

Special points of interest:

- Hands-on fun throughout our schools
- 1st Annual Best Buddies Bowl
- West Lake & Special Olympics sports rock!
- TAP Graduates for 2017

SPRING 2017

From the desk of Rebecca Gromala, Director of Special Education

It is hard to believe we are coming to the end of another school year. The current weather makes it even harder to believe that summer is right around the corner. I am proud to say that our staff has worked very hard at our goal of creating more inclusive opportunities for our students with special needs. In both Lake Central School Corporation and the School Town of Munster, we have successfully increased the amount of time students with special needs are spending in the general education classroom. In doing so, we have increased opportunities for academic instruction and socialization with peers, which benefits ALL students in the classroom. A sincere thanks goes out to the administrators, teachers, support staff, parents and students who are helping us continue to improve services for students.



From the desk of Barb Kepchar, West Lake Supervisor

Fun with Avocados!

By Miss Nicole Saulters, Clark Middle School

We are growing an Avocado in our 7th grade Science class! Every day our students check on the avocado in Coyote Corner. We first started growing our avocado the last week in March. The students researched how to grow an avocado and developed a plan to journal and take care of the avocado. The students pushed 3 tooth picks into the avocado to form a tripod and placed it in the water with just the bottom touching so the top stayed dry. Since the students first placed the avocado in the water they have been journaling and having a blast! Our avocado has cracked and we are waiting to see it spout!



Celebrating Earth Day

By Stephanie St Amour, Teacher at Clark Middle School

On April 21st students in the life skills program at Clark Middle School celebrated Earth Day by making bird feeders and planting flowers. We learned about ecosystems and how everything on our planet is connected. We discussed how all of us should take actions to care for the plants and animals around us.

The students made the birdfeeders by covering toilet paper rolls in peanut butter and then rolling them in birdseed. Each student got to take their bird feeder home to hang up and watch the birds use.

The students then each got to pick a flower to plant. They planted them in small pots to keep in the classroom so that we can observe the changes as they grow. The students will take turns caring for their flowers each day, and they will later be sent home as Mother's Day presents.

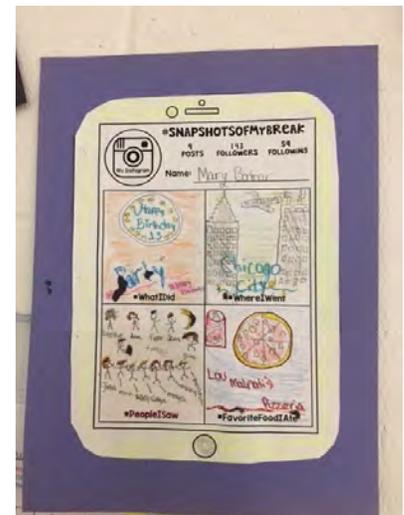
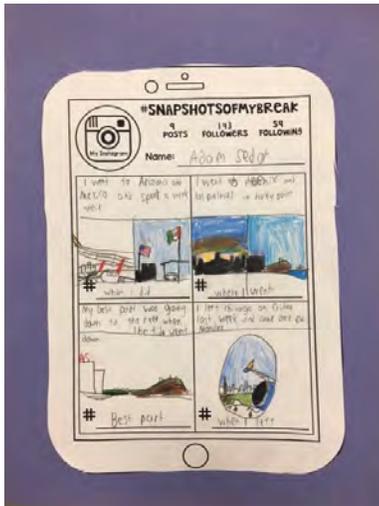
The students had a blast learning about our planet with these hands-on activities!



Sharing Spring Break Stories

By Ms. Algozine, Clark Middle School

Students in my class were ready to share their spring break stories when they returned! My Read180 classes took a snapshot of their break to share with the class. Each student hash-tagged four different events from their spring break to post in our classroom. Students wrote a sentence about what they did and also drew photos. Several students who usually do not enjoy writing were able to also draw and use color to help bring their words to life!



Trip to the Shedd Aquarium

By Adam Orze-Kahler Middle School

On Friday, March 17th, Mr. Orze's seventh grade science class went on a field trip to the Shedd Aquarium. This field trip was the culmination of a unit on cells and cellular biology. Students participated in a learning lab which involved dissecting a squid. Before the lab, students were able to walk around the galleries and view many species of fish, reptiles and amphibians. Some of the favorite animals included: spider crabs, lungfish, manta rays, and a sea turtle. Everybody's favorite animal was the 14 foot green anaconda in the Amazon Rising gallery. After viewing some of the animals, the class made its way to the Shedd classrooms. Some students were apprehensive at first since, for many, this was their first time performing a dissection. After some basic instructions, students dove right into their work and carefully dissected the squid. Students were able to determine the sex of the squid, as well as how the squid uses its various body parts to eat and move. Microscopes were used to further examine the squid, including the eye and beak. The students were very excited to have the opportunity to visit the Shedd Aquarium and dissect a squid.



