

Know Your Schools ... Online

Good News You Can Use about the Solon Schools.

Friday, March 1, 2024

Know Your Schools ... Online is part of the district's [Strategic Plan](#) goals for communications. This is a monthly publication for families, staff and our Solon Schools community. Look for each issue on the last Friday of the month.

SOLON STUDENTS SHOW OFF THEIR ARTISTIC TALENTS

The artistry of Solon students was on full display at the annual Reflections Art Show. Students' creations interpreted the theme "I Am Hopeful Because..." Genres included painting, drawing, literature, poetry, film, photography, dance, music composition and multi-media 3-D art.



FINANCE FACTS: TAX INCREMENT FINANCING FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

With ongoing discussions about redevelopment at the Liberty Ford site, it is important to understand the potential school finance implications related to major community projects such as this. One effect is the utilization of a TIF, or Tax Increment Financing.

A TIF is a funding tool used by local governments in Ohio to pay for infrastructure projects that support commercial and residential development.

Here's how it works:

- A local government creates a TIF district in an area it wants to develop. The TIF district may last for up to 30 years or more.
- Per Ohio law, property taxes in the TIF district are frozen at the current, or base, amount at the time the TIF is created. This means developers of the project with the TIF only pay property taxes on the base value before development, not on the full increased value. This is because a TIF works by allowing the increase in assessed value or an improvement to real property to be exempt from real property taxation and the developers pay PILOTS (Payments in Lieu of Taxes) on the increased value instead.
- As the development progresses, property values in the TIF district increase. However, instead of being paid to the school district as property taxes, an amount equal to the increased tax revenue – the PILOTS – are paid by the developer into a special TIF fund.
- Money from the TIF fund is used by the developer to pay back loans, bonds or other debt needed to finance the project.
- The school district continues to receive the amount of property tax revenue for the TIF district that it would have if no development project took place.
- Any TIF exemption for more than 10 years or 75% of the increased valuation and affecting property tax revenue to a local school district requires a compensation agreement between the local government enacting the TIF and/or the developer and the Board of Education.
- The goal of the compensation agreement is to balance the common good of community development while also protecting the interest of local taxpayers and making certain the school district exercises due diligence and is fiscally responsible to the community.



A TIF district is proposed for the project at the Liberty Ford site. The required negotiated agreement between the developers and the Solon City Schools is ongoing. The district is working with the developers on an agreement to ensure the fiscal path of the district going forward. Details about the agreement will be shared when it is finalized.



Call (800) 418-6423, ext. 359
Text TIPS to 614-426-0240
Web www.safeschoolhelpline.com

ROXBURY FAMILY GAME NIGHT!

Roxbury held its first-ever Family Game Night featuring games, prizes and snacks! Families had a great evening connecting over games such as Checkers, Connect 4, Chess, Pictionary, Apples to Apples, and Memory to name a few. It was a fun night of building the school community and making connections.



EWOW DAY: LEWIS STUDENTS EXPLORE THE WORLD OF WORK

Lewis 3rd and 4th grade students enjoyed a day of career exploration during the school's Explore the World of Work day. Parent and community volunteers presented hands-on exhibits covering a range of careers including law, computer science, civil and mechanical engineering, graphic arts, landscape architecture, medicine, social work, music and sound production, product development, non-profit organization, security and AI technology as well as police, fire and Coast Guard.



KINDERGARTENERS CELEBRATE THE 100th DAY OF SCHOOL

Kindergarten students at Lewis, Parkside and Roxbury celebrated the 100th day of school with engaging activities and curricular connections.

ROXBURY: Many kindergarteners at Roxbury celebrated the 100th day of school dressed as if they were 100 years old! The day was packed with fun, hands-on activities that had students counting to 100 many times in every subject area. In kindergarten, students learn to count to 100 by ones and tens, so the activities for the 100th day celebration focused on that learning target throughout the day. “We wrote about what we would buy if we had \$100,” said kindergarten teacher Amber Moore. “We got to see how many various exercises, such as jumping jacks and arm circles, we could do in 100 seconds. We drew a monster with 100 body parts, painted 100 dots, flipped a coin 100 times, read fictional stories about the 100th day of school in animal land and even read a story about a fox that ate 100 different foods.”



