

# HOMER COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

## SECOND SEMESTER 2010-2011

# NEWSLETTER



### From the Superintendent

#### BUILDING PROJECT ON THE BALLOT

Homer Community School's Board of Education has decided to move forward with a building project bond election on Tuesday, February 22, 2011. This decision did not come lightly during these hard financial times. Homer Community Schools was fortunate to be chosen for a low-interest federal program called Qualified School Construction Bonds. This will allow Homer to leverage twice as much money for the project at the same tax rate. The program is only available for the February election and will be awarded to another school if Homer does not pass the bond issue.

The \$18 million proposed project will build a new high school/middle school classroom structure to replace the original two-story building. This structure will have larger classrooms with the space and tools needed for today's learning. The project will allow for upgraded technology, including wireless, so Homer students can continue to be competitive with their peers. Other essential updates will include improved safety and security of students by creating secured entrances that enter directly into building offices. By separating a bus loop from the vehicle traffic in the south parking lot we can create safer pick-up and drop off-areas for students.

The effect on the property owner will be a 2.2 mill increase for a total debt levy of 7.0 mills. The effect to an individual home is exemplified in the chart below. For a more accurate estimate of your tax impact, please visit Homer's tax calculator at [www.mytaxcalc.com/homer](http://www.mytaxcalc.com/homer).

Home Market Value	\$50,000	\$75,000	\$100,000	\$150,000
Average Taxable Value	\$25,000	\$37,500	\$50,000	\$75,000
Resulting ANNUAL Tax Increase	\$55.00	\$82.50	\$100.00	\$165.00
Resulting DAILY Tax Increase	\$0.15	\$0.23	\$0.30	\$0.45

In closing, I want to encourage everyone to make his or her voice heard and vote on February 22, 2011. The community of Homer has an opportunity to continue the great tradition of academic excellence. Please contact me personally at (517) 568-4461 if you have any questions. Again, thank you for making Homer 'The Destination District'.

*Rob Ridgeway, Superintendent*

### School Closings

The announcement of school closings due to hazardous conditions will be made beginning at 6:00 a.m. on:

- WUFN (96.5 FM) WSAE (106.9) WNWN (98.5 FM)
- WKFR (103 FM) WILX (TV 10) Q106 (106.1 FM)
- WWMT (TV 3) FOX 47 (TV 47) WQLR (106.5 FM)
- WLNS (TV 6) WLAJ (TV 53) WOOD (TV 8/TV 41)

### FFA/Agriscience

#### Winter/Spring Activities

Students at HCS in grades 7th through 12th are welcome to join FFA at any time of the year if they are interested in developing premier leadership, personal growth and career success through Agricultural Education.

#### JANUARY 2011

- 6 Parent's Meeting at 5 pm in the Ag Room
- 7 Jacket Essay Contest
- 7 Deadline for State Applications: *State FFA Degree, Outstanding Junior Applications, Proficiency Award Applications, State Officer Applications, Agri-Entrepreneurship Awards and State FFA Band & Choir*
- 15 Volunteering at the Recycling Center from 9 am to Noon
- 15 Alumni Meeting, 1 pm at VFW Hall
- 27 Pre-District Leadership Contests at Homer (only Homer competing), 3:30 p.m.

#### FEBRUARY 2011

- 3 District Leadership Contests, 5 p.m. at Homer
- 10 National FFA College Scholarships due
- 17 Regional Leadership Contests, 5 p.m. at Branch Area Career Center, Coldwater

#### 21-25 National FFA Week

#### TBA Winter Reward Trip

#### MARCH 2011

- 3 Deadline-Chapter award applications
- 3 Deadline for Homer FFA Alumni College Scholarship Applications

- 3 Parent's Meeting, 6 p.m., Ag Room
- 3 Alumni Meeting, 7 p.m., Ag Room
- 9-11 State FFA Convention (Wednesday – Friday)

