

Inside This Issue

On The Cover

- Central High School Students To Design Classrooms For the Future
- City High Student To Attend Ocean University in China
- 2 Burton Elementary School Students Receive Surprise Visit From "Dora the Explorer"
- 2 Teen Author Essay Contest/Writing Workshop
- 2 From The Office of Retirement Services
- 3 May Customer Service Award Nominations Being Accepted
- 3 HBCUTE To Honor Founder, Celebrate 20th Anniversary
- 3 Winners at the National League of Academic Games Tournament
- 4 Thinking About Retirement?
- 4 District Offers Interest-Based Strategy (IBS) Training For All GRPS Staff
- 4 KVO (East) Car Wash
- 4 Ottawa POHI Program Receives \$4,500 Lowe's Toolbox Grant
- 4 BOE Policies/Bylaws Available on InfoHost
- 5 2009 Grand Macker Tournament This Weekend!
- 5 GRASP (Grand Rapids Academic Summer Program)
- 5 Summer Meals Program
- 6 Channel 27/902 Special Programming

Central High School Students To Design Classrooms For The Future

Several students at Central High School will have a unique opportunity to participate in a challenge through Architecture for Humanity, Orient Global and others to design a classroom of the future in partnership with Tower Pinkster and the GRPS Facilities/Management Department.

Six students in Rinard Pugh's class are working with Matt Slagle, an architect from Tower Pinkster, and Alex Smart, an architect in the district's Facilities/Management Department.

On Thursday, May 14, students had the opportunity to tour Steelcase University, located at 901 44th Street, S.E.



Afterwards, they heard from designers about the design process. They also observed other classrooms in action and discussed how space is used, making connections to the

design principles they are learning about. Eventually, students will bring all of these experiences together to design a classroom.

See "Classroom Design," page 2

City High Student To Attend Ocean University in China



Pictured (above): City High-Middle School junior Oliver Johnson who will attend Ocean University in China this fall.

For the past year and a half, Oliver Johnson, a senior at City High-Middle School, has been studying Chinese. He has al-

ways found languages very intriguing, and something about the Chinese language made him want to learn more.

After visiting China last year with friends, Oliver decided to return there for college.

Now, with the help of his parents, teachers (Ning Liu and Jeff Hayes) and fellow junior classmate (Wang Wen Qian), Oliver has been accepted into a one-year Chinese language program at Ocean University in Qing Dao, China.

Oliver is excited to be going to China this fall. He credits his Spanish/Chinese teachers at City for helping further his love for languages.

Oliver's goal is to major in Chinese studies. The program is taught in Chinese.

Next month, Oliver will find out if he has received the Confucius Scholarship.

For additional information, contact Dale Hovenkamp, Principal, or Danielle Ralston, Counselor, at (616) 819-2380.



Pictured (above): Students arriving to Burton Elementary School on Tuesday, May 12 had a special surprise guest greeter - "Dora the Explorer." Not only did Dora visit with students, but thanks to a generous donation of 40 tickets by SMG/DeVos Place and Van Andel Arena, the first grade students were able to attend the matinee performance at DeVos Hall that same day.

Classroom Design

From page 1

If students at Central and their partners at Tower Pinkster and the GRPS Facilities/Management Department win the challenge, Central will receive up to \$50,000 in funding for classroom construction and upgrading.

The basic premise of the competition is that teachers and students know best what their

classrooms need, and architects have the design expertise to help them imagine spaces which fit those needs.

For more information about Architecture for Humanity, visit <http://www.openarchitecturenetwork.org/competitions/challenge/2009>.

www.grpublicschools.org

From the Office of Retirement Services

Do you plan to retire in two to four years? If so, you should plan to attend an online Pre-Retirement Information Meeting (PRIM) for public school employees. The two-hour live webinar will help you make informed decisions about your retirement and future.

Topics:

- Pension eligibility
- Pension calculations
- Payment options ▪ Service credit
- How and when to apply
- Insurance
- Questions and answers

You may register for one of these meetings on the website.

Four Pre-Retirement Information Meetings (PRIMs) have been scheduled for the month of May. Each interactive webinar will last about 90 minutes and you will have plenty of opportunities to ask questions. On the day before the meeting, detailed instructions about how to access the webinar will be sent to you at the email address you provide when you register.

