GCS Takes Second At ICE

Geneseo Central School won took second place at the 2013 Interscholastic Competition in English and also brought home seven individual and team awards. It took place December 10 in Wadsworth Auditorium on the SUNY Geneseo campus.

GCS was one of nine school districts that participated in this year’s ICE. Each district sent three teams of three students who individually competed in a different category of English Language Arts skills. The categories were Comprehension / Interpretation of Literature, Dramatic Presentation, and Creative Writing. The scores earned in each category determine individual and team awards, with the highest ranking school taking the top prize of the ICE Cup.

Individual winner for GCS in creative writing was Claire Linton, who took third place. In the literature category, Maggie Wheeler took sixth place. GCS again dominated the drama category taking the top three spots. Eric Leary took first, Emily Slade took second, and Melita Kingston took third for their monologues. Two of GCS’ competing teams won trophies. The Blue Team of Xinyuan Chang, Melita Kingston, and Claire Linton was ranked second. The White Team of Makenzee Cohoon, Melita Kingston, and Claire Linton took third place.

Also representing GCS at ICE was the Devil Team of Megan Moynihan, Abby Phillips, and Emily Slade. GCS’s alternate teammates were Mallory Crane, Josh DeBell, and Phoebe Hartvigsen. They were all coached by Bettina DeBell and Megan Dulmage.

The ICE judging panel consisted of distinguished scholars and educators from the region. They were Maryanne Arena (Director of Fine and Performing Arts at Geneseo Community College); Graham Drake (Associate Professor of English, SUNY Geneseo); Norm Gayford (GCC Department of English); Mary Krickmire (theatre teacher at Aquinas Institute of Rochester); Dennis Miller (founding ICE member); and Susan Ware (Artistic Director of Community Arts Connection at The ARC of Monroe County). ICE is a program of the Genesee Valley Educational Partnership.
Starving the Beast

by Timothy Hayes, District Superintendent

Several years ago I was at a presentation on school mergers and consolidation when someone asked the presenter, “What if communities don’t want to merge or give up their community-based school?” The presenter, Dr. Larry Kiley, the Executive Director of the Rural Schools Association of New York State at the time, replied that our state government might set out to “starve the beast” if communities were unwilling to give up local control of their schools. At the time, I thought Dr. Kiley’s words were hyperbole. I was unwilling to believe that the politicians in Albany would act (or not act) to do harm to school children. What has happened to rural, average and below average wealth school districts in the past five years in New York State has brought me to the conclusion that Dr. Kiley was eerily clairvoyant in his assessment of what was to come.

Governor Cuomo would have you believe that school districts just keep asking for more money without regard to results. As a point of fact, New York State schools have not been funded at an appropriate level since the 2008-2009 school year. Who determines what the appropriate level is? Our Governor and New York State Legislators. Since the 2009-2010 school year, the state funding formula (determined through legislation) directed that Geneseo Central School should receive $34,581,697 in aid from New York State. However, by means of a regressive take back mechanism called the Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA), the state has withheld $6,732,875 of the aid due to our District. In other words, our state government has reneged on nearly 20% of the funds promised to educate the children in our District.

On January 15, Governor Cuomo presented his Executive Budget Proposal for 2014-2015. The Governor has maintained the GEA in his education budget proposal for the 2014-2015 fiscal year. The Governor also proposes new education projects such as funding for Universal Pre-K and grant programs. He has even proposed that state funds be utilized to provide college courses leading to degrees for inmates in New York State correctional facilities. Although these programs are very attractive, until our State provides appropriate funding for K-12 programs, how can we afford to add more mandates that are only partially funded? It is my opinion that the state cannot afford such programs. I believe that any current funding available for education must be applied to eliminating the GEA before new programs requiring state aid are instituted.

Please visit our District website for information regarding contacting our state officials in order to advocate for equitable and adequate funding for schools across New York State.

Of note...

…basketball player Anna Miskell was profiled in the Livingston County News feature “Metcalf’s Hot Corner.

…basketball player Jake Vattimo was the subject of a "Metcalf’s Hot Corner” interview in the LCN.

…wrestler James Lukaszonas was named “Athlete of the Week” by the Livingston County News for winning the 170-pound title at the Bradshaw Wrestling Tournament.

