

AAPSNews

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

More news and features online at <http://news.a2schools.org>

Artistic display

Annual all-district exhibition continues through this week, **page 4**

Habitat at Abbot

Space is celebrated and certified, **page 5 and video online**

Honors and celebrations

A series of school district news briefs, **page 6**

Issue No. 36, May 31, 2011

Pittsfield 3rd-graders learn about aquaculture

From AAPSNews Service

Say hello to Walter, if you can find him.

Families and students who visit Spring Valley Trout Farm look forward to spotting the behemoth 14-pound catfish that has become a legend at the family owned farm west of Dexter.

Third-graders in Melissa Jaeger's and Kara Armstrong's classes from Pittsfield Elementary School recently

See Fishing, page 2



Kevin Turley of the Spring Valley Trout Farm shares fish facts with some Pittsfield Elementary School third-graders during a recent field trip. Here, students get a chance to see a channel catfish up close and to touch it. Spring Valley Trout Farm is located west of Dexter.

View a video of Pittsfield students at Spring Valley:
<http://a2schools.org>

11 schools get new principals

Changes are due to retirements, reduction of 2 administrative high school posts

Nine Ann Arbor Public Schools elementaries will have new principals due to retirements and shifts in personnel and two middle schools will get new assistant principals for the 2011-12 school year.

All of the new appointments are internal in the district. The announcements were made last week by Interim Superintendent Robert Allen and individual letters were sent to parents at each school introducing the new administrators.

Elementary principal appointments include:

- **Kit Flynn at Ann Arbor Open**, who has been the school's media specialist and also served as an interim principal for part of this school year;
- **Roberta Heyward at Bryant Elementary**, who moves to the permanent post after serving as

See Principals, page 6

Portfolio Day offers poise, career advice to Scarlett 8th-graders

A list of participating professionals

Who did the interviews? **Page 2**

Preparation is everything

Teacher Ellen Daniel helps students prepare their portfolios. **Page 3**

A2Y Chamber gives program award

Applause for excellence. **Page 3**



Tiffany Lin of Google interviews a Scarlett eighth-grader during the school's annual Portfolio Day. More than 70 professionals participated.

Fishing, from page 1

got the chance to search for Walter, as well as enjoying a day of fishing, learning about fish and the business of aquaculture while visiting the farm on a field trip.

Jaeger's maternal grandparents (and parents to Haisley Elementary Principal Mary Anne Jaeger) bought the property and started the 20-acre farm when they discovered there was a natural spring on the property.

"My grandparents bought this property and found out they were on an aquifer. He learned as he went," said Jaeger of her grandfather's farming. She grew up coming to the farm and said she thought her students would also enjoy a day there.

It is still family owned and operated, with Jim Kaercher at the helm. Another connection: he is Mary Anne Jaeger's brother and the husband of Pioneer High School math teacher Jeanette Kaercher.

"I was 10 when we opened," he explained. "Everything here we (the family) brought in and created."

Kaercher grew up working around the family fish farm and eventually got his degree in business. He said the spring-fed nature of the ponds puts them at the proper temperature for keeping the trout healthy and happy.

"You have to be part biologist, part environmentalist part businessman to be able to do it," he added.

Spring Valley Trout Farm sells fish mostly to individual anglers, but does make one exception to the rule: They sell trout to Haab's Restaurant in Ypsilanti, he said.

The farm caters not only to school groups like the Pittsfield classes, but is used for corporate team-building meetings and draws other groups including churches. Individuals and families also come out to catch fresh trout and catfish during the fishing season.

Kaercher said his favorite part of the job involves the many families that visit.

"I love working with the kids," he said. "I've had college kids working for me who have loved the kids so much, they've gone into teaching," he added.

For more information about the Spring Valley Trout Farm, visit www.springvalleytroutfarm.com or call 734-426-4772. Their e-mail address is detrout@aol.com.

Area professionals participating in 2011 Scarlett Portfolio Day

Devon Adjei, African Studies Center at The University of Michigan

Robert Allen, Ann Arbor Public Schools

Lorenzo Banda, Ann Arbor Smiles

Ben Barefield, SRT Solutions, Inc.

