From Student Reporter Ali Stauffer

For my senior year, I signed up to take Mass Media class, which I honestly thought would be an easy English credit. It was not an easy English credit. This class is full of stressful deadlines, and at times I just wanted to scream. There were so many tasks put on my plate sometimes that I really didn’t think I could pass the class.

After the first couple newsletters, I figured some things out, I stopped feeling so stressed, and the class began to lighten up. Soon this class became my favorite class, and my classmates became my friends.

Who knew this would be exactly what I needed my senior year. I got to leave campus and get treated like the young adult I’ve become. The class slowly turned into a job, and we were now the staff of the Pinto Connection.

This class also helped end my senior year wonderfully. I got to go to the elementary and middle school for reporting duties. It was a joy to walk the halls where it all began for me. I reminisced on memories. I remember when friendships started and old friendships ended. Endings are always bittersweet.

So I want to end this saying thank you! Thank you Mrs. Heimericks for putting in all the hours of editing and piecing the layout together. Also thank you for always reminding me of all the things I could be doing, but always trusted that I would get the job done...even though I always cut it close.

Finally, thank you to the readers for giving us a responsive viewing audience. It has been an honor.

This newsletter is a product of the CHS Print Media class taught by Mrs. Christy Heimericks.

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Middle School Students Attend UCM Literature Festival
by Amada Garcia

On Tuesday, March 22, students from around Missouri gathered at the University of Central Missouri (UCM) in Warrensburg for the annual Literature Festival. California Middle School sent 60 students and 6 teachers.

Each grade level listened to five authors. The authors, some of which were well-known, either gave presentations or signed autographs and talked with the students.

“Everyone loves engaging with these authors and become interested in books and different genres. The Literature Festival helps them get to know authors they love and fall in love with authors they didn’t know before.”

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Famous Missourians Appear at CES

As part of their Famous Missourians unit, fourth graders created portraits of their subject during art class, taught by Dana Lee. Shown are Courtney Potter with Molly Brown, Morgan Newkirk with Janet Kavandi, Evy McGill with Mary Margaret McBride, and Emmary Williams with Susan Elizabeth Blow. These pictures will be part of the public presentation on Thursday, May 12 from 12:30-2:30.

For many years, fourth graders throughout Missouri have brought life some of our state’s most renowned residents. This month, fourth graders at California Elementary are digging deep into the life of a famous Missourian of their choice.

With the help of the elementary specials and classroom teachers, the students are sharpening their informational writing and research skills. Each young scholar is utilizing the Big 6 Research process.

“This writing structure allows the students to identify details through various resources, formulate research goals, and accumulate relevant and credible information,” said fourth grade teacher Kelli Williams.

Throughout the six research stages, students utilize biographical resources from our district and MRRL library, along with Kidrex.org, a safe online search engine. Students will fulfill the following learning criteria: state mapping, biography investigation, written analyses, script writing, and portrait creation.

On Thursday, May 12, from 12:30 to 2:30, the public will have the opportunity to enjoy meeting a small sampling of famous Missourians, as portrayed by our fourth grade students, at our annual Famous Missourians Museum.

Attendees can visit student stations to view individual projects while each delivers their script, in hopes of receiving a vote to earn a permanent star in the Missouri Walk of Fame hallway.

Buddy Bench Saves the Day

by Bailey Wehmeir

At the elementary school, there is a special bench called “The Buddy Bench” that benefits all students pre-k through fifth.

The buddy bench has two main purposes; it fosters healthy relationships for children and it gives kids a way to ask a friend to play with them without them having to “ask” at all. A student sits on the buddy bench when they need someone to play with. It is an opportunity to make new friends and feel connected.

Lisa Milligan, fifth grade teacher, brought up the idea of the bench after reading an article about a school that put a buddy bench on their playground. Tawnya Clause, counselor for the lower elementary, coordinated all the working parts to bring the project to CES.

Clause and fellow counselor Christiane Goans met with Principal Daniel Williams to express their interest in having a “Buddy Bench” on the elementary school playground.

“He was supportive and gave us the “green light” to begin the buddy bench project. We were so excited,” said Clause.

Alicia Whitson donated “Bo’s Buddy Bench” in her father’s memory. Bo Abbott worked for CES and passed away in the spring of 2014. He is dearly missed by all that knew him. The sign that hangs above the bench was donated by the PTO.

The buddy bench is located on the elementary school playground underneath the covered picnic area.

Clause said, “All teachers and students encourage its use. I know one of the first questions I ask when a child reports to me that they do not have friends at school is ‘Did you try out the buddy bench today?’”

Field Trips are End of Year Highlight

by Brice Miller

California Elementary takes many trips towards the end of the school year. These trips have educational intention by tying in with the unit the classes are covering.

If the teachers want to take a field trip, first they get approval from administration. Distance and cost are two major considerations. Most of the time they just go on the same field trips every year.

