

# the IOWA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF hothot

**“Friends are  
the different  
thing,”**

**– Sembetu Dalay,**  
8th grader  
from Des Moines  
commenting on the  
variety of peers she  
met during ISD’s  
STEM Days.

## Getting a charge at STEM days Middle school doubles for first-time event

It was Amazon to the rescue.

ISD’s first science, technology, engineering, math (STEM Days) event was so popular among mainstream middle schoolers, registration closed early, and additional workshop materials had to be ordered ASAP.

Through ISD’s middle school faculty, dorm and transportation departments, a successful day-and-a-half event was born.

The ISD middle school enrollment of 14 nearly doubled, with 13 students from across Iowa and Nebraska registering.

Justin Cyboron, middle school science and math teacher, began setting up the event for ISD students last spring. It was quickly realized that the event could include mainstream students who are deaf or hard of hearing, as well.

Guest instructors from National Technical Institute for the Deaf and Deaf Kids Code provided on-site sessions in building lemon batteries, programming robots and creating solar-powered phone chargers.

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## Get your game on Nov. 30/Dec. 1

### ISD hosts basketball classic

Iowa School for the Deaf will take its turn hosting the Neesam Classic Basketball Tournament for a few midwest schools for the deaf. Iowa begins play at 3 p.m. on Nov. 30. All games will be held at the campus Lied Multipurpose Complex.

The Neesam Classic promotes sportsmanship along with a recognition of the athletic skills of the students who participate.

For schedules and livestream access, click [HERE](#) or visit [iowaschoolforthe deaf.org](http://iowaschoolforthe deaf.org). Click when the basketball header appears.

Guest students  
were from Council  
Bluffs, Omaha,  
Des Moines,  
Burlington, Pella  
and Ottumwa.



**Dashing through to show** – Students at ISD’s STEM Days programmed the Dash robots to show their coding skills. Above, Bobby Valdez Tarpein, a mainstream 7th grade student from Burlington, programs a sequence to send his robot through a blue tape maze.

Although the theme was academically-focused, participants also found time for the all-important social time.

"It was good to meet other kids," said Sembetu Dalay, an 8th grade student at Hiatt Middle School in Des Moines. "At my school, I see the same friends all the time." Dalay (who has been a camper at ISD) estimates there are eight students who are deaf or hard of hearing at her middle school.

Like many of the guest students, Dalay stayed overnight in the ISD dorms, and used ISD transportation to get her to and from her hometown of Des Moines. All activities and accommodations were provided to students without charge. ■



**Save lives! The ASTRA Club is hosting a blood drive Friday, Dec. 14 in the Lied Multipurpose Complex. Email [kwills@iowaschoolforthe deaf.org](mailto:kwills@iowaschoolforthe deaf.org) for an appointment.**

## Tasty tricks and treats



**Winning tastes pretty good! Sixth grader Ashley Vera Nieto is not only a champ at eating dessert, but her race-car driver costume complete with cardboard car earned her first place in the costume contest.**

### Fall's activities were deliciously attended

Fall ISD events sponsored by the student life department provided food and fun for both ISD and area mainstream students. At Vala's Pumpkin Patch, 11 area mainstreamed (non-ISD) students who are deaf or hard of hearing joined ISD day and boarding students. In all, about 80 school-aged students were able to enjoy all of Vala's famous games,

attractions and rides, said student life advisor Taryn Peterson.

### Bring back the bonfire

This former spirit week tradition had been missing for almost 20 years on campus, when the dorm staff revived it on Halloween. Younger students enjoyed their party inside, and the bonfire was reserved for older students (held by the campus barn). Peterson reports four non-ISD students attended.



The student life department invites area and ISD students who are deaf or hard of hearing to its holiday party Wednesday, Dec. 19 at the campus auditorium. Details are [here](#) or visit [iowaschoolforthe deaf.org/social](http://iowaschoolforthe deaf.org/social).

## Volleyball coach marks final score

"It's time for me to step away after 24 years," said Bobcat volleyball coach and ISD teacher Karen Lechner, who will retire at the end of this school year. "I leave with great pride and honor that showed, 'girls can compete.'"