PARKSIDE: The celebration of the 100th day of kindergarten allows teachers and students time to acknowledge the students' progress and successes, explained Parkside kindergarten teacher Elisa Siegler. “It is a great way for students and teachers to reflect on all their hard work and celebrate the milestones that have been achieved,” she said. “The 100th day activities have a lot of educational value. The planned activities are fun and engaging for the students. They also reinforce reading, writing and math concepts and skills that have been taught throughout the year.”



LEWIS: During the Lewis 100th day celebration, students moved among all three kindergarten classes participating in centers that focused on 100. “This special day incorporated the kindergarten standard of counting to 100. It was a fun afternoon of centers and activities for kids to celebrate the 100th day of school,” noted Lewis kindergarten teacher Jodi Appell. “The centers focused on literacy and math skills. Kids also had the opportunity to find sight words to collaboratively build a chart with 100 words they can read and write.”





#1 CELEBRATIONS REINFORCE STUDENTS' SUCCESS AND EFFORT

Celebrations for students recognizing their success and effort resulting in our #1 State of Ohio School Report Card for student achievement continued this month. Orchard students enjoyed a soft pretzel bar with different flavored dipping sauces. The celebrations at all schools have been great partnerships with parents and family members, who volunteered to serve the treats during student lunch periods. Thank you!



PRESCHOOL IN THE PARK

Preschoolers from Regano Early Learning Center visited Liberty Park in Twinsburg to explore seasonal changes in nature during the winter. They discovered how animals adapt to cold weather and learned that animals are active or that they hibernate, brumate or migrate during the winter.



BLACK HISTORY MONTH ACTIVITIES

Throughout the district, students participated in engaging activities during Black History Month.



At Solon High School, Student Council and the African-American Culture Club collaborated to create their annual Walk through History display, which included a Black History timeline and a gallery of influential African-Americans such as James Baldwin, Maya Angelou, Robert Smalls, Bessie Coleman and Ruby Bridges. An after-school discussion with a civil rights speaker who worked with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. as a young man gave SHS students a first-hand glimpse of his



experiences participating in civil rights marches in the 1960s. James Catledge, a Cleveland teacher who lived in Alabama at the time, shared his reflections and spoke to the students about the importance of nonviolent civil disobedience, conflict management and mediation, and voting rights.

Activities at Solon and Orchard Middle Schools helped increase student understanding and knowledge. For example, Orchard students completed “trivia” contests that required them to conduct research and SMS students planned a spirit week. Additionally, 8th grade students in U.S. history classes wrote journal reflections on a specific phrase they selected from Dr. King’s I Have A Dream speech and what they can do to help achieve his vision as well as writing reflections on a significant African-American from history.



Students at Parkside, Lewis and Roxbury extended their learning especially through literature, music and art. At Lewis, for example, the theme this year focused on African-American contributions to the arts with student-created displays on artists as well as books available during library time highlighting artists. Among the activities at Roxbury was a focus in music classes on African-American singers, composers, instrumentalists and dancers. Students performed music originating from the Black experience in America and talked about the music within a historical context.



FRENCH CLUB MARDI GRAS CELEBRATION

The Solon High School French Club gathered for a festive Mardi Gras celebration on Fat Tuesday. Students made colorful and glittery Mardi Gras masks, donned beads and enjoyed traditional treats such as beignets, crepes and king cakes. The group shared facts about Mardi Gras and talked about the colors associated with the celebration: purple represents justice, green represents faith and gold represents power.

Students in French classes also decorated the world language hallway with Mardi Gras themed posters and enjoyed a feast with foods they prepared at home and brought in to share. These celebrations reflect the learning standard of recognizing practices related to other cultures and making a traditional artifact. The French Club will be selling Mardi Gras specialties at the Ethnic Expo community event on March 16.



