Safety is a priority
From Mr. Derek Suroggins, California Middle School assistant principal
The Moniteau Co. R-1 School District takes the safety of its students and faculty very seriously, and the school district was able to demonstrate this as it added a second School Resource Officer (SRO). The school board approved the addition of a second SRO, and Officer Leanna Brown began working in the district on August 26. Officer Brown joins Officer Scott Harkins, who began working as SRO for the district in January. Officer Brown has been in law enforcement since November of 2015.

Superintendent Dwight Sanders said that “unfortunately, we live in a world where some scary things have happened at schools and having two resource officers allows the students and staff the ability to come to school and feel safe. With two campuses in district and only one SRO, he was only able to be on one campus or the other. There was a need to provide coverage to both campuses, and a second SRO allowed us to do that.”

In addition to ensuring the safety of the students and faculty, a SRO also acts as an advocate for the students in a capacity where they can support the students, fosters educational programs that increase students’ knowledge and relationship with law enforcement, investigates criminal offenses, and attends activities that occur in the district.

With the addition of a second SRO, Officer Brown and Officer Harkins alternate which SRO is based at each campus.

Officer Brown says that “working between the three different buildings has been good. There is a lot of variety by being in the three different settings on the two campuses.”

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<td>MS and HS Fall Band Concert 2:00 p.m. in CPAC</td>
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<td>6 9/V Girls BB @ Smith-Cotton 9/V Boys BB vs Sweet Springs 2nd Grade Concert 7:00 p.m. in CPAC</td>
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<td>8 PTO Special Guy Dance 6:00-8:00 p.m. in elementary gym</td>
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In my room ... Kindergarten builds Mayflower for STEM project
By Jasmine Kerley

Taylor Grellner’s kindergarten class is working on their STEM project building Mayflower ships that follow a storyline about the first Thanksgiving.

The students enjoy being creative working on the STEM project while getting to interact with their friends.

Kindergartner Emerick Loring explained, “We had to glue humans [Pilgrims] on a box [the cardboard boat] with glue and scissors and tape.”

All the students had to build their own boat, and they got to share ideas with their friends and help each other come up with unique ideas for their boats.

Everyone sat on the carpet as the students presented their mayflower boats individually. “The water tub was up on a table so they could see,” said Grellner.

The project only took one day to complete, and all the boats had to float. “We tested all the boats to see if they floated, and all of them did,” Loring said.

Grellner let the students use their own imaginations building their boats, but she helped them with supplies such as tape when they asked and cutting the cardboard.

Students in Taylor Grellner’s kindergarten class build ships for Pilgrims out of recycled materials.

District helps with toy donation program
by Bryce Menhennet

Every year people donate toys and money in support of Toys for Tots for families who are less fortunate.

Toys for Tots was started by the Marine Corps Reserve and has been carried on annually for many years. The city of California has had a Toys for Tots chapter for three years now.

“This year is the first year that the school district has partnered with the Moniteau County Toys for Tots,” Superintendent Dwight Sanders said.

California school district raised a total of $1,077 in one week by teachers who wanted to wear jeans during school.

Volunteers all around the community gather to help sort toys and books based on age group and gender. They also make sure the donations are appropriate.

Toys for Tots is not just for the city of California but for the entire county of Moniteau. This seasonal fundraiser helps roughly 200 families in the county.

Donations to Toys for Tots are collected in boxes such as this one inside of Burgher Haus.

Special substitute announces retirement
By McKayne Barbour

John Hempe is a full time substitute teacher at California who has built a great relationship with students across the district. He has announced his retirement at the end of the semester.

Rachel Hees, fifth grade teacher, explains what makes him such a special substitute.

“He worked hard to build a positive relationship with [the students] in the ways he interacted with them. My students always looked forward to having him as their substitute if they knew I would be gone for a day,” said Hees.

Bret Martin, a kindergarten teacher, explains how he built relationships with the kids in her classroom.

“I felt that my class always had a blast with him. He would tell jokes, draw funny pictures and play his harmonica for my students when they had free time,” said Martin.

He was also known for playing his harmonica for the students if they behaved. He has even played his harmonica at some California sports events.

Before joining the California staff, Hempe worked for two other school districts. He had nothing but good things to say about Moniteau County R-1.