…basketball players Anna Miskell and Bryan Rollins both had triple-double performances in their January 24 games against Pavilion. Anna recorded the first triple-double in GCS girls basketball history with 27 points, 11 steals, and 10 rebounds in GCS’ 59-37 win. Bryan scored a career-high 34 points with 11 rebounds and 10 steals in GCS’ 72-60 victory. It was the first triple-double for both athletes.
A fourteen member Transportation Facilities Task Force has recently been assembled to consider options for the bus garage complex on Route 20A, which no longer meets the needs of the district in its present condition. Specifically, the Task Force was given the following charge from the Board of Education: The Transportation Facilities Task Force is charged with developing a recommendation to the Board of Education to determine what should be done with the transportation facility on South Street, which is unsatisfactory in its current state. The Task Force will consider sharing partnerships with other districts and municipalities, develop a facility plan, and make a recommendation to the Board of Education on or before August 5, 2014. Shannon Loughlin is serving as the Chairperson of the Task Force, along with Catherine Bennett, Bill Keihl, Phil Jones (Secretary), David Dwyer, Jim Memmott (Assistant Secretary), Martin Miskell, Al Dietrich, Tracy Levee, Tom Curtin, Craig Phelps, Art Hatton, Jim Allen, and Roger Collins (Vice Chair).

The bus garage currently being utilized by the district was constructed in the 1940s, a time when school buses, and our student enrollment, were much smaller in size. Eleven years ago, another, larger Facilities Task Force presented a series of recommendations to the school board regarding campus-wide project proposals to upgrade instructional space, energy conservation and HVAC improvements, exterior building repair, safety and security enhancements, improved access for the disabled, and bus garage renovation. The recommendation at the time was to include a complete renovation of the transportation facility during the second phase of the capital project. A proposal for a new transportation facility was included in a capital improvement referendum which was not approved by district voters in 2009, nor was a 2010 proposition to purchase 6.5 acres of land adjacent to the campus for future development. During that period of time, a Five Year Building Condition Survey cited the bus garage complex as “unsatisfactory” and “at the end of its useful life.” It should be noted that while the physical structure of the bus garage complex is inadequate for the district’s current needs, the land it sits on is an asset to the district. A professional appraisal of that property determined its value to be between $450,000 and $500,000 in 2009, and environmental remediation at the site was completed in 2011.

The Genesee Valley Educational Partnership contracted with consultant Mark Walsh, of Transportation Advisory Services (TAS) in 2011, to evaluate transportation alternatives for component school districts. Mr. Walsh noted that the Geneseo Central School District is in need of a new facility, and suggested that merging transportation with a neighboring district or districts might create a more efficient and cost effective fleet configuration.

At the Board of Education meeting on February 4, 2014, the Board adopted a Five-Year Strategic Plan for 2013-2018. The plan focuses on goals and strategies in five key areas: Teaching and Learning, Student Life, Community Partnerships, Facility Development, and Fiscal Stability. A major component of the Facility Development Goal is to pursue options for the transportation facility, which brings us to the work currently being conducted by the Transportation Facilities Task Force. Minutes of Task Force meetings are posted on the district website, and questions and comments from the public are welcome and encouraged. The members of the Board deeply appreciate the time and effort that members of the Transportation Facilities Task Force have committed to, and we look forward to their comprehensive recommendation later this year. Our hope and expectation is that the issue of what to do with our outdated bus garage facility on South Street will be brought to a successful conclusion, culminated by strong support from district voters on a project referendum.

The Geneseo Central School Board of Education has adopted a resolution that grants partial school property tax exemptions to veterans who served in the United States Military during wartime. The exemption adopted by the GCS Board grants exemption levels identical to those already in effect for Livingston County, the Town and Village of Geneseo and the Town of Groveland.

Prior to adopting the exemption program on February 4, 2014, the Board held a public hearing to present information on the proposal and to listen to opinions from the community regarding the idea. Subsequent to the hearing, the Board voted in favor of adopting the exemption program. All veterans (and surviving spouses) are granted a base level of exemption for having served during a time of war. If the veteran served in combat, a higher level of exemption applies. The highest exemption level is for veterans who were disabled as a result of their wartime service.

The chart below shows the exemption levels for Geneseo Central School District Veterans:

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<th>Wartime</th>
<th>Combat Additional</th>
<th>Combat Total</th>
<th>Disability</th>
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<tr>
<td>$ 21,000</td>
<td>$ 14,000</td>
<td>$ 35,000</td>
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Members of the Class of 2014 with Parents who Graduated from GCS

Chris Guldenschuh, son of Tracy Adamson (1991)
Lindsay German, daughter of Christopher German (1986)
Melita Kingston, daughter of Dan Kingston (1977)
Ryan Peace, son of Barbara Kingston (1974)
Lindsay German, daughter of Christopher German (1986)
Jake Vattimo, son of Kathy Bondi (1985)
Haley Moran, daughter of Kim Haley (1981)
Joel Cripps, son of Sheila Staley (1985)
Melita Kingston, daughter of Dan Kingston (1977)
Little Blues Take First Place

Taking first place in the Elementary School Division of the recent Stock Market Simulation Game were the teammates of GCS’ Little Blues team. The tycoons won by amassing a total of $105,578 in play money equity, topping competing school districts from throughout the greater Rochester region in the contest sponsored by the Democrat and Chronicle Media Group.

