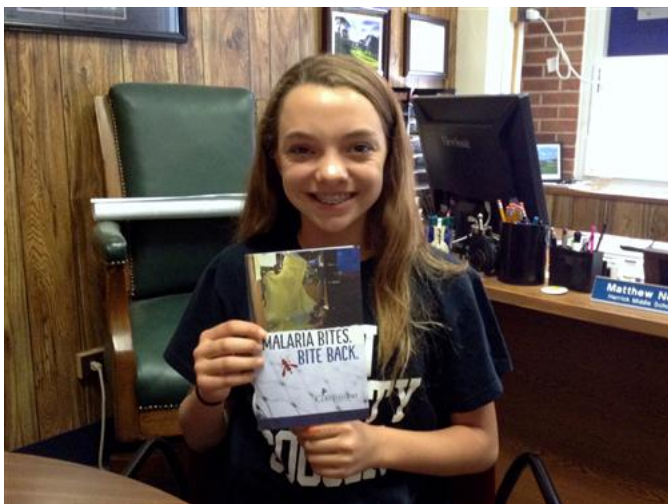


## 58 Doing Good: 2014-2015 Archives

### Herrick eighth grader inspires school to "bite back" to fight malaria

Published: June 11, 2015



Mia Marconi's perspective on life changed dramatically last March. The Herrick eighth grader (and now, recent graduate) volunteered to take a mission trip to Port au Prince, Haiti with the non-profit Compassion International. She witnessed first-hand the impoverished conditions in which many Haitians live. Many lack adequate shelter at night, making them at risk for malaria-infected bug bites.

When she returned home, she inspired her entire school to make donations to Compassion International's Bite Back campaign, which funds mosquito bed

nets and malaria treatment for Haitians. Thanks to her efforts, **the Herrick community raised \$2,000 for Bite Back!**

Read more about her amazing story at <http://dg58.org//site/Default.aspx?PageID=10307>.

### Hillcrest's "Funding for Fun" donates \$8,000 for inclusive playground project

Published: June 10, 2015



The Hillcrest community celebrated a major victory this spring: With help from their friends and neighbors, they donated more than \$15,000 to build a well in South Sudan, an area that lacks good access to clean water.

But they didn't stop there. Instead, Hillcrest's Student Council announced its annual spring fundraiser, called "Funding for Fun." Together, they worked to raise money for Hillcrest's future all-inclusive playground.

Thanks to their generosity, Hillcrest raised \$8,000 toward the inclusive playground

Once built, the Hillcrest all-inclusive playground would be the first of its kind in DuPage County. The playground would be accessible and fun for all children -- those with and without

disabilities. Peg Chaidez, a Hillcrest parent, is leading a crowdfunding effort to make the Hillcrest all-inclusive playground a reality. She started a non-profit called The Dream Build Play Experience to coordinate the effort. All donations are tax-deductible.

The general public may donate to "Funding for Fun" as well. Donate online at [www.dbpexperience.com/donate](http://www.dbpexperience.com/donate).

## **Kingsley raises more than \$3,900 for juvenile diabetes research**

Published: June 8, 2015

The Kingsley Student Council recently hosted a charity walk that raised more than \$3,900 to support the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.

"The entire school walked around the building together the number of times based on your grade level," said Ashley Bidlencik, Kingsley's Student Council moderator. "For example, fifth graders made five laps and second graders walked around two times."



Thank you for your generosity, Kingsley!

## **Lester Girl Scouts make blankets and pillows for hospitalized children**



*Idea came from one girl's personal experience*

Published: June 3, 2015

Lester's third grade Brownie Girl Scouts recently made more than 17 Cuddle Comfort blankets and pillows for hospitalized children at Good Samaritan Hospital in Downers Grove. The project's idea originated from one of the Girl Scout's personal experience: she recently had a surgery and received a similar cozy blanket afterward, which brought her much comfort. To give back, she asked the troop to

make blankets for their service project.

The troop used proceeds from their cookie sale to purchase the fleece and devoted a troop meeting to making the blankets and pillows.

The girls had a great time making the blankets and hope they provide comfort to a hospitalized child!

Thank you, Troop Leader Kelly Dahle for providing the photo and information!