Principal Daniel Williams said, “the school sends permission slips home with the child a month before the trip, and if they have not brought it back within two weeks before the trip, I or the classroom teachers call the parents to help remind them to send it with their child. If there is little time left before the trip with no signed slip, I will contact parents for verbal permission for the student to attend.”

Typically, the school has to pay an average of $400-$500 for the bus to cover fuel and driver costs per trip. The students have to pay a little something, but they try to keep it in the $8 range per student.

The teachers like parents to help chaperone field trips, but some venues limit how many people may attend.

“An example is when we go to the Capitol. We are very limited in how many people we are able to bring,” said Williams.

Typically students bring their own lunch, and if they are not able to bring their own lunch or forgot theirs at home, the school will provide one for the kids. They usually eat at a park close to the field trip location. The fifth grade had a field trip recently and ate at the Governor’s Garden since their field trip was close.

The teachers always have emergency contacts and medkits and provide all required accommodations for anyone with special needs such as a wheelchair.

Field trips have detailed scheduling to assure a prompt return because the busses are then used for evening bus routes.
Friends of Rachel Still Active at CMS

by Erica Schmireh

April 20, 1999, at Columbine High School, two students, armed with guns, shot and killed several students and teachers, including a girl named Rachel.

Rachel’s family started an organization with emphasis on solving social problems, like bullying. They called it Rachel’s Challenge.

The Rachel’s Challenge program was introduced to California schools in the 2012-2013 school year. The middle school’s Friends of Rachel Club (FOR), led by teachers Hal McNeal and Amy Elliott, is still active and focused on creating a more positive school environment.

This year, the focus is on decorating lockers and making positive action chains. The chains are made by students around the school who have witnessed positive behavior by their peers, such as making others feel welcome. The positive action is recorded on a slip of paper which is then added to the chain.

The faculty leaders are very proud of their students for the good deeds they have done.

“Once a student fell down the steps, three students helped her and picked her binder up. They helped her to class,” said McNeal.

He also recalled, “There were some kids bullying a younger. We had some kids bullying a youngster. We had some

Friends of Rachel members are dressed for their 80’s day: Mr. Hal McNeal, President Lauren Spillane, Vice President Megan VanLoo, Secretary Brianna Miller, Treasurer Lauren Dietzel, and Mrs. Amy Elliott.

Students Attend the MASL Twain and Truman Party

by Hannah Lehman

Each year our middle school library promotes the Missouri Association of School Librarians’ (MASL) Mark Twain and Harry S. Truman Book Award nominations.

The awards are used to encourage young readers to explore different genres of literature. The Twain books are read by fourth through sixth grade students while the Truman books are for seventh and eighth grade students. In each category there are 12 books nominated by Missouri librarians. Missouri students get to vote for their favorite book from a list of nominated titles.

At CMS, librarian Jill Meisenheimer purchases the suggested titles for students and advises them to read as many books as they can. Students who read at least four books from either category have the benefit of attending a party in the spring to complete a voting ballot.

Calen Kruger, sixth grader who attended the party, said, “My favorite book this year was Escape from Mr. Lemoncello’s Library by Chris Grabenstein.” Calen read five of the books to qualify for the party.

The voting party takes place during an afternoon exploratory hour. Meisenheimer provides snacks and drinks. She also creates a Jeopardy game that covers the current year’s books.

MASL is a professional organization for library media specialists who work in Missouri schools. The author whose book receives the most votes from students around Missouri will be present at the spring MASL conference to receive an award from the Association.

In my room . . . Maggie Long

by Byron Moseley

Maggie Long has been at California for three years. She teaches a mixture of classes including STRETCH.

Sixth grader Ryan Staton enjoys having Ms. Long because “she has really funny jokes.”

In the sixth grade STRETCH, her students are creating their own movie trailer for the books they’ve just read. They will create these trailers with tablets provided by the school.

Long wants them to make the trailer unique and original, without the use of online photos. Her goal with this project is for the students to come up with their own creative ideas to share information.

The students can use the effects provided by their tablet to create fun, unique trailers with their own personal touch.

“They’ll take their own photos that go along with their book and can include music with the photos they present,” said Long.

While this is the first time she has done the project, she envisions using it every quarter next year.

Besides California, Missouri, Long also taught in Las Vegas, Nevada and in South America. She likes teaching because of relationships she can build with the students.

Literature Festival

cont. from pg 1

“They all give great advice about the importance of reading and how reading helps with writing,” said Meisenheimer. “All the authors share personal stories about their own experiences, and about where they get their ideas.”

Students were able to purchase the authors’ books during the day. This event is for those students that are connected with reading and love to write. The writing club, library aids, and 15 students from each grade level were selected to go.

Meisenheimer said, “It’s a really beneficial day and a good experience for all the students who attend.”

