

SUMMER 2017

inTOUCH

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION FROM OTTAWA HILLS LOCAL SCHOOLS



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UT BASKETBALL COACH AND OH PARENT TOD KOWALCZYK READS TO HIS DAUGHTER'S 2ND GRADE CLASS.

From the Superintendent's Desk

One of the correlates of effective schools is parental and community involvement. Great schools encourage and promote parental and community involvement in the schools.

We have strong parental involvement at Ottawa Hills Schools. It is key to our success. However, two-thirds of the households in Ottawa Hills do not currently have children in our schools, and too often, those Villagers no longer feel connected to the school district. It is important to us that all community members feel welcome in our schools.

Included with this edition of **inTOUCH** is your official invitation to be part of your schools.

Community members often enhance the learning experience for our students. For example, last year, Hindea Markowicz, "Check It Out" program coordinator, provided OH girls with practical knowledge concerning breast cancer prevention. Jay Berschback, Channel 13 meteorologist, visited the second grade to enhance their atmosphere studies. Dr. Randy Ellingson, Professor of Physics and Astronomy at UT, presented information on solar energy to the fifth grade students. Former teacher Steve Wipfli returned to the classrooms of Ottawa Hills as part of the Artist-in-Residence program. Hoda Chaaban, a French teacher, spoke to French IV and V students about her experiences in France, Lebanon, and Syria.

As you review the "Connect 2 Our Schools" form enclosed with this edition of **inTOUCH**, please consider sharing information on your areas of interest and expertise. We will create a directory of resources for our teachers to use as they develop units and lessons. Whether it's genetics, literary analysis, entrepreneurship, or the life cycle of the monarch butterfly, we would like to connect with you as a valuable classroom resource.

A second section of the form asks for your college/university alma mater. Connecting our students to Village residents who are graduates of schools in which students have interest can help our students with the college search and application process.

A third section lists some of the volunteer opportunities available not only to parents, but also to all community members. Consider sharing some of your time with our students, teachers, and support organizations throughout the year. It's a great way to stay connected to the school district.

We invite all parents and Villagers to fill out the enclosed form. It can be mailed or dropped off at any district office. It can also be filled out and submitted digitally by going to our district website at www.ottawahillsschools.org. The form is available on our home page.

You have an open invitation to connect to your school district. We would love to include you as a partner as we serve the students of Ottawa Hills.

Sincerely,
Dr. Kevin S. Miller, Superintendent



2017 Fall Festival Coming Soon!

Fall Festival will take place on Saturday, September 23 from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The Festival, sponsored by the Ottawa Hills Schools Parent Association, is held on Geresy Field at the corner of Indian and Evergreen Roads.

There are activities at the Fall Festival for people of all ages and interests. The Art Fair & Marketplace features a variety of original art, crafts, and other specialty items, live entertainment, pony and wagon rides, a pumpkin decorating contest and more. Additionally, the Car Show is returning this year.

Support OHSPA by coming out to Geresy Field on September 23 to enjoy this Ottawa Hills tradition! ■

meeting our MISSION



FUTURE BUCKEYE KENDALL KROPP
Realizing her unique potential

Our Mission:

In partnership with our community, Ottawa Hills Local Schools will challenge and inspire each student to realize his or her unique potential; to embrace learning as a lifelong process; and to become an active, responsible citizen.



OH Alumni, Arohi Bhatt.

Life Long Learner: Arohi Bhatt ('10)

Miami University ('14), majored in International Studies and Economics; minored in Spanish

Currently works in Miami, Florida as the Manager of Regional Operations for "Teach for America"

"The lessons I learned inside and outside the classroom at Ottawa Hills are ones that serve me every day in my current role, and I imagine will be ones that I take with me the rest of my life. Ottawa Hills provides a space for students to be creative, work hard, learn from mistakes, and ultimately, excel. When I went to my first classes in college, I remembered feeling not only prepared, but also confident because of the unparalleled education and support I had received in my years at OH. I feel lucky to be a Green Bear."

Kendall Kropp, a member of the newly graduated class of 2017, says that dancing has been a part of her life since her earliest of memories.

She shares, "I wanted to dance ever since I was in diapers. My parents said that my older sister, Katie, would be in the dance studio, and I'd be outside the door crying because I couldn't come in. I finally got to start lessons when I was about two or three."