## **District 58 donates more than \$55,000 for American Heart Association**

*American Heart Association's Jump Rope for Heart program teaches kids heart health*

Published: May 27, 2015

District 58 enjoys a 30-year partnership with the American Heart Association's Jump Rope for Heart program, and for good reason! The program offers District 58 a win-win situation: throughout the winter and spring, it educates students about heart health, and it provides families an easy opportunity to donate to a great cause.

"I'm so thankful for our partnership with District 58," said **Mary Lou Torrison**, youth market director for the American Heart Association. "The PE teachers go above and beyond to teach their kids and families about the importance of heart health and to raise lifesaving funds for the AHA."



To kick off the program, the American Heart Association shared Jump Rope for Heart information with parents, inviting them to donate and encouraging them to continue the heart health lessons at home.

In response, District 58 schools **donated more than \$55,000** for the American Heart Association's Jump Rope for Heart program!

"We are incredibly grateful for District 58's continued support!" Torrison said.

The Jump Rope for Heart program also provided several District 58 schools with heart healthy learning materials - posters, suggested PE activities and more. This year, the program focused on "Five For Life," a curriculum that promotes five key lessons of heart health: reduce sodium intake, add more exercise, cut sugary drinks, never smoke, and know which foods you should eat. They even provided Common Core-aligned lesson plans that classroom teachers could use to



complement lessons learned in PE class.

PE teachers hosted their own fun family-friendly Jump Rope for Heart-themed events. For example, Pierce Downer/Belle Aire PE Teacher **Mary French** invited families to jump rope with their children.

"It's such a sight to see: children jumping rope with their parents, aunts, uncles, grandparents, even dogs!" French said. "They all had a wonderful time supporting a great cause."

Learn more about Jump Rope for Heart and heart health at [www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org).

## Hillcrest raises more than \$15,000 to build well in South Sudan

Published: May 27, 2015



Earlier this year, Hillcrest fifth graders set a lofty classroom goal: to raise \$15,000 to build a well in South Sudan, an area that lacks access to clean water.

In an interview last March, Hillcrest fifth grade teacher **John Smoke** said, "We aren't sure if we'll make it, but we'll try our best. If anything, this fundraiser will teach students the intrinsic feeling of giving."

The Hillcrest community rallied together, gathering support from other District 58 families and the Downers Grove community/local businesses. Hillcrest fifth graders even led an evening community assembly explaining the significance of their fundraiser. Assembly guests included **Superintendent Dr. Kari Cremascoli, Board President Sallie Lupescu** and **Mayor Martin Tully**.

By the end of April, they amazingly reached their goal – and then some – raising nearly \$16,000 for the nonprofit organization Water for South Sudan. The organization recently shared that the Hillcrest School Well will be built during South Sudan's next drilling season, which begins in December. Once the well's construction is complete, Water for South Sudan will share photos of the wonderful end results!

*The photo pictured above depicts a cardboard-box well that Hillcrest fifth graders built to measure progress toward their goals (each brick signifies a fundraising milestone).*



## Henry Puffer holds walks/run, donates \$1,200 for St. Baldrick's

Published: May 27, 2015

The Henry Puffer Student Council led a walk/run fundraiser on May 22 to

support the St. Baldrick Foundation. Thanks to their school community's generosity, they raised more than \$1,200 to support childhood cancer research!

For a small donation, participants - students, parents and staff - could run laps around Henry Puffer (it's a farther distance than you might think!). Donations of \$50 or more gave participants the opportunity to shave their head or dye their hair green.

*Photo provided by Henry Puffer teacher and Student Council moderator **Katie Hurckes**.*

## **Belle Aire raises \$225.66 to support Nepal relief**

Published: May 19, 2015

Belle Aire students and staff raised \$225.66 for the nonprofit Watts of Love. Student Council sponsored a Hat Day on May 8. Students wore their favorite hat and donated \$1. Teachers contributed \$5 to wear jeans for the week.

Mr. Kuster, from Watts of Love, will travel to devastated Nepal this month to distribute life-changing solar lanterns and headlamps. The people of Nepal do not have electricity in their huts. The solar lanterns and headlamps will improve their quality of life by extending their day for work and education.



Pictured in the photo to the right: Belle Aire Student Council Executive Board: Adam, Arden, Ella and Emily, pictured with Kevin Kuster from Watts of Love.

*- Contributed by Joan Mommsen, Belle Aire LRC Director and Student Council moderator*

## **Eight schools collaborate to support Cupcake Classic 5K**



Published in May 7, 2015 issue of Communicate 58

Eight District 58 schools have collaborated to raise awareness about rare diseases! The schools are encouraging families to participate in the Noah's Hope Cupcake Classic 5K, a race that donates proceeds to Batten Disease research. The race is May 17 and starts at McCollum Park in Downers Grove.

