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GRADUATES



DANIEL MATHIS

Eastern Michigan University

Daniel Mathis graduated summa cum laude in April with a bachelor of science degree in social science from Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti. He minored in communications.

He served as an intern in the office of the EMU president.

He is the son of Mark and Valynda Mathis of Monroe and a 2003 graduate of Ida High School.

He recently worked for EMU Campus Life as an orientation intern. He plans to begin a master's degree program at Michigan State University, East Lansing, and is employed as a graduate assistant in the MSU Office of Admissions.



MARISSA LEE OTTER

Concordia University

Marissa Lee Otter graduated in December with a bachelor of arts degree in secondary education from Concordia University, Ann Arbor.

She majored in mathematics and minored in biology. She played varsity softball for four years.

She is the daughter of James and Cindy Otter of Carleton. She is a 2002 graduate of Airport High School.

She has accepted a position at Airport High School teaching geometry and algebra. She also coaches the freshman volleyball team.

Cool Career Cruising

BY GINA ZIEGLER
gina@monroenews.com

CARLETON — What do you want to be when you grow up? This year, students at Airport's Wagar Middle School are exploring careers in detail, finding out what their dream jobs pay and what classes they need to prepare.

All students in the school have access to Career Cruising, software purchased by the district to help each child learn more about jobs, job training, educational preparation and where the best jobs are located.

"Using our exploratory classes we are able to provide each student with information about career pathways. With this software we have additional electronic support that kids enjoy using and can access at home, too," said Wagar counselor Krista Bree, who works with Kevin Hileman to make sure each student in the building is introduced to the new program.

Students throughout Michigan have been required to develop an Educational Development Plan. Previously, those plans and documents followed a student through school in a folder. Now, all information researched by each child can be saved in an online account and accessed, changed and updated as his or her interests change.

"This program allows parental input and access to this important aspect of career planning that their children are engaged in at school," said Mr. Hileman.

Wagar students are given assignments that they can complete by using the Career Cruising program. The assignments are designed to help students focus on career and life goals; to keep a list of their extracurricular activities, awards, special skills and abilities; to document volunteer and work experiences, and to record the special classes they have taken that pertain directly to career preparation.

The software offers multimedia experiences for students. They can access onscreen interviews with people working in a field of interest. They are provided with direct links between careers and educational programs that support those careers.

"Students can search for colleges and schools within the state or somewhere else in the United States. They can check out how the job market looks from state



— Evening News photos by AMANDA LARAE LARKIN

Morgan Snyder (left) and Jessica Weiss search for jobs using the Career Cruising system at Wagar Middle School. The program tells students which careers match their interests, and gives them access to information about salary, working conditions and education requirements, and even allows them to watch videos of people who work in their field. Morgan's results told her to search for a career as a police officer or a professional athlete, while Jessica's results matched her as a therapist or music producer.



Students in Jim Marlow's career education class at Wagar Middle School search for jobs using the new Career Cruising system.

to state and where the pay scale is higher or lower for a job," Ms. Bree said.

Through assignments that help students learn more about personal interests, they begin to develop plans based on the careers and schools they have explored. Students can create a four-year high school plan for classes they want and need, and they have a document that shows how their activities have supported career preparation.

"Using this program will help each student develop a complete resume, an overview of highlights from several years, following them from middle school through high school," said



Eleven-year-old Benjamin Schock (left) and 12-year-old Conner Elezi, students in Jim Marlow's career education class at Wagar Middle School, also search for jobs using the new Career Cruising system.

Ms. Bree.

Counselors are able to use the site to pull up information about individual students to use in specific

counseling and to view data from the district overall.

"This new program is one more tool that we are using to support our students in

exploring their own interests, abilities and skills as they gain understanding about the world beyond high school," said Ms. Bree.

Restaurant invites Pasta Tales from the young

Olive Garden asks "What is your favorite family activity and what makes it so special?" as the theme for their 12th annual Pasta Tales essay contest that began this week.

Students in first- through 12th grades could win a \$2,500 savings bond.

Entries must be submitted online or postmarked by Nov. 30. Judging is based on creativity, theme, organization, grammar, punctuation and spelling.

More information is available at www.olivegarden.com/company/community/pasta_tales.asp.

