Not Just Pinto Strong, Community Strong!
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**From Middle School Principal Matt Abernathy**

As I reflect on the nine outstanding years that I have had as the middle school principal, I can’t help but be both impressed with and proud of the support that this community has given to its school district. Each year, I am filled with joy and pride as I hear about and watch our community come together to positively impact the lives and education of our children.

I have seen the support come from large corporations and businesses, small businesses, family owned businesses, civic organizations, local churches, volunteer groups, and each and every one of you as members of this community. No task or undertaking has proven to be too large.

In just nine years time, the California community has come together and successfully passed two bond issues.

The first bond issue provided the community with a state-of-the-art performing arts center and track facility, the high school with a new library and several classrooms, the middle school with a completely renovated gymnasium, and the elementary with an entirely revitalized playground. The second bond issue provided an expansion of facilities with a new football stadium, baseball/softball complex, and agricultural building addition, as well as made energy efficient improvements to heating and cooling, lighting, and windows. Several restrooms and locker rooms were renovated, parking lots were paved, technology networking infrastructures throughout the district were rewired and updated, and every building received security improvements, ensuring the protection of our campuses and safety of our students.

All of these improvements were made possible by you and your support of the California School District. Along with the improvements to infrastructures and security systems, other advances in technology have focused on improving the quality of education for our students.

The community has already shown their support of the 1:1 initiative at the high school, which placed a Chromebook in the hands of every student, and continues to show their support as the middle school and fifth grade work toward placing Chromebooks in the hands of each of their students as well.

Along with this shift of preparing students for the digital era, comes the acceptance of...
Mrs. Debbie Pardoe is truly the heart and soul of our building. Without her and her infectious smile and never-ceasing work ethic, we would not make it through a single day!

Debbie was born in the Latham Hospital 29 (sh!) years ago. She grew up in Kliever and loved to play outside with her friends and family. Debbie’s eyes light up when reminiscing about softball games and summers of barefoot freedom.

She is in love with her family. Debbie married 30 years ago and had two amazing children, one boy and one girl. Now, lots of family time is spent chasing the two granddaughters around.

Debbie has been an integral part of our school district for the past 15 years. She spent two years as a cook, one as a teacher’s aide and the remaining 12 as the BEST custodian an elementary school could ever have! When asked what she is most proud of during her time in the California School District, Debbie replied “Everything!”

Words of wisdom from Debbie Pardoe: “Hang in there, one day at a time! You have to care about the kids or it is just a job, and THIS IS NOT JUST A JOB!”

Her final words during our interview were “I love All you guys!”

We are so thankful for the love and skill that all of our staff members bring to our school community. Thanks for all that you do!
Student Council Develops Leadership Skills

by Richard Harfield

The Student Council at California Middle School offers students a glimpse as to what the real world is like. This organization helps develop leadership skills, also allowing students to have fun in the process.

There are numerous ways that STUCO benefits the school system. Student Council gives students some control over school events, which boosts Pinto Pride.

They are responsible for school dances, fundraisers, and concession stands. They also organize fall and winter pep assemblies to recognize sports teams and cheerleaders.

They also learn the value of helping others by orchestrating fundraisers to help children in need both in and out of the district.

In the fall, the council had a dance that raised $300 for the California Girls Relay for Life team. Candy Grams were sold in December to raise funds for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society Pennies for Patients.

STUCO will sponsor a “Make Leukemia Disappear” penny drive to raise funds for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society Pennies for Patients.

According to council sponsor Krista Davis, “about 20 students are active in Student Council.”

Active members enjoy doughnuts at the morning meetings and lots of social time with friends and peers.

According to Emma Russell, sixth grade STUCO member, “Student Council is fun because many posters are made, fundraisers are held, and lots of fun experiences are shared.”

Not Just Pinto Strong

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of shifting toward paperless classrooms and online textbooks. This too, has been supported by you and the California community, making the transition to a more rich and productive education possible.

The support doesn’t stop there. Annually, I receive donations from local businesses, organizations, and volunteer groups, which aid in funding multiple projects and initiatives. These same donations are evident at the elementary and high school buildings as well.

When our students and their families are in times of need, these various groups work together with individual community members to help provide initiatives like Buddy Packs, Circle of Sharing, Giving Tree, and canned food drives, none of which would be possible without community support.

Even when our school district grieves the loss of beloved employees, or our students suffer a tragedy, or experience house fires, the community of California pulls together to assist them in their time of need.

This overwhelming support is what makes California great.

As I look to the future, I know that the community of California will continue to show their support for the school district. The years go by quickly, and sometimes we lose track of just how much has happened.

I am grateful for the opportunity to reflect on everything that has occurred during the nine years I have been here. I am blessed to have witnessed the support that this community has shown. Because of that, it has been, is, and always will be, a great day to be a Pinto and a member of the California community.

National Spelling Bee Begins in the Classroom

By Dylan Vines

Every year California Middle School holds a spelling bee. The students participating have a chance to enter the Regional Spelling Bee in Columbia, MO. However, students must first make it through the class and grade competitions.

