



Read Across America

Grab Your Hat and Read with the Cat!

It's a celebration of reading and literacy, and of one of America's favorite children's authors – Dr. Seuss. Monday, March 3 will mark the 10th anniversary of the National Education Association's (NEA) Read Across America program.

Launched in 1997, Read Across America focuses the country's attention on how important it is to motivate children to read. The celebration takes place every year around the birth date of Dr. Seuss (March 2), the beloved author whose use of rhyme makes books an effective tool for teaching young children a love of reading.

A number of Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools will be hosting formal and informal celebrations of Read Across America. Here is a sampling:

Welborn Elementary School has invited guest readers to visit the school that day to read to classes between 8:45 a.m. and 3 p.m. The readers may bring their own book or choose one from a selection that Librarian **Kim Sprowl** will have available. Scheduled readers include Mayor Joe Rearson; Board of Education members **Gloria Willis**, **George Breidenthal** and **Linda Pendleton**; KCKPS administrators and staff members **Connie**

Brand, **Jim Heiman**, **Jean Ney**, **Jayson Strickland**, **Steve Gering**, **Yvonne Pandzich**, and others. Also, a number of staff from State Farm, the school's corporate sponsor, will be reading at the school that day, as well as staff from the KCK Public Library.



Teachers at Wyandotte High School and Mark Twain Elementary School are collaborating on a special program to bring Dr. Seuss' books to life during Read Across America day. At Wyandotte **Patricia Hodison**, vocal music and choir director, and **Michelle Lee**, theater, have been working with five groups of students to adapt Dr. Seuss' books into plays to perform for students at Mark Twain. They have teamed up with Mark Twain music teacher **Christina Litke**. While the project promotes literacy and reading, it also allows the Wyandotte students to serve as role models for the younger students, Hodison said.

The NEA has a myriad of Read Across America celebration ideas and materials posted on its website at www.nea.org.



Strike Up the Band. . .

The middle school choir, band, and orchestra festivals filled the air with music in KCK during the last two weeks. Seen here are Arrowhead Middle School band members (front row from left) Lana Davis-Beard, 8th grade; Jessica Fleig, 8th grade; (back row, from left) Darius Horn, 8th grade; and Aarondrick Knox, 7th grade.

Missouri State Retires Jersey of Daryl Garrison

A special ceremony was held last week at Missouri State University for Kidzone Program Specialist **Daryl Garrison**. He became the fourth men's basketball player in Missouri State's history to have his uniform and number permanently retired. The ceremony took place during halftime of the Missouri State vs. Central Michigan University game on February 23.

Garrison is a 2007 inductee into the Springfield Area Sports Hall of Fame and a 1986 selection for the Missouri State Athletics Hall of Fame. He was a four-year starter for the Bears, and his 1,975 point total has not been beaten even though his career was completed (Continued on back)

February Employees of the Month

Congratulations to February Employees of the Month **Shannon Sundberg** and **Sarah Gerber**, kindergarten teachers at Stony Point South Elementary School, and **Javier Ruiz**, night custodian at McKinley Elementary School.

Sundberg and Gerber received the recognition for “going above and beyond to teach and build one-on-one relationships with every child in their class,” the nomination stated. “They have a way of connecting with every student as well as being able to teach in a way that allows every student to catch

on.” They were nominated by the parent of a former student.

Ruiz is respected by colleagues and students alike. He is a “dependable, conscientious worker,” his nomination stated. Speaking both English and Spanish, he has been asked on occasion to be a translator, and he willingly steps in to help staff communicate with parents or students. He is appreciative of his job and it shows through his dedication to McKinley.

Each of these staff members is a true asset to the Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools.

Board of Education Highlights

At its meeting on Tuesday, February 26, members of the Kansas City, Kansas Board of Education:

- Approved a request for out-of-district travel for 30 Washington High School ROTC Cadets. The group will be attending the Junction City Junior ROTC Drill Competition on March 8.
- Accepted the district’s insurance renewal for the plan year beginning July 1, 2008 with Humana. The district will continue to fund Coverage First plans at 100 percent for employee only coverage. The only benefit change to all plans is to change the prescription drug copays from \$10/\$30/\$50/25% to \$15/\$30/\$50/25%. For dental insurance, the district switched from Delta Dental to Guardian, and for vision it switched from VSP to Superior Vision. Open enrollment for district insurance will be held April 21 through May 23 this year. All employees are required to enroll in their benefits for the 2008-2009 plan year even if no

changes are being made.

- Accepted revised policies on Employee Fringe Benefits – Payroll Deductions and Teacher Fringe Benefits – Payroll Deductions that allow employees the opportunity to sign up to make payroll deduction donations to the KCK School Foundation for Excellence.
- Heard a report from students participating in the 20/20 Leadership Program. The 15-month leadership program focuses on teaching students communication, organization, determination and time management skills. Harmon High School students reported on a fund raiser they held to provide Christmas support to families. Wyandotte High School students presented a report on “Project Pregnancy” that teaches students to take responsibility, avoid peer pressure and make personal choices to reduce teen pregnancy.

Quindaro Staff Reunion Planned for June 7

Members of the Quindaro Elementary School staff are planning a reunion for June 7, 2008. The time and location of the event have not yet been finalized.

If you have been (or still are) a staff member at Quindaro, and are interested in getting together with current and former colleagues, please contact one of the following people before March 15, Florence Mays (321-8041), Marsha Hays (281-0485), or Ruby Frazier (287-7839).

Garrison

(Continued from front)

12 years before the introduction of the three-point field goal.

Garrison played in 107 Missouri State games and only 21 people have since reached or exceeded that total. He still holds MSU career marks in 20-point games (46), double-figure games (97), field goals (830) and field goal attempts (1,755).

A Celebration of Music

Staff and community members are invited to attend a celebration of Music in Our Schools Month set for 7 p.m. Monday, March 3 at Northwest Middle School Science and Technology Magnet. The event will include:

- Special selections from elite musical groups.
- A post reception honoring students.

For more information, call (913) 627-4066.

Applause

...to the TIS Department for their continued management



of SPAM e-mails. When the district’s SPAM filter went down last week, it let in scores of unwanted e-mails to all employees’ inboxes. It opened employees’ eyes to just how many of these unwanted e-mails the TIS staff filters out each day. Thanks to the TIS staff for their expertise and for their dedication to the district’s network!



STAFF NOTEBOOK

is a weekly publication for employees of the Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools. Submissions are welcome and should be directed to:

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