To register, go to http://www.michigan.gov/orsschools/0,1607,7-206-36528---,00.html#Preretirement_Seminars.

For additional information, contact the Customer Education Department at the Office of Retirement Services at <http://www.michigan.gov/orsschools>.

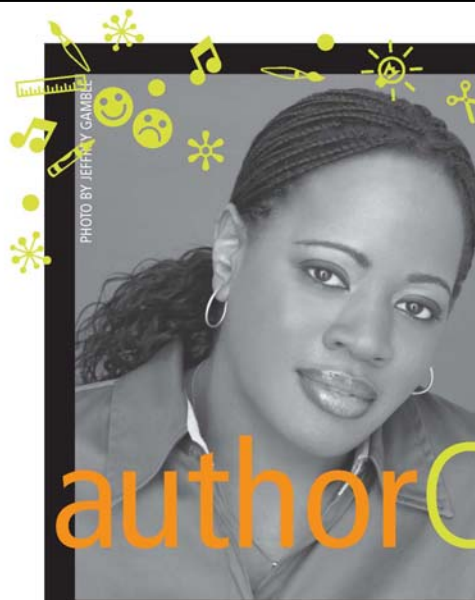


PHOTO BY JEFFREY GAMBLE

author Coe Booth

THURSDAY, JUNE 11

TEEN WRITING WORKSHOP

2-4 PM • Main Library • 111 Library Street NE Level 4 • Vander Veen Center for the Book Limited space. Sign up www.grpl.org/register.

Coe Booth, award-winning author, will teach you how to use your life experiences to create good writing. If you are an aspiring writer, don't miss this chance to get advice and feedback from a published author. Workshop open to teens ages 13-18.

TEEN ESSAY CONTEST


Entries due Friday, June 5. Email typed entries to teens@grpl.org or turn them in at any Library location. Contest open to teens ages 13-18.

Write a 500-word letter to an African American author, sports figure, entertainer, educator, or other role model. The person can be living or dead. Explain how the person's work or achievements changed your way of thinking about the world or yourself. Top 8 essay writers will receive Best Buy gift cards. Winner of the essay contest gets dinner out with Coe Booth on Thursday, June 11 before the evening program!

MEET COE BOOTH!

7 PM • Main Library • 111 Library Street NE Level 3 • Ryerson Auditorium

Teen author Coe Booth will discuss writing her books *Tyrell* and *Kendra*. Booth's realistic portrayal of teen life is drawn from her job working with teens in the Bronx. She works with the NAACP ACT-SO mentoring teen writers. A book signing will follow the discussion. Books will be available for purchase.



Funded by the Grand Rapids Public Library Foundation.
Events are free and open to the public. Free parking with a validated parking lot ticket.
For more information call 616.988.5400 or visit www.grpl.org.

May Customer Service Award Nominations Being Accepted

It's time to recognize another employee who exemplifies customer service. **For the month of May, we are looking for another staff member from GRESPA** (food service, supply, grounds, operations / maintenance, utility cleaners) who falls into that category.

As a reminder, a sample of the criteria for consideration of the award would be an

employee's demonstration of one or more of the following:

Encourages teamwork
Creates a more productive work place
Successfully meets the customers' needs, and
Greets customers in a welcoming manner, making them feel important and appreciated.

Please send your nomination, with an explanation of why the nominee should be

recognized, to Ineke Zweerus in the Superintendent's Office no later than Friday, May 22. Don't forget . . . Providing exceptional customer service is within everyone's reach. Nominate that exceptional colleague today!

For additional information, please contact Ineke Zweerus at (616) 819-2193 or at zweerusi@grps.k12.mi.us.

HBCUTE To Honor Founder, Celebrate 20th Anniversary

The Historically Black Colleges and Universities Tour Experience (HBCUTE) will celebrate its 20th Anniversary. It will also host a celebration honoring its founder, Mrs. Shirley Allen-Little.

In 1989, Allen-Little had a vision that she shared with Sidney Bailey, then principal of Ottawa Hills High School, and Earnestine Tolbert, a GRPS nurse. Together they organized a successful bus tour for students that has visited many Historically Black Colleges and University (HBCU's), as well as educational sites.

