



focus

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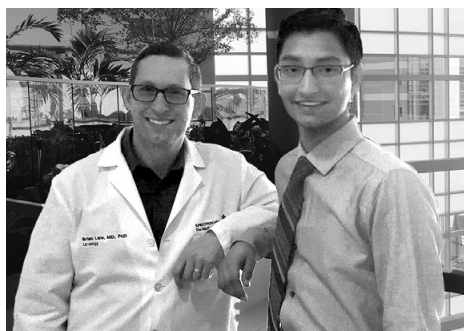
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Forest Hills Public Schools Among Select Few in the World to Implement Advanced Placement Capstone

Forest Hills Public Schools is among an elite tier of public schools which will join approximately 1,000 schools worldwide to implement Advanced Placement Capstone. This is an innovative diploma program that allows students to develop the skills for college success: independent research, collaboration, and communication.

Created by the College Board, the AP Capstone program consists of two courses: AP Seminar and AP Research. Developed in direct response to feedback from higher education faculty and college admission officers, AP Capstone complements the in-depth, subject-specific study of other Advanced Placement courses and exams. More importantly, it cultivates curious, independent, and collaborative scholars and prepares them to make logical, evidence-based decisions.

Forest Hills Central High School will start offering AP Seminar in the fall of 2017. AP Research will be introduced in the fall of 2018. The goal is to implement AP Capstone at one high school to really establish the program, and then look at the research about implementing AP Capstone at the other two FHPS high schools in subsequent years. AP Capstone expands upon the Col-



Ruchir Gupta, Forest Hills Central 2016 graduate, worked alongside surgeons at Spectrum Health to conduct research. This is one example of what AP Capstone could offer many more students.

lege Board's efforts to offer rigorous college-level courses by creating a program that excites and engages students in new ways that prepare them for success after high school.

AP Capstone students will take AP Seminar in the 10th or 11th grade followed by AP Research. The Capstone program is a little different than just taking AP classes throughout high school. According to the College Board website, the first class, AP Seminar helps students investigate topics from a variety of perspectives and fosters their writing skills so they can craft, communicate, (continued on page 2, column 1)

Love is at the Heart of Forest Hills Public Schools Teacher of the Year

Just think how the world has changed in the last 24 years. Now think how the profession of education has changed during that time. Sure, blackboards and overhead projectors have been replaced with interactive electronic boards and computers, but when Laura Gottschalk embarked on her teaching profession in 1992, she said that one thing has remained. "The one constant in education is a teacher's love for their students and their concern for the students' well-being," said Gottschalk. "This love drives what teachers do. We truly love all of these kids."



Laura Gottschalk

Gottschalk was named this year's Forest Hills Public Schools Teacher of the Year, and is now in her 24th year as a middle school mathematics teacher. As a daughter of two educators, she saw the passion her

parents had for the teaching profession and for students, and it stuck. Following college graduation from Cornerstone University, she taught for three years at Lansing Christian School, until she got her ultimate teaching (continued on page 4, column 2)

Forest Hills Public Schools to Launch AP Capstone Program

(continued from page 1)

and defend evidence-based arguments. In Seminar, students collect and analyze data, and they are assessed through a team project and presentation, an individual written essay, presentation, and a written exam.

Then in AP Research, the year after students take the Seminar class, they will conduct independent research to produce and defend a scholarly academic thesis. Just like Seminar, AP Research allows students to select their own topic—one that is interesting and meaningful to them. Then, throughout the year, students explore, more deeply, the topic, problem, or issue they have selected. Students design, plan, and conduct a year-long mentored, research-based investigation. The culmination of this class is that students prepare an academic thesis paper, and present their topic and make an oral defense.

“The AP Capstone program is a unique and innovative program that teaches students the skills of collaboration, critical thinking, and problem solving at a college level,” said Steve Passinault, Forest Hills Central High School principal. “These are life skills that will benefit our students as they prepare themselves for college and their future careers.

“What I like about the program is the flexibility for students to explore areas that they are passionate about,” Passinault continued. “It is a paradigm shift from teaching content to teaching skills. Students flourish and are motivated when they are studying something that they are passionate about.

“We’re excited to launch AP Capstone within our district and here at Forest Hills Central,” said Passinault. “AP Capstone fits incredibly well with the research class we’ve had in place for years, taught by Kristy Butler, our AP science teacher.” Butler has taught the AP science class for eight years and leads an independent research component for those students wanting to partner with leaders and researchers in our community to dive deeper into a topic.

“The students are ready for AP Capstone,” said Butler. “It takes learning to an incredibly meaningful level and allows students to direct their learning. AP Capstone isn’t about a program for the academically-gifted. AP Capstone is for any student wanting to develop their skills in communication, collaboration, critical-thinking and much more. It’s about taking a topic that the student is passionate about and truly mak-



Students in Kristy Butler’s scientific research class show off their research during last year’s showcase.

ing it their own. It’s invigorating to see the journey a student embarks on when they are free to develop their ideas, passions, and interests.”

According to the College Board website and Advances in AP, “Following AP Seminar and AP Research courses, students must take AP exams of their choosing. Students who earn scores of 3 or higher in AP Seminar, AP Research, and on four additional AP exams will receive an AP Capstone Diploma.” This diploma, in addition to their high school diploma, signifies students’ outstanding academic achievement and attainment of college-level skills. The site goes on to say, “For those students not taking four additional AP exams, but score a 3 or higher in AP Seminar and AP Research courses, they will receive an AP Seminar and Research Certificate.”

“I believe this program will give our students an advantage in college admissions as they are able to differentiate themselves from other applicants with this unique and innovative program that is well respected and has been developed in collaboration with colleges,” said Passinault.

“We hope this program will entice those students who are naturally inquisitive, or those independent thinkers and doers to try something they believe in and see where it takes them,” Butler added. “It’s not just about memorizing things and regurgitating information. It’s more of a hands-on approach based on real-world applications.

“The best part of AP Capstone, is that it’s not limited to the sciences, but can encompass almost any subject matter, from science and math, to history, literature, the arts and much more,” Butler added. “AP Capstone allows students to pursue their own passions

and allows them to grow in life-long skills.”

As previously stated, the program’s inaugural year will be the 2017-2018 school year at FHC. Students wanting to participate in this program are encouraged to talk with their school counselor. For additional information and to learn more about what the AP Capstone program affords students, visit the College Board’s website: <https://aphighered.collegeboard.org>.

