

THE STEWARD SIGNAL

APRIL 2022

"Steward School continues to offer high quality education with a small town approach."

Ag Day at RTHS



What's Inside

Classroom news from Kindergarten to 8th grade.

Meet the teachers this month:

- Mr. Paisley (PE teacher)
- Mr. McCormick (music teacher)
- Mrs. Malcolm (cook)
- Mrs. Johnson (speech)

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Healing Our Society Through Lessons of Kindness

by Superintendent Steven Simpson

"Human kindness has never weakened the stamina or softened the fiber of a free people.

A nation does not have to be cruel to be tough."

U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt

As responsible adults, we are challenged with living in a time when our society seems to be swamped by loud and negative voices attacking those who do not speak or think exactly like they do. These voices appear to have penetrated deeply into the fabric of our nation and presented us with unique obstacles to raising children devoted to kindness and caring. How can we teach our children that manners and polite treatment of others is the proper path to follow when they see well-known elected officials and celebrities behaving in very childish and un-adult-like ways? How can we "repair" a society that seems bent on continually damaging itself through the self-inflicted wounds of incivility or lack of neighborliness toward their fellow citizens? The good news is we can all make an immediate difference (and are doing so already).

Although it may seem difficult, at first, to teach the values of the Golden Rule and being thoughtful towards others in the twenty-first century, the key is where we look, and where we help direct our children's attention to find the proper examples. Instead of focusing upon negative national or international panic-stricken headlines or stories designed to attract viewers, listeners or readers, we should help our children see how much good they are surrounded by in their own homes, neighborhoods and communities. Most parents and guardians are quietly humble about the charitable donations they give or volunteer efforts they perform, **but are your children aware of all of the good you are doing?** It is very easy to overlook teaching the lessons of what we think may be obvious. Children need explicitly clear instruction about lessons we think may be implicitly unmistakable.



- Do they realize the food and clothing shelters that are available in our area?
- Are they aware of how many people are devoted to making sure they will not go hungry or cold if the family ever needs assistance?
- Do they know how many veterans or currently serving relatives they have?
- Are they aware of which friends and neighbors are involved in fire or police protection?
- Can they tell you how many people they know who work in the medical profession or so many other careers that provide key services and goods to our nation and the world?

Caring and kindness may not be headline grabbers, but the truly good news is that our children have fine examples of admirable actions swirling around them everyday, but they may be missing it, partially because we, as adults, may be allowing ourselves to be over-burdened by the negativity of news media and social media. We may be forgetting to help our youth focus on the wonderful people and civic-minded organizations that they witness each day. Through emphasizing these simple and close-to-home lessons of kindness, we can do much to build a future adult citizenry devoted to goodness, understanding and helpfulness who look for the positive, rather than the negative, attributes of their fellow Americans.



Is your child up to date on the immunizations they need for school?

Don't wait until back to school time when appointments are limited. We have appointments available now.

Give us a call today!



815-284-3371

Ext. 2124



Kindergarten News

by Mrs. Esposito

Kindergarten is truly happy for spring!!!! We have so many spring activities this year that the children are so excited to check on each of our projects as soon as school starts.

The eggs have arrived and by this weekend, the eggs will be half way through their growing process. The students keep checking and announcing that a chick has started to hatch, but we know that is not the case. May 11th is our official hatch day and we are thrilled to learn more about the process of hatching. Our weekly journals are keeping us busy, but we keep asking when it is May 11th.



For AG Day we visited the high school and loved looking at all the animals, but our favorite part was sitting in the wheels of a tractor.



For math, we have started counting by 5's and talked about how counting by 5's is actually multiplication. We were excited to find out how smart we are in kindergarten. We introduced money and hopefully we will have a store in the classroom where they can apply their knowledge to money, saving, and purchasing.

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Mother's Day is on its way and these little ones are growing something every mother will cherish. They can't wait to bring it home, shhhhhh it's a surprise.

1st-2nd Grade News

by Mrs. Hayes

In **reading** we just finished up a three week unit on generalizations, skimming/scanning, and summarizing nonfiction materials. The students have all continued to learn new words and move up in their individual reading levels. Almost every student is reading at or above their grade level! The class finished listening to Mrs. Hayes read aloud the novel *Flora & Ulysses*. This is about a girl who finds a squirrel that has gained superpowers! We watched the movie in order compare/contrast it with the book.