GIRL UP! DISCUSSION WITH SOLON'S FIRST FEMALE POLICE OFFICER

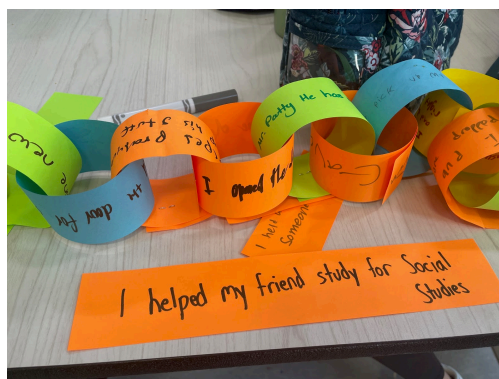
Solon High School's Girl Up! Club members met with Tina Uhl, the Solon Police Department's first female officer this month. Ms. Uhl joined the Solon PD in 2000 and served as a patrol officer until her retirement. She now works as a security aide at SHS. She shared some of the challenges she faced as well as insights on how the Solon PD forges relationships and keeps the community safe.



SPREADING KINDNESS ONE LINK AT A TIME AT SMS

During a lunchtime mixer activity, Solon Middle School students built a "chain reaction" of kindness by having students talk about the kind things they have observed from others or done themselves. They then wrote down the actions they discussed on paper strips. Members of the school's Principal Advisory Team assembled them all into paper links and created a colorful chain of kindness to hang in the school.

Members of the school leadership team include 7th graders Paige Moore, Chase Cohen, Mia Sullen, Domenic DiOria, Adam Sealfon, Jagvi Yadav, Reese Arnold, Marina Han, Jasiah Tinsley, Zion Fujamade, John Gilkey, Caroline Malec, Anna Leskovic, Isaac Kim and Jaden Factor as well as 8th graders Anum Riaz, Evelyn Jin, Aiden Blumenthal, Dante Howell, Karan Bahl, Zach Berk, Aubrey Boyd, Grady Arnold, Joe Sahl, Callie Zhou, Rishi Gupta, Miguel Martinez, Lilly Hodermarsky, Niah Johnson and Wesley Cayne.



LEWIS STUDENT LEADERSHIP

Members of Lewis Student Council committees are using their creativity and applying new skills to produce monthly Mindset Monday videos to share with the school. Already in 2024, the students have focused on the key messages of the Power of Yet and goal setting. For example, the Lewis leaders provided tips for goal-setting success by encouraging their peers to set a goal, make a

visual detailing the goal, keep it

somewhere as a

reminder and regularly reflect on their progress toward meeting the goal. The student leaders also designed a birthday bulletin board for February.



“Being part of these leadership opportunities allows our students to develop a sense of responsibility and accountability for creating our building culture and climate,” said Ashley Mivsek, curriculum & gifted resource teacher at Lewis. “They are not just role models for their peers in their actions, but they are a vital piece of the

planning and implementation of our building mission and vision. Just like teachers, parents and community members, they are stakeholders, and leadership groups give them the chance to have their voices heard.”

ORCHARD RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS WEEK

Orchard Middle School spread kindness during a special week designed to promote and encourage students to be kind to others. Organized by the school’s student leadership team, the Orchard student body was challenged to complete a random act of kindness for another person and to sign a pledge to show kindness to others.

The students designed a different philanthropic collection for each day of the week to show kindness, including pet supplies for Rescue Village, new socks and travel-sized toiletries, and Valentine’s cards for seniors at the Solon Senior Center. On the last day of Random Acts of Kindness Week, the students embraced the theme “Kindness is your Character” by donating new or gently used books and reading with a classmate during independent reading time.



BUILDING EMPATHY: WALK IN MY SHOES AT SOLON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Through a self-reflective team-building activity aimed at fostering trust and empathy, Solon Middle School students helped their peers and teachers understand what it is like to “walk in their shoes.”

Sharing information that others may not know about them helps students to lessen resentment and frustration and opens lines of communication. After sharing their shoes through discussions, the colorful “footwear” is now decorating the SMS hallway leading to the cafeteria so students pass it several times a day as a powerful reminder of the important connections they are making in their school community.



SOLON DAY AT THE RINK WITH THE CLEVELAND MONSTERS

Students and families had a “cool” experience for the first-ever Solon day at the Cleveland Monsters hockey game this month. Sponsored by the Solon Council of PTAs, the event was a great way for families to connect.



The Solon fans were part of a record-setting game as the first-place Monsters beat the Chicago Wolves 9-0, setting a team record for margin of victory and tying the team record for most goals scored in a game.

