

Elementary Read-a-Thon is a Huge Success

By Hugo Vargas

The two-week-long MACCRAY Elementary Read-a-thon was really fun for everyone. The Read-a-thon took place March 4-15 in the elementary school.

The Read-a-thon creates opportunities for elementary students to read in competition with each other and raise money from sponsors. This money is used for field trips and provides new MACCRAY swag for Kindergarteners and new students.

Kati Hess, the elementary media specialist says, "Read-a-thon challenges students to read as many minutes as they can during a period of time. I love seeing how excited the kids get about reading and wanting to read as much as they can."

Paige Schueler, a 5th grader, also gets motivated to read during the Read-a-thon. She said, "I like to be competitive, and it helps my class read, and it's a fun way to read." She says she enjoys reading historical books.

All the kids love receiving prizes and going on field trips so Read-a-thon is an amazing way to get kids to be motivated to read more!

The whole elementary school came together on Thursday, March 28, in the high school gym to celebrate their successes with the Read-a-thon. The students who read the most minutes in their class got to put ice cream sundae toppings on Mr. Kent, while those who read the second most in their grade level got to silly string their teachers.



Liam Westbrook was the top reader in his class so he got to put strawberry syrup on principal Mitch Kent. Photos by Tayte Nokleby and Alex Dirksen.



MACCRAY's One Act "The Mouse and the Raven" Dazzles Audience

By **Averie Nurmi**

MACCRAY's one act group created a show-stopping performance with *The Mouse and the Raven* for students, audience members, and their competition that was held on January 27th. Many audience members said that it was the best that they had ever seen and were very impressed with the show that was put on.

The MACCRAY one act was led for the first time by theater patrons Crystal Donner and Jen Wassenaar. The one act was led by seniors Kyra Jarrett and Averie Nurmi, juniors Abel Mares and London Hoffer, and, to finish out the bunch, sophomore Iris Donner.

Kyra Jarrett played the hilarious Mrs. Pilsbury that was a fan favorite for everyone in the audience. Averie Nurmi portrayed the heart-warming Mrs. Manoil, who left the audience with a realization that what they do with their lives matters. London Hoffer played the newspaper editor, Jennifer Newport, like a real business woman with an added bit of sass. Abel Mares played the newspaper office editor Conrad that judges at the competition loved. Iris Donner portrayed Mrs. Bradbury with just the right amount of etiquette and attitude.

Behind the scenes, helping with set, makeup, lights, and sound were Carson Duis, Chelsea Lopez, Mikayla Wiler, and Mariah "MJ" Stokes. The show wouldn't have run as smoothly and been successful without them.

The Mouse and the Raven was portrayed in the 1950s after much debate. Wassenaar says, "We had a hard time deciding on an era." She then went on to say, "We decided on fifties because of the fact that they have social circles and that was more popular back then than it was in the eighties." In the 1950s, the play went through the story of three clubwomen who stumble upon a secret about obituaries. As they are determined to uncover the truth, they storm the local newspaper office,



Cast members included Averie Nurmi, Iris Donner, London Hoffer, Abel Mares, Kyra Jarrett. Behind the scenes, helping with set, makeup, lights, and sound were Carson Duis, Chelsea Lopez, Mikayla Wiler, and Mariah "MJ" Stokes. The show wouldn't have run as smoothly and been successful without them.

causing chaos and hilarity to ensue.

They first performed at the school, for ninth through twelfth graders. Many audience members that belong to the student body said that it was one of the best performances MACCRAY has ever put on. The second performance was for the public and many audience members were wowed by the performance. They then finally performed it for competition.

The one act competition was held at Dawson-Boyd High School on January 27, 2024. During the competition, besides performing, there are regulations that all competitors must follow. Some of them are no food on stage, not asking for audience participation, and that the set cannot injure any actors on stage. At the competition, MACCRAY was awarded second place after a three-way tie. Hours later they found out the officials made a mistake, due to human error, and that CMCS would be moving on in the second place position. Despite tears

shed, MACCRAY was still proud of the performance and work that they did.

The Mouse and the Raven was a huge fan favorite by audience members.

