



## Going the Distance: Our Response to COVID-19 From BHM Superintendent Scott Thielman

So much has happened since March 16 when BHM Schools closed and we began planning for distance learning. The buildings may have shut down, but the staff were all in action, planning and preparing for a health crisis that this modern-day world has never seen. The Coronavirus or COVID-19 is making history daily and shaping a new way of life. Through it all, we are learning to adapt to the seemingly never-ending changes and are uniting together from a distance. With the help of BHM Communications Coordinator Laura (Barta) Lindquist, the following information is an abbreviated look at the school district's response to COVID-19 and the closure of schools.



Scott Thielman

### Schools and Communities Shut Down

On March 13, Minnesota Governor Tim Walz declared a peacetime state of emergency. There were 14 confirmed cases of COVID-19, including one in Wright County. Schools were to remain open since children were not as likely to contract the virus. BHM administration began meeting to determine what the district might do in case of a shut-down.

Just two days later, Walz announced that K-12 schools would be closed from March 18-27. He directed that meals were still to be provided to students, school-age childcare was still to be offered for emergency and health care workers, and teachers were to begin planning for the possibility of distance learning.

District administration assembled on Sunday, March 15 and determined that schools

would remain closed on March 16 and 17 to develop a district-wide plan. By March 25, the governor said schools will begin distance learning March 30 through May 4, and by April 23, Governor Walz extended distance learning for the remainder of the school year.

### FREE Meal Distribution

BHM Nutrition Services had one day to prepare for the FREE meal distribution ordered by Governor Walz. Curbside pick-up sites were established at Montrose Elementary School of Innovation (MESI), Hanover and Parkside Elementary schools. Meals are FREE to any child in the district ages 18 and under and individuals 19 and over with state-defined mental or physical disabilities who participate in school programs. On their first day, Monday, March 16, they served 414 meals. Each child receives a lunch for that day and a breakfast for the next day.

By March 23, the district began delivering meals into the neighborhoods with the help of 14 Vision Transportation drivers and vans and 14 Educational Support Professionals (ESP) to hand out meals. In addition to the three established curbside locations, sites were added at Buffalo Community Middle School (BCMS), Northwinds Elementary and Tatanka Elementary School of Innovation (TESS). They average about 34,000 meals per week (typical school week averages just over 22,000). By the time this newsletter goes to print, they will have served over 215,000 meals since March 16. "Heat and Eat" meals started on Friday May 8. On Thursdays, children receive their Thursday and Friday meals and on Fridays, they receive two "Heat and Eat" meals for the weekend. By offering the weekend meals, they are using up the inventory they already have at the schools.

Nutrition Services Director Kim Hinrichs said the biggest misconception about the program is that it is only for people in need. "This FREE program is for EVERYONE," stresses Hinrichs. "This program is federally funded through the USDA which allows the district to purchase the food for both breakfast and lunch. We are producing more food than ever before. My staff, the drivers and the ESPs have all really stepped up to make this a successful program for our kids."

Meals will continue to be served in the neighborhoods and curbside through June 4. More information including times and curbside locations will come out soon for the FREE Summer Meals program.

### Keeping it Clean

It was all hands-on deck for the BHM Buildings and Grounds Department on Friday, March 13, as they worked to clean and sanitize buildings from top to bottom before students were expected to return on March 16. Staff used electrically charged water (ionized water) to sanitize surfaces. Once they found out schools would remain closed, they completed hard surface sanitizing and came up with a plan to keep rooms clean as staff and children in KidKare moved throughout the buildings.

With buildings mostly empty, they can get a jump start on summer cleaning and projects. Instead of setting up for prom, graduation and end-of-year events, staff began cleaning in areas such as gyms, auditoriums and locker rooms. In early May, MESI was able to get started on replacing a section of their roof. In mid-May exterior wall work began at Buffalo High School (BHS), MESI and TESS along with the remodeling work in the BCMS Media Center.