KEY CLUB SPREADS KINDNESS WITH FLOWERS

Students and staff at Solon High School purchased hundreds of carnations that were delivered with colorful notes at the start of the day on February 14. The kindness spread through the annual Key Club Valentine's Day carnation sale this year extended beyond students and staff and into the greater community. All of the proceeds from the carnations sold were used to purchase toiletry kits donated to Hands, Hearts & Homes Outreach (H3O), a Solon-based nonprofit organization that provides furniture, household furnishings, personal care items and food to individuals in need. Activities such as this reinforce our district mission of helping students to become empathetic citizens.



MAKING A DIFFERENCE: SADD MEMBERS VOLUNTEER AT THE CLEVELAND FOOD BANK

Members of Solon's Students Against Destructive Decisions Club volunteered at the Cleveland Food Bank to help ease food insecurity. The students made sandwiches, packed lunches and packed frozen trays of stuffed cabbage, macaroni and cheese, and vegetables as part of the food bank's ongoing food distribution programs.



HEART-SHAPED SKILLS

The aroma of Valentine's Day sweets was in the air at Solon High School this month as students applied their skills to create heart-shaped projects. The Fashion Club iced and decorated heart-shaped cookies and embellished t-shirts and heart pillows. The Cooking Club made and decorated red velvet cupcakes.



VOTE AT 17 - SHS STUDENTS REGISTERING TO VOTE AHEAD OF MARCH 19th PRIMARY ELECTION



More than 100 students at Solon High School are newly registered Ohio voters, thanks to the efforts of the school's bi-partisan Political Club. The February voter registration drive focused on SHS students who will turn 18 by the November general election. In Ohio, 17-year-olds can vote for candidates in a primary election. They cannot vote on ballot issues. Regular voter registration initiatives such as this are an important way to help students understand the role citizens play in a democracy by exercising their Constitutional right to vote.

PARKSIDE POSITIVITY ASSEMBLY WITH THE GUARDIANS MASCOTS

Parkside students participated in an awesome assembly with the Cleveland Guardians mascots this month. Ketchup, Mustard, Onion and Slider shared positive messages about physical activity, healthy eating, supporting friends and believing in themselves. All of the students went home with Parkside-branded squishy baseballs.



ROXBURY STEM: THE POWER OF PLANTS



Participating in the Holden Arboretum's the Power of Plants program, Roxbury students learned how plants impact their everyday life. In addition to a large-group assembly, the educational STEM program provided opportunities for hands-on exploration at a series of learning stations. Topics covered included a shelter station showing how plants provide the materials to build our homes and students were able to try building a home of their own; a materials station demonstrating how trees and plants are used to make many of the items they use in their daily lives; a "smell" station illustrating the varying types of plant smells plants and how plants are used in health and wellness products; as well as a career station giving students a chance to dress up as workers in different plant-related jobs.



JOIN OUR COMETS COMMUNITY FOR THE 2024 ETHNIC EXPO!



Sponsored by Solon High School's Model UN club, the annual Ethnic Expo is a celebration of diversity. The Ethnic Expo, slated for March 16 from 6-9 p.m. at the high school, is a family-friendly event for children of all ages, providing an opportunity to experience a variety of cultures, foods and entertainment.

Solon High School's cultural clubs create colorful and informative exhibits and offer traditional foods for purchase.

Planned entertainment includes ethnic dancers, local bands, student singers, henna art, origami demonstrations and more. Admission to the event is free.

ROXBURY'S POET TREE IS BLOOMING WITH KINDNESS

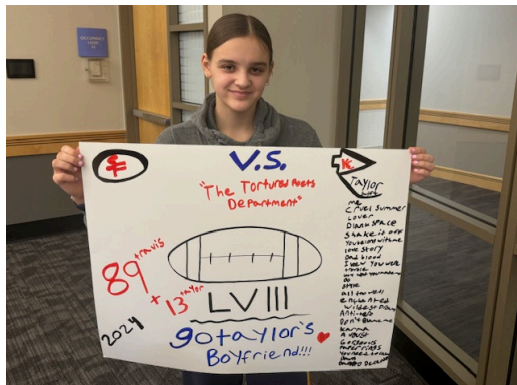
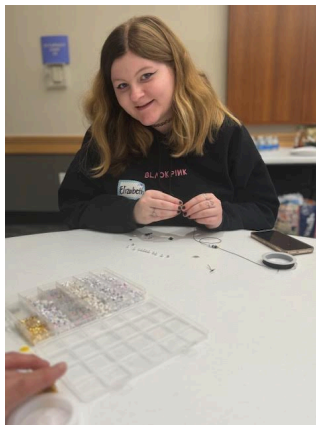


Roxbury 2nd graders expressed messages of kindness through poetry this month. The students learned how to write a variety of poems and applied what they learned by choosing a favorite style to write a kindness poem.