In **math**, the First graders are finishing up a unit on fractions. They have been exploring the difference between wholes and parts. They also learned what equal shares are and why there must be equal shares for a shape to be in halves or fourths. Next week both groups will be taking a diagnostic test in IXL.com to show where their individual strengths and weaknesses are in the subject area of math. This is a quick test that helps Mrs. Hayes know what needs to be reviewed or retaught at the end of the school year.

On April 22 nd we took a field trip to Rochelle Township High School to visit their Ag Day event. We were shown all the flowers they are growing in their greenhouse, the many farm animals with their respective babies, and several huge tractors. On May 12 th we will be heading to the Niabi Zoo to visit all the wild animals. We can't wait!



In **language arts**, the students are continuing to look at using appropriate voice in their writing. They have written scary as well as serious stories. They also learned to use dialogue and write using different points of view. We have also been using IXL.com to practice many language arts concepts covered throughout the year.

In **science** we have been learning all about plants and animals. We have completed experiments about what plants need to survive and how food coloring travels up celery stalks. The students also learned all about the life cycles of plants and animals. They also learned that bees aren't the only pollinators. Butterflies, bats, and hummingbirds also help pollinate our flowers!

In **math**, the second graders are learning multiple addition strategies to use in order to solve three-digit addition story problems. Some strategies include adjusting addends, skip counting on a number line, decomposing 2 addends, and decomposing 1 addend. Of course, most of the students prefer the most traditional approach of adding the numbers in columns with regrouping.



3rd-4th Grade News

by Mrs. Swartz

Mrs. Swartz's class has been trying some new activities this month! We have been hosting **Mrs. Pratt from Lee County Ag in the Classroom**. She has been teaching us about the many uses of crops grown in Illinois. We made sculptures with packing peanuts made from corn (see pictures below). We learned that Henry Ford made a car from soybeans!

Next month we are going to try a farming simulation and discover all the tasks that must be done if you are a farmer.



We also traveled to Rochelle Township High School for **Ag Day**. We got to see bunnies, ducks, horses, goats, cows, pigs, and lots of cool farm machinery.



We have been working on identifying generalizations, summarizing, and skimming and scanning in reading. We are also using a technique called PALS to make sure students are getting lots of time reading with feedback. PALS stands for Peer Assistance Learning Strategies. The students have been trained to read along with a partner and serve as a coach with tricky words. We are helping each other become better readers!

5th Grade News

by Ms. Kalata

Field Trip

On April 22nd our class traveled to the Lee County Fair grounds to learn how agriculture affects the world around us. In the morning, we learned about renewable energy and the importance of wind farms, the fundamentals of showing rabbits and cows, and the impact of horses on modern-day agriculture. After eating lunch and enjoying our Culver's custard, we learned about bee farms and were able to try raw honey. We visited the corn and soybean stations and were amazed with the never-ending uses for both crops in our everyday lives.

Students also learned about dairy and discovered that cows have four stomach chambers!



Students met an Angus cow and learned about the procedures for a livestock show.



We used a hammer to grind soybeans into powder. From there, we mixed the soybeans with hot water to observe the separating of the soybean meal from its proteins.



Language Arts

Students have worked diligently on their Genius Hour projects and did a fantastic job presenting their research on Monday. During the rest of the week, students organized their findings and wrote an informative essay. Next week, we are beginning to work on writing conventions. Stay tuned for creative writing opportunities for students!



Math

We wrapped up our unit on adding and subtracting fractions on the 19th. Our class has recently begun to work on the multiplication of fractions.

5th Grade News cont...

by Ms. Kalata

Science

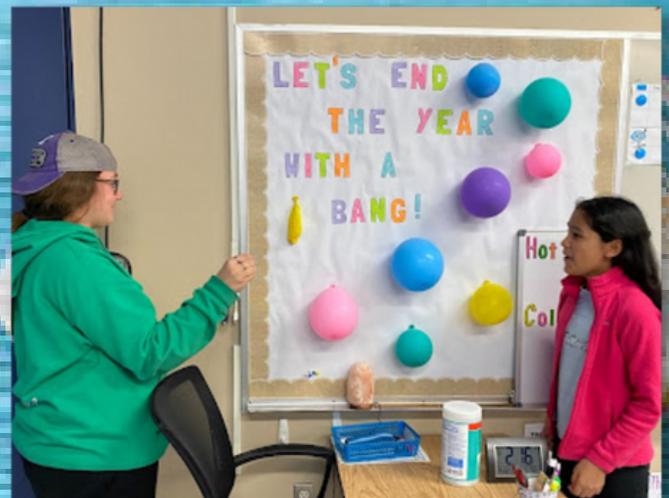
Students simulated a landslide by building a mountain out of clay, dirt, and rock. We poured water on top of the mountain and determined that trees (pipe cleaners) were the most effective in slowing the process of erosion. Currently, we are finishing up a short unit on fossils and how they help scientists determine the age of different layers in the earth. Our next unit will cover the internal and external structures of plants and animals.



