

THE BURLINGTON BARK

Burlington, Iowa | Jan. 6, 2025

QUICK SIX

- 1. Jan. 13**
School Board meets at 5:30 p.m.
- 2. Jan. 14**
VIBE Blood Drive from 12:30-6:30 p.m.
- 3. Jan. 17**
Two-hour early out
- 4. Jan. 20**
No School-Martin Luther King Day
- 5. Jan. 27**
School Board meets at 5:30 p.m.
- 6. Jan. 31**
No School-Professional Development

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DAYS UNTIL GRADUATION

145

THIS IS BURLINGTON



Burlington High School Student Council members sing carols Dec. 15, 2024, at RidgeView Assisted Living. It was among several carolling stops the students made in their quest to spread holiday cheer. The students also presented residents with hand-made holiday cards.

GRAYHOUNDS GIVE BACK

December may have been a short month, but there was no shortage of holiday spirit as Burlington staff and students of all ages spent the weeks leading up to winter break giving back to their community.

Here's a round-up of some of the things our Grayhounds were up to last month.

BURLINGTON HIGH SCHOOL

Student Council members gathered in the cafeteria after school on Dec. 10 to decorate holiday cards to be distributed to residents of local nursing homes and assisted living facilities. They delivered the cards the following Sunday while carolling.

The Student Council also participated in the Angel Tree Project, purchasing and wrapping gifts for two teens and two children under the age of 4, and Bring Change 2 Mind members handed out holiday cards and candy canes to hospice patients and their families.

Minority Scholars also purchased gifts for a family and hosted a holiday party complete with cookie decorating



Members of Black Hawk Elementary School's Student Council pose for a photo alongside gifts they purchased and wrapped for a family they adopted for the holidays. They raised money for the gifts by selling water bottle stickers and candy canes.

for students and their families just ahead of Christmas Eve.

The BHS DECA chapter, meanwhile, spent a morning at the Burlington Memorial Auditorium to help set up ahead of the Toys for Tots distribution day.

National Honor Society made homeless shelter winter kits. Each hat contained a scarf, hat, fruit snacks, toothbrush, poncho, blanket, hand sanitizer, lotion, socks and hand warmers. NHS also teamed up with Varsity Club to gift wrap presents for community members.

Students in the Extended Learning Program spread cheer among their peers by hosting a holiday party complete with cookie decorating and games, and Karen Leichty's class held a donation drive for Camp Courageous.

EDWARD STONE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Edward Stone students hosted a food drive to help those in need. The school also has been continuing its Soapy Paws Laundry Drive and is well on its way to reaching a goal of 1,000 donated detergent items by the end of the school year.

ALDO LEOPOLD INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

More than 100 Aldo Leopold Intermediate School students in Girls

Group delivered items collected via their first community outreach project of the year to the Des Moines County Humane Society. After delivering the items, they got to take a tour of the facility and volunteer in the cat room.

ELEMENTARIES

Black Hawk Student Council sold candy canes and water bottle stickers to raise money to adopt a family for Christmas. They then went shopping for members of their adopted family.

"When we went to check out, each group was so excited to show each other what they picked out for 'their kid,' and kept asking if they stayed in their budget," student council advisor and fourth grade teacher Julie Russell said.

At Sunnyside, Student Leadership Team members spent time with younger students for rewards and crafts. The team also asked all students to make holiday cards to be distributed to area nursing homes.

North Hill's Student Leadership Team held a food drive and delivered donated items to the City Hope food pantry, and Grimes held a food drive for the Lend a Paw Pantry.

This list is by no means exhaustive, and staff once again went above and beyond to spread holiday cheer among students.



Students smile while practicing sanitization techniques Nov. 20, 2024, in Christa Whittemore's Introduction to Cosmetology class at Burlington High School.

WHEN HOMEWORK MEETS HAIR WORK

BY MICHAELE NIEHAUS / COMMUNITY RELATIONS COORDINATOR

The shelves in Christa Whittemore's classroom at Burlington High School are filled with neatly stacked brush and comb kits, curling irons, and mannequin heads with hair of varying textures and styles.

It's where, for two class periods each day, she teaches students both the practical and business aspects of cosmetology.

"So far, we have done all kinds of styling," said Whittemore, who taught at a cosmetology school for six years before coming to BHS to teach the inaugural trimester of the school's cosmetology program. "We've gone over business, taxes, all that fun stuff, kind of how to set up your business as you go so you're set up for success the entire time."

Whittemore's Introduction to Cosmetology class has drawn considerable student interest, so much so that only sophomores and upperclassmen were able to take it this trimester.