6th Grade Orientation

Tuesday, May 10
6:00 p.m.
Middle School Gym

• meet most of the sixth grade teachers
• learn middle school information and preparation

C.S. Adler was the last author the California students saw. English teacher Heather Schoeneberg said, “We were her only audience, and she just sat and read one of her books to the kids. They absolutely loved it! It was much more personal than some of the others. All were good, but this was a great way to end the day!”
In my room . . . Spanish II with Linda Fulbright

by Isaac Wells

Currently the Spanish II students, taught by Linda Fulbright, submitted a video entry at the University of Central Missouri Foreign Language Film Festival and placed third.

They also finished a project where they took an imaginary trip to a Spanish-speaking country. They made a video with scenes from the countries.

“It was a lot of fun,” said sophomore Cole Schlup.

Right now they are working on vocabulary of city and country living, and soon the classes will celebrate Cinco de Mayo.

Fulbright says that by working on these projects, they have become familiar with vocabulary used for traveling and real life situations. They have learned about the customs and cultures of countries they may be able to visit in the future. This gives her the satisfaction of knowing that she has done her part in preparing them for real life situations they may encounter.

The students are constantly re-viewing. They practice with oral and written exercises. They do chapter reviews and group reviews.

Fulbright doesn’t have a preferred teaching method. She describes education as a process of teaching, helping to learn, encouraging to think and use what is learned.

Senora Fulbright, which her students lovingly call her, has been teaching at CHS for ten years with a total of thirty-two under her belt. She currently has 118 students in her ninth through twelfth grade Spanish classes.

“Before moving to California, I was teaching conversational Spanish at Miami-Dade College in Homestead, Florida,” said Fulbright who will retire at the end of the year.

The people who inspired her to be a teacher were her previous teachers. Watching them teach inspired her to want to do the same.

Senora said, “Every time I am able to reach a student and have him/her understand what I am teaching, that is my greatest accomplishment.”

Student Council Receives Honor Council Award

by Seth Stotts

The Student Council at California High School is a very successful organization focusing on school leadership and spirit. They are led by teachers Ashley Atteberry, Jamie Johnston, and Megan Jones, with student president Hannah Banderman, senior.

California’s student council currently has 40 students in good standing.

“Our council consists of four student body officers, four officers from each class, and class representatives. The number of reps differs each year because you have to run for an office, but if you don’t win, you are automatically a representative,” said Atteberry.

Student council plans activities like homecoming and courtwarming weeks as well as educational assemblies, such as the Veteran’s Day assembly. They also participate in service projects for the community and for the school.

“Student council promotes a positive learning environment and a positive school culture; it gives students a voice in what happens in our school and develops leadership skills that they can take with them in the next part of their lives,” said Atteberry.

In March, select student council members attended the Student Council State Convention at Platte County High School in Platte City, MO.

“As a member, it’s an honor to be a delegate at state convention, seeing as each school is only allowed six delegates,” said Banderman.

At the convention, the CHS council was recognized for the Honor Council Award. They won the “Gold” award because they fulfilled over 16 requirements/activities, including having a written constitution, having democratic elections, being members at the state level of MASC (Missouri Association of Student Councils), and attending the MASC state convention.

Some of the California’s qualifying activities were the food drive at the Mr. Pinto contest, Parent’s Night Out, and cleaning out the library. Also, the council participated in the Polar Bear Plunge to raise $950 for Special Olympics.

“We try to change our activities so the students stay involved. We are always willing to try new ideas,” said Atteberry.

Track Meets Shape Athletes

by Aaron Kendrick

Athletes on the 2016 track team have been working very hard this season.

Phillip Strobel, a junior sprinter, says that the first few weeks were really hard, but he knows the coaches expect a lot of hard work and effort. Strobel also says he knows the coaches work with students and their teachers so track doesn’t interfere as heavily with education.

With the addition of the new track about six years ago, California has been scheduling home meets after school hours. Last year the track season had seven home meets, the most ever for California. This year it is down to four.

Rick Edwards, the athletic director, explains the best reason to have more home meets is because “students don’t have to leave school early and miss classes.”

Away meets often happen during the school day or so soon after school that students may regularly miss their afternoon classes. This can certainly cause a problem with grades and subject attainment.

Track head coach Jon Lindquist and other coaches also agree that home meets are great for that reason. However, they also believe there are a few reasons away meets can be beneficial.

Lindquist said, “for some kids it is an opportunity to see something other than California,” and he believes that competing in different environments can help in an athlete’s development.

Strobel says that home meets are best for him because his friends come and watch, which drives him to work harder.

Overall, coaches and athletes agree that track is a great sport for any type of person. The social, health, and now academic benefits prove that the city’s investment on the high school track is a very worthy one.

Summer Athletic Camps

June 3-5
Cross Country Camp
July 2-10
Dead Week
July 18-22
Softball Camp
July 18-22
HS VB Camp
June 6-10 & July 18-22
Football Camp