

Local Schools



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Professional Play Series Put on for Local Students

MARCH 13TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Professional Play Series Put on for Local Students

Poplar Bluff, Missouri- The children's play series presented by the Patrons of the Arts wrapped up on Friday, Feb. 23, exposing some students to theater for the first time.

Poplar Bluff students grades K-5 were provided an opportunity to see one of the following plays performed by the Repertory Imaginary Theatre Company at the Tinnin Fine Arts Center: "The Nutcracker," "The Country Mouse and City Mouse" or "Laura Ingalls Wilder: Voice of the Prairie."

"It was quite moving to see their expressions while they watched the characters from the story come to life on stage," said Teresa Webb, first grade teacher of Eugene Field. "I believe they walked away from the experience with a newfound appreciation of performing arts and gained a deeper understanding of the lesson learned from (the play)."

Getting to see the reaction of students was one of Webb's "most treasured memories" of the school year, she continued. Faculty colleague Kristen Spain added that watching the faces of the students sitting on the edge of their seats, soaking in every word, was "priceless."

"My Alanii Render now wants to grow up and be in performing arts in college because she was so inspired by one of the actresses that day," said Spain of one of her first grade students. "In her words: 'I didn't know grownups could play and act silly on stage in front of kids and get paid for it!'"

Three Rivers College has been arranging for professional plays to be performed directly for schools within its service area for the past few years. The plays are free thanks to the Patrons of the Arts Society, which subsidizes the costs with help from business sponsors.

“Having a variety of opportunities in the arts education is so important for our students. These experiences help kids develop on many fundamental levels,” stated Patty Robertson, R-I assistant superintendent of curriculum. “Some students find their ‘voice’ while studying the arts. Creative expression is also a great way to build self-confidence.”

Pictured: The cast of ‘Voice of the Prairie,’ (from left) Lana Dvorak, Jeanitta Perkins, Charlie Barron and Aaron Orion Baker, answer questions from fifth graders following the performance.

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Businesses Sponsor Girls State Group

MARCH 08TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Businesses sponsor Girls State group

The largest number of Poplar Bluff High School juniors in recent memory will be participating in American Legion Auxiliary Girls State this summer at Central Missouri University in Warrensburg, thanks to several generous community sponsors.

During the seven-day program from June 24-30, student delegates nominated by teachers will form a local government structure through a mock election and carry out responsibilities and duties as assigned, writing and voting on bills. After taking an exit exam, students can earn college credits.

“No one ever goes and doesn’t have a good time,” said PBHS counselor Tamara Day, who helped secure the sponsorships so the students can attend for free. “It’s an amazing experience that teaches leadership and knowledge of the fundamentals of government, and oftentimes brings them out of their shell.”

Business sponsors include Endeavor Home Care; First Midwest Bank; Kevin Barbour Jr. of Kraft, Miles and Tatum; Dr. Teri Page of Pearle Vision; Nathan Maurer on behalf of Poplar Bluff Realty; the Rotary Club of Poplar Bluff; Rowland Family Dentistry; and Southern Bank.

(Back row, from left) Counselor Tamara Day, and students Lina Dill, Geneva Taylor, Sophia Rowland and Kaylee Barbour; and (front row, left to right) Darian Strange, Sara Holland and Jillian Page. Not pictured is participant Destinee Howell.

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

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PBHS Continues to Offer ACT for FREE Despite State Cut

FEBRUARY 12TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

PBHS Continues to Offer ACT for FREE Despite State Cut

Poplar Bluff, Missouri - The Poplar Bluff School District will offer the ACT exam to High School juniors one time free of charge in April.

The college admissions test, previously state-funded, was cut from the Missouri budget this school year. To eliminate the possible barrier preventing students from exploring college options, the R-I Board of Education voted unanimously in November to pick up the tab – at a discounted group rate.

“Our local board was gracious enough to allow us to do this,” said Scott Dill, superintendent. “It’s one of those threshold moments in a student’s academic career that may be a deciding factor in whether or not a student extends education to a post-secondary environment.”

Student ACT participation more than doubled since the fee was waived during 2014/15, according to information PBHS Principal Mike Owen reported to the school board. In a survey asking over 300 juniors whether they would be interested in taking the exam voluntarily, at no cost, half signed up.

Over 60 percent of PBHS students go on to college, according to the district report card recently released by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Of that percentage, about 20 percent of graduates go straight to four-year higher education institutions.

