



# Blackcat News

**Mission Statement:**  
*"Educating Today for a Better Tomorrow"*

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## Rocking Robo Rangers!

In only their second year, Pevely students made it to the invitational round of a robotics competition. The self-titled Robo Rangers write code to make a robot move through a grid and perform a sequence of tasks. Ranger David Morris says, "I can make (the robot) go anywhere and do a lot of stuff." His fifth grade Class of Academically Talented Students, or CATS, is participating in the Wonder League Robotics Competition. Ranger Dallas Frischle says, "We had to do five missions to qualify. They judged them and said we could move on."

The next round includes a new coding challenge and a team presentation. All four students have been working toward that goal, including Ranger Carter Ijames, their best coder. Ijames says, "It's really fun. You get to learn how the mechanics work." They must make the robot named Dash flip boxes to spell out "recycle" and "earth." Each box has to end up in a specific location on the grid. Ranger Avani Koenen makes the grid and obstacles for the robot. She knows how to code but is drawn to the role of project manager. She says, "I do mostly the future mission creations. One of them we needed boxes, and one of them we needed mystical rocks. I do the creating and they do the coding."



Pictured: Avani Koenen (left), David Morris (front), Carter Ijames (back), Dallas Frischle (right), and Dash.

When all the parts of a mission come together, they make a video of Dash performing the tasks and send it to the judges. Teacher Michelle Storment says the video for the invitational round is due on Monday. She doesn't know how long they'll wait for results since this is new territory for our fifth-grade team.

The company behind the competition is a 2012 startup named Wonder Workshop. They make the robots and organize the competition.

According to their website, they are "...engineering play to develop the next generation of innovators." Today they are in 20,000 schools worldwide, and 45 percent of the participants are girls.

There are roughly 75 students in the Dunklin R-5 CATS program. To qualify, students need to score 125 or higher on their IQ test. Storment says the top 10 percent of students in each grade are likely to be in the program.



The date for 2021 Herculaneum Senior Prom has been set and approved by Superintendent Freeman. So ladies, dust off those dancing shoes and start looking for that perfect prom dress. Be ready to dance the evening away with our good-bye to COVID, Roaring 21's theme. The Senior Prom will be held at the Oak Valley Golf Resort in Pevely, MO, on Saturday, April 17th starting at 7:00 pm. Tickets will be available starting Monday, March 1st, 2021, and be sold until Friday, April 2nd, 2021. Tickets are \$50 per person and include dinner and beverages. Please see Mrs. Lauterborn in Room #102 to purchase tickets. The School Dance online ticket sales website will be set up for credit card use.

Due to COVID 19, there will be some minor changes to the usual social norms, but we are still looking to have a roaring good time. Food, music, dancing, and photography will still be at the venue. In an effort to alleviate any crowding issues, the guest list will be limited to senior students and their dates. Only seniors can purchase tickets. Out of school dates will still

be welcome under the same restrictions as in the past, so seniors need to make sure and get their needed paperwork turned in and approved before the purchase deadline. Once the paperwork is approved, seniors can purchase their tickets.



# Message from the Superintendent

Blackcat Community:

In just over a week we will begin the process of kindergarten registration, which means the class of 2034 is coming to Pevely Elementary, and we are so excited to have them here next fall. We cannot wait to see some of the smartest, energetic students in the county enter our school. There will be several more opportunities to gain valuable information from Pevely Elementary over the next few months. Please visit our website at [www.dunklin.k12.mo.us](http://www.dunklin.k12.mo.us) to complete your registration.



As we continue to navigate the pandemic of COVID 19, our faculty and staff stay committed to your student's success. Whether a virtual student or in person student, we are ALL Blackcats! If you are having trouble or need any assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out to your child's teacher or administrator.