FHPS Named to Advanced Placement Honor Roll

Forest Hills Public Schools is among 23 Michigan school districts honored recently by the College Board with placement on the Seventh Annual Advanced Placement District Honor Roll. To be included on the Seventh Annual Honor Roll, districts had to, since 2014, increase the number of students participating in AP while also increasing or maintaining the percentage of students earning AP Exam scores of 3 or higher. FHPS has done so through an open enrollment process, meaning any high school student can choose to take an AP course and exam without prior approval.

“Reaching these goals shows that these districts are successfully identifying motivated, academically-prepared students who are ready for AP,” said State Superintendent Brian Whiston. “In our goal to make Michigan a Top 10 education state in 10 years, we need to promote greater access to AP opportunities for all students,” Whiston said. “Every student should graduate from high school with up to 60 transferable college credits or a recognized industry credential/certificate through access to quality dual enrollment, early middle colleges, and/or career/technical education. AP credits are one avenue to get there.”

Forest Hills Public Schools has received this honor and ranking for multiple years now. Inclusion on the

(continued on page 4, column 3)

Upcoming District Events

Calendar Listing of Community-Wide School Events

February

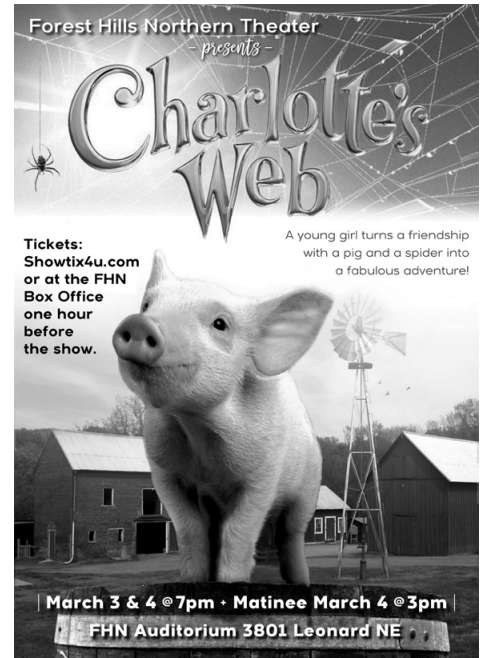
- 16 Central Woodlands 5/6 STEAM Night, 6 p.m., Central Woodlands
- Northern Hills Middle School Jazz Coffee House, 7 p.m., Northern High Auditorium
- FHPS AAA Circle of Support Parent Meeting, 7 p.m., St. Robert's Church
- 20 No School for Students and Staff, Mid-Winter Break
- 22 FHC/FHE/FHN Masterworks Concert, 7 p.m., FAC
- 23 Knapp Forest 2nd Grade Musical, 7 p.m., Knapp Forest Gym
- FHC/FHN/FHE Orchestra Soiree, 7 p.m., FAC
- 27 Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m., Ada Vista Elementary
- FHC/CMS 7th-12th Grade Band Concert, 7 p.m., FAC
- 28 Pine Ridge Elementary Art Show, 6 p.m., Pine Ridge Elementary
- Foundation Business Breakfast, 7:30 a.m., Watermark Country Club, RSVP
- Northern Trails/Northern Middle/FHN Collage Concert, 7 p.m., FAC

March

- 1 CMS/EMS/NHMS 8th Grade Orchestra Night, 7 p.m., FAC
- 2 Middle School Band Festival, Eastern Middle School, Ongoing Throughout Day
- Ada Vista 4th Grade Recorder Performance, 6:15 p.m., Ada Vista Elementary
- Thornapple Elementary School, 2nd Grade Musical, 7 p.m., Thornapple Gym
- CMS/EMS/NHMS 7th Grade Orchestra Night, 7 p.m., FAC
- 3 District Band Festival, All Day, FHE Auditorium
- Collins 2nd Annual Art Night, 6 p.m., Collins Elementary
- 3-4 FHN Presents "Charlotte's Web," 7 p.m., and Matinee on March 4, 3 p.m., FHN Auditorium
- 5 Forest Hills Adult Community Band Concert, 2:30 p.m., FHE Auditorium
- 8 Thornapple Elementary Art Show, 6 p.m., Thornapple Elementary
- 11 FHE Variety Show, 7 p.m., FHE Auditorium
- 16 Knapp Forest 4th Grade Musical, 7 p.m., Knapp Forest Gym
- FHPS AAA Circle of Support Parent Meeting, 7 p.m., St. Robert's Church
- 16-18 FHC Presents "Little Shop of Horrors," 7:30 p.m., FAC
- 17 Students Half Day a.m., Teacher Collaboration in p.m.
- 20 Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m., Northern Trails 5/6 School
- CMS/NHMS/EMS Choral Gala Concert, 7 p.m., FAC
- 21 Ada Vista Kindergarten Music Program, 6:30 p.m., Ada Vista Elementary
- Collins 4th Grade Musical, 6:30 p.m., FHN Auditorium
- FHC Spring Sports Parent Meeting, 7 p.m., FHC Gym
- Central Woodlands 6th Grade/Central Middle/FHC Spring String Fling, 7 p.m., FAC
- 22 Pine Ridge Elementary School, Camp-Read-A-Lot, 6 p.m., Pine Ridge Elementary School
- Forest Hills Fine Arts Center Presents: Golden Dragon Acrobats, 7:30 p.m., FAC
- 23 Moxie Strings & Knapp Forest and Orchard View 6th Grade Orchestra/Forest Hills
- Eastern Middle and High School Orchestras, 7 p.m., FAC
- 24 Knapp Forest Talent Show, 6:30 p.m., Knapp Forest Gym
- 25 Solo Band Festival, All Day, Eastern High School
- 27 FHE ExtravaBandza, 7 p.m., FHE High School Gym
- 28 FHE/FHN/FHC High Choral Gala, 7 p.m., FAC
- 30 Half Day for Students and Staff
- 31 No School for Students and Staff, Spring Break

April

- 3-7 No School/Spring Break
- 10 School Resumes
- 17 Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m., Goodwillie 5/6 Environmental School
- 18 Meadow Brook Elementary 3rd & 4th Grade Musical, 7 p.m., FAC
- 19 Ada Elementary Music Program, 7 p.m., FAC
- Meadow Brook Elementary Kindergarten Kickoff, 6 p.m., Meadow Brook Elementary
- 20 FHPS K-12 Student Artists' Reception, 6 p.m., FAC
- Thornapple Elementary 1st Grade Concert, 7 p.m., Thornapple Gym
- FHPS AAA Circle of Support Parent Meeting, 7 p.m., St. Robert's Church
- 20-21 FHE Student-Directed Play, 7 p.m., FHE Auditorium
- 25 FHE Blood Drive, 7:30 a.m., FHE Auxiliary Gym
- FHPS Jazz Summit, 7 p.m., FAC
- Pine Ridge Elementary Kindergarten Kickoff, 7 p.m., Pine Ridge Cafeteria
- Thornapple Elementary Kindergarten Kickoff, 7 p.m., Thornapple Multipurpose Room
- 27 Knapp Forest 5th Grade Finale Show, 7 p.m., FAC



Adult Community Band Concert

Sunday, March 5, 2017, 2:30 p.m.

