



Tiger Territory

Delano High School Newsletter October 2022

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October

- 10.....Conferences, 4-7 p.m.
- 12..Walk and Roll to School Day
- 17.....Picture retake day
- 17.....Kindness in Chalk
- 17..Levy listening session, 7 p.m.
- 19.....Two-hour late start
- 20-21.....MEA, no school



John Otto is a National Merit Semifinalist. See Page 2.



Homecoming court

The DHS Homecoming Coronation was held Friday afternoon, Sept. 23, in the Tiger Activity Center during the Homecoming Pep Fest. Members of the court included, from left, Nick Truax, Aiden Lynch, Luke Frank, AJ Rasmussen, Will Brown, King John Otto, Queen Sophia Sonnek, Mckenna Allen, Emma Kern, Ashlynn Kley, Kyla Link and Bella Molitor.



2022 theme: Back to Basics

By Barry Voight
Principal

Greetings, DHS families. This first newsletter article finds you all with great hope and optimism for the school year. While we are only completing the first month of school, we've had a great start.

Our theme for the school year is "Back to Basics." This means that we are focusing on providing engaging and rigorous learning opportunities for our students, as well as building relationships with and among our students to improve Inclusion and Respect throughout the building.

As many of you are aware, we conducted a school climate



Barry Voight

survey last spring. Our Site Base Leadership analyzed the results over the summer and came away with two major

takeaways. First, the results were pretty clear that last year was tough; more specifically, our school struggled with regard to two key areas of the TIGER Way: Inclusion and Respect.

DHS staff have already begun working to improve the culture and climate of our building. Our advisory classes have been restructured from previous years to solely emphasize the TIGER Way. As a staff, we've further defined the TIGER Way to be more precise and consistent in our enforcement and coaching of students. We've collectively cracked down on hall passes and

See Voight
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Otto a National Merit Semifinalist

Fewer than 1% of seniors nationwide qualify for the academic honor

By Paul Downer
Communications Coordinator

John Otto has distinguished himself as an outstanding student before, but his latest accomplishment might be the biggest of all.

The Delano High School senior is among fewer than 1% of seniors nationwide who have been named semifinalists in the National Merit Scholarship Program.

"All Delano High School is really proud of John and the work that he has put in over the last number of years," said DHS Principal Barry Voight. "He takes challenging courses and takes pride in his work. This is an elite honor."

Nationally, 16,000 students were chosen as semifinalists after taking the 2021 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. In February, those who submit detailed academic records, write an essay, receive a recommendation from a staff member, and earn sufficient ACT or SAT scores will become finalists who compete for around 7,250 National Merit Scholarships.

Otto is the fourth DHS senior in the last six years to be named a semifinalist. Previous honorees were Campbell Logan



John Otto, left, scored among the top 1% of students nationally on 2020 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. Here, he is recognized by DHS Principal Barry Voight.

in 2021, and Seth Thoele and John Weber in 2016-17.

"I had looked at all the scoring ranges and the predictions for where the line would be drawn for the applicants and I was hoping I would be in that group, but it was still a surprise," said Otto, who found out that he was a semifinalist while at the State Fair serving as one of just 22 Minnesota 4-H State Ambassadors – the highest level of leadership a student can reach through 4-H.

Otto said his favorite current class is Principles of Engineer-

'All Delano High School is really proud of John and the work he has put in.'

Barry Voight

ing, and his favorite subjects overall are math and science.

"What I really like about math – especially this last year after I took Calc – is how everything connects," Otto

said. "If you can figure out the basics of it, if you know your algebra and trigonometry, you can pretty much figure out the rest of it. You still need help from the teacher, obviously, but that's what I enjoy about it. It all makes sense; it all connects."

Chemistry and physical science are Otto's favorite branches of science.

"There is the math aspect of them, which I like, but there are also the applications to the broader world and how it can help you understand everything else," he said. "Learning in chemistry how aspirin is made and how it affects your body, for example – now I can understand that at the chemical level."