Friday, April 5, 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, April 6, 7:30 p.m.
 \$4 children & students \$6 adults

Frozen water pipe bursts, causing flooding in Elementary

By Alexis Gates

"A perfect storm of malfunctioning electrical equipment, cold weather, and bad timing." Mr. Wheatley says.

On January 14, 2024, a pipe burst at MACCRAY Elementary due to cold temperatures reaching -10 degrees Fahrenheit. Due to the damage to their classrooms, eighteen elementary school teachers were forced to relocate into some of the high school classrooms and the Bethany church. It was all hands on deck when the water pipes burst; custodians, paraprofessionals, and students at the open gym had to help.

After the pipe burst, the MACCRAY schools had two days of e-learning in total while staff and teachers tried to determine what

would work best and increased communication with teachers through in-person staff meetings and online Zoom.

When hearing about the water-damaged classrooms teachers were devastated but did what they thought would work best for students.

"This is like my second home," Mrs. VanEps said.

Teachers were holding classes in rooms they didn't usually use when the students returned, and the elementary special education classroom had moved a few times. Due to water damage, teachers were having problems finding their materials, but "I saw it as an adventure and opportunity for both my students and my staff," Mrs. Thoma said.

Teachers tried their best to make light of the situation despite the strange surroundings and curious students. Staff and students rarely complained, and there were chances for both parties to try something new and have some fun. Mrs. Thoma's class got to use a "real chalkboard" and loved the bigger space in the Bethany church.

With all of the hard work put in MACCRAY Administration would like to give appreciation to the custodians: Noel, Chris, Raymond, Curt, and Matt.

The damage was fixed and it was safe for elementary teachers and students to return to their classrooms a few weeks after the incident.



Bus Driver Appreciation Day!

Bus Drivers go above and beyond each and every day for our students transporting them to and from school and activities. On Feb. 29, MACCRAY Elementary students showed their appreciation for their bus drivers to celebrate their support for students on School Bus Driver Appreciation Day.



MACCRAY Girls Basketball 2023-2024 season

By Ella Kienitz

The MACCRAY Girls Basketball 2023-2024 season kicked off this past November. The girls started their season with four out of their five starters returning from the previous season.

The varsity team consists of one freshman, Sam Hultgren, four sophomores, Brielle Janssen, Maggie Jaenisch, Nora Hultgren, and Emma Thein. They have two

seniors, Ella Hultgren and Callie Jaenisch, and four juniors, Ella Hultgren and Callie Jaenisch, and four seniors, Emersen Tatge, Erika Pieper, Annie Bourne, and Ella Kienitz. The girls are coached by head coach Shaun Condon and assisted by Bryce Olson and Dana Johnson.

"The season has had its ups and downs, but overall it has been successful. Some players have really stepped up to fill some important roles," said Olson.

The girls secured the 3 seed in the North Subsection and are scheduled to play the 6 seed, Canby on February 24th, in Montevideo. MACCRAY was just below Minnesota and Central Minnesota Christian in the North Subsection seeding. The girls came out with a win over Canby on the 24th, but then lost to CMCS on Friday, March 1.

Overall, the season was successful for the Lady Wolverines. At the end of the season four players were named to the Camden Conference All-Conference player award. Sophomore Brielle Janssen earned Camden Conference Player of the Year. Sophomore Emma Thein and senior Annie Bourne were All-Conference, and senior Ella Kienitz was All-Conference Honorable Mention.

MACCRAY boys basketball

By Jordan Warne

The MACCRAY Boys basketball team had an 18-10 season record for the 2023-24 season. The boys played many tough and impressive games throughout the season, but ended their journey when they lost to CMCS in the playoff tournament.

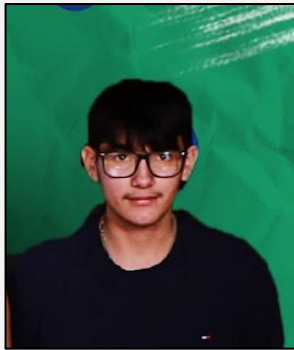
When asked about the team's overall performance, Matthew Wadsworth, a MACCRAY senior starter said their record shows they play well but he believes they could have played better as a team overall.