Seated in front (left to right) are Alex McLean, Gary Converse, and Jon Barnett; standing are Ainsley Lyons, Addy Capel, Olivia Videtti, Claire Allen, Jacob Meyer, and Jacob French. Also on the team is Matthew Stout.

Strong Singers

GCS 4th and 5th grade music students presented a concert in the atrium at Strong Memorial Hospital on December 19. The patients and hospital staff stopped by and enjoyed the performance of seasonal song favorites by the GCS choristers. This is the second year the children have sung at Strong during the holiday season.

Indoor Walking Paths Open

Four different indoor walking paths have been created in the GCS building and are available for community use, from 5:00pm to 8:00pm, on days when school is in session.

The indoor walking paths were created by the Geneseo Wellness Committee which encourages you to use them.

You can find maps of the paths, with calculated mileage, on the GCS website under the “Parents” tab then click on “Health and Wellness.” Maps will also be posted in the lobby of the main entrance to the school.
Geneseo Central School is pleased to welcome our new staff. Each brings excellent credentials and energy to our students and will be an outstanding addition to the knowledgeable and committed GCS faculty. Parents who are interested in learning more about the credentials or qualifications of their child's teacher may contact the District Office.

**Bill Buckenmeyer, Teaching Assistant**

**Hometown:** Alexander  
**Education:** B.A. in Communication Studies from Lock Haven University  
**Philosophy of Education:** “Do you want to know why you go out on a limb? because that’s where all the fruit is. If you don’t go out on a limb, you’ll be stuck eating bark for the rest of your life.”

**On my bookshelf:** *Running with the Buffaloes* by Chris Lear  
**Critic’s Choice:** Mitch Albom (author); *Back to the Future* (film); *The Amazing Race* (TV)

If I could host a dinner party and invite anybody in history, the guest list would include… Francisco Pizarro, Lasse Viren, Thomas Paine, and Leonardo da Vinci; I would have a buffet, with all types of food.

**In addition:** I’m the head cross country coach at GCS, also the head girls track and field coach at GCS, as well as the head indoor track coach at Wayland-Cohocton HS.

**Meghan Wheeler, Third Grade Teacher**

**Hometown:** Perry  
**Education:** Undergraduate at Roberts Wesleyan College and master’s degree at SUNY Geneseo  
**Who inspired you to become an educator?** My aunt inspired me to want to be a teacher because of her love and dedication to helping children succeed.

**Prior to GCS:** Perry Elementary School and The Perry Family Literacy Center  
**On my bookshelf:** *The Giving Tree* by Shel Silverstein; *Tuesdays with Morrie* by Mitch Albom; *The Last Lecture* by Randy Pausch and Jeffrey Zaslow  
**Turn up the radio for:** Country  
**Film Festival:** *P.S. I Love You* and *Freedom Writers*  
**Critic’s Choice:** Rascal Flatts (musicians); *The Lion King* (play); *The Voice* (TV)

**How I keep active:** running and tennis  
If I could host a dinner party and invite anybody in history, the guest list would include… Thomas Edison, Abraham Lincoln, and Susan B. Anthony. I would serve spaghetti with my family’s sauce.

**At leisure:** travel and the beach.

**Sarah Wilcox, First Grade Teacher**

**Hometown:** Henrietta  
**Education:** Nazareth  
**Who inspired you to become an educator?** My kindergarten teacher; for my final writing assessment in kindergarten I wrote “I want to be a teacher and be nice like you.”

**Prior to GCS:** Webster  
**On my bookshelf:** works by Joan Lowery Nixon and Ellen Hopkins; *Gone Girl* by Gillian Flynn

**A perfect night at the theater:** *Next to Normal* or *Hairspray* or *Mama Mia*  
**Film Festival:** *The Breakfast Club*; *Heathers*; *Stand By Me*; *The Goonies*; *Gremlins*…

**A goal:** to run one marathon a year for the rest of my life until physically impossible.

**I root for:** The Buffalo Bills  
**Gene pool:** I am related to the May family and can trace my ancestors back to the first people who came to America.

**I admire:** astronomer Maria Mitchell, because she didn’t let society’s social standards of women hold her back from achieving great things.

