

Blue Hill Community Schools Newsletter

SCHOOL HOTLINE ~ 756-2800

December/January 2008

A message from the Superintendent

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE BOBCAT FOOTBALL TEAM AND COACHES!

What a great way to end the 2008 football season! The success of this team is a great example of what high school athletics are all about. Teamwork, dedication, hard work, setting high expectations and doing your best to achieve those expectations along with excellent sportsmanship and having the right attitudes. While many accolades are due to the coaches and players a thank you also to the parents, community, student body, and staff for their support and the roles they played in helping with the success of the team.

The winter sports season is just around the corner, and I encourage you all to attend the various activities in the months ahead. Please remember the participants are young adults who will be doing their best to be as good as they can be. They will make mistakes just as we as adults do at times.

Please encourage them to improve upon their mistakes and not belittle them with sarcasm and snide remarks. They are all great kids. Let's do the best we can in helping to make them into great people.

I also want to encourage you to treat opposing teams and officials with respect. They are our guests. Please treat them as you would a guest in your home. (Please see the article in this newsletter regarding another school's perception of some of our student's behavior when they were watching a couple of opposing teams compete). That tells it all!

Congratulations to Lori Toepfer and Jamie Reiman for being re-elected to serve on the Blue Hill School Board and to Mitch Woeste who will begin his first term in January 2009. A big thank you goes out to Bruce Eckhardt for his years of service on the Board of Education.

With the winter months creeping up on us, we will most certainly be faced with some weather conditions which will cause concern for the safety of our students and staff. Decisions are not made in haste when it comes to deciding not to have school, or in some instances to let school out early because of hazardous weather conditions. School officials do make phone calls to various people in the surrounding areas as well as driving the roads to see if conditions warrant starting school late, and in some cases not having school at all that day. The weather station in Hastings is also a source we use in helping to make the correct decisions. Sometimes we might err in our decisions, as it is difficult to predict weather conditions, but when a decision is made it is with the students' and staff's best interest in mind. Every attempt is made to make announcements as early as possible on Channel 10/11, KHAS TV Channel 5, KHAS Radio (12 am), TV Channel 13 and the School's hot line 402-756-2800

HERE'S WISHING EVERYONE A VERY JOYOUS CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Happy Holidays!



Dates to Remember....

December 22nd will be a noon dismissal (unless the can drive goal is met!)
COLLECT THOSE CAN GOODS!

Teachers Work Day Monday,
January 5th.

School resumes Tuesday,
January 6th for students.

CONGRATULATIONS!
Blue Hill Bobcats
2008 C-2 State
Football Champions!



Journalism Class

Bonifas Speaks Out

On October 10th I interviewed Melissa Ann Bonifas about her past history. She got her Ag degree at UNL and also her biology endorsement. She attended UNK to receive a Master's in biology. This year is her ninth year teaching at Blue Hill. Her biggest class here had twenty-three students, and that was Agricultural Science. She sponsors FFA year round. When she was in high school she was involved in FFA her sophomore through senior years. She has been involved in agriculture her whole life with her family. In college, she was involved in the Collegiate FFA Chapter and in an Ag Ed Club. She has judged contests at State FFA. Her teaching philosophies have been primarily based upon her own personal experiences. There are a total of fifty-two high school students in FFA this year and fifteen in junior high. I also had asked Melissa if she thought there had been an increase of women as Ag teachers. Her response to this question was, "At times, because sometimes there would be a burst of women as Ag teachers and sometimes not." She has a husband, Troy Bonifas, and he owns his own trucking business. Troy and Melissa have a baby girl, who is about one-and-a-half years old. Melissa did say that Aidyn has that typical 18 month old attitude.

-Amanda Brader

Trucking Their Way into Town

Blue Hill Community Schools had the opportunity to have Central Community Colleges (CCC) trucking instructors come to school with a trucking simulator. Students were able to test their skills as truck drivers in some scenarios such as snow, wind, rain, and much more! Blue Hill FFA members helped to host the event. It was a great opportunity to help the students realize a new perspective on the trucking industry, and to show them how important trucking is to our country. Altogether the event was a real success. The Blue Hill FFA Chapter would like to thank CCC for the experience; it was greatly appreciated by all students.