Several of the members of the boys basketball team were recognized after the season by receiving All-Conference Awards, including Isaac Post, Matt Wadsworth, Sawyer Janssen, and Willie Miller as an Honorable Mention.

The team will graduate a large and talented group of seniors: Jordan Warne, Sawyer Janssen, Matthew Wadsworth, Jeremy Maldonado, Isaac Post, Juan Del Bosque, Willie Miller, and Hugo Vargas Garcia.

Seniors on the girls basketball team included from left, managers Averie Nurmi and Greta Meyer, Ella Kienitz, Annie Bourne, Erika Pieper, and Emersen Tatge.

Seniors on the boys basketball team included, manager Hugo Vargas Garcia, Sawyer Janssen, Jordan Warne, Isaac Post, Willie Miller, Matt Wadsworth, Juan Del Bosque, and Jeremy Maldonado.





Quinton bowls at State

By Keegan Rand

Quinton Hauck, MACCRAY Senior, had a great season as a member of the Willmar Bowling team with his teammates and was good enough to make it to State. Quinton's state experience was fun and very exciting. Even though they did not do as great as they wanted in State, it was a big accomplishment that they made it all that way.

Quinton and his team had some ups and downs throughout the season but the team came through when it was needed. The team's average was around 160 to 180, which is very impressive for an average score for the whole season.

Quinton had a standout day when he bowled a score of 220.

Quinton and the Willmar Bowling team has always been a successful program, but this year set them apart from most; only 26 teams overall made it to state and Willmar was one of them.

Quinton and his coach were all very proud of the team.

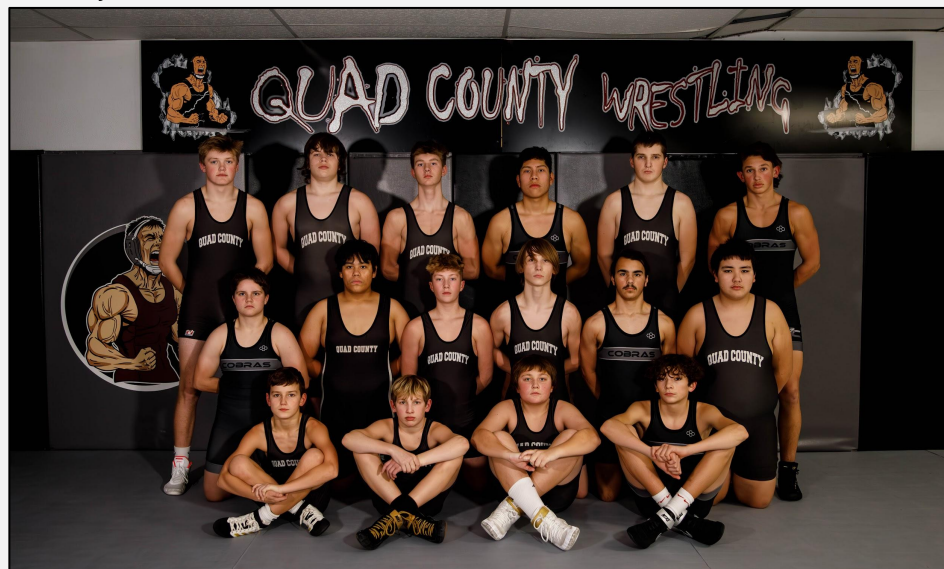
"I enjoyed doing something that I love with my friends, and it's just a plus that we were very successful doing it," Quinton said.

Quinton and his team got a ton of attention for their success this past season from the students and staff at MACCRAY and it's not even a MACCRAY school sport. That just shows how great they were.



Quad County Wrestling

MACCRAY Wrestlers on the Quad County team include senior Andy Osorio, sophomores Danny Sietsema and Sam Miller, freshmen James Hardin, Blaine Carroll, and Mario Gradillas, seventh graders Gracen Shubert and Rykurt Bristle. Pictured above is the varsity team and below is the junior varsity team.