“From the support staff all the way up through the faculty and administration, including at the very top with Dwight Sanders [superintendent], I witness on a daily basis people genuinely love and care for one another. In all my years I’ve never been part of such a close-knit work family,” said Hempe.

He joined the Marines in 1977 and became a photojournalist stationed in Japan then in New York. Then he got a degree in fine arts graphic design from Webster University, St. Louis. After he got his degree, he became vice president of marketing and advertising at a private university in South Dakota.

Besides substituting, Hempe also took up coaching duties with the CHS baseball team.

His presence and the relationship he built with the students will be missed throughout the district.
In my room . . . understanding basics of chemistry
By Chris Cassil

Darrell Bolin, eighth grade science teacher at California Middle School, is currently teaching his kids the basics about chemical compounds.

Students learn about the interaction of various atoms: how they can react and how they can create different compounds. Some of these reactions are essential for life existence, especially the complexities of organic and inorganic compounds and their effect on nature and life. One very significant example is the photosynthesis reaction. In this, carbon dioxide combines with water to create glucose, which is broken down to create usable energy then returned into the environment as carbon dioxide and water. “It is large cycle,” said Bolin.

While studying chemical compounds, the students do many experiments. Gavin Porter an eighth grader says his favorite experiment was a baking soda and vinegar combination which caused an explosion to occur.

“I just hope they are having fun and learning at the same time,” said Bolin.

Homework in this class makes sure each student pays attention because at the end of every unit is a unit test.

Bolin tries to make things different by using a flipped style classroom method which is very common nowadays. Flipped teaching is where the kids learn from online sources outside of the classroom and do work in class.

Porter said, “if you follow the directions and pay attention in class, the work is really easy.”The kids seem to enjoy the activities and hands-on experiments we do in class throughout each unit” Bolin said.

Bolin has been teaching for 11 years and really enjoys teaching his middle schoolers.

Sixth graders visit observatory, art gallery, museum

There have been occasions when California students have never traveled farther than the adjoining counties. Knowing this, the sixth grade team of teachers decided to provide their students with a field trip that allows many students to experience new activities and locations.

The teachers endeavor to provide an educational experience. “I have ties to CMU and have taken classes to the campus, off and on, during my 20 year career,” said Elizabeth Dick, English teacher. “Several of my former students have graduated from CMU because they had decided when we visited in fifth grade, that it was “cool” and smaller than MU.”

All California sixth graders were allowed to make the trip with a signed permission slip. Most students can find something that interests them on the field trip between the Morrison Observatory, CMU’s local history museum (pictured below), and the Ashby-Hodge Art Gallery.

“Weather-wise, this is Missouri, and we have had 80 degree with possible tornadoes to our recent 39 degrees with frost,” said Dick.

The bus ride to Fayette may not have been short, but it is not as long as going to St. Louis or Kansas City.

Giving Tree

The California Middle School Giving Tree is up and running again this year. All of the donations go to help middle school families who have been identified as in need. We have already had the help and assistance of the UCC church, a 4H group, and Eagle’s Lady Auxilliary.

If you would like to help, there are two ways to assist us.

1) Pick up a tag from the middle school office, purchase the item and return it with the tag by Wed. Dec.11 or

2) Donate money and the peer helpers will do the shopping for you. So, it isn’t too late to help.

Thank you for whatever assistance you can provide. Please, call the office and ask for Marcia Bibb, CMS counselor, if you have any questions.

Security
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Officer Harkins added that “things are easier with a 2nd SRO. The problem before was that I could only be in one place at a time, and if something happened in another school, I was always behind the problem. Now, I can feel like I’m able to get in front of things and be more proactive in dealing with issues. Having a second officer has also helped in that I am able to complete more cases because when day-to-day things come up, Officer Brown is there and can handle those.”

Middle School Principal, Matt Abernathy expressed his appreciation for the addition of Officer Brown because it not only “ensures that everyone has a better sense of safety or added security, but it also helps streamline the process of various tasks, such as communication with parents, transportation of students, and contact point for other agencies that otherwise wouldn’t openly share information with us, such as local law enforcement.”

Three months into the job, Officer Brown states that she “loves the job” and cites that “the interaction with the kids make the job great. These students are the future of the community, and I believe that by connecting with them, I can impact the future of the community.”

Officer Brown can be seen daily hi-fiving and welcoming students to school as both resource officers demonstrate law enforcement in a positive light.