“Because spreading kindness is our school-wide theme this year, we were extra excited to display our kindness poems on a Poet Tree for the whole school to enjoy,” said teacher Briana Leimeister. This activity also enabled students to focus on the learning target of strengthening their writing through revising and editing with guidance and support from both adults and peers.

A FUN AFTERNOON OF SUPER SOCIALIZING

At a mixer event sponsored by the Solon Organized Parent Education Network, students kicked off Super Bowl Sunday by playing board games, making friendship bracelets, designing signs for their favorite NFL team in the big game (or cheering on Taylor Swift and Travis Kelce) and getting to know one another.



ORCHESTRA HITS SUPERIOR NOTES AT REGIONAL MUSIC EDUCATION ASSOCIATION CONTEST

The Solon Sinfonia orchestra earned Superior ratings for its performances at the Northeast Region State Orchestra Contest sponsored by the Ohio Music Education Association. Performing a very challenging program of music by composers Frank Bridge, William Grant Still and Sergei Prokofiev, Sinfonia received a Superior rating from all three judges as well as many complimentary remarks across all categories, according to orchestra teacher Gerry MacDougall. Following the performance, the Sinfonia members completed the contest experience by earning a Superior rating for their sight-reading of a newly composed piece, also with high compliments. "These remarkable students represented us in a most impressive way, and I simply couldn't be more proud of their efforts that led to such a great experience and recognition," Mr. MacDougall said.



WATCH TO SEE IF SOLON'S ACADEMIC CHALLENGE TEAM MAKES THE FINALS!



Solon's Academic Challenge team is competing in the current season of the television quiz show, Academic Challenge. The episode featuring our Comet team will air on Saturday, March 9, at 11:30 a.m. on WEWS-Channel 5. Although the outcome of the pre-taped program is embargoed until after the show airs, we encourage everyone to tune in!

The Solon team members are juniors Wyatt Johnson, Kartik Bhat and Angela Sun and seniors Varun Sathyajeeth and Sarah Dong.

SHS MOCK TRIAL QUALIFIES FOR STATES

Congratulations to Solon Mock Trial's Team Marshall for qualifying for States! Solon was one of three area teams to qualify at Regionals in Lake County this month for the upcoming state competition in Columbus, March 7-9. Team members include Alison Kaiser, Kira Zakem, Kartika Mohta, Siya Maheshwari, Alina He, Simone Davis, Vivian Li, Alana Guo and alternates Chisom Ezetundu and India Patton. Two Solon alumni have been working with the team: Raja Krishna (Comet Class of 2011 and Cal Berkeley Law graduate) and Stephen Tang (Comet Class of 2013 and Stanford Law graduate).



SOLON MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT DESIGNS 2024 RED RIBBON WEEK WINNING THEME

The 2024 national Red Ribbon Week theme “Life is a Movie, Film Drug Free” is the original design and concept of Devansh Aggarwal, a 7th grader at Solon Middle School. This is the sixth time the national campaign theme was created in a Solon art room.

Devansh’s logo art was selected from among millions of entries and will be used as part of the annual Red Ribbon Week campaign in October across more than 100,000 schools nationwide. Red Ribbon Week is a long-standing and respected drug prevention and education program focusing on students making healthy choices.



Designing the slogan and logos is a lesson in SMS digital arts classes. “Our digital art class focuses on design, visual literacy and 21st century skills,” said art teacher Cheryl Holsapfel. “I love using the Red Ribbon Week theme contest as a lesson because it has an authentic audience and provides a real-world application. The students analyze the audience, explore the various printing applications and work to refine their slogan and logo ideas to be attention grabbing, clear and creative.”

