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# ROCK RIDGE REPORTER

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF ROCK RIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS



EDUCATION TO INSPIRE THE NEXT GENERATION

## LAURENTIAN GRADES PREK-6 MEDIA CENTER NEWS

Laurentian Elementary students have been greatly enjoying time spent dedicated to classwork and learning, catching up on reading a wonder-filled tale, and/or just 'chillin' as their imaginations expand and abound while taking in a creatively told tale during story hour which takes place during weekly classes in the media centers.

*The Wolverine Den, Rock Ridge Reading Headquarters and Rockin' Reading Zone* are the names the students have chosen to represent the media centers found in three of the wings of the new campus our students now call their "home away from home". These names they have selected collectively reflect the personalities of the three age groups represented and the energy in the air as one enters their working and reading space.

Laurentian Elementary students had the opportunity to observe Native American Heritage Month and learn about those who walked the lands of northern Minnesota before us. The week of November 11th and Veterans' Day was a time to read about the history and making of the Wall of Remembrance while reflecting on honoring the sacrifice of those who fought for our freedoms. As we all know, November cannot end without celebrating Thanksgiving! The students discussed the life, courage and tenacity of Sarah Hale and all she forged through to make the fourth Thursday in November a day for all to gather and show appreciation. All the while, students participated in a small card giving campaign called "Gratitude is the Best Attitude", showing thankfulness to those who have touched their lives!

Kwanzaa, Hanukkah, and Christmas were the cultural traditions the students learned about during the blizzardy, yet festive, month of December. It seems that story telling is celebrated in every culture represented by humankind. Through tall tales and true history retold time and again, we laughed along with Anansi, the trickers spider that made melons talk. We fought a war with Judah Maccabee and celebrated eight days of Hannukah in less than a half an hour! Finally, we learned a lesson from Charlie Brown's pal, Linus, about the true meaning of Christmas with angels singing about the glorious message of good tidings of great joy, peace and hope!

January is upon us and the weather may be cold, but books warm our hearts and fill our heads with valuable knowledge and our imaginations with everything impossible! Before we know it, February and I LOVE TO READ month will be knocking down our door with lots of excitement, great challenges, and well...more reading!

So, until next time, remember...don't walk and read at the same time! It could be dangerous!



# PARKVIEW

## GRADES PREK-2

### CAN'T CATCH ME!

Mrs. Davidson-Teff's and Mrs. Streier's kindergarten classes celebrated the holidays with a 12-day countdown to break!

Together, the students made crafts, talked about kindness and giving, collaborated with others, and learned about Santas from around the world, carols, stockings, and more!

The classes' favorite day was Gingerbread Day! Students read the story, "The Gingerbread Man Loose in the School". Then, they made a plan on paper of how they would decorate their own gingerbread cookie. Meanwhile, Mrs. D-T and Mrs. Streier were baking the cookie to decorate!

When everyone went to take the cookie out of the oven, the cookie was gone! Now there was a mystery to solve - the case of the missing gingerbread man! Students found clues around the school to try to locate the missing cookie that ran away. The missing gingerbread man was never found, but he did leave a yummy treat instead!



# NORTH STAR

## GRADES 3-6

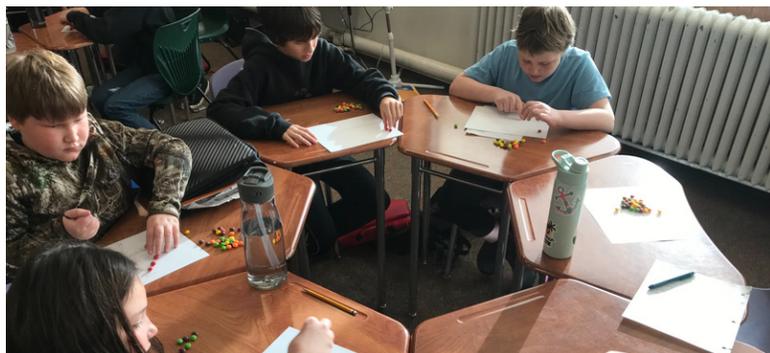
### MINING IN THE CLASSROOM

Ms. Zadnikar's 6th grade Project Based Learning class welcomed special guests from US Steel and Cleveland Cliffs mining companies. Both provided hands-on learning opportunities for our students and connected their learning to the world around them.