Participating schools include the Whittier and Kingsley student councils, as well as the Belle Aire, El Sierra, Henry

Puffer, Pierce Downer, Herrick and O'Neill PTAs. Even if you do not attend these schools, you may still support this cause!

The race celebrates the birthdays of Noah and Laine, two Downers Grove children with Batten Disease. Every participant will receive a delicious birthday cupcake at the race's conclusion. The event includes a 5K race and a Kids 1-Mile Run.

Noah's Hope was developed by Noah and Laine's family to raise money to find treatments and a cure for Batten Disease, a terminal disease in which there currently is not a cure. Learn more about Batten Disease at <http://bdsra.org/>.

Learn more about the Cupcake Classic at <http://www.noahshope.com/cupcake/index.htm>.

## Support the Puffer Community Art Fair

*Buy a handmade key chain, bid on a mural May 7*

Published: May 5, 2015



The Henry Puffer Student Council will host its second annual Community Art Fair on Thursday, May 7 from 6:30-8 p.m., during the school's open house. All may attend!

Back by popular demand, this art fair will sell student-designed wooden key chains for \$2. These handy key chains are rumored to work well as iPad case tags, as well. About 300-400 key chains will be for sale.

In addition, Puffer students designed three spectacular murals (4'x4') that represent peace, love and happiness.

"They wanted to design murals that fit in with the school's motto for the year, 'Choose Kind,'" said **Katie Hurckes**, Student Council moderator and teacher.

The murals are truly one of a kind -- they were designed using paint and color-coordinated plastic lids (milk jug lids, Play-Doh lids, orange juice lids, etc.). Henry Puffer





will host a silent auction for the murals from 6-7 p.m. during the Art Fair.

Can't attend the fair, but want to participate in the auction? Email your bid to [khurckes@dg58.org](mailto:khurckes@dg58.org).

All art fair profits will be split between the American Red Cross and the Global Campaign for Education.

"The students strategically selected their charities," Hurckes said. "They said they knew tornadoes frequently occur in the springtime, and they always notice the Red Cross helping out after tornado disasters, so the Red Cross made sense. They also wanted to help children across the world have access to education, so they also chose the Global Campaign for Education."



## Fairmount raises more than \$5,400 for Charlie's Gift autism center

Published: April 29, 2015



Fairmount School participated in the Walk the Walk for Autism in Hinsdale on Sunday, April 26. The Fairmount Student Council supported and organized the school's participation in the event. Fairmount students, families and staff members walked together as a team to raise funds and awareness for those in local communities dealing with

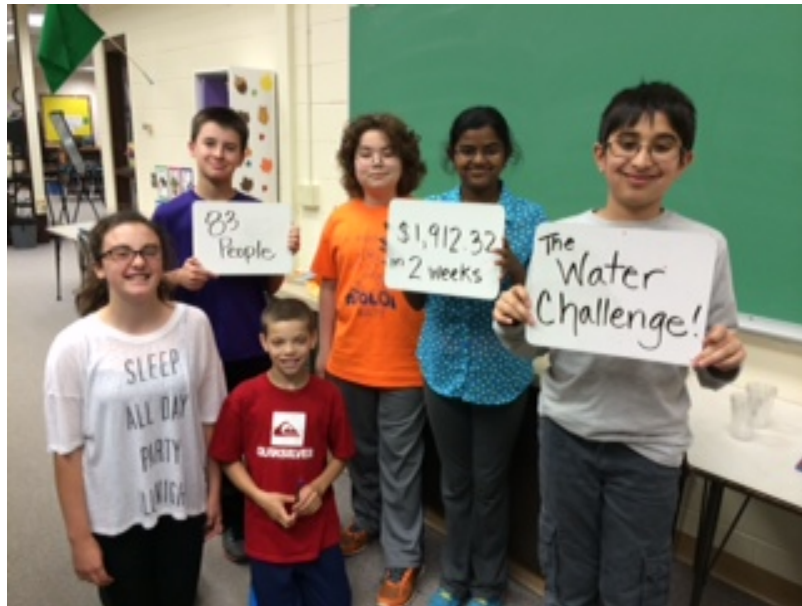
autism. As a school, Fairmount raised more than \$5,400 and had over 100 participants who "walked the walk" to show their support for the "Charlie's Gift" Center for Autism and Related Disorders, which is located in Downers Grove. April is Autism Awareness Month.

