

AAPSNews

News, features, profiles and activities in The Ann Arbor Public Schools

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Issue No. 25. November 22, 2010



Fourth-graders in Teri Fraley's class at Lawton Elementary School collected 110 pounds of candy from around their school. They then weighed, packaged and shipped the candy to those serving in the military overseas. Here, students write letters and draw pictures to send with the candy.

Lawton students collect 110 lbs. of leftover candy for the troops

4th-grade teacher gets idea from TV show, inspiration from her own family

From AAPSNews Service

It was a sweet moment for Lawton Elementary School fourth-graders in Teri Fraley's class: Collecting 110 pounds of candy from Halloween trick-or-treaters and benefiting the troops overseas proved to be a double treat.

Earlier this month, students packaged candy into one-pound bags, wrote letters and drew pictures for military personnel serving overseas. Fraley said she got the idea from watching a segment on Good Morning America, where dentists from around the country were paying children to bring in their candy and then were shipping the candy overseas.

"We thought this would put a smile on someone's face, during a difficult time away on duty," Fraley said, explaining the project.

"My son is a graduate from Pioneer 2010 and is in the ROTC Air Force. Thinking of him and my nephew, a Marine who has had two tours of duty, is what I thought of when I carried out this idea."

Fraley reached out to the rest of Lawton, asking other students to bring in their candy, where she bought it for \$1 per pound. Fourth-graders visited other classrooms to explain their candy drive and, ultimately, filled a long table with bags of treats.

"Our plan is to ship them off to the troops and let them enjoy the chocolates and sweets," she added. "It was a big accomplishment our first year around."

The class researched groups and website that donate to the troops, but Fraley ultimately contacted her nephew to make the

See Candy page 6

28 fall teacher grants impact 7,500 students

Featured story

From AAPS Educational Foundation and AAPSNews Service

Some 450 sophomores in Skyline High School's advanced physics class are taking part in Crash Test! – a multi-week project where students design collapsible front ends for cars.

The project teaches students to work in teams, discover how the basic principles of physics apply to everyday life and how to apply motion, force and gravity said David Coupland, one of six teachers involved with the program who also applied for a AAPS Educational Foundation grant to help fund it.

"We're really trying to do something hands on," he said. "We point out that regardless of what you do

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102 honored at NAACP Freedom Fund Dinner

From AAPSNews Service

A total of 102 Ann Arbor high school students were honored this month by the Ann Arbor Chapter of the NAACP during the group's annual Freedom Fund Dinner.

The awards represent a 26 percent increase in the number of Ann Arbor students honored from last fall.

"This year, we had more scholars than ever before

See NAACP, page 4

Ann Arbor students taking charge at Neutral Zone

By **Carlina Duan**
AAPSNews Service

A recording studio, a printing press, a concert venue, a record label. It's not your typical run-through of independent businesses. Yet, these enterprises are unique in that all are created, managed, organized and run by Ann Arbor teens.

Youth Owned Enterprises at Ann Arbor's teen center, the Neutral Zone, ties all these businesses together.

YOE encompasses all four: Youth Owned Studios (the Orpheum), Red Beard Press, the B-Side and Youth Owned Records. Each is organized and monitored completely by Ann Arbor students who meet weekly to plan, coordinate and release their respective products to the purchasing community.

"Essentially, Youth-Owned Enterprises is a collaboration of different teen enterprises," said Youth Business Developer and YOE adviser Sarms Jabra. It gives these (enterprises) the opportunity to come together, teach each other, support each other and ultimately improve the quality of services that they're putting out."

Neutral Zone staff saw an intriguing chance this fall to expand students' learning experience. "It started officially this semester as all the different businesses began to get going," said Jabra, "We saw a really great opportunity to bring them together."

The entire range of the creative spectrum is covered. Red Beard Press is the Neutral Zone's printing press, publishing professional and student literary voices. Youth Owned Studios, (the Orpheum,) offers recording space for musical artists. Youth Owned Records is a business for aspiring young musicians to create, record, and distribute their work. Students participating in the B-Side oversee concert booking and scheduling of the Neutral Zone's concert venue.

Pioneer High School senior Sander Bregman is a B-Side staff member. He said YOE is a great resource. "The Neutral Zone and the staff provide opportunities for teens that really can't be found anywhere else around here," he said.

