

Pemberton Pride

The Newsletter of Pemberton Township Schools

March, 2021

EMMONS STUDENTS KEEP MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY TRADITION ALIVE

Students at Howard L. Emmons Elementary School have collaborated to participate in a day of service on Martin Luther King Day for the past two and a half decades.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the tradition took on a new look this year.

"For the past 25 years, Emmons School has visited Aspen Hill rehab hospital for our MLK day of service activity," Academic Mastery teacher Amy Oattes said. "Traditionally, Emmons students went in the hospital and sang songs about Martin for the residents, then distributed cards and paper flowers or

and collected donations that would be received by residents of the rehabilitation hospital in the foreseeable future.

The students also made cards for the residents of Aspen Hills.

"The staff and residents were happy to know we continued our day of service, despite COVID," Oattes added.

The items were delivered and distributed after a quarantine wait time.

Oattes, along with kindergarten aides Ariane Nixon and Gerrie Cole-Brown, directed the event and helped teach the values of community service to participating students.

"I am very proud of the staff and students that participated in this event," principal John Schmidt said. "Under the current pandemic circumstances, staff members that typically plan this event each year had to formulate an alternate plan since we would not be allowed to personally visit patients at Aspen Hills as is normally done.

The students responded with making cards at home, donating socks, and delivering these items to the school. Staff members took the items to Aspen Hills the same day, and they were distributed at a later date after a quarantine process."

More importantly, the giving nature of Emmons School and its students and staff proved to be a symbolization of its true identity.

"Emmons encourages core values for all its students and staff to aspire," Schmidt said. "We are able to illustrate what service to others can look like through events such as our sock drive. We hope that the positive feelings generated inspires students and staff to



Emmons kindergarten student Sophia Senior helps organize donations at the Emmons sock drive.

butterflies to brighten their day."

This year, students were unable to visit Aspen Hill in-person, but didn't miss out on the opportunity to help the community.

Emmons students hosted a sock drive



Second grader Sakinna Davis gives a thumbs up at the MLK Day of Service sock drive at Emmons on Martin Luther King Day.

continue participating in such events of giving back throughout their life."

The students were excited to learn the fundamentals of community service through their good deeds and it showed in their enthusiasm. The participating students experienced tons of fun and weren't bothered by the cold temperatures.

"The Emmons students were thrilled to drop off cards," Oattes said. "They were happy to know their creations would brighten someone's day at Aspen Hills."

We are so proud of our Emmons students for their community service!



Pemberton Learning Community: Pursuing Excellence One Child at a Time

PTHS WELCOMES BACK WINTER ATHLETICS AMID COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Pemberton Township High School welcomed back its winter athletes for interscholastic competition.

The NJSIAA allowed for basketball and bowling to begin practicing on January 11 and competitions to start on January 26.

Both sports concluded their seasons on March 6.

an entirely new routine when it comes to participation in interscholastic athletics. On top of their daily health screening, which includes temperature checks and submission of a Google survey verifying that they are symptom free, they must make sound choices and likely social sacrifices to reduce as greatly as they can the likelihood of exposure to COVID-19."

So far the Hornets have done an excellent job adhering to all guidelines. PTHS is one of only a few schools throughout New Jersey to not have any cancellations of originally-scheduled games due to COVID-19-related issues.

For example, the boys basketball team was able to play all 15 games on its schedule without COVID-19 related setbacks and finished the season with a satisfying 12-3 record. "Our athletes deserve all of the credit in the world for adhering to the health guidelines and making smart choices," McColgan said. "Because of their actions, we are one of the very few schools in the entire state to not have canceled any scheduled games due to a COVID-19 issue among any of our sports programs."

sports. While cancellations haven't been an issue, the Hornets have been forced to compete in lesser games than usual and often have been matched up with



PTHS senior Quincy Osorio makes a pass to junior Cameron Downs in a game against Cinnaminson on March 1.

Swimming and winter track began practicing on February 1 and competing on February 16. Those seasons will continue until March 27.

As expected, the circumstances surrounding the current winter sports season have differed drastically compared to previous seasons.

Health screening protocols were incorporated to minimize the chances of individuals contracting COVID-19 and to maximize the opportunity for student-athletes to compete.

"New routines were developed to help best ensure the health and safety of athletes, coaches, officials and spectators," athletic director Joe McColgan said. "Upon arrival, all individuals involved in an athletic event, practice or game, are required to undergo a health screening that measures the individual's body temperature and verifies that they are free of any COVID-19 symptoms. The athletes have to get used to



PTHS students Ryan Palma, left, Caliph Robertson, center, and Kyle McCloud pose for a group photo at Thunderbowl Lanes.

Scheduling changes were inevitable in an ongoing national health crisis and also played a major part in the way athletic departments prepared for the return of



Seniors on the PTHS swim team showcase their posters from Senior Day.

unfamiliar opponents.

"Schedules are set with a more geographical mindset than in typical years," McColgan said. "Some sports had no post-season, while others had a limited post-season. Also, regular season game limits were lower than in a normal year. For example, basketball is typically allowed to compete in 26 regular season games. However, this year they were limited to just 15."

It's safe to say the Hornets are beyond thankful to simply be able to compete again this winter.

There have been several silver linings in a time filled with so much uncertainty.

"As we've successfully progressed through the sports calendar to where we are now, it is a great feeling of 'normalcy' to be able to just watch the kids play," McColgan said. "As a result of me being in front of the school on most days checking temperatures of our athletes upon their arrival, I've become more familiar with our athletes on an individual basis than in any of my previous years in the district. It's something I have found to be a very rewarding moment of my day during a time where chaos is more often the norm."

