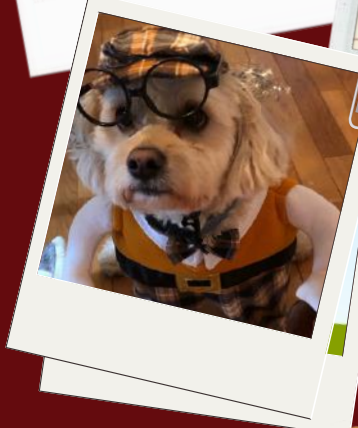
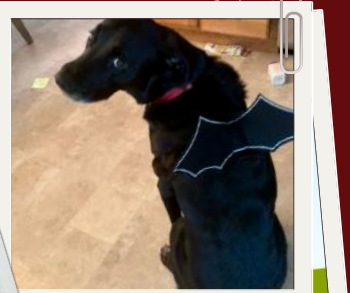
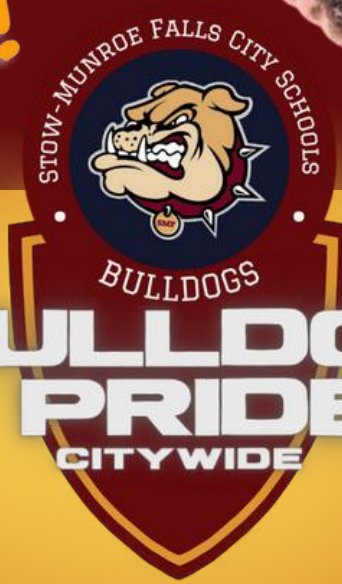


THE SMF SCOOP

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF SMF SCHOOLS



OCTOBER HAS GONE TO THE DOGS!





A Note From Superintendent Bratten

Dear Stow-Munroe Falls City Schools Families,

I hope the school year is off to a great start for you and your family. It's hard to believe we are almost at the halfway point of this school year! It's so great to see all the smiling faces in our school buildings each Friday when I make my rounds!

While I'm sure your students are bringing home their fair share of stories from the classroom, I hope they are taking time to share with you the connections they are making, the friendships that are evolving and the time that our staff spends making sure they are safe, healthy and thriving in our buildings -- because that is what I am witnessing each week as I interact with them all.

Being a Bulldog is so much more than just coming to school to get an education, it's about being a part of a family and I hope that you and yours feel welcome, included and are excited to be members of this Bulldog Family!

As the year continues, I hope that you take a moment to look through these newsletters that I send to each of you. They are highlighting some INCREDIBLE things happening in our buildings by our students, their staff, and teachers. Each story signifies what it means to be a Bulldog this 2023-2024 school year, and we couldn't be prouder!

If you have stories that you'd like to share with us, please reach out! Send them to photos@smfcsd.org and tell us what amazing things you're witnessing in the district!

I wish each of you the best and hope that remainder of 2023 brings you happiness, health and most of all, Bulldog Pride!

Sincerely,

Tom Bratten
Superintendent





HB 583 of the 134th General Assembly designated October as School Safety Month in Ohio to increase public awareness of school safety programs and to encourage Ohioans to identify their role in keeping Ohio schools a safe place for students to learn and grow.

Theme: Relationships for Safety

When technology and security solutions fail, trusted relationships save the day. Creating an environment in your school where students feel comfortable sharing concerns is essential to maintaining a safe environment. From both a physical and emotional standpoint, students need to feel they can trust school staff, staff need to feel they can trust their administration, and the administrators need to feel they can trust their community support systems.

This month, we will focus on building stronger relationships, positive school climate, information sharing, and how relationships can make a huge difference when it comes to safety.

Oct. 1-31 - High School Poster contest - ODE

Oct. 1-31 - Student Safety Advisory Council IG Takeover (Instagram)

Oct. 8-14 - Fire Prevention Week

Oct. 15-21 - National Teen Driver Safety Week

Oct. 16-20 - National School Bus Safety Week (details below)

Oct. 17-18 - National Anonymous Reporting System Conference - in person, Columbus

Oct. 18 - World Unity Day

Oct. 19 - Great ShakeOut Earthquake Drill

Oct. 23 - Advanced Digital Threat Assessment Training

Oct. 23-31 - Red Ribbon Week

Month Designations:

In addition to School Safety Month, October is also [National Bullying Prevention Month](#), [Cybersecurity Awareness Month](#), and [National Domestic Violence Awareness Month](#).



A Fond Farewell to the “Hands of Education”

After almost 40 years as the welcoming structures at Stow-Munroe Falls High School, the “Hands of Education” will be retired.

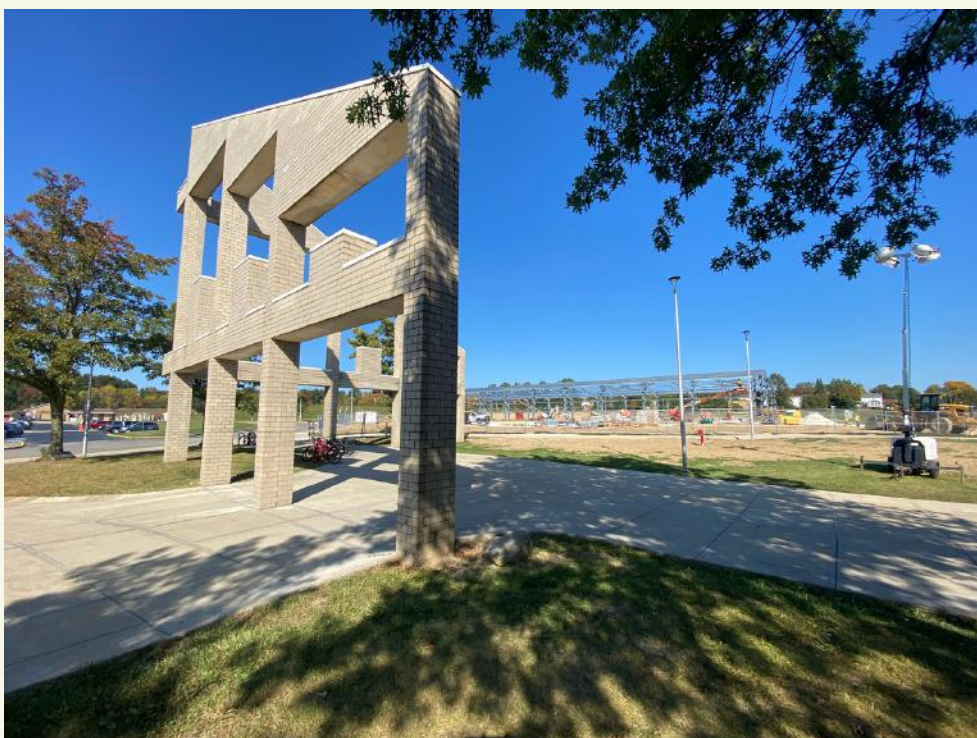
During the construction of the new Dawg Pound Athletic Facility and Community Resource Center, the construction company performing the work found that the aged structures were crumbling and creating unsafe conditions.

