



PRINCESS MASQUERADE BALL AT WITTENBERG SCHOOL

Wittenberg Elementary-Middle School students participating at the masquerade ball put on by the Parent-Teacher Organization on Friday night are, from left, Parker Thorson, Oakley Thorson and Maiyah Granquist.

MIRIAM NELSON | NEW MEDIA

State DPI rule impacts WBHS report card

Wittenberg-Birnamwood High School worked hard to close achievement gaps on tests it gave to students, but instead of giving the school a boost with the school, it counted against them.

PAGE 2

Metropulos 16th in state events

McKenna Metropulos took 16th in both her individual events, the 50-yard freestyle and 100 butterfly. She also helped the 200 freestyle relay team to come in 16th.

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Meet the new school principal

Randy Berndt sits down for a question-and-answer session as he takes the reins of Birnamwood Elementary-Middle School.

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WITTENBERG
ENTERPRISE
& BIRNAMWOOD NEWS

(USPS868-800)

Published Wednesdays

by **NEW Media Inc**

d/b/a The Wittenberg Enterprise
& Birnamwood News

Periodicals postage paid at

Wittenberg WI 54499

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to:

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Shawano WI 54166

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10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday-Friday

circulation@newmedia-wi.com

RATES

Print

Print single issue: \$1

Prepaid nonrefundable 12 months:

\$41 Mail - WI

\$52 Mail - outside WI

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1-day, \$0.99

3-mo (90-day introductory offer) \$12

Month-to-month \$10

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Closing gaps counts against Witt-Birn on report card

DPI considers high school's significant gains an 'outlier'

By **LEE PULASKI**
City Editor

WITTENBERG — Having poor efforts to close achievement gaps in schools will cause the Department of Public Instruction to label a school as failing, but having a big turnaround and getting scores among races, genders, disabilities and economic subgroups to be similar proved to be worse for Wittenberg-Birnamwood High School.

The school received a score of 61.8 from the latest round of school report cards issued by DPI this week, which makes it a two-star school meeting few expectations in the eyes of the state. This is much higher than the score of 51.1 the school had in 2018, which made it a failing school, in DPI's view, but Wittenberg-Birnamwood School District Superintendent Garrett Rogowski feels cheated with the current score.

Schools are graded in four key areas: student achievement, school growth, closing gaps and on-track and post-secondary readiness. WBHS had a high score in closing achievement gaps this year, but it was a leap of more than 50 points, and DPI policy dictates that one-year changes in scores are considered to be outliers and not counted in the school's overall score.

In 2018, WBHS only scored 21.2 points when it came to closing achievement gaps, far below the state average of 67. This year, the school improved its efforts and scored 78.2 points on DPI's rubric for



GARRETT ROGOWSKI

have a four-star rating, which means the school exceeds the state's expectations.

"I don't have any problems with assessing districts and saying 'You're doing well with this,' or 'You're doing well with that,'" Rogowski said. "What they're saying (to us) is, 'You're an outlier. You've got great scores with respect to closing achievement gaps,' which we spent a lot of time on in the past year, and we don't even get credit for it."

Rogowski said it's unfair that DPI opted to "exclude our most significant work" and give it a label it doesn't deserve.

"I feel for my high school staff that get this sent out publicly and then, truthfully, the good work they're doing there isn't fully considered," he said. "This isn't just indicative of how we feel at Wittenberg-Birnamwood."

Laura Pinsonneault, director of DPI's Office of Educational Accountability, which is responsible for creating the report cards, said in a phone interview Thursday that the outlier rule was put into play for this year only as the department redesigns that part of the report card. That is expected to tighten up score fluctuations in future years so changes aren't as drastic as what WBHS experienced, she said.

the category.

If the high school's points for closing gaps, which count for one-quarter of a school's overall score on the report cards, were included, Rogowski believes the high school would

"We were trying to reduce the score fluctuations beyond what we can expect," Pinsonneault said. "We understand it's disappointing in some situations. We just take that statewide position when we make changes like that."