Statewide engineers' group offers 36 scholarships

The Michigan Society of Professional Engineers (MSPE) is offering 36 scholarships to high school seniors who plan to study engineering in college.

Applicants must be citizens of the U.S. and full-time Michigan residents. A minimum grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale is required from grades 10 and 11. An ACT score of 26 is required. The scholarships are based on merit, not financial need.

Deadline for entry is Jan 14. More information is available at www.michiganspe.org.

Ida, MCISD receive DTE Energy grants to help improve math

Ida Public Schools and the Monroe County Intermediate School District have received grants totaling \$33,000 to improve math skills among middle school students in a program funded by DTE Energy Foundation in a new competitive Math Enrichment Grant Program.

Ida Public Schools will receive \$10,000 for a project designed to strengthen math skills using a wireless hand-held response system to help teachers quickly evaluate student comprehension.

The MCISD will receive \$23,000 for professional development helping teachers incorporate technology into geometry and measurement instruction.

Monroe school board to host town meeting

The Monroe Public Schools Board of Education will host a town meeting for parents at 6 p.m. Nov. 5 in the Cantrick Learning Center auditorium at 1008 Riverview Ave.

The focus of the meeting is to inform parents of the latest technology in the district.

Technology staff will present the new district webpage with a new portal named "Home Access Center."

SCHOOL CALENDAR / To submit an item, send an e-mail to doug@monroenews.com

Friday, Oct. 5

Buy it cheap: SMCC rummage sale, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., also Saturday.

Haunted Forest: Set for Sterling Elementary woods, also Saturday.

Saturday, Oct. 6

Parading: HHS band in Applefest parade.

So dramatic: St. Anthony drama on St. Augustine, 7 p.m.

Sunday, Oct. 7

Procession: St. Mary holds a rosary procession, 1:30 p.m.

Blessing of Pets: St. Anthony, 2 p.m.

Paper: St. Anthony paper drive.

Monday, Oct. 8

Tests: Airport, Huron MEAP tests begin.

Meeting: Huron Athletic Boosters, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, Oct. 9

Meetings: Sterling, Eyer and Niedermeier PTOs, 6:30 p.m.; Brown PTO, 9 a.m.; Miller PTO, 6 p.m.; SMCC Athletic Boosters, 6 p.m.

Wednesday, Oct. 10

Special day: Sterling Bank Day

Mass: SMCC homecoming Mass, 10 a.m.

Thursday, Oct. 11

Special delivery: Miller fund-raiser delivery.

HOMECOMING ROYALTY



Senior Joe Koszykowski is crowned Huron High School homecoming king Friday. He is the son of Ray and Barb Koszykowski of New Boston.



Amy Dickinson, a senior, was crowned Huron High School homecoming queen at Friday's game. She is the daughter of Patty Sparks of New Boston. The school for Mr. Koszykowski and Miss Dickinson was misidentified in photo captions in Saturday's Monroe Evening News.

GRADUATE



DARIN J. MEISNER

Eastern Michigan University

Darin J. Meisner graduated in April with a bachelor of science degree in technology management from Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti.

His major was in geographic information systems.

He is the son of Dan and Alison Meisner of Temperance and a 2001 graduate of Mason High School, Erie.

Showing off their project



— Courtesy photo

A group of Monroe Road Elementary students went to Lansing recently to show State Rep. Kathy Angerer, D-Dundee, a collaboration project they were working on with a school in Columbia. Teacher Cheryl Lykowski and her counterpart in South America hold regular chats and are working with the fifth-grade classrooms in the two countries. For the project, Global Explorers, the students are exchanging podcasts. "It's been a fantastic experience," Mrs. Lykowski said. Pictured with Rep. Angerer (from left) are Marley Brereton, Taylor Potrzebowski, Wesley Gensler, Grant Harper and Mrs. Lykowski.

Play not suitable for kids, official says

MESA, Ariz. (AP) — It was supposed to be a two-hour Shakespearean comedy show attended by 700 sixth-through 12th-graders. But it was not to be.

About 40 minutes into a touring company's performance of "The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)," a Higley Unified School District official halted the show Monday.