MACCRAY/ RCW Dance

Tre Lee was the only MACCRAY Senior on the MACCRAY/RCW Dance team this year. After a fun experience on the dance floor, the season ended on Feb. 10 in Montevideo and the section tournament.

Elementary classes enjoy having high school TAs

By Jordan Warne

There are many different ways students can help out the school community. For example, being a teacher's assistant can help the younger students interact with kids older than them and help them learn in class better.

Garrett Struxness is one of these many students who have volunteered to be a teacher's assistant. He spend an hour of his day in Mr. Grund's third-grade classroom. Garrett helps out with the third graders and says he really enjoys being around them as it allows him to be around kids he normally wouldn't see every day. He likes to talk to them about sports and just learn about them like a friend would. "Yes, being a TA is super fun because I get to be around kids that I don't normally see throughout my day."

Although he likes to hang out with them and talk, he also does a lot for them. Almost every day Garrett helps the third graders with their daily school work.

"Some of the things I do on a daily basis as a TA are help the kids, read, pass out papers, and help them out with their IXL's," Garrett said.

Being a teacher's assistant is more than just passing around papers and telling kids what to do, it's about connecting with the kids and helping them learn and be comfortable talking to new people. It's important to help out with whatever we can in school and Garrett agrees.

Garrett believes it's a good opportunity for other students to be a TA and encourages others to try it saying "I would absolutely recommend being a TA. It's been a great experience for me and I really enjoy all of the moments with the third graders."



Senior Ella Kienitz was a TA in Stephanie Condon's kindergarten class and enjoyed her time bonding with the younger kids in the building.

By Sebastian Cisneros

Having a TA in the classroom not only benefits the elementary students and the senior in their classroom, but the teacher who gets help from the senior as well. Brandon Grund loves having Garrett Struxness in his third-grade classroom.

"Garrett helps with different assignments that we have throughout the mornings. He listens to kids read, he plays sparkle with us on Fridays to prepare for our spelling test. He is very helpful. He is willing to work with kids, whether it's reading with them or helping with an assignment," Grund said.

After having Garrett in his classroom this semester, Grund believes Garrett has what it takes to be an elementary teacher.

"Garrett is a natural with kids and he does a fantastic job. He definitely has a bright future in education if he decides to go the route after high school," Grund said.

The students in Grund's class get excited for their time with Garrett each day.

"It's the highlight of my kids' day. They absolutely love it," Grund said.

Since MACCRAY moved to a one-campus building, hosting pre k-12th grade, elementary and high school students have benefited from

programs like having a Teacher's Assistant.

"It's a great chance for the kids to get to know someone in high school. Garrett has had a very positive influence on these kids so far and I'd love to see that continue in the future." Grund said.

By Juan Del Bosque

The middle school students also benefit from seniors coming into their classroom as a teacher's assistant. Senior Jack Miller is a teacher's assistant in Cole Christopher's 8th grade phy ed class.

"I pretty much just help Christopher out, and then like if the younger kids are in the weight room I'll have an open gym and we can have kids come in here and we can just play badminton and just hang out," Jack said.

Seniors have an option to put being a TA in their schedule for the school year. They get an elective credit for being a TA in a younger class. The seniors have to get permission from the teachers before they can be a TA for their class, and teachers love to have TAs.

"My favorite part would probably be bonding with the kids and just playing these fun games with them," Jack said.



MACCRAY students who competed in the State BPA Convention are front row from left, Sam Andol, Izzie Wallace-Klein, Ilianna Bautista, Anna Miller, Sadie Koenen, Rorie Bristle, and Maggie Jaenisch. Second row, Nora Hultgren, Tayte Nokleby, Averie Nurmi, Ella Kienitz, Erika Pieper, Callie Macht, Brielle Niesen, Rachel Seehusen, and Jeremy Maldonado. Back row, Alex Dirksen, Greta Meyer, Molly Loe, Tre Lee, Grayson Ahrenholz, Charlie Delbosque, Garrett Struxness, Wyatt Swenson, Tobyne Dalle, Willie Miller, and Carson Duis.