“ IT'S DIFFERENT, BECAUSE NOT A LOT OF HIGH SCHOOLS HAVE THIS CLASS. ”

AVAIAH HARRIS

With continued interest comes the possibility of expanding the program to include an advanced course in the future. The ultimate goal is to build a program that will provide a pathway for students to pursue licensure in cosmetology, positioning it to become the 13th Career and Technical Education pathway available to BHS students.

"It's different, because not a lot of high schools have this class," junior Avaiah Harris said. "I took this class because I want to go into cosmetology school when I graduate high school, because I know there's not a lot of people who know things about curly hair and I thought it'd be fun."



Christa Whittemore delivers a lecture to students in her Introduction to Cosmetology class Dec. 13, 2024, in her classroom at Burlington High School.

And it has been. Harris and her classmates have been doing hands-on learning with basics like proper sanitization techniques, how to do flat-iron curls, and braiding. They've also been learning about hair structure and curl patterns, and how to prepare different hair types and styles to withstand humidity.

"I took this class because I needed a filler class originally but taking it, it's a really fun class. I like that it's interactive, because a lot of people are better hands-on learners and this class really provides that," senior Julie Short-Neff said. "Instead of just all being out of the book, it's mostly hands-on, which is really nice."

But there's more to cosmetology than hair, and Whittemore is making sure her students have a solid grasp of how to successfully operate a salon as well.

"People don't realize going into cosmetology that there is a lot of business to it, because most of the time you're essentially your own boss, so they get out and they're like 'I have all this money, I'm going to go spend it,' but they forget about taxes and about rent and about buying product and how you have to keep track of everything, so we've been kind of deep diving into that," Whittemore said during a planning period before delivering a lecture to students that included everything from retaining clients and creating an ambiance to the different types of salon ownership.

Whittemore looks forward to growing the program and offering students even more opportunities for hands-on learning experiences next year.



Hands-on teaching tools are shown in Christa Whittemore's Introduction to Cosmetology classroom at Burlington High School.



Riley Waters helps a student assemble an electrical circuit board Dec. 19, 2024, after giving a presentation on how students can become electricians through the local IBEW union at Southeastern Community College during its annual 8th Grade Career Fair in West Burlington.

CREATING TOMORROW'S LEADERS – ONE CONNECTION AT A TIME

BY ANIKKA COOK FOR THE BURLINGTON BARK

You might think that eighth-graders would have a difficult time concentrating two days before winter break, but Edward Stone students proved this theory wrong while visiting Southeastern Community College on Wednesday, Dec. 19, for its annual career fair.

The eighth grade students were welcomed by successful community members and leaders who volunteered their time to help students begin thinking about their future career aspirations. Students were able to learn about various career paths in fields like business, skilled trades, healthcare, and the arts.

Students listened to career exploration presentations describing the daily routines of various jobs as well as the steps it takes to get them. They also participated in hands-on activities such as identifying marketing strategies they see in their own lives, drawing ordinary objects in new ways, and connecting electrical wires in order to make

a speaker play.

With the wide variety of interests and careers represented, it was not difficult for students to connect with at least one of the presenters.

Student Brynn Robinson's favorite presentation was a session on public relations and coaching presented by SCC Head Volleyball Coach Michelle Popkin. As a volleyball player herself, Robinson saw a glimpse of what goes on behind the scenes.

"I learned that it takes a lot to be a volleyball coach," said Robinson. "It's not just about playing the game; it's about building friendships with your team."

The career fair was another initiative in the class of 2029's GEAR UP program, a federally funded college preparation program standing for Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs. GEAR UP coach Ivy Tranter and eighth grade counselor Dayton Leazer collaborated with the Greater Burlington Partnership



Student Brynn Robinson poses Dec. 19, 2024, with the SCC volleyball jersey she received at the session on coaching at Southeastern Community College. Robinson learned what coaches do for their athletes and teams behind the scenes.

to organize the event.

Edward Stone principal Alec Clark described the impact of both the career fair and the GEAR UP program.

“It’s good to get (the students) out of the school and into the different areas of the community to learn from other people besides the normal faces they see every day,” Clark said. “The biggest thing I’ve seen is just getting people into the building or the kids going out [in order to] get them those different opportunities.”

The students were not the only people positively impacted by the crossover between the school and the community. Presenter Elizabeth Pappas, Executive Director of the Art Center of Burlington, returned to the career fair for a second time this year to continue its mission.

“I love talking with young people, especially about the arts and careers in the arts and how they can get involved in their community,” said Pappas. “It’s fun to have their perspectives because they’re different from mine. I learn a lot from them too! It’s good for all of us.”

The career fair occurred just in time to get students thinking about their career goals before they enroll in their first high school classes after winter break.