Forest Hills Eastern High School

2200 Pettis Avenue NE, Ada • Free Admission

Our musicians come from all walks of life, creating wonderful music that makes toes wiggle, fingers tap, and spirits dance. Come treat yourself to an afternoon of free music! For more information, please visit fhacb.org.

FHC's "Little Shop of Horrors"

March 16 - 18, 7:30 p.m.

Forest Hills Fine Arts Center

Seymour Krelborn works at Mushnik's, a flower shop on Skid Row. He harbors a crush on his co-worker, Audrey, and is berated daily by his boss. By chance, he happens upon a mysterious plant with strange cravings! Will Seymour find success and romance with the help of a giant man-eating plant who demands to be fed?

Tickets are \$12 for adults, \$10 for students 18 and younger. Purchase tickets online at showtix4u.com or in person at the FHFAC Box Office, 600 Forest Hill Avenue SE, Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

For the most up-to-date district and school calendars, visit our website: www.fhps.net/about-us/district-calendar

Coming in March!

The Moxie Strings

With the Forest Hills Eastern Orchestras

Thursday, March 23, 2017

7 p.m.

Forest Hills Fine Arts Center

600 Forest Hill Avenue SE, Grand Rapids

Forest Hills Eastern orchestra students will join forces with The Moxie Strings for a night of upbeat contemporary music. The Moxie Strings ensemble includes electric cello, violin and drums. The band will be in residence at Eastern for two days leading clinics with the orchestra students. The students and band will collaborate in a final concert at the Forest Hills Fine Arts Center on March 23. Join us to experience the musical energy!

Tickets

Tickets are \$10 for general admission seating, available in advance at the Fine Arts Center Box Office (in person ticket sales only), or at the door on the night of the event.

On the Cover



Central Middle School eighth-graders, Audrey Sidebotham, Lydia Pink, Jonah Cumings, and Joshua Philip take time out during their school day to read. To learn more about this innovative reading program at Central Middle School, see page 5.

Classroom Furniture Pilots Give Teachers and Students Flexibility

One classroom at Orchard View Elementary School is among several classrooms throughout the district taking part in a furniture pilot project. The classroom was upgraded with all new student furniture that is flexible to meet the many needs of students. The desks and chairs are on casters which enable students to easily get together in large and small groups. Chairs move, and some swivel and tilt for students who need a little more movement. The classroom also has adjustable height tables, so students can even stand at their desks and work. The furniture upgrade was due in part to the 2013 bond. Some other classrooms that have seen similar furniture include the STEM Academy at Northern High School and the media center at Central High School. Additional classroom furniture upgrades are being explored.



Orchard View students and teachers can easily rearrange their furniture to fit various learning tasks during the day.

FHPS Teacher of the Year

(continued from page 1)

offer at Northern Hills Middle School, where she has been ever since.

Although things have changed over the years as a teacher, she says, "The connection all of our Northern Middle teachers have with kids runs deep. We truly care about how to help each and every student in our care. Even though teachers have many demands, we meet every child where they are, and we teach to help them find their gifts. In turn, the students inspire us."

"Her dedication to kids is amazing," said Nancy Susterka, Northern Hills Middle School principal. "I've watched her take kids who couldn't have possibly been successful in math become to be that confident mathematician, and I've seen them honor her as their favorite teacher."

Many feel the same way. "Laura has built her entire life around service," said NHMS colleague Dawn Mathews. "Each and every day we are witness to her selfless service to others. She is so dedicated to the craft of teaching, and her love for helping all students is endless."

Becky Telzerow, counselor at the middle school echoes Mathews' sentiments. "Laura's calm and rhythmic pacing of instruction, coupled with connecting with her students,

really builds a bridge to success that goes way beyond math."

A bridge to success is what Gottschalk hopes she is helping inspire in students. "Being a successful student means so much more than getting perfect scores, but being a well-rounded student in all subject areas and life skills," Gottschalk said. "I hope I help my students realize their own given potential and give them the encouragement to follow their hearts. It's all about love, caring, kindness and compassion."



Northern Hills Middle School seventh-grader Molly Berg (left) and David Nethercot (right) work on a math problem with teacher, Laura Gottschalk.

AP Honor Roll

(continued from page 2)

7th Annual AP District Honor Roll is based on a review of three years of AP data, from 2014 to 2016, looking across 37 AP Exams, including world language and culture.

Giving Students the Time to Read is Crucial for Middle Schoolers to Grow into Lifelong Readers

Can one video, one book, one conversation, lead to instrumental change? Can that change be simple yet profound at the same time? Can one statistic help educators reimagine a school day? The answer is, unequivocally, “Yes!”

It all began in the spring of 2015 when English language arts staff at Central Middle School sat down to conduct a redesign or re-assessment of existing practices. They were introduced to a video clip and a research-based book called, “Book Love,” by Penny Kittle, a high school English language arts teacher and literacy consultant. The video stated, “Too many teenagers are not reading in high school.”

Stop and think about that.

“Too many teenagers are not reading in high school.”

Why not? Aren’t students assigned books they have to read and write reports and analyses about, and draw conclusions, pick out themes, compare books and genres and make presentations? They do. But what research has found is students are using methods to “get by” without reading books in their entirety, or as revealed in the video, not reading books at all.

With this fact poignant to the CMS staff, they thought to themselves, how can they change this? More importantly, how can they build reading engagement, reading stamina and reading skills in middle school students that would transfer on to high school and beyond? How could they develop teenagers’ interest and desire to read?