Kate Begeman, E. Stadium Physical Therapy

Channing Bennett, Henry Ford West Bloomfield Hospital

Virginia Cardwell, Roberts & Freatman

Dr. Mark Chappell-Lakin, Live Well Chiropractic Center, PLLC

Velda F. Coleman, RAHS School-based Health Center-Scarlett

Wendy Correll, Ann Arbor Public Schools Educational Foundation

Vaughan Daniel, LG Chem Power, Inc.

Lee Ann Dickinson-Kelley, Ann Arbor Public Schools

John Duerr

Marina Fedner, SRT Solutions, Inc.

Dr. Todd M. Gillihan, Bennett Optometry

JoAnn Grantham, U-M Youth Mentoring Program

Dr. Steve Gray, Ann Arbor Smiles

Claiborne Green, U-M Athletic Dept.

Elyse Guilfoyle, Google Ann Arbor

Katy Hepner, U-M Athletic Department

Joyce Hunter, Ann Arbor Public Schools

Linda Jenkins

Kristin Judge, Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners

Dr. David Keren, Saint Joseph Mercy Health System

Keith Knudsen, Soar Technology, Inc.

Tom Kolpacki, Ann Arbor Police Dept.

Andy LaBarre, Ann Arbor / Ypsilanti Area Chamber of Commerce

Elizabeth LaPorte, Michigan Sea Grant

Moses Lee, U-M Center for Entrepreneurship

Tiffany Lin, Google Ann Arbor

Jacqueline Lucas

Chris Marinos, SRT Solutions, Inc.

Teri McDaniel, DFCU Financial

Jeff McDole, U-M Dept. of Public Safety

Deb Mexicotte, U-M and Ann Arbor Public Schools

Glenn Nelson, Ann Arbor Public Schools

Brice O'Neal

Ryan Ormond, FBI

Tiffani Pace, Subaru Research and Development, Inc.

Derrick Padgett, Ann Arbor Public Schools

Andy Paterson, Michigan Energy Generation

Melissa Pohrence, U-M Athletic Dept.

Douglas Rakoski, U-M Health System

John Ramirez, Real Estate One

Sander Robinson, Cooperative Institute for Limnology and Ecosystems Research

Omari Rush, University Musical Society

Raleigh Sadlier, Ann Arbor Public Schools

Waleed Samaha, Ann Arbor Public Schools

Jon Sanderson, U-M Athletic Department

Nancy Schleicher

Steven Schulman, DFCU Financial

Ingrid Sheldon, former Ann Arbor mayor

Collyer Smith

Sally Sorte, Google Ann Arbor

Alan Tanabe, Meijer Pharmacy

Whitney Tarver, U-M Athletic Department

Christopher Taylor, Butzel Long law firm

Andy Thomas, Ann Arbor Public Schools

Emma Tolman, The Neutral Zone

Ron Torrella, The University of Michigan

Sherlonya Turner, Ann Arbor District Library

Amaechi Udoji, Huron Valley Financial

Monique Uzelac, Ann Arbor Public Schools

Trina Vallion, Env. Protection Agency

Veena Valluri, Google Ann Arbor

Gerald Vazquez, Ann Arbor Public Schools

Steve Vinson, The University of Michigan

Bill Wagner, SRT Solutions, Inc.

Christopher Wall, Fishbeck, Thompson, Carr & Huber, Inc.

Kim Ward, DFCU Financial

Dr. Erika Washburn, NOAA Great Lakes Environmental Research Lab

Doug Warsinski, Ann Arbor Fire Dept.

Matt Wherry, Subaru Research and Development, Inc.

Kathryn Wilkinson, Huron Valley Beauty Academy

Barbara Wingrove, U-M Health System

Jason Whittaker, Russell Video Services

Source: AAPS Business Partnership Office

Portfolio Day pairs professionals, students

Scarlett Middle School eighth-graders get one-on-one interviews with local business leaders

Portfolio Day receives kudos from the chamber

Scarlett Middle School Portfolio Day received an Exemplary Educational Endeavors Award this month from the Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti Regional Chamber of Commerce for its Portfolio Day project. Scarlett language arts teacher Ellen Daniel and retired counselor Nancy Schleicher, who founded the program, were both nominated an honored.

