

Breakfast turns into surprise fundraiser



Goodspeed’s advisory served the PPS staff members breakfast to thank them for their work at New Trier | Goodspeed

by Melanie Mandell

On Tuesday Dec. 9 a thoughtful event turned into a fundraiser when David Goodspeed and his advisees served breakfast to the Physical Plant Service (PPS) staff and sold the leftover food to students.

The students sold over three hundred dollars worth of food in twenty minutes according to Goodspeed, who is a science teacher, advisor, and the founder of the annual breakfast. “The funds went directly to Habitat for Humanity,” said Goodspeed.

The Goodspeed advisory intended to use this food to honor the PPS staff and all that they do for the school, but since there was so much extra they jumped on the opportunity to raise money for Habitat. The students made, or bought, eggs, pancakes, waffles, bacon, fruit, doughnuts, muffins, cinnamon rolls, and croissants.

Habitat for Humanity is an organization that partners with the senior class as a part of their class project, where students aim to raise \$50,000 in order to build a house for a family that does not have one.

The senior class organizes multiple fundraisers throughout the year in order to make enough money. Some of these fundraisers include the Tom Deluca hypnotism show, selling

Santa hats for the Quad Header, and the Winter Carnival.

“It’s great how many fun and exciting fundraisers the seniors have for their Habitat for Humanity project. This most recent one was a surprise to everyone, and the food was great,” said junior Bella Miller when asked about the extra food sold by Goodspeed’s advisory.

‘There isn’t a more deserving group in the school worth honoring than the PPS staff’

-David Goodspeed

While Goodspeed organizes the breakfast, he said it’s the kids who do the work, “It’s all on them. They do all of the setup and cooking.”

This breakfast originated over a decade ago when Goodspeed was discussing social service opportunities with his advisees.

“One of the students brought up how well maintained the school was and we decided we should do something to honor the ‘blue ghosts’ [referring to the PPS blue uniforms and how the PPS staff seem to go unnoticed] that keep the school in such good condition,” said

Goodspeed.

According to the school website PPS staff members are “responsible for all district cleaning and maintenance both inside and outside the buildings.”

The PPS staff also plans and budgets the district’s projects, oversees construction, and fixes any environmental issues. These workers are the reason the school stays clean and organized.

There are three shifts of PPS workers throughout the day. One during the usual school day, from around 7 AM to 4 PM. A second shift then comes from 4 PM to midnight. Finally, a third shift is in the building from midnight to 7 AM.

“This breakfast was meant to honor those who work the third and first shifts,” said Goodspeed.

Although this seems like a huge task to take on, Goodspeed said, “the guys got really into it and were excited to honor the staff.” His advisees had to be at school at five in the morning but served breakfast with a smile.

Senior advisee of Goodspeed, David Raynes said, “It was actually a lot of fun. I did have to wake up at four but we made a lot of money and the PPS staff were really appreciative.”

“There isn’t a more deserving group in the school worth honoring than the PPS staff,” said Goodspeed.

High Five choir gets festive for the holidays

by Sarah McAtamney

This Friday, Dec. 19, the High Five Choir will perform their annual holiday sing during 4th period.

During the holiday sing, the students will perform holiday favorites including Walking in a Winter Wonderland, Feliz Navidad, All I Want for Christmas is You, and Chanukah, O Chanukah.

Katherine Spain, special education student, said, “I’m really excited because my parents are coming to see.” Her partner, junior Sophie Stempel, added “I am very excited for the holiday sing and I hope a lot of people get the opportunity to come and watch.” The Holiday sing is one of the 5 concerts the choir performs each year.

High Five is a group of students of all abilities coming together through music to build and create friendships while also raising disability awareness in the school and outside community, according to High Five music director Susan

Vaughan.

There are currently 70 members in the choir, an impressive increase since its original group of 35. The choir began almost 10 years ago, in the fall of 2005. With the help of the administration, music and special education departments, Vaughan and Jane Che (a special education teacher) created the choir, according to Vaughan.

“For two years, Mrs. Che, myself, and students volunteered our time every day to meet and have class. High Five became an official New Trier course in the fall of 2007,” said Vaughan. Since then, the choir has increased and become a team, partnering with 70 different High Five students of all abilities.

“One of the most rewarding things I do at New Trier is serving as the High Five choir music director,” said Vaughan.