Kendall, who has an obvious passion for dancing, has been trained in dance styles such as jazz, contemporary, ballet, tap, and hip hop. But it's the way that she was able to use her dancing expertise at Ottawa Hills that enriched her time here as a student. And those experiences have led her to a new and exciting venture. Kendall was recently selected as a member of the prestigious Ohio State University dance team.

"Tryouts at Ohio State are very competitive," she stresses. "My background at Ottawa Hills helped to prepare me. Being on the OH dance team taught me the importance of paying close attention to detail. It was also helpful to be on the cheerleading squad because so much of being on the dance team at OSU is cheering at football and basketball games."

These past few years, Kendall's impact has been seen on the stage as she has choreographed many musicals. "The biggest thing I took out of the musicals is appreciating the process of creating the choreography. You can't skip over the details. Every detail has to be addressed."

But even more than creating dances, choreographing the district's musicals taught Kendall about leadership. "I could go on and on about how these experiences helped me become a leader," she notes. "They helped me realize that when there was a problem, I had to come up with a solution. Leading the choreography gave me an opportunity to work on my communication skills. I wasn't a strong speaker beforehand, but when you have to get in front of one hundred of your peers and explain what needs done, you learn that everything has to be articulated clearly."

Kendall says, "Interviews were part of the dance team tryouts at OSU. They were very interested in hearing about the work I did with our musicals. It was unique. No one else had the opportunity that I had to choreograph their school's productions. It helped set me apart."

OH Artistic Director Darrin Broadway sings the praises of Kendall and her work with school productions: "Kendall Kropp works and works and works and works. She creates. She listens. She reflects. She analyzes. She synthesizes. She collaborates. She motivates. And she commands. Kendall joins the ranks of some exceptional artistic leaders who have graduated from OH Theatre. Her leadership will be missed." ■



OH students are active, responsible citizens.

Creating Great Citizens

These OHHS Volunteer Focus students spent part of their summer painting a mural at Monroe United Methodist Church. The mural, designed by Mary Shawaker (far right), was done to enhance the church's Freedom School. The Freedom Schools program, supported by the Children's Defense Fund, is a literacy-rich summer program developed to serve children in communities where quality academic enrichment programming is rare, cost-prohibitive, or non-existent. ■

green bears ON THE GO!



Five OHHS students extended their Agora, 2016 experience this summer by climbing to the peak of Ruth Mountain in the North Cascades of Washington. They were led by Villager and OH parent Von Sigler. As part of last November's Agora, Dr. Sigler led a workshop called "The Climb," which taught participants mountain climbing skills.



The Ottawa Hills "Diamond Dogs" won the Nations Baseball state tournament for ages 11 and under. The top 52 travel baseball teams in the state competed at the tournament. The Diamond Dogs won nine games, defeating Solon in the semi-finals, 8 to 0, and Hilliard in the finals, 7 to 4, to capture the title.

The Green Bears marching band began their season with a two-week band camp, which began on August 7. After many years of being dormant, the marching band program was revived by Director Michael Leeds in 2010. Fifty-three students will be marching in the band this year, led by drum major Will Rand. The band's opening performance will feature songs from the hit movie, Shrek.



Eight OHHS students joined students from across the country to take part in the Summer Learning in Kenya (SLIK) program, led by OH alumnus Fred Roberts ('79). This service learning program had OH students teaching in the rural schools of Kenya. Students also enjoyed a safari to the Samburu Game Reserve, hiked up Mt. Kenya, and took part in a classroom building project at Manyatta Primary School.



Safety Village, sponsored by the Office of Village Life, was held in July for incoming kindergartners. Thirty-nine students learned lessons in everything from bicycle safety to safely crossing the street and more. Afternoon attendees are shown here with Sargeant Chris Sargent of the OHPD, who assisted with the program.



China was the summer destination for eight OHHS students who took part in the Chinese Bridge Summer Camp through the University of Toledo's Confucius Institute. The program provides students with Chinese language classes and culture classes, such as calligraphy and tea ceremonies. Students gained rich cultural experiences through interaction with Chinese students, home-stay experiences, and sightseeing.

Summer garden parties gave students and community members a chance to interact with the elementary Learning Lab. Attendees took part in various gardening activities, enjoyed dishes prepared from locally grown produce, and took home produce from the lab that was ready for harvest. OHES student will continue to make use of the Learning Lab this fall to supplement classroom activities.