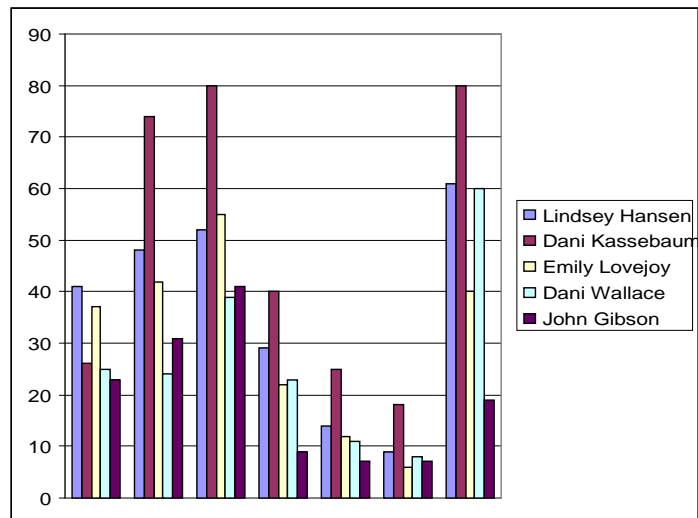
By: Cody Bland

CROSS COUNTRY

The cross country season went well this year with all the participants improving throughout the season. The runners who finished the season are: Danielle Kassebaum (senior), Emily Lovejoy (senior), Lindsey Hansen (junior), and Jonathon Gibson (freshman).

By: Jonathon Gibson

Blue Hill Cross County 2008-2009



(Chart courtesy of Cody Bland)

Aprils Answer

October 26, 2008, I interviewed Mrs. April Ann Meyer who is the secretary for Blue Hill High School and the sponsor for the Blue Hill Dance Team. She lives three miles south of Blue Hill. April has been employed for seven years; first as a paraprofessional, a secretary for four years, and the Dance Team sponsor for five years.

When asked what she likes most about being the sponsor for the Dance Team she replied, "Working with the girls and seeing their creative side." Her favorite dance routine so far this year is the one they did at homecoming, "Dirty Pop". Her favorite memory from 2008 was dance camp.

There are eight girls on the squad this year, and their dance camp was held at UNK. Some of the three most important things that happen at dance camp are that the squad meets new friends, sees old friends, and learns new routines. The Dance Team is also involved with competitions at camp, this year the squad received a superior.

The goals and responsibilities of the squad are to entertain the crowd, promote school spirit, be positive role models, and do concession stands for basketball games. For a fundraiser, they sell Eileen's cookie dough. Mrs. Meyer thinks that the two most important assets to this year's group are leadership and talent.

When asked why she felt that dance was an important program she replied by saying, "Many people look at dance as something to do for fun. Which it is! However, it is also a lot of hard work. The members put in countless hours of practice and working. The reward comes when they can perform before of a crowd and receive a positive response to all their hard work! It's awesome to see the girls shine!" She loves what she is doing, the girls are amazing, and she looks forward to many more years.

She and her husband have six children and four grandchildren, and they all enjoy spending as much time as they can together.

Flying Gifts
The air moves so swift
Almost as it were a gift
from the one that lines up

By: Jonathon Gibson

2008 STATE FOOTBALL GAME PICTURES!

Mrs. Meyer has given the senior boys a CD with over 400 pictures of the State football game. If any other students would like a copy, Mrs. Meyer will be happy to make you one. Please bring a BLANK CD to her and you can have your very own copy as well!

CONGRATULATIONS BOBCATS!!!

Mrs.

Q: Could I have your exact name please?
A: My name is Penny Drury. I reside near

Q: Where did you go to college for your
A: Wayne St. College Nebraska, and Will

Q: How many years have you taught at B
A: Eleven years

Q: Have you taught in any other schools
A: Yes. Cardinal elementary in Iowa, for three years. Junata- Distrist 60 in Hastings for four years.

Q: What
A: I teach

Q: Are th
educator?
A: My st
counselor

Q: In you
the subje
A: The cl

Q: What s
A: There
a March d

Q: Did you sing in any choir groups in college?
A: Yes

Q: When did you, personally, begin singing in a choir?
A: Junior high school

Q: What is your voice?
A: Alto (low)

Time to Kick Back...

It almost seems as we go throughout our lives, there are obstacles that get in our way, whether it is a big test or quiz, a term paper, or even scholarships for the seniors out there. The human body can react to stress in many ways. Many times it makes one's muscles tense up, which in return, will cause pain throughout one's body. Some people react to stress in a positive manner. These people are similar to the professional athletes, but let's face it, we are not all a Tony Romo or a Chad Johnson. No one likes to have that feeling of being stressed constantly and weighted down; I know I don't! But there is some good news; you don't have to feel stressed out. There are many ways to relieve stress.

- Eat foods that are healthy for you - fresh grains, fruits and vegetables.
- Reduce caffeine and sugar intake.
- Go outside and increase heart rate up with aerobic activity.
- Get some quality sleep.

So, if you get the chance today try out one or more of these ways, and see if they can help you get a stress-free life. It will be hard to eliminate all stress, but remember that we cannot control every stressful situation that we encounter everyday.

By Cody Bland

Senior Section

If you haven't submitted your admission applications yet, now is the time! College visits should be completed also, if not done already, as the college can do a more thorough job of explaining scholarships and other opportunities (and their deadlines!). ! Contact your top college choices to determine application deadlines and procedures. Ask if the admission application is also the application for college-based scholarships. If not, ask about the scholarship application process.