With heavy hearts, the Board of Education at their September 18 meeting, decided that the repairs would be far too cost prohibitive, standing at over \$50,000. The demolition of the architecture would cost around \$10,000 and the Board simply could not put a price tag on safety of students and the community so they voted to demolish them.

SMF Schools personally did their best to reach out to members of the community that had a hand in the design and construction of the features and explained the dire situation, being granted their acceptance of the decision of the Board. “We hate to see such a landmark of our district disappear,” said Superintendent Tom Bratten, “but the safety of our students, staff and community members is a far more pressing matter. We hope that while we may not be able to preserve the structures from the past 40 years, that the next 40 years we can continue to grow the expansive landscape of the High School property with the addition of the Fieldhouse and so many other aspects coming soon.”

Demolition of the “Hands of Education” is set to take place November 22 & 24, 2023.

If you would like a commemorative brick from the “Hands of Education”, they will be available on a first-come, first-served basis near their current standing location beginning on November 22, 2023.



*The Hands of Education
1984 - 2023*

Yanke Bionics Educate Lakeview 5th Graders on Science They Can Touch & Feel!

On October 11, Team 511-512 had a special speaker from Yanke Bionics to teach them about prosthetics and the design process as a part of their fifth grade science unit!

Students got to "touch" and handle the old and the new high tech prosthetics they design there for individuals in need. Students got to see videos and ask questions to our guest speaker and Prosthetic Intern, Ms Sophia Mancini -- it was SUPER fun and relevant for the kids!



YANKE BIONICS
PROSTHETIC AND ORTHOTIC PATIENT CARE

Woodland Celebrates Unity Day!

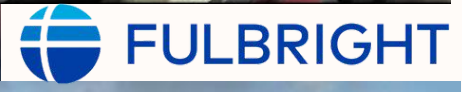
The third Wednesday of October is National Unity Day, a day founded by PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center to pledge to end bullying and wear orange. While the orange color may fit in well with the month of October or the fall season, it stands to represent safety and visibility of all. #BulldogsDoTheirPartToEndBullying #UnityDay2023



SMF Hosts KSU's Fulbright Scholars Fall 2023!

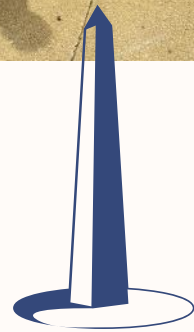
They are all from KSU. They are part of the Fulbright Teacher Excellence and Achievement. (TEA). They spend about 6 weeks here. They spend one day a week at the High School. They work with a partner teacher and observe many classes. They are here to observe, share and plan best practices and everything else in the educational world. They were chosen through a competitive application process, teachers of English, ESL, and Math. All have to have a minimum of 5 years teaching experience. Kent is one of the 6 U.S. Universities that host this program. Kelly Lanci serves as the lead teacher and these are our teacher pairs:

- Seydou Dembele from Mali: Joanne Wyant
- Bertha Castro DeGonzalas from El Salvador: Tatiana Jordan
- Ana Ines Battaglino from Uruguay: Rachel Lyon
- Nelson Kwashie from Ghana: David Lee Morgan
- Abd Essalam Alma-Aitra from Jordan: Kelly Shifflet



8th Graders Visit Washington, DC!

For the first time, our SMF 8th grade class had the ability to visit Washington, DC as a class! Students were amazed by all of the historic locations they were able to visit and learn about. They visited George Washington's Mount Vernon, Lincoln Memorial, MLK Memorial, Arlington Cemetery, Smithsonian, The White House, war memorials, and so many more. They even took time to appreciate the Flight #93 Memorial in Pennsylvania on the way home to Stow & Munroe Falls.



Need new SMF Gear?!
 THERE IS STILL TIME TO CATCH OUR FALL SALE!



BULLDOG PRIDE
CITYWIDE



Head over to smfschool.org/athletics and click on "Shop"

Jayla Atkinson Is Pushing to Break All the Records Her Senior Year

It's no surprise to see Jayla Atkinson in the headlines on the cross country circuit as she continues to break records for the Stow-Munroe Falls Bulldogs! This SMF Senior was all smiles as she won the Stow Bulldog Invitational at Silver Springs Park on October 7.

SMF coach Aaron Morris shared that Jayla has always loved the shorter distance races, but has begun to fight mentally and physically for those longer races with her drive and attitude being at the forefront of her push to win.

Jayla proved herself on September 24 as she set a new school record for the 5k at Madison's U Wanna Come Back meet as she won in 18:06.41 to break the 18:14 mark of Abby Koch set in 2008.

"The course was really flat, it was good conditions and overall, I just felt really confident about the race," said Atkinson. "That helped me with my time."

Jayla turned the Stow Bulldog Invitational into a one-woman race as she blew past the group, opening a huge lead in the first 1,000 meters and never backed down.

Although she just missed breaking the course record with her time of 18:39.17, she dominated the race with second place finishing at 20:02.99.

"Her times are putting her right up there among the fastest in Ohio this year and we are looking forward to seeing what she can do," said Morris.

We wish Jayla all the best as she continues to strive towards breaking records and making a mark on leaderboards all year!



AJ Halsne proves that you can teach yourself anything and be great!



SMFHS Sophomore AJ Halsne has been a hockey player through and through but two years ago he set off on a new journey, to teach himself to play golf. AJ joined the SMF golf team and was a member of the junior varsity team last year and through the start of this season. He proved himself as a JV team member and his scores took off throughout the beginning of the 2023 season, so he was moved up to play for the varsity boys golf team where he absolutely excelled. Once on the varsity team, Halsne shot four 77's and an 80 before making it to the sectional and district teams where he shot yet another 77.