MACCRAY BPA competes at State

By: Daniel Roelofs

Business Professionals of America, otherwise known as BPA, has students participating in various fun and unique activities, some of which allow the BPA students to go to state to compete with other students. In fact, some of our own students from MACCRAY have gone to state competitions to participate in the events while having an enjoyable experience with one another.

Mrs. Pieper is the head of BPA for MACCRAY, as she has been for several years, and has encouraged more and more students to join each year. In fact, she believes that it's good for students to get out of their comfort zone and to try something new because it could help them out with their chosen career path.

Some events that students participate in could actually help them learn more about their desired career choices for their future.

The State BPA Convention was held March 14-16 at the Hyatt Regency in Minneapolis, with 30 MACCRAY students grade 9-12 competing in 22 different events. Some students competed in individual events and some in team events. Some MACCRAY students even qualified for the state competition in more than one event. An incredible 1,400 Minnesota students participated in the State BPA Convention.

Mrs. Pieper is incredibly proud and excited for her BPA students because she knows that they all worked hard to get to where they are

today. Overall, BPA can be a rewarding opportunity for all students if they put their mind to it.

Mrs. Pieper mentions that "BPA is used to develop and empower student leaders to discover their passion and change the world by creating unmatched opportunities and learning their professional growth and service."

BPA overall offers a wide variety of things that students can try out to improve their skills and to get them to try something different. It really gives them something different to try out and it can have plenty of opportunities for students.

"I think it's just a good profession but yet a fun and rewarding experience," Mrs. Pieper said.



MACCRAY Snow Week Royalty includes Mackenna Burnett, Kyra Jarrett, Adelyn Plagge, Princess Greta Meyer, Queen Callie Macht, King Jack Miller, Prince Jordan Warne, Willie Miller, Jeremy Maldonado, and Juan Del Bosque.

MACCRAY Snow Week Activities fun for all!

By Quinton Hauck

Every year the MACCRAY School District plans a Snow Week full of activities. Although the original week of Snow Week got pushed back, it didn't stop the staff and students from having fun February 6-9.

Early in the week, there is the crowning of the king, queen, prince, and princess. On Tuesday morning the crowning was done. On Wednesday the high school classes went down to the elementary to help with snow week-themed fun. This included arts and crafts and games. Thursday afternoon was packed with different activities middle and high school students could sign up for. This included playing video games, card games, watching movies, pickleball, and free time in the gym. To wrap it all up there was a pep fest for the students on Friday before the boys basketball team hosted CMCS. There were games and activities to watch. The staff and seniors played basketball.

The question was asked to a couple of students: "What was your favorite activity during snow week?"

"I think playing pickleball and helping the little kids was fun," said junior Lexi Nurmi. Senior Carter Matthews said, "Pickleball was the best thing this week."



By Riley Roskens and Annie Bourne

MACCRAY School District hosted a Snow Week Coronation and many activities on February 6th-9th. The whole MACCRAY School District participated in snow week and it seemed to be very enjoyable for many students.

The MACCRAY staff tried to put together the best snow week they could for the MACCRAY students and snow week prince Jordan Warne said they did a very good job at it.

Jordan was very happy that he got Snow Week Prince. Warne's favorite part of snow week was when they did activities. Warne was disappointed that he couldn't do much because of the cast on his foot.

Greta Meyer was the Snow Week Princess. Greta said her favorite activity of the week was definitely

watching the staff vs seniors basketball game. "It was hilarious and so entertaining," Greta said.

Overall Greta really enjoyed the entire week, "It was fun! I enjoyed all the different activities that were put on during the week. They made it feel like Homecoming... but in the winter. I appreciate all the time that was spent trying to plan all the activities, especially the pep fest on Friday. I think it went very smoothly and was enjoyable to everyone," Greta said.

The entire Snow Week Court included Queen Callie Macht, King Jack Miller, Princess Greta Meyer, Prince Jordan Warne, Mackenna Burnett, Kyra Jarrett, Adelyn Plagge, Willie Miller, Jeremy Maldonado, and Juan Del Bosque.