It was presented at the A2Y Early Edition breakfast on May 18, the same day that Portfolio Day took place in the afternoon.

Scarlett received a trophy and a \$200 award for the program that has touched more than 3,000 eighth-graders over 17 years. Programs in Ypsilanti, Lincoln Consolidated and Willow Run school districts were also honored by the chamber.

Ann Arbor Public Schools Educational Foundation Executive Director Wendy Correll nominated the Portfolio Day project for the award. "For most students, this will be their only opportunity for a 'mock' interview before they truly are interviewing for jobs and applying to college," said Correll, who also serves as an interviewer. "The program that Mrs. Schleicher designed has exceeded expectations and lives on today, nearly two decades after its inception."

Mary Moffett, community relations director for The Neutral Zone, has been involved with Portfolio Day since its start. "Even after all of these years, I continue to be impressed by the students I interview and how they present themselves," she said in her letter supporting the nomination. It is "the perfect example of a partnership between schools and business and of business professionals supporting youth in the development of real-world, life skills."



Professionals spread out across the building, including on Scarlett's second-floor, to meet with students and conduct interviews. Organizers say the event boosts student confidence and teaches them skills they will need heading into high school next year.

From AAPSNews Service

Scarlett Middle School eighth-graders got a taste of multiple career choices during the school's annual Portfolio Day, which teams students with local professionals who share their expertise about the working world.

To prepare for the day, students prepared portfolios to get ready for the 10- to 12-minute interviews.

Whitney Tarver, an administrative intern with the University of Michigan Athletic Department, was one of the professional interviewers. She spoke with five students and said, "it's just exciting to talk to them and hear them talk about their future."

Tarver said she was surprised to see how things have changed since she was in school. "I learned that the curriculum has changed a lot," she said. "They're really helping students apply what they're learning to what they want to do in the future."

A total of 76 Ann Arbor area professionals took part in this year's event. New this year was a student-business mixer at the conclusion of the interview sessions.

Scarlett lead Language Arts teacher Ellen Daniel works with students to build their portfolios and confidence leading up to the day. Students create cover letters, resumes and portfolios of their accomplishments, research areas of interest in careers, rehearse interview questions and learn interview skills including business dress, posture, making eye contact and developing a firm, confident handshake.

The day "makes a clear connection between what they do in real life and how school relates to that," Daniel said. "It exposes students to all kinds of possibilities of what they can do and gives them exposure to other careers they might not even consider."

Daniel told the visiting professionals that this is the first time most students would be doing a cold interview

and meeting with a professional. "I'm trying to prepare them for a future none of us can see," she told the group. "Jobs that didn't exist five years ago are hot now."

Annette Ferguson, the district's business partnership coordinator, worked with Daniel to coordinate business participation in the day. She said it can be a turning point for students. "These students are moving into high school next year and Portfolio Day encourages them to think about their careers, academic choices and connections to the community," she said. "This event is not designed to make students know what they want to be, but to help them think about what they can be."

Ferguson said participating businesses this year included scientists, entrepreneurs, engineers, medical professionals and law enforcement representatives, among others. Organizers looked not only for interesting and challenging professions, but also for those who use new and advancing technologies.

Tiffany Lin works with Google as an account manager. She said she looked forward to meeting with students. "It's definitely important to learn new skills early on," she said.

Certified athletic trainer Melissa Pohorence works at U-M. She said Portfolio Day gives students confidence in themselves. "They can learn how to conduct themselves in a setting like this," she said. "They're getting a great start."

Elizabeth LaPorte directs communication and education outreach to schools for the Michigan Sea Grant through U-M. This was her first time at Portfolio Day, and said she was pleased to share her career calling with students. "This will be exciting for me too," she said before the interviews began. "I'm expecting to get energized from the students."

"Even if they may not choose science as a primary career, there are a lot of related things they can do. There's so much variety in almost every area."

