

What's in ? this Issue ?

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The Paw Print

2001, 2002 & 2003 ODE Excellent Rating; 2003 National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence

Calendar Notes

- March 8-17**
4th & 6th grade proficiency tests
- March 31- April 4**
Senior Class Trip
- April 7 - 8**
Kindergarten Screening
- April 9**
Spring Break
- April 12**
Calamity Makeup Day-School In Session
- April 16 - 17**
KHS Musical
- April 27**
Spring Band Concert
7:30 PM
- May 1**
Prom
- May 27**
Last Day of School
- May 30**
Graduation
- May 31**
Memorial Day
- August 25, 2004**
First Day
Back to School

Finance and Funding

Are Ohio Schools in Trouble?

Given the recent news concerning schools and their financial situation, we thought it might be timely to update residents as to why this is happening.

There were 207 school issues on the November (2003) ballot in the state of Ohio. Predictions indicate up to 400 school issues may be on the 2004 ballots. This multitude of school levies during the last election and even more possible for 2004 has given rise to the following two questions. First, why are so many schools attempting to pass revenue issues and/or cutting services and opportunities for students all of a sudden? Secondly, with all the school levies on the ballot, how long will it be before Kalida is on the ballot?

The answers to these questions lie in Ohio's school funding system. Ohio's school funding system provides that the state pay a portion of the dollars needed to fund each student's education annually. The other portion must be provided through local taxes. This year, the State of Ohio is providing Kalida Local with **61% (down from 68% in the 1998-99 school year)** of the funds necessary to educate each student. Local taxpayers must provide the difference. This year's state funding was complicated by being reduced from its original amount. A 2.8% increase in state funding was originally approved for this school year. Due to the lack of state funds, the legislature reduced the increase to 2.2%. This amount was further reduced by other legislative action including three mid-year reductions during the 2002-03 school year, the elimination of safeguards for stable school funding and the phase out of the inventory tax. Therefore, the actual increase to education was closer to 1% statewide. **While this increase was well publicized the cuts to state funding for schools were not!**

These reductions in anticipated state aid were approved during the summer of 2003, when it was too late for most districts to revise programs, reduce staff or cut services for 2003-04. Compounding the problem is the fact that, even with less money appropriated for schools, no reduction in new state and federal mandates followed.

Kalida, like many districts in the area, gained some additional local funds from property re-evaluation without voting a new tax increase. While this would appear to help our district and reduce the effect of unexpected cuts, in reality, our state aid is reduced 115% for the additional funds raised from re-evaluation. Thus, in Kalida School's situation, if an additional \$20,000 were raised locally because of re-evaluation, state aid would be reduced by \$23,000. This loss of state revenue is one of the major issues raised in the DeRolph School Funding Case and one of the reasons the school funding system in Ohio was ruled "unconstitutional" in the Ohio Supreme Court. Hopefully, the current "Blue Ribbon Commission," appointed by Governor Bob Taft, to study the state funding system, will develop a system of school funding that is fair, equitable and predictable. Until that time, it seems that when a district takes a step forward financially, it really ends up taking two steps backward.

Why was education funding reduced?

Last year, the legislature and governor needed funds to balance a tight budget. Two options existed; raise taxes or cut services. The legislature opted for some of each. A temporary sales tax was passed and cuts were made in the budget, including aid to education. While no one likes increases in taxes, most of us want and expect the services they fund. As the cost of these services increase, whether it is Medicare, schools or road repair, there are only two alternatives: raise additional revenue or cut services.

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School Finance Continued from page one

Two interesting political situations come to mind concerning this issue. First, candidates for several state offices in the last election predicted that whoever was elected would have to raise taxes to continue the current level of services in Ohio. This stand probably contributed to the defeat of these candidates. Second, a current elected state official is leading an effort to repeal the temporary state sales tax. I hope this effort is based on sound fiscal information and not on political motives for future elections. Repeal of this tax would certainly affect the level of services in many areas.