Monthly meetings consist of members from each group discussing, brainstorming and sharing perspectives on their businesses. Last month, the meeting entailed establishing YOE goals, which included ideas for multi-media business collaboration. For example, a writer whose work is published at Red Beard could record their work at

The Orpheum and perform it at the B-Side, said said Pioneer High School senior Sara Ryan, who works with Red Beard Press.

"We definitely really wanted to start working together and supporting each other. We wanted to have a very tight-knit, interweaving business community."

Other YOE goals include exchanging business tips and brainstorming a mission statement and rationale. The November meeting featured a graphic design workshop to teach teens about the design elements of business.

Jabra said the backbone of YOE is a community of support, cultivating advice and ideas from each teen business to another. "If we develop this community, it can be almost like an incubator," he added. "One of the best things about starting your own business is the ownership you have, and the responsibility."

Community High School senior Scott Aldworth is excited to be part of it. "The fact that I'm (having) an opportunity to be part of something unprecedented in that it's youth-owned and operated is an exciting offer," said Aldworth, who participates in the Orpheum.

Pioneer senior Mary Gallagher, an Orpheum participant, said YOE has offered her a vivid outlook on teamwork. "It's definitely made me feel a lot more like I'm part of a big group working towards a common mission," she said. "It's also neat to make progress together to create projects that are a lot more multi-layered and interesting than we could come up with on our own. The fact that we're all connected makes it better."

Jabra said YOE could face a challenge due to the busy schedules and possible commitment issues of high school students. But he and students say they are optimistic about Youth Owned Enterprises' budding future.

"I think for a lot of kids, what initially started as a simple interest has kind of become a really early, almost career choice for them," Ryan said.

"Being a part of businesses in YOE is a real show of passion. When you think of teenagers, the last thing you think of are kids who actually budget their projects and help other people complete their own projects. I think it's really interesting that kids are offering their services up for the community."

Carlina Duan is a regular contributor to the AAPSNews. She is a senior at Pioneer High School and is the editor of The Optimist, Pioneer's student newspaper.

Column

Carlina
Duan

Student
Contributor



Love of language draws senior to Red Beard Press

This past summer, I and five other Ann Arbor high school students gathered at the city's teen center, The Neutral Zone, each week to greet an ever-thickening amount of paperwork and rigid ambition.

Each meeting was met with a whirlwind schedule of designing business plan goals, learning about the publishing field, researching facts on the print industry, cooperating as a group to develop a mission statement, rationale, a vision ... and realizing daily reminders of the importance of our work for the latest addition to the Neutral Zone's youth-owned enterprises, Red Beard Press – an independent, youth-driven printing press dedicated to publishing cutting-edge books.

Our presence seemed, at times, a little idealistic, and a tad pretentious. After all, there are other independent printing presses in Ann Arbor – all aiming to reinvigorate readers with the freshest and the most compelling works of literature. So what makes us emboss ourselves? How can our voice cast clear over all the others?

Maybe we're too bold, or too young.

Sure, we have passion, curiosity; we're not afraid to plummet depths in order to fully carry through with our mission. But one key we have that other groups might not: A limitless belief in our generation and we want our work to delve into the heart of the community, but especially into the core of our generation: the youth.

Growing up in a world that's been widely centered on usage of the Internet, cell phones, television, and other multimedia appliances, I admit that I've been prone to becoming easily influenced by the swelling arena of technology. But a constant in my life has always been the more "traditional," rigid spine of the book.

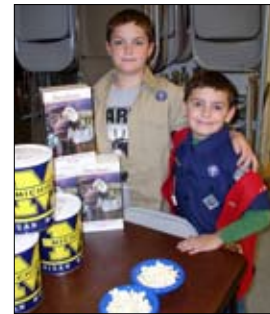
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Exceptional Education



Logan hosts fall 'Taste of Asia'

PTSO fundraiser offers
dinner, book fair, fellowship



Cub Scouts hosted a U-M popcorn sale fundraiser during the evening, left.

**SLIDE SHOW online at
news.a2schools.org**



Visitors are served a variety of Asian foods as part of the fall fundraiser. About 200 were served during the evening social, which took place on Nov. 18.



Community invited to view Pioneer High School improvements on Dec. 3

From AAPSNews Service

Members of the Ann Arbor Public Schools community are invited to visit Pioneer High School at 6:30 p.m. Dec. 3 to tour the building and see improvements made possible through the voter-approved 2004 bond issue which funded much of the district's Comprehensive School Improvement Plan.