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### FREE Childcare

From the moment the governor made the announcement on March 15, KidKare Coordinator Lori Trogstad and her lead supervisors began making plans and calls to be sure they were ready to go the next day at 6 a.m. The program started out with three sites in Buffalo, one in Hanover and one in Montrose. But as businesses began to close, fewer kids were attending. The three Buffalo sites condensed down to one at Parkside Elementary. Rooms have 10 people or less and social distancing practices are followed.

Once distance learning began on Monday, April 6, KidKare began offering time during the day for school-age children to get their work done. At about the same time, staff reductions had to be made because the program was not allowed to charge fees to those workers who were deemed essential by the state. ESPs have stepped in to help fill the gaps and even more have been added to help with the distance learning part of the day. "The kids have accepted this challenge better than some adults," states Trogstad. "They come in with positive attitudes, ready to have a great day at 'school.'"

KidKare will begin charging fees after June 5 (end of the school year). Staff are working to provide some type of youth enrichment classes over the summer months that will comply with the state's summer programming guidance for schools. Beginning June 8, KidKare sites will be back at all elementary schools with the exception of Discovery Elementary.

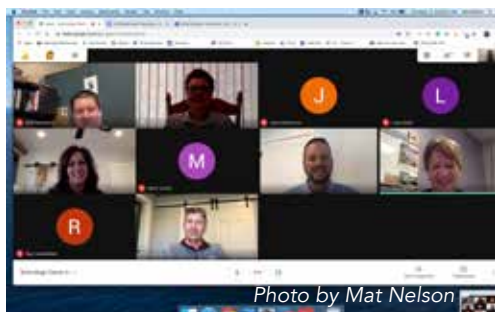


Photo by Mat Nelson

### Behind the Screens

As a district, we do not have a one-to-one ratio of technology devices for students. We rely on our computer, laptop and Chromebook labs and students' personal devices. The technology department knew right away that our students and staff were going to need technology and Internet support at home.

Director of Technology Mat Nelson said his staff hit the ground running with daily meetings and long weeks. They disassembled computer labs, cleaned devices, took inventory on everything and created a check-out system for families. Technician Mandy Green says, "In the first week of distance learning, my

fingers could not have typed any faster as I was responding to help tickets, emails, chats and online meetings all at the same time."

To date, over 900 devices have been distributed district-wide. Nelson shares, "No devices were purchased. Everything we checked out to families was from one of our labs. Even at home, many students still do not have one-to-one access. Most families received one device to share. Only families of four or more received two devices."

The Internet was also an issue with many not having access or spotty service. Techs worked with local providers to get families free Internet access during this time and helped families set up hot spots on their mobile devices for service.

### In the Office

Many people joke that it's the secretaries in the office who run the schools, not the principal. At this time of year, their regular routines consist of ordering supplies, paying invoices, compiling registration forms and materials for incoming kindergarteners, registering new families, preparing schedules and calendars for next year and so much more.

Because of distance learning, secretaries have become the front-line connection for parents—fielding phone calls, preparing materials for pick-up, preparing for the return of devices and materials and wading through thousands of emails weekly. They have also had the important task of helping communicate the plans during distance learning to families and being available for families to pick-up materials.

### Distance Learning from Preschool to High School

Distance learning began for BHM students on April 6 and by the April 23, distance learning was extended for the remainder of the school year. Many found it challenging to plan for the two months of "at home" instruction in such a short period of time. Teachers really looked to each other for guidance on how to plan and how to use new technology pieces such as Google Classroom (to post assignments), Google Hangout or Zoom (for live video chats) and videos for short instructional messages.

If you don't have kids in school, you may wonder what distance learning looks like? It will likely look different from teacher to



teacher and student to student. While almost all of our teachers are using some sort of technology tool for daily instruction, with distance learning, it shouldn't be necessary in order for the student to complete his or her work. District-wide, ESPs played a big role in assisting teachers with gathering books and materials to send home with students. In addition to the book work, many teachers have made online resources available for classroom assignments. Teachers have worked closely with families to ensure students are getting the materials they need to meet the core requirements to finish out the school year.

