

District Reporter

STEGER
DISTRICT 194

Winter 2018

Steger School District 194 Welcomes Marion Blumenthal-Lazan

Marion Blumenthal-Lazan visited Columbia Central on December 7th. Mrs. Blumenthal-Lazan is a Holocaust survivor of the Bergen-Belsen Concentration Camp. Students in 5th through 8th grade were able to hear her story of survival. Blumenthal-Lazan highlighted the historical changes that took place in Europe leading up to her imprisonment. Her message included telling students that ideas will have consequences and that it is important to understand where those ideas might take you. She discussed the hardships she faced while in Bergen-Belsen which included being burned by hot soup accidentally spilled as her family attempted to cook a meal on her bunk. "I could not cry," Blumenthal continued, "to cry meant that they would kill us. You see, we were doing something that wasn't allowed." She spoke to students about hardships and understanding that everyone has hardships but that no matter the hardship, one also has hope. "Never, ever give up hope." Mrs. Blumenthal-Lazan discussed the ways she was able to find hope while in the midst of so much hardship and death. "I played games to make myself feel better. I used to look for pebbles. I thought that if I could find four



perfect pebbles that were the same shape and size, that it would mean that my parents and my brother and I would live."

Mrs. Blumenthal held up the Star of David that she had been forced to wear, highlighting the mistreatment that Jews suffered at the hands of the Nazis. She asked that the students of District 194 be kind to one another. "Let kindness be your guide." After a standing ovation from the students of Columbia Central, Mrs. Blumenthal-Lazan shared hugs and pictures with countless groups of students. Many were moved to tears and the staff and students of District 194 were forever changed by her visit.

Intermediate Center Students Enjoy Cultural Learning Experience

Miss Wendt's class at Steger Intermediate Center had a special learning experience on November 13th. Miss Pamela Austin came to visit from Tanzania, Africa. The students created interview questions for Miss Pam, who works with an orphanage in Tanzania. She taught the students about the Tanzanian culture, taught the students a little Swahili, and then did a canvas painting project with the students. The students enjoyed Miss Pam's visit and learned a lot about the similarities and

differences between the Tanzanian culture and our own.



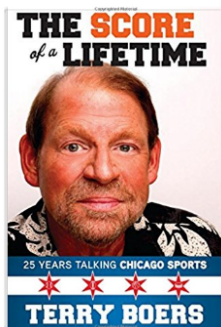
Chicago Sports Radio Voice Comes Home to District 194

Terry Boers, the voice of radio 670, The Score, for 25 years, will visit Columbia Central this spring. Boers' visit will be a trip down memory lane - he attended Steger schools from Kindergarten through eighth grade.

The visit is being coordinated by Mike Smith, Principal, and Anthony Carter, Grade 8 Social Studies teacher. Mr. Carter has been a fan of Boers for many years.

Boers' book, "The Score of a Lifetime," a memoir on his life and career, hit the bookstores in November.

Amazon.com had this to say about the book - "For 25 years, Chicago sports fans invited Terry Boers into their homes, cars, and offices as one of the premier voices of WSCR radio. Covering the latest championships and trades, Boers was a Windy City constant until his retirement in 2017. In his highly-anticipated memoir, Boers delivers a trove of lively anecdotes and personal reflections from journey through sports media—from raucous banter with Mike Ditka during The Score's early days to the Cubs' World Series celebration in 2016. A must-read for any of the thousands who made Boers part of their daily routine, *The Score of a Lifetime* is a freewheeling, frank portrait of a man, a career, a station no one thought would survive, and a city that loves its sports."



Columbia Central Musical Aladdin a Huge Success

Sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students from Columbia Central once again offered a noteworthy musical performance with the winter season's offering of Aladdin Jr. Once again, Ms. Olsen and Ms. Wendt outdid themselves in planning, costuming and performance. Steger District 194 recognizes their hard work and that of their students. Great job.