The CMS English staff took it upon themselves to learn more, and dive deeper into the research on how to engage middle schoolers in reading. The staff read time and time again some similar themes pointed out in research: students must have access to a broad range and quantity of books; students should be able to choose what they read; and students should read what they understand and at their level of understanding. They also learned in addition to the reading component, some other factors were key in developing middle school readers. Students had to be kept accountable and keep track of their reading time. Students’ comprehension of the text also increased when they had to write their personal thoughts about



Central Middle School eighth-grader, Gabriel Dörner, dives into the book, “The Last Star,” during language arts.

the book and then share their thoughts and ideas with others—namely their peers. Finally, research also stated that it was still important for this grade level to also listen to fluent readers read out loud.

Once the English staff knew what needed to be done, they presented their learning to the whole staff in hopes of making some changes school-wide to raise awareness of the importance of reading for middle schoolers. It didn’t take long for everyone at Central Middle to be on board with the language arts teachers. A simple place to start was ACE (Academic Classroom Excellence). During this time built into the daily schedule, students are in classrooms and are given announcements over the school’s electronic system. They say the “Pledge of Allegiance,” and the rest of the time is devoted to everyone reading. And yes, everyone reads, including teachers. The English language arts teachers also keep track of students’ reading goals and review their writing journals. Students keep vocabulary logs to learn new words they come across when reading, and they are given time to share what they’ve read with other students. Students have even gone so far as to use technology and a program called Padlet to complete book reviews, keep track of books enjoyed, and create video book talks to encourage others to read. Central Middle also has created a small video recording studio where students and staff can do impromptu book talks to share school-wide. Ultimately what exists at Central Middle is at least a solid 25 minutes a day spent reading self-selected books—a mission to build a community of readers.

“We have seen a new excitement in reading,” said Brenda Dieffenbach, Central Middle School language arts teacher.

Dieffenbach said that Central Middle has seen a large increase over last year—nearly 40 percent—in the quantity of books checked out from the school’s library, and from the online library through FHPS Overdrive. “We’re seeing students ask teachers and media specialists for recommendations on what to read next, and the students are becoming more comfortable in reading genres outside their comfort zone.”

As for students, how do they feel about the extra daily reading time? “I don’t have time to read at home, so this gives me and others the time we need to read,” said eighth-grade student, Audrey Sidebotham. “What’s better than time, is that we can read what we want to read and we can enjoy reading again.”

“Reading during ACE time actually gives your mind a good break,” said eighth-grade student, Delaney Niswonger. “Today, kids like me, get so easily distracted by technology, and ACE helps me get back to reading and read more. I think I’ve become a stronger reader because of ACE time.”

Sidebotham agrees about this mind break. “Reading time gives you time to just relax and calm down. It gives your mind time to get refreshed.”



Central Middle School eighth-grader, Kaylee Sidebotham, finds a comfy reading nook to focus on her book during the dedicated reading time.

Do students think this reading time will have a long-term impact? According to Sidebotham, “I have learned to enjoy reading again. So, that when we ‘have’ to read a book for a class it is no longer intimidating. It’s no longer something I dread.”

Niswonger shook her head in agreement. “Since I’m more confident in my reading now, I think it will help me push through a book and persevere when we are given

(continued on page 6, column 1)

"Hey, Watch This!" Orchard View's LEGO Robotics Team Invited to Competition in California

What do bats and LEGO bricks have in common? How about a group of students from Orchard View Elementary School and a robotics competition? The 10 students who comprise the robotics team called, "Hey, Watch This!" brought home the silver at the state competition last month, and have been invited to compete at the FIRST LEGO League North American Open Championship at LEGOLAND California in May.

FIRST LEGO League is an international competition for fourth-, fifth- and sixth-grade students and has three components. Students must create a display or showcase about their core values. The second component is a research project. The final component is creating and programming a robot made of LEGO bricks.

This year's FIRST LEGO League theme was "Animal Allies," so Orchard View's team conducted research on bats and interviewed bat conservation experts from Eastern Michigan University, Grand Valley State University and the Bat Zone at the Cranbrook Institute of Science. Sixth-grade teacher and team coach, Anne Keller, said their project included the development of "Bat Week"

at school to educate students about the benefits of bats and bat conservation. They also created an original stop-motion LEGO movie about bat conservation. As part of the project, the team also received a grant from River City Wild Ones to create a bat garden and will install bat houses on school grounds in the spring.

"There are so many different levels of what this competition is," said Natalie Mouw, Orchard View Elementary School sixth-grader and LEGO team member. "It's really cool to build and program robots and work together with other students on a fun project."

"This competition is all about teamwork and working together, and it's a great skill to have no matter what you do in school or life," said Ryan Harrelson, an Orchard View parent who also serves as a coach.

Orchard View received a \$1,500 grant from the Forest Hills Public Schools Foundation to start the team this school year. Additional support and funding came from the school's PTO.

For more information about this team, and to see them in action, visit the FHPS website: www.fhps.net



"Hey, Watch This!" team includes (back, from left): Matthew Harrelson, Josh Carlson, Coach Anne Keller, Natalie Mouw, Nora Rumery, Coach Ryan Harrelson; (front from left), Kelsey Pattison, Rand Ripple, Aiden Engvall, Nate Kelso, Tessa Stanley, and Kate Harrelson.

Time to Read

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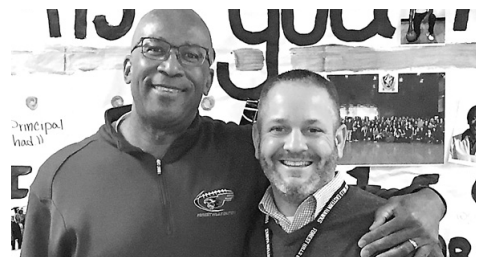
a book we don't want to read, but have to. I'm sure this will help me next year in high school and beyond."

That's exactly what the staff hoped to accomplish. "When we embarked on this journey two years ago we hoped that our students would love to read again, but more

importantly learn the reading strategies that will transcend all subject areas students will encounter.

"It all boiled down to time, and giving students the time to read," concluded Diefenbach. "Things fell into place when we found the time to give the students. But what we've learned along the way is just

FHE Assistant Principal Retires



Forest Hills Eastern assistant principals Edgar Wilson (left) and Tim Hollern (right) share memorable moments on Wilson's last day.

Please help us congratulate Edgar Wilson, Eastern High School assistant principal, on his retirement. "Edgar has provided strong leadership and steadfast dedication to FHE families, staff, and students for over a decade," said Dan Behm, superintendent. "We know he'll always be a 'Hawk' and we will always be grateful for the impact he has made in the lives of our students." Wilson was not only known for his administrative duties, but also for his athletic abilities.