Keeping connected has been important to everyone as we finish out the year. Many teachers report feeling more connected to their students despite the inability to be together. Some teachers use live video chats to meet with students for one-on-one help, and others use it for small group or whole-class meetings. Some use video conferencing with students every day and others use it once a week. Especially at the elementary level, teachers are building closer relationships with parents to help them navigate teaching their children while also working from home. BCMS Health Teacher and parent of elementary age students Nicki Schahn shares, "Let's be honest, this is hard. As a teacher and parent of a 5 and 9-year-old, I'm learning to let go of some things and celebrate the little victories. We are here to support our parents and help them through this." TESS 3rd Grade Teacher Pam Ramsey adds, "We have really moved from academic support [in the beginning] to social/emotional support for students and parents."

Distance learning has been hard for preschoolers to really understand. They don't know why they can't be in class with their teachers and friends.

"We have been focused on relationships with our children and parents," shares ECFE Coordinator Barbara Eckberg. "We have recorded stories and songs and provided resources for families. We've had circle time and story time on video chats and the children love seeing one another."



Submitted Photo



## Going the Distance, p. 2

Discovery Elementary Kindergarten Teacher Kimarie Tacke says this is the hardest thing she has ever had to do in her 36 years of teaching. She shares, "It's hard not to be sad about everything they are missing during their first year of school. We missed out on our field trip to the Minnesota Zoo. So, on the day we were supposed to go, I planned a virtual trip to the San Diego Zoo. I'm so thankful this happened at the end of the year so we had time to learn about school and to build our relationships."

There have been set hours during the day so students know when they can access their teachers. However, teachers have found that depending on parent and student schedules, distance learning happens at a variety of times throughout the day. "I try my best to respond to student questions and

emails as fast as possible knowing that some students are working in the morning, others in the afternoon and others in the evening," says BHS Social Studies and AVID Teacher Craig Lachowitz. "They all have questions that need to be answered as soon as possible [so they can keep working]."



Photo by Michelle Leimer

What if a student has special needs? What if a student doesn't understand English? What if a student doesn't have a place to call "home?" BHM Special Education Teachers have also put in many hours and have provided many various communications to families to make sure their student's needs are being met. The district has over 1,100 students in special education, 80 ELD (English Language Development) students and just over 20 students who are homeless. They are making sure these students understand what is happening and getting the resources they need.

Distance learning has certainly been a challenge for everyone involved. Many have discovered a new appreciation for going to school whether you are a student, teacher or parent. There is value in seeing your friends and having social interactions each day. There is value in seeing the body language of students in class to know if they are understanding the material. There is value in sending your child to a safe and supportive environment where you know they are developing positive relationships and learning the skills that will carry them through their entire lives.



Photo by Stacie Beyer

### Dream, Believe and Achieve

We could have never **dreamed** that BHM Schools would be participating in distance learning for the last two months of the school year. We continue to work to determine summer programming and what this fall might look like. But, we **believe** our entire staff and families have done an outstanding job during this extraordinary time. We know that our students will **achieve** great success beyond this health pandemic because of the support systems put in place by our staff, their families and our communities. We thank Buffalo Rotary for masks. We thank Buffalo Chamber for finding businesses to donate tents for our curbside pick-up and gift cards for our Nutrition Services employees. We thank Buffalo Girl Scout Troop #18148 for the boxes of cookies we shared with our families at curbside pick-up. We thank all of you for hanging in there with us and working through this crisis together. Thank YOU ALL for making **BHM Schools the place to dream, believe and achieve!**

## Welcome to BHM Schools

### Jeanna Miller Appointed New Parkside Elementary Principal

At the Monday, April 27 BHM School Board meeting, the board approved the appointment of Jeanna Miller as the next Parkside Elementary Principal. Miller will replace current principal Michelle Robinson who is set to retire on June 30 after 33 years of service in BHM Schools.