After all five teams were finished, AJ and three others were put into a playoff where the top two spots advanced to the state competition. AJ took this opportunity to push through the pressure and all eyes on him as he pulled the number one and had to shoot first with an outstanding drive to the center of the green. He rose to the occasion and was able to secure his spot at States with an unbelievable 8' putt to clinch par on the hole.

"AJ serves as a reminder that a Bulldog can do anything they put their mind to and we couldn't be more proud of him," said head coach, Chet Feldman. "We can't wait to see what he is able to accomplish with us in the future!" Chet Feldman has been the boys golf head coach for the past three seasons and is astonished that AJ just began playing golf a mere two years ago.

"While his hockey experience may have helped, being self taught and able to push your way to the top of a sport in just a season and a half is something to be proud of," shared Superintendent Bratten. "We are certainly proud of AJ for all of his accomplishments and admire his story."



Mrs. Conkle's Riverview Class Takes the Trophy in the Bulldog Dash Door Contest

Mrs. Conkle's Riverview 4th graders were over the moon to win the Bulldog Dash Door Decorating Contest this year! The class was awarded a \$100 Amazon card which they plan to use to order STEM activities for their classroom. These faces say it all!



Indian Trail 4th Grade Pen Pals!

Indian Trail 4th grade has partnered with the Stow-Munroe Falls Football Team! The high school students were just as excited as the elementary students to gain a pen pal this year! 4th graders decorated placements for their team dinners, wrote letters back and forth, and they got to attend the October 20th home football game and cheer on their favorite pen pals! The football team was invited to Indian Trail to have lunch with their pen pals and play on the playground with them! This was such a fun program!



Congratulations to Tyler Cleveland!

SMFHS senior, Tyler Cleveland was sworn into the United States Army by our very own LTC Justin Summers on October 10. LTC Summers was active in the U.S. Army for 17 years before joining the Reserves six years ago. Since joining the Reserves, he runs overall airborne missions out of a group at Twinsburg and has become a teacher at SMFHS where he got to know Tyler Cleveland in his English 12 CP class.

LTC Summers has the ability to swear in anyone enlisting into any branch of the military. This fact and LTC Summers' rank make this quite the special occasion, as it is not seen often!

This was a special moment for Tyler, as it is very rare to even know the person who swears you into the military, let alone know them so well. Tyler will ship out in June as a 19D.

This date holds special significance to LTC Summers as he also swore in his oldest son, Justin Summers Jr. the same day. Congratulations to Tyler and to Justin and best wishes in all of your endeavors!



LTC Summers and Tyler Cleveland



LTC Justin Summers Sr. and son, Justin Summers Jr.

Hands on Weathering Lessons!

Weather is not only changing outside the classroom, but INSIDE the classroom too! To help students understand slow changes to our Earth's surface, Indian Trail students completed a "sugar shake" experiment to model what weathering looks like!

The collage features several photographs of students engaged in a hands-on weathering experiment. In the top left, a student is shown pouring liquid from a purple container. In the center, a smiling cartoon Earth globe is surrounded by weather icons: a wind cloud, a sun, rain clouds, and snowflakes. Below the globe, two students are seen talking at a table. In the bottom left, a hand is shown holding a sugar cube over a tray of sugar. In the bottom right, a group of students is working together at a table, with one student holding a purple container. The background of the collage is decorated with various weather-related icons and a decorative swirl.

Show your school spirit with the a SMF license plate!



Do you have your personalized SMF Bulldogs school spirit license plate?! Bulldog's plates are being offered by the Ohio BMV. All alumni and proud SMF families can sport their team spirit by contacting the BMV. Proceeds from the sale of each plate go towards scholarships for graduating seniors.

Two SMF Seniors are Semifinalists in the 2024 National Merit® Scholarship Program

Officials of National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC®) announced the names of over 16,000 semi-finalists in the 69th annual National Merit Scholarship Program, including SMF seniors Andrew Lozianu and Samuel Leasure.

These academically talented high school seniors have an opportunity to continue in the competition for some 7,140 National Merit Scholarships worth nearly \$28 million that will be offered next spring.

Merit Scholar designees are selected on the basis of their skills, accomplishments, and potential for success in rigorous college studies, without regard to gender, race, ethnic origin, or religious preference. To be considered for a Merit Scholarship award®, Semifinalists must fulfill several requirements to advance to the finalist level of the competition.

The National Merit Scholarship winners of 2024 will be announced beginning in April and concluding in July. These scholarship recipients will join nearly 375,000 other distinguished young people who have earned the Merit Scholar title.

Andrew and Samuel first entered the 2024 National Merit Scholarship Program as juniors by taking the 2022 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT®), which served as an initial screen of program entrants. The nationwide pool of Semifinalists, representing less than one percent of U.S. high school seniors, includes the highest-scoring entrants in each state. The number of Semifinalists in each state is proportional to the state's percentage of the national total of graduation seniors/

Congratulations to Andrew and Samuel for such a significant achievement! Our Bulldog family is beyond proud of you. #BulldogPrideCityWide