**FREE and REDUCED Lunch Forms:** Please take a couple of minutes to complete the Free and Reduced Lunch Form. If you need assistance, please contact Nichole Arnold, Food Service Director, at [narnold@dunklin.k12.mo.us](mailto:narnold@dunklin.k12.mo.us). By supplying the district with your Free & Reduced applications, it helps aid the

school district in qualifying for the Pandemic Relief Waivers as well as making sure that your child receives the nutritional meal they deserve each and every day.

## Message from the Board President

Hello Blackcat Community!

I am encouraged that in 2021 things will continue to progress towards some normalcy as we navigate the global pandemic we have faced for almost a year now. We appreciate your flexibility as we grow and learn through these unusual times. While our district's exposure numbers have remained low, I want to encourage you to continue following precautionary steps. The protocols that we have in place at all of our facilities are there to help ensure the safety of students and staff. By remaining cautious, it will continue to minimize exposure opportunities and help to keep everyone safe.

On behalf of the Board of Education, I want to sincerely thank our dedicated Dunklin R-5 staff. Everyone, at every level, no matter their role, has been working hard, shifting, adjusting, and making changes as needed to do what is best for the students and families we serve. Whether teaching in person, virtually, or both, everyone is doing a great job without complaint. OK, maybe a few complaints, but we wouldn't be human if we didn't, right? But seriously, staff and students have done a great job being flexible.

With spring approaching, plans are being made for those activities. Kindergarten registration is coming up in early March. Free preschool is being offered to those who qualify at Taylor Early Childhood Center. There are lots of spring sports, plays/musicals, concerts being organized, and plans for prom and graduation. Please watch for updated information on our website and social media.

The Board of Education meets in person on the third Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. These meetings are currently held in the HHS Theatre building to allow for social distancing, and masks are required. If the meeting location changes, this will be posted on the agenda and on our social media. These meetings are open to the public.

Please know that the Board's focus in **every** decision is to do what is best for the kids and families we serve and to support our district's mission statement, "Educating Today for a Better Tomorrow."

Sincerely,

Dawn M. Warner, President  
Dunklin R-5 Board of Education



Thank you to everyone who continues to support the Dunklin R-5 School District. I am so fortunate to serve such a great community as Superintendent of Schools. For more information, please follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

"Stay Safe, Stay Positive; Focus on what we **CAN** do, not what we can't."

Dr. Clint Freeman, Superintendent of Schools

### DUNKLIN R-5 SCHOOL DISTRICT

497 Joachim Avenue • Herculaneum, MO 63048 • (636) 479-5200  
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#### Board Meetings are Open to the Public

The Dunklin R-5 Board of Education meets on a regular basis on the third Tuesday of each month. The meetings are held in the Dunklin R-5 Theatre beginning at 7:00 p.m. (There is more room in that building to spread out due to COVID 19.) The meetings are open to the public. Patrons may view agendas and items from the meetings by going to our website [www.dunklin.k12.mo.us](http://www.dunklin.k12.mo.us), clicking on the District tab and clicking on "Paperless Board Meetings."

***Dunklin R-5 School District is an equal opportunity employer***

# Anchors Away, Moloney



Pictured: Ann and Doug Moloney at Senior Night for the basketball team and James Moloney in the courtyard of the USNA.

The United States Naval Academy has an acceptance rate of 8 percent, but the Moloney family is hoping lightning strikes twice. Six Moloneys have graduated from Herculaneum High School, and five enlisted in the military. James Moloney took a different path. He's a junior at the Naval Academy and will become an officer upon graduation. The Arabic major is studying abroad, in Israel, but still found time to persuade his younger brother to apply.

Herculaneum High School Senior Doug Moloney submitted a pile of paperwork, got a nomination from Congressman Luetkemeyer, and sent in his medical records. He is just waiting on an official invitation from the Naval Academy to join the Class of 2025. Moloney says, "I'll serve one way or another. It's of course stressful because I haven't gotten the results back, but even if I have to enlist, I'll have the opportunity to serve." His backup plan is the Air Force ROTC program at Missouri S&T.