Miller first learned about the BHM community when she heard Dr. Corey Martin speak at the February 2020 Minnesota Community Education Association Conference. He spoke about the community-wide Bounce Back Project and promoting health through happiness. His presentation really spoke to her and immediately she went home and purchased small notebooks for everyone in her family to record their Three Good Things (a community-wide initiative of the Bounce Back Project). When she heard there was an elementary principal position open in BHM Schools, she was excited to think about what

a school could look like when its community prioritized emotional wellbeing. She never imagined just a couple months after hearing Dr. Martin speak that she would be hired to work in BHM Schools.

Miller is currently serving the Bloomington School District as the Director of Early Learning Services. She has been with the Bloomington District since 2001 serving in a variety of teaching and leadership positions including: Deaf/Hard of Hearing Teacher, Reading Specialist/Response to Intervention Lead, District New Teacher Instructional Mentor, and Learning Supports Manager/Response to Intervention Coordinator. She earned her B.A. in deaf education and elementary education from Augustana College in Sioux Falls, South Dakota in 1992. She went on to get her Masters in Educational Leadership from St. Mary's University, her Reading Specialist Licensure from Hamline University and her Education Specialist Degree in Educational Leadership from the University of St. Thomas.

Director of Teaching and Learning Pam Miller said that at the end of the interview process, they had two great candidates for the position. Jeanna's skills and leadership style

just seemed to be a good fit for Parkside Elementary. "During the interview process we discovered Jeanna's drive and passion for education. She places emphasis on equity and inclusivity for all students to be successful. She also believes strongly in shared leadership and is a builder of community. We are excited to have her as a part of our BHM team."

"I am honored to be joining BHM Schools and lead Parkside Elementary," stated Jeanna. "All of my experiences have led me to what I love the most, leading a building. Principalship is the place where things get done, where leadership and teaching converge with deep, meaningful relationships. I want to continue to make a difference in the lives of students and families. I want to support teachers in their growth and learning. I want to continue to unite a community. I want to continue to create a space where every family, student and staff feels a sense of belonging and empowerment. I look forward to getting to know everyone and learning all about the excellent work of BHM and Parkside Elementary."

Miller will begin her new position on July 1, 2020.

# BHM Staff Making Headlines



Linda Augustson



Vicki Cary



Denise Casey



Nancy Daniels



Martha Driscoll-Nelson



Barbara Jacobson



Nancy Koehler



Lee Ann Marzean



Lynnette Neumann



Mike Quady



Michelle Robinson



Kathleen Schmidt



Jeannie Tregaskis



## The Retiring Class of 2020

This year, 14 employees, from around the district, have already or will retire from BHM Schools. Combined, they have provided 380 years of service to the district.

Typically, Superintendent Scott Thielman and members of the school board would recognize each employee for their dedication to BHM students and the years of service they provided at a retirement luncheon in early May. This year, because of the COVID-19 health pandemic that event has been postponed. They hope to be able to recognize them early next fall as more restrictions are lifted.

Each one of these employees has played a valuable role in shaping the lives of students, both directly and indirectly, and has allowed students to *dream, believe and achieve*. BHM thanks the retirees for their many years of service and the impressions they have made on students, staff and the community. We know this isn't the way they wanted to end the school year, but we want to wish them all the best in the next phase of their lives.

The following retirees are listed in order, from top to bottom, left to right, in the photos above.

- Linda Augustson** ..... 20 Years  
Tatanka Elementary STEM School  
Educational Support Professional
- Vicki Cary** ..... 30 Years  
Buffalo High School English Teacher
- Denise Casey** ..... 34 Years  
Parkside Elementary Kindergarten Teacher
- Nancy Daniels** ..... 34 Years  
Tatanka Elementary STEM School  
Educational Support Professional
- Martha Driscoll-Nelson** ..... 35 Years  
Buffalo High School  
Physical Education Teacher
- Barbara Jacobson** ..... 15 Years  
Tatanka Elementary STEM School  
Music Teacher