## **Belle Aire donation will provide 83 people with clean water for life!**

Published: April 29, 2015

Belle Aire sixth graders recently hosted a Water Challenge to raise money to help bring more clean drinking water to South Sudan. The sixth graders challenged the District 58 community to drink nothing but water from April 13-24 and donate any money saved to the non-profit, Water for South Sudan.

Belle Aire is proud to announce that they raised **\$1,913** during their Water Challenge fundraiser! According to "Water for South Sudan," this money will provide clean and safe drinking water for about 83 people for life!



"The kids are absolutely thrilled with their efforts," said Tricia Miller, Belle Aire sixth grade teacher and fundraiser coordinator. "We continually talk about a small group of students being able to make a difference, and they finally see that this is possible!"

Miller added that her students are incredibly grateful for the support of the Belle Aire and District 58 communities during this endeavor.



## **Hearts abound at Whittier**

Published: April 2015

Last week, Whittier students and staff joined together in a Whittier Student



Council led effort, Whittier Cares-Hearts for Tornado Relief, to collect money for the victims of the April 9 tornadoes in Illinois.

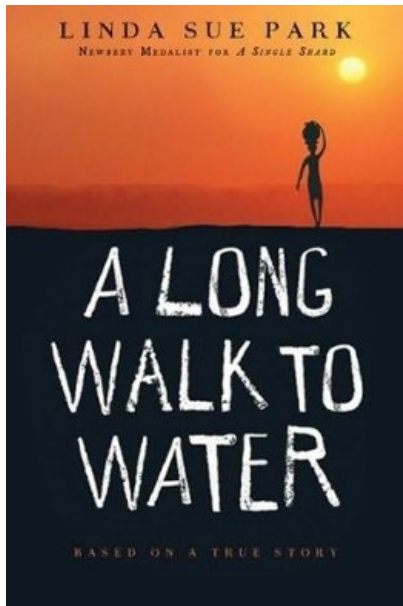
Students and staff decorated paper hearts and then returned them to the Whittier Student Council along with donations for the tornado relief effort. **In just two days, over \$330 was collected and donated to the McCormick Foundation 2015 Illinois Tornado Relief Effort Campaign! With their matching funds, Whittier's donation resulted in a \$495 gift for those in need!** As an added bonus, the entryway to Whittier School is now decorated in a sea of colorful hearts, demonstrating the caring spirit of our Whittier community!

*Contributed by: Student Council Moderator/Sixth Grade Teacher Deb Krygeris*

## **Book inspires Hillcrest to help bring fresh water to South Sudan You can donate to the Hillcrest Well Fund, too!**

Published March 2015

What are you doing **Thursday, April 9**? Please consider visiting Hillcrest School at 7 p.m. for a very special assembly. Fifth graders will lead a presentation on South Sudan's urgent need for fresh water and their goal to build a well to provide clean water to Sudanese citizens.



Last fall, Hillcrest fifth grade teacher John Smoke read "A Long Walk To Water" with his students. It's a true story about a Sudanese Lost Boy who survived in a refugee camp without fresh water for 10 years. After he moved to America, he started a non-profit called "Water for South Sudan."

"It really hit a nerve with my students," Smoke says. "They wanted to help."

After brainstorming ideas, Smoke's class launched the Hillcrest Well Fund. They're aiming to raise \$15,000 to build a well in South Sudan.

Right away, Smoke's students displayed a giving spirit. One student donated the \$10 she earned shoveling driveways; another student fundraised for the Well Fund while caroling. Another student convinced his extended family to donate to the well fund in lieu of Christmas presents this past year.

"This project is giving the students an intrinsic feeling of giving," Smoke says. "They are freely giving without any expectation in return. It's a good skill to learn at this age." Learn more at <http://www.dg58.org/Page/9984>.

## **District 58 students raise money, shave heads for cancer research**

Published: March 2015

Several District 58 students and staff from Herrick, Whittier, O'Neill and Henry Puffer schools generously

raised money and/or shaved their heads for St. Baldrick's this month. The St. Baldrick's Foundation funds research for cures for childhood cancers. Herrick students Donald Peters and Emma Nykiel and Whittier student Ethan Peters raised more than \$6,000 and shaved their heads on March 6 at a St. Baldrick's event in River Grove. This is the third year Emma has participated, and the sixth year for brothers Donald and Ethan.