#### APRIL 2011

- 16 State FFA Career Development Events – MSU
- 20-21 Regional Camp – Augusta

#### MAY 2011

- TBA FFA Awards Banquet 2 p.m. – MS Gym
- 12 Alumni Meeting, 7 p.m., Ag Room
- 13 Due to the State FFA Office: American Degree Applications

- 27 Plant Sale, noon-3 p.m. at school and 4-6 p.m. at Water Tower Park

- 28 Plant Sale, 9 a.m. to noon at Water Tower Park
- 28 Brunch set-up, 1-3 p.m. (at school cafeteria/ag room)
- 30 Pancake Brunch, 7 a.m. to noon
- 30 Plant Sale, 9 a.m. to noon, at school

#### JUNE/JULY/AUGUST 2011:

- SLCCO, POA Camp, Dairy Showmanship, Dairy Judging, Tractor Driving, Canoe Trip, Point System Trip, Fair Parking, Fair Booth, Chapter & Alumni Bonfire/Picnic, YPCS (Young People Citizenship Seminar) – week-long conference in Midland, MI, WLC (Washington Leadership Conference) – week-long conference in Washington, DC, Land Lab/Nutrition/Vegetable Garden

*Lora Finch, Agriscience Instructor & FFA Advisor*

### Elementary News

As we near the second half of the school year, we'd like to give you the following information so that you will be able to plan accordingly. As usual, if you have any questions or concerns regarding your child, please don't hesitate to stop in or call the elementary office.

#### HOUSEKEEPING

Just a reminder that children will need to stay on the cement during recess if they are not wearing boots and snow pants. We do have some winter clothing items that have been

donated. Please call the elementary office if we can be of assistance.

As spring approaches, please remember that weather at this time of year is very unpredictable. Please be sure that your child wears a coat to school every day. Even though the weatherman may predict a warm day, it is often still chilly during morning recess. We don't have nearly enough coats to loan to all the children. As soon as it begins to warm up and there are signs of spring, children who want to may leave their coat in the classroom. I want you to be aware of the guidelines I have given our recess supervisors. If a child wears a coat to school he/she must wear it outdoors if it is below 60 degrees.

In the past there have been questions regarding students wearing shorts to school. Please refer to page two of the Elementary Handbook regarding the dress code. It states, "Students should dress according to weather conditions. Boys and girls may wear shorts which fall near the knee level. 'Short' shorts and clothing that is disruptive to the educational process is not allowed." Avoid sending students to school in tops which are very short and show the stomach, and tops that are loose with lower necks which often aren't appropriate in the active elementary setting. When students wear this type of clothing they are often sent to the office to put a T-shirt on over it.

Watch for notices coming home regarding the process for ordering DVDs of all of our special events in the elementary.

#### Classroom Placements

If there are circumstances where you feel your child needs special classroom placement for the 2011-2012 school year, please call and discuss it with me before May 15, 2011.

*Rick Cooley, Elementary Principal*

### Life In The Middle

**School Fair** - The annual FFA School Fair was held on October 28. It was a tremendous evening full of food, fellowship and fun. Thank you to Lora Finch and all the class advisors for making this a memorable event for the entire community.

**Athletics** - Our middle school cross country, football, volleyball, cheerleading and boy's basketball teams completed their fall/winter seasons. Pep assemblies were held this fall/winter to recognize all of our student-athletes. We were very fortunate to have members of the high school band perform for us. It was exciting to see our entire middle school standing as one as the band played our school fight song! Winter/spring athletics are right around the corner! Go Trojans!

**Quiz Bowl** - On November 13th Reading played host for the annual Big 8 middle school and high school Quiz Bowl Competition. Thank you to Coach Nancy Lemmon and Coach Randy Shank and the members of our Quiz Bowl teams for their time and effort with this exciting academic event.

**MEAP** - Our MEAP testing window for the 2010-2011 school year was from October 12th through October 20th. For the sixth consecutive year we traveled to the Homer Community House for testing. Again this year we also utilized the Homer Presbyterian Church as an additional testing site.