- Nancy Koehler** ..... 16 Years  
Buffalo Community Middle School Nurse
- Lee Ann Marzean** ..... 28 Years  
Hanover Elementary  
Educational Support Professional
- Steve McManus** (photo not available). 40 Years  
Buffalo Community Middle School  
Custodian
- Lynnette Neumann** ..... 18 Years  
Buffalo High School  
Nutrition Services Manager
- Michelle Robinson** ..... 33 Years  
Parkside Elementary Principal
- Mike Quady** ..... 35 Years  
Parkside Elementary Media Specialist
- Kathleen Schmidt** ..... 10 Years  
Buffalo High School  
Educational Support Professional
- Jeannie Tregaskis** ..... 32 Years  
Northwinds Elementary  
Special Education Teacher

## Steffes Named a Finalist for National Distinguished Principal Award

Tony Steffes, principal of Montrose Elementary School of Innovation (MESI), and a member of the Minnesota Elementary School Principals' Association (MESPA), was one of three finalists for the Minnesota 2020 National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) National Distinguished Principal (NDP) award.



climate for the students, families, and staffs in their learning communities.

Among Steffes's greatest accomplishments as a principal, was being an instructional leader for the MESI staff as they worked to become a STEAM school as well as an AVID Elementary Showcase Site. The process included research, thoughtful planning, providing intentional professional development opportunities, acquisition of new funding sources, fiscally responsible budgeting and decision making, and long-term vision of the programming they wanted to provide for their students and families.

BHM Superintendent Scott Thielman said, "Tony is a positive and innovative person. He

takes on challenges with focused determination and logic. He is consistently thinking out of the box to solve problems."

MESI parent Sarah Brenny, shares, "Mr. Steffes and his team of educators have built a creative, engaging, and forward-thinking community. Over the years my husband and I have been so impressed by the exceptional opportunities that our kids have been able to be involved in."

While Steffes was not selected for the top award, he is still a highly regarded principal in BHM Schools and worthy of the recognition. The NDP award went to Bret Domstrand from Lakeville.

The NDP program was established in 1984 to recognize elementary and middle level principals who set high standards for instruction, student achievement, character, and



## 2020 Graduation: A Certain Uncertainty

Each year, the communities within BHM Schools come together to celebrate four distinctively unique graduations. They are full of pomp and circumstance that is sacred to all of those involved. It signifies a rite of passage to the next phase of life that is full of new expectations, experiences and exploration. But this year, the COVID-19 health pandemic has derailed these traditional celebrations. What is certain is that celebrations will happen, we are just uncertain when or how.

### Buffalo High School

Buffalo High School (BHS) typically ends graduation week by packing about 3,000 people in the gym to watch over 400 deserving young adults receive their diploma. Depending on the year, the band, orchestra or choir sing and play inspirational music while fellow graduates deliver heart-felt speeches to the anxious graduates.

This year, about 440 BHS seniors are being asked to come to the school's north parking lot on Friday, June 5 from 3-7 p.m. for curbside pick-up where they will receive a MN/Home laundry bag with their student awards and/or projects, their cap, gown, tassel and cords if applicable, diploma and graduation program. Students are to stay in their car as staff greet them and hand-off materials from the curb. The specifics are uncertain, but some type of graduation ceremony (either virtual or in-person) is expected at the end of July 2020. More information will be announced in the weeks ahead.

### Phoenix Learning Center

This graduation was once held on the grounds outside of Phoenix Learning Center (PLC) but has since landed on the stage of the Performing Arts Center at BHS. With a more intimate number of graduates, teachers share short sentiments about each student and video captures the feelings of the students as they reminisce on their time at PLC and look forward to future endeavors. Each graduate receives a flower that was selected by and has special meaning to that class.

This year, 12 PLC seniors will also be a part of the BHS curbside pick-up in the north parking



2019 Buffalo High School Graduation



2019 Phoenix Learning Center Graduation



2019 PRIDE Transitions Graduation



2019 ABE Graduation

lot on Friday, June 5 from 3-7 p.m. They will also receive a MN/Home laundry bag with their student awards and/or projects, their cap, gown, tassel and cords if applicable, diploma and graduation program. Again, the specifics are uncertain, but they too will have a graduation ceremony (either virtual or in-person) at the end of July 2020. More information will be announced in the weeks ahead.