Lechner thanks her girls through the years. Although the 2018 season was 1:18, Lechner had a rewarding career of coaching dozens of girls. She summarizes, "To all the young ladies who have crossed my path these past 24 years,

**all of you are somewhere in my heart."**

Her assistant coaches were: Nancy Pietzrak, Barb Smith, Beth Chadwick, Ashley Villaverde, Mike Bummer, Stacey Morgan, Katrina Landolt and Jada Hart. "Their wisdom and positive attitude towards volleyball is much appreciated," she said. Lechner also acknowledges the support of the dorm staff and administration.



**Lechner tallied her final volleyball stats this season.**



## Employee news

■ We express our sympathy to **Matthew Lee**, facilities, whose mother passed away in late October.

■ **Steve Gettel**, superintendent of ISD and **Gwen Woodward**, who oversees the 4PLUS program for Iowa Educational Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired (IESBVI) on the ISD campus both received accolades in October.



The Council of Schools and Services for the Blind presented

the honors at its national conference. Read excerpts from their nominations [here](#) or go to [iowaschoolforhtedeaf.org](http://iowaschoolforhtedeaf.org) and scroll down to view the Prowler.

■ **Deb Cates**, Ph.D., sign language program coordinator, presented The Influence of Sign Language Interpreter Skill on Student Outcomes at the Conference of Interpreter Trainers held in Salt Lake City, Ut. this fall. Her co-presenter was Julie Delkamiller, Ph.D., associate professor at the University of Nebraska at Omaha and former ISD faculty.



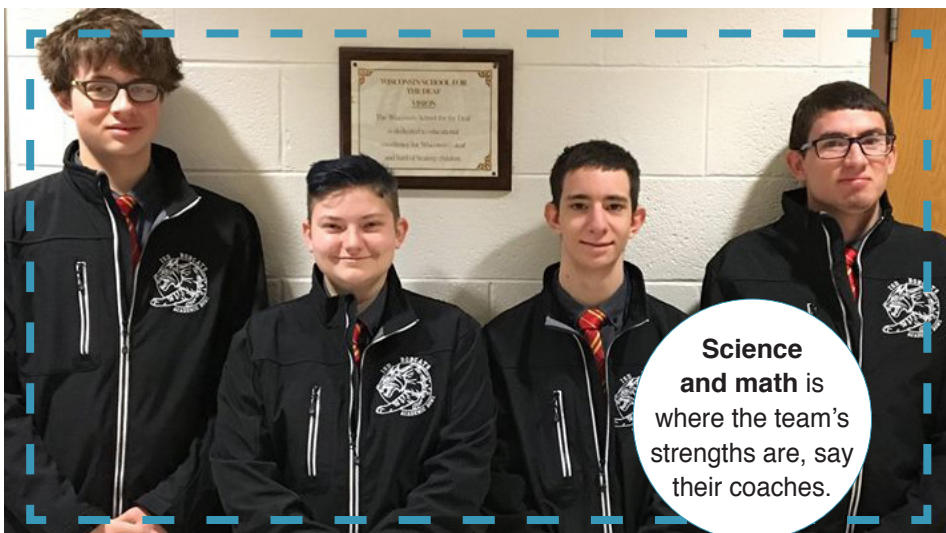
## Academic team advances

A 2-win, 5-loss performance by the ISD academic bowl team in October was enough to earn them a spot at Gallaudet's Regional competition in February. The team competed at the Great Plains Schools for the Deaf meet in Wisconsin in October.

According to co-coach Taryn Peterson, the team **beat the national average score for the screening match.**

"Overall, the team seemed to gel pretty well together," she said. Peterson said the record was improved from last year, and "we are encouraged by that."

Peterson and fellow coach Kevin Boyce will emphasize Deaf studies, language & literature and social studies with the team to build on their strengths in other subjects. Regionals will be held at Kansas School for the Deaf.



**Science and math** is where the team's strengths are, say their coaches.

**On to Kansas** — After wins over New Mexico and Missouri, ISD's academic team will compete in the regional competition in February. Team members are Travin Nipper, Sadie Kindt, Jessie Murphy and Cory Jacobson.