**Volunteerism:** Greater Rochester Teen Book Festival

**Michael Thayer, Social Studies Teacher**

**Hometown:** Cattaraugus  
**Education:** SUNY Brockport, Canisius College  
**Who inspired you to become an educator?** Football coach & math teacher Tim Miller

**Prior to GCS:** Brockport Central School  
**First impressions of GCS:** I already feel like I belong thanks to the great students and staff  
**On my bookshelf:** *Killing Lincoln* by Bill O'Reilly & Martin Dugard; *Teach Like A Champion* by Doug Lemov & Norman Atkins; *What Great Teachers Do Different* by Todd Whitaker  
**Critic’s Choice:** “The Dance” - Garth Brooks (song); *We Are Marshall* (movie); *Seinfeld* (TV)

**I root for:** Denver Broncos, New York Yankees  
**I admire:** Abraham Lincoln; anybody who has the courage to do what’s right when everybody else thinks he’s wrong is admirable.

**Free time:** Coaching; visiting friends and family
Rotarian David Parish is shown handing out dictionaries to third graders. The free dictionaries were presented to every student in the third grade, complements of the Geneseo Rotary Club.

Radium Girls, the true story of the wrist-watch dial painters who made labor history, is the upcoming production of the award-winning Geneseo Central School Drama Club. The drama by D.W. Gregory will be presented in two performances on March 21 and 22 at 7:30 PM in McCarthy Auditorium. Tickets are $7.00 for adults and $5.00 for students and senior citizens and can be reserved by calling the box office at 243-8088.

The fast-paced story is set in the 1920s when luminous watches were all the rage; that is until the girls who painted those watch dials began to die. The story is also wryly entertaining as it examines the commercialization of science and the obsessive pursuit of health and wealth.

At work; (L to R) Chloe Kernan, Emily Slade, and Melita Kingston portray the Radium Girls—luminous watch dial painters. Based on a true story, the play is the upcoming production of the Geneseo Central School Drama Club to be presented in two performances on March 21 and 22 at 7:30 PM in McCarthy Auditorium.

A grown-up story, the production is suitable fare for grades three and above.

The story centers on watch dial painter Grace (played by Melita Kingston) who, with her friend Kathryn (Emily Slade), brings a lawsuit against their employer the U.S. Radium Corporation after one of their coworkers dies of mysterious malady. Playing U.S. Radium executives are Eric Leary and Cameron Skidmore, with Matt Esham and Sean Kelly as lawyers, and Allie Barnett and Garrison Hunt as rival newspaper reporters feverishly covering the case. Evan Halstead plays Grace's boyfriend, Tom.

Also in the GCS Radium Girls cast are Hanna Case, Joel Cripps, Grainger Flint, Carlea Grant, Sara Halstead, Chloe Kernan, Michaela Kingston, Francesca McClure, Emma Post, Hunter Radesi, Ethan Roth, and Felicity Thomas. Radium Girls is directed by Bettina DeBell, produced by Chuck Nesbitt, with set design by Rob Antonucci. All are GCS faculty.

Students working behind the scenes include the stage manager Kyle Scoville assisted by Kyle Hochbrueckner and Cami Mehlcbacher. Sound is by Cal Cylke, assisted by Paul Allen. The house manager is Lindsay German. On the running crew are Josh DeBell, Teegan Mendel, Josh Ruskauff, John Rutigliano, Nino Rutigliano, and Kate Thomas.

The hairstylists and makeup artists are Tyresa Adams, Tess Bennett, Makenzee Cahoon, Breonte Croteau, Ariel Dee, Ashley Dee, Elizabeth Kaye, and Claire Linton. Minding the props are Alita Anderson, Jessica Harris, Phoebe Hartvigsen, Zoe Harvey, and Megan Mikolajczyk. Costumers are Sam Hammond, Lydia Johnson, Molly Maloney, Haley Moran, Paige Moreland, Martha Norton, Morgan Sanchez, Bailey Steinhauer, and Jordan vanBuren. Costume design is by Karen Meleski.
GCS at RIT

High school art students Bianca Mannix, Laura Olverd, Ethan Roth, and Hannah Roth each had work selected to represent GCS at the 2014 Rochester-Finger Lakes Middle School/High School Art Exhibition at the Rochester Institute of Technology. Displayed in RIT’s Bevier Gallery through February, the exhibition featured some of the finest examples of student art work from throughout the region.

Advanced Art Observational Drawings

High school art students were given the task to create a drawing with the theme “Rock, Scissors, Paper.” Here are a few samples of what they came up with.