How long before Kalida Local School is on the ballot? We cannot predict the exact time. The State of Ohio may face the need to make further cuts this school year due to lack of state dollars; particularly with the possible repeal of the temporary sales tax. Local tax collections are also subject to decline, should business tax revenue fall short due to economic problems. We have no control over these and no way of predicting them precisely. However, one thing is definite. With the current funding system for education, school districts, including Kalida, will eventually need to ask for additional local revenue and/or reduce the quality of the educational programs offered to students. We pledge to keep you informed as to the financial status of our schools and be prudent in our expenditures.

Note: *A topic related to school finance will be discussed in each monthly newsletter. Next month, the various funds and their use will be explained. In addition, an area on the school web page will be established to archive these articles.*

Phantasm Donations- *Phantasm Designs* of Ottawa held a fund raiser for Kalida Schools during the month of December. For each item purchased by Kalida families, 10% was donated back to the Kalida Schools. This month a check for \$330 was delivered to the school. Thanks to all of you who purchased items there and helped accumulate this donation.

Athletic Dept. Donation- Thanks to Kalida Manufacturing, Incorporated (KMI) for the donation of an eight row set of bleachers that will seat about 100 people. The new bleachers will be used this spring at the new KHS softball field and then in the fall at the KHS soccer field. Thank you for your school and community support.

Notes from the Elementary

Welcome Spring! The arrival of March means Spring is right around the corner and proficiency testing is about to take place. It also means more outdoor time for everyone. Students are reminded to get to their studies first and play time second.

Safety First. The safety of our students is always a priority and the increase in walkers and bicyclists serves as a reminder that extra caution is necessary to protect our youngsters as they make their way about town before and after school. Students are also reminded of the sudden changes in weather this time of year and to properly dress for those abrupt changes.

Special Visitors' Day in the Elementary

Every year we like to open our classrooms to parents, grandparents, or anyone special in the eyes of our students. Those special people are invited to observe us in our daily settings on April 2. We will be opening our doors from 9:00 - 11:00 a.m. for those visits. Afternoon kindergarten visitors can check us out from 12:15 - 2:00 that day.

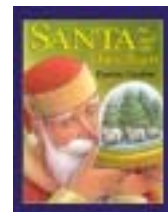
Proficiency Tests. Fourth and sixth grade students have been preparing for the state proficiency tests which will be given March 8-17. Results of the tests will be sent to parents in late May. Third graders will be taking the state Reading Achievement Tests in March also.

It is important that students are well rested prior to the tests. Make-up tests will be given on the first day a student returns to school.

BE A READING ANIMAL

Right to Read Week is April 19-23. Author/Illustrator Dominic Catalano will visit the Kalida Elementary on April 19 at 10:15 a.m. Mr. Catalano says, "I find it a privilege and an honor to visit schools and talk with young people about my work and the book publishing industry. My programs are designed to

meet the needs of students at all levels."



The theme this year of Right to Read Week is "*Be Reading Animals.*" Some of Mr. Catalano's published books include *Wolf Plays Alone*, *Hush*, *Mr. Bassett Plays*, and *Santa and the Three Bears*. Copies of his books will be on sale March 22-April 2.



CAREER DAY 2004

On February 19, Kalida High School was delighted to welcome 9 guests who spoke to all of the freshmen and sophomores about various career areas. Students in those grades spent their morning class periods rotating through five classrooms each with two focus areas. In each room, the speakers described their training and the education necessary for their jobs as well as different aspects of their employment situation.



As shown in the pictures (clockwise from upper left), Mr. Heath Boroff of Unverferth Manufacturing spoke in Information Technology. KHS grad Mr. Mark Gerding described his responsibilities as an engineer at Ford in Lima and Mr. Matt Hilvers demonstrated the engineering design work that he is responsible for at Unverferth Manufacturing. KHS grad Bonnie Knueve highlighted many Kalida residents who are employed at St. Rita's Medical Center as she outlined her own responsibilities there. Ms. Maggie Turnbull of the Lima Area/MCO Health Education Center detailed opportunities for a wide variety of jobs in the medical field.