### PRIDE Transitions Diploma Ceremony

Take an oversized classroom, fill it with family, friends and a standing-room-only section, and top it off with several graduates up front and center and you have the PRIDE Transitions Diploma Ceremony. This ceremony may be one of the smaller ones, but it is the biggest in PRIDE and emotion. A video shares the students' experiences at PRIDE while the staff share their stories and memories, and provide thoughtful advice to the graduates.

This year, eight PRIDE Transitions students will still have a video shared with their families. Each graduate will also have a sign to put in their yard (provided by a donor). They hope to arrange a picnic later in August for graduates and their families for a smaller, more informal diploma ceremony (while following the social distancing guidelines). More information will be announced in the weeks ahead.

### Adult Basic Education Graduation

Typically, each year, the Adult Basic Education (ABE) graduation ceremony kicks off the BHM graduation week. Adults who have been working on earning their GED (General Education Diploma) are invited to the Discovery Center Auditorium where they unite with others from the 19-member district consortium. Awards are also handed out that night to those who have earned citizenship, made strides in reading and math, learned English as a second language and more.

This year, ABE graduation has been postponed, tentatively, until Tuesday, August 4, 2020. Depending on social distancing rules at that time, the date may need to be moved back further or a virtual ceremony may be another option. More information will be announced in the weeks ahead.

BHM Schools Celebrates the Class of 2020

# Congratulations Grads!

You are a "class act" that we will NEVER forget!

#BHMBisonPride



## Brilliant Bison—Alumni Shining in the World

**Alumni:** Karen (Friederichsen) Mammano  
**Buffalo High School Class of 1987**

**Lives In:** Webster, New York

**Family:** Husband: Sam Dog: Lily

**Employed:** American Kennel Club Professional All-Breed Dog Handler

### Bred to be the Best

One could ask, "What is the best way to get to the Westminster Dog Show in Madison Square Garden?" The response would likely be, "Training, training, training."

Karen (Friederichsen) Mammano, has never known life without a dog in it. Born in Bellefonte, Pennsylvania to Bob and Cleo Friederichsen, Mammano's dad was a professor at Penn State. When Mammano was 18 months old, the family moved to Buffalo. Her mother's family is from the Howard Lake area and both her parents met while they attended Bethel College. Her dad would go on to teach at Augsburg University for over 30 years while her mom bred and raised Golden Retrievers for 25 years.

When Mammano was about two or three years old, she began to learn the dog handling trade from her mom. She was always going along with her to dog shows and helping her with the dogs. She joked, "It's good, that back then, there weren't a certain number of days that you had to be in school. As long as I was on the B honor roll, I could go with my mom to dog shows." By the time Mammano was 16-17 years old, she worked in the summer with professional handlers and started to get paid to show dogs.

School wasn't a high priority for Mammano, but music and theater were her passion. She recalls how Buffalo High School (BHS) Music Teacher Mike Walsh and English Teachers Karen and Clark Swenson got her through high school. Clark was the theater director and one of her favorite teachers. "Clark saw the uniqueness in students. He gave me confidence and gave me a place to be." She was inspired by the music trip to New York during her junior year and starring as Jan in the BHS production of *Grease*. That was the year she felt like they went from "music geeks" to the "cool kids" at BHS. It was also during that time that Mammano remembers her science teacher Mr. Fiedler allowing her to create her own dog anatomy class. "It was an amazing time." That was also the time in her life that she had the least to do with dogs because of her music and theater commitments.

After graduating BHS in 1987, Mammano attended Augsburg University where her dad taught. After her first fall semester, he told her she should leave school and focus on show dogs. She moved to California and worked as an apprentice with a dog

handler for a brief time. By 1988, she began showing dogs professionally, working and traveling with her mom. She stated, "You can't go to school for this type of career."