Despite the impact on the high school, the two elementary and middle schools in the district performed well on their report cards, both getting four-star ratings. Wittenberg Elementary-Middle School had a score of 78.9, a gain of 0.4 points, while Birnamwood Elementary-Middle School's score was 77.4, a bump of 0.2 points. Any score between 73 and 82.9 points puts a school in the four-star category.

"We're proud of the work that's being done there, but the truth is that we're proud of the work going on at all of our schools," Rogowski said.

The district doesn't plan to appeal the label for WBHS, with Rogowski noting that the state's report cards are only one measure that determines how well its schools are educating students. He noted DPI doesn't give consideration to how many students are taking advanced and college-level courses.

"It's not a reflection of what's truly happening," Rogowski said. "So much more happens in particular with individual growth per child that goes unseen by the public eye. We understand that you have to do this by statute, but at the end of the day, there are so many other indicators of the district performance that aren't considered in this formula."

Rogowski said the district plans to continue its efforts to bring rigor to classroom learning and combine that with meeting students' individual needs.

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"I feel for my high school staff that get this sent out publicly and then, truthfully, the good work they're doing there isn't fully considered. This isn't just indicative of how we feel at Wittenberg-Birnamwood."

GARRETT ROGOWSKI, Wittenberg-Birnamwood School District superintendent

CORRECTIONS

Accuracy is important to the Enterprise & News, and it wants to correct mistakes promptly. Call errors to our attention by phone at 715-526-2121, ext. 7018.

Long Chiropractic opens in new location

Kriha joins practice

By MIRIAM NELSON
News Editor

WITTENBERG — Long Chiropractic has a new location.

After spending a few months painting and giving a facelift to the new property, Dr. Casey Long opened the doors on Nov. 12 at 500 W. College Ave. in Wittenberg.

According to Long, the biggest challenge, due to all the rainy weather this fall, was installing a new parking lot.

She noted the new location can accommodate more patients and has better handicap accessibility than their previous office on Howard Street.

Also new is Dr. Mikayla Nelson Kriha, who is working as a student doctor, much like a residency program. Originally from Antigo, Kriha now lives in Birnamwood with her husband and two dogs.

“Dr. Casey and I take very similar approaches to chiropractic health, and that is why we are the perfect fit. I have already learned so much in the short time being mentored by her,” said Kriha.

Kriha attended University of Wisconsin-Marathon Campus and transferred to Palmer College of Chiropractic in Davenport, Iowa, where they offered a bachelor's degree program that she could take while enrolled in the Doctor of Chiropractic program. She took her board exams last weekend.

“I knew I wanted to hire her whether I moved into a new location or not,” said Long, who knew Kriha through a family friend.

Kriha said she was drawn to the chiropractic profession by its basic philosophy and the natural side of things. After shadowing many professionals in the medical field she knew that wasn't the way she wanted to help people. She wants the healing to be put back where it



Dr. Mikayla Nelson Kriha, left, joins Dr. Casey Long at new location at 500 W. College Ave., Wittenberg.

MIRIAM NELSON | NEW MEDIA

AT A GLANCE

WHAT: Long Chiropractic

WHERE: 500 W. College Ave., Wittenberg

WHO: Dr. Casey Long

FYI: 715-253-2239

belongs and believes everyone is responsible for their own health.

“I have no preference on age groups to work with because I believe everyone with a spine should get chiropractic care,” said Kriha. “However, kids tend to fit my personality better.”

Long has three other employees who help with making appointments, taking vitals and patient histories. Two of the three are certified to teach exercise classes, and handle laser and decompression therapies.

“This new location gives us much more room,” said Long. “We're not as rushed now that we have more space.”

There is also room in the basement level for another business, Premier Portraits by Patience.

Patience Szutkowski does photography specializing babies from birth to 1 year.

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projects using LEGO blocks on Nov. 25 from 3-6 p.m. at the Marathon County Public Library's Hatley Branch, 435 Curtis Ave., Hatley.