Christmas Choral Concert

Sunday, December 15
Performing Arts Center
High School Choirs 2:00 p.m.
Featuring: The California Kids and United Church of Christ Handbell Choir
Middle School Choirs 4:00 p.m.
Lady Pintos watch Mizzou game, support former teammate

By Spencer Messerli

The 2019 Lady Pintos traveled to Columbia to watch Elizabeth Lutz’s college basketball team play Mizzou. Lutz was a former teammate for some of the Lady Pintos. The whole team showed up and supported both Lutz and Mizzou.

Makayla Schanzmeyer, a senior on the Lady Pintos basketball team said, “We are still friends, and she will always be my favorite person to play with.”

Lutz was an exceptional player for California. She broke 1000 points within her high school career and was successful in many other ways. This talent led to her being able to play college basketball at Western Illinois.

“It was a very exciting game. Both teams played very well, and the score was close the whole time,” Schanzmeyer said.

Bobby Sangster, head coach for the Lady Pintos, also attended the game.

In regards to watching Lutz play again, Sangster said, “enjoy is an understatement. There was a lot of pride, and I was very happy for her.”

He was very impressed with the way both teams played and the energy level they played with.

Sangster said, “I hope all the girls on our team follow their dreams like Lutz did.”

After the game, all the girls got together and took pictures with their former teammate. She may not play for the Pintos anymore, but as everyone always says, “Once a Pinto, always a Pinto.”

In my room... Direct teaching to give better understanding

by Jacob McCracken

Jason Gatlin teaches two different classes, world cultures and American government. Currently his government class is focusing on the legislative and executive branches as they study the way laws are made and enforced.

Gatlin wants students to “understand freedom” and what they are given as citizens. “I want to prepare students to make educated choices for our elected officials,” said Gatlin.

Maliki Christian, a student in Gatlin’s class said, “It is necessary for us to know how it works so we can understand how important voting is.”

One thing Christian says he took away from the unit was learning about how big and small states were taken into account when creating the American voting system.

According to Gatlin, the legislative branch is the most important branch of the government, and “you can’t have functioning government without it.”

His preferred method of teaching is direct teaching (lecturing). However, he hopes to break free of long monologues by creating situations that may happen in real life. This way, students can really see how something affects them.

American government is required for graduation and is a junior-level course at CHS. As part of this class, students must pass three tests: state constitution, federal constitution, and civics. They also have to take the state end-of-course exam for American government.

High tech, low tech sports equipment develops athletes

By Jordan Bondurant

Sports equipment is something that has become more popular over the years. At CHS many coaches look into better, more modern equipment.

Basketball coach Ron Lebel says he isn’t much for basketball equipment, but one thing his players use is the basketball shooting gun. This piece of equipment shoots the ball out to the players giving them game situation shots without needing someone to pass them the ball.

“The gun is used to help develop good shooters and to get more shots off in less time. It improves their shot, but they have to be willing to spend extra time on it to get better,” said Lebel.

Players mostly use the basketball shooting gun for individual work before or after practice, but it is used during practice on occasion.

Lebel said, “The equipment is purchased mostly between the school and the booster club.”

Football coach Derek Scroggins got a new, unique piece of equipment just this year. It is called the MVP drive tackling robot and is used for hawk tackling.

Scroggins said, “The tackling robot is a remote control tackling dummy and allows players to have full contact in a safe and functional manner.”

Not all equipment is high-tech.

Volleyball coach Julie Bailey uses a piece of equipment for blocking spikes. It blocks the spike which forces the players to recover the blocked shot, helping them react faster.

The basketball shooting gun shoots the ball out to players giving them game situation shots without needing someone to pass them the ball.

Bailey said, “It’s a pole that extends above the net that blocks the ball to practice recovering blocked shots.”

Baseball and softball coach Steven Stock keeps it fairly simple with his equipment. His players use a hitting tee to correct their mechanics of hitting the ball.

“The players put the ball on the tee, and if they hit correctly the tee doesn’t move,” Stock said.

Hitting from a tee may sound juvenile, but it helps to level out a swing to create a better chance of making solid contact with the ball.

Equipment is not a necessity, but is beneficial if athletes spend time on it. Having the basics such as just a basketball and rim, or a volleyball and net is still an efficient way to better one’s game.