"We stopped the show because we feel that this was inappropriate," said Tara Kissane, the district's director of visual and performing arts. She declined to give specifics but said "there was inappropriate language and the content was very suggestive."

"I just thought it was over some of our kids' heads and it wasn't appropriate for our kids," Kissane said.

"It's a matter of interpretation, but they're surely not seeing anything on that stage that they're not seeing on television," Paul Bartz, the producer, said Tuesday. "You might liken it to a 'Saturday Night Live' sketch on Shakespeare."

Bartz said his own middle school-aged children saw a video of the original off-Broadway production in class, and as a parent he had no problem with it.

The play is a comedy compilation of all William Shakespeare's works.

Parents seek support in specialized playgroups

BY MELISSA KOSSLER DUTTON
For The Associated Press

When Anna Dasbach's daughter was a toddler, she joined a playgroup for children adopted from China because she wanted AnMei to meet other girls from her homeland. The other moms became a great support to Dasbach, too, as the Santa Cruz, Calif., mom navigated life as an adoptive mother.

She remembers talking with them about sleepless nights and stares from strangers.

"It was a help to know that other families were going through it," says Dasbach, 47, who still arranges play dates for 5-year-old AnMei with other Chinese girls.

Playgroups, long a loose fellowship of stay-at-home moms, are becoming more specialized as parents with particular interests look for friends and support.

Relationships and play dates are forming on the basis of food allergies, religious beliefs and parenting styles.

The Internet has helped facilitate niche playgroups. Many groups develop Web sites to promote themselves and their events, and use e-mail to share information.

"Some parents benefit from having a sounding



— AP photo by STEPHANIE OBERLANDER

RaeAnna Casady (rear left) of Virginia Beach, Va., chats with Maggie Abernathy of Norfolk, Va., as Casady's son, Carter, 2, (front left) and Abernathy's son, Anthony Hill, 2, play together as part of a working mother's playgroup.

board," says Jonathan Pochyly, a child psychologist at Children's Memorial Hospital in Chicago. "It is helpful to know you're not the only person who struggled with this."

Jeannette Zell started a playgroup for working mothers because she needed weekend play dates for her children, 4-month-old Dylan and 18-month-old Austin. But she also wanted to mingle with other moms who juggle kids and jobs.

"I wanted it to be more

than a playgroup," the Virginia Beach, Va., resident says. "I wanted to get 'mom friends' more than friends for the kids."

The group, which has gone to the zoo, the beach and a farm, recently held its first moms night out. The women met at a restaurant without their children.

"It's fun to meet someone where you can talk about something other than your kids," the 39-year-old says. "I wouldn't really understand just hanging out with

TIPS FOR STARTING A GROUP

■ Use the Internet to find and connect with local people. For example, www.meetup.com connects people with common interests.

■ Find places where parents in a similar situation might go. Hang fliers at the pediatrician's office, gym or health food store. Advertise in church bulletins or newsletters. Attend events at the park or library that are focused on your interests.

■ E-mail members of your neighborhood association, professional list serve or wine club seeking potential playgroup members.

someone because her kid is my kid's friend."

It's natural for moms to look for other women with similar beliefs and experiences, says Karen Deerwestler, a parent educator and early childhood specialist in Pompano Beach, Fla.

"People are looking for relationships that are comfortable and nurturing for the whole family — not just the children," she says.

The Shalom Baby playgroups at the Lawrence Family Jewish Community

Center in San Diego help new moms and dads make friends, says organizer Judy Nemzer. Initially, they bond over questions like breast-feeding, teething and childrearing. Eventually, members start socializing with their spouses.

"There's a lot of getting together with the dads," Nemzer says.

For Shauna Herman, of Post Falls, Idaho, her 2-year-old son's get-togethers with other children with food allergies allow her to relax with friends. As a parent of a child with life-threatening food allergies, she must be vigilant about potential dangers.

"We all seem to take the same precautions," she says.

The women pack safe snacks and wipe down the tables at the park before the children eat. They swap advice about eating in restaurants, explaining allergies to their children and preventing allergic reactions.

Herman's son, Rylee, is allergic to milk, nuts, eggs and other foods. She's overheard older boys talking about their allergies.

"The kids feel (the stress) as much as the parents," she says. "It's important for the kids to have that outlet."

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