Cleveland Cliffs shared the mining process with the students and environmental impacts on our area. The students created blast patterns using skittles and grid paper. They also mined chocolate chips from cookies using limited funding and equipment.

US Steel shared the stages involved in the production and the future of the mining industry. Students learned the process of extraction through magnetication. They also received sample packets and magnetics. They finished the presentation with a discussion about career opportunities within the industry.

The students finished with a Keynote featuring the history of mining, a map of the mineral deposits in northern MN, careers opportunities, and information on the top mining companies. These Keynotes assessed the learning targets for this activity.



### SHINING BRIGHTLY IN PBL

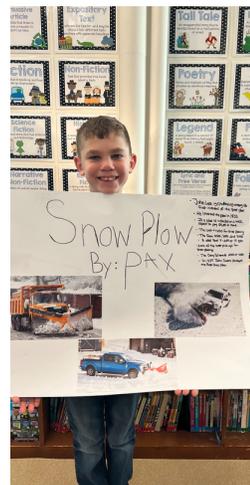
In Mrs. Spry's 5th grade, another Project Based Learning (PBL) lesson was taking place to make the holiday a little brighter! Students made LED holiday cards - a most jolly electricity lesson.



# STUDENT EXPLORATIONS

Genius Hour is student-directed learning, not teacher-led. Students direct their own learning for just an hour a day. This is a time when teachers provide an opportunity for their students to process, create, develop, and learn a new skill set.

Genius Hour allows every student to explore their own ideas and encourages creativity. The goal is to engage students through problem-solving and critical thinking. This inquiry-based learning experience is geared specifically towards students exploring their interests.



# EGHS GRADES 7-12

## GOING "HOME" FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Students from Mrs. Thyen's and Mrs. Aho's classes created holiday memories with the help of members from the EGHS National Honor Society. The North Star Elementary students painted snowy gnomes on the last few days before winter break.

NHS students are required to complete volunteer hours throughout the year, so they were eager to help out in the elementary school. It is always fun for the high school students to visit their "old" school and give back to the school community that has given so much to them.



## MUSIC MATTERS

The junior high music students at Eveleth-Gilbert Secondary had the opportunity to talk with recording artist, Elisa Fiorillo on December 1, 2022.

Elisa is a current recording artist who has worked and toured with musical icon, Prince. She talked to the students about the importance of music in the schools, having a positive work ethic, the importance of reputation, and what it was like to work with Prince. She resides in Las Vegas, NV and talked to the students via Zoom in the high school auditorium.

The students left inspired with the message that the gift of music can take you places and connect you with extraordinary people!



# VHS GRADES 7-12

## BOP 'TIL YOU DROP

WRITTEN BY VHS JUNIOR, EMILY PONTINEN

You wake up in the morning full of excitement! You can't wait to get into your formal attire and go out with your friends. All day, the excitement builds until you finally arrive at the dance. Everyone that you know is there, in their finest clothes. The music calls to you from the other room, and you and your friends dance the night away.

This is what it was like arriving at the Midnight Ball in the Parkview gym Saturday, December 3rd. "My favorite part about the dance was the people that I was there with. I really enjoyed dancing with all of my friends," says senior Marie Kastner. This formal dance is held every year, but this year was the best one yet. "I thought this year's dance was better because of the crew that put it together, and it had way more decorations," says junior Marian Louks. Students arrived at around 8:30 pm for social hour and pictures, and the music officially started at 9:00pm. There was lots of good food (including a chocolate fountain), and many exciting games. There were options for everyone no matter if you dig the dance floor or not.