Parents Mike and Ann Moloney never served in the military, so there wasn't an expectation to join. However, paying for college for eight kids was also out of the question. The oldest sibling, the late David Moloney, joined the Navy. He was followed by three sisters who all served in the Air Force. Ben Moloney is a Marine, and James is at the Naval Academy. The youngest, Michael, is a sophomore at Herculaneum High School.

It's difficult to determine how growing up in the Moloneys' Barnhart home prepares children for the armed forces. They have all served with honor and excelled in their specialties. Ann Moloney believes coming from a large family helps. She says, "The concept of individual service for the betterment of the whole unit is easily taught in a family of eight children." Her children talk about David as being a trailblazer, and the daughters credit Cross Country Coach Jim Kasten for making Air Force boot camp seem like a jog in the park. On the eve of taking an oath, Doug Moloney believes success in the military will come down to work ethic. The 18-year-old says, "I'm so excited to serve. I can't wait."

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## Equipment Donation

The industrial arts classes at Herculaneum High School will have access to new equipment thanks to a donation from the H-J Family of Companies. The international manufacturer donated \$1,000 to support our Industrial Arts program. Teacher Jordan King says, "We purchased a Powermatic floor model drill press. We don't have one in the shop, and it's safer to use than a hand drill."

Last year, some administrators and teachers toured the company in High Ridge. H-J is a supplier in the transformer, switchgear, and breaker industry. H-J Companies are always looking for a strong pool of talent that can master its high-tech machinery. It could be an ideal fit for Blackcats going directly into the workforce and



college graduates who want to work close to home. This community partnership should benefit both the school district and the international manufacturer.





# STMS Basketball Conference Champs



Both the boys and girls eighth grade basketball teams are conference champions. The expectations were higher for the boys team. They finished the season undefeated in conference games. Player Tytus Wright says, "We worked hard in practice and left it all out on the court." The way the season played out was a bit more complex

due to injuries. The team pulled up seventh grader Jackson LaPlante to help fill the gaps, and he performed well for the team. Coach Goodwin says, "I saw improvement throughout the year from each and every player." When Gavin Tooley came back from a mid-season injury, the team took off, playing their best basketball, and they eventually beat Jefferson for the conference title.

The eighth grade girls played with a lot of heart. They lost some close games during the season but kept fighting. The girls only had seven healthy players, which gave them a lot of time on the court. One of the injured players was Kenzie Quick. She says, "It was very difficult not playing, but the best part was watching my teammates grow." Coach Ashlee Weinhaus says, "We had a blast working hard together as a team to get better every day, and the athletes trusted each other..." The Blackcats had the second seed in the conference tournament. They beat Crystal City and advanced past Jefferson in the semi-finals. They faced Grandview in the finals, who beat them in the regular season. Their conditioning paid off as the game went to overtime. Player Jillian Jarvis says that's when the Blackcats "...pushed through and brought home a win."

The plaques from these victories are now on display at Senn-Thomas Middle School. They are just a small representation of these players' growth in confidence, camaraderie, and school spirit.

**"Go  
Blackcats"**



Pictured: Tanner Duncan, Riley Cox, Nerik Stricklin, Jackson LaPlante, Mason Gorza, Nate Wright, Dylan Hollingsworth, Chase Goodwin, Gavin Tooley, Landen Miller, Steven Stenzhorn, Tylek Wright, Anthony Gallina, Tytus Wright, Kaleb Cole



Pictured: Front row: Jillian Jarvis, Kaylyn Yamnitz, Madison Barlow, Coach Ivanka Starkey, Back row: Coach Ashlee Weinhaus, Mackenzie Quick, Emma Johnson, Abigail Smith, Mackenzie McKee, Gretchen Sutton, Coach Amber Buehler



# Blackcat Generosity

There are several ways to describe our Blackcat community, like bright, spirited, optimistic, encouraging, creative, and patriotic. However, the heart of our community is revealed when we talk about generosity. Dunklin set a record for the number of families we were able to help with Christmas. As a result, 151 students had a little extra something under the tree. In November, we assembled 31 baskets with all the fixings for families to enjoy Thanksgiving. Herculaneum's JAG program helped organize a coat drive in December. They collected over 100 winter coats, hats, and gloves for the Blackcat Closet.