Samuel Leasure

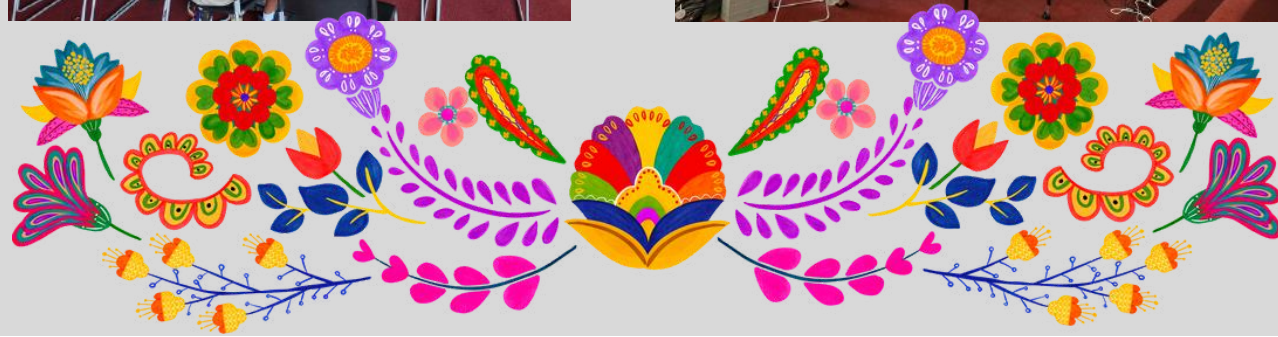
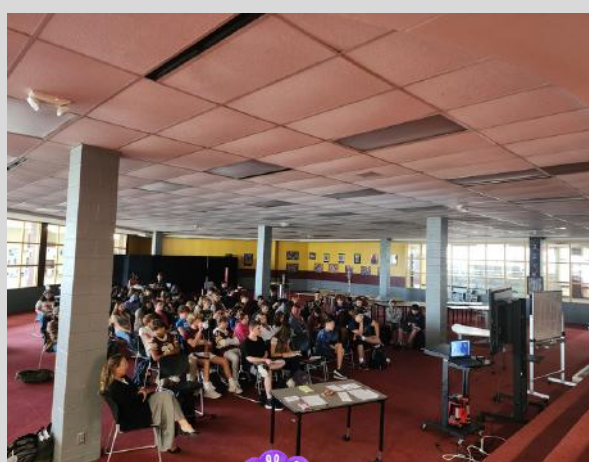


Andrew Lozianu

Bulldogs Celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month

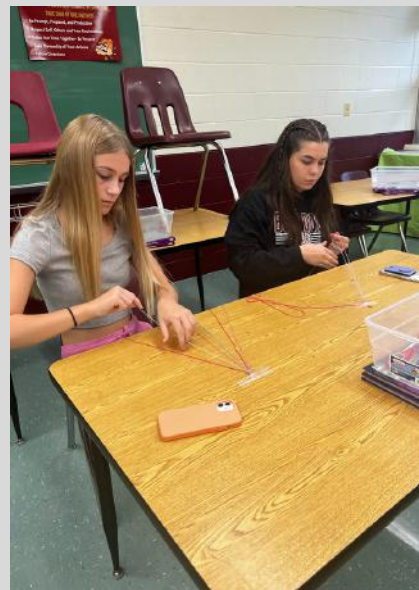
Over 400 students attended the Hispanic Heritage Film Festival organized by Mrs. Pierce. Students and staff enjoyed films from Argentina, Guatemala, Colombia, and Spain while enjoying authentic treats.

Ms. Jordan's Spanish 2 students researched and wrote biographies in Spanish of influential Hispanic people in the United States. They wrote about astronauts, educators, actors, singers, writers, and politicians



Wellness Wednesday @ Kimpton!

Wellness Wednesday: In order to give students an opportunity to learn a new skill, while also building a positive relationship with adults and peers, we have developed the idea of Wellness Wednesday. This will consist of various staff members picking an activity to do during our WIN period and allowing students to sign up for an activity of their choosing. So far, the staff-led activities include cross stitching, weight lifting, poster making, how to change oil, and even therapy dogs. The staff leading these activities play a variety of roles in our building. Staff leading activities include our custodians, Principals, Speech Pathologist, and various grade level teachers. Research supports that one positive adult relationship can make a positive impact on a student's school engagement. We are hopeful this also creates an opportunity for students to develop new skills and be exposed to various career paths. Kimpton eighth graders completed and loved their first Wellness Wednesday and seventh graders will take part in Wellness Wednesday in October. We are excited to make Wellness Wednesday a permanent part of Kimpton Middle School.



Kickin' It With Kobe!

Meet Kobe! The unofficial-official mascot of the Stow-Munroe Falls Bulldogs! Here he is posing with his idol, Spike!

At just 16 weeks old, Kobe hopes to inspire Bulldogs fans just like Spike!

For now, he thrives on the thrill of the game, his squeaky pig toy, treats, treats and more treats and ALL the snuggles he can muster up!

Follow us on social media for updates as we periodically post all of the new happenings in the "Kickin' It with Kobe" series!



An SMF Teacher is Breaking Through The Lines

Written by Carmen Addison

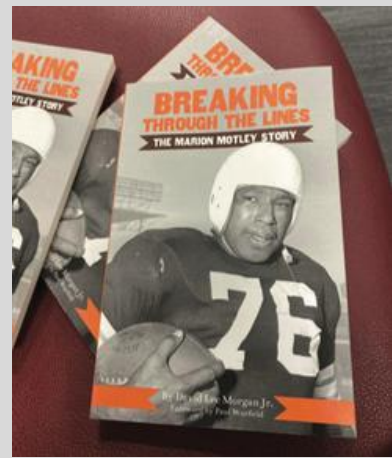
In a compelling convergence of literary prowess and educational dedication, David Lee Morgan Jr., an esteemed English teacher at Stow-Munroe Falls (SMF) High School, has recently unveiled his latest literary opus, "Breaking Through the Lines: The Marion Motley Story."

Morgan, a multifaceted professional who effortlessly juggles his roles as an author and an educator, epitomizes the philosophy that has guided his teaching approach at SMF High School. Through his teachings in SMF high school, Morgan encourages his students to write what they know. His approach champions the notion of writing authentically, encouraging his students to channel their experiences and emotions onto the page, thereby fostering a sense of vulnerability that resonates with readers on a profound level. People can relate to their vulnerability and their experiences and perceptions if they put themselves out there.

"Write from what you know and from what you experience and from what you feel because nobody else has that experience [and] nobody has that perspective," Morgan says. The drawing of "Breaking Through the Lines: The Marion Motley Story" can be traced back to an unexpected opportunity. David Lee Morgan Jr. was enlisted into a documentary project revolving around the remarkable life of Marion Motley. Fuelled by his engagement with this project, Morgan undertook the monumental task of crafting a book that would encapsulate the essence of Motley's journey and legacy.