In addition to his rare honors from the National Merit Scholarship Program and with 4-H, Otto also scored a 35 on his ACT. He credited DHS math teacher Mandy Weinand and science teachers Stephen Schaack and Karen Hohenstein for helping him to excel academically. As a younger student at St. Maximilian Kolbe Catholic School, Otto said teachers Sherry Carroll and Sheila Barth were particularly influential.

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Voight

from Page 1

attendance. The initial results of these efforts are promising and we look forward to continuing building the culture of Teamwork, Inclusion, Grit, Excellence and Respect.

"Systemic growth towards educational excellence for EVERY learner" is our vision at Delano Public Schools. Our staff recognize that this vision is not possible unless every student and parent feels safe and welcome in our schools. We're off to a good start, but know that we'll keep working.

The other major takeaway is we discovered the need to completely redo the survey so it provides more precise and tangible information. Stay tuned for more information to come.



The TIGER Way

Teamwork is the combined effort of a group of people to identify and follow the best path.

Inclusion is the genuine consideration for others that values, supports, and welcomes everyone.

Grit is following through and persevering to the end.

Excellence is the result of high self-expectations, honest effort, and personal accountability in and out of the classroom.

Respect is being kind, courteous, and polite to each other, our community, and ourselves.

Middle School Play



Lion King

Nearly 50 DIS and DHS students in grades 5-8 joined forces to put on the annual middle school play. This year the production was 'Disney's The Lion King Jr.' The cast performed three shows Sept. 8-10 that retold the classic story. These scenes from one of the final dress rehearsals.





Zachary Hemmesch



Adelle Persian



Evan Truman

Scholars earn a surprise

Three named Commended Students

Zachary Hemmesch, Adelle Persian and Evan Truman were surprised with some big news during the Homecoming Pep Fest on Friday, Sept. 23.

Without prior notification, the three seniors learned along with the rest of the DHS student body that they had been named Commended Students in the National Merit Scholarship Program.

They earned a hearty round of applause along with National Merit Semifinalist John Otto, who is featured elsewhere in this newsletter.

The top 50,000 scorers nationally are divided into 34,000 Commended Students and 16,000 semifinalists in the competition for National Merit scholarships. While in rare company, Commended Students do not move forward in the scholarship competition.

"Those being named Commended Students have demonstrated outstanding potential for academic success," said a statement from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation. "These

students represent a valuable national resource; recognizing their accomplishments, as well as the key role their schools play in their academic development, is vital to the advancement of educational excellence in our nation. We hope that

'These students represent a valuable national resource.'

**National Merit
Scholarship Corporation**

this recognition will help broaden their educational opportunities and encourage them as they continue their pursuit of academic success."

Hemmesch is the son of Scot and Stephanie Hemmesch of Delano. Persian is the daughter of Glenn and Erin Persian of Montrose. Truman is the son of Chad and Shelley Ann Truman of Delano.

Merit

from Page 2

Outside of the classroom, Otto runs for the cross country and track teams, serves as president of the DHS National Honor Society, and competes in Science Olympiad.

How does he manage to consistently perform at such a high level academically? Otto said his grandpa's baseball advice from years ago has carried well beyond the diamond.

"He always told me, 'Keep your eye on the ball.' I feel like

that applies to more than just baseball," Otto said. "It's everything, having that focus, being able to get stuff done on time. If you can get something done on time and you can understand how it happened, it's so much easier to do everything else. Tests aren't designed to be that hard. They're only designed to show what you've learned. It's a chance to prove that you've learned that through your focus. That's the way I've always looked at it."

Next fall Otto plans to attend college to study mechanical or agricultural engineering.

He hasn't picked a destination yet, but is looking at engineering programs mainly in the Midwest. He also has not yet targeted a specific career, but will be looking to determine that focus in the next four years.

"There are so many experiences in college that point you toward those kinds of things, but I know I've never really wanted to work behind a desk," Otto said. "I like to be outside. I like to talk to people. So I think especially with agricultural engineering, the chances of finding something along those

Oct. 17 listening session on levy

Members of the Delano School Board host periodic "listening sessions" to discuss matters of interest with district residents.