End of the year activities:

Wow! This year has flown by! These students have amazed me with all of their curiosity and excitement when it comes to learning. We have all grown so much since August.

In celebration of a successful school year together, we are "ending the year with a bang" by popping one balloon each week during study hall. Within that balloon contains an activity that our class will do together. Last Friday we had the joy of experimenting with Oobleck (cornstarch and water). This week we watched a movie on Thursday and Friday during study hall and had a special treat to enjoy.



6th-8th Math/Science News

by Mrs. Odle

6th Grade Math: We are currently working our geometry brains. We've been learning about perimeter and area of 2 dimensional figures as well as volume and surface area of 3D figures. While looking at and using these shapes, we've been incorporating and honing our algebra skills, as well, by finding missing measurements of the figures. We will be finishing out the year with statistics!

7th Grade Math: We finished up our geometry units earlier this month. Since then, we've moved on to probability. The students are learning to enhance their ratio reasoning skills by applying it to real life situations and how the probability of simple and compound events are calculated.

8th Grade Math: We have been diving deep into geometry topics. The girls completed a big project from the last chapter in which they created their own unique figure on graph paper and demonstrated their understanding of transformations (movements) of their figures into new quadrants on the graph. The girls have started exploring area, volume and surface area of 2D and 3D figures as well.

6th-8th Grade Science: We are working our way through our last chapter of life science this month. We've been learning about the theory of evolution and how scientists use it to study the changes in organisms and environments over time. Most recently, the students completed a lab in which they created their own fossils. The students have also been spending some class time with Mrs. Pratt from Ag In the Classroom. This is a program that strives to teach kids about agriculture and how it is incorporated in the world all around them. We've been reinforcing an earlier science chapter by learning more about the water cycle and how it pertains to agriculture around us. So far, students have created their own water sheds and are experimenting with which materials make the best water filtration system.



6th-8th S.S./L.A. News

by Mrs. Stroh

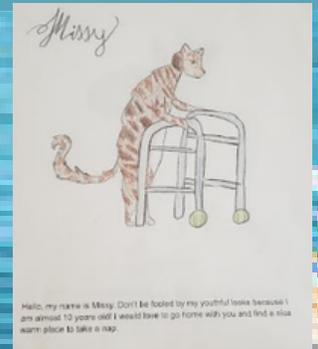
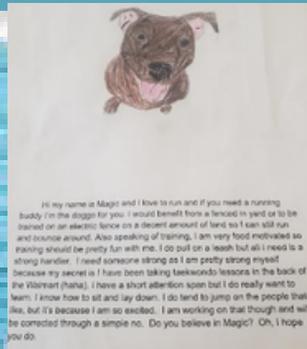
April has brought a ton of highs and lows for our classroom. For the lows, it was definitely the temperature and all of the snow. We've made a ton of jokes about the weather, and all hope that it is soon trending into a warm up period. April also brought us to conquering our state IAR testing. Students did a great job at coming prepared every day of testing. They also worked extremely hard to show their knowledge and skills on these tests. I am extremely proud of them for that. That was definitely a high point of being able to watch them master these tests.

In **language arts**, due to having testing in the morning, students have been working on their persuasive writing techniques. For a bit of fun, students wrote persuasive paragraphs from the point of view of an adoptable pet currently at Tails Humane Society in Dekalb. They just finished drawing the pets, and these will be delivered to Tails. Our goal was to try and persuade people to adopt some of the longer term residents at Tails. Students pulled out all the stops on this assignment and really enjoyed doing something helpful.

In **reading**, we finished our unit earlier in April with reading two stories and comparing and contrasting the situational irony at the end of the stories. Students really loved reading "After Twenty Years" by O. Henry and "He-y, Come on O-ut" by Shinichi Hoshi. Students also worked on reading a short story, analyzing symbols in the story, and writing out why those symbols were important in the story. We have just recently begun our new unit. We will be focusing on nonfiction work and the essential question of "what information should we learn".

In **6th and 7th grade social studies**, we are working on completing our current unit. Students have studied about Asian empires including Chinese Dynasties and the Great Khmer people. We have also studied about African empires during the Medieval time period. And have recently begun discussing ancient Europe during that time period as well. Students are having a great time watching various videos about the ancient empires we are studying, and doing projects to demonstrate our understanding of the material covered.