From the desk of Mary Rebey, West Lake Supervisor

1st Annual Best Buddies Bowl

This year, Best Buddies Munster started what we hope will become a Munster High School tradition. On Tuesday, January 17th, we hosted our 1st Annual *Best Buddies Bowl* in the Munster High School Fieldhouse. This event was designed, not only as a fundraiser to help send future Best Buddies Munster officers to our annual Leadership Conference, but, even more importantly, to get the school and community involved with our organization and to promote our mission. Best Buddies has been an active part of Munster High School for the last seven years. We strive to ensure people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities are an equal part of society. At Munster High School, we have come a long way toward making this a reality. We still, however, have a very long way to go.

The *Best Buddies Bowl* consisted of two flag football games made up of members of the Munster High School Football Team and members of Best Buddies Munster. I am happy to say it was a great success! We had over 120 people in attendance and raised \$318 to send future members to Leadership Conferences downstate. Beside the players, members from the MHS Art Club, Robotics Team, Project X, DECA and Speech and Debate Team participated. The Art Club provided free Face Painting. Project X sold concessions and the Robotics Team showed off their robots to all of those in attendance. Attendees were allowed to come onto the field during halftime to see the robots at work. All of the clubs present set up booths and worked to encourage attendees to participate in their organizations as well.

Overall, the 1st Annual *Best Buddies Bowl* was a huge success. We are hoping that it will set the stage for future, even more successful, Best Buddies bowls. We would like to thank all of the football players, all of the organizations, the sponsors, all of the volunteers (parents, students and staff) and all of the fans who came out to support Best Buddies Munster. The first annual *Best Buddies Bowl* could not have been a success without all of these wonderful supporters.



From the desk of Alison Mazurkiewicz, West Lake Supervisor

Presidential Fun at Homan **By Lesli Heinrikson, Teacher**

Our Structured Learning class learned a lot about our past as well as our new President during the month of February. We made Abraham Lincoln and George Washington look delicious!



Kolling resource staff and Kolling Elementary students are pictured wearing blue and yellow to celebrate Down Syndrome Awareness Day on March 21, 2017. Kolling students read Disability Awareness books with Mrs. Adank, SSP in library throughout the month of March.

Submitted by Elizabeth Stone, Teacher



Biography Fun!

By Mrs. Beth Dallman, Teacher

Mrs. Dallman's class at Peifer has been studying the biographies of famous people. For the final biography, the students were given the book wrapped in black paper and enjoyed playing a guessing game of clues, to try to discover who the final biography would be about. They finally were able to open the wrapping paper, uncovering the book Who Was Walt Disney? Lessons centered on the events of Walt Disney as a boy growing into adulthood, with his many trials and disappointments as well as his determination to succeed, even when family and friends encouraged him to give up. Students learned about how the events surrounding his life such as the Great Depression and WWII impacted and added to the challenges in his life. Animation and moving pictures were studied and each child had an opportunity to learn to draw a cartoon horse!

I am Cassie Cauffman, and I teach K-2, Essential Life Skills at Protsman Elementary. This year, my math and reading instruction is taught through our new curriculum, Unique Learning Systems (ULS). It is a modified curriculum that exposes my students to grade level standards. As I have become more comfortable with how it is used, I am amazed to see how well my students are engaged with the activities included in our curriculum. It not only focuses on math and reading, but also includes other related content areas such as science and social studies. Back in February, my class did a science experiment where my students had to make a hypothesis on whether certain items would sink or float. Many visuals were used, and the students all had fun participating and learning. In addition, this curriculum offers great opportunities that can integrate speech and occupational therapy as well. It involves a lot of language-based activities including word wall and vocabulary words which are incorporated in stories that are read in the unit, following simple-step directions in recipes, activities with prepositions, and involves a lot of writing/tracing.



"West Lake's Kid's on the Block puppets came to visit Watson's Preschool Programs to discuss disability awareness!"

Submitted by Amanda Early, Teacher



How-to

By Amanda Early, Watson Teacher

Ms. Mandy's EC class was lucky enough to receive a visit from Ms. Yelich's Kindergarten class where the kindergarten students read a "How-to" writing activity on blowing bubbles. The Kindergarten students read the steps to blowing bubbles, while the preschool students followed through with each step. Teaching, learning, and fun was had by all!