The next listening session will occur on Monday, Oct. 17, in the Delano High School Tiger Den. All are encouraged to attend to hear information and share feedback about the district's operating levy request (see Page 5 for details).

Listening sessions are not formal meetings, and open discussion about the designated topics is encouraged. Members of the public are welcome to share comments, questions and suggestions.

Two or three board members, along with appropriate school staff, attend each session to share information and hear feedback. No official action is taken at the sessions, but feedback is shared with the entire board to inform members as they make decisions going forward.

The Oct. 17 listening session is the last one scheduled for 2022.

lines is pretty good. I've always been really interested in that."

Wherever he decides to go, Voight said Otto has the foundational skills and the track record he needs to succeed.

"He has an impressive transcript. He obviously has a tradition of success, and he's committed to his own development," said Voight. "John demonstrates the Tiger Way, specifically that excellence component, so we're really proud of him."

Otto is the son of Kevin and Elizabeth Otto of Delano.

Referendum 2022

The Delano School Board has called for an operating levy vote on Nov. 8

2021 result

\$970

Last fall voters turned down a school district request to increase its per pupil funding by \$600 to a total of \$970, the amount needed to prevent budget cuts for the foreseeable future. As a result, the district trimmed its budget by more than \$550,000 for 2022-23 through staff cuts, fee increases and more.

2022 changes

This year the school board has lowered its overall request and broken it into two questions.

Question 1

\$604.46
per pupil

The first ballot question asks voters to approve a new levy amount of \$604.46 per pupil to replace the expiring levy of \$404.46, an increase of \$200 per pupil.

Tax increase

\$100
per year

on an average home
valued at \$350,000

Question 2

\$250
per pupil

The second question asks voters to approve an additional per pupil funding amount of \$250.

Tax increase

\$122
per year

Total increase

\$222
per year



Question 2 is contingent on Question 1, meaning it cannot pass unless Question 1 is approved.

Potential outcomes

Q1 | Q2



If both questions pass, no budget cuts will be needed next school year. Some cuts may still be needed within the 10-year life of the levy, depending on state funding and enrollment changes.



Cuts of approximately \$360,000, or the equivalent of five full-time staff members, would be needed for the 2023-24 school year. In the last four fiscal years overall reductions have totaled \$1.7 million.



Question 2 can only pass if Question 1 is approved. This outcome would mirror the result for two "no" votes below.



The district would lose \$1 million in annual funding when the existing levy expires after the current school year. Resulting budget cuts would be the equivalent of 23 full-time staff members.

See more information at www.delano.k12.mn.us

Elsen named to all-state choir

By Paul Downer
Communications Coordinator

When 180 of the best high school singers in Minnesota gathered at St. John's University over the summer months for all-state choir rehearsals, Delano senior Grace Elsen was among them.

"When it comes to the choral and instrumental world, getting into all-state is a really huge honor," said DHS choir director Eric Conway. "It's very rare, very tough, to get into. To work with a collegiate professor for a week and get to create that kind of music, it is super impactful. It is an experience unlike any other."

Elsen, a senior, said she has been singing for as long as she can remember. She is active in Concert Choir and Sound Revolution, as well as at church. What does she enjoy about the choral experience?

"It's a mix of a lot of things that make it such an amazing experience and feeling," she said. "It's hard to describe what it feels like. The community of being in a choir is really amazing, the friends you get to make and the people you get to surround yourself with. And each individual section has its notes and parts, and then you put it together and hear that harmony and blend, and that never gets old. Music is all these individual puzzle pieces and then you put it together and it's



Grace Elsen

so seamless and gorgeous."

To qualify for all-state, Elsen had to submit a recording of one song of her choice, along with a required song and a scale. She was chosen for the all-girls ensemble of about 60 members. (The three all-state choirs also include one all-boys choir and one mixed choir of boys and girls).

The camp experience at St. John's had choir members living in the dorms, eating in the cafeteria and gathering for rehearsals with their director, Dr. Rosephanye Powell of Auburn University in Alabama.

"She was phenomenal," said Elsen. "She made it a life-changing experience with her talent and expertise."