The event will take place in the school's newly expanded cafeteria

at 601 W. Stadium Blvd.

Pioneer represents the final major district construction project paid for by the bond issue.

"Completion of the plan is a powerful demonstration of the commitment our parents and community have to our schools," said Interim Superintendent Robert Allen. "It is another example of the Ann Arbor Public Schools community coming together to accomplish great things for our students."

Projects paid for with the bond include: Constructing Skyline High School, the district's third comprehensive high school; remodeling both Pioneer and Huron high schools; modernizing all K-12 school buildings; building a new preschool facility and offering tuition-based preschool in other buildings; expanded all-day kindergarten options; providing up-to-date technology tools; upgrading Scarlett Middle School into a commu-

nity centered model middle school; purchasing new buses; replacing musical instruments; eliminating high school portables; and creating small learning communities at the comprehensive high schools.

Also, successful management of the bond money allowed the district to make additional technology purchases of \$7 million; the district anticipates being able to do an additional technology upgrade from the final budget reconciliation.

NAACP honors, from page 1

and, for the first time, students from Roberto Clemente,” said chapter President William Hampton, about the Nov. 6 event.

Last year, 81 Ann Arbor students were selected as top scholars at the Freedom Fund Dinner, which honors academic achievement among black high school students. The Ann Arbor chapter concentrates heavily on education, giving out scholarships and tutoring students.

Each student honored had a grade point average of 3.2 or higher during the last academic school year.

Chauné Rael-Whitsitt, an honor student from Skyline High School, performed a musical selection on her viola as part of the program, Hampton said. The keynote speaker for this year’s dinner was Keith Owens, former Michigan Chronicle editor and communications professional.

Ann Arbor students honored this year and the schools they represent included:

Community High School:

Third-year scholars: Tamara Parks and Bradie Connor.

Second-year scholars: Senait Dafa and Chelsea Evans-Warren.

First-year scholars: Leah Awkward-Rich, Melissa Chime, Rianna Johnson-Levy and Kylah Thompson.

Huron High School:

Third-year scholars: Brittany Cole, Blaire Crockett, Awah Dittah and Marysa Hill and Imani Watkins. *Second-year scholars:* Christiana Allen-Pipkin, JeJuan French, LaMicah Hughbanks, Kamaria Lee, Maya Long, Fatou Ndaw, Cynthia Ofili, Lindsey Whitlock and Dallas Williams. *First-year scholars:* Brianna Brewer, Tavion Calhoun, Ibrahim Fasina, Camille Frazier, Jessica Gibson, Sara Golidy, Rachel Hutchings, Alexis Marable, Danielle Marshall, Olivia Martin, Xavier McClair, Chelsea Mercer, Hannah Mohamed, Deborah-Luti Munganga, Gabriel Stevenson and Bianca Wilson.

Pioneer High School:

Third-year scholars: Triesha Arnold, Tiffany Cole, Chloe Corley, Gregory Goss II, Megan Graham, Mani Herring, Kailen McKay, Kaitlyn Mills, Crystal Smith, Willie Smith Jr., Joshua Weiland and Aaron Wilson. *Second-year scholars:* Malachi Bowerbank, Jazmine Cooper, DeLayna Corley, Ashli Marable, Justin Pendleton, Daniesha Scott and Ana Vereen.

First-year scholars: Josephine Alinoti, Sinclair Fonville, Taylor Gayton, Ivy Gregory, Shana Jackson, Terrell Jordan-McKnight, Ti’Anna Mercer, Jassadi Moore and Antonia Smith.

Roberto Clemente Student Development Center:

First-year scholars: Wilniqua Battle, Roderick Casey II and Yazmin Warren.

Skyline High School:

Second-year scholars: Hafsa Farah, Jeremy Jagers, Kelsy Lee, Jasper Lindsay, Jonathan Muriu, Chauné Rael-Whitsitt and Paige Wint. *First-year scholars:* Oreoluwapo Abatan, Emily Anderson, Shalena Blocker, Christian Boyd, Kevin Burden, Mariam Carson, Joshua Crawford, Densu Dixon, Tionna Griffin, Dominique Hardy, Austin Lee, Abeni Lynk, Kiyah Mills, Lena Mitchell, Mariah Mitchell, Frederick Newing II, Hussain Sandifer, Imani Schneider, Christopher Shepherd, Jayla Sims, Mahal Stevens, Ashlie Turner, Sina Webster, James Wilks, Emajae Woodley and Malaika Worsham.