*Herrick students Donald Peters and Emma Nykiel, and Whittier student Ethan Peters, shaved their heads and raised more than \$6,000 for childhood cancer research.*



*Henry Puffer student Robert Huth, before shaving his head*

Meanwhile, Robert Huth, a 9-year-old Henry Puffer student, shaved his head March 10 for children's cancer research. He also donated 18 months of hair growth to an organization that specializes in wigs for cancer patients.

"Robert is a very thoughtful boy who wants to be a scientist," says his mom, Nancy Huth. "Several years ago he told his pediatrician that he wanted to help cure cancer someday. Knowing that everyone wants cancer cured as soon as possible, Rob's decided to help the only way he could for a nine year old -St Baldricks and donating his hair."

O'Neill alumna Sarah Ansah, class of '14, shaved her head to support St. Baldrick's and childhood cancer cure research. To help Sarah's mission, O'Neill students and staff raised \$2,000 for St. Baldricks! Thank you all for your generosity.

Thank you, District 58 students, for your incredible generosity!

**Kingsley and Lester each raise \$700 for Global Genes Project;  
Pierce Downer staff raise \$195 for National Organization for Rare Disorders**

Published: March 2015



Kingsley, Lester and Pierce Downer schools recently held fundraisers to raise awareness and money for rare disease research.

The Kingsley Student Council hosted a "Dance Off Disease Day."

"The Kingsley Student Council raised over \$700 for the Global Genes Fund in support of SASSED and Rare Disease Day," said Deanne Jacobs, sixth grade teacher at Kingsley.

During the week of Feb. 23-26, Lester School Student Council

sponsored a Penny Harvest to raise money for the Global Genes Project, one of the leading rare and genetic disease patient advocacy organizations in the world. Lester's goal was to raise awareness and money for those living with rare diseases, including three students in District 58. On Feb. 26, all students and staff were given denim ribbons to wear and encouraged to wear their favorite pair of jeans to school to show support for World Rare Disease Day. In addition, teachers could pay a dollar per day to wear jeans. Our school raised nearly \$700 for this great cause!

In addition, Pierce Downer staff recognized Rare Disease Day by donating \$10 to wear jeans to school. Pierce Downer staff raised \$195 to donate to the National Organization for Rare Disorders.

## Lester, El Sierra and Belle Aire collect non-perishable food during "Souper Bowl"



Feb. 2, 2015

Last week, the Lester, El Sierra and Belle Aire student councils sponsored "Souper Bowl" activities, during which students and staff collected cans and boxes of food. Students "voted" for which team they thought would win the Super Bowl by putting their food in boxes labeled Seahawks or Patriots.

"Lester collected over 400 food items that we donated to the People's Resource Center of DuPage. The Seahawks were voted for by a 3 to 1 margin!" said Marina Kasicki, Lester teacher and student council sponsor.



"We want to thank everyone who donated soup cans for our Student Council Souper Bowl this week," added El Sierra Principal Jason Lynde. "The final results are in... Seahawks 170 and the Patriots 60. In all we are able to donate 130 cans of soup to a local food pantry."

"Belle Aire got into the spirit of the Super Bowl last week," said Joan Mommsen, Belle Aire teacher and Student Council sponsor. "Students were asked to bring in non-perishable items for the FISH food pantry in Downers Grove and place them in a Patriots or a Sea Hawks themed box to show which team they were supporting. The Patriots might be the victors in the world of football, but the Sea Hawks won 147 food items to the Patriot's 40 items at Belle Aire."

## Fairmount girl scouts hold bake sale for charity

December 2014



Fairmount's girl scouts sold holiday baked treats at the school's Santa's Secret Shop in December, and donated all money raised to charity. Nice job, girls!

## El Sierra gets in the spirit of giving!

December 2014

El Sierra hosted many charitable activities this holiday season! Their philanthropies were hosted by staff, parents, students and administrators - nearly everyone got involved!



For example, both El Sierra staff and families started an Adopt-a-Family program, in which they purchased gifts for anonymous El Sierra families in need. Staff took it one step farther and started an employee Giving Tree. El Sierra teachers and staff volunteered to donate individual items, such as clothing or gift cards, for anonymous families in need.