According to Varsity News Network, after starring at Union High School in Dowagiac in football, basketball and baseball during his prep years Wilson graduated from Michigan State University in 1978. While at MSU, he played both varsity basketball and football for the university. After playing one year of varsity college football, he had a free-agent try-out with the Chicago Bears. Wilson got his coaching start at MSU as a graduate assistant under Jud Heathcoate and was on staff when MSU won the NCAA national title in 1979. Wilson later went on to become the head coach at Ferris State University for six years. Wanting to do more for kids, he decided to go into education and administration, and found a position as an assistant principal at Forest Hills Eastern. While at Forest Hills, he also helped coach middle and high school students for many years.

We wish Edgar all the best in his retirement and in all of his future endeavors.

like the advice we give our students...try something new and see where it takes you. By trying something new here at Central Middle School we believe we are having a profound impact on our students. The research and data supports it, but more importantly, our staff and students do too."



FOREST HILLS PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOUNDATION

February 2017

Human Anatomy, Now in 3-D

Making Models Helps Students Understand Bodies

by School News Network

Emma Beck admits she hasn't yet mastered cooking macaroni and cheese without burning it. But even after just two weeks of practice molding a human body, the Central High junior already is showing mad anatomy skills.

Emma and her classmates are building their own human scale model bodies, thanks to a \$6,100 grant from the Forest Hills Public Schools Foundation.



Chad Scholten

Science teacher Chad Scholten learned about the 2½-foot models at a national conference for science teachers, and said even he understood more about the musculoskeletal system when he could

build it himself. He thought the models would be just the thing for bringing anatomy lessons off the page and the projector.

"Some of these students might go on to be nurses, doctors...and those professions definitely work in three-dimension," Scholten said. "Even as patients, having this knowledge can make a difference."

By the end of the school year, Scholten's students will have molded every organ in the body and every major system, such as musculoskeletal, digestive, nervous, cardiovascular and respiratory.



Seniors Samuel Hopkins, left, and Peyton Fester mold arm muscles for their human scale models.



Juniors Emma Beck, foreground, and Taylor Williams mold arm muscles for their human scale models.

Scholten said he envisions using the models to demonstrate both healthy bodily systems and unhealthy ones. Maybe Scholten will create a card game where students pick an illness, or an injury such as a torn rotator cuff or tennis elbow, then have them explain what other areas that particular injury can affect and how to repair it.

There are a lot of possibilities, which is A-OK with Scholten. "We'll have these forever," he said.

Save the Dates!

■ Business Breakfast

Tuesday, Feb. 28, 2017, 7:30 a.m.
Watermark Country Club
Reservations Required
Chairperson: Jeff Wierenga

■ State of the District Luncheon

Thursday, May 4, 2017, 11:30 a.m.
Watermark Country Club
Reservations Required
Chairperson: April Woods

■ Charlie Anderson Memorial Golf Tournament

Wednesday, June 14, 2017
Thornapple Pointe Golf Club
Sponsorships Available
Chairperson: Brian Sandberg

Thank You

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the Forest Hills Public Schools Foundation during the 2016 calendar year! We are grateful for your gift. The generosity of the Forest Hills community is amazing and we appreciate your support.

Forest Hills Public Schools Foundation Board

If you are interested in joining the Forest Hills Public Schools Foundation Board, please visit our website to obtain an application – www.fhpsf.org, select the "About" tab, then select "Board of Trustees." All applications must be received by the Foundation office prior to March 15, 2017. Please contact the office at 493-8954 or jsiminski@fhps.net if you have questions or would like additional information.

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Spotlight on FHPS Staff

Robert Miedema: Teaching What He Loves

Written by Forest Hills Central High School 10th-grader, Samuel Noonan, "The Central Trend"

Students work hard on their projects. Machinery hums and whirrs. Computers with complex CAD drawings are spread throughout the room, ready for work. This is just part of what might be seen walking into teacher Robert Miedema's room, a place that offers classes not found anywhere else in the school.

Miedema teaches woodshop, engineering, architecture, and Gone Boarding at Forest Hills Central High School, and this is his 15th year teaching. For students who spend their days with their faces in textbooks or studying for that test next hour, Miedema's classes provide a much more hands-on experience and a welcome break. Students passionate about engineering, woodworking, architecture, and more can pursue these subjects in Miedema's classes.

Although Miedema is a teacher, it wasn't originally his plan. Out of high school, he planned on being a plumber and not going to college, and didn't take an ACT. However, after working full-time for his first summer out of high school, Miedema decided to take night classes at Grand Rapids Community College.

"The only class I really liked in high school was drafting, which is like what we do in engineering, but back then it was all pencil and paper. I took some classes here and there while I was working full time, and I had a really good teacher in college," Miedema said. "He came out of industry, so everything I learned in my drafting class had some tie to how things worked in the real world. It was a CAD class, and I thought, 'Maybe I could teach this stuff.'"

After two years at GRCC, Miedema decided to transfer to Western Michigan University and get his teaching certificate, to teach drafting. While he was at Western, he found out that under Michigan certification he needed to be able to teach other classes such as woodshop and metalshop in order to teach drafting. Miedema had to take those classes at Western in order to teach drafting, and found new passion in those subjects too.

"I get to teach what I love to do," Miedema said.

Being able to teach something he enjoys and does himself makes teaching the "perfect job" for Miedema. By spending time with his students and helping them through projects and complex work, Miedema is able to teach students as not only a teacher, but a practitioner.

"(My favorite part of teaching) would have to be the kids. They're fun. You have your good days and your bad days, but teaching keeps me young and keeps me connected with people," Miedema said. "I get to teach them from my life experiences, and I learn from them. Being able to teach what I love to do makes teaching the perfect career for me, and I really love it."

Miedema teaches the way he lives. He fixes everything himself, and does hard work when it needs doing. He fixes his own car, he has remodeled his house, and he works on his house on the weekends. He even makes his own maple syrup in the spring, tapping up to 20 trees. Miedema teaches the same hands-on work he does on a daily basis.

Miedema believes that his classes don't stop when class is over. He feels and hopes that what he teaches will help in everyday life, and help kids out no matter what they're doing.

"I think what I teach has a lasting impact, more so than a lot of other classes. The kids have this hands-on work component that's in every one of my classes, (which) they don't always get in other classes. It helps them in the real world when they have deadlines, when they have projects to be done, and when they have to work together as a team," Miedema said.

"I feel kids will look back and think, 'I learned that. I learned that in Mr. Miedema's class,'" continued Miedema. "That motivates me (because) these kids are going to take these skills and this information and use that no matter what career they pursue."