K-12 Art Exhibition continues this week at U-M gallery

By Casey Hans
AAPSNews Service

Huron High School senior Nick Freese was eager to participate in this year's Ann Arbor Public Schools K-12 Art Exhibition with a self-portrait that reflects his love of nature and has a bit of whimsy.

In the portrait, he is upside down and becoming part of a tree – roots and all. Freese's work is among dozens of student works that continue on display through this week at the University of Michigan Slusser Gallery on North Campus.

Freese's 3-by-4 foot artwork uses acrylics, plus spray paint and markers to achieve the final result. He said the portrait was based on a class project that "was supposed to be reflective." He based his work on a photo taken by friend and let it develop from there.

"My belief that everything is one in nature and everything is constantly moving," he said, describing how he approached his art. Freese said he hopes to someday be an art teacher.

"My mom's an artist – it skipped a generation," explained Nick's mom, Beth Freese, who attended an opening reception with her son. "He thinks everything through and then acts. He's always had a plan."



Nick Freese, a Huron High School senior, with his self portrait that is part of this year's Ann Arbor Public Schools K-12 Art Exhibition at the Slusser Gallery on U-M's North Campus. Below, more samples of student creations and Community High School Jazz Band members, who played at the exhibition's opening reception.



Pottery, paintings, jewelry and mixed media are all represented in the district's largest student art show of the year. Exhibit hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays and noon to 7 p.m. Saturdays through this weekend. The Slusser Gallery is in the U-M School of Art & Design Building, 2000 Bonisteel Blvd., just off of Fuller.

Works from AAPS students in all grades are represented in the show and, for the first time, all elementary schools have a presence, said director of this year show, Chris Cerniglia, an art teacher at Scarlett Middle School.

Organizers had to balance the amount of art by school to find space for the extra 18 schools. "This year, we were happy to include every elementary school," said Cerniglia, who coordinated the hanging of the show. "I think that's what so powerful here: It's a full district show. Rebuilding that feel is kind of neat. (Students)

were all excited about trying to get into it. It just exposes them to more and more."

Cerniglia said the show is also continuing to build a relationship with the university, which has graciously allowed the district in the Slusser Gallery for the second year.

Huron High School graphic design teacher Jason Treece had his students design art show posters for a third year. They promote the event, but are also on display as artwork at the show.

He said students judged each other's work and came up with four solid designs; all are on display.

"I only chose what the students liked," he said. "This was their thing. I was really tickled. Each year it gets a little bit better."

In addition to the student show, the Ann Arbor Art Teachers Spring 2011 exhibition runs through June 10 at the Work Gallery, 306 S. State St.



National Wildlife Federation honors Schoolyard Habitat

Video online:
<http://a2schools.org>

From AAPSNews Service

Take a stroll through the Abbot Elementary School courtyard and you are transported into a world of nature.

The once overgrown space has been transformed into an area of beauty that attracts birds, wildlife and has native plants and flowers. The National Wildlife Federation recently certified the courtyard as a Schoolyard Habitat.

“One year ago, that space was overgrown trees and weeds and garbage and cracked asphalt. It was a mess,” said Angie Ceely, fourth-grade parent who co-chaired the habitat effort with fellow parent Tamara Schirmer. “We had all of the students and all the parents and all the teachers work together to change all of that to make something really special.

“You all should be so proud of all of the projects that you do to make it a special place that we all can enjoy,” she told students during a celebratory assembly.

The Abbot Schoolyard Habitat features a sound system to bring bird sounds into the school; a bird feeding system including a fresh fruit feeder, two suet feeders, a thistle feeder and three squirrel corn cob bungee cords; 650 native Michigan plants; a water pond; and two rain gardens.

As a project, classrooms decorated 12 hand-made cedar birdhouses depicting various places in Ann Arbor and specially made to attract chickadees, wrens and Prothonotary warblers. At the assembly, the birdhouses were unveiled by representatives of the businesses and organizations depicted. Teachers, their class birdhouse themes and special guests included:

- Amelia Barrons (multi-age class), Police Department theme. Special Guest: Officer John Elkins, Ann Arbor Police Department.
- Sarah Bradley (morning Young Fives),



Students, staff and guests parade through the Schoolyard Habitat following a school assembly.

