

What's Up for May? Take a Look Inside...

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Students Look Towards the Future at Graduation Ceremonies



By Amanda Rombough
Information Services Officer

It's what students work towards for 13 years of education and it comes as a bittersweet time for many students. Graduation often times comes faster than students realize, and while it means saying goodbye to friends and leaving behind what they've known for years, it also offers a chance to start over and begin the next chapter of their life.

"Closing this chapter in the story of my education means getting to have new and exciting experiences and a chance to use the knowledge I've gained," Central High School graduate Jessi-

ca Bachman said. "The best part being there's no straight line or set path I am required to follow with that knowledge. I get to draw that line and follow it, or maybe veer from it or draw a brand new line if I choose to. Education is such a gift in that way - we're given the tools and we get to use them in any way we so choose!"

Central, Stevens, and Rapid City High School recently held their graduation ceremonies. Over 900 students graduated from the three schools combined.

Speakers urged students that the future is wide open for them.

"Earning a high school diploma is the culmination of 13 rewarding years of hard work and dedication to academic excel-

lence," Stevens High School Principal John Julius said. "I want to congratulate all of you on the success and commitment you've shown to earn your diploma."

Student speakers reminisced on the good times through the past four years at high school and what they're most looking forward to in the future.

"We came into high school as naïve 14 year olds. We were told these four years would be gone in an instant but we didn't believe that statement to be true," Central High School graduate Matt Stephens said.

"Through these last 18 years, each and every one of us has their own unique life story... Despite the ways that all of our lives have played out thus far, we are all here tonight to share in one special accomplishment that we all share."

Students across the district looked to the future and what they hoped to do as they walked across that stage. Some students going off to the military, some going to college, others starting various jobs, or perhaps some taking time off of school, everyone had their own plan and their own future to look forward to. For Central graduate Trace Overby, it's studying business/finance at North Dakota State University in Fargo.

"Graduation means the start of a lifelong journey, a journey that could lead me

"You guys were my first 5th grade class in RC. You were a class act and the very best. Thanks and good luck, Mr. Swartz!"

Cont. from A1: Graduation

anywhere,” Overby said. “Graduation is a bitter sweet time for me. Saying good-bye to the friends I’ve made over the past four years is extremely hard.”

Bachman said she is going to miss the Rapid City School District and all of the teachers she’s had through the years.

“The faculty and staff in this district are absolutely top of the line and have impacted my life in more ways than I can express,” she said. “Each teacher I’ve had has been personally invested in my education and goals as a student and made every point to go above and beyond with helping me understand a concept or even just supporting me by attending an orchestra concert.”

Bachman plans to major in Music/Cello Performance at the University of Northern Colorado and eventually pursuing a graduate degree with an emphasis in String Quartet Studies.

The Rapid City Area School District administration, staff, and Board of Education congratulate all of the high school graduates and wishes them the best of luck in their future endeavors. Don’t forget to come back and visit!

Did you miss graduation? You can still watch it on The Cube!

- Go to www.thecube.com
- Search for Rapid City Area Schools
- Pick the graduation you’d like to see
- Enjoy!



Teachers Get Projects Fully Funded for Classroom Supplies

By Amanda Rombough
Information Services Officer

Supplies for a classroom do not come cheap. But they are necessary to a student’s learning and development. While many teachers fund the items in their classroom themselves, there are some items and experiences that are too far out of their price range. Two teachers in the Rapid City Area School District got their projects fully funded the day before school let out by Horace Mann Insurance Agent Rob Bickett through the website DonorsChoose.org.

“I’m so excited,” Canyon Lake Kindergarten teacher Mindy Nelson said. “Donors Choose has done so much for our classroom this year. I’m very thankful to Horace Mann for funding this.”



DonorsChoose.org is a nonprofit organization that allows public school teachers to submit their equipment or experience needs to the website and allows individual donors to help donate to their need. Teachers are able to submit anything from equipment for their classroom like chairs, books, and rugs, to money for field trips. As long as it is student-centered and provides learning and life opportunities, teachers can submit it.

Nelson submitted a reading rug for her classroom for the students to sit on during story time or other activities.