Q&A with a student DJ

What was your favorite activity during Snow Week? Staff edition

By Juan Del Bosque

"There were two that we really enjoyed as a class. The first was Buddy day. We were paired up with Mr. Christophers class in the gym. The kids loved being able to hangout with the Sophomores for the morning and play different games. I was also a big fan of the pep rally. Watching all the students partake in different events was fun to see. It is a huge success anytime you can get the whole school together! Cole and Brenda did a fantastic job setting the whole thing up."

Brandon Grund, third-grade teacher

"I thought that the games Mrs. Schwitters planned were really unique and fun for all the grades to be involved. I liked the basketball game because it was fun to be involved.." **Carrie Cronen, high school Social Studies teacher**

"All of Snow Week is fun, but my favorite activity would have to be the pepfest on Friday and specifically the basketball game. It's always fun to play hoops and to put on a show for the student body. It's really fun to see the whole school getting into the game and cheering for the teachers or for the seniors. I heard many of my students talking about the basketball game after the pepfest. These big school events really bring the school together and are a blast for the students and the staff! It's just an added bonus that the staff dominated the seniors this year too!" **Jakob Zuidema, middle school Social Studies teacher**

By Alex Dirksen

Senior Kyra Jarrett is active in a lot of MACCRAY things. One of the things she is involved in is Student Council and she also got a chance to DJ for the dances Student Council planned.

Q: What is your role in student council and do you enjoy student council?

Kyra: "My role in the student council is the social media representative for the seniors. I do very much enjoy Student Council."

Q: Why did you want to DJ?

Kyra: "I DJed the dance because the Student Council did not have a lot of money to pay for an actual DJ. I also did the Homecoming dance and had a lot of fun."

Q: Did you enjoy DJing?

Kyra: "I did enjoy it because I also enjoyed the Homecoming dance and I was excited to do it again."

Q: Did the dance go well?

Kyra: "Yes, I think that the dance went really well. More people showed up than I was expecting. I was glad to see people dance their hearts out."

Q: How did it go picking the music and did you have good requests?

Kyra: "Some of the requests were pretty good but I only had 4 requests. I think they enjoyed my picks of music because there was a lot of dancing and singing loud."

MACCRAY FFA Week

By Quinton Hauck

FFA has a whole week dedicated to FFA. Every year the MACCRAY FFA does activities for the whole school to be involved. FFA Week was celebrated at MACCRAY the week of Feb. 20-24.

There are a ton of different activities done during FFA week. "During lunch, there was a mini CDE Contest, bean bag tournament, horse races, and on Thursday we had hay bale throwing. We also had dress-up days every day. Saturday evening we had a pancake feed and a program recognizing the FFA royalty court and a couple of guest speakers," said Hansen.

The event is mostly planned by the FFA officers. "There is a lot of planning and preparing beforehand. We have to line up all the supplies for the different activities, get the speakers contacted and scheduled, and advertise what is happening throughout the week," Hansen said.



FFA Week Royalty included Princess and Prince Molly Loe and Charlie Delbosque, and King and Queen Cameron Tebben and Callie Jaenisch.

By Andy Osorio FFA Royalty

High School Senior Cameron Tebben and Junior Callie Jaenisch are coordinated FFA queen and king during FFA week.

FFA Week is celebrated everywhere there is an FFA organization. MACCRAY High School celebrated FFA week on February 20-24, 2024. During this week there is a group of students from the FFA organization that get elected to be crowned queen or king. Tebben says the honor of being king is, " (that it) showed that I am a leader in FFA and is an honor for me because of how long I have been in FFA."

Jaenisch, who has been in FFA for four years concurs. "It means a lot to me as people see the work that I put into FFA and see me as a good person."

FFA Advisor of 14 years, Ben Johnson, encourages everyone to join FFA for several reasons, "the career development so you get to kind of experiment with different careers and help you choose the career choice, college choice. There are other benefits like teamwork. Also, there are scholarships, there is a lot of money put into FFA scholarships its a lot of fun, too."

The king and queen also think joining FFA is with it! FFA court members included: Garrett Struxness, Charlie Delbosque, Domic Neville, Andy Osorio, Quinton Hauck, and King Cameron Tebben for males, girls being: Alexandra Dirksen, Emersen Tatge, Molly Loe, Samantha Andol, and queen Callie Jaenisch.

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