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Businessman extends fitness regimen to Homme Youth and Family Programs

Steve Slama
helps boys learn
discipline, teamwork

By **MIRIAM NELSON**
News Editor

WITTENBERG — Four months ago Steve Slama, owner of Tenth Legion Fitness in Wittenberg, started a workout program for the boys at Homme Youth and Family Programs.

Homme Youth and Family Programs is a residential treatment facility for boys who are court appointed to be there. The facility, which started as an orphanage in 1881, currently runs a therapy program for juvenile sex offenders and victims.

Slama started his fitness training center a couple of years ago and focuses on crossfit training which features a variety of techniques including lifting weights, special exercises and includes positive goal setting and meeting nutritional needs for a healthy lifestyle.

Slama has a lot of life experience which the boys can relate to, and feels he's been able to instill a sense of self-esteem in them as they accomplish individual goals and work on team building exercises.

As a crossfit trainer he works with the boys teaching a variety of exercises. He works with about 30 residents at any given time and encourages staff to get involved when they aren't on duty.

Pam Cotton, the director at Homme, has participated when her schedule allows.

"What I love about Pam is the kids respect her because she gets involved with them," said Slama.

Cotton is impressed with the results of this program, noting that many of the boys are doing better in school, have a sense of accomplishment and a boost in self-esteem. A few boys who have never been active in recreation are taking advantage of this opportunity.

"A program such as Steve's allows our boys an opportunity to find the means they need to live a healthy lifestyle," said Cotton. "It's another tool they can take with



Tenth Legion Fitness owner Steve Slama has been working with the residents and staff at Homme Youth and Family Programs in Wittenberg.

MIRIAM NELSON | NEW MEDIA

them when they leave."

She said that many of the activities at Homme do include physical activity but Slama offers another that they would probably not find if they were not placed with Homme. Crossfit is a challenge to the boys because it's a workout that's unfamiliar to them — they are learning proper form and exercises they haven't done before.

"Steve is really supportive and encouraging of the boys doing what they can, even if it's just a little to start," said Cotton. "He is very good at reading their body language and reaching out to the young men who need a bit more encouragement."

Slama also includes military type training exercises such as carrying ruck sacks on hikes and doing cadences where the leader sings and the troops repeat while marching. The point is to get them involved in working together as a team and learning to trust and depend on others.

He understands this is a problem for many of them because it does require that they are a bit vulnerable

in the learning process. He reminds them that they are all at Homme because of their similar behavior issues and situational circumstances and helps reinforce the goal of working together. Slama and the staff recognize the boys also learn compassion for others through this shared experience.

"When everyone is working toward a common goal, if one is suffering the others try to help," said Slama. "In order to get to the goal, you have to share the suffering."

Slama acknowledges that when you only know a world full of trauma you think that's normal and that sometimes you need to show them what real love and caring is all about.

It's not all exercises and drills. Slama takes the time to engage the boys in conversations. He recently asked the group what was their definition of an "alpha" personality.

Given the traumatic background many of the boys have come from, he was expecting answers like brute strength and domination. He said he was impressed to learn the qualities the boys associated with the alpha

personality included "compassion, a leader in the community, someone who loves others and wants the best for them, and someone strong enough to take the hits for other people."

Slama has noticed a difference in one boy who has been participating in the program, saying, "He's a good leader, quiet, mild mannered and really wants to make something of himself."

Another boy at Homme has some physical challenges. According to Cotton, his mother had never encouraged him to participate in sports.

"He's embraced this opportunity wholeheartedly and plays football, basketball, lifts weights and works on mobility with Steve, which requires some patience and a bit of pain with stretching," said Cotton.

Slama feels this program has been a great opportunity for him to use his skills as a trainer, a listener and a motivator to good use and that hopefully it makes a difference in the lives of the residents and staff at Homme.

BOOKS AND STUFF

Amnesia leads to love, drug cartel mystery

The chances I would select two books in a row with the same title are pretty slim, but that's just what I did. This week's book was "Lost and Found" by Clair Poulson, and it is nothing like the previous "Lost and Found" I reviewed by Amy Shojai.