In September 1995, she went to a dog show in New York where she met her now husband Sam. By November 1995, she moved to New York to be with him, got married in 1998 and they have been showing dogs together ever since. They typically do 135-140 dog shows per year and are both considered All-Breed Handlers, showing a variety of dogs, about 10-15 per show. On a typical show day, Mammano will put in approximately 12-14 hours. She shared that dogs are shown for many different reasons and often times the owners don't have the time to dedicate to the training. Often, they are shown to promote a breed or for the work they do. The Mammanos travel all over the country to show dogs, but many of the competitions are on the East Coast. When they are home, they have about 10-15 dogs living at the house where they have 1.5 acres for the kennels and running yards for the dogs. When she isn't showing dogs, Mammano can be found judging junior (ages 9-17) handlers.

Mammano has known a great deal of success in the business. In the early 2000s, she won Best in Show at the World Dog Show in Portugal. The Newfoundland that she showed beat out over 9,000 dogs in the competition. Her most recent accomplishment has come with a Golden Retriever named Daniel. Since she has been working with him or "campaigning" him as she calls it, he has been the number one Golden Retriever for the last two years. Dogs become the best in their breed by the points they earn at the various dog shows. At the 2020 Westminster Dog Show in Madison Square Garden, Daniel won the Sporting Group and went on to compete in the Best in Show. He was clearly the "Fan Favorite," but he didn't take the top prize. "It was a surreal experience," explained Mammano. "There are no words for it. I had no idea he was going to win the group. It was unbelievable. He is such a good dog, a cool dog." So cool in fact, there is a children's book in the works about Daniel with the lesson that you don't always have to win to be successful.

It's as if Mammano was training for this moment all her life. She has been going to Madison Square Garden since she was 10



Karen (Friederichsen) Mammano shows Daniel during the 2020 Westminster Dog Show. Daniel won the Sporting Group and a chance at Best in Show.

years old, where she started showing dogs in the Junior Showmanship competition. Winning the Sporting Group at Westminster is like winning the Super Bowl in football. It's the most prestigious competition and a great way for Daniel to end his career. He is only six years old, but will now retire and go back to living with his owner and working in the local nursing home as a therapy dog.

"When I was younger, I was told this was only a hobby," shared Mammano. "I got to follow my dream. I borrow dogs for a little while, we play 'dog show' and they go home. If you have a passion, follow it. I have made an incredible living at it."

Since COVID-19 has hit, everything has been shut down. The last show Mammano participated in was early March. The next one is scheduled for early June if that holds. All the dogs have gone home leaving Mammano time to focus on her eight-year old Norfolk Terrier Lily.



Forever Greasers—Roger and Jan, played by Eric Taylor and Karen Friedericksen, sing "Mooning" in the BHS performance of *Grease*. Photo courtesy of the 1987 Tatanka Yearbook.





# Proud Of....

Those listed below were submitted by district staff and recognized by the BHM School Board for their special contributions and accomplishments.



Photo by Barb Luna

Buffalo High School seniors Amanda Krinke and Damir Omole who were selected to receive the 2019-20 Hall of Fame Award.



Photo by Zahler

Buffalo High School seniors (left to right) Maggie Hermanson, Kiley Irwin, Luke McGorry and Logan Miller who were selected as Students of Excellence for the Resource Training and Solutions Award Program.



Buffalo High School seniors Mya Tiernan and Jack Leipholtz who were selected to receive the 2019-20 American Legion Citizenship Award.



Photo by Teresa Braccini

Buffalo High School seniors Sofia Morin and Luke Lichtenberg who were named Triple A (Academics, Arts and Athletics) award winners by the Minnesota State High School League.



Buffalo High School juniors Bridget Weese and Justin Bunting who were named ExCEL (Excell in Community, Education and Leadership) award winners by the Minnesota State High School League.



Daniel Jungwirth



Dexter Huss



Harper Lostetter



Kumail Akram

Buffalo Community Middle School students Kumail Akram and Daniel Jungwirth who placed 1st in the National History Day-Minnesota Junior Group Performance and will represent Team Minnesota in the National History Day Competition. Lily Wheeler, Harper Lostetter and Lucy Anderson earned Honorable Mention. Other students who competed at the state level were Dexter Huss, Lucas Lawrence, Marcus Boekers and *not pictured*-Eric Bajema, Avery Davidson and Mackenzie Koren.



