Student Government Members Read to Elementary Students

By: Breanna Fowler

Student government members went to Shipman and Brighton North Elementary Schools on Friday morning, Nov. 14, to serve as guest readers.

Because it was National Young Reader’s Week, student government organized this event to promote reading. Seniors Hannah Greeling, Payton Heyen, Chelsey Milligan, and Alyssa Cox, and juniors Evan Lowis, Samantha Cranmer, Kaeden Kessinger, and Nathan Beilsmith participated in the event.

The books read were chosen by the elementary teachers or by the student government members. Members selected books that they missed from their childhood.

Cox and Milligan agreed that being able to be a role model and being someone that they can look up to was the best part of reading to the children.

Senior Payton Heyen also added, “It was cool to be able to read to the children, because I remember when the older kids came to read to us when I was younger.”

Mrs. Jen Borkowski, student government sponsor, said that the student government hopes that reading to the elementary students will become a tradition for student government. They also plan on reading at Medora Elementary but the date has yet to be decided.

Brittany Hand Tunes Out Drugs With Her Anti-Meth Winning Poster

By: Hayley Neibel

In October, junior Brittany Hand entered her artwork in the anti-drug poster contest for the Macoupin County Anti-Meth Coalition in Carlinville.

The poster contest was to support the theme “iTune out drugs” and needed to be student’s original work. Students could use any art medium to create the poster. Hand’s 8x10 poster was a colored drawing of an iPod that says, “iTune out drugs.”

After the posters were judged, Hand was chosen as the winner of Southwestern High School. She was also invited to a pizza party sponsored by the MCAMC on November 19, to be recognized and receive her award, which was a $25 gift card.

Hand said that she worked on the poster for a couple days at home.

She expressed her feeling about winning the poster contest. She commented, “I was surprised. I normally don’t win things.”

Hand added that art is a big part of her life and she hopes to be an art teacher someday.
Art Club Members Carve Creative Pumpkins

By: Ashlee Wittman

After school on Wednesday, Oct. 29, art club held a pumpkin carving contest. Mrs. Susan Ruyle, art teacher, observed the students as they worked on their own creations. The pumpkins were judged by the faculty the following morning.

There were six winners in five different categories including: funniest, scariest, most creative, pop culture, and best Halloween theme.

Senior Brandon Murphy won the scariest pumpkin award and claimed, “I was surprised, yet ecstatic.”

Juniors Erin Laubscher and Malea Bailey, the winners of the funniest pumpkin, said that it took them an hour and 45 minutes to make their pumpkin because of the teeth.

To get the idea for his pumpkin, junior Evan Lowis used the internet.

The art club plans to decorate ornaments or make gingerbread houses in December.
Fall Band and Chorus Concert Impresses Audience

By: Jamie Brockway

On Thursday, Nov. 20, at 7 p.m. the Southwestern Middle School and High School bands and choruses presented their annual fall concert in the gym under Ms. Alex Weinberg’s direction.

The middle school choir made their debut by performing, “Dance Evolution Medley” by Brymer. The middle school band followed with two songs.

High School Choir Club sang highlights from the Broadway hit musical, *Wicked*. Next, the jazz band entertained with two numbers, “Summertime” and “Yardbird Suite.”

The final performance was by the high school band playing “The Flight of the Piasa” which included solos by Kimberly Behrends (flute), Kathryn Crowder (flute), Kaeden Kessinger (trumpet), and Bradley Spurling (trombone).

Before the high school performance, Ms. Weinberg thanked the band and choir boosters for their constant support and helping to improve the program. She also thanked administration, faculty, staff and students of Southwestern for their support and encouragement of the programs.

Ashley Egelhoff, drum major, thanked Ms. Weinberg, principal Mr. Bearley, superintendent Mr. Skertich, and the band and choir boosters for their support. She also recognized Jacob Rotermund, trumpet player, and Spurling for being chosen to perform with the National FFA band. She explained that it is rare that two students from the same school are selected.

Senior Ashlee Wittman commented, “I really liked the current songs because I knew them. It was a good concert.”