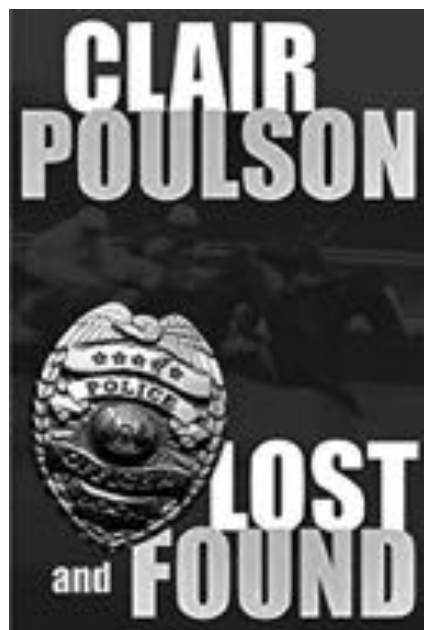
JAN JONES

The story opens with a young woman on horseback desperately trying to elude a man on a four-wheeler. She knows that he's stone cold killer who's there to kill her for what she knows about his boss.

The big horse is tiring, but they can reach the highway and other people the woman feels she'll be safe. As she nears the road, the horse stumbles then regains his footing, but the jolt has torn the woman from the saddle and left one foot caught in the stirrup. The horse runs on dragging her, like a rag doll. She is saved by two young men driving a semi.

The scene then switches to the local hospital. As the young woman wakes up to see two strangers standing near her bed. They introduce themselves and tell her all about how they stopped her runaway horse and saved her life, but all she can do is wonder "What horse?" and most of all "Who am I?" Her memory is completely gone and her purse, truck, and trailer have disappeared.

Months later, a young woman calling herself Coleen Whitman arrives in Duchesne, Utah. Dur-



ing a quick stop, she notices Luke Osborne and his horses. They chat briefly and he offers to let her exercise one of the horses. Time gets away, she misses her bus and Luke helps her get a job at a local restaur-

AT A GLANCE

BOOK: "Lost and Found"

AUTHOR: Clair Poulson

PUBLISHER: Covenant Communications

PUBLISHED: June 24, 2011

PAGES: 280

rant. She knows she can only work a couple weeks before she must produce a social security number that she does not have. Then she'll hit the road again.

While at work, she learns that Luke is a Duchesne Sheriff's Department detective, widowed and has a 5-year-old son. Luke is the area's most eligible bachelor and Bianca, one of the women in the sheriff's office has a huge crush on him. Luke has to admit that he is intrigued by Coleen, but since she isn't Mormon, the relationship can't go anywhere.

Eventually, Coleen shares the truth about her identity so he decides to help her find out who she really is. As they research, her pursuer uses a fake FBI badge to put out a warrant on her for a whole

list of crimes. Naturally, everyone believes she's guilty, and soon her pursuer has her in his sights again, and that man will do anything to eliminate her.

As with any mystery, this one holds several other back stories that flesh out the other characters, but there just isn't space here to share them. So I'll wrap up this by saying that the author has made it clear that this is a book about redemption and it has a strong Mormon view on how life should be.

Coleen learns her real identity and is safely hidden in Ohio, but she still can't recall anything before waking in the hospital. The pursuer tries to use Luke's son as leverage, but Bianca and Luke foil his plans. His capture takes down a widely networked drug cartel.

It also brings up the final question of whether there can be a relationship between Luke and Coleen. This was written by a man, but it's still a romance at heart so the answer is obvious.

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Sister time will be taken whenever it's available

I'm so thankful I have a sister I like to spend time with and am grateful we're only three hours away from each other.

We recently went on a little adventure to Minneapolis. Having discussed many options, like driving separately, or meeting up in Eau Claire, we eventually decided she should come home to Wittenberg and we'd drive together from here.

Note: my siblings moved away from home years ago, but I still refer to



MIRIAM NELSON

Nelson Manor as "home" for them. I'm almost certain they appreciate it and if not, at least they're too kind to correct me!