From the desk of Kim Beach, West Lake Supervisor

What's Happening at Eads Elementary

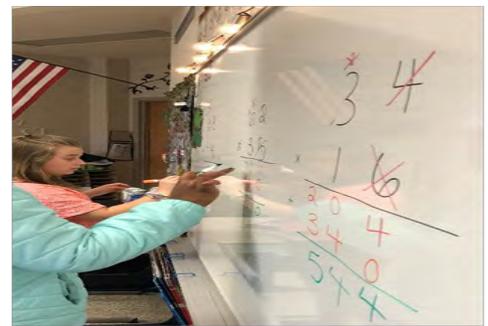
Submitted by Lisa Rudy, Teacher

On February 9, 2017, we welcomed Dr. Carl Hale, a local Neuropsychologist to speak at our staff's professional development. He spoke on "Learning Strategies for the classroom for children diagnosed with ADHD."

The feedback from the teachers was very positive. They are all asking for him to return.

Our resource teacher Lisa Rudy was one of the most impressed and she put his words into action. Plenty of strategies were easily implemented in the classroom. Using visuals to increase working memory was utilized with colored markers. Each step of a process is displayed with a rainbow sequence. The students could recall the first step in red, the next step in orange, and so on.

Another incredible strategy implemented was student encouragement. The growth mindset was a natural connection that the students have been using regularly, so they built their own test taking mindset lap book. The students learned that they have lots of ways to rock any test and now they have a foldable as a reference for future years. One student said they will keep it forever.



Elliot Shows Support

By Michelle Young, Teacher

For Autism Awareness Month the structured learning class at Elliott Elementary School is showing their support by decorating their classroom door with puzzle piece fish. We are encouraging all classes at our school to decorate their doors to help spread awareness during this special month. Also, the structured learning students are selling blue ribbons to students and staff during the month of April.



Math Fun at Elliott

By Michelle Young, Teacher

Justin Reid and Nathan Cleary are following their third grade peers by mastering their math facts for a banana split treat at the end of the year.



Giraffe fun!

Submitted by Amanda Sanow, Teacher

Twenty-five million people were watching April the giraffe so we had to see what it was all about. We tuned in and saw just how cute April was. We learned about giraffes too. We made a giraffe craft, counted the spots and talked about how each giraffe had a different pattern. We worked on measurement during this activity. Did you know giraffes are 6 feet tall when they are born? No two giraffes are alike, just like us. Some fun facts we learned are: giraffes only sleep 30 minutes a day and spend over 20 hours a day eating! Giraffe feet are as big as a dinner plate!



St. Paddy Day Fun

By Sandra Will-Brum, Teacher

Ms. Sandy's Preschool Class at Frank Hammond celebrated many fun activities on St. Patrick's Day. First, a leprechaun caused mayhem in her class. We went on a hunt to find the pesky leprechaun. Then, we listened to an Irish jig and danced. We followed up with crafts and educational videos of leprechaun's counting. We drew four-leaf clovers, painted rainbows, and made wishes. We ate golden oreos and drank leprechaun fizz (green juice) for snack. The day was such a hit that the kids have been talking nonstop about at home. Here we are in our St. Patrick's Day Attire!!



Spring is Here!

By Sharon Sellberg, Teacher

Sharon Sellberg's Early Childhood Classes at Frank Hammond Elementary School have been busy welcoming spring. Here are some things spring brings:

Frog Snacks



Shaving Cream Rain Clouds



Work Can Be Fun!

Submitted by Dana Hopper, Teacher

TAP recently partnered with a new job site called Recycled Granite Outlet. Our students create a variety of hand crafted products from pieces of granite that would otherwise have gone to the landfills. Students are being trained on how to work with the recycled granite to create a variety of products such as stone wall veneer tiles, stone fire pits, jewelry, cheese trays, etc. You can check out some of our students creations for purchase at their store front located at 1952 US-41 Schererville, IN 46375.



TAP Class of 2017

Congratulations to our Transition to Adulthood Program graduates! May your futures be as bright as you all your smiles! Pictured in the group photo, from left to right are:

Paul Daniele, Alec Bisone, Taylor Roeda, Brittany Kacir, Taylor Barchi, Cameron Jung, Vanessa Newell, Robin Tucker, Zach Moore and Emily Hepburn



West Lake Basketball season was once again fun for all! Consisting of 2 teams, coached by Karen Brann, LCHS teacher, and Tim Powers, LCHS Assistant Principal, our teams not only played each other but also played Lowell and Crown Point, and participated in Crown Point's annual Sammy Ballicki Memorial tournament. The pictures below are from the tournament. There were a series of skills tests and elimination games and awards. The kids LOVED it! A special thank you to not only our coaches but the many teacher and student volunteers during the season. We could not do it without them!





Many West Lake students again participated in Special Olympics Track and Field at Valparaiso High School on May 13th, and fun was had by all. Also back this year was the LCHS Unified track team. Although separate from our West Lake group, many of our athletes participated in both and practiced together.