In **8th grade social studies** this month, we studied the cold war with Russia. We also discussed the Korean War and learned how Korea became split into North and South Korea. We just started Chapter 29 in our textbook in which we will learn about all different Civil Rights Movements- African-American Rights, Hispanic-American Rights, Native American Rights, and the struggle for Women's Rights. Students will end this unit by working together to create a radio broadcast about the different movements.



Student Council News

by Mrs. Odle

Steward Student council is revving up to finish the school year with a bang. So far in April, we all gathered together on the playground to kick off our Easter Break with an all-school recess.

We have also started our spring all-school community service project. The students at Steward will be collecting items to be packed in care packages for our deployed servicemen and women.



In May we have several activities planned:

- The Student Council will sponsor a track meet spirit week.
- We have a Family Fun Night planned with outdoor games and activities.
- The student body will end the year with a town-wide clean up and school beautification day. The students will be doing activities such as picking up trash and planting flowers around the school.

Track Spirit Week

Monday: Beach Day

Tuesday: Sports Day

Wednesday: Wacky Wednesday (Wear the wackiest clothes you've got)

Thursday: Black and Gold/School Spirit Day

Friday: Nationality Day (Represent your favorite nationality in some way. You could be Irish, Mexican, French, American or any other nationality you want to be!)



Do you remember when we had the school wide roller skating last fall? That was a lot of fun!



Art News

by Mrs. Loeffelholz

April whizzed by and now we're entering our last month of school here at Steward!

In **Kindergarten**, our tiny friends discovered that a different kind of speaking can happen with sign language! They practiced signing letters in their names by hand & even spelling "ART" with their traced & folded handprints!



1st & 2nd graders got an idea of symmetry in all types of faces (including animals!) We discussed African hippos & studied unique facts as we applied paint to one side of a drawn hippo's face. Next, we simply folded the painted paper & viola! Symmetry!



In **5th grade**, Mimbre bowls peaked curiosity & air-dry clay was used to model & carve designs.



Our 3rd & 4th graders continued Australian Aborigine studies by creating symbol stories similar to Egyptian hieroglyphics!

In **7th & 8th grade**, Dadaism was drawing to a close using nonsense & humor to lighten things up in a world that can feel quite heavy at times.



Glass artist Dale Chihuly was still a person of interest in **6th grade**. Our "macchia" designs from last month were being used again, but this time in **Shrinky Dink style**! Students were blow drying their inked art to create bulbous bends on their sculptures.



Silent Art Sale

Lastly, please visit our upcoming **silent art sale** to be displayed & bid upon before the spring concert! Highest bids will be awarded the artwork before the start of the concert. :)



Meet the Cook by Mrs. Malcolm

Hey! I'm Sarah Malcolm the lunch lady here at Steward. I live in Scarborough with my husband Corey, our two boys **Hunter**, 8yrs old and **Logan** 5yrs old. We also have two dogs, Zeus a mastiff mix and Apollo a pitbull. Corey and I will celebrate our 10 year wedding anniversary this September!

I've always enjoyed cooking. Before I became a mom I worked as a cook at a supportive living center for 5 years. I became a stay at home mom in 2014 and babysat multiple kids throughout the years from my home. Once my youngest went off to kindergarten, I decided to get a job outside the home. I love to cook and I love kids so becoming a lunch lady made perfect sense!



Some fun facts about me...

1. I'm a huge Packers fan! Go Pack Go!
2. I went to college for criminal justice.
3. I can do an impressive Chewbacca impression.
4. My husband works right across the road at Nutrien!
5. I was a stay at home mom for eight years before I started here



Hobbies:

-Camping! We love to go to our lot out at Woodhaven any chance we get and cruise around on our mopeds, have campfires and take long walks.

-I love to be outside! You can catch me riding my bike, doing yardwork, jumping on the trampoline with my boys and having campfires with the family!

-Cooking! (Go figure) I love to cook and whip up new meals in the kitchen and enjoy figuring out fun ways to make meals camping friendly.



Meet the teacher

by Mrs. Johnson



My name is Lisa Johnson and I have been the Speech/Language Pathologist at Steward Elementary for **9 years**. I currently split my time, spending 2 days each week in Steward and 3 days serving the Rockford Public School District. I received my Bachelor's and Master's degrees from NIU 26 years ago, which seems nearly impossible!