Carlina Duan, from page 2

Needless to say, I’m a reader.

However, I can’t speak for the rest of my generation.

In many of my past English classes, many of my friends (and, occasionally, myself included) – have grumbled at the mandatory assignment of each Shakespeare novel, each Elizabethan-era poem. The problem with literacy in our generation is that many young people have developed the mindset that literature is a burden. Books are material that only encompass the confines of class work, the five-paragraph essay, the often out-of-date, indecipherable diction, complete with a revolving set of metaphors and detailed reading quizzes.

Although classic literature is a necessity in the academic curriculum, I find that it can be stifling for students who must sift through years of mandatory English class novels to re-discover the joy of literature. In fact, an increasing number of high school students have stopped reading books outside of what they’re required to do for class. They don’t have the motivation or the eagerness to read any more than the bare minimum.

Needless to say, they’re missing out.

At Red Beard Press, we believe that books have an extraordinary power to teach and to energize. Our mission statement declares that literature “still has the power to serve as a bridge to both inspiration and insightful dialogue.” That said, we think that books should unite, educate both academically and culturally and preserve a vibrant scene of literary awareness in Ann Arbor’s youth and beyond.

Countless modes of our print culture are being lost to media and technology, yet the existence of Red Beard Press is as urgent as ever right now, and we’re ripe to make it happen.

Red Beard Press is aiming to publish five books this year – ranging in subjects from anthologies of teen prose and poetry, to short poetry books featuring emerging voices of young writers around our community. We’re even planning on partnering with local nonprofits to develop books orbiting on a common theme: integrating ourselves further within the community.

We published our first book of the school year two weeks ago. Titled “Watch Me Swing,” the book was released for the annual literary event, Poetry Night In Ann Arbor, which took place Nov. 4. “Watch

Me Swing” showcases the work of two brilliant, professional poets prime in their field, who performed at the event: Martín Espada and Samantha Thornhill.

Youth participants like myself meet at least once each week at the Neutral Zone, and, essentially, partake in every aspect in the publishing process of a book. We’re key in selecting the content, promoting community outreach, crafting business plans, laying out the book design, marketing, coordinating events, organizing publicity, and more. Which makes it even more exciting for our audience.

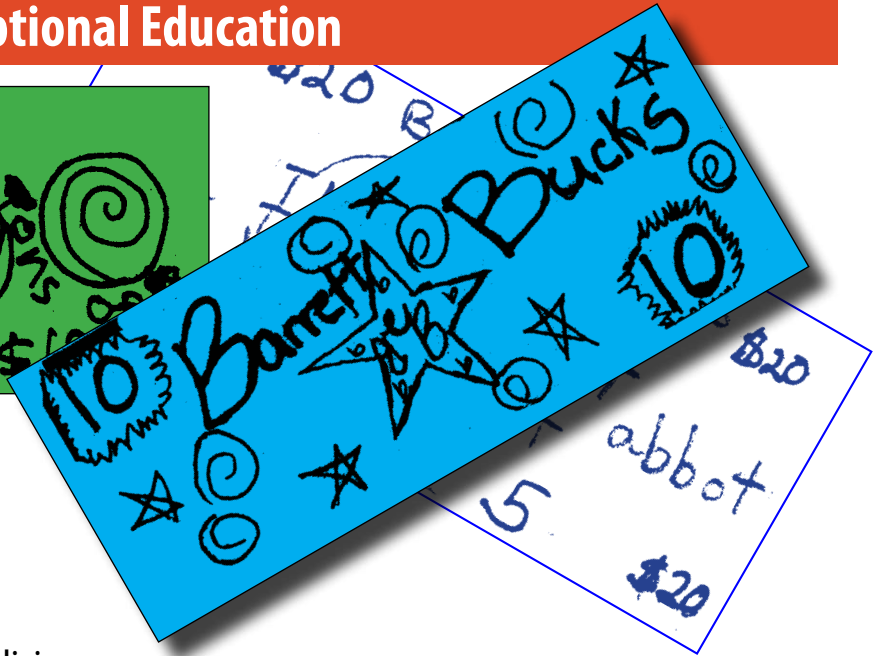
By involving high school students in Red Beard, we’re essentially at the forefront of being able to choose and cultivate what our generation is reading. We can offer the appeal of books in ways other publishing companies might not be able to. After all, who better understands what the youth today love than . . . youth?