TEACHER FEATURE

Hannah Lehmann

Wall-to-Wall Talent



Ottawa Hills Jr./Sr. High School art teacher Hannah Lehmann spent part of her summer making the world a bit more colorful. If you drive east on Sylvania, you'll see the results of her work—a large mural on the side of the Craig's Keyboards building.

The idea came from Craig's Keyboard owner, Craig Whitaker. "Hannah and my daughter, Leah, went to school at Maumee Valley together. When I told Leah I was thinking about having a mural painted on the side of the building, she suggested Hannah for the job."

It was a natural fit for Ms. Lehmann, who had previously

done a mural on the Market on the Green in downtown Toledo for the Arts Commission. Still, the Craig's Keyboard job was a daunting task. Ms. Lehmann reflects, "This is definitely the biggest mural I've painted. It's about 600 square feet. That's a lot of square surface when you consider a sketchbook is about one square foot."

The theme of the mural came from Whitaker. "I suggested to Hannah that I didn't want a commercial sign. I wanted something that reflected an interest I have. I'm a scuba diver, so that was the basis of the mural. I wanted something that would enhance the neighborhood, which is part of the West Oak Walk. I gave Hannah several pictures from my scuba diving expeditions to help with the creative process. She showed me a proof, and I told her, 'Let's go for it.'"

Ms. Lehmann points out that the design also had to be approved by the city and the Arts Commission. "Since I had already done one mural with the Commission, they were familiar with my work," she notes.

As Ms. Lehmann worked on the mural over a two-week period, it drew a crowd. "A lot of people

would honk their support as they drove by," shares Whitaker. "A couple times there were almost accidents because people were slowing down to see the mural. People would just stop by to watch her paint. One group even brought a picnic lunch to enjoy as they watched. There were a couple nights she was there until one or two in the morning doing the preliminary sketch on the wall."

Sixty different colors were used in the mural. The finished product features an ocean theme complete with a scuba diver and a variety of sea creatures—from turtles to squid to fish and more. The design evolved even as it was being painted. Whitaker says, "She had requests from people as she was painting. I asked her to include a moray eel. She researched it and added it free hand."

Ms. Lehmann's work receives a thumbs up from Whitaker. "I absolutely love it," he shares. "I've had people call me to say 'thank you' for having the mural done. It's beautiful and it's doing a lot to enhance the neighborhood. Now that I've had a mural painted, I'm beginning to notice other murals. I think Hannah's is the most beautiful, and content-wise, it's totally unique." ■



BY THE NUMBERS

Ottawa Hills facts & figures

90

Percentage of OHHS students who earned a 3 or better on their spring, 2017 Advanced Placement Tests.



59

Number of kindergartners starting their school career as the OH Class of 2030.



251

Number of jr. high and high school students participating in a fall sport.

100

Percentage of third graders who met or exceeded the Ohio Department of Education third-grade reading guarantee in '16-'17.



74

Number of OH students involved in summer STEM camps sponsored by the Office of Village Life and the Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation.

DISTRICT DOWNLOAD

Improvements continue at district buildings.

OH Five-Year Forecast is Solid

This past spring, district treasurer Brad Browne presented an updated five-year forecast to the Board of Education.

After experiencing four years of expenses exceeding revenue from Fiscal Year '08 through Fiscal Year '11, the district has realized five straight years of revenue exceeding expenses. FY '17 ended with expenses exceeding revenue, but only because of the \$2.4 million being used to address House Bill 153 facility improvements. These funds will be paid back to the general fund from the Permanent Improvement account over the next ten years (see "Money Matters" article).

Since the early 1970s, the district has asked voters to approve operating levies about every three years. The last operating levy was approved in 2013. The current five-year forecast indicates that the district would not have to consider an operating levy until approximately 2020. This stretch of at least seven years without an operating levy is unprecedented in the district's history. ■

Money Matters

Using available funds, major projects have been taking place in district buildings during the summer of 2017.

Some of those projects are being addressed through the use of House Bill 153. This legislation allows the district to fund larger projects through a loan that can be paid back over a ten-year period using Permanent Improvement funds. Instead of using an outside lender, the Board of Education has been able to "borrow" the funds from the general fund to support \$2.4 million in improvements at the elementary building. These funds will then be "paid back" to the general fund from the Permanent Improvement fund over the next ten years. Borrowing the funds internally will save the district \$220,000 in interest over the span of the project.