El Sierra staff put up a mitten tree and invited anyone to place winterwear - mittens, hats, scarves, etc - on the tree

limbs. All items were donated to area families in need of warm clothing. To complement the mitten tree, El Sierra staff hosted a coat drive. They received many coats from a generous Hillcrest parent!

El Sierra Student Council members hand cut and knotted blankets for the homeless. Students and staff also hosted a food drive for the local pantry.

For fun and fun-draising, El Sierra staff hosted a Jingle Jeans activity. If they donated money, staff could wear jeans to school during the month of December. They raised \$356 through this endeavor, which El Sierra will use to purchase healthy fruit snacks for students.



Thank you for your incredible generosity, El Sierra community!

## Henry Puffer students give to their classroom mitten trees

December 2014

Deck the halls with boughs of holly! Literally, at Henry Puffer School. Several teachers built Christmas trees outside their classrooms, and invited students and families to donate winter accessories on the tree! Here, some of Mrs. Hurckes' second graders pose beside the tree.

All mittens and winter clothing were donated to area families in need.



## Pierce Downer donates 3,022 books, hosts holiday auction

December 2014



Pierce Downer held a competition to see which class could donate the most books to the Bernie Book Bank. Together, they donated 3,022 books, beating their goal of 2,000 books!! Mrs. Breault's third grade class won the competition, donating 633



books. Nice work, Pierce Downer!

Isn't it great when you have a WIN-WIN-WIN situation? That's exactly what happened at Pierce Downer's fifth grade charity auction Friday, Dec. 19!

Students brought in gently used items they no longer use (it's a great way to declutter!). During the auction, they bid on items brought in by other students. These items make great inexpensive gifts for family and friends! All the money raised was donated to a charity chosen by each fifth grade class.



"It has been a fantastic, fun-filled activity that we have held for over 10 years," said fifth grade teacher Sue Murphy. "The kids love it and everyone leaves with arms full of items and smiles on their faces."

## Highland Student Council organizes biggest Giving Tree ever

Dec. 19, 2014



According to Highland Principal Dr. Judy Kmak, this year's Giving Tree was the fullest one ever, with piles and piles of gifts surrounding it, and layers of winter weather accessories decorating it. Highland's Student Council, led by teachers Cheryl Varys and Jen Dunlap, coordinated the Giving Tree.

"The Giving Tree at Highland has been a tradition for the last 25 years that I have been here maybe even longer," Varys said. "Students remember it from year to year. Many staff members ask students to donate to the giving tree instead of giving gifts to them at Christmas."

This year, Dr. Kmak kept some donations to help Highland families in need; the rest of the donations were packed and sent to FISH and the Humanitarian Service Project.

Thanks for your generosity, Highland!

## After studying world hunger, Belle Aire students start food drive

Dec. 18, 2014



*"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed it's the only thing that ever has." -- Margaret Mead*

This powerful quote has rung especially true for Belle Aire third grade teacher Tara Fulton this holiday season. After teaching her students about world hunger, third and fourth graders decided they wanted to help fight hunger on a local level. With the help of Mrs. Fulton and other teachers, they organized a food drive. Thanks to their efforts, they donated 1,118 food items, weighing more than

1,000 pounds!

"Our students were inspired by Robby Novak, aka 'Kid President,' to do something 'to make the world awesome.' We brainstormed ideas on how we can give back to others and found that we would like to help feed the hungry," Fulton said.

Large vans from three local organizations - FISH Food Pantry, Loaves and Fishes and West Suburban Community Pantry - arrived at Belle Aire on Thursday, Dec. 18, and students and teachers made several trips to fill the vans up.

The food drive received generous support from Caputo's, Trader Joe's, Shop & Save, Ultra, Target, Kramer's, Whole Foods, and the Lemon Tree.



## Giving back: Students buy books for Herrick's classroom libraries

Dec. 17, 2014





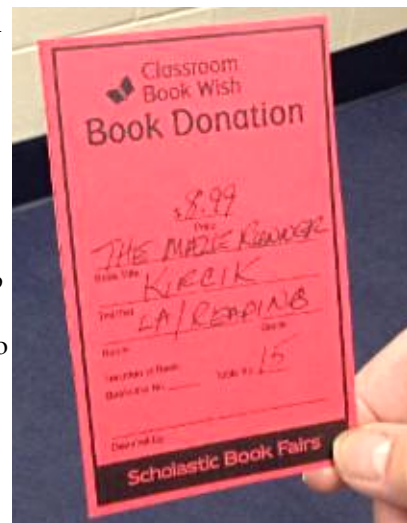
*Herrick eighth grader Ben Kulat used his own money to purchase books for his teachers' classroom libraries and the LRC.*

This year's Herrick Holiday Book Fair featured a festive Teacher Wish List display board. Teachers wrote which books they desired for their classroom libraries on slips of paper. Visitors - mostly parents or grandparents visiting for VIP Day - could take a slip of paper and purchase the book right there at the fair.

