Gold Canyon United Methodist Church Donates $33,690 to AJHS Choir

Members of the choirs at Apache Junction High School gathered in the lobby of high school for a surprise. Members of the Gold Canyon United Methodist Church presented a check for $33,690 to help Ms. Andie Chung, choir director at AJHS and her choral programs.

Throughout the year the congregation takes up collections to support local programs and charities. The check for the choir was especially generous as it was taken on Christmas Eve and earmarked to help the AJHS program. Ms. Chung has designated the funds be used for uniforms, risers and microphones.

AJPD Opens Satellite Substations

The front door to AJHS and CCJH display a new alliance with AJPD.

Folks at AJHS and CCJH can feel safer now that the AJ Police Department has set up a satellite substation on both campuses. The schools provided space for AJPD officers to come in and out of campus to write reports and interact with students and staff.

“The partnership we have with AJUSD has always been outstanding,” said Chief Thomas Kelly. “This is just one more step toward strengthening that relationship and building a safer environment for staff and students alike.”

Arizona School Tax Credits

Tax law has temporarily expanded to allow tax credit monies for public school fees to include taxpayer contributions toward some capital items including playground equipment and shade structures for playground equipment. Visit Arizona Department of Revenue for more details. Donations for the 2019 tax year can be made up to April 15, 2020.
Yee Haw! AJHS Teacher Claire Williamson Named KNIX Teacher of the Month

Congratulations to AJHS Teacher Claire Williamson for being named the KNIX, Federal Credit Union Teacher of the Month. Claire won a check, delivered by the one and only Barrel Boy, and will be entered to win $10,000 at the end of the year.

PTES Working Hard to Make the Grade

Students aren’t the only ones working hard to earn an A+. The Peralta Trail Elementary School team recently completed a massive (90 pages) of documentation about why the school should receive an A+ School of Excellence™ rating. The A+ Schools of Excellence is a comprehensive school assessment program that challenges school teams to work together to identify areas of excellence in teaching, learning, climate, community building and leadership. The announcement on whether PTES made the grade will be announced at a special awards ceremony on April 8. Good luck!

Fun Fact about St. Patrick’s Day

Green is the color associated with St. Patrick’s Day, but the color was originally blue. Rumor is the change was due to Ireland’s nickname, “The Emerald Isle.” Plus who ever saw a blue shamrock?

AJHS’ Cody Arbogast Wins State Championship

Cody Arbogast came back in a big way when he returned to wrestling after a four-year hiatus and captured a first-in-state trophy for Apache Junction High School. It’s the first state championship winner to come out of AJHS since 2010. In addition to wrestling, Cody played football (defensive line) and track and field for the Prospectors. Also placing in the state tournament from AJHS was Ethan Wright, who came in second, Preston Lindstrom with a sixth place finish and Nathan Munoz who placed 8th. Overall, AJHS placed 10th as a team. Congratulations to everyone!

Hoop Hoop Hurray for CCJH

The Cactus Canyon Girls Basketball team finished their season by going undefeated and winning the Desert Middle School Athletic League Championship for the second year in a row. The Cougars were led in points by Allie Pride with an average of 9.2 points a game and Erin Smiley with an average of 8.7 points a game. Sharp shooter Alexis Alsenay made 19 three pointers over the course of the season. Congratulations to all.
CCJH Student’s Artwork Honored by DAR

Artwork submitted by Hailey Webb, an eighth grade student at CCJH won at the state and southwest regional competition and is now being considered for a national honor by the Daughters of the American Revolution.

Webb’s work began in Allison Bauman’s advanced art class and was later entered into a Constitution Week poster contest sponsored by the DAR. From that contest Hailey’s poster moved through the ranks as an entry in the Junior American Citizens Art Contest and won at the state and regional levels.

The theme for the contest is the 19th Amendment - Women’s Suffrage – which celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2019 (the year the contest launched). The national winners will be announced in March.

Imagine the “Pastabilities” of Bridge Design

The students in Steven Bussell’s Intro to Engineering class at AJHS built bridges out of uncooked spaghetti. Students began with a blueprint, and then the spaghetti was bundled together and cut and glued into the desired shape. The goal was to construct a bridge that could hold a specified load over a specified span. The students performed a stress test and added weight to the point of catastrophic failure. The winning team was Mallory Mellor and Caris Lonkert, both sophomores. Congratulations Mallory and Caris!

STEM Learning Provides Electrifying Results

Lane lights up about the power project.

Students in Caerensa Klaus’s fifth grade class became supercharged about science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) learning while working with Dr. Nathan Johnson on a recent classroom project. Professor Johnson and a team of engineers from ASU visited Desert Vista Elementary School and set up micro-grids to demonstrate how electricity is generated and tasked the students with the job of supplying power to a simulated town with a power shortage.

DVES Students Exceed Fundraising Goal

DVES Student Council members pose with their advisor.

Student Council members at Desert Vista Elementary School participated in a Pennies for Patients campaign that connects schools with local blood cancer patients and allows students to see how their fundraising efforts can impact the lives of others. The Mustangs exceeded their goal of $1,000 by raising $3,423.44!
FPES PTO Hosts First Parent/Student Dance

From left Reginald and Sandra Garnett.

For the first time in many years Four Peaks Elementary School was able to form a Parent Teacher Organization to help support the students. Their first event, a “Just You and Me Date Night” was a huge success.

Coach Sloth Gives Great Message

From left: Donevan Stimson and Coach Sloth.

Children’s book author, Coach Ryan Sloth, visited FPES for an assembly and entertained and educated the students with an exciting anti-bullying message from his latest book, “Hank the Bully.” Prior to launching his writing career Coach Sloth coached and played football in his home state of Iowa. About Coach Sloth.

AJUSD Rolls to Success at LDD Parade

Thank you to everyone who helped out at the Lost Dutchman Days parade, rodeo and marathon events.

DVES Kids Spring into Action for Heart Health

The students and staff at DVES participated in their annual jump rope event. The staff and students spent the day jumping rope to raise awareness of heart disease and stroke and were able to raise $2,261.16 for the American Heart Association. The Kids Heart Challenge, formerly known as Jump Rope for Heart, has been a tradition at the school since 1996.

Nationally Certified Teachers Go the Extra Mile

Our National Board Certified Teachers

Congratulations to Suzanne Decker and Liz Savoy who are nationally board certified teachers. Both women teach at PTES. Ms. Decker recently renewed her certification for another five years. The National Board Guidance Page provides great information and outlines national standards for what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do. Why certify? Students learn more and teachers improve their practice. So teachers, why not join Suzanne and Liz, make the next step, and take your career and AJUSD to the next level?