Additionally, we can peel away stereotypes of our generation that others may have developed, and help the rest of the community gain a better understanding of our imaginations, and the issues we’re passionate about. And by doing so, we’re able to unify a diverse group of people through a shared interest in reading.

For me, Red Beard Press is a huge outlet to create, and to teach. As an aspiring writer, it’s absolutely invigorating to read the words of others and be able to help others achieve a similar feeling. It’s especially beautiful that I can change others’ perceptions of books. It hasn’t been the easiest of tasks. Laying out an entire book or even just selecting which poems to keep and take out of an anthology has proven to be daunting. But it’s work that I find unique in that it offers my generation a booming voice to magnify the things we really care about for the community and for ourselves. By doing so, I’ve already experienced a surge in inspiration by reading and dishing out these good reads to others.

That being said, hear us out. We might be young, we might dream big, but I know I speak for the rest of the Red Beard staff when I say we’re dedicated to churning out top quality books for ourselves and for the rest of the community.

For more information, check out our website: www.redbeardbooks.com.



Mini-society at Abbot

5th-graders learn about spending, saving, living

By Angie Ceely
AAPSNews Service

Monthly rent of \$500 for your desk? Being paid \$100 for receiving 100 percent on a math test? Being fined \$50 for a messy desk or locker? Jobs, money and real estate are now a part of everyday life in Tracy Barrett's fifth-grade classroom mini-society at Abbot Elementary School.

Students worked together to determine potential names for their mini-society, and voted on the final name. The "District Five" mini-society will be in place for the entire school year.

All students are employees with specific jobs to perform. The main job of each employee is to be a student. Students are expected to complete all assignments and follow the school and

classroom rules. Each student is also responsible for classroom jobs which could include bankers, janitors, accountants, graders, homework distributors, couriers, librarians, clerks, police officers and absence coordinators.

In early September, students completed job applications with their top three choices for jobs as well as why they would be the best person for each of those jobs. Barrett announced job assignments after reviewing all of the applications, and then trained everyone on their specific tasks and responsibilities.

Students will have the same job for the entire school year. Each job has a set salary; an employee can receive a raise for a job well done, or can be fired for not fulfilling responsibilities.

"Barrett Bucks," designed by students in a variety of denominations, are used as money. Students are paid set amounts when they

complete assignments, perform their jobs and follow school rules.

All students pay \$500 monthly rent for their desks, and may use any remaining money they have at the monthly classroom store. Items for purchase include modeling clay, recorders, pencils sharpeners, puzzles and more. Students can also decide to save their money to purchase their desk for three times the amount of rent. If a desk is owned, property taxes of 20 percent are paid in January and April.

So far, District Five is off to a great start. Students are enjoying their jobs and the salary that comes with a job well done. They are learning valuable life skills on a day-to-day basis with this yearlong project.

This article was submitted by Abbot Elementary parent Angie Ceely.



Dave Corsa's students talk with students in Sapporo, Japan via Skype on Nov. 17. Families were invited to the 6:30 p.m. teleconference; it was 8:30 a.m. in Japan, where students were just starting their day.

**VIDEO online at
news.a2schools.org**

Allen 3rd-graders chat with peers in Japan



Allen Elementary teacher Dave Corsa, right, and his students and their parents watch as teachers and students from Japan share information about their school. Several more teleconferences are planned this year.

Foundation grants, from page 1

in life, you'll use this."

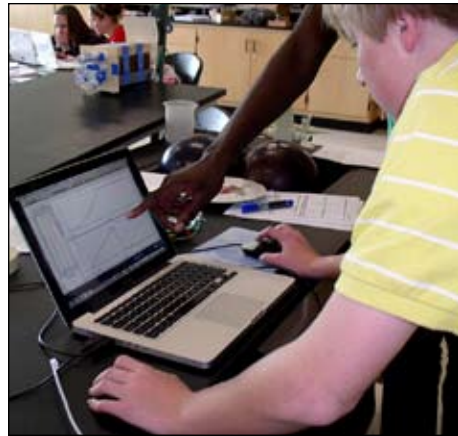
The Accelerated Integrated Sciences II class project is being done thanks to a grant from the Ann Arbor Public Schools Educational Foundation, which provided \$936 through its fall teacher grant program. According to Coupland, grant money paid for the model test cars students are using to test their hypothesis of how to best design the front end of a car for safety.