There are a hundred smaller ways parents and others show their generosity. It could be purchasing a dessert for the First

Grade Pie Social or supporting a sports team by buying fan gear. Many find a way to help teachers with supplies or put some food in the "Lending Library" boxes outside of Pevely and Taylor. We've received cleaning supplies from Buchheits and a 3-D printer from the Pfaff family. The Band Program could not exist without the generosity of our parents.

Positive adjectives are abundant. However, few of them are a call to action like generosity. It requires you to make a donation, spend money to benefit others, or give away your precious time. "We thank you for your generosity and we love being part of this community. Go Blackcats!"

## Competitive Speaker



Junior Janie Jackson is carving out her future one speech at a time. On January 7th, she delivered a speech on prison reform to the Missouri Eastern Speech Association, or MESA. She won first place in the original oratory category. Her

previous ten-minute speech was about genetic editing. Jackson is preparing for districts and participates in a competition organized by Optimists International, whose prizes include scholarship money.

Coach Mendy Fischer says participants are asked to write an argumentative research paper on a timely topic. It's a tough category, and most students don't want to write another paper, much less memorize it and give a speech. That's one of the reasons Jackson is so impressive. Fischer says, "She has drive. She's very passionate, she's very mature, and she doesn't like to just sit. She's a go-getter."

Award-winning speeches require detailed research, concise writing, and an effective delivery. Jackson works hard on all three, but she is also devoted to her topics. She says, "If you really love something you're talking about, which I do, your passion comes out. If you don't care about the topic, it seems forced."

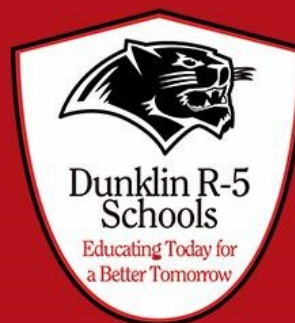
Sharing ideas with others isn't limited to an educational setting, but it's more difficult to engage others in today's world. Jackson says, "Debates turn into arguments. It's so sad to

watch because I feel you just need to hear other people's stories. You don't have to agree with them, but at least understand where they are coming from."

It's hard to believe Jackson is 16 years old. She seems to have skipped that part of high school is where students are consumed with grades, friends, clothes, sports, and social media. The junior takes pride in her originality, and people are naturally drawn to her joyous nature. Both may serve her well in the future as she is considering becoming a teacher.

*Class of 2034*

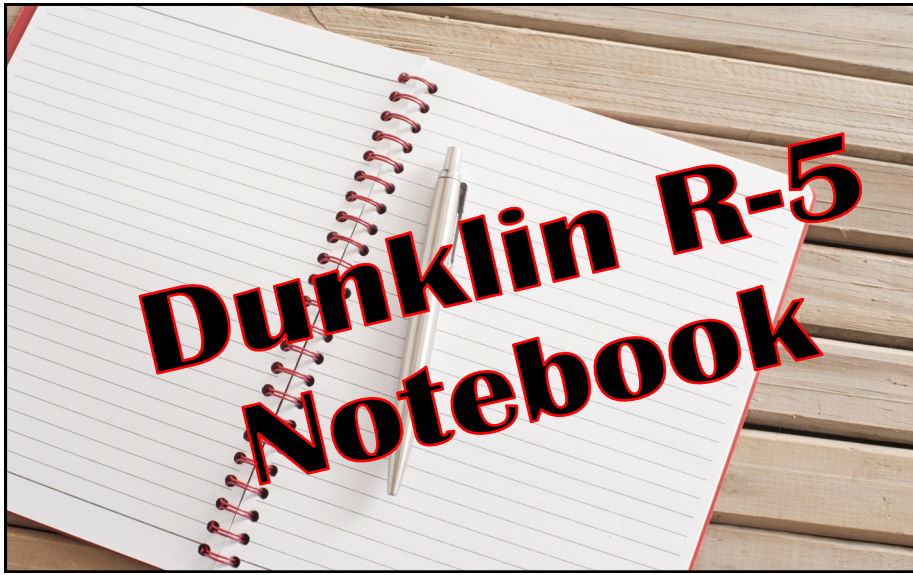
**Pevely Elementary School's  
kindergarten registration and  
screenings will be March 1st and  
2nd. Reserve your time now by  
visiting the Dunklin R-5 website or  
calling (636) 479-5200 Ext. 3006**