## Is it gross or gravity?

### Problem solving with spit



**All that freshman Karina Vallin needs to learn physical science is a straw, paper and... spit.**

Physical science students engaged in a problem-solving lesson which tested how the size of a spitball and length of straw effects distance a spitball travels. After each spitball launch, results were graphed. Numbers were averaged to get the best results.

"Lots of math- and they only thought math happened in math class!" said teacher Kristen Newton.

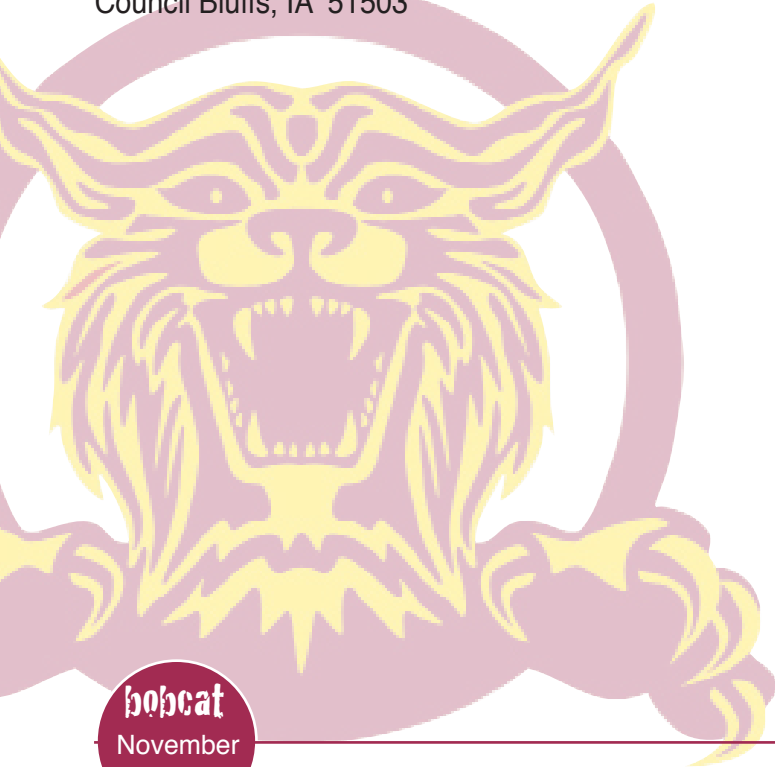
Students learned about angles of trajectory, parabolas ("Without even knowing it," added Newton), force and load.

"Some wouldn't touch their own spitballs," she said. "And some hadn't made spitballs before." Imagine!





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**bobcat**

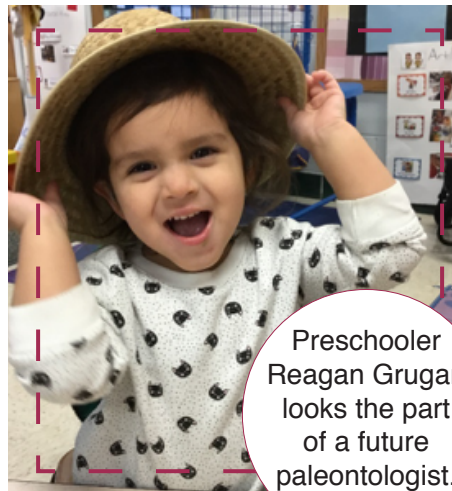
November  
2018

## The many hats of preschool language development

SD speech language pathologists Abigail Bradley and Jenna Frink recently sent out a parent newsletter about the topics covered and growth seen while working with the preschool class.

The two provide group activities twice weekly, focusing on language skills and concept development.

During the first trimester, activity themes included summer activities, shapes and colors, farm animals, sports, big/little, fall, fruits, vegetables, verbs, Halloween, community helpers and Thanksgiving.



Preschooler Reagan Grugan looks the part of a future paleontologist.

**Some new vocabulary preschoolers learned relates to police officers, construction workers, firefighters, cooks, race car drivers and paleontologists.**

Each topic is introduced with a related story followed by related activities. According to Bradley and Frink, the students especially enjoyed dressing up as different community helpers.

This trimester the topics will include emotions, who, where and opposites.