“Having a reading rug gives each student a place to sit when doing project,” she said.

Bickett also funded a project submitted by Valley View teacher Zion Schmidt for wobble stools to use during various class activities to help them engage more sense and keep active during class.

“I’m so surprised I’m speechless,” Schmidt said. “I’m very thankful. I know how much this will help the kids. Movement is an important part in classrooms and if they can wobble for a little bit it’ll help. I know I have a hard time sitting for a long time as an adult.”



Bickett said that DonorsChoose.org is important because it allows things like the reading rug and wobble stools to be a

**Jump to A3:
Donors Choose**

Graduates Honored at Honoring and Feathering Ceremony



By Amanda Rombough
Information Services Officer

Graduating from high school is a big milestone in a teenager's life, and it is a moment that the members of the Indian Education department of Rapid City Area Schools wanted to honor even more than the traditional graduation ceremony. An Honoring and Feathering Ceremony was held this year to honor the graduates by giving them each an eagle feather and plume. The eagle feather and plume are treated as a relative after it is presented to them and they are meant to be worn with pride and honor.

"You've worked hard, but this is not the end," Director of Indian Education Jr. Bettelyoun told the graduates. "It is the beginning. Rely on your own strengths and abilities. They've gotten you this far. Rely on your true friends but most of all

your family. They've supported you your whole life."

Speakers encouraged students to stick close to their families for help and to never forget their heritage and where they have been and where they are going. Guest speaker Adonnis Martinez shared his story about how he made it through high school and graduated from Central High School in 2011.

"I went from a student who was going to fade off as a drop out to a student who was graduating on time," Martinez said. "Graduation was the physical representation of the hard work and that my hard work had not gone unnoticed. Your work is noticed."

Martinez encouraged students to go to college and increase their knowledge saying that society needs them to go to

college.

Each student was presented with a home-made quilt, an eagle feather and an eagle plume, attached to them by their sponsors, which was an honor that was not to be taken lightly, Dr. Gerald Yellow Hawk said.

"Take it with you. Don't just hang it on your rearview mirrors collecting dust," he said. "Put it somewhere safe and every now and then take it out, when you need prayer, take it out and pray with it. When you're in distress or discouragement, bring out your feather and pray the best you know how. This has done my heart well."

An honor song was sung by the Ateyapi Singers and students received Wasna and Cherry Juice as "medicine to start (their) journey of life."

Cont. from A2: Donors Choose

reality in Rapid City Area Schools classrooms and it'll go to help students learn better. So far, DonorsChoose.org has helped impact 10,000 people locally.

"It's going to explode and change lives of several honored students over the years," Bickett said. "We want to be able to help provide classroom materials for teachers."

For more information or to submit a project, visit DonorsChoose.org.



Want to see yourself,
class or activity in

The Reporter?

Email your photo or idea to:
RapidCityDistrictCommunications@k12.sd.us

Fifth Graders Prepare for the Move to Middle School, Celebrate Years in Elementary School

By **Amanda Rombough**
Information Services Officer

Elementary school can be scary at first, but by the time students have mastered the halls, it's time to go onto middle school, which can be even scarier. Leading up to that time, elementary schools throughout the district celebrated the accomplishments of the 5th graders, however, with Fifth Grade Promotions, sending the students off in style and celebrating all that they have done for the past six years.

"This is a big day in students' life and it only happens once," South Canyon Principal Brad Jungwirth told his students. "What I'm most proud of is that you look out for each other. You guys need to stick together and be kind and do what is right and be there for each other. You guys have made it all worthwhile."

Students at both South Canyon and Valley View and other elementary schools throughout the district held promotion ceremonies for their 5th graders. Students shared their thoughts on going to the 6th grade, all mixed with fears and excitement.

"My time here will never be forgotten," South Canyon 5th grader Victoria Lujan said. "I'm thankful for every teacher who has been here. I learned a lot through the years and South Canyon has been best at teaching us kindness. South Canyon will have a huge part in our heart."

Many students shared feelings of fright when first coming to elementary school, but quickly learned that they didn't need to be afraid and that is something they will take into middle school with them.