At home with a natural habitat at Abbot

Gingerbread House theme.

- Alison Corey (afternoon Young Fives) Dairy Queen theme.

- Carol DeKeyzer (morning and afternoon Kindergarten) Humane Society & Doggy Hotel themes. Special Guest: Deb Kern, Humane Society of Huron Valley.

- Cynthia Heusel (fourth-grade) Blimpy Burger theme. Special Guest: Rich and Christine Magner, Owners of Blimpy Burger.

- Andy Meyer (first-grade), Night Sky and Neighborhood House themes. Special Guest: Ann

Neuenschwander, Director of Development for the Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum.

- Christine North (third-grade), Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum theme. Special Guest: Mel Drumm, Executive Director of the Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum.

- Laura Publiski (third-grade) M-Den theme. Special Guest: Daniel Tyrell, M Den.

- Dawn Snow (multi-age class), Abbot Elementary School theme. Special Guest: Morgan Solomon, head custodian at Abbot Elementary.

- Annette Stojceovich (fourth-grade), Plum Market theme. Special Guest: Jennifer Bolanos, Store Assistant Team Leader of Plum Market.

Students learned about growing native Michigan plants from seed and transplanting them to the habitat, placing colored yarn in the habitat for birds to use in their nests and creating wildlife identification books based on sighting logs. Many other classroom projects were done relating to the habitat theme.

The Schoolyard Habitat Steering Committee began working on the project about two years ago. Adding natural

features, the school aimed for things that would encourage wildlife, including: water, food, shelter and places to raise their young – the four things needed to be certified by the National Wildlife Federation, said John Stahly, a local naturalist and habitat consultant for the project.

In addition to committee co-chairs Schirmer and Ceely, other members of the steering committee included first-grade teacher Andy Meyer, fifth-grade teacher Becky

Waits, Principal Pam Sica, AAPS Environmental Education Specialist Dave

Szczygiel; and naturalist Stahly.

The school sends out special thanks to Pictures Plus, owned by the Godwins, an Abbot family, for donating the framing for the School Habitat certificate. Also thanked was Abbot parent Rob Norris and his family who built all of the birdhouses that students decorated.



Principals, from page 1

interim principal since mid-year;
■ Virginia Bell at Burns Park Elementary, who comes from an assistant principalship at Huron High School;

■ Kathy Morhous at King Elementary, moving to King from the principal's job at Burns Park Elementary;

■ Kevin Karr at Mitchell Elementary, moving to Mitchell from the principal's job at King Elementary;

■ Charles Davis at Carpenter Elementary, who has been lead teacher at Haisley Elementary and also served as interim principal at Haisley for part of this school year;

■ Bill Harris at Eberwhite Elementary, who moves from the assistant director post in Student Intervention and Support Services;

■ Kathy Scarnecchia at Haisley Elementary. She has most recently served as administrative liaison for the UM-Mitchell-Scarlett Partnership and, prior to that, was principal at Mitchell;

■ Natasha York at Thurston Elementary, who moves from a teaching position at Carpenter Elementary.

At the middle schools, **John Reece** moves from assistant principal at Pioneer to assistant principal at Forsythe Middle School and **Edward Broom** returns as assistant principal at Scarlett Middle School.

Broom has most recently served as interim principal at Mitchell Elementary and also served as interim principal at Scarlett the previous year.

Retiring from principal posts at the end of this year are Ron Collins at Carpenter, Debi Wagner at Eberwhite, Patricia Manley at Thurston and Mary Anne Jaeger at Haisley. Naomi Zikmund-Fisher at Ann Arbor Open and Luther Corbitt at Bryant Elementary resigned their principal positions mid-year and interim principals have filled those posts.

School Bells

Online safety topic of panel discussion

A panel presentation is scheduled to offer information to families about how students and children function in an online world.

"Stop, Think Connect: Online Safety & Digital Citizenship" is sponsored by the Ann Arbor Public Schools, the Washtenaw Area Council for Children, and the Ann Arbor Police.