Red Ribbon Week themed items with Devansh’s “Life is a Movie, Film Drug Free” slogan and logo will be displayed in Solon schools at the start of next school year.



ORCHARD MATH EXTENSION: ESCAPE ROOM

Building on the problem-solving engagement of Escape Rooms, Orchard 6th grade students are using their math skills to unlock four different “doors” in an online activity. The students must solve a variety of math problems to determine letters to a code word that will unlock a door.

By unlocking all four doors, students will make it out of the Escape Room. This activity is optional enrichment for students that helps them to extend and apply their math learning.

Try to get through the first door using the following clues:

Solve the following problems.

Problem	Letter
How many minutes represent 10% of one full week?	M = 1,006 minutes N = 1,008 minutes A = 1,012 minutes
How old would you be if you lived 1,000,000 hours?	E = 110 years old L = 116 years old R = 114 years old
A digital clock that shows only hours and minutes will have how many different readings between 10:00 AM and 6:00 PM that contain at least two 2s in the time? (for example, 10:22 AM and 12:02 PM)	U = 36 B = 32 D = 24

Unscramble the letters to ★ 1 point reveal the code word.

Type your answer in lower case.

Your answer

SOLON JAZZ FEST '24

Join us for an evening of smooth jazz at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, March 6, as student musicians from Solon High School and Solon Middle School take the stage for the annual Solon Jazz Fest in the SHS auditorium.

This event is a fundraiser for the Solon Music Parents in support of Solon music programming. In addition to the musical performances that night, Music Parents will be holding its annual Silent Auction.

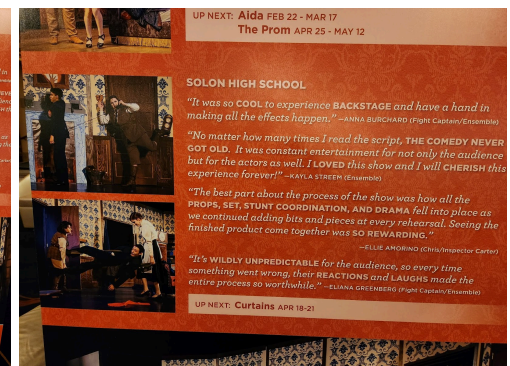
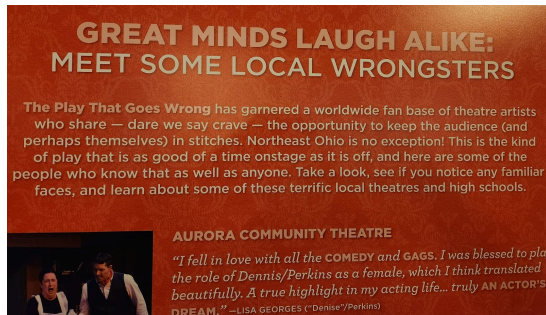
Solon Music Parents supports the bands, orchestras, choirs and dance team through equipment and uniform purchases, guest teachers and other educational opportunities for music students in grades 5-12.

Tickets are \$5 for adults and students/children are free. To participate in the Silent Auction, use the following link:
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080B49A8A72BA4FE3-jazz>



SHS DRAMA SHOWCASED AT PLAYHOUSE SQUARE

The Play That Goes Wrong is running at the Cleveland Play House this month. This is the same play our Solon High School Drama Club put on for its fall play. In a continued connection and effort to support theater at the high school level, Playhouse Square is highlighting the area high school productions of The Play That Goes Wrong that were performed this year with large poster board displays in the Play House lobby. The displays, titled Great Minds Laugh Alike: Meet Some Local Wrongsters, feature color photos of the Solon fall production with quotes from SHS student actors about their experience performing in the same play on their high school stage.





SOLON CITY SCHOOLS

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

NEW! FULLY ONLINE PROCESS!



Kindergarten Info Night is
February 29!

Registration Portal opens
March 4!



**Families have
March 4-15 to register.**



*Students must be completely registered by
March 15 to be guaranteed placement in their home school.*

**Info Night Link & Solon Kindergarten 24-25
Registration Information:**

<https://www.solonschools.org/domain/1228>



WELCOME COMETS CLASS OF 2037!