Lily Wheeler



Lucas Lawrence



Lucy Anderson



Marcus Boekers



BHM Administration and staff who are providing distance learning for our students during the COVID-19 pandemic, those who are providing childcare for emergency and critical healthcare workers, those who are providing meals for families, and those who continue cleaning and disinfecting our facilities.



Tom Bauman, Buffalo High School Activities Director, who received the Distinguished Service Award from the Minnesota State High School Athletic Administrators Association.

## The place to dream, believe and achieve.



1987 BHS grad Karen (Friederichsen) Mammano and Daniel visited the Today Show in February after winning the Sporting Group in the 2020 Westminster Dog Show. Read more about this Brilliant Bison on p. 6.

\*\*\*\*\*ECRWSS\*\*  
RESIDENT DISTRICT 877

## Calling All BHS Graduates

### Got Your "Got to be me!" Book?

If you have passed through 8th grade at Buffalo Community Middle School (BCMS) since 1984, you have likely created a "Got to be Me" or "All About Me" book. This book is about 48 pages with two writing prompts per page such as, "I feel important when..." or "If I have my own children someday, I'll be sure to...." It was an English lesson in composition: five sentences in a paragraph and N2SSWTSW (no 2 sentences start with the same word). It was a place for 8th graders to record their thoughts and feelings, make life decisions, set some goals, document their dreams and aspirations and use it as a creative outlet for poetry, drawings and pictures. The idea was to generate the masterpiece and let it sit and percolate, until their senior year.

Retired BCMS English Teacher Jan Heyerdahl started the "Got to be Me" book project. The idea came to her after she opened a letter that she wrote to herself back in 8th grade about "How to be a mom" after her mother refused to let her try out for cheerleading. She sealed it and wrote on it that it wasn't to be opened for 15 years. When she found the letter 15 years later, little did she know that she would be a mother of two children, born 17 months apart, and on a family leave from teaching 8th grade English.

Heyerdahl realized the importance of the project in 1995 when a student, in her junior year, died in a car accident. Heyerdahl delivered the



Retired Buffalo Community Middle School English Teacher Jan Heyerdahl spent the day in early March, just before schools closed due to COVID-19, handing out "Got to be me!" books to seniors at Buffalo High School. Nick Kobbe was excited to reunite with his former teacher and his book.

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*Reader comments or questions welcome!*

book to her mom at the visitation. She shared, "The mom contacted me later and expressed her deep appreciation for the book and asked me to never stop having my students write the book. I kept my promise!"

In 2017, some students gave the book an "upgrade" to make it more contemporary like adding fun lists to complete such as, "Top 3 favorite jokes" or choice sentences like, "Do you prefer English or Math."

Later in Heyerdahl's career she added a letter writing assignment to the book. The letter was to be written to a future child or sometimes she had them write to a future grandchild. The letters were taped inside the back cover. Heyerdahl shared how one year she discovered an unclaimed book that belonged to the father of one of her new students. "Unfortunately, the father had passed away before I could return the book to him. Imagine our shock when we found in the back cover, a letter the dad had written to my current student!"

"I always told my students the book is a 'gift you give yourself,'" said Heyerdahl. She wants to be sure this "gift" is given back to as many as possible. Over the years, students have moved away before their senior year or have just forgotten to get their book.

#### Claim Your "Got to be Me" Book

Even though Heyerdahl retired in 2017, the BCMS 8th grade teachers have carried on the tradition. There are still many unclaimed books that Heyerdahl and the current 8th grade teachers would like to reunite with their owners. If you or someone you know did not receive your book and you know Heyerdahl was your teacher, you may contact her at [jan\\_heyerdahl@yahoo.com](mailto:jan_heyerdahl@yahoo.com) to make arrangements for its return. If you had one of the current 8th grade English Teachers including Brandon Aldrich, Andrea Koltes, Natasha Leach, Ryan McCallum or Jason Tornell, you may email Leach at [nleach@bhmschools.org](mailto:nleach@bhmschools.org).