Curriculum and Instruction Corner

We have about five months left in the school year, so our work continues to focus on best instructional practices to help our students reach the highest possible achievement. Achievement is more readily attainable when we have parents supporting the learning happening in the classroom. Here are some ways parents can help us to achieve our goals for our students.

- Go to our District website: www.sd194.org and click on **parent resources** for access to our reading and math textbook series.
- Ask your child's teacher for access to other online programs such as Raz Kids, Wowzers, Reflex Math, etc. These are free for our students to use.
- Read ten minutes each night with your child or use math flash cards to work on math facts.

Any time you can spend at home supporting our efforts here in District 194 would be of great value. Setting aside 10-15 minutes each night to work on skills being learned at school can help boost our achievement for our students.

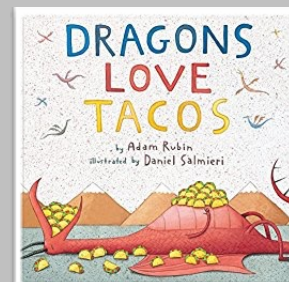
Important Upcoming Dates:

February 14th – Theater production of *Dragons Love Tacos* for all students and parents (evening performance held at Columbia Central School)

March 6th – PARCC testing begins for all students in grades 3-8 (reading and math)

For more information about PARCC, please visit <https://parcc-assessment.org/>.

We look forward to working with you and helping your child be their very best.



Columbia Central Sports Corner

Girls Basketball- The 6th/7th grade Lady Cards teams ended up with a record of 5-14. There were many great accomplishments during the season. The 6th and 7th grade team was made up of a group of girls who were extremely inexperienced. Only three of the eleven girls had played basketball before. "Major improvements were seen by McKenzie Wiesenthal, June'Lee Hurtado, and Megan Farmby with skill development on offense and defense. McKenzie and Megan improved at the post position, while June'Lee made major strides at the guard position" said Coach Maple. The girls went from knowing very little about basketball to becoming a team that were able to execute and implement a read-and-react offense along with a strong zone defense.

Boys Basketball- The 8th grade record recently moved to 7-10. Ivan Mitchell, Tyler Smith, and Jalen White have led the 8th grade team in many hard fought games. Jayden Watson and Kolin Turner have put the 7th grade team on their shoulders.

Steger Intermediate Center Performs "Pirates"

Second grade students from the Steger Intermediate Center performed "Pirates! The Musical" for a full house at Columbia Central on Wednesday, December 6. The 140 students in attendance started rehearsing for the performance in September under the direction of Alice Cate and Billie Peterson. The singing, dancing, acting and costumes displayed by all performers delighted audience members. Congratulations to all of the second graders on their outstanding performance!



Farmer's Insurance Continues to Thank District 194's Teachers

This seasons winners for the Thank America's Teachers contest are Frosini Smith and Michelle Perry.

To date our teachers have won \$130,000 from Farmers Insurance for their classroom. Voting for the next contest begins March 1-31st.



Getting to Know Our Faculty: Seeger Primary Center's First Grade Team



Steger Primary Center staff is comprised of several teams of teachers. One of these teams is the first grade team that has been together for three years now. They pride themselves on working collaboratively to provide the best education to ALL first graders students in the general education classrooms. Who are these teachers? See if you can guess who they are based on their responses to the questions below.

Where did you go to elementary school?

Mrs. Kirk - Saukview
Mrs. Ciapponi - Eastview
Mrs. Schaaf - Eastview
Mrs. Peters - 7 different elementary schools!
Mrs. Jennings - Longwood
Ms. Husmann - Churchill
Mrs. Scheutzw - Serena Hills
Mrs. Stluka - Algonquin
Mrs. McNamara - Monee

Why did you decide to become a teacher?