Coming "home" takes more sacrifice on her part than on mine since she needs to drive three hours out of her

way. The upside is we get to spend the time to and from Minneapolis to ourselves, uninterrupted and set our own leisurely pace.

We were heading up to see the eighth rendition of those crazy church basement ladies in the musical production of "Hark the Basement Ladies Sing!" and to prepare ourselves, we listened to Christmas music all the way. Who knew there were so many versions of "Jingle Bells?" Yikes.

There's a cheese place we like to shop at in Thorp, so we always allow time for that. Why live in Dairyland if you're not going to enjoy the bounty it provides? I love how they've made the store/restaurant/farm a destination. I love even more that Nueske's and Country Fresh Meats have products there.

For some reason, I take great pride in seeing our local products at other destinations. It's like an invitation to come visit our area.

My sister and I are very different in some ways. She's thoughtful, organized and methodical, and I'm more of a fly by the seat of my pants, life is a big stage for improv kind of gal. Since we had declared this day our adventure

day, we veered off the beaten path to see what downtown Boyd looks like. We learned a lot – there's a beautiful Victorian home just as you enter Boyd. We also learned we hadn't missed much by not seeking out downtown Boyd on our many travels past it.

We got to our destination in time to have a leisurely lunch at a favorite restaurant across the street from the theater. As luck would have it, we ran into my friend Janet Letnes Martin, one of the authors of the material that sparked the Church Basement Ladies musicals. Had we stuck with our original plan to stay overnight we probably would have had just a few minutes to spend with her at the party after the show, sharing her with the audience.

One thing my sister and I share is our sense of humor. Some might offer that we are both easily amused — I'll not deny that. We are also not easily offended, so that covers a lot of humor territory. The very best thing about hanging out with my sister is not the shows we see, the places we go or even the people we meet. The best thing is the time spent together, being goofy, solving the world's problems, and sharing dreams.

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Berndt moves into Birnamwood principal post

Experiences make for an interesting career path

By **MIRIAM NELSON**
News Editor

Editor's note: *The Enterprise & News recently chatted with Randy Berndt, who has made the transition from dean of students to principal at Birnamwood Elementary and Middle School.*

Q: What is your work/education background?

A: I earned my bachelor's degree at UW-Madison in agricultural journalism. When I couldn't find a writing job, I landed a job as an auto parts manager at Dobbe Motors, a Chevrolet dealership in Rosholt. I really didn't know a hubcap from a gas cap, but I needed a job in the area as my fiancée was going to school at UW-Stevens Point.

After we got married, Jackie and I moved to Wittenberg where she started teaching in Birnamwood, and I went to work as an auto mechanic at Wittenberg Ford Mercury. I landed a reporting job at the Shawano Leader a couple of years later and stayed there until we had a child, and I began working as a stay-at-home dad.

My time as a stay-at-home dad lasted seven years, and during that time I served as program manager for Tigerton Main Street, a downtown revitalization effort. I also did some freelance writing and sold fine art photographs. When our daughter, Jenni, started school, I was hired as a long-term sub in Wittenberg. I enjoyed working with students who had disabilities and went back to school to get my teaching license.

I was hired by Marathon County Special Education and worked for 11 years in Rosholt as a middle/high school special education teacher. While in Rosholt, I earned my master's degree at Montana State University in Bozeman, which is a great place to go to school.

I took a self-imposed sabbatical after the 2012-13 school year and started a fly fishing guide service in the U.P. I spent winters working as a long-term sub, first in Gresham and then in both Birnamwood and Wittenberg.

It didn't take long to learn that spending weeks away from Jackie six months out of the year wasn't exactly



RANDY BERNDT

living the dream, so I took a full-time position as a special education teacher. This year, I was named dean of students for both the Birnamwood and Wittenberg elementary/middle schools before being named principal in Birnamwood.

Q: Where are you from, and who makes up your family?

A: I am originally from Plymouth, Wisconsin. Jackie and I met at the Hancock Experimental Station where we both worked during the summer. I worked for a soils professor from Madison; she worked for the farm tending research plots. I like to say we were an experiment and still are after more than 30 years of marriage.