The ACT is accepted at all universities in the United States, and is the predominant college placement test used in the Midwest, according to Tamara Day, PBHS counseling department head.

“With the opportunity to take it for free, a student who may be wouldn’t have taken it otherwise, could score better than they imagined, and realize: ‘I am college material. I have what it takes,’” Day stated.

The four-hour test will be offered free of charge on Tuesday, April 3, at PBHS with a make-up date of Tuesday, April 24. The test may be retaken up to six additional times at a cost of \$46 or \$62.50 including the writing component.

For more information, contact the counseling center at 573-785-6471.

Pictured: Dr. Regina Williams, PBHS guidance counselor, hosts the first of a series of CAPS (college application party and scholarship) meetings on Tuesday, Jan. 30, in the cafeteria to assist senior advisory classes in applying to colleges or submitting scholarship applications.

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

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Santa's Workshop inspired by 'Toy Story'

DECEMBER 28TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Santa's Workshop inspired by 'Toy Story'

Poplar Bluff, Missouri - Students of the Poplar Bluff Middle School STEM class have been designing new products out of broken toys in an activity instructors are calling Santa's Workshop.

The three-week project combines engineering and teamwork, and has a business marketing component, according to faculty. The concept was inspired by a scene in the computer-animated film, "Toy Story."

"You know the part with Sid's toys where you have the mutant toy builder?" asked Kimberly Davis, who teaches STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) with Cody Young. "We were brainstorming activities back in August, and I was just waiting until Christmas. I always loved that movie."

Last week students, grades five and six, were given the opportunity to select 2-4 used toys and then visit the supply station to assemble their creation with tools provided. The miscellaneous toys mostly came from parent donations.

This week the classes will create a commercial to sell their invention to a target audience at a chosen price range, and fourth graders will rank the best concepts. Winners will receive actual discount prizes from Disney World in Orlando, where Davis' mother Dena Burk happens to be employed.

Pictured: Isaiah Park (left) and Dyllon Lux turn a doll into an action figure/stuffed animal.

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

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The Mule Shack Teaches Valuable Life Skills

DECEMBER 21ST 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

[The Mule Shack Teaches Valuable Life Skills](#)

The recently opened Mule Shack is serving multiple functions at Poplar Bluff Junior High—in addition to serving customers—including teaching students business math, organization and social interaction.

“Every piece of the store is a teachable moment,” said Courtney Rutledge, the instructor over the life skills class, which runs the operation under teacher supervision.

After several months of planning, a ribbon cutting for the new store was held on Oct. 13. The Mule Shack sells snacks, school spirit items and other supplies during lunch every Friday next to the cafeteria. Proceeds go toward enhancing the life skills classroom, which is currently in the market for a stove to show students some basics on how to cook.

Over the summer, the district renovated the classroom, installing plumbing, sinks, countertops and cabinets so students—grades 7-8—can obtain practical knowledge that will help them manage the demands of everyday life beyond the school day. Students cleaned and painted the room, previously used as a storage space for gym equipment, and back in the day a place where students could get malts, according to Principal Candace Warren.

Before and after lunch, students gather at the service window to make their purchases. Seventh grader Nickolas Gallamore says he is saving up to one day buy a foam finger designed for sporting events. He had been anticipating opening day for quite some time.

“Finally, here’s the day,” Nickolas recalled thinking. He gave his early review of the store. “They have all the stuff people like... music, plus the name is catchy,” he exclaimed. “It’s sure to have success.”

The name of the store was chosen by incoming Junior High students at the end of last school year. The Parent Teacher Organization helped supply the initial inventory, along with donations from businesses. The plan is for the shop to eventually become self-sustaining once it achieves profitability.

Asked what his favorite part of working at the Mule Shack is, cashier Labron Thomas of the seventh grade replied: “What I like about the store is getting to know people, and [seeing] how they’re doing.”

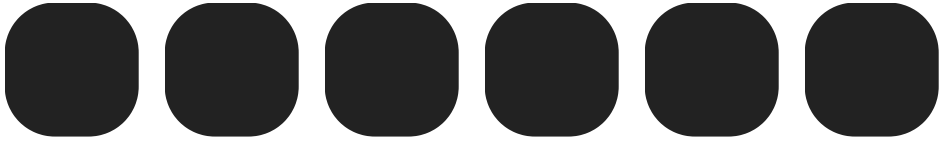
Pictured: Life skills students man the Mule Shack under the direction of faculty during lunchtime.

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

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