Mrs. Kirk - loved playing school as a child
Mrs. Ciapponi - I was inspired by my 3rd grade teacher
Mrs. Schaaf - wanted to help others/children
Mrs. Peters - wanted to help young people
Mrs. Jennings - wanted to make learning fun for students
Ms. Husmann - wanted to help students learn and grow
Mrs. Scheutzw - I love kids!
Mrs. Stluka - I love to help and I love children
Mrs. McNamara - started out in a different career and soon realized I was very passionate about teaching

What are your favorite hobbies?

Mrs. Kirk - Spending time with family, church, reading
Mrs. Ciapponi - Spending time with my sons, concerts, reading
Mrs. Schaaf - Spending time with my kids, scrapbooking, reading
Mrs. Peters - Baking

Mrs. Jennings - Hiking by waterfalls
Ms. Husmann - Relaxing and playing with my dog, Sophie
Mrs. Scheutzw - Reading, walking my dog, running
Mrs. Stluka - Relaxing and reading good books
Mrs. McNamara - Spending time with family, taking pics, reading

If not teaching, what job would you like to have?

Mrs. Kirk - Counselor
Mrs. Ciapponi - Photographer
Mrs. Schaaf - Veterinarian
Mrs. Peters - Own my own bakery
Mrs. Jennings - Florist
Ms. Husmann - Working with animals
Mrs. Scheutzw - Chicago Cubs bat girl
Mrs. Stluka - Traveling agent
Mrs. McNamara - Stay-at-home mom

What was your favorite book as a child?

Mrs. Kirk - Curious George
Mrs. Ciapponi - A Wrinkle in Time
Mrs. Schaaf - The Cat in the Hat
Mrs. Peters - Little House on the Prairie
Mrs. Jennings - Didn't have a favorite, loved all books!
Ms. Husmann - Where the Wild Things Are
Mrs. Scheutzw - A Chair For My Mother
Mrs. Stluka - Of Mice and Men
Mrs. McNamara - Harry Potter series

STEGER DISTRICT 194

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3753 Park Avenue, Steger, IL
753-4300
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94 Richton Road, Steger, IL
755-0021
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3411 Hopkins Street, Steger, IL
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A Word From Superintendent Hahto

Dear Community Members,

In October, Ted Griffin, a teacher in the Steger 194 school district for 37 years, from 1961 to 1998, passed away. This article is about Ted and his legacy to Steger schools.

As many of you may know, I am a K-8 graduate of Steger 194. That was over 50 years ago. Since early 2016, when I was appointed Superintendent here, I have been vocal about the fine education I received in 194. Mr. Griffin played a big part in that.

We all have favorite teachers – there's nothing surprising about that. But, what is surprising is that more than five decades later, I find myself in the position to have the opportunity of writing an article of appreciation about Mr. Griffin and why he was an inspirational teacher and a role model for his students.

In my junior high school-aged brain, Mr. Griffin was simply my chorus teacher who taught his students lots of cool songs to sing and who made learning fun. Now, looking back as a teacher and administrator, it is apparent that Ted Griffin was indeed somebody special. He had that solid combination of qualities - knowledge in his field, confidence, humility, humor, kindness, and most of all, an optimism in his students' capabilities, all of which resulted in students who respected him and were eager to learn.

I have a feeling there are legions of others who experienced Mr. Griffin's music and choral classes that feel the same way I do. One reason is because I have seen generous donations come in to the District Office to help fund a music scholarship in his name. The funds will help send middle school students to summer music camp. At this writing, we have collected more than \$2500.00, a wonderful legacy.

Additionally, I'd like the community to know that today's Steger 194 teachers are developing their own legacies, many, I suspect, without fully realizing it. The same characteristics that Ted had are being replicated time and time again in all three of our schools by teachers who see their teaching careers not only as a job, but as a calling, whose dedication to their students and their academic and emotional empowerment is their life's work. I'd like to say to them, "I cannot thank you enough for the good that you are doing for Steger 194 students. Just like Ted Griffin, you are building a wonderful legacy."



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