Denise Rytych, Herrick library resource center, quickly noticed an unexpected trend. In addition to the grown ups, some students were purchasing books as well.

"I was delighted to see students choosing to spend their own money on books that will benefit their entire classroom!" Rytych said.

For example, eighth grader Ben Kulat used money he saved up to purchase books for his teachers - at least seven of them! - plus the library resource center. He decided to buy the books to show his appreciation for his fantastic teachers and in hopes it might inspire more students to read.





"I felt like I needed to give back to my teachers," Ben said. "I think having more books in the classroom is valuable. Some kids love to read, but others need to have more reasons to read. I tried to pick books that I think might attract the attention of a lot of kids, including those who might not read a lot."

The teachers who received books from Ben and other students were very thankful for the kind gesture.

"I appreciated it so much," said Nicole Trezzo, Herrick science teacher. "Anytime students give me something, whether it's a book, cookies or a card, it means a lot. It meant even more knowing that these students used their own money to buy the books for me. Rather than buying something for themselves, they chose to spend it on others."

## **Puffer's Smooch the Pooch raises \$475**

Dec. 15, 2014



Late last month, Henry Puffer's Student Council hosted a unique fundraiser that garnered a lot of giggles – and donations! Their Smooch the Pooch fundraiser gave students and teachers the opportunity to kiss a cute little dog, in exchange for a donation.

The fundraiser netted \$475, which Henry Puffer used to purchase turkey gift cards for their Thanksgiving baskets. The baskets were given to families in need.

## **Hillcrest parent donates 80 coats to students in need, Green Team collects 10 bags of coats and boots**

Dec. 4, 2014

A Hillcrest parent, through his affiliation with the Knights of Columbus, recently donated 80 NEW winter coats to District 58. Thanks to his generosity, all of those coats have been placed with students in need in five of our elementary schools.

In addition, Hillcrest's Green Team hosted a coat and boot drive last week. They successfully filled 10 LARGE bags to help families. Nice job, Hillcrest!

## **Belle Aire fundraiser harvests \$440 in change**

Dec. 2, 2014

Belle Aire students learned how little things can add up during their annual Penny Harvest, Nov. 17-21. Each day, student council members wheeled the harvest wagon to each classroom and collected students' spare change. By the end of the week, they tallied \$439.10 in change!

The money raised will be donated to local families in need and charitable organizations. The Penny Harvest is coordinated by the student council and its teacher co-chairs, Betsy Matson and Joan Mommsen.



"It has become an annual tradition," Mommsen said. "The kids really enjoy it and help the needy in the process of having fun."

*\*Pictured in the photo: student council members Adam Sitabkhan, Ella Campbell, Emily Greifhahn and Arden Zajack.*

## **Stuck on giving: Lester raises \$1,023 to help families this Thanksgiving**

Nov. 25, 2014



Lester raised \$1,023 to help local families in need have a truly Happy Thanksgiving, via their "Stuck on Giving" fundraiser. Last week during lunch, students could "buy" pieces of duct tape for \$1 each. Then, they duct taped PE teacher Mr. Donnelly to the wall!!

"We're making Thanksgiving baskets for needy families. We bring in the canned items, and we'll use the fundraiser money for gift cards for turkeys," explained Clare Rhodes, Lester student and Student Council treasurer.

Lester teacher Marina Kasicki says that \$1,023 was far more than they expected to raise.

"We have more than enough money to provide turkey gift cards to families, so we will use the leftover funding to help out at Christmas!"

These kids are really "stuck on giving!" Thanks for your generosity!



## Bloom's Angels family fundraiser a huge success

Nov. 25, 2014



Last Saturday night, families packed the Downers Grove North High School gym in support of Herrick's Bloom's Angels FUNdraiser. Herrick Middle School hosted a cross-town boys' basketball game against Jefferson Junior High to raise money to help their students and families in need.