IMPORTANT DISTRICT UPDATES FOR APRIL

Spring Break Family Meal Distribution
Tuesday, April 6th and Thursday, April 8th

Regular meal pick-up at
Harker Wylie from 9 am - 1 pm and 3 pm - 7pm

Frozen meal pick-up by appointment at
Denbo-Crichton from 9 am - 1 pm

Please call (609) 893-8141 x 1225
 to preorder frozen meals.

Please visit
<https://www.pemberton.k12.nj.us/Pemberton>
 for the menus.

**DRIVE-THRU
 COVID TESTING**

**April dates now available at
 Pemberton Township Schools!**

Free COVID-19 Testing for
 Pemberton Staff, Students,
 & Community Members

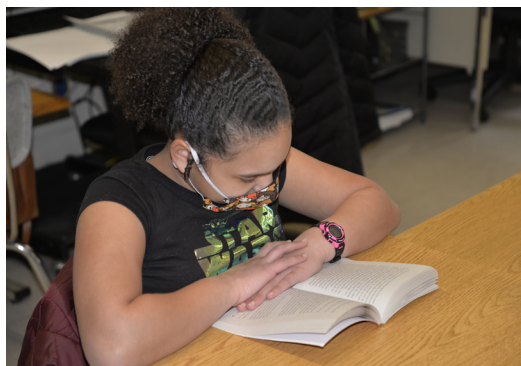
Visit the district
 website to
 make an
 appointment

TESTING LOCATIONS AND TIMES

Pemberton Early Childhood Education Center 100 Arney's Mount Road, Pemberton, NJ 08068 10 am - 2 pm • Thursday, April 15 • Tuesday, April 20 • Thursday, April 29	Denbo-Crichton Elementary School 2 Learning Way Browns Mills, NJ 9 am - 3 pm • Saturday, April 17 • Saturday, April 24
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BUSANSKY STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN 'ONE BOOK, ONE SCHOOL'

The One Book, One School program has united the Busansky school community to read and connect over the same book. Third through fifth grade students read *Restart* by Gordan Korman and participated in an introductory Kick-Off event to



Busansky fifth grader Alexa Martinez Sanchez follows along as her teacher reads to the class.

introduce the story's characters and get the families excited about the program.

"We were lucky enough to be able to screen record different teachers reading for the various narrators in the book so

that our kiddos could have access to a read aloud at any time," fifth grade teacher Jennifer Sweeney said. "Our second event was a Kahoot Game Night for our mid-point event. We had prizes for the top three students in the game -- all were books with the corresponding movie."

The ongoing One Book, One School program has given Busansky students something to look forward to in an unprecedented school year barred by social limitations.

"I think that all students that attended the events were engaged and excited about this," Sweeney said. "Moreover, students in individual classrooms are excited about completing activities and reading this book even if they could not attend the virtual after-school events."

The school has also formed connections with the book that allow students to learn lessons and navigate through school both socially and emotionally.



Busansky fifth grader Todd Jeremy Thornton listens attentively as his teacher instructs.

"The school has embraced a theme of 'can people change,'" fifth grade teacher Diana Muse said. "Along with, 'who are you now and who do you want to be.' We use self-reflection and character analysis to help students identify with the characters, and demonstrate how they can and will react to various situations. We are so proud of the students for how well they've responded to the lessons and activities that coincide with our 'One Book, One School' program."

DENBO-CRITCHTON KEEPING COMMUNITY ENGAGED WITH VIRTUAL SOCIAL EVENTS

Denbo-Crichton Elementary School has been hosting virtual night events, better known as 'PRIDE events' to keep the school community socially connected through the ongoing pandemic.

"PRIDE in Public Education" is a campaign that shares the successes of New Jersey's public schools while building community support and involvement. These events are sponsored by the Pemberton Township Education Association with joint partnership of the Denbo-Crichton School community.

The trend of activities began in December when the school decided to incorporate a holiday themed event to bring the community of students, staff and parents together. Colonial Catering has provided free meals to participating families through the PTEA's sponsorship.

"All of our PRIDE events are coordinated by the staff of Denbo-Crichton, creating and promoting community involvement with various activities," Academic Mastery

teacher Denise Martin said. "We started hosting online 'wellness' events back in December with a holiday storytime event."

Following the holiday storytime occasion in December, Denbo-Crichton provided a yoga night event, numerous music-based events and a Storytime with the Wolfpack program that takes place on the first Friday of every month.

"Forty two families attended our Yabba Dabba Yoga: Stretching into Mindfulness event on February 17," teacher Stacey Feehan said. "During

this event, participants learned several breathing techniques that help calm the central nervous system. We connected our bodies and minds with mindful movement and yoga. Participants were able to share out loud how they felt after breathing and meditating."

The virtual events will continue into the spring and students at Denbo-Crichton are encouraged to participate and join in on the fun!



Denbo-Crichton students in Mrs. Feehan's class practice their yoga moves at recess.

Pemberton Pride is a publication of
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HELEN A. FORT STUDENT HONORED AT COUNTY-WIDE ROUND-TABLE EVENT

Helen A. Fort student Lyla Goodwin was selected as the school's nominee for the 2021 Burlington County Principals & Supervisors Award. On March 8, she participated in the virtual Burlington County School Boards Association's annual 8th Grade Dialogue, with representatives from around the County, in a round table-style event that addresses 8th graders' insights and suggestions for our schools.

Congratulations, Lyla!