Miedema is far from a normal teacher; he truly teaches what he loves and does, and teaches it the way he does it himself. His passion shines through his teaching, and he is dedicated to his students.



Robert Miedema, Forest Hills Central High School woodshop, engineering, architecture, and Gone Boarding teacher, says he enjoys being able to teach what he loves every day.

"A lot of kids come through my door and say they've never been in my room before. That always hurts a bit," Miedema joked. "I wish more kids could come in here and have an opportunity to take a class, or even squeeze in an elective before they graduate," Miedema said. "I believe they'll be a better person because of it."

Middle, High School Students Selected for All-State Ensembles

Congratulations to Forest Hills Public Schools students recently selected by the Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association to be part of several all-state ensembles. Northern Hills Middle School students, Faith Addington (violin), and Perry Heredia (viola) performed with the MSBOA's Middle School All-State String Orchestra. Forest Hills Central High School student Bennett Hendricks (guitar) performed with the MSBOA's High School All-State Jazz Ensemble. Josiah Sherk (tenor saxophone), from Forest Hills Eastern High School received honorable mention accolades for the state jazz ensemble. Five ensembles are selected from recorded auditions: a middle school string orchestra, a middle school band, a high school full orchestra, a high school band, and a high school jazz ensemble.

Forest Hills Fine Arts Center

SOMETHING FOR Everyone 

Forest Hills Fine Arts Center 2016-17 Season



GOLDEN DRAGON
Acrobats

Wednesday, March 22, 2017 • 7:30 pm
\$28 • \$30 • \$34 • \$40

Award-winning acrobatics, traditional dance, spectacular costumes, ancient and contemporary music and theatrical techniques... to present a show of breathtaking skill and spellbinding beauty.

TICKETS

Tickets can be purchased in person only at the FAC Box Office, by calling 800-745-3000 or at ticketmaster.com.

www.fhfineartscenter.com Fine Arts Center Box Office:
600 Forest Hill Ave., SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546.

SEASON SPONSORS

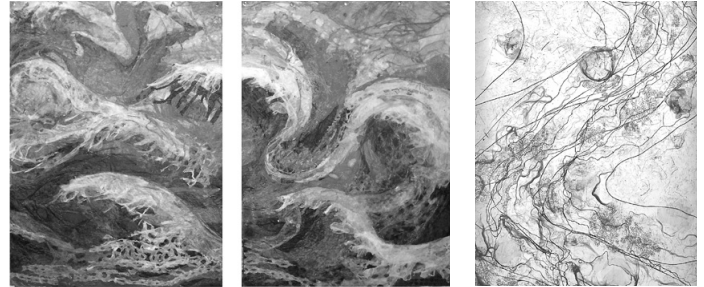
 

Season materials designed by 

Art Exhibits at the Center

Artist-in-Residence
Sandra Hansen
Mixed Media Paintings
February 2 - March 24, 2017



FHPS K-12 Student Exhibit

April 14 - May 11, 2017

Artists' Reception: Thursday, April 20, 6-7:30 p.m., FHFAC Lobby

Presenting Sponsor:



Supporting Sponsors:



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Be seen, heard & remembered.

FHFAC Calendar

Visit www.fhfineartscenter.com to view a calendar showing all FHFAC events.

March

- 16-18 FHC Presents "Little Shop of Horrors, 7:30 p.m.
- 22 FHFAC presents Golden Dragon Acrobats, 7:30 p.m.
- 23 Moxie Strings with FHE Orchestras, 7 p.m.

April

- 20 FHPS K-12 student artists' reception, 6 - 7:30 p.m.

2017-18 Kindergarten Language Immersion Program Updates

If you have a child who will be entering kindergarten next year in Forest Hills Public Schools, you have many kindergarten options. In addition to traditional kindergarten programs, we also offer a Spanish immersion kindergarten at Ada Vista Elementary and a Mandarin Chinese immersion

kindergarten at Meadow Brook Elementary School. Due to the high demand and interest in both of these programs, there is a pre-registration and selection process in place for sibling registration and new student lottery registration. At press time, families interested in the Spanish immersion kin-

dergarten will have their names placed on a waiting list. Those interested in the Mandarin Chinese program, a few spots remain. Please contact Ada Vista Elementary School, 616-493-8970 or Meadow Brook Elementary School, 616-493-8740, for additional information.

Thank You, Board of Education

January was School Board Recognition Month. Our seven school board members play a crucial role in our communities and schools, and we greatly appreciate their dedication and hard work. They are extraordinary people who voluntarily tackle the enormous job of governing our school district and their actions and decisions affect the present and future lives of our children. School board positions in Forest Hills no longer come with an annual stipend, as this was unanimously decided upon six years ago by the board. They truly represent the best in public servants and give their time, talents and so much more to advocate for public education. They ensure that every decision made is in the best interests of our children. The job of a school board member is tough, the hours long and the thanks few. So if you see one of our board members, please extend a handshake or a simple thank you. In Forest Hills, we truly are fortunate to be represented by seven selfless individuals who put education first and help make Forest Hills an exemplary school district.

2016-2017 Board of Education Members

- Mary Vonck, President
- Martha Atwater, Vice President
- Susan Lenhardt, Secretary
- Walter F. Perschbacher III, Treasurer
- Suzanne Callahan, Trustee
- Nicole Meloche-Gregory, Trustee
- Michael Seekell, Trustee
- Daniel Behm, Superintendent

Publication information:

The Forest Hills Public Schools' "Focus" newsletter is published bimonthly during the school year by the FHPS Board of Education. It is mailed to all residents of the Forest Hills Public Schools district, and additional copies are sent to every district school for distribution to staff, new residents, and visitors. FHPS is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination of all its programs in relation to race, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability and genetic information.

FHPS Thanks Doug Josephson for 12 Years of Service on the Board of Education



Doug Josephson

At the December meeting of the Forest Hills Public Schools Board of Education, long-time board member, Doug Josephson was honored. During his 12-year tenure on the board, he served as trustee, vice president and president. "Doug has always been an advocate for our schools, our students, staff, families and community, and he is an outstanding example of selfless service," said Dan Behm, superintendent. His term on the board expired and he did not seek re-election in November. The new member of the board

of education is Nicole Meloche-Gregory. We wish Doug all the best and we know that Forest Hills will continue to have a special place in his heart.



Doug Josephson congratulates an FHPS staff member on her retirement.