Mr. Bearley stated, “I was very impressed with the performance.”

ETS Members Visit SLU: Home of the Billikens

By: Aleigha Dobbs

On Friday, Nov. 21, Educational Talent Search students visited St. Louis University.

Mrs. Gill, the ETS advisor, assisted them in learning more about SLU College surroundings as well as the administration at the university.

The ETS students chose this specific college to visit. Mrs. Gill added that it was a majority choice.

Mrs. Gill stated, “I haven’t taken any group from Southwestern to SLU before so it’s pretty exciting.”

ETS attended a presentation by the administration at SLU campus. They were on a tour of the campus and had an opportunity to ask questions about the university.

For lunch the students went to Maurizio’s Pizza in downtown St. Louis.
Mockingjay Premiere Stirs Excitement

By: Meghan Pomeroy

At long last, the beginning to the finale of one of the most popular book series of this decade will hit the big screen. The Hunger Games’ third book Mockingjay made its movie premiere in Hollywood on Nov. 11, and then premiered to the world on Nov. 20, at 8 P.M.

Directed by Francis Lawrence, Mockingjay continues the love triangle between Katniss (Jennifer Lawrence), Peeta (Josh Hutcherson), and Gale (Liam Hemsworth). To clarify, Jennifer Lawrence and Francis Lawrence are not related even though they have the same last name.

When asked about Jennifer Lawrence’s acting skills, senior Kristen Doerr commented, “She’s really a great actress, and portrays Katniss’ character well.”

Doerr has read The Hunger Games series, and is very excited for the Mockingjay movie. All the fans, including Doerr, won’t have to wait any longer. However, the suspense continues because there is a part two to this movie. Mockingjay Part 2 is to come out in 2015.

On author Suzanne Collins’ blog, www.goodreads.com, the public said that the book was unsatisfying but they are hopeful that the movie will be much better. Seeing as the last two Hunger Games movies did not disappoint, everyone has high expectations for Mockingjay.

Local theaters will be showing the film. Tickets are $6 at the Jerseyville Stadium Theater, $8.25 at the East Alton Eastgate AMC Showplace 6, and $10.25 at the Edwardsville AMC Showplace 12. See their websites for times.

Band Marches in Alton Halloween Parade

By: Hayley Neibel

On Friday, Oct. 31, at 7 p.m. the Southwestern Marching Band and Color Guard marched in the Alton Halloween parade. They performed the theme songs from “Ghostbusters” and “The Addams Family” and played “Thriller.”

While the band was playing, Color Guard was danced in front, as they entertain the crowd with their flag routine.

The parade began on Washington Ave. then traveled to Broadway, ending on Piasa St. where the bus station is located. The parade is three and a half miles long. There are usually over 70 different entries in the parade including Halloween themed floats, local high school marching bands, fire departments, and other emergency vehicles.

Ashley Egelhoff, drum major, said “I think the band and color guard performed really well. The community had great things to say about the color guard.”

She also mentioned that considering the cold weather it was harder, but the performance was not any less of what they are capable of. The band did receive a plaque for marching in the Alton Halloween parade.

In The Halls

What’s your favorite book turned movie?

Cheyenne Slack—The Fault in Our Stars
Kevin Cox—The City of Bones
Kristen Doerr—Mortal Instruments
Graham Bachman—Lord of the Rings
Ryan Cox—Star Wars
Sarah DuPont—War Horse
Abbie Westerman—Harry Potter
Jenna McElyea—The Fault in Our Stars
Nathan Beilsmith—Into The Woods
Megan Kirby—Lord of the Rings Trilogy
Rachel Baldwin—Alex Rider Stormbreaker
Carley Link—Follow Your Heart
Olivia Jones—A Walk to Remember
Kaeden Kessinger—Harry Potter
Danny Merideth—Lord of the Rings
Dallas Sherman—Star Wars
Amber Whitehead—The Fault in Our Stars
Hayley Neibel—The Perks of Being a Wallflower
Brittany Hand—Maze Runner and Warm Bodies
Let the Madness Begin: Black Friday Sales Bring Out the Craziness in People

By: Publications Class

For years, people looked forward to Black Friday shopping but it has changed over the past few years. In 2012, Walmart announced that it would open at 8 p.m. on Thanksgiving Day and now many retailers are opened all day on Thanksgiving in which some refer to as “Gray Thursday.”