Three major projects are being funded using the House Bill 153 legislation. The biggest is installing a new heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system at the elementary building. This project allows us to replace five different heating and air conditioning systems currently serving the elementary building with one building-wide, energy-efficient system. The new HVAC system will also provide air conditioning throughout the entire building.

The second project is replacement of all exterior doors at the elementary. This will increase building security as access to the building can be monitored through the use of a key-fob system. In addition, instead of being manually locked, doors can be programmed for automatic lock-down during the school day.

The third project is replacement of windows in the 1930 section of the building with new, energy-efficient windows. The windows will

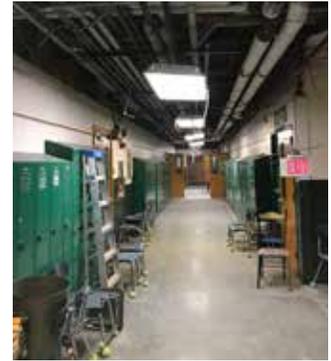
bring more lighting into classrooms and decrease the need for artificial lighting through the day.

In addition to the House Bill 153 projects, the district has undertaken two other large projects using Permanent Improvement funds.

The first is replacement of a section of the roofing at the jr./sr. high school. This \$98,000 project will address aging roofing in the area called the "transition" hallway from the high school to the jr. high. With the completion of this project, 100% of the roofs in the district will have been replaced with new roofing over the last twelve years. Total cost of those projects over the twelve-year period has been just over \$1.7 million.

The second project funded directly with Permanent Improvement funds is wholesale replacement of our interior lighting with new LED lighting systems. The project cost for the lighting upgrade is \$367,000. Due to the increase in energy efficiency with the new LED lights, the "payback" on this project will be just under seven years. In other words, over the next seven years, the savings on utility costs will completely cover the cost of this project. Beyond those seven years, the energy savings realized will mean ongoing cost savings for our general fund.

In response to feedback from our community members, we are doing everything we can to address facility needs with the funds that are available to us. ■



This past spring, a twenty-eight member advisory committee consisting of representatives from the community, school faculty and staff, and Board of Education developed a new long-range strategic plan for Ottawa Hills Schools. The group worked in coordination with Battelle for Kids out of Columbus, Ohio.

Please join us on Thursday, September 7 at 4:30 p.m. in the elementary library/media center for the roll-out of the new strategic plan

Members of the advisory committee will provide an overview of the newly-established goals: Academics, Engagement, Innovation, Partnerships, and Support. Attendees will receive a copy of the 2017-2022 Long-Range Strategic Plan.



Ottawa Hills Local Schools

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Ottawa Hills, OH 43606

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The *Cleveland Dealer Plain Dealer* gives Ottawa Hills the highest ranking in the state through a formula that creates a Grade Point Average for each of the state's school districts

"The *Plain Dealer* calculated the GPAs by using the 'component' grades the Ohio Department of Education reported for each of six areas deemed of special interest by the state. The component grades consider things like overall student achievement, how well districts do in helping lower-performing students improve, and graduation rates."

The *Plain Dealer* notes, "Ottawa Hills, outside Toledo, is the only perfect 4.0 district in the state, by our calculations. Solon checks in at No. 2 with a 3.8 GPA. Only 23 of 608 districts got a 3.0 or better."

Congratulations to our staff, students, and community on earning this achievement!

OH Welcomes New Faculty & Staff Members



WE WELCOME OUR NEWEST GREEN BEARS!

Nine new faculty and staff members will be joining the Green Bear team with the start of the 2017-2018 school year:

- Elementary Custodian **Melissa Johnson**, a resident of Oregon, Ohio;
- Paraprofessional **Amy Krupp** (B.S. from Muskingum University; M.A. from BGSU);
- High School Intervention Specialist **Allison Latella** (B.S. from BGSU);
- Second grade Teacher **Holly Morgan** (B.A. from Bethany College; M.A. from Carlow University);
- High School Guidance and College Counselor **Jennifer Nagy** (B.A. from BGSU, M.A. from the University of Toledo);
- High School Secretary **Amanda Neuendorf** (B.S. and M.Ed. from Ohio State University);
- Reading Tutor **Tori Norman** (B.S. from BGSU);
- High School Science Teacher **Liz Puskala** (B.S. from Michigan Technological University; M.Ed. from the University of Toledo);
- Paraprofessional **Alexis Weghorst** (B.A. from Mount Vernon University);