HBCUTE
Historically Black Colleges and Universities Tour Experience

A Celebration Honoring Shirley Allen-Little

Saturday, June 27, 2009
6:00 p.m.
Crowne Plaza Grand Rapids
(5700 28th Street S.E.)

Cost: \$25 per person. Advertisement in the Souvenir Booklet is also available.

For additional information, contact Earnestine Tolbert or Joyce Dean at (616) 617-4987.

Twenty years later, more than 1,500 students have traveled to numerous sites. Because of the tour experience, many attended and graduated

from the colleges and universities they visited.



National League of Academic Games Winners

Pictured (above): GRPS students who competed in the National League of Academic Games Tournament held last month in Knoxville, TN. The Senior Team took 1st Place in Equations and Linguistik.

To me, education is a leading out of what is already there in the pupil's soul.

Muriel Spark
1918—2006
British Writer

Thinking About Retirement?

Are you thinking about retiring from GRPS at the end of this school year? If so, please remember to submit your retirement form to Human Resources. The form can be obtained in the Human Resources Department or on the HR page of InfoHost.

Also, please make sure you contact the Office of Retirement Services (MPERS) at (800) 381-5111 to notify them of your intent to retire.

Early notification to the District and MPERS will assist us in making sure that:

- you receive your retirement benefits in a timely fashion,
- you receive an invitation to the District's Employee Retirement Recognition Open House to thank you for your service to the GRPS, and
- the District can plan for your replacement to ensure less disruption to the students you have served during your time with GRPS.

Kent Vocational Options (KVO) East

CAR WASH

Friday, May 22, 2009
9:00 a.m.—12:30 p.m.
East Congregational Church
1005 Giddings S.E.

Cars: \$5
Vans: \$6
Trucks: \$6



Please drive through and let us wash your car! This is a fundraiser for classroom materials and activities.

For additional information, please contact Donna Poag, Teacher, at (616) 819-2109.

Board of Education Policies/Bylaws Available On InfoHost

Did you know that you can view Board of Education policies and bylaws on InfoHost. Simply log on to InfoHost and check out policies/bylaws regarding administration, communications, personnel, students, etc. Go to Departments on the Home Page, then click on Board of Education.

District Offers Interest-Based Strategy (IBS) Training For All GRPS Staff

Based on the work of the Harvard Negotiations Project, GRPS and the Michigan Education Association (MEA) have used the Interest-Based Strategy process in Grand Rapids for bargaining, grievance resolution and other problem solving activities.

Join the over 100 GRPS employees who have been trained in the process.

What Else Do I Need To Know?

To serve on a negotiations committee or subcommittee for the groups that use IBB, you must have had

this training. Those who wish to serve on labor-management committees are encouraged to attend. Training classes will be limited to approximately 30 participants. If the training occurs during your normal work hours, you will be released with pay to attend.

What Do I Need To Do To Register?

If you are a union member, complete an association leave request to be signed by your supervisor and union president and submit it to Ronda Kaechele in Human Resources. If you are an administrator, please email Ronda in Human Resources.

Register early—the deadline to register is May 8.

Association leave forms must be received in Human Resources by the deadline date.

IBS Training for GRPS Staff

May 26 & 27
8:30 am—6:00 pm
GREB Building
3205 Eaglecrest Dr. NE
Suite 201

Ottawa Hills High School Receives \$4,500 Lowe's Toolbox Grant

Officials at Ottawa Hills High School recently learned that its Training and Transition Program has been awarded a Lowe's Toolbox for Education Grant. The grants, in the amount of \$4,500, is to refurbish its central courtyard.

Details of the grant include construction of a wheelchair accessible gardening bed, a sun / weather shelter, outdoor furniture, and wildlife feeding stations. Disabled students, staff, and retired

volunteers will do the construction along with guidance from the Lowe's staff. In addition, master gardener assistance will be used to select plants.

Physically impaired students are expected to benefit from involvement in the life-long hobbies of gardening, construction, bird watching, and volunteer activities, as well as developing friendships and mentors within the community.