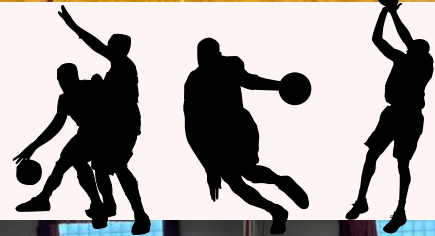
Morgan's literary journey is enriched by a background in sports journalism, having previously served as a sports writer at the Akron Beacon Journal. This experience, which honed his professional writing and editing skills, influenced the thematic trajectory of his literary pursuits. He began writing for high school sports. This transitioned him to covering college, then professional sports. A notable highlight in his career was the coverage of LeBron James, tracking the superstar's meteoric rise from middle school prodigy to NBA luminary. This accumulation of firsthand insights and narratives coalesced into Morgan's inaugural publication, "LeBron James: The Rise of a Star." With unwavering dedication, he continued to gather captivating sports stories, resulting in a burgeoning portfolio of published works that span the gamut from Jim Tressel to the Massillon Tigers' remarkable 2019 football season, Ohio State football exploits, and, of course, the indomitable Marion Motley.

David Lee Morgan Jr. stands as a testament to the junction of education and storytelling, where the pursuit of knowledge finds a harmonious alliance with the art of literature, yielding inspiring narratives that capture the essence of human experience and triumph.



Lakeview Earns A Greatness Reward on the Court!

Lakeview students were treated to the chance to challenge SMFHS basketball players to some time on the court as a part of their Quarterly Greatness Reward! This was such a fun way to end the first grading period for our students! Thank you to the high school teams for being amazing and volunteering your time to make our 5th and 6th graders day!



2022 Education Celebration Nominees!

Summit ESC's All-Star Teaching Team was honored at the Summit ESC Education Celebration event on October 5, 2023. During the event, the Teacher of the Year, Rookie of the Year, and Lifetime Educator Award nominees were recognized from the Stow-Munroe Falls City Schools.

Congratulations to the three Stow-Munroe Falls City School District teachers who were honored as nominees. Recently retired Kimpton Middle School Teacher Kendra Jozsa was nominated for the Lifetime Achievement Award. Kimpton Seventh Grade ELA Teacher Tracy Zappone was nominated for the All-Star Teacher Award. Stow-Munroe Falls High School History/Geography Teacher Josh Budd was nominated for the All-Star Rookie Award.



We couldn't be more proud of these three individuals for all of their hard work and accomplishments. The pure passion they show for our students and the entire Bulldog family has been seen time and time again with each of these amazing educators. Congratulations on this incredible honor, you deserve it! #BulldogPrideCityWide



Rookie of the Year 2023 Nominee
Josh Budd (SMFHS History/Geography)



Teacher of the Year 2023 Nominee
Tracy Zappone (KP ELA)



Lifetime Achievement: Kendra Jozsa
(retired language arts teacher from KP)

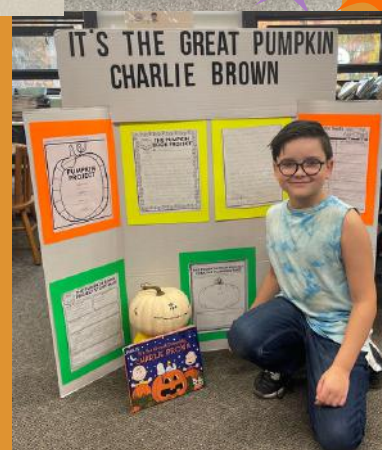
OCTOBER MEANS READING AND PUMPKINS!



Second grade students at Woodland finished their October book project this week! Students chose a book, then wrote about the setting, plot and characters.

Each student then chose a character from the book on which to model their pumpkin. The results were fantastic! Students were very proud of their efforts, and their kindergarten friends came to visit their pumpkin creations and talk about the books they chose.

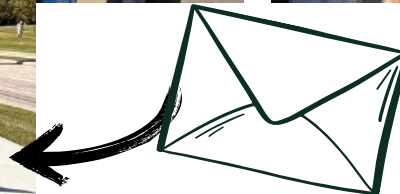
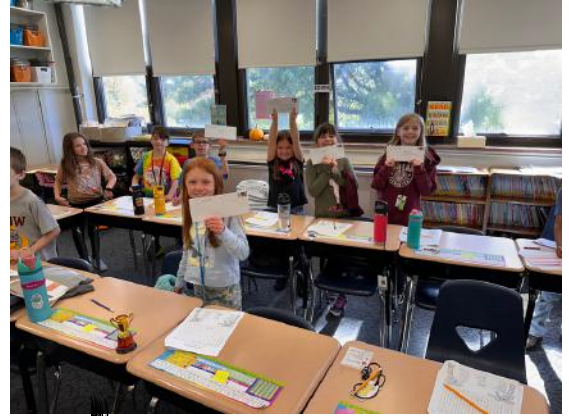
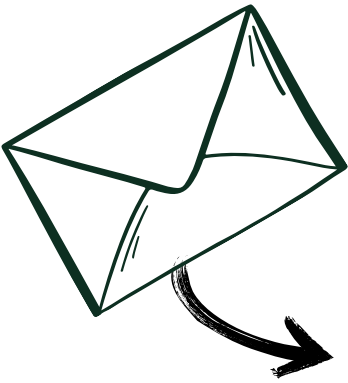
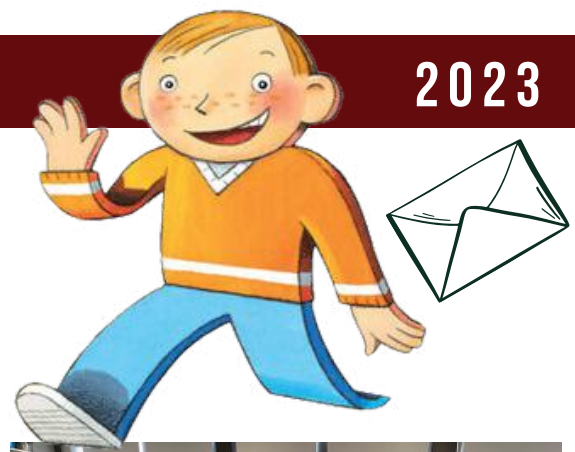
"We are so proud of the students! They worked so hard and the projects turned out amazing! It was a great way for them to learn all about characters and work on reading comprehension, while having fun,"



Flat Stanley - Highland

Students in Ms. Bowers' 3rd grade class celebrated the 50th Anniversary of Flat Stanley by reading the books, creating their very own Flat Stanley, and on a gorgeous October day, these students got to hike to the post office and mail their Flat Stanleys all over the United States and beyond!