Most people say that stores should not be open on Thanksgiving. Senior Megan Kirby stated, “People should be with their families on Thanksgiving, not at stores buying stuff.”

Other people look forward to Gray Thursday and Black Friday shopping to find deals (especially on electronics) while others go to have fun and see how crazy people can act.

Meghan Pomeroy, senior, said, “I am going Black Friday shopping this year. I like to go and hide things from people.”

Senior Aleigha Dobbs said that she is going to Wal-Mart and Target to get good buys on movies and CDs.

Freshman Alex Silvester said he is going to Finish Line to get Under Armour hoodies and shoes.

Some students and faculty at SHS are working on Thanksgiving and Black Friday at local stores. Senior Aubrey Thornsbury, who works at Kohls, said, “I am working on Thanksgiving and Black Friday and I am not excited. After I get off work on Friday, I will go find some good deals.”

Mr. Tim Reed, ag teacher, and junior Kaleb Cruse will be working on Black Friday at Jerseyville Farm & Home. “I want to manage the insanity,” commented Mr. Reed.

Cruse added, “I just want to get it over with.”

Seniors Jacob Rotermund and Darby Jones are working on Thanksgiving and Black Friday. They agreed that they are not looking forward to the crazy shoppers.

FFA “Finally” Harvests Farm Plot

By: Sarah Dupont

In early June, Southwestern FFA members planted six different varieties of corn in their farm plot which is located next to Brighton North Elementary School. FFA members Keely Egelhoff, Adlai Schetter, Ashley Egelhoff, Ethan Wilson, and Tommy Wilson harvested the corn on Tuesday, Nov. 18.

The farm plot manager is sophomore Adlai Schetter. Graduates Leighton Grothaus and Jon Loy and some of the students’ fathers also assisted.

Keely Egelhoff said that Wm. Nobbe & Co. John Deere in Jerseyville donated the planter and local farmers donated seed to make the project possible.

When asking Schetter what he learned from this experience, he stated, “Teamwork goes a long way and gets a lot more accomplished.”

Ashely Egelhoff said that it couldn’t have went any better. “It was a successful day,” she added.
### Fall Sports Wrap-Up Season

**Golf Holds Banquet**  
*By: Breanna Fowler*

The golf season ended with a banquet to recap the season and recognize the players. The event was held at Cross Roads Community Church in Brighton on Oct. 27, from 6:30 – 8 p.m. During the banquet, Coach Gary Ballard talked about the season and the players. Each player also spoke about his favorite memory of the season.

Senior Nick Ballard was presented with the Most Valuable Player award. In addition to the MVP award, Coach Ballard surprised the players with a plaque with their name and picture.

The players’ scores were also announced. Some individual scores were: Nick Ballard at 40 (four over par), junior Reid Nixon at 36 (shot at par), and sophomore Collin Baumgartner at 41 (5 over par).

Nick Ballard used one word to describe the season, “Exciting, because you never knew what was going to happen next.”

### XC Team Crosses the Finish Line

*By: Payton Heyen*

The Piasa Birds Cross Country team concluded their season on Oct. 25, at Smithton.

Junior Brandon Myatt advanced to sectionals on Nov. 1 at SIUE where he finished in ninth place, advancing to state.

On Nov. 8, Myatt competed at the state finals in Peoria at Detweiller Park. There, he ran his best time of the season.

The team congregated in the high school cafeteria to celebrate the season with a banquet. The event was catered by “Bird Feeder” Trish Catlett. Members Ailee Manns and Evan Lowis were honored with the gold captains star. Senior Payton Heyen and freshman Grant Seniker received the Runner-Up Award, and juniors Erin Laubscher and Brandon Myatt were named as the team’s MVP.