Students who participate in the choir also find it to be a rewarding experience. Senior Katherine Mayer is the SILC for the class,

and she enjoys building meaningful friendships within the choir. “My partner, Susie, and I went to Homer’s for lunch a few weekends ago, and we had a great time,” said Mayer.

Other members have made connections outside of the classroom as well. “My partner and I have created a special connection for sure. We hang out outside of class now too, which is great. I feel like I have gotten to know all of the students a lot better,” said Stempel.

In addition to making connections outside of the classroom, students add that the class makes their day. “I think that the High Five choir is a place where students can come everyday and have fun. I have always been able to leave my worries at the door, and I hope that everyone who participates in high five feels this way too,” said Mayer.

Junior Jordy Richman said, “I love seeing how excited my partner gets about singing new songs and how happy he is while he is singing.” The choir has received very positive

The perks and problems of New Trier’s finals schedule

by Charlie Clarke

When Winter break comes to an end, Loyola and Evanston students will start a new semester, while New Trier students return to school in preparation for finals, which are still two weeks away.

You think you have it bad? In past years, New Trier finals were one week after break, causing for conflicting opinions on finals scheduling.

While the debate over the schedule of finals rages on, the administration will begin a study on the ideal timing of final exams, whether they be before or after winter break. The general consensus among students is to have finals before break.

“In the last days of break, you begin to think about finals, and there’s pressure right as school starts up again,” added New Trier Senior Daniel Weiner, “whereas if we had finals before, we wouldn’t have to worry about that.”

“I’d probably rather have them before break,” claims junior Andy Binder, “it would just be nice to get them out of the way.”

That brings up the question, why are finals after break instead of before? The two main reasons are found in the first semester’s schedule. The primary reason is because New Trier starts their school year later than most other schools. While students get to enjoy a later end to their summer, they are faced with having to take finals soon after winter break.

The other reason is because New Trier often has many days off in the fall. New Trier takes off all of the major Jewish holidays, unlike catholic schools. New Trier also plans early release and late start days.

With all of the days off adding up, it is less than ideal to schedule final exams before winter break.

“The optimal semester length is ninety days,” said New Trier’s Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Paul Sally. “When we add up those ninety days in first semester, it often ends up being around two weeks after winter break.”

The main reason both semesters need to be almost equal isn’t because of the general core classes. “The

semester length is not a problem for most of our classes, it’s more of a problem for our one semester classes, like social studies and business courses,” added Sally.

As a result of the one semester classes, semester days must be as even as possible.

Taking these conditions into account, New Trier will schedule next year’s finals dates before winter break. The pre-winter break finals schedule will not carry over into future years. New Trier is essentially using the construction schedule for the referendum changes to test out a new final exam schedule.

“We need to finish the school year earlier next year so the construction workers have a longer summer to work on the school,” said Principal Denise Dubravec. With a longer summer and finals before winter break, students may think this schedule is a win-win, but it has its drawbacks, too.

The 2015-2016 school year will be without many of the holidays that were included in prior years, along with cutting the Thanksgiving break down by one day.

Additionally, the school year will be starting a week earlier, on Aug. 17. The question New Trier students are faced with is will they be willing to make the sacrifice of starting school earlier and having less days off in exchange for pre-winter break finals and finishing school earlier?

Both Binder and Weiner claim that they would like to keep finals the way they are. Binder went on to describe his decision. “It’s really nice having those days off, everyone needs a break once in awhile.”

When told that he was going to start school earlier next year and lose many of those days off, Binder wasn’t happy. “I’d much rather have those days off and start later.”

While Binder and Weiner disagreed with the idea of moving finals, there are arguments for both sides. With many different opinions, the future plan for finals scheduling is undecided. “We’re going to try the pre-winter break finals schedule for next year,” said Dubravec. “And once we get some feedback from parents, teachers and students, we’ll make a decision for the future.”



High Five choir at a rehearsal in preparation for the holiday sing | Vaughan

feedback from the staff, students, and especially the students’ families, said Vaughan.

“The High Five Choir is not an “us and them” mentality when it comes to abilities. It’s a community of amazing young people who realizes possibility in one another,” said Vaughan.

Everyone is encouraged to attend the concert on Friday. Students who have gone in the past have given it extraordinary reviews.

“I’m really excited to see their performance this year. It’s definitely not something you want to miss,” said junior Clare Foley.