“This stuff will hopefully trigger which pathway they want to



Presenter Elizabeth Pappas speaks to eighth grade students Dec. 19, 2024, about careers in the arts and the support that the Art Center of Burlington can provide. Connecting with young people in the community is a core part of the Art Center’s mission.

choose and they can get signed up for the right classes, leading down the road to hopefully getting college credit while they’re at BHS,” said Clark.

As students begin to wonder where they see themselves in five, 10, or even 15 years, the connections made through community crossovers like the career fair will no doubt impact their lives and their community for the better.

50 YEARS OF FRUITCAKE

BY MICHAEL NIEHAUS / COMMUNITY RELATIONS COORDINATOR

The audience at Burlington High School's jazz concert had been enjoying the Purple Aires' much anticipated performance of a beloved staple of the holiday season when the unexpected occurred.

The ensemble had been nearing the end of "Fruitcake," a song sung in sections according to voice type that essentially describes how to make a fruitcake, when sophomore Ian Hanks popped up his head and shouted "Remix!"

And so the song continued, with the sopranos singing the bass part, the altos taking over the tenor portion, the tenors shifting to sopranos, and the basses transitioning to soprano.

The audience loved it.

"I will give the kids the credit for that," music teacher James Flaherty said. "It is nice to do a remix because it's been around for so long."

"Fruitcake" is a long-standing tradition for the Purple Aires, with this being the 50th year it has been performed, and, if previous support for it among students is any indication, it's a tradition that won't be broken any time soon.

The year was 1981, and Roger Hattenberg had just taken over as choir director the previous year.

"The story I have been told by Roger Hattenberg, who was in the district for a long, long time, was when he came in in 1980, the kids had been singing it for five years before, so he kept the tradition and put it in their folders for that concert," Flaherty said. "And then in the Christmas concert of '81, he didn't pull it out again and there was a riot."

The outcry among students spurred Hattenberg to reverse course, and the Purple Aires went on to serve up "Fruitcake" that year and every year since, complete with perfectly paired choreography.

"I think it's just so different from everything else that they do and it's just silly and fun and real quick to learn," said Flaherty, a 2012 BHS graduate who has fond memories of "Fruitcake" performances he was a part of as a high schooler. "I don't think we sang through it for a week-and-a-half, two weeks before the concert."

The remix wasn't the only thing that shook up the Holiday Jazz Concert. The audience also got to see the debut return of New Legacy, a treble group that started around the time Flaherty was in



Members of the Purple Aires perform "Fruitcake" Dec. 16, 2024, at Edward Stone Middle School. This year marked the 50th year that "Fruitcake" has been a part of Burlington High School's Holiday Jazz Concert.

high school but, like so many other things, was put on pause by the pandemic.

New Legacy's return was made possible this year by a strong turnout.

"We have a really solid group of freshmen, which I credit Melissa Carper for kind of helping rebuild that middle school choir side of things after scheduling was crazy (due to COVID)," Flaherty said. "I had a really solid group of freshman girls who I knew could handle it and then a couple of upperclassmen who missed the deadline to audition into Purple Aires who stepped up in there also."

Auditions for the Purple Aires are held within the first few weeks of the school year, and there will be plenty of "Fruitcake" to go around.

BURLINGTON ACTIVITIES DEPT.

To view the Activities schedule, [click here!](#)

THE RECAP



UPCOMING EVENTS

BURLINGTON COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

- Jan. 13 - School Board meets at 5:30 p.m.
- Jan. 17 - Two-hour early out
- Jan. 20 - No School (Martin Luther King Day)
- Jan. 27 - School Board meets at 5:30 p.m.
- Jan. 31 - No School (Professional Development)

BURLINGTON HIGH SCHOOL

- Tuesdays and Thursdays: After School Study Table from 3-4:25 p.m. in the upper library
- Jan. 12 - StuCo-hosted Co-ed Volleyball Tournament at 10 a.m.
- Jan. 14 - Parent-Teacher Conferences from 4-7 p.m.
- Feb. 1 - Burlington Dance Competition from 8-3 p.m.

EDWARD STONE MIDDLE SCHOOL

- Jan. 16 - Parent-Teacher Conferences from 4-7 p.m.
- Jan. 23 - Winter Band Concert at 7 p.m.

VIBE VIRTUAL LEARNING PROGRAM

- Jan. 14 - Blood Drive from 12:30-6:30 p.m.

AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

[Click here to view the PiECES Calendar and activities!](#)

Saturdays with PiECES

Brick Masters: Jan. 11 and 25 from 10 to 11 a.m. at the Burlington Public Library

NO PiECES

Jan. 17, 20 and 31

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@bcsdgrayhounds

AT BCSD, WE ARE RAISING GRAYHOUNDS!



BURLINGTON COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT NONDISCRIMINATION NOTICE

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