"I was afraid because I was new and I didn't know anyone but Valley View taught me to be caring and has given me

some amazing 5th grade teachers," Valley View 5th grader Kamra Jager said. "Valley View changed me with all of the special people and I'm so blessed I went to this school."

Students thanks their teachers and administrators for everything that they've

who has made my time at Valley View enjoyable. I wouldn't be who I am without Valley View."

Administrators were also sentimental and assured students that they will be missed and each year it's difficult to say goodbye to another batch of students after watching them grow up through the years.

"I love when they come back to visit," South Canyon 5th grade teacher Karen Thorson said. "I've enjoyed getting to know them all and all of their quirks. We have some very smart 5th graders."

Administrators assured the students that once they leave elementary school, they will continue to learn, so take it all in and keep learning as much as they could.

"Once you get there, you will find out your education will continue," Superintendent Dr. Tim Mitchell said. "It will be something that is very exciting. We know you're going to be successful because you have a lot of support."

"You're moving on to middle school and some of you are very nervous and some are very excited but you've become who you are because of your efforts that you put into learning," Valley View Principal Wayne Rosby said.

No matter what, Rosby said, keep dreaming and choose to have a great life.

"I hope you continue dreaming about what your future can become. I hope you make good choices. I hope you choose to be successful. I hope you don't listen to people who tell you that you can't do that. The only person that's going to make you successful is you. Only you can make it happen. You can have a great life if you choose, or not, the choice is yours."



taught them over the years, including the six pillars of the Character Counts program.

"Valley View has definitely made an impact on me," Valley View 5th grader Sara Smith said. "Valley View has helped me grow academically. Valley View has also helped me grow socially. I now have a thick skin and I know how to handle conflict. I would like to thank everyone



Student Achieves Perfect Attendance for 6 Straight Years

By Amanda Rombough
Information Services Officer

Having perfect attendance through an entire year is hard enough for most students. But to have perfect attendance through all six years of elementary school from kindergarten through fifth grade is a feat that very few students can say they've achieved. But Black Hawk Elementary student Sam Blackett did just that. Blackett was recognized at an all school assembly for having perfect attendance from kindergarten all the way through fifth grade.

"This is an outstanding accomplishment," Black Hawk Principal Holly Yamada said. "Sam has not missed a day of school kindergarten through fifth grade, an

accomplishment not many can claim. I've had the privilege of knowing him the past three years and he continues to exemplify Cougar Pride in his attendance, positive character, and academic achievement. Congrats Sam!"

Blackett said the honor means a lot to him and he hopes to continue his streak of perfect attendance.

"I sorta like school and I want to get as much learning in as I can and all of the fun stuff," he said.

Blackett said it wasn't as easy as it may seem and there were days he didn't want to go to school, especially on days when the roads were bad, but now he's glad he went.



(Left) West Middle School held their annual Orchestra Concert at the end of the year.

Did You Know?

Who can vote in upcoming Opt Out/School Board Election?

Everyone living within the Rapid City School District!

Summerset	Countryside
Black Hawk	Red Rocks
Johnson Siding	Hart Ranch
Black Gap	Moon Meadows
Whispering Pines	Rapid Valley
	Rapid City

VOTE

Go to your regular polling place to Vote on June 2nd
 Early Voting is happening now
 If you live in Meade County, Early Voting takes place at the Pennington County Courthouse.

Teachers: Have a student who wrote something awesome, took a great photo, or made an amazing art project? Share it with the rest of us by emailing it to RapidCityDistrictCommunications@k12.sd.us and it could be featured in an upcoming issue of *The Reporter!*



(Above and right) Mr. Bierle at Canyon Lake Elementary School was named the Sam's Club Teacher of the Month! Congratulations Mr. Bierle!



Check out the great things our staff & students are doing!

Pinedale Elementary School Spring Carnival



(Left) West Middle School held their annual POPS Concert at the end of the year.



(Right) West Middle School held their end of year awards ceremony, recognizing those students who had perfect attendance throughout the year.

Grandview Elementary School Talent Show



Check out the great things our staff & students are doing!

Field Days

Grandview Elementary



General Beadle Elementary



Knollwood Elementary