After Jackie earned her degree, we moved to Wittenberg where she has worked for the district her entire career, starting as a middle school teacher, teaching fourth grade, then second until moving into her current job as literacy coordinator. We have one daughter, Jenni, who is the band director in Auburndale. Jenni is married to Sam Nueske, who is a Wittenberg native (son of Bill and Kristy). Jenni and Sam have a son named Cameron, whom his grandparents spoil just because they can.

Q: What's your basic philosophy for learning, and how does that apply to your new role as principal?

A: I love learning and have earned either a new degree or a new education license in every decade of my life since graduating high school. I have lost count of how many universities I have earned credits from, but I think it's seven or eight.

That's why it hurts me when a student says he or she doesn't like school. Nothing makes me feel worse than a student who does not like to come to school. I take that personally. Thus, my goal is to create a learning environment that students want to be a part of and want to be present for. As principal, I also have to make sure I create an environment where my staff feels comfortable and wants to come to school every day.

Q: Who or what was the inspiration for you becoming a principal?

A: I never intended to be a teacher, much less an administrator, so that's

a hard question to answer. I think the easiest way to answer it is with a story.

I had been teaching for two days when I met Tom (not his real name). I was walking down the hall when I saw a kid kick a hacky sack up through a ceiling tile. I asked the student to accompany me to the office. Tom replied with words I can't use in a newspaper. I had no idea who the student was so, not wanting to elevate the situation, gently tugged on the student's shirt and said, "Come with me."

Tom complied but had a plan. By the time we had reached the office 20 yards away to speak with the principal, Tom's story was that I had ripped his shirt as I drug him down the hall. Two days into teaching, I had learned a lesson: Never, ever touch a student. As I waited to be fired, the ultimate twist of fate occurred. The school psychologist called to inform him that Tom had been referred for special education.

During the next two years, without knowing, Tom taught me more about education than any course ever had.

He taught me to compromise. He taught me to give up some of my power and control to students in order to help them succeed. He taught me that students don't care about how much you know until they know you care about them. He taught me that students must see the value in the work in order for them to want to do it. In short, Tom had taught me my core beliefs about teaching.

A few years after Tom and I parted ways, I got an invitation to his wedding. At the reception, he thanked me for all I had done for him. I returned the thank you and ignored the puzzled look on his face. There have been many students who have benefited from Tom's teaching and, ultimately, I believe there are many students who have benefited from mine. I never intended to be a teacher or a principal, and now I can't imagine not being in the field of education. Certainly there are many challenges, but knowing you can have a positive affect in the lives of children is a powerful position to be in.

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¹New orders only. Minimum purchase required. Does not include material costs. ²Financing available with minimum purchase and approved credit. Mad City Windows & Baths, Inc. is neither a broker nor a lender. Financing is provided by third-party lenders unaffiliated with Mad City Windows & Baths, Inc., under terms and conditions arranged directly between the customer and such lender, all subject to credit requirements and satisfactory completion of finance documents. Any finance terms advertised are estimate only. Ask for details. New orders only. Not valid with any other offer, or previous job. ³With in-home estimate and product demonstration to homeowner(s). Limit one per household. Gift card given upon completion of demonstration to be mailed in by homeowner(s). Salespersons do not carry gift cards for security reasons. Allow 2-3 weeks after demonstration to receive gift card. Gift card valued at \$60.



Agent Jamie B

Medicare & Retirement

MEDICARE OPEN ENROLLMENT

OCT. 15 - DEC. 7

Call **715-201-1221**

Free Community Meetings!

**THURS, NOV. 21, 2019
2:00 PM**

Perkins Restaurant
1398 E. Green Bay St.
Shawano, WI 54166

**WED, NOV. 4, 2019
10:00 AM**

Glas Coffee Shop
511 N. Main St.
Shawano, WI 54166

CAN'T MAKE IT?

Give Me a Call:

(715) 201-1221