The idea of Flat Stanley is to track his travels and document all of the cool places he's been on his adventures! These particular Flat Stanley's are still making their journey and will be arriving back at Highland any day! Follow us on social media to see where all they've been!



...and what would a field trip to the post office be without a stop off at SKiP Playground?!

The Dawg Pound Athletic Facility and Community Resources Center has Broken Ground!

Stow-Munroe Falls City Schools held their groundbreaking ceremony for the new Dawg Pound Athletic Facility and Community Resource Center during their Homecoming weekend festivities!

Following the groundbreaking ceremony, a golden beam was placed in Marhofer Stadium for the community to sign and have their name or message be a part of this facility forever, as it will be used to build the final stages of the Dawg Pound Athletic Facility and Community Resource Center.

This facility has been a dream in the making for over a decade and will bring so many opportunities to the citizens of Stow and Munroe Falls along with the students within the SMF School District.

The concept behind the Dawg Pound is to make it more than just a place for athletes, it is going to serve as a true hub of the community as it offers not only reservable space by businesses and organizations, but practice areas, meeting locations, a facility for our senior citizen community members to gather as well as a direct partnership with Child Guidance and Family Solutions, as they will be housed within the Community Resource Center.

This is just phase one of the multiphase plan to bring our community together.

If you are interested in being a part of the future phases of this project, please contact us at the SMF Schools Central Office and put you in touch with the planning committee.

Go Bulldogs!





Bringing our Community TOGETHER.



ABOUT THE DAWG POUND



The Dawg Pound Athletic Facility and Community Resource Center is a newly constructed building located on the grounds of Stow-Munroe Falls High School offering state-of-the-art athletic facilities for students, their families, and the entire Stow and Munroe Falls communities.



The Dawg Pound Athletic Facility and Community Resource Center will be more than just a sports and athletic center. It will also house a dedicated space for mental health outreach and counseling services.

WHAT CAN WE OFFER?



The building will meet the highest standards of safety, accessibility, and energy efficiency and will be equipped with cutting-edge fitness gear, sports facilities, and multipurpose rooms to cater to the diverse needs and interests of our community members and school athletes. SMF Schools aims to promote a healthier and more active lifestyle for individuals of all ages and will offer a large number of services, a variety of hours, and community inclusivity.



A HUB FOR OUR COMMUNITIES

The construction of this state-of-the-art facility that will serve as a hub for our communities, providing them with a safe and inviting space for various activities and programs. A variety of meeting spaces, rental facilities and external businesses will continue to bring community members from all walks of life to one central location.



FOR MORE THAN JUST ATHLETES

We are so excited to be close to securing a partnership to provide access to vital mental health resources. This collaboration will ensure that individuals and families in our communities can receive the support they need to thrive emotionally and mentally. The plan for additional partnerships is ongoing.



CREATING THE BIGGEST IMPACT ON THE SMF COMMUNITY

Whether it is athletics, fine arts, mental health, legal services, a concert in the park, a sporting event or little league practice - this is more than just a location, its a destination. Complete with the facilities that will put us on the map for years to come and bring constant business to our cities.

THE DAWG POUND ATHLETIC FACILITY AND COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTER

5th grade Lakeview Intermediate School student Ramar Richmond received an honorable mention at the 30th annual Ohio Invention Convention Competition!

Written by Maddie Goerl



Out of the thousands of students who entered the competition, his invention *Catch and Hold Nail Clippers* captured the judges attention.

His journey began when six students from Stow-Munroe Falls City School District entered the regional competition. Lakeview 5th grade math and science gifted teacher Jessica Martinez worked alongside the group from November to May to prepare them for the competition.

Out of the six, Ramar was chosen to move on to the state competition. Students K-12 gather at the Ohio Invention Convention to display their problem-solving and critical-thinking skills through the prototypes they have invented.

“I was involved with the Invention Convention this summer working as a moderator so I know what these kids experienced when they presented their inventions in front of the judges and other students competing with their inventions,” Martinez said.

The Invention Convention program is a free, STEAM-aligned educational program. The curriculum aligns with Ohio's Learning Standards, National Science Standards, Social and Emotional Standards and it is the only pathway for Ohio students to the Invention Convention US Nationals and the Global Invention Convention

“This is a big deal for our district and I am so excited for him,” Martinez said. “I can't wait to experience the process again this school year!”

“We are so pleased to see Ramar move onto state competition! The work he and Ms. Martinez put forth is a testament to the amazing things our Lakeview students and staff are doing,” shared Lakeview Principal Andy Yanchunas. “Our hope is to watch Ramar and other Lakeview students soar all the way through this year’s competition and make it to Nationals!”

The Invention League’s slogan says, "Problem solving is our superpower!" and it’s clear that it is Ramar’s as well.

To read more about the Invention Convention winners, visit <https://inventionconvention.org/ohio/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/2023-Honda-State-finals-CLEVELAND-Press-Release.pdf>

From Student to Colleague: The Inspiring Journey of Two Teachers

Written by Katie Criswell



In the heart of Riverview Elementary, where the halls are filled with smiles and laughter, a unique story unfolds. Megan Postak, a Kindergarten teacher, finds herself in a full circle moment—teaching alongside her former student, Kiersten Hilliard. Together, they share the same passion for education, creating a classroom dynamic that is inspiring and heartwarming.

For Postak, the experience of teaching alongside Hilliard is nothing short of miraculous. “It is definitely a full circle experience!” Postak exclaims. “Kiersten was one of my kindergarten students during my very first year of teaching kindergarten. I feel honored to be her partner as she embarks on her teaching journey as a kindergarten teacher.”

Even during her early days as a student in Postak’s classroom, Hilliard had a remarkable presence. “She always had a calm and focused demeanor, coupled up with a strong work ethic and love for learning,” Postak said. “These qualities have undoubtedly contributed to her success as an educator today. Kiersten is not just motivated and driven; she is also kind, warm, and deeply committed to student growth and achievement. Working together, we have found that we share many of the same teaching styles and beliefs in how children learn and thrive.”