### Basketball Boys Shoot For A Good Season

*By: Karlie Green and Reagan Rinacke*

After ending their season with a loss to Carlinville in regionals last season, Coach Jason Darr states, “The boys still have a bad taste in their mouth. It was upsetting because we were expecting to win.”

Many changes have made to the schedule for this season, including Breese Mater Dei, who Coach Darr expects to be their toughest competition.

They also added the Metro East Lutheran Thanksgiving Tournament and will play in the Columbia Christmas Tournament.

“These new tournaments should be good for our team, there are a lot of great teams and good competition,” said Darr.

There are four seniors on the roster, Andrew Fry, Blake Lawson, Connor Robinson, and Briston Johnson. Coach Darr anticipates all four boys will show leadership this season.

Senior, Andrew Fry has high expectations for this season, “I hope to get my free throw percentage about 60%,” he mentioned.

As a team, he expects “to win conference and hopefully make it to sectionals.”

Coach Darr agrees, and also looks to win regionals and compete in post season.

Both Darr and Fry view Greenville as their toughest competition in conference.

“They won conference last year and have a lot of players returning,” commented Darr.

The boys will host their annual Green and Gold game on November 21.
Lady Birds Jump Into 2014-15 Season

By: Payton Heyen

After a heart-breaking loss to Riverton in their first round of sectional play last year, the Piasa Birds girls basketball team is hungry to begin their 2014-2015 season.

Coach Steve Wooley commented that he was upset, to say the least. He felt that after all of the team’s hard work throughout the season, they “got cheated.”

“Everybody was very upset with how our season ended; however, I feel like it will make us work even harder this year,” stated junior forward Karlie Green.

There have been many changes made to the team’s schedule this season. More competitive teams have been added in order to prepare the Lady Birds for the post-season.

One of these changes has been the annulment of the Birds Thanksgiving Tournament, which had been held at Southwestern for the past 18 years.

Instead, the team will travel to Pana for their Thanksgiving Tournament, competing against teams such as: Athens, St. Teresa, Pana, Central A&M, and Mattoon.

Wooley states that they “dropped weaker teams” in order to “pick up more successful teams” like, Mater Dei, Calhoun, Pleasant Plains, and Wesclin.

“I think the new schedule will be good for the team. We’ll be playing more advanced teams. I feel like that is going to make us better,” Green commented.

The Birds tip-off their season at North Green on Nov. 18. Followed by their first home game against Calhoun on Tuesday the 25.

Scholar Bowl Team Buzzes Into a New Season

By: Josh Nagel

Another school year brings about another season of the quizzical sport of Scholar Bowl. With a current record of 17 wins and one loss the former nationals team has buzzed into the season with a bang. Returning for his 11 year is Coach Matt Hasquin who enjoys the sport as a whole, be it playing or moderating. This year, he hopes, “that we play as well as we can. I’d like to think we can challenge other schools for the county and conference titles,” and he mentions that “student’s shouldn’t feel shy to come to matches. What we do at games is what they do in the classroom.”

This year, the team consists of 27 players; eight freshmen, six sophomores, eight juniors, and five seniors. Of these five seniors, two stand out. Seniors Darby Jones and Brandon Murphy have competed all four years of their high school career. Jones commented that what drove her to compete was her older sister, watching her play in matches appeared fun to her, so she joined the team.

What drove Murphy was the philosophy that “knowledge can only increase.” Scholar Bowl is unlike any other sport, and the team urges students who are unsure about joining the team to realize that “you know more than you think you do.”

Freshman Jonathan French is one of the many new additions to the team this year, and so far he likes the sport. French commented “I enjoyed the sport in Middle School, so I thought I’d try it in High School.” French mentioned, “I really enjoy Scholar Bowl as a sport and an after school activity, so I’m going to stick with it.”

What is your favorite part of Scholar Bowl?

Junior Brandon Thomas commented that he loves the sport because it is fun getting to see a variety of teams “and winning, winning is nice.”