The best part was the first rehearsal when the singers heard their parts come together for the first time.

"That was the most magical

moment for me," said Elsen. "We had all been practicing on our own for a couple of months, but then all the most talented singers in the state were there together in one room and we put all the notes together and made those beautiful chords and harmonies. That was the moment where I was like, 'Oh my gosh. This is so cool.'"

Elsen and the all-state choirs will perform a mid-winter concert at Orchestra Hall in February. In the meantime, she remains a standout performer for the Delano ensembles.

"Grace is a consistent pro. She understands what it takes to do well on things and she puts in so much extra effort," said Conway. "All the other students view her as a good example of how to act – how to practice and prep and prepare in our rehearsals and our concerts. So having someone like Grace be part of this program has been really, really special the past four years."

Elsen has not yet chosen a college for next fall, but said she intends to study nursing while staying active in choir on the side.

She is the daughter of Larry and Lori Elsen of Delano.

• The last time DHS was represented with all-state choir representatives was when Emma Sorenson and Autumn Langdon made it in 2020-21.

What is DHS PIE?

DHS PIE stands for Delano High School Partners in Education. All parents, students, teachers and community members are welcome to join PIE to help raise money and support various efforts for the high school students and staff.

How to help

Join us for a meeting or volunteer to help with any of our events throughout the year. These events include:

- Volunteer at the football concession stand on Oct. 7.
- Coordinating food, such as staff meals during conferences, holiday cookies and pies for Pi Day.
- Events like Teacher Appreciation Week and Senior Brunch.
- Fundraising for freshman sweatshirts and senior grad signs.

Meeting dates

Meetings take place at 6 p.m. in the high school office conference room on the following Mondays:

- Nov. 14
- Jan. 9
- March 13
- May 8

Please join us to help support our students and staff!

WCC champs

The girls tennis team defeated Litchfield 5-2 to earn the Wright County Conference Championship on Monday, Oct. 3. The victory marks the 13th conference title under Coach Kim Finn, who is holding the trophy in the center of the front row in this photo.



DHS Homecoming



Week's events

DHS celebrated Homecoming with a variety of fun events Sept. 19-24. Powderpuff football, he-man volleyball, pep fests at all three schools, the coronation, football game and Saturday dance made for a busy week.



Participation needed for safety, wellness

By **Steve Schaubberger**
Assistant Principal

Greetings, from Delano High School! It is "Back To Basics" this year, and we are very excited to see our students, parents and staff back at school. You can sense the fresh start and positive vibe.

First, we have updated our Safe Routes to School Walk and Bike Map on all of our school building's websites. Please take a moment to look at the map with your student to plan out a safe route to bike and walk to school.

Wednesday, Oct. 12, is Minnesota/International Walk and Roll (Bike) to School Day. It is an opportunity to build community and make healthy choices. We are also discussing other programs to encourage



Steve Schaubberger

healthy and smart choices like carpooling and park/ride the bus days for next school year.

Wellness

Second, we are looking for parents of K-12 students and community members to serve

on our District-Wide Student Wellness Committee. The District-Wide Student Wellness Committee's responsibility each year is to monitor student health and wellness issues related to whether or not the district is in compliance with the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 and the School District's Wellness Policy (#533).

The areas of school nutrition, health education, physical and mental well-being activities are examined.

This committee is made up of district parents, staff and administration. We will meet two to three times this year in November, March and June. We may use Google Meets as our venue and encourage participation. We use a three-year cycle; the past two years were district/

building goal implementation/monitoring/compliance years.

Please email or call Mr. Schaubberger at 763-972-7607 at the high school if you are interested in serving on this important committee.

Finally, the DHS building Student Wellness Committee is also looking for grades 7-12 students to serve on this important group that meets once per quarter. Please encourage your child to join and make an impact in the areas of school nutrition, health education, physical and mental well-being activities at our school. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Schaubberger.

Thank you for being a partner in your student's total school experience. *Together we are better!*

Veterans clothing drive begins Oct. 24

Delano Public Schools will conduct its eighth annual new clothing drive for veterans in need again this year.