As the school librarian, Jill Meisenheimer has run the bee for the past six years.

Meisenheimer said, “I would love to improve the interest level of students, but I just haven’t come up with a good plan for that.”

Every student participating in the spelling bee has an opportunity to do well. All of them are given a list to study prior to the contest. The winning student is rewarded by going to the regional bee in Columbia. If they make it through the regional bee, then they move on to Washington D.C.

“I think teachers like the fact that kids are rewarded for something educational instead of sports as sports are heavily promoted in school,” said Meisenheimer.

Someone outside the school is asked each year to pronounce the words so that the students feel it is more formal. This year Nancy Lewis, former CMS librarian, was asked to pronounce. She started taking the students to the Regional Spelling Bee during her tenure.

Lewis, who now works at the Moniteau County Library, said, “I was very pleased to be asked to return for this event. I always enjoyed doing it.”

The winner of the school bee will have their name added to a plaque in the school office.

Parent Teacher Conferences

Middle/High School Conferences
Thursday, Mar. 16 4-8 p.m.

Elementary School Conferences
Tuesday, Mar. 21 4-8 p.m.

In my room... Boys P.E. with Coach Miller

by Kasey McAdams

In Coach Doug Miller’s P.E. class, students do more than just test their physical skills. They receive a well-rounded physical education.

Stretching and strengthening exercises on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

A l t h o u g h these are mostly student-led, Miller takes over by the end. He leads more physical warm-ups, such as pushups, situps, and Coach’s favorite: four-count leg lifts.

On Wednesdays the boys go to the health room for lessons about personal hygiene and safety. This may include a video about hunting safety.

Three days a week, the boys meet with the girls P.E. class, taught by Jennifer Porter, to play a game such as dodgeball.

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

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FFA Activities Invoke Member Communication

by Hunter Carpenter

FFA has been a part of this high school for many years, during which the members have had many monthly meetings. During these monthly meetings students catch up on all things going on in the FFA whether it be details about past or future events. After the meetings are over, members can partake in an activity that has been chosen by the FFA chapter officers over the summer. These activities can range from a movie night to a tournament of mudy volleyball games.

According to Lee Longan, one of the chapter’s advisors, the meeting activity has been a tradition for over 25 years. He notes that there is a difference in attendance based on activities.

“A lot of members enjoy the mud volleyball activity. They divide into teams and really have a good time. That is the most attended meeting and activity,” said Longan. “Underground Farm is a great activity as well and several members attend it.”

California’s chapter has a huge membership at 207 students. According to Longan about 75 members attend the monthly meetings, on average.

Allee Koestner, the chapter’s treasurer, said, “I would say that the scavenger hunt meeting is one of my favorites. I also enjoy the hayride and bonfire meeting that we have in the fall.”

In regards to the post-meeting activities, Longan said, “It’s not so much about playing games as it is having an activity for the members to do. The members enjoy spending time together, and being able to work together on team events is a great opportunity for the students.”

Another activity held by our FFA chapter that is nation-wide is FFA week. FFA week comes around every year and is Saturday to Saturday, encompassing Washington’s birthday, February 22. This year’s FFA week takes place from February 18 to 25.

Longan said FFA week was started “To celebrate the organization’s impact on the school and community.”

“I enjoy FFA week. FFA is the biggest student organization that we have in our school. FFA week gives us a chance to promote FFA and show our pride in the agriculture industry,” said Koestner.

During FFA week the members of the chapter dress up in fashions chosen by the officers and partake in other fun things like “Drive your Tractor to School Day.” They also show appreciation by cooking a meal for the teachers in the school.

The FFA holds many activities for the students and shows a great pride in doing so. These activities are not only fun for the students but also promotes teamwork, cooperation, and communication throughout the members of the FFA.

CHS Math Department Seeing Growth

by Kale McAdams and Wyatt Bonecutter

California High School has five math teachers (shown left to right): Ashley Reno, Tabatha Silvey, Dixie Trester, Denise Banderman, and Chris-sy Yingst. Although young in the profession, their teamwork has established their department as one that gets solid results.

Only having taught math for 21 years combined, the most seasoned teacher on the team is Trester with seven years.

A lot of members enjoy the mud volleyball activity. They divide into teams and really have a good time. That is the most attended meeting and activity,” said Koestner. "Underground Farm is a great activity as well and several members attend it."

Silvey said, “We all share the same amount of responsibility in the group.”

“Have been in education more than 20 years. Based on my experiences, I believe our math team is one of the best teams I have ever worked with in my career,” said Kirksey.

Their goals seem fairly difficult. Silvey said, “Improving ACT and EOC scores,” were their short-term goals. In the long-term they hope to “increase the number of students in upper level mathematics and get more students college and career ready.”

NHS Blood Drive

High School Gym
Wednesday, March 29
Open to the public
3:30-6:30 p.m.

NHS Induction Ceremony

Sunday, March 12
2:00 p.m.
California Performing Arts Center