**It's a great day to be a Blackcat!**







Pevely Elementary accepted a \$500 grant for math and science materials from our friends at Mobil On-The-Run in Pevely.

The Lil' Cat Club PTO at Pevely Elementary School has scheduled virtual events. February 20th is for mothers and sons. Play a board game and share a picture. March 20th is the Father and Daughter Dance at Home. Don't forget to share a pic.

Please support the STMS Student Council when they take the Polar Plunge on February 27th. The "Reason for the Freezin" is to benefit the Special Olympics of Missouri.

The Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHSAA) recognizes teams with a high grade point average. Congrats to our HHS Girls Cross Country Team for placing in the Outstanding Achievement category with a GPA of 3.82. Teams with a cumulative GPA of between 3.0 and 3.49 are in the Distinguished Achievement category. Those Blackcat teams include Dance, Softball, Cheerleading, and Volleyball.

A big thank you to our community partners, Victory Church-Pevely and Brendan's Backpacks for supplying weekend food bags to over 100 families at Pevely Elementary every Friday! We appreciate your support for our students and their families on a weekly basis!

Does your student qualify for a free or reduced lunch? Want to find out? Go to the Dunklin R-5 website, click on the Departments tab and you'll see a category named Food Service. You can also apply through Parent Portal or get an application from a building secretary. The number of students that qualify affects our state funding and our ability to provide free meals during the summer.

Girls on the Run is coming in March for third to fifth grade girls.

**The Herculaneum High School  
Theatre Department Presents**

Performances will be at 7pm on April 22nd-24th. Tickets will be limited but a video of the play will be posted on social media. Check the Dunklin R5 Facebook page for updates.

**FREE PRESCHOOL**

The Dunklin R-5 school district will be offering FREE preschool services to qualifying children living in the Dunklin R-5 school district for the 2021-2022 school year.

**QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**

- 1) Must be a Dunklin R-5 resident.
- 2) Children must be 4 years old on or before July 31, 2021.
- 3) Low income; qualify for free & reduced lunches, or state aid, i.e. Medicaid, food stamps, WIC, etc.

If you're interested in this opportunity, call  
**636-479-5200 option 5 for additional information.**



# Record Breaking Paige Fowler



all score. Leaving them uncovered is a recipe for disaster. Together, they will be a competitive team going into Districts.

Spectators never see the years spent developing skills, but for Paige Fowler it started when she was 3 years old. Her dad coached her through elementary school. In middle school, with Coach Gary Zastro, she got better at using her left hand and make free throws. Zastro helped Fowler realize her potential and followed her high school career, always talking about Senior Night. He passed away two days before that game, and it was the hardest game she can remember because he wasn't in the stands. In high school, Coach Riley Blair has always made time to listen and support Fowler, but he expects a lot. Fowler says, "He set the bar ridiculously high and held me there." She says, "I honestly couldn't ask for better coaches over the years."

With the season coming to a close, Fowler holds the Herculaneum High School record for scoring the most points (45) in a game. A year ago, she set the record for the most points in a season (510), breaking the record she set in the 2018-2019 season (410). The record for the most points in a high school career was held by Cailey Metcalf (1,032), but Fowler surpassed it at the beginning of this season. The senior plans on playing basketball at the next level, while studying sports medicine. Then it's off to Logan University to get a chiropractic degree.