Planning for the project will take place this spring, with construction and planting occurring at the beginning of the 2009-2010 school year.

For more information or to volunteer to assist with the project, please contact: Teresa Firlit, POHI teacher, at (616) 819-6082, or Kathy Fisher, physical therapist at (616) 819-7050 at Ottawa Hills High School.



GRAND RAPIDS, MI 2009

2009 Grand Macker Tournament
May 23-24, 2009
Fifth Third Ballpark
 (Comstock Park, MI)

Proceeds go to help the GRPS avoid a pay-to-participate athletic program for students. More information can be obtained by calling the Macker Office at (616) 754-0373.

Interested in volunteering? Contact Jodie Brannum in the Volunteer Office at (616) 819-2131.

Looking for help to keep your child's math and reading skills up for the summer?



If so, then the Grand Rapids Academic Summer Program (GRASP) is your answer. GRASP is a nine-week summer correspondence program in reading and math – grades K-8 – that seek to help students retain skills learned during the school year.

Students complete one lesson a week and mail it to the GRASP scoring center. Experienced staff members grade and record the lessons and return the results to the students. GRASP students earn medals and certificates for their efforts.

GRPS elementary students received enrollment forms in April from their school. Interested parents may also purchase packets for their children from the GRASP Office, located at Shawmut Hills Elementary School (2550 Burritt N.W.) from 8:00 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. during Open Enrollment Week (June 3-5).

Questions? Please call the GRASP Office at (616) 819-2548. Or, visit www.grpublicschools.org/grasp.

Hunger Doesn't Take A Summer Vacation

The GRPS Nutrition Services Department will be sponsoring the USDA funded Summer Meals Program this summer in locations throughout the city. Everyone wins with the Summer Meal Program! Meals will be available Monday through Friday beginning June 8th. See below for specific start times/dates. **Children 18 years of age or younger may participate at no charge.** A nutritious lunch is available at the locations listed below. Please check with the specific site for snack and breakfast availability. Many of these sites also have exciting summer activities for children.



SUMMER SITES

Aberdeen Elementary School	6/8–8/14	M–F	Ken-O-Sha Park Elementary	6/15–8/7	M–F
Alger Middle School	6/8–8/14	M–F	Kent Hills Elementary School	6/15–8/7	M–F
Baxter Community Center	6/8–8/14	M–F	MLK Leadership Academy	6/15–8/7	M–F
Brookside Elementary School	6/15–8/7	M–F	Mulick Park Elementary School	6/8–8/14	M–F
Buchanan Elementary School	6/8–8/14	M–F	New Hope Baptist Church	6/15–7/23	M–R
Burton Elementary School	6/15–8/7	M–F	Salvation Army @ Linden	6/8–8/14	M–F
Camelot	6/15–8/7	M–F	Seidman Center	6/15–8/14	M–F
Campus Elementary School	6/29–8/7	M–F	Sherwood Park Elementary	6/15–8/14	M–F
Covell Elementary School	6/15–8/7	M–F	Southwest Community Campus	6/8–8/14	M–F
Creston Plaza	6/8–8/14	M–F	Steil Center	6/15–8/14	M–F
Gerald R. Ford Middle School	6/8–8/14	M–F	Stocking Elementary	6/8–8/14	M–F
C.A. Frost Env. Science Academy	6/15–8/7	M–F	Westwood Middle School	6/15–8/7	M–F
Garfield Lodge	6/8–8/14	M–F	David D. Hunting YMCA	6/15–8/14	M–F
Harrison Elementary/Middle	6/8–8/14	M–F			

Channel 27/902

SPECIAL PROGRAMMING

May 14–21, 2009

- **NEW Union High School Spring Music Concert**

Monday at 3:00 p.m.
Tuesday at 5:30 p.m.
Wednesday at 7:30 p.m.
Thursday at 1:30 p.m.
Friday at 9:00 p.m.
Saturday at 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m.
Sunday at 2:30 p.m.

- **NEW Focus on GRPS**

Monday at 6:30 p.m.
Tuesday at 1:00 p.m.
Wednesday at 7:30 a.m.
Thursday at 1:00 p.m.
Friday at 4:30 p.m.
Saturday at 8:30 p.m.
Sunday at 7:00 a.m.

