

## Local Schools



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# Science Students Have a Blast

NOVEMBER 03RD 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

## Science Students Have a Blast

**Poplar Bluff, Missouri** - Poplar Bluff Junior High students concluded their unit on the scientific method with a rocket launch on Thursday, Oct. 27, at Fred M. Morrow Stadium.

Rocket Day was founded several years ago by retired science teacher Vic Clark, who still returns for the occasion to help operate his homemade compressed air launcher. Eighth graders later make qualitative and quantitative observations about the data.

Prior to the event this year, students watched “October Sky,” which was inspired by Homer Hickam Jr., a NASA engineer, who actually wrote a personal letter to the class after teacher Ashley Woolard connected with him via Twitter.

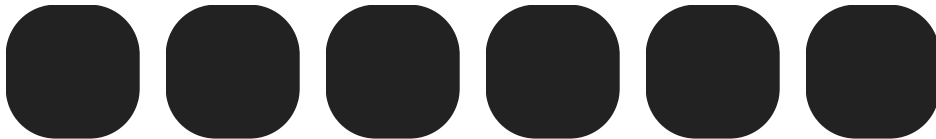
“Best wishes to you and remember, if you never have dreams, they never come true. Aim high,” Hickam stated and included an autographed self-portrait, which he addressed to Poplar Bluff Schools.

Shown in the photo: Makaya Mitchell launches her rocket under the instruction of Vic Clark.

Article and photo submitted by Tim Krakowiak, Communications/Marketing Director, Poplar Bluff R-I School District

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## Central Elementary Receives Grant From Ronald McDonald House Charities

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**Dexter, Missouri** - Central Elementary School in Dexter, Missouri has received a grant from Ronald McDonald House Charities to support the school's Accelerated Reader program.

The money received will be used to fund the AR Reward Program and Reading Week at Central Elementary. Students earning their goals will be treated to a variety of treats including pizza picnics at the park, bowling, skating, and Snowcones.

The program develops reading skills, confirms comprehension by computerized testing and offers motivational rewards to students.

The Ronald McDonald House Charities supports non-profit children's programs in the areas of education, health, and social well-being, and the cultural arts.

The local chapter awarded over \$250,000 in grants to projects in the tri-state area.

Students in the photo were the top three readers in each of their grades.

Shown in the photo are April Aldridge, English Teacher and AR Program Coordinator and Shane Brumfield, Ronald McDonald House Charities representative; 3rd grade students: Serina Churchill, Landon Annesser, and Cadence Buenaventura; 4th grade students Jake Parker, Ryan Goode, and Adeline Prance; and 5th grade students Gabe Ingram and Camrin Thurston. Piper Freeman was not available for photo.

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## Bright Futures Celebrates Success Stories

NOVEMBER 03RD 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

[Bright Futures Celebrates Success Stories](#)

**Poplar Bluff, Missouri** - Chartwells School Dining Services announced it has opted to take over the long-standing Backpacks for Friday program for the Bread Shed during the third annual Bright Futures symposium on Friday, Oct. 28, at the Gamma HealthCare Conference Center.

The reinstated program will supply district families in need with food for the weekend beginning on New Year's Day, according to Food Services Director Dixie Harden. 'Mule Packs' is just one of many programs being coordinated under the Bright Futures umbrella that was highlighted at the event.

"With a lever this large, we can move the world," stated Poplar Bluff R-I Superintendent Scott Dill before an estimated audience of 125, including district personnel, parents, business leaders, church officials and partners in the social services sector.

Run by R-I social workers, Bright Futures Poplar Bluff is a nonprofit that, through community partnerships, helps to meet the basic physical needs of students so they can focus on academics. The district became affiliated with the national organization headquartered in Joplin in 2014.

Each school within the district has a site council that works to identify the specific needs of their studentbody. Council members reported about some of the program successes such as the Red Bookshelf Project organized at Oak Grove Elementary and the free senior photos a philanthropist offered at the Graduation Center.

Lake Road Site Council member Raymond Webb said that he arranged to give a basketball to each student in the Basketball Club, one of many organizations that elementary students could now choose to join during Club Day. "It's small to some, but to those kids it's a real big deal," said Webb, who is the assistant manager at Wal-Mart.