This panel presentation will answer the questions of what kids are doing online and discuss the topics of digital citizenship, online privacy, cyberbullying, sexting and more. Students are welcome to attend.

The event will take place at 6 p.m. Monday June 6 at the Forsythe Middle School Media Center, 1655 Newport Road, west of Main Street, north of Summit Street.

E-mail Director of Instructional Technology Monique Uzelac at uzelac@aaps.k12.mi.us with any questions.

2 honored with excellence awards

Two Ann Arbor Public Schools staff members received Celebration of Excellence awards at the May 25 Board of Education meeting.

Huron High School business teacher Christy Garrett was nominated by co-worker Diane Stocker-Bendersky for outstanding customer service and Ann Arbor Open teacher Mike Derhammer was nominated by parents Annie Rubin, Angie Smith and Laurie Krauth for outstanding customer service.

Garrett was nominated for her excellence in teaching and her "zest in preparing students to compete and win consistently" in business competition and for bringing the real world to the classroom.

"She is the type of teacher that demands excellence and pulls brilliance from each student she works with," says her nomination.

Derhammer's nomination says he is "beyond an exceptional teacher.

There are concrete and tangible things we can point to that he does to go above and beyond to create opportunities and build community within the classroom."

In addition to an after-school math club, he hosts a barbecue to celebrate his graduating sixth-grader, organizes a parent Euchre night and invites former students who are now in middle school to come back to his class to talk to sixth graders about what to expect. He also involves his students in community service projects.

"But there are so many other countless ways that Mike goes above and beyond that are less tangible. There are countless stories from parents and students that summarize the impact Mike has on kid's learning, self-confidence, their understanding of their place in the world and their responsibility to give back, and simply how they have been inspired by Mike to learn, and to stand at their full height."

Clemente grads heading for college

The following Roberto Clemente Center seniors have been recognized for their college admissions:

- James Kelly (Pioneer). Eastern Arizona College, Owens College
- Kayla Jones (Huron) Alabama A & M University
- Anthony Abrams Hagan (Pioneer) Northwood University, Defiance College
- Serina Johnson (Huron). Eastern Michigan University
- Jeremy Jackson (Pioneer) Ferris State University, Western Michigan University, Eastern Michigan University
- Yasmin Warren (Pioneer) Wayne State University
- Bria Galloway (Huron) Wilberforce University
- Christian Arreola (Huron) Washtenaw Community College
- Nicole Davis (Huron) Jackson Community College
- Tynisha Sharp (Pioneer) Jackson Community College
- Ameen Benin (Pioneer) Ferris State University
- Wilniqua Battle (Pioneer) Wayne State University
- Desmond Bright (Pioneer)

Eastern Michigan University
 • Ameer Frederick-Toure (Community) Washtenaw Community College

These college-bound seniors represent 14 of the program's 16 graduating seniors. Clemente students graduate from their home high schools.

PTO Thrift Shop continues support

The Ann Arbor PTO Thrift Shop donated more than \$101,000 to the AAPS District last fall for the Ann Arbor PTO Thrift Shop Transportation Fund for the 2010-11 school year. The shop also supports AAPS Educational Foundation as well as additional end-of-year contributions to the district.

The PTO Thrift Shop is a nonprofit, community-based resale store featuring gently-used everyday items, unique treasures, and more. The shop has a special connection to families and to the district. All shop profits go toward Ann Arbor Public Schools and students.

Visit the store at 2280 S. Industrial Hw., Ann Arbor or online at www.a2ptothriftshop.org. They can be reached by phone at 734-996-9155.

Library launches reading program

The Ann Arbor District Library will launch its annual Summer Reading Program during the Taste of Ann Arbor event.

The preview launch takes place from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday, June 5.

Visit the Library booth (on Liberty Street between Main and 4th Avenue) at Taste of Ann Arbor as the Ann Arbor District Library spreads the word about the Summer Reading Game.

Featured will be hula-hoops, bubbles and sidewalk art. For more information on this event call the Library's Youth Department at 734-327-8301 or visit <http://play.aadl.org/>