Special Olympics provides year round athletic competitions in a variety of Olympic-type sports for persons with intellectual disabilities with West Lake participating in bowling and track and field.

Special Olympics players generally need to be 8 years of age and older and currently be in our West Lake program. For those students who have graduated, contact Teresa Parker, Lake County Coordinator at 219-613-7284 or solakecounty@yahoo.com to participate at the county level.

Please note that new players & some former players will need a physical to participate. If your son or daughter meets the above criteria and would like to participate in one of our events next school year, contact Kimm Maznaritz at the West Lake Office at 365-8507 x2947.





Camp Millhouse - A camp for all ages and all abilities located in South Bend - www.campmillhouse.org

Indiana Resource Center for Autism link to list of summer camps in Indiana - <https://www.iidc.indiana.edu//index.php?pageId=summer-camps-and-programs>

Camp FUEL - For adolescents with disabilities ages 11-17 located in Fort Wayne - There are 2 different sessions - For more information and to register visit <http://www.eastersealscrossroads.org/camp-fuel>



Our West Lake Preschool program still has openings for peers for the upcoming 2017-2018 school year . All students must be screened so please contact Sara Pietrzak in our West Lake office for available screening dates. Call Sara at 365-8507 x2946

As more and more technology becomes available we are on the lookout for donations of iPods or iPads that you are not using.

Thank you!

Cooperative Special Recreation Initiative (CSRI) Events

C.S.R.I. is a cooperative venture seeking ways to increase recreational opportunities for individuals of all ages who have special needs and abilities. By working together toward a common goal we are able to provide more events to a larger amount of people than any one agency alone. The following agencies are proud to be a part of CSRI:

- ◆ Hanover Central HS Key Club
- ◆ Hammond Parks & Recreation
- ◆ Lake County Parks
- ◆ Merrillville Parks & Recreation
- ◆ Crown Point Parks & Recreation
- ◆ Hammond Port Authority
- ◆ St. John Parks & Recreation
- ◆ Munster Parks & Recreation
- ◆ Dyer Parks & Recreation
- ◆ Highland Parks & Recreation
- ◆ Schererville Parks & Recreation
- ◆ Whiting Parks and Recreation

Upcoming Events

June 20th from 7pm to 9pm - Pool Party at Community Park pool, Munster, \$2 per person at door

July 12th from 10:30am to 11:30am or 11:45am to 12:45pm - Special Needs Day at the Splash Pad, Wicker Park, Highland, FREE

Call host agency for fees, FULL details and how to register!

Join the CSRI email group by emailing csri2004@yahoo.com

Visit them via http://lakecountyparks.com/activities/great_outdoors/special_recreation.html

Helpful Links

IN*Source / Indiana Resource Center for Families with Special Needs - www.insource.org

Indiana Department of Education - Article 7 and other informative information - <http://www.doe.in.gov>

Indiana Institute on Disability and Community - Providing Hoosiers with disability-related information and services from birth through older adulthood - <http://www.iidc.indiana.edu>

Autism Support Network - Designed as a place by those living with ASD, for those with ASD and those seeking social connection, peer guidance and a feeling of community with those that understand - www.autismsupportnetwork.com

GRASP - The Global and Regional Asperger Syndrome Partnership - grasp.org

Down Syndrome Association of NWI - Serving Lake, Porter, LaPorte, Jasper and Newton Counties - 219-3838-3565 or dsaofnwi.org

National Down Syndrome Congress - Public awareness, language guidelines and other information - www.ndscenter.org

YOUR family - Resources, events and news in conjunctions with The Times - <http://www.nwitimes.com/niche/yourfamily/special-needs-directory>

AccessAbilities - Focusing on the provision of services that emphasize best practice, comprehensiveness and overcoming possible barriers between human potential and physical or cognitive abilities - www.accessabilitiesinc.com

Center for Possibilities - Their mission is to improve the quality of life for children and adults with developmental disabilities and their families - www.centerforpossibilities.org

Innovations in Learning - Dedicated to implementing best practice standards in helping consumers achieve their individual potential throughout the developmental life span - www.innovationsinlearning.net

Center for Parent Information and Resources (CPIR) - serves as a central resource of information and products to the community of Parent Training Information (PTI) Centers and the Community Parent Resource Centers (CPRCs), so that they can focus their efforts on serving families of children with disabilities. <http://www.parentcenterhub.org>

Hannah's Hope - Aiming to assist children with special needs obtain various therapies and costly medical equipment. - <http://www.hannahshope.org/>

West Lake Special Education Cooperative

8410 Wicker Av

St. John, IN 46373

Phone: (219) 365-8507

Fax: (219) 365-6641

Web Site: <http://westlake.lcsc.us>

LISTSERV@: listserv.westlake.lcsc.us