"Intelligence isn't the obstacle to graduation, life is," added High School Principal Mike Kiehne, who announced that librarian Marcia Priest has started a Giving Closet with clothing and other items.

"They're not asking for thousands and thousands of dollars," noted Eugene Field Site Council member Michelle Shelton, human resources manager at Briggs & Stratton. "They're asking for little things... It truly does make a difference."

To learn how to get involved, 'like' Bright Futures Poplar Bluff on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/BrightFuturesPB](http://www.facebook.com/BrightFuturesPB).

**Shown** in the photo: Maclaren Moore of O’Neal Elementary watches an introductory video about the Bright Futures program.

Article and photo submitted by Tim Krakowiak, Communications/Marketing Director, Poplar Bluff R-I School District

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## Robert Whelan Donates to Iron Mules

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**Poplar Bluff, Missouri** - The Poplar Bluff High School Robotics Club received its largest single donation to date: \$1,500 from Robert Whelan Wealth Management to purchase a complete Velocity Vortex obstacle course.

The Iron Mules will use the equipment to practice to compete in the Missouri FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Tech Challenge next year. The High School will also have the opportunity to host its first qualifying meet on Saturday, Dec. 10, in the gymnasium.

“Anything that moves technology forward, I’m all for it,” said Whelan on Tuesday, Oct. 26, during a classroom visit.

The hope is for a “chain reaction” to occur once the program generates revenue from concessions while hosting qualifiers, elaborated Tonia Clark, a financial adviser for Whelan.

“We’re just doing our little part,” Clark said.

Clark’s daughter Jocelin, a junior, has been a member of the Robotics Club since last year, when the Iron Mules placed 12th in the state championship for the first time since the program was started in 2013. Jocelin approached Whelan for the sponsorship.

“Ask and you might receive,” she exclaimed.

Shown in the photo from left to right: Robotics Club Coach Kathy Miller, student Bryan Nguyen, Robert Whelan and Assistant Coach Mike Sowatzke.

Article and photo submitted by Tim Krakowiak, Communications/Marketing Director, Poplar Bluff R-I School District

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## DMS Sponsors Lead the Largest Beta Club in the State

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### DMS Sponsors Lead the Largest Beta Club in the State

**Dexter, Missouri** - "Leading the largest Jr. Beta Club in the state of Missouri is no easy task," commented Scott Kruse, T.S. Hill Middle School Principal. "This team of teachers works behind the scenes to organize and lead students. It takes each and every one of them."

Kruse recognized the following teachers at the Jr. Beta Student Induction Ceremony on Friday, October 28, 2016. Mrs. Boles, Mrs. Cato, Mrs. Delay, Mrs. Thurlkill, Mrs. Ramsey, Mrs. Simmons, Mrs. DeMent, Mrs. Moore, Mrs. Duncan, Mrs. Miller, Mrs. Stevenson, Mrs. Monroe, Mrs. Muckerman, and Mrs. Stickles for the endless dedication to their students.

"Our lead Beta Club sponsor, Mrs. Langley, was named National Jr. Beta Sponsor of the Year at the National Convention in New Orleans, LA over the summer," continued Kruse. "No one works harder, puts in as much time, and cares as much about seeing a Club succeed than Mrs. Langley. The award could not have gone to a more deserving person and we would like to once again recognize our Jr. Beta Leader!"

In December students will participate in the State Convention at Poplar Bluff, from there those that qualify will travel to the National Convention in Orlando, Florida in 2017.

This year they are running Miss Abbie DeMent at State Jr. Beta Secretary. Two years ago Irene Huang was elected State Jr. Beta President and last year Kyla Propst was elected State Jr. Beta Chaplain. "We are confident in Abbie's chances of representing Missouri!"

Candles were lit during the ceremony. Cacie Ramsey lit the white candle, Kristi Boles lit the red candle, Taryn Duncan lit the blue candle, Kristin Miller lit the black candle, Jessica DeMent lit the gold candle. Mrs. Nancy Langley held the induction and pledge.

LET US LEAD BY SERVING OTHERS!

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