The drive will begin on Monday, Oct. 24, and end on Veterans Day, Friday, Nov. 11. All donated items must be newly purchased.

The clothing drive will continue to support veterans who are hospitalized at local VA hospitals in Minneapolis and St. Cloud, as well as veterans who are undergoing treatments for post-traumatic stress disorder at the Eagles Healing Nest.

The VA hospitals provide assistance to veterans in need. These veterans, many who are homeless at admission, are typically hospitalized for 60 to 90 days. When they are well enough for discharge, the hospital staff works to ensure that their basic needs are met.

The Eagles Healing Nest has recently expanded its program to include female as well as male veterans. The Nest provides holistic treatment and therapy, education and job training.



Students display some of the items gathered in last year's drive to support veterans.

With the fall of Afghanistan, the Nest seen a significant increase in veterans needing and accessing services.

Please consider donating the following items.

For men: sweatpants and sweatshirts (L and XL), zip-up

hooded sweatshirts (L and XL), slippers or shower shoes, socks, boxer shorts (M-XL), colored T-shirts (all sizes), white T-shirts (L, XL); winter hats, gloves and coats; pajama pants (L, XL), jeans (32-38), work out clothes; deodorant, toothbrushes and toothpaste; and body wash.

For women: sweatpants, sweatshirts and zip-up hooded sweatshirts (M-XL); slippers or shower shoes; socks and underwear (M-XL); colored T-shirts (all sizes); winter hats, gloves and coats (L-XL), pajamas (M-XL), work-out clothes and sports bras, jeans (all sizes), deodorant, toothbrushes and toothpaste, and body wash.

• If you would like to make a monetary donation, collected funds will be used to purchase the items of greatest need based on the request of each facility.

Make your check payable to Delano Public Schools, and note "veterans clothing drive" in the memo. Thank you in advance for your continued support of this project.

Substitute teaching is a bright idea.
Pick the days that work for you,
and we'll see you in the classroom.

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Substitutes needed

Delano Public Schools is among many area districts seeking additional assistance from substitute teachers.

Interested, but not sure how to get started? Contact Teachers on Call at 800.713.4439 or see www.teachersoncall.com for information on training and more.

The application process is almost completely online and can be completed in less than one week.

Substitutes do not need to have a teaching license, although substitute roles are available for both licensed and un-licensed roles.

Substitute positions allow

you the freedom to choose where, when, and how much you work. You also enjoy work-free nights, weekends, holidays, summers, and other breaks throughout the school year. There are also opportunities for summer employment.

Substitutes can choose which jobs they take, and are free to explore a variety of districts or only take work from schools on their preference list. They can also choose the grade levels they work.

More information about training, requirements, pay, benefits, frequently asked questions, and more can be found at www.teachersoncall.com.

Announcements

Volunteer at our schools

Delano Public Schools welcomes volunteers and appreciates their efforts on behalf of our students. The district uses the volunteer management system from Raptor Technologies to screen and track volunteers in our buildings. This is the same system currently used for visitor management and ensures safety and security for students, staff and visitors.

The district's risk management policy mandates that all volunteers MUST be registered every year with the district prior to participating in any school-related activity, including field trips.

Registration can be completed at www.delano.k12.mn.us/district/school-services/volun and consists of two parts.

1. Volunteers MUST have a secure background check on file with District 879. The background check is valid for three calendar years and can be accessed via a link on the volunteer page of the district website. The cost of the secure background check is \$12, payable by the volunteer.

2. Volunteers MUST complete -- every school year -- a volunteer application form, which can be accessed and completed at www.delano.k12.mn.us/district/school-services/volun.

If you have any questions, please contact Wendie Scanlon at 763.972.6200 ext. 1312, or wendie.scanlon@delanoschools.org.

District Advisory Council

Delano Public Schools is seeking parent and community members to serve on the District Advisory Council (DAC) for the 2022-23 school year.

The District Advisory Council serves to ensure active community participation in all phases of planning and improving instruction and curriculum in terms of state and local standards. Through that work, the DAC provides recommendations to the school board regarding rigorous academic standards, student achievement goals, and measures consistent with the MN Statute B.11.