Financial aid time is fast approaching also. See the attached flyer about the upcoming program on Thursday, January 8. Parents and students are welcome (both juniors and seniors). Also, a heads-up to seniors: There are a few scholarships which may require you to submit an estimate of your financial aid. To estimate your FAFSA results now, use the *College Funding Estimator* at EducationQuest.org. The program will ask for 2008 income tax information. You may estimate your tax information to complete the Estimator but should use your completed 2008 tax returns when you submit the actual FAFSA.

And about scholarships...

Follow these tips to increase your chances of earning scholarships:

Don't pay for scholarship searches. Free scholarship search sites are available on the Internet including ScholarshipQuest at EducationQuest.org which has over 1,800 state and local awards.

Visit your guidance counselor weekly for information about local scholarships.

Get organized. Place scholarship applications in deadline order and prioritize each award. Local awards and college-specific applications deserve top priority because you're more likely to earn them.

Continually update your activities, honors and volunteer or paid jobs using the [Activities Resume](http://ActivitiesResume) at EducationQuest.org.

Earn the best possible ACT/SAT scores by taking the exam in the spring of your junior year and again in the fall of your senior year.

Use quality references such as a teacher, coach or counselor. Encourage them to write specific examples of your leadership skills. Give them advance notice and a specific deadline.

Get an early start on essays. Describe your interests, hopes for the future, and leadership abilities.

Pay close attention to grammar, spelling and neatness. Ask at least two people to proofread your application.

Following is a list of upcoming scholarship deadlines from the Education Quest website. While this list contains all scholarships for which students may be eligible, the ScholarshipQuest will actually personalize the search to meet each student's criteria. That personalized list would be much easier to work with.

Governor's Opportunity Award (State Colleges)	Half Tuition	December 1
Huge NWU (Wesleyan) Scholarship	up to \$25,000	December 1

Nebraska Softball Foundation	\$500-\$1,000	December 1
Staats Custom Awards	\$\$500	December 1
Nebraska AXA Achievement Scholarship	\$\$10,000 & up	December 15
Creighton University--numerous scholarships		January 6
Hastings College--some scholarships		January 9
Campus Citizen Award	\$2,000	January 15
Nebraska State College System		
Board of Trustees Scholarship	Full tuition	January 15
RED Scholars Fund Scholarship (UNL)	\$500 per year	January 15
WARREN & VELDA WILSON SCHOLARSHIP	\$1,000	LOCAL DEADLINE JAN. 15
Doane College	Several	January 31
Norma Ross Walter Scholarship (English majors)	\$1,000	January 31
Democratic Divas of Nebraska	\$1,000	January 31
Ralph Herz Memorial Scholarship	\$750	February 13
Ak-Sar-Ben Chapter of IAAP Scholarships	Tuition +	February 15
Goodrich Scholarship (UNO)	Fees	February 15

*Some information above was reprinted/adapted from the Education Quest Foundation of Nebraska.

Juniors--Get Ready!

You have some tasks to accomplish in the near future to prepare for college! ACT registration is due for the February 7 test on January 6. We will go through the registration process together here at school, but students will be responsible for actual payment and submission of the registration. Juniors will probably want to take either the February or April ACT, as well as possibly the June and October ones. The current cost is \$31.

Juniors should also be exploring colleges and doing some career exploration. The www.nebraskacareerconnections.org website has some interest, skills, and values surveys which are helpful in the career search. There is also excellent information about all the colleges in the state (and nationwide), as well as detailed career information. This is a great resource! See Mrs. Jeffery for codes and/or other help.

Juniors and their parents are also welcome to attend the Financial Aid Program on Thursday, January 7, if they want to learn what will be expected during the senior year.

Junior High Champions at TVC

The Junior High Quiz Bowl team brought home the gold from the Twin Valley Conference Junior High Quiz Bowl competition last week. The bowl, which was held at Kenesaw, was a double elimination tournament with all nine TVC schools in attendance.

The team played five games in their quest for the championship, losing only one. They first took out Harvard and Red Cloud, but their third match against Lawrence/Nelson proved to be a challenge. At the end of the twelfth and final question, the teams were tied 60-60, so a sudden death question decided the victory for Blue Hill. After this, Blue Hill had to play Lawrence/Nelson again, and this time they won 50-45. Because both teams had only lost one match, a final game was needed to determine the winner. Again, Blue Hill came out on top, with a decisive 65-30 score.

Many of the team members made major contributions to the team's success. Nick Gilbert (captain), Nick Anderson, and Andi Meyer each answered six toss-up questions correctly. Hope Blakely contributed three correct toss-ups. Other team members proved very helpful on the bonus questions. The students were especially strong in the areas of science, world geography, and literature.

Other team members are Mandie Cox, Tatiana Hohenfield, Cassandra Marousek, Britany Norris, and Emily Ostdiek.