Preparation is not taken lightly. Months beforehand, the school's Leo's Club develops plans to make the dance as enjoyable for the students as possible. "Being the head of decorating with Mia was really fun because we got to make our vision the reality, but it was also insanely stressful. We made a google doc to put all our ideas down and keep track of our budget. Between texting daily and meetings, we put hours a day into the dance between the two of us. We wanted to have everything ordered and organized the day of decorating so that it was a fun experience for all the Leo's Club members. Overall, it went super well, and all the decorations got put up in time. We had a few issues with getting stuff to come in time, but the overall product was really pretty," says junior Izzy Smith.

The Club is split into committees, each with their own co-heads. The committees are organized into categories like decorating, selling, catering, etc. The heads make sure that everything they need is in order for the big day. President Becca Kowalski and Vice President Cora Eilola-Zallar work alongside Advisors Mrs. Galloway and Mr. Tikkanen as the masterminds of the whole operation. "Being behind the scenes of the planning and organizing process as the Vice President alongside our President, Becca Kowalski, was honestly an enjoyable experience for me. (cont. page 6))

## FROM PRINCIPLES TO PROJECTS

(cont. from page 5) It's really interesting seeing how each and every moving part fits into place," says sophomore Cora Eiola-Zallar. A lot goes into making a perfect night for the students.

This year, all of the proceeds went to Care Partners, which is a non-profit organization that helps both individuals and their families with cancer and other life-threatening illnesses. "We've worked with Care Partners previously this year and heard about their purpose, which we thought fit directly with one of Leo's missions of fighting childhood cancer," says senior Becca Kowalski. A table was set up at the dance with all kinds of gold apparel. Gold is the official color of childhood cancer. Once again, every profit from the table was given to the non-profit organization. Not only was this dance thrown for the enjoyment of the students, but it also helped raise money for a wonderful cause! "One reason we chose to give the dance proceeds to Care Partners was because all the proceeds could go directly to people in our community.

Being able to help people so close to home really makes the impact feel that much stronger," says Leo's Club's Vice President Cora Eiola-Zallar.

At the end of the day, all this hard work is paid off with a fantastic dance that everyone can enjoy! Not only is this dance enjoyable for the students, but it also supports a very important cause. Preparation begins months beforehand, but it is definitely worth it in the end. Next time, a school dance comes your way, I highly recommend going with friends and dancing the night away.

Students in 9th grade *Introduction to Chemistry and Physics* designed their own experiments and have been working hard conducting research, performing experiments, and collecting data before the winter break. Some of the projects they chose include the chemistry of ice cream, cosmetics, slime, environmentally friendly plastics, and heavy metals and remediation of soil. A few of the physics based projects include drones and propellers, physics of flight, Bernoulli's principle, seawalls and tsunamis, composting, and rockets.

The projects will be on display at VHS on Wednesday, January 25, outside of Room A-228. The overall best projects will advance to the Northeast Regional Science Fair at UMD on February 18 where students will have the opportunity to learn from and collaborate with other regional students interested in science.

At regions, projects will be eligible for monetary prizes, awards, and certificates from organizations including but not limited to Sea Grant, UMD Earth and Environmental Sciences, United States Air Force Award, Yale Science and Engineering Association, Lake Superior Zoo, Society for Mining, Metallurgy, and Exploration, NRRI, American Chemical Society, Great Lakes Aquarium, and NASA Earth Systems. Winners at the regional fair advance to the State Science Fair held in March at the Minnesota Academy of Science in St. Paul. The best projects at the state level advance to the world's largest pre-college STEM competition, the Regeneron International Science and Engineering Festival in May in Dallas, Texas. Are you interested in sponsoring our best and brightest student teams at the Northeast Regional Science Fair? Please contact Lisa Rudstrom at [lisa.rudstrom@rrps.org](mailto:lisa.rudstrom@rrps.org) for more information.