Coupland said the project introduces students to technical writing and project management skills as they develop their task lists, set deadlines and track their projects. Each team has its own Google page, accessible by their teachers where they log work, testing and results.

The project started with visits from Ford Motor Co. engineers, who explained what they do and discussed the concept. The finale will be a capstone project at month's end, where student teams will have developed posters with their findings. They will present to adult reviewers during the school's first Conference on Automotive Crash Testing.

"They see there's more to this than school work," Coupland added. "We do a lot with data analysis. We have ambitious and broad goals for this class."

The Skyline project is among 28 grants totaling \$22,606 recently awarded by the AAPS Educational Foundation during its fall grant review. The programs will impact an estimated 7,584 students at 21 Ann Arbor schools. AAPSEF grant awards are competitive – 61 applications were received in all – and the maximum amount of funding given



Skyline High School physics students work on the Crash Test! project.

per project is \$1,000. Grants were awarded from kindergarten through high school levels.

Projects funded include a mural project at Skyline High School; installation of a garden at Roberto Clemente; additions to the science collection for K-5th grades at Carpenter Elementary School's library; the purchase of West African percussion instruments for Ann Arbor Open; summer learning programs at Haisley and Lawton Elementary Schools, among others. Some grant awards are for next-step phases of projects, such as the Scarlett Bands Clinic Remix Day, where local music professionals spend a day working individually with students.

Other projects, such as the Huron High School Science Extravaganza Day, are traditions that have built their own history. Extravaganza Day, in its fourth year of funding, introduces hundreds of fifth-grade students to the world of high school science with hands-on physics experiments led by Huron High students. The idea is to inspire the fifth-graders to be excited about science classes offered in middle school, preparing them for high school courses in the subject.

Ann Arbor Open's music teacher, Dan Tolly, received funding for West African percussion ensemble instruments. "The support of the Ann Arbor Public Schools Educational Foundation allows educators to take our craft to a whole new level," he said. "The grant money received gives us the chance to bring the world to our students."

New to the teacher grants this year is a fund established by the Pioneer High School Class of 1980, which gathered support for special education classrooms. Students at Pioneer in the Life Skills Classroom will benefit from a new swing in the Sensory Area. At King Elementary School, students with attention issues will experience the difference of using stand-up desks.

Other grants are made through the foundation's general fund. In addition, support for teacher grants is given through the Burns Park Players Grant Fund, The Eleanor B. Dahlmann Memorial Fund, The Freeth Family Fund and the Marcy Westerman Fund.

The 2010-2011 academic year is the 14th year that the Ann Arbor Public Schools Educational Foundation has awarded grants to staff.

Candy, from page 1

necessary contacts overseas.

"There are many organizations out there that think of the troops," Fraley said, adding that her students are "very excited about the idea of the soldiers writing back."

One student asked in his letter: "I want to ask you some questions. How are you? How are you feeling? Thank you for what you are doing," he wrote.

Fraley said she used the candy collection as a multi-faceted lesson for students: In addition to the obvious health and community service, they did the math (had to count and weigh the candy for shipping), got a lesson in language arts (writing to the troops) and practiced their art skills (each Marine got a handmade picture.)

In addition to finding a unique way to share unused candy, Fraley has been involved in the school's "greening" in other ways, finding ways to reduce, reuse and recycle. Her classes have collected and recycled used plastic and snack bags during school lunch hours in an all-school effort to reduce items going to landfills.

The most recent project Fraley is proposing the school is using Wrap "N Mats, a reusable product that will allow students to bring their sandwiches and other items to school without using disposable bags. She contacted the company and received a discounted price if they place an all-school order.

"I keep telling them this is applying your knowledge to the community," Fraley added. "Set your goals and your purpose and decide how you're going to get there."



Community High fitness class runs through Hell

Thirty eight Community High School students participated in the annual Halloween Run Thru Hell 5k and 10K races in Hell, Mich.

According to physical education and health teacher Robbie Stapleton, all of the students participating were from the Personal Fitness classes at Community. Most ran the

5K, but about 10 student did the 10K, she said.

"Every semester, the Personal Fitness students run a race together, after training hard for the first nine weeks of the semester," Stapleton said.

"There's nothing quite like crossing a finish line!"