	
11	End of 2nd Trimester - 1/2 Day for Students
17-18	Parent-Teacher Evening Conferences (Grades K-5)
<b>April</b>	
4-8	Spring Break
22	Good Friday
<b>May</b>	
6	Mid-Term
30	No School - Memorial Day
<b>June</b>	
9	Last Day of School for Students



**Conceive It...Believe It...Achieve It...At Sturgis Public Schools**

# From the Superintendent's Desk

---

## Superintendent Search Process

The following is a list of some of the suggested focus groups that are being invited to participate in the "input" phase of the Sturgis Public Schools Superintendent Search Process.

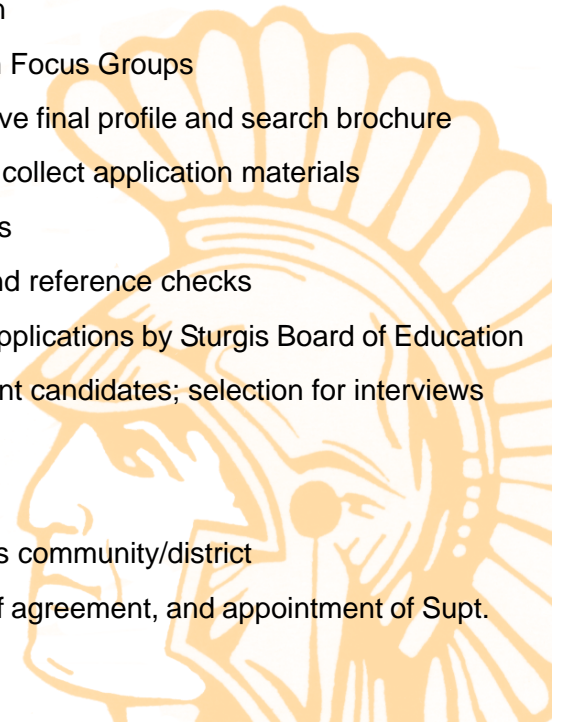
While not everyone will have an opportunity to participate in these sessions, a representative cross section of the community will take part. To get as much input as possible into this decision, we are hosting a special meeting for those who may not be involved in that formal process. Craig Misner, MLI Consultant, will hold that meeting on Wednesday, December 1, 2010, beginning at 6:00 p.m. The meeting will be held in the Sturgis Middle School Large Group Instruction Room (LGI) located at 1400 E. Lafayette St.

## Focus Groups

- Parents... and... Community Members at Large...
- Students... Recent Alumnus
- Public Officials
- Community Organization Representatives (Service Clubs, Clergy, Non-governmental Agencies)
- Business Community
- Faculty and Staff
  - Teachers... Instructional Support Staff
  - Administrators... Administrative Support Staff
  - Directors and Supervisors... Operations Support Staff

## Search Schedule

October 19, 2010	Board Planning Session
November 29- December 2, 2010	Profile Work. Meet with Focus Groups
December 14, 2010	Board meeting to approve final profile and search brochure
January 7 – February 18, 2011	Recruit candidates and collect application materials
February 18, 2011	Deadline for applications
February 18-25, 2011	Candidate screening and reference checks
February 22-25, 2011	Confidential review of applications by Sturgis Board of Education
February 28, 2011	Board meeting to present candidates; selection for interviews
March 7, 8, 9, 10, 2011	Initial Interviews
March 14, 15, 16, 2011	Second Interviews
Week of March 21, 2011	Visits to final candidates community/district
Week of March 28, 2011	Selection, negotiation of agreement, and appointment of Supt.
July 1, 2011	Proposed Start Date



**Conceive It...Believe It...Achieve It...At Sturgis Public Schools**