Sophomore Aaron Tutterow said that his favorite part is seeing his friends every time he goes to practice.

Senior Brandon Murphy’s favorite part is “answering the question right, and beating Darby.”
Motivational Speaker Inspires FFA Members at Convention

By: Aubrey Thornsbury

On Wednesday, Oct. 29, twenty FFA members attended the 87th annual FFA National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky. Mr. Tim Reed, FFA advisor, and students attended the opening day of the four-day long convention. This year’s theme was “Go All Out!” This group of students had a busy schedule, leaving for Louisville at 4:45 a.m., then going to the career fair and opening session. They returned to Southwestern at 11 pm.

In addition, ten students went to the convention for three days, Oct. 29 -31, with student teacher Mr. Smith. The students that went on the three day trip went to the convention every day and toured a cave, went to a Justin Moore concert, visited an orchard, went to the Louisville Slugger Factory and Museum.

“It was really fun. I met a lot of people and learned a lot. We all got to know Mr. Smith better too,” junior Jamie Moore said.

After many rounds of auditions, senior Jacob Rotermund and junior Brad Spurling, were selected to play in that National FFA band. They were required to be in Louisville three days prior to opening day of the convention in order to attend practices that were seven hours long per day.

The National FFA Band performed eight times at the convention, at Churchill Downs (home of the Kentucky Derby), and in downtown Louisville.

When Rotermund and Spurling weren’t playing, they went bowling and visited the Louisville Slugger Factory and Museum.

Spurling, trombone player, said about this honor, “It was probably the best thing I’ve ever done. I had a lot of fun.”

All of the students listened to motivational keynote speaker, Nick Vujicic, who was born with a disorder that caused him to be born with no arms and legs. He spoke of never giving up.

“He was probably the best speaker I’ve heard in all my years of going to the convention,” stated Mr. Reed.

“"It was probably the best thing I've ever done.”
-Brad Spurling

Junior Brad Spurling has fun at the Louisville Slugger Factory and Museum.

The convention center was decorated in blue and gold displaying the theme.

Juniors Jamie Moore and Taylor Graham admire the trucks at the career fair.

Juniors Jacob Bowman, Kaleb Cruse, Cody Catlett, and senior Chase Bowman wait for the opening session of the convention to begin.

Sophomores Kaylen Walker, Alyssa Norell, freshmen Isabelle Wolff, Tom Wilson, Korin Lucas, and junior Braden Whippens enjoy their time at the convention.
Artist of the Month: Aubrey Thornsbury

By: Brittany Hand

November’s artist of the month is senior Aubrey Thornsbury. She is currently active in Art Club, and is in Intro to 2D right now, but has taken photography and ceramics in the past.

She became interested in art her freshman year, because her sister was very involved in Art Club, which made her want to participate in it as well.

Her main inspiration is her sister, but another artist she admires is Ansel Adams, a nature photographer. Thornsbury commented, “He inspires me to do more nature photography, or at least try and not totally give up.”

Her favorite styles include painting, photography, and drawing. She likes realism, and typically takes portrait pictures.

When asked if she will make a career out of her love for art, she said, “Yeah, it might be a different form of art, like fashion, or maybe photography.”

Her advice to all young artists is: “Just keep trying. Practice makes perfect, right?”

District Sends Letter Home to Parents

On Wednesday, Nov. 4, an informational letter was given to students to take home to their parents concerning recent drug searches conducted at the high school and middle school.

Parts of the letter said, “We encourage parents to also talk to their children about the dangers and consequences of using these drugs. The drug task force also wants parents to be aware that children in the area are selling and/or trading their prescription medication for other drugs.”

“Students in both the high school and middle school will be closely monitored due to the recent trends in illegal use of drugs in rural Illinois. We are doing our best to educate and inform students and we also want to inform parents that these activities are unfortunately taking place in our area. A combined effort between home and school will help ensure we take another step forward in keeping our school system and communities a safe environment.”

The full letter is available on the high school website, along with numbers parents can call if they have questions or concerns.