Bloom's Angels successfully raised \$8,500 from the 750 people who jammed the bleachers to enjoy two great basketball games! The crowd also enjoyed rockin' performances by the Herrick Middle School and North High School jazz band. The Herrick choir did a beautiful job singing the National Anthem, and the cheerleaders did a great job performing at both half times.

"What an exciting night for our organization!" said Gail Pistello, co-founder of Bloom's Angels. "It does my heart good to see so many students step up and participate in one way or another to make this night great!"

A special thank you goes out to all the parents, teachers, PTA members and students who supported this event.





## Whittier gets crazy for a good cause!

Nov. 25, 2014

Whittier students got a little crazy earlier this month! The Student Council hosted a Hat and Crazy Hair Day on Nov. 14. Students paid \$1 to join the fun. They raised \$189.04 for the Heavenly Hats Foundation, a non-profit started by a Wisconsin boy to provide new hats to patients in hospitals and clinics who lose their hair due to chemotherapy or an illness. Nice job, Whittier!



## Lester gives a 'hand' to our veterans

Nov. 17, 2014

The Lester student community gave a hand to our servicemen this Veterans Day – literally. Lester students wrote messages and drew pictures on red and white paper “hands.” The messages thanked our veterans, shared why they’re proud to be an American, and described what



freedom meant to them.

"The school-wide activity was a great opportunity to have a discussion about the importance of Veterans Day and what veterans do and have done for us," said sixth grade teacher Marina Kasicki.

The activity also allowed teachers and students to discuss the specific connection that the building has with Veterans Day. Lester School was erected in 1955, in memory of all Downers Grove servicemen who gave their lives for their country in World War II. It is named in recognition of Frederick F. Lester, winner of the Congressional Medal of Honor.

First grade student Owen Rausch used the activity to "thank our veterans for helping keep the United States safe." Sixth grader Ben Hallberg used the activity as a chance to "thank our veterans for protecting our country and loved ones."

As each class completed the activity in their respective rooms, the hands were returned to the main office, where they were then arranged to create the final product, an American Flag.

"To see the flag and to know that our students participated in and understood the purpose for its creation, makes our school community proud," said Assistant Principal Adam Ubben.

The finished American Flag will be on display for the parent community to see during the month of November.

### **Third year in a row! Puffer fifth-grader Gabriella Frank recognized for charity**

Nov. 3, 2014:

The Kohls' Kids Who Care program selected Gabriella Frank, a fifth grade Puffer student, as the local winner of its Kids Who Care scholarship contest. This is the third consecutive year Gabriella received this honor.

Gabriella is known for her empathy and dedication to service. In first grade, she started a program that collects and donates books and school supplies to low-income schools in the Caribbean.

"This summer, she donated her 750th book to the Sandals Foundation for the local low-income early childhood schools," said Heather Frank, Gabriella's mother. "She has donated over 1,000 miscellaneous school supplies, consisting of pens, pencils, markers, crayons and folders."

To show appreciation, Jamaica's Minister of Education wrote a thank you letter to Gabriella, and the Jamaican Observer newspaper once featured Gabriella's project on the front page.



Gabriella asks friends and family members to donate gently used paperback books. Her home has a holding area for books and supplies.

"I shop school supply sales in the summer with my mom," Gabriella said. "I use my own money to buy supplies."

A family vacation to Jamaica inspired Gabriella to start her charitable project.

"I first learned about the need for books and supplies in Jamaica when I visited a preschool during a family trip. The students had to share pencils, and the classrooms didn't have much," she said.

Gabriella has since visited Jamaica three times and Turks & Caicos three times, each trip arriving in a vehicle packed with books and school supplies to donate.

"I am motivated to do charity projects because I like helping people," Gabriella said. "I think they are important because people in need, need things to help survive and to learn skills."

This past summer, Gabriella was also named a top 10 national finalist in the Auntie Anne's Mini Acts Mighty Impact contest.

In addition to the school supply and book program, Gabriella is active in several local charity projects. Each month, she tries to donate either 100 items or \$100 worth of items to local organizations, including the West Suburban Humane Society, Sharing Connections and a local food pantry.

In her free time, Gabriella enjoys trampolining/tumbling, playing the violin and traveling with family.

Want to donate books or supplies to Gabriella's charity project? Email Megan Hewitt, community relations coordinator, at [mhewitt@dg58.org](mailto:mhewitt@dg58.org) to get connected.