The transformation of Hilliard from a bright-eyed kindergarten student to a dedicated kindergarten teacher standing side by side with her former teacher is awe-inspiring. “It is very hard to believe that she once was a kindergarten student in my classroom, and now I get to teach beside her as a grown adult. It is a pretty amazing feeling. I know she is ready to make a huge impact on the lives of so many students here in Stow and Munroe Falls,” Postak exclaimed.

Hilliard’s memories from kindergarten with Postak are filled with joy and creativity. “I have many fond memories from kindergarten with Mrs. Postak that all involve singing and creative learning,” Hilliard recalls. “One of my most vivid memories is from our ‘Q’ and ‘U’ wedding, in which we learned that ‘Q’ and ‘U’ stick together in words. Her classroom was always fun in a magical place to learn!”

Postak’s influence on Hilliard’s teaching style is profound. “As a teacher, I love to be creative in my lesson planning and to make learning fun for children. It is my goal to make my classroom a happy place where all children feel valued and have equal opportunities to learn,” Hilliard shares. “I believe in hands-on learning, flexible seating, and the importance of classroom community. My memories with my teachers at Riverview and in Mrs. Postak’s class have helped to shape these beliefs. The two of us share many of the same teaching philosophies, as she has inspired many of them!”

As they embark on this new chapter together, Postak and Hilliard blended their teaching styles as they work together for the same students every day. What makes their collaboration truly special is the mutual learning and growth that occurs. “We are just starting out on this journey together! Kiersten teaches our class for half of the day, and I teach the other half. I love that while Kiersten acknowledges my role in shaping her as a teacher, I am already learning so much from her as well. That is the beauty of working together. We teach each other new tricks and strategies, and we can learn and grow together,” Postak said.

Co-teaching with her kindergarten teacher has been a dream realized for Hilliard. “I love all of my memories from kindergarten, and I love teaching kindergarten! Co-teaching with my kindergarten teacher has been great. I get to work with someone that I have fond childhood memories with and I get the chance to know her as an adult and a colleague. We’ve been working together seamlessly, and I feel incredibly lucky to have this opportunity!”

Returning to the Bulldog Family as a teacher holds a special place in Hilliard’s heart. “I loved my time in Stow Munroe Falls City Schools, and to return to the Bulldog family as a teacher feels like coming home! I have felt so welcomed, valued, appreciated, and supported as a teacher and a returning alumna. Once a bulldog, always a Bulldog!”

In the heart of Riverview Elementary, Megan Postak and Kiersten Hilliard are not just teachers; they are shaping the lives of young children and leaving a mark on their futures. Their journey from student to colleague is a testament to the long-lasting impact and inspiration educators have on their students.



Join the
SILVER BULLDOGS
Sharing time to make a difference!



Silver Bulldogs are amazing senior citizens that join our SMF Bulldog team as a paid employee or volunteer a few hours a week to make a difference in the lives of Stow and Munroe Falls students! Share your time to make a difference!

DID YOU KNOW?!?!

- You can work or volunteer a few hours a day/week at the building where your grandchild attends school?!
- Afraid you won't be able to commit every day/week? Perfect! We always need substitutes! Work on your schedule!
- Many of our students have grandparents who live out of town, out of state, or are no longer with them. Bonding with a Silver Bulldog will fill an extraordinary void that could be missing in their lives!
- Volunteering keeps the brain active, which contributes to mental health. Meaningful and productive activities can help you feel happier and have a positive outlook on life. According to the National Institute on Aging, volunteering may also lower your risk of dementia and other health issues.



HOW TO GET INVOLVED!

Volunteers

If you are interested in volunteering in any of our school buildings, please contact the main office at that particular building, and you can begin the process!

*You will be required to pass a BCI/FBI Background check prior

to volunteering (paid for by the state).

Please be sure to bring your ID.

Paid Positions

If you would like to apply for one of the paid positions in the Silver Bulldog Program at SMF Schools, please email us at SilverBulldogs@smfcsd.org OR call Franca Padula at 330.689.5412

We look forward to working with you!





What Positions are Available?

PAID POSITIONS IN THE SMF SCHOOLS

- Noon Time Assistant
 - Assist in the supervision of elementary children during lunch and/or recess. 5 days/week, 1.5 hours per day
- Substitute Noon Time Assistant
 - Assist in the supervision of elementary children during lunch and/or recess. Days vary and can be customized to availability. 1.5 hours per day
- Substitute Cook/Server
 - Assist in serving lunches to students, cleaning of trays and other dishes, and other tasks as assigned by the kitchen manager. Days vary based on availability. Hours depend on the building (eg elementary = 2 hours)
- Substitute Assistant
 - Duties vary but can include providing assistance to teachers and students. Student needs can vary in complexity. Days vary and can be customized to availability. Full day is 7.5 hours (half-hour lunch)
- Crossing Guard
 - Monitors pedestrians and upholds safety rules. Hours 8:30-9:00 am & 3:30-4:00 pm (one hour/day)

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- Playground Buddy
 - Visit with children on the playground. Engage them in appropriate play activities, including but not limited to games.
- Guest reader/Helper for Elementary Early Literacy Groups (ELG)

- Partner with teachers in K and 1st grade, building aides and title tutors to guide children in literacy activities tailored to their learning level and needs. ELGs occur daily, but schedules can be flexible based on volunteer availability.

ARE THERE PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS?

Some of our positions do have physical requirements, but they vary based on the position.

- Noon Time Aides and Substitute Noon Time Aides must be able to tolerate extreme Ohio temperatures and move easily while being on their feet for up to 90+ minutes straight.
- Substitute Cooks must be able to work quickly and move easily while on their feet for a prolonged amount of time.
- Substitute Aides must be able to move easily and be on their feet for a prolonged amount of time. They must have the ability to follow directions from teachers and work collaboratively.
- Playground buddies may need to tolerate extreme outdoor temperatures, have the ability to move easily and be on their feet for 90+ minutes straight.
- Guest Readers/Helpers for ELG will need to be able to read, have the ability to follow directions from teachers and work collaboratively.

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO?

- Pass a BCI/FBI Background Check (fee is paid for by SMF Schools)
- Meet necessary physical requirements for a specific position
- Choose what position fits your needs best then email or call us!

APPLY NOW



<https://smfcsd.tedk12.com/hire/index.aspx>



Speech & Debate Kick Off their Season!