- **NEW Grand Rapids Board of Education Meeting**

Tuesday at 8:00 p.m.
Thursday at 9:00 p.m.
Saturday at 10:00 a.m.

- **NEW Grand Rapids Board of Education Meeting (Spanish Translation)**

Wednesday at 9:00 p.m.
Friday at 5:00 p.m.
Sunday at 5:00 p.m.

- **NEW Grand Rapids Board of Education—Education Committee Meeting**

Wednesday at 5:00 p.m.
Friday at 3:00 p.m.
Sunday at 9:00 p.m.

- **Grand Rapids Board of Education—Legislative Committee Meeting**

Monday at 12:00 p.m.
Thursday at 4:00 p.m.
Saturday at 9:00 p.m.

- **Grand Rapids Board of Education—Finance Committee Meeting**

Thursday at 7:00 p.m.
Friday at 8:00 p.m.
Sunday at 9:00 a.m.

- **GRAPCEP Press Conference**

Monday at 9:45 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.
Tuesday at 4:45 p.m.
Wednesday at 8:00 a.m.
Thursday at 8:45 p.m.
Saturday at 12:15 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.
Sunday at 8:30 a.m. and 11:45 a.m.

- **Arts Jam 2009**

Monday at 10:00 a.m.
Tuesday at 7:00 a.m.
Wednesday at 9:30 a.m.
Thursday at 6:00 a.m.
Saturday at 4:00 p.m.
Sunday at 7:00 p.m.

- **Houseman Field Groundbreaking Ceremony**

Monday at 9:00 a.m.
Tuesday at 4:00 p.m.
Thursday at 5:00 p.m.
Friday at 8:00 a.m. and 7:15 p.m.
Saturday at 6:00 p.m.
Sunday at 7:30 a.m. and 11:00 p.m.

- **KidSpeak 2009**

Tuesday at 3:00 p.m.
Wednesday at 6:30 p.m.
Thursday at 11:45 a.m.
Saturday at 9:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.
Sunday at 10:00 a.m.

- **East Leonard Elementary School Music Concert**

Monday at 7:00 p.m.
Tuesday at 9:45 a.m.
Thursday at 11:00 a.m.
Friday at 1:45 p.m.
Saturday at 12:30 p.m.
Sunday at 1:45 p.m.

- **Mulick Park Elementary School Earth Day Choral Concert**

Monday at 9:45 a.m.
Tuesday at 12:30 p.m.
Thursday at 3:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.
Friday at 7:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m.

- **Ottawa Hills High School Academic Dean's List 2nd Trimester**

Monday at 9:15 a.m.
Friday at 6:30 a.m. and 11:30 p.m.
Saturday at 3:30 p.m.

- **Student Signing Day**

Monday at 9:00 a.m.
Thursday at 3:30 p.m.
Sunday at 10:30 p.m.

- **GRAPCEP Engineering Internship Presentations 2008**

Monday at 5:30 p.m.
Tuesday at 2:00 p.m.
Wednesday at 3:00 p.m.
Thursday at 10:00 a.m.

- **GRAPCEP Internship Presentations at Van Andel Institute 2008**

Tuesday at 1:00 p.m.
Wednesday at 4:00 p.m.
Saturday at 8:00 a.m.

- **Testimonials—SWCC, City High-Middle, Ford Middle, Harrison Middle, Buchanan Elementary, Burton Middle, Alger Middle, Central High, Creston High, Westwood Middle, Ottawa Hills High, Union High Schools (back to back)**

Monday at 1:00 p.m. and 8:30 p.m.
Tuesday at 10:30 a.m.
Wednesday at 1:30 p.m.
Thursday at 8:30 a.m.
Friday at 11:00 a.m.

- **University Prep Academy Flag Raising Ceremony**

Tuesday at 4:00 p.m.
Thursday at 6:45 p.m.
Saturday at 6:45 p.m.

- **Annie (rerun)**

Monday at 7:00 a.m.
Wednesday at 11:30 a.m.
Friday at 9:00 a.m.
Saturday at 1:30 p.m.
Sunday at 12:00 p.m.