FHPS Board of Education Welcomes Nicole Meloche-Gregory, Trustee



Nicole Meloche-Gregory

A new member of the Forest Hills Board of Education began her term in January. Nicole Meloche-Gregory was elected to the board in November and fills the role previously held by Doug Josephson. Meloche-Gregory's term expires in 2022.

Meloche-Gregory attended Northern Michigan University for her bachelor's degree and UCLA Anderson School of Management in Southern California for her master's in business administration. While in California, she started and grew a technology business,

working directly with venture capital firms in Southern and Northern California to help start several dot-com businesses. After selling the business, she took her technology experience and moved it into real estate. An entrepreneur at heart, she considers herself a "gap finder," identifying gaps in the market to create businesses/opportunities that help fill those gaps. This is the same strategy she will bring into her role in public education.

Although a native of the Upper Peninsula, she has called Forest Hills her home since 2009. Presently she is the owner of several businesses, including Urban Lab Ventures. She, and her husband, David, have five children who attend schools—from elementary to high school—within the district.

Long-Time District Resource Officer Retires



Officer Glenn Nevelle

The Forest Hills Public Schools Resource Officer and Kent County Sheriff's Deputy Glenn Nevelle retired in December. "He was a very influential and charismatic leader, and was a constant fixture in our district," said Dan Behm, superintendent. "Most importantly, he helped make our schools safer and our community stronger. He was

a great resource and leader, and truly cared for all students. We will deeply miss him in our halls and in our schools."

Nevelle was hired by the district in September of 2003. Prior to that, he spent two-and-a-half years working in a narcotics unit, two-and-a-half years in the corrections division, and many more years on the road patrol of Kent County.

The new resource officer for the district is Jim Svoboda.

Forest Hills Fall Sports Athletic Awards

FHC

Boys' Soccer

*OK White Conference Champs
MHSSCA Team Academic
Award*

Kevin Conn (AC, AD, AR, ASHM, IA)
Mitchell DeJong (IA)
Jared Ireland (AC, AD)
Ian Kastner (IA)
Dylan Mackey (AC, IA)
Samuel Postlewait (AC)
Noah Saleh (AC, AD, AR, ASHM, IA)
Nolan Vandegrift (AC, AD)

Volleyball

OK White Conference Champs

Kendall Gardner (AC)
Brianna Tilton (AC)
Reese Weslow (AC)

Football

*MHSSA District Champs
MHSFCA Team Academic
All-State*

Nicholas Beaumier (AAC)
Bryce Clay (AC)
Alec Elzinga (AC)
Tanner Hallock (AC)
Salim Sidebotham (AC)
Jackson Uecker (AC)
Nickolaas White (AC)

Girls' Golf

Madeleine Junkunc (AC)
Kaitlin Knorr (AC)
Sydney Reynolds (AC)
Allison Ringler (AC)

Cross Country

Kathryn Allen (AC)
Susannah Bennett (AC)
Gabriel Carlson (AC)
Amytess Girgis (AC)
Eryn Ho (AC)

Boys' Tennis

*OK White Conference Champs
MHSAA Regional Champs
MHSAA State Finals, 2nd Place
MHSAA State Champion,
#2 Doubles*

Reed Aleck (AC, AS)
Michael Battiste (AC)
Connor Genschaw (AC, AS)
Peyton Herbert (AC)
Jacob Herbruck (AC, ASHM)
Justin James (AC, AS)
Aidan Rynbrandt (AC, AS)
Jacob Wiltjer (AC, AS)
Jack Ziegler (AC, AS)

Girls' Swim/Dive

MHSAA State Finals - 3rd Place

Nicole Bailey (AS)
Felicity Buchmaier (AC, SC, Swimmer of the Year)
Nicole Carlson (AS)
Anna Hansen (AC, SC, Diver of the Year)
Riley Hofmann (AC, AS)
Colleen Kramer (AC, AS)
Emma Krug (AS)
Kathryn Ryan (AS)
Jessica Schellenboom (AC, AS)

Equestrian

*MIHA District 5 Champs
MIHA Region 5 Champs*

FHE

Boys' Soccer

Samuel Dziuba (ACHM)
Clay Edwards (AD)
Garryn Johnson (AC, AD)
Keegan McGonigal (AC, AD)

Volleyball

Jenna Breuker (ACHM)
Julia Mitchell (AC)

Football

Ciaran Alward (ACHM)
Brayton Kelso (AC)
Isaac Leipprandt (ACHM)
Caden Peters (AC)
Dane Potzinger (AC)

Girls' Golf

Megan Skoog (AC, AS)

Girls' Cross Country

Kiah Becker (AR)
Claire Benedict (AAS)
Olivia Miller (AC, AR, AS, AAS, MLive All-Area Team)
Jamison Reed (AC, AR, OK Gold Champ, MLive All-Area Team)

Boys' Cross Country

Jakob Grubb (ACHM, AR)
Thomas Stever (AC, AR)
Thomas Westrick (AC)

Boys' Tennis

*MHSAA Academic All-State
Team*

MHSAA State Qualifier

Tyler Dann (AC, AS)
Nicolas Hakken (AC)
Anish Premkumar (AC, AS)
Nolan Sherwood (AC)
Mark Wassink (AC)

Girls' Swim/Dive

Gracie Sleeman (AC, AS)

FHN

Boys' Soccer

MHSAA District Champs

James Elwell (AC, AD, AR, ASHM)

Benjamin Meyers (AD)

Zachary Meyers (AD)

Adrian Miling (AC, AD, AR, AS, MHSSCA Dream Team)

Boys' Soccer (continued)

Issac Nelson (AD)
Sam Sacharich (AD)
Hayden Strobel (ACHM, AD)
Evan VanNortwick (ACHM, AD, AR, AS)

Volleyball

Riley Homer (ACHM)
Parker Kwiatkowski (AC)
Kate Tsironis (AC)
Shelby Verbrugge (ACHM)

Football

Tyler Black (ACHM)
Connor Bruinius (AC, MLive Defensive Dream Team)

Austin Clay (AC)
Eric Ditzhazy (AC)
Anthony Green (AC)
Will Hawkins (AC)
Caleb Krugman (ACHM)
Chase Morello (AC)

Girls' Golf

OK Bronze Conference Champs

*MHSAA Regional Champs
Sixth in State Competition*

Madeline Goodrich (AC)
Chloe Johnson (AC)
Gabby Mas (AC)
Madison Reynolds (AC)
Kay Zubkus (AC, AS)

