

Foundation Newsletter

... because education is a shared experience

District 279 Foundation-11200 93rd Avenue North-Maple Grove, Minnesota 55369

Phone 763-391-7118

district279foundation.org



Our Mission

We are citizens in partnership with Independent School District 279 to support and enhance the district's dedication to learning for all.

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Weaver Lake Elementary Project FeederWatch

One hundred twelve third grade students had an opportunity to contribute to our local birding community through Project FeederWatch, a winter-long survey of birds that visited feeders in our area. Project FeederWatch is operated by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. The partnership between Weaver Lake Elementary and Cornell was made possible by a grant bestowed by the District 279 Foundation. The grant, which was a little over \$1,000, paid for *Birds of Minnesota* books, feeder set-ups, bird feed for six months and a bird presentation program in the outdoor classroom.



Throughout the winter, each third grade class spent one week a month tracking species and counting the number of birds that visited the feeders located in the school's courtyard. Every Friday, the students logged their data on the Cornell website.

Students practice both basic and advanced math skills throughout the project by examining their data and comparing it to data from Minnesota and other states. Students also used Excel spreadsheets to make graphs, learned how to use binoculars, how to set up and maintain a bird feeder, studied the varieties of feed and the types of birds they attracted and much more.

"Our project is unique in that third grade students are collecting real data that is used by scientists at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. By linking the activity to an actual research facility the students' work is valuable and authentic," says the grant applicant.

You can help make educational opportunities like Project FeederWatch a reality for area students through your donations to the District 279 Foundation. Go on-line to district279foundation.org to pledge your support or call 763-391-7118 for more information on this project or one of the many other projects supported by the District 279 Foundation classroom grant program.

Family Literacy Night at Fair Oaks Elementary School



Fair Oaks Elementary School created a program using funds from a District 279 Foundation Classroom Grant called Family Literacy Night. The evening was meant to equip parents with strategies for setting up a reading routine in their homes and engaging their children with books.

The evening began with a meal of sloppy joes, chips and drinks. Teachers modeled ways for parents to be involved in their children's reading and thinking processes using tools funded by the District 279 Foundation grant.

The \$660 grant paid for seventy five wordless picture books (\$8 per book) and the printing and laminating costs for both English and Spanish versions of "Cards on a Ring" (one set per family). The wordless books to assist English Language Learner with making connections between images and vocabulary words associated with them. The bilingual reader's response/discussion cards contain the same visuals and common language that teachers use to teach comprehension strategies within the classroom. By making this a family learning event, affirming to parents that we believe they have a significant impact on their children's academic success and empowering them with practical tools to do so.

Reading is Fundamental

The District 279 Foundation has been awarded a Reading is Fundamental grant for eight years in a row. Through this program the Foundation will provide funding for the purchase of books for 20 educational sites serving more than 14,500 students in our community.

Over the past eight years, the grant has provided more than \$520,600 and the Foundation match was \$164,000. Together these funds have enabled the purchase of more than 400,000 books since 2001.



The District 279 Foundation relies on donations from local businesses, community members and our school district staff to raise the matching portion. For more information about the District 279 Foundation or to make a donation, go to our website at district279foundation.org.

For more information on the Reading is Fundamental program, visit rif.org.

District 279 Foundation Partners are...

Osseo Book Review Club

Members of the Osseo Book Review Club presented a check for \$1,000 to the District 279 Foundation on June 11 to benefit its youth reading program, Reading is Fundamental (RIF). The donation was raised through the club's annual member dues.

The RIF program provides students in 20 Osseo Area School District sites with three books per year free of charge to enhance literacy and encourage independent reading habits.

"The reading program requires matching local dollars, and the contribution from groups like the Osseo Book Review Club truly make a difference for the children in our community," said Mike Looby, Director for the District 279 Foundation.



Left to right; District 279 Foundation Trustee John Theis, Osseo Book Club President Karen Jaeger, Trustee Don Waletzko, Book Club Member Joyce Nelson, and Trustees Don Kreye, Vickie Parks and Tammie Epley.

TruStone Financial Credit Union

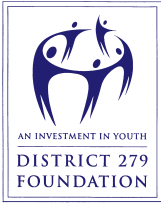


Pictured left to right are District 279 Foundation Trustees Tammie Epley, and Don Kreye, TruStone Financial Branch Manager Cathy Worth and Trustee Diane Autey.



TruStone Financial Federal Credit Union, formerly Teachers Federal Credit Union, presented a check for \$1,000 to the District 279 Foundation to benefit the Character and Leadership programs. The Character and Leadership programs promote and reinforce four key traits: respect, responsibility, integrity, and service.

NewGround, a premier provider of business growth solutions for financial institutions, made the donation in the name of TruStone in honor of the opening of their new Maple Grove location.



District 279 Foundation
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Maple Grove, MN 55369-6605

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Did you know you can designate your United Way donation to the District 279 Foundation? The United Way will allow a donor to designate their donation to any 501(c)(3) organization, like the **District 279 Foundation**. It's an easy way to make an investment in our youth.

Does your employer offer matching gifts? Most employers match gifts to educational foundations. Check with your human resources department to find out if your gift to the District 279 Foundation could be doubled.

The District 279 Foundation invites YOU to a special night at

PITTSBURGH BLUE
A special night to benefit the children in our community through the programs supported by the Foundation will be held at Pittsburgh Blue on Monday October 26, 2009. Enjoy fabulous hors d'oeuvres and learn more about the programs supported by the District 279 Foundation. The cost is \$30 per person and \$50 for two. For more information or to reserve your spot, please call Penny Laing at 763-391-7118.



**PITTSBURGH
BLUE**
STEAKS • CHOPS • SEAFOOD • BAR



Guest Gary Monson & *A Night Out*
Committee Member Sarah Monson

10th Annual *A Night Out...*

The *A Night Out...* event is an elegant evening at Rush Creek Golf Club in Maple Grove and will be held on Saturday, February 13, 2010. The highlights of the evening include a social hour, a silent auction, entertainment and a grand dinner.

We'd love to have you be a part of this special evening, but please note that each year this event sells out quickly. The cost is \$75 per person or sponsor a table of 10 for \$1,100. If you want to ensure a place, please call Penny Laing at 763-391-7118.