KHS graduate Mr. Rob Edwards filled students in on his work at Landstar Inway here in Kalida, while KHS grad Mr. Joe Knueve outlined training requirements and employment needs for various divisions of Knueve and Sons, Inc. Mr. Mike Krouse, also a Kalida graduate, spoke to the students about the career decision-making process as well as his responsibilities in marketing at Unverferth Manufacturing. Pictured in the center, Kalida grad Mr. Norm Schnipke spoke to students about opportunities in the banking and financial world. He also used the special day to caution students about some of the credit problems that many young people run into as they leave high school either to go to college or to enter the world of work.

This program was coordinated by Mrs. Mary Gerding, English 9 & 10 teacher, and Mrs. Beth Myers, guidance counselor. Both Mrs. Gerding and Mrs. Myers would like to thank all of the speakers as well as all of their employers for sharing their time and insights with Kalida's students. The response of the volunteers once again proves that the Kalida community is blessed with people who have a deep commitment to the future of its young people.

Science Fair

On Friday, February 27, twenty 6th graders voluntarily participated in a science fair judging in the grade school cafeteria. They were judged by eight pairs of high school seniors from Mr. Gerdeman's science classes. Many of the projects presented were of high quality. Sixteen of the twenty students participating in the fair received first place ribbons.

Bountiful Food Drive

Junior high and high school students collected canned and boxed food items for the area food pantry in February. The seventh grade students collected the most in the junior high and the seniors won hands down on the collection "war." Thanks to everyone who helped with this successful drive.



KHS seniors Neil Schnipke, Brian Unverferth, Brian Stechschulte, Kyle Recker, Jason Kahle, and Kevin Cygan help load the trucks with the food donations gathered during Feb. 2 through Feb. 13.

Homecoming 2004



The Kalida High School annual homecoming was held on Friday, February 20 with the dance on Saturday, February 21. Crowned King was senior Rick Schnipke and Queen Heather Kimmel. The court included sophomore attendants Tyler Heitmeyer and Michele Remlinger; seniors Kyle Recker and Lindsey Horstman, juniors Travis Schnipke and Danielle Vorst; seniors Ross Kleman and Heather Vorst; and freshmen attendants Mike Recker and Andrea Van Oss.

Three Hour Delay Policy

With the possibility of spring fog, we will consider going to the three hour delay. **If we have inclement weather that clears in time for school to begin at 11 a.m. the day will then be extended until 4:01 p.m.** Kindergarten sessions will run from 11:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m and 2:00 until 4:01 p.m.

You're a Good Man Charlie Brown

The musical for 2004 will now be *You're a Good Man Charlie Brown*. The cast has been selected and rehearsals have begun. Please make plans to attend this high school production to be presented April 16-April 17.

Cast of the musical includes:

Charlie Brown ----- Justin Barnhart
 Sally Brown ----- Tabitha Patton
 Schroeder ----- Mike Hogsett
 Snoopy ----- Lindsey Miller
 Lucy Van Pelt ----- Kristen Rankin
 Linus Van Pelt ----- Shane Hill
 Peppermint Patty ----- Kelly Nienberg
 Woodstock ----- Tim Buckland
 Little Red Headed Girl ----- Emily Kahle
 Nancy ----- Jenny Kahle
 Pig Pen ----- Aaron Swihart
 Miss Othmar ----- Jen Wehri

Chorus Members include:

Jason Reindel,
 Jared Siebeneck,
 Kelly Kneuve,
 Leah Remlinger,
 Jess Honigford,
 Jenny Honigford, Krista Warnecke, Lauren Verhoff,
 Kerri Geckle, Angela Hanneman, Brooke Schroeder,
 Emily Berheide, and Austin Barnhart.



Music Boosters' February Winners

Denny & Marge Heitmeyer \$50
 Dave & Cindy Erhart \$50
 Kim Fortman \$50
 Lisa Patterson \$50

March Winners

Lori Kneuve \$50
 Scott & Lori Recker \$50
 Judy Birkemeier \$50
 Tom Verhoff \$50

Superintendent:
Robert Williams
 419-532-3534

School Board Members:

Dave Erhart
 Brian Laudick
 Rhonda Osterhage
 Pres. Gary Stechschulte
 VP. Barry von der Embse

School Board Meetings:

Second Wednesday
 8:00 p.m.
 High School Library

Our primary concern is the welfare and education of the children entrusted in our care.

KALIDA BOARD OF EDUCATION
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