Girls' Cross Country

OK Bronze Conference Champs

Hannah Callahan (ACHM)
Grace Fletter (AC)
Emily Fredette (AC, SQ)
Gabbi Taylor (ACHM)
Samantha Tran (AC, SQ, AS)

Boys' Cross Country

OK Bronze Conference Champs

Abdifetah Ahmed (AC, SQ, AS)

David Jamet (AC)
Conor Streng (AC)
Scott Tran (AC, SQ)
Michael Zacker (ACHM)

Boys' Tennis

*OK Bronze Conference
Runners-up*

Regional Runners-up

Seventh in State Competition

*MHSAA Academic All-State
Team*

David Bacon (AC, AS)
Herman Cheng (AC)
Jacob Dennen (AC, AS)
Anthony Eyde (AC)
Parker Morey (AC, AS)

Girls' Swim/Dive

Elise Turke (AS)

Field Hockey

Mallory Jacobs (AS)

Key:

AC = All-Conference
ACHM = All-Conference
Honorable Mention
CC = Conference Champion
AD = All-District
AR = All-Region
AA = All-Area
AS = All-State
ASHM = All-State
Honorable Mention
AAS = Academic All-State
AAC = All-Academic
SQ = State Qualifier
SRU = State Runner-up
SC = State Champion

Preschool Programs for 4-Year-Olds Are Filling Up Fast!



Preschool is a time to run, jump, and play...to take things apart and put them back together...to sing and dance...to listen to stories and to share with each other. The Forest Hills Public Schools' preschool program provides these opportunities and much more in a warm, nurturing environment where children can grow socially, emotionally, physically, and intellectually.

FHPS offers many options for preschoolers. We have both traditional and Spanish immersion tuition-based preschool programs. The Great Start Readiness Program, a 4-year-old preschool offered through the Kent Intermediate School District, is a free preschool option

for qualifying families. Our two traditional preschool programs for 4-year-olds are located at Ada Elementary School and Knapp Forest Elementary School. The Spanish immersion preschool is housed at Ada Vista Elementary School. The Great Start Readiness Preschool is located at Ada Elementary School and Collins Elementary School.

For more information about FHPS tuition-based preschools, please call the child care office, 616-493-8787, or visit: www.fhps.net. For information about Great Start Readiness, call 447-2409. Spaces are filling up quickly for the 2017-2018 school year.



Forest Hills Public Schools

6590 Cascade Road SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49546

Phone: (616) 493-8800
www.fhps.net



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Community Services Offers Exciting Classes and Sports This Spring

Aquatic Center Classes

Empower your child with the skills to enjoy the water as a lifelong activity. The Aquatic Center offers the American Red Cross Learn-to-Swim program on Saturday mornings at 9:10 a.m., 10:10 a.m., and 11:10 a.m. for ages 5 to 17. Each class is 50 minutes long. For spring, classes start April 15 and end on May 20.

American Red Cross Waterfront Lifeguard Training's spring class, course number 175PLGT, begins April 17, and meets Mondays and Wednesdays from 5-8 p.m.

For adults, enjoy a revitalizing water exercise class this spring! We offer morning and evening co-ed water exercise classes.

Youth Classes and Sports

We are offering a variety of classes that will interest your student this winter and spring:

- American Sign Language at Pine Ridge Elementary for grades 3-4; begins Feb. 14.
- Volleyball Camp for Girls at Collins Elementary for grades 3-4; begins Feb. 13.
- Baseball Concepts at Ada and Thornapple Elementaries for grades 3-4; and Central Woodlands and Northern Trails for grades 5-6; begins at various times in February.
- Fit Body Boot Camp at Meadow Brook Elementary for grades 2-4; begins Feb. 13.
- Bricks 4 Kidz Newton's Laws of Motion and Bricks 4 Kidz Jurassic Park at all elementary schools for grades 1-4; begins at various times in February and March.
- Spring Break Horse Camp at Kathy Williams Quarter Horses in Lowell, for ages 8-12; begins April 3.

Additional classes include: Fencing for Beginners, Beginning Ballet, Primary Ballet and KCAD art classes for first to fourth grades.

Civic Theatre Presents Fancy Nancy

Introductory class to the performing arts, grades 1-4, March 9 - April 27.



ACT, SAT Test Prep Seminars

ACT, SAT Prep at FHC, March 15 and 16.

SAT Prep at FHN, March 13 and 14.

SAT Prep at FHE, March 20 and 21.

Middle School Sports

Girls' Water Polo, Begins March 14

Middle school water polo is an excellent opportunity for girls to gain polo experience before high school. Participants must be able to swim and tread water. To register, call Community Services at 616-493-8950.

Co-ed Tennis, Begins March 20

Athletes will participate in the West Michigan Middle School Conference tennis program. Practices will take place at the high school courts. A team t-shirt is included. To register, call Community Services at 616-493-8950.

Awesome Classes for Adults

This winter and spring, adults can enhance their technology skills by enrolling in Excel Basics 2016, Windows 10 Overview, iPad 101 and iPad 102, or How to Sell on Craigslist and eBay. Plus, we have excellent classes in Spanish language, painting, fitness and dance, and special interests. Sign up today!

To register for classes or for more information, please visit enjoylearning.com, or call our office at 616-493-8950.

Senior Citizen Corner Learning Café

The following Learning Café programs will be held at the Forest Hills Public Schools Community, Aquatic & Senior Center, 660 Forest Hill Ave. SE. Catered lunch is at noon; program at 12:45 p.m. Cost: \$8 per person for lunch and program (\$9 for non-residents); \$2 for program only (\$3 for non-residents). Please register at 493-8950 or online on our website, enjoylearning.com, by the Friday prior to the event. For a full list of Learning Café programs, call us at 493-8950 and ask to be added to the "Encore Programs Guide" mailing list.

Tuesday, February 28

Learning Never Ends: American Sign Language

The frustrations of hearing loss can be lessened with sign language. Even without issues associated with hearing loss, sign language can be a new and challenging activity to continue stimulating the brain. This is presented by Kimberly Williamson, American Sign Language instructor with Forest Hills Public Schools.

Tuesday, March 14

Discuss, Decide, Document

No one can predict when a sudden illness or accident may leave you unable to make personal healthcare decisions. Who would speak for you if you could not speak for yourself? Would they know what to say? Learn about advance care planning, how to choose and prepare a patient advocate, steps to create an effective advance directive, and more. This is presented by Carol Robinson, doctor of nursing practice and community coordinator for Making Choices Michigan.