The DAC membership reflects the diversity of the district

and its school sites and includes teachers, parents, support staff, students and other community residents. DAC members must be able to commit to three or four meetings per year.

Interested parents and community members can request an application by contacting Monica Kunkel, Curriculum Coordinator, at 763-973-7601, ext. 1731, or monica.kunkel@delanoschools.org.

Walk and Roll to School Oct. 12

Delano Public Schools is participating in the national Walk and Roll to School Day on Wednesday, Oct. 12.

Local children and adults are welcome to participate in this celebration of the benefits of walking and biking. There are four steps to keep in mind if you or your students plan to walk or bike to school.

- Step 1: Look on the school's website for the DPS Safe Routes to School Walk and Bike Map.
- Step 2: Use the map to plan a safe route to "Walk and Roll" to school.
- Step 3: Practice your route ahead of time to see how long it takes. Tell your family what route you're taking.
- Step 4: Walk to school on Oct. 12. Leave earlier and dress for the weather!

Learn more at walkbiketoschool.org. Walk and Roll to School Day is coordinated in the United States by the National Center for Safe Routes to School.

Every Meal offers assistance

Every Meal, a weekend food program formerly known as The Sheridan Story, is once again available to DHS families this year.

The program is free for all families, and no qualifications are required for enrollment. No information is collected on participating families, and privacy is protected.

For more information, see the DHS counseling office web page on the school website at <https://sites.google.com/delanoschools.org/dhscounseling>.

To sign up, go online to bit.ly/DHSmeal22.

When to keep an ill student at home

By Tina Prior
District Nurse

When a student is sick, parents often wonder whether or not to keep a child at home from school.

If a child stays home and has the care they need when first sick, they will often get better faster. Staying home and resting will help the body fight the sickness. Staying at home is also one of the best ways to keep others from becoming ill.

Reasons to stay home include:

Reasons to stay home include:

1. Severe colds, coughs, or sore throats.
2. Eye infections, especially if discharge is present.
3. New skin rashes, especially if draining – unless medical opinion states rash is not



Tina Prior

contagious.

4. Temperature of 100 or more with or without symptoms of an illness.
5. Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or abdominal pain.
6. Any other sign of acute illness.
7. The student is waiting until results of laboratory tests

(i.e., throat culture, nasal swab, saliva test) are known.

8. The student is unable to participate in routine activities or needs more care than can be provided by staff.

9. The student needs to be given an over-the-counter medication to come to school.

Students may return to school when:

1. They are well enough to participate in normal school activities.
 2. They are free of all symptoms for 24 hours (especially vomiting, diarrhea and fever).
 3. Their temperature remains normal for a 24-hour period without the use of fever reducing medications.
 4. They have been on an antibiotic for at least 24 hours.
- It is often difficult to decide whether it is really necessary to keep your child home. There

are very few rules to follow when dealing with these variables. Hopefully these guidelines will be helpful to you in making this decision. Gone are the days when you should tell

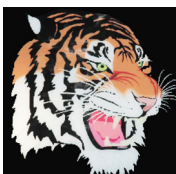
‘If a child stays home and has the care they need when first sick, they will often get better faster.’

your child “to push through” or “go to school and if you are not better go to the nurse.” Our goal is to provide a healthy environment for all children.

Thank you for your cooperation!

New staff at DHS

New high school staff members this fall include, front from left, Michael Haller (social studies), Brian Fredine (math), Miriah Huntington (special education) and Lindsey Mulligan (special education). In the second row, from left, are Cassidy Nelson (counselor), Brianna Dorr (social studies) and Claire Iversen (art). In the third row, from left, are Hannah Axelson (science), Stephen Nelson (special education), Anastasia McQueen (English Language Learners) and Angel Erickson (special education).



This e-newsletter is published by District Communications Coordinator Paul Downer. Contact Paul at 763.972.3365, x1911, or paul.downer@delanoschools.org. For more information, see www.delano.k12.mn.us, or find Delano Public Schools on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube.