Her sincerity, easy smile, and laughter are disarming. Paige Fowler says, "I know life is hard. I have it pretty good and I just want others to feel happy and enjoy their lives." Yet, every opposing basketball team comes up with a plan to shut her down. Fowler is double-teamed and triple-teamed while racking up points. She gets bumped, bruised, and sometimes cut as she battles under the basket. If a team is covering her like a blanket, she says, "...that just allows me to bring my teammates into the game." Blackcats like Macey Pilliard, Emily Wiese, Kyrsten Britton, Madilyn Dearing, and others can



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## Class of 2021 May 26th at 7pm



Graduation for the Class of 2021 will take place on May 26th at 7:00 pm on the football field at Herculaneum High School. Tickets will be limited and we will share additional information closer to the event. In case of rain, the location will be moved to Jefferson College in Hillsboro. The date and time will remain the same.



# Computer Science Curriculum

In 2019, I applied for the Amazon Future Engineer Partnership program for high school students. I was awarded the scholarship and was among a small amount of schools that were accepted in the pilot program. Since then I have been able to successfully maintain the scholarship three consecutive years.

This year, Amazon Future Engineers and Project STEM have partnered together to offer a new opportunity for middle school students. I applied to participate and receive the scholarship for the upcoming 2021-2022 school year. Last week, I learned that I had been accepted in the middle school program as well!

Amazon Future Engineers and Project STEM are two organizations that provide students with curriculum and opportunities in Computer Science. Both programs include an introduction to Coding with Python, Robotics, Artificial Intelligence, Programming Multimedia, and much more! Without the scholarship, the curriculum would cost approximately \$100 - \$250 per student. With these scholarships, I am able to offer these computer science programs to students in sixth through twelfth grade at no cost to the district or the students. In addition to curriculum, students learn about post-secondary education pathways and career opportunities that span the gamut of computer science.

This program has provided me with the ability to teach students social skills, problem solving, and collaboration through real world concepts, as well as, up and coming concepts in the field of computer science. In addition, because of my efforts and contributions through this program, I was nominated in 2020 for the Amazon Future Engineer Teacher of the Year. I am proud to be among the select few that were nominated for the award.

Starting in the 2021-2022 school year, the content offered by these programs will be offered at Senn-Thomas Middle School for grades 6-8 for the first time! Material will include: Coding and Programming, Artificial Intelligence, Robotics, and Computer Science through Creative Media. I am excited to introduce this content to my students at STMS and look forward to building the Computer Science programs offered in the Dunklin R-5 School District. Courses will continue to be offered at Herculaneum High School that include Computer Science Principles, Coding, and our Cisco program we currently offer.

Technology Teacher Courtney Stenzhorn

## Employees of the Year!



The Teacher of the Year goes to Music Teacher/Band Director Doug Smelser. He has built an award-winning program during his 26-years at Dunklin. One letter written on his behalf stated, "His love for music is infectious and contagious, which is why so many of his students thrive under his direction." Years ago, Smelser was a student at Herculaneum High School, where he met his wife. They wanted the same experience for their sons, who are both alumni. Smelser has an unwavering passion for his job, which can only be matched by his affection for his students. He embodies the qualities we aspire to be as Blackcats.



The Classified Employee of the Year is Senn-Thomas Middle School Nurse Heather Shadowens. She believes a student's ability to learn is tied to their health. She talks to students about hydration, sleep, and dealing with stress. With the pandemic, her duties increased dramatically. It was more than reminding

students to wash their hands, wear masks, and stay 6 feet apart. There's contact tracing, talking to parents about quarantines, and launching an appointment system to keep groups of kids from showing up at her door between classes. Shadowens takes the time to follow up with students at home, and she's a valuable resource for parents. She is a great nurse with a big heart, and she makes us all proud to be Blackcats.



Sophomore C.J. Asinger stole the show on Senior Night. Grapplers James Dixon and Aaron Payne were recognized that evening, but the crowd erupted when Asinger flipped from his wheelchair onto the mat and eventually pinned his opponent.

  
**Asinger Stole  
The Show**