I am married with **3 kids** and live on a farm near Shabbona where we raise cattle, 2 dogs (Mia and Cali), and a large cat herd! **Morgan** is my oldest and will begin vet school at Iowa State University in the fall. My son, **Tate**, is a sophomore at Black Hawk College in Kewanee and will transfer to Oklahoma State University in the fall and specialize in animal nutrition. My youngest is **Libby**. She is a freshman at Indian Creek and is the catcher for her softball team.

Hobbies:

- **I love to be outside!** You can usually find me in my garden, growing fruits and vegetables to can and freeze.
- **I enjoy baking**
- **Working in my flower beds**
- **Mowing our very big lawn!**
- **I spend time at cattle shows and fairs** during the summers, where Libby shows calves. My other kids used to do this as well, but they are too old now and miss it a lot!



Favorite food: Ice cream
First job: Detasseling corn
Favorite animal: Dogs,
especially Mia and Cali
Favorite subject in school: English

Something I want my students to learn: Don't quit! Learning new things can be tough sometimes, but the more you work at something, the better you will get.

Something I want people to know about my job: Speech/language pathologists who work in schools do so much more than help kids learn how to say sounds and words correctly. My goal is to help others become better communicators, which means that I teach many skills. I also teach listening comprehension, verbal expression, memory strategies, social skills, proper vocal care, stuttering management, vocabulary development, critical thinking, and so on. There are many parts of my job, which makes it very interesting and rewarding!

Meet the teacher

Mr. Paisley



Mr. Paisley was born and raised in Dixon Illinois, which is not that far from here. In high school he played football for the Dixon Dukes, which was the same team that President Ronald Reagan, our 40th president of the United States, played for. They didn't play on the same team though. Mr. Paisley wasn't even born yet when that happened. He did get to play against the Rochelle High school.



Mr. Paisley married his wife Katherine 42 years ago. During that time they had 2 daughters and a son. They also are blessed to have 5 grandchildren!



Why did you want to be a teacher?

Mr. Paisley has taught P.E. here at Steward school since January. The reason he became a teacher is he wants to make a difference in young people's lives. He really enjoys coaching. He has coached basketball, football, tennis, track, volleyball and soccer.

Mr. Paisley has enjoyed working at Steward school. He likes teaching small classes so he can get to know each student. He also appreciates the wonderful support from Mr. Simpson and all of the teachers here at Steward.

Hobbies:

- He enjoys watching basketball, football and baseball.
- He loves playing tennis and teaching tennis.

Did you know?

Mr. Paisley has been playing tennis for **56 years!** He has been coaching tennis for **40 years!** I have heard that he is pretty good at it too.





Meet the teacher

by Mr. McCormick

Mr. McCormick grew up in Sterling Illinois, which is located in Whiteside County.

Did you know that Mr. McCormick has 10 brothers and sisters and 11 nieces and nephews? That's a big family! He even has his 12th niece who will be born in June.



He decided to become a music teacher because he was inspired by his High School band teacher who always made music fun.



The thing he likes about teaching at Steward school is personally connecting with the students and getting to know them.

Hobbies:

Coin collecting



Geode collecting



Currency collecting



Spending time with family members

Taking care of his pet cat whose name is Clementine. He adopted her 2 and a half years ago at an animal shelter.



Did you know that the saxophone is the instrument that Mr. McCormick played all through High School? He was even in the marching band.

Upcoming Events



Spring Music Concert Tuesday, May 17th 6:30pm

Join us for a night of music as our K-8 classes sing and play their instruments to show how much they have learned this school year.

We will also have our **silent auction for the art** that the art classes created together before the concert. All money raised will go towards art supplies.

8th Grade Graduation Thursday, May 19th 6:30pm

Join us for our graduation night as we honor our three graduates:

Tilly Gonser
Sam Overton
Alayna Smardo



Track Meet Thursday, May 5th 4:00pm



We will have our **one** track meet for the year at the Rochelle High School on Thursday, May 5th starting at 4:00. Come see how our student athletes do after weeks of training.

School Wide Trip to Niabi Zoo Thursday, May 12th all day



The school will be taking a trip to the Niabi zoo in Coal Valley Illinois on Thursday, May 12th. It is a smaller zoo that gets overlooked. The kids should have a great time seeing all the animals and taking their special class tours.

Please return the green permission slips by Monday or Tuesday next week.

family FUN NIGHT

Friday, May 13th
6:00-8:00

Our Student Council has put together a night of family fun on Friday, May 13th. Come out and enjoy a fun family night of games and activities!

Last Day of School Friday, May 20th