The Speech and Debate team co-hosted a tournament with Hudson HS this weekend and finished seventh out of 25 teams, marking the beginning of its regular season.

The Congressional Debate squad had an excellent showing, placing six students in the top four of their respective chambers. Andrew Loznianu, Andrew Brantsch, Kristian Leseure, Nadia Farrell, Jenny Baniya, and Griffin Moore all earned bids to the state tournament, while Loznianu and Brantsch also won their chambers of Congress outright.

Meanwhile, Lauren Garfield and Penelope Covey won Duo Interpretation, and Otis Schoenberg and Cece Lattime earned third in Duo. Both teams earned bids to States. And Ella Embry secured a placement in the top six in Dramatic Interpretation, which is also high enough for a bid to States. When students earn four or more bids, they're automatically state qualified. In all, this means 11 Stow students are well on their way to States!



They Did it! Riverview Raises \$30,000 ...and Gets To Tape Mrs. Kosmach to the Wall!

When you were in school, wouldn't the best incentive have been to tape your principal to the wall?! That's just what the students at Riverview Elementary did! The school raised \$30,000 in their Bulldog Dash fundraiser this year and the smile on students faces says it all!



Exemplary Math Teaching at Lakeview!

Our very own **Jamie McKeown** from Lakeview was awarded the Linda M. Gojak Award for Exemplary Mathematics Teaching! Only three teachers are chosen each year for this prestigious award. Jamie is a sixth grade teacher and has been with us since 2005. She earned this award by engaging her students each day in rigorous activities to promote conceptual learning and using math in the context of the real world. "I believe that all students have the ability when given the needed support to engage with mathematics to feel the joy that comes from solving and connecting with the problems," says Mrs. McKeown. Congratulations on this incredible honor, you truly deserve it!



Bulldogs Celebrate Red Ribbon Week 2023!



Red Ribbon Week is a week-long awareness campaign October 23-October 27 that promotes a drug-free lifestyle and warns of the dangers of tobacco, alcohol and drug use. Across the district our Bulldogs celebrated with a variety of theme days, contests and projects that raised awareness for students of all ages.

Have a conversation with those around you about making safe, healthy choices for your mind and body. For more information, visit <https://www.redribbon.org/>



Riverview Hosted Incredibles Night... and it was INCREDIBLE!

Riverview Elementary's PTA presented their second annual Back to School night as "Incredibles Night!" Bringing in over 400 people, families enjoyed lots of food trucks, bounce houses, face painting, balloon twisting, and visits from special guests throughout the evening!



Unified Sports Bring Bulldogs Together!

Unified Sports® is a team sports program that brings people together! It also allows us to eliminate barriers and stereotypes about people with intellectual disabilities in a fun way that engages the whole community. Students play alongside peer partners, who act as positive role models for students of varying needs. Kimpton Middle School competed in a flag football tournament in Strongsville on October 2nd. The students had a great time and worked together to be successful.



Denise Ward Speaks on Diversity, Differences and Divide at Kimpton Middle School



Kimpton Middle School hosted Denise Ward in September to give a presentation entitled, "It's Not Our Differences That Divide Us". Mrs. Denise Ward has served in various roles as an educational administrator and has most recently worked as the educational/diversity consultant for the state support team at the Educational Service Center.

Mrs. Ward shared more about her experiences relating to diversity and inclusion while highlighting the power of kindness. Mrs. Ward added to the positive culture of Kimpton by creating a stronger spirit of unity, empathy, and appreciation. Seventh graders heard the introductory presentation from Mrs. Ward while our eighth graders heard a continuation of Mrs. Ward's message from last year that words can hurt and that words have the power to heal, help, or hurt.



Kimpton's Career Compass Students Travel to Kent State University

Kimpton Students had a wonderful experience taking their Career Compass student leaders to Kent State University. They worked on collaboration and communication skills while participating in the low ropes course. They capped off the day with a delicious meal in the dining hall followed by a campus tour introducing our Bulldogs to all that university life has to offer. It was a great day!

The Career Compass team is a great group that helps students to build connections with one another and also a stronger connection to Kimpton. This group helps students to explore future educational and career options and provides for service opportunities in the community.



Science Trips Reveal Organisms and Fossils of All Kinds!

Team 7-1 utilized our wonderful local natural resource, the Cuyahoga River, to extend their learning of populations and ecosystems. On a perfectly sunny day, students hiked down to the river where they were able to study several aspects of the freshwater ecosystem. Through fishing, using nets, and collecting samples for viewing under microscopes our students found organisms from microscopic to large. Students also completed a water pollution activity and were able to make connections to how much healthier the river is in 2023 vs. 2006 prior to the removal of the Brust Park dam. This was a great learning experience for the students. On October 4th and 5th, teams 7-2 and 7-3 got to experience the Nature Realm up close and personal on field trips. Students learned about local flora and fauna from a team of naturalists. They went on a one mile hike while learning about environmental science. They had a chance to try to feed the birds from their own hands, and to visit the nature center, the herb garden and the arboretum.

Ten members of the Kimpton Science Club took a field trip to Fossil Park in Sylvania, Ohio -- one of the only exposed Devonian area sites in the US that allow fossil collecting. They found many brachiopods, a few trilobites and even some pyrite (Fool's gold!).



WALL OF FAME INDUCTEE 2023

The SMFHS Wall of Fame inducted its newest member, **Sue Theisen!**

Sue is very deserving of this honor and has modeled what it means to be a Bulldog for many years.

The dedication of Sue's Wall of Fame induction was held on September 18 to honor her longstanding commitment to our students and her legacy in the district as an outstanding English teacher as well as the SMFHS Speech & Debate Coach for many years!

We honor Sue's exemplary contribution to the field of education and our school community.

Congratulations to our newest Wall of Fame honoree!



STUDENTS DON'T GET TO HAVE ALL THE FUN!

The Kimpton Staff and SMFHS Staff have started a friendly staff competition with a continuous kickball game!

Kimpton Staff came out on top with a score of 13 to 12!





HALLOWEEN PARTIES

2023



JOIN OUR BULLDOG TEAM!



WE'RE HIRING!



**BE A
PART OF
OUR
TEAM!**

APPLY TODAY!
<https://smfcsd.tedk12.com/hire/index.aspx>