A huge thank you goes out to the Village of Homer and Pastor Tim Marvil for their kindness and continued support of our students. It was a tremendous success!

**Helpful Homer** - Staff members have recognized 127 students for being "caught" in the act of performing a kind deed so far this school year. Five students monthly receive a special treat of having lunch with Mr. Salow.

**Positive Parent Contact Program** - Again this year our staff has been busy making positive contacts with the families of our students. I have challenged myself and the entire staff to contact at least one family per week with good news from school.

**CHAMP Club** - Back for a seventh year is our Homer Middle School Parent Organization the CHAMP Club (Caring, Helpful and Motivated Parents). We have had excellent participation this year. Our goal is to provide positive (and fun) learning experiences for all of our students. We meet on the first Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. in the media center. We would love to have you join us! It is a great time of fun and fellowship.

**Activities** - This school year our students have been able to participate in a variety of extra-curricular activities including; HMS Harvestfest, middle school dances, activity nights, M-60 Challenge Canned-Good Collection, Toys for Tots Dance, school drama production, athletics, FFA, Spanish Club, Big 8 Quizbowl and many more!

#### Middle School Upcoming Events

- CHAMP Club Meeting January 13 at 7p.m.
- HMS Spelling Bee January 28
- HMS Winter Extravaganza January 28
- Ski Trip to Timber Ridge February
- Building Project Vote February 22
- HMS Read-A-Thon March
- Jackson Area Spelling Bee March
- March is Reading Month Activities March
- Fifth Grade Class Trips May
- Sixth Grade Campout May
- End of Year Dance May
- Seventh Grade Chicago Trip June
- Eighth Grade Michigan Adventure Trip June
- Eighth Grade Celebration June 2
- Last Day of School! June 10 at 11 a.m.

Thank you so much for all of the great things that you do for our kids. Your continued support of our students, staff and programs is why Homer Middle School is and will always be "A Great Place to Learn." If you have any questions or concerns do not hesitate to call the school for assistance. Go Trojans!

*Scott Salow, Middle School Principal*

### Middle School & High School Choir Concerts

**District Vocal Solo and Ensemble** - February at Portage High School

**High School Choir Winter Concert** - February 28 at 7:45 p.m., Presbyterian Church.

**Elementary Spring Sing** - April 28 at 7:00 p.m., HS gym

**Middle School Choir and High School Choir Spring Pop's Concert** - May 22 at 6:00 p.m., Methodist Church.

### High School News

With the completion of the first semester exams, one half of the 2010-2011 school year is behind us. This school year has been very successful to this point, and continues to move at a very fast pace. It seems like it was just the other day that we were holding Freshmen Orientation and getting ready for

the first day of school.

The second semester is full of activities, highlighted by the administering of the Michigan Merit Exam (M.M.E.) for our junior class. This is the new MEAP test that all juniors in the state of Michigan will be taking. The test window for the M.M.E. will be March 1-3. Please encourage your child to get plenty of rest as they prepare for this important assessment. If you have any questions about the Michigan Merit Exam, please do not hesitate to contact the guidance or high school offices.

We will also be implementing a new program for the start of the second semester. "Club Success" will be kicked off starting on February 1. This is a program to ensure that high school students are turning in work and getting extra help during lunch hour. Students that have missing assignments and are not being successful in class will be required to attend this program for 20 minutes each lunch period. The program will run Tuesday through Friday each week. Once a student has shown improvement and raised their grade, they will not be required to attend. If you have a specific question about this program, feel free to contact us at the high school office.

As we kick off the start of the second semester, I would like to recognize some outstanding achievements from the high school. **Congratulations to...**

- Homer athletic teams for successful fall and winter seasons.

- Samantha Johnson and Logan Hurtado for being named Homecoming Queen and King

- Homer teachers and staff for continuing to make Homer "The Destination District"

As always, if you have any questions, please feel free to call me at (517) 568-4464. Go Trojans!

*Tom Salow, High School Principal*

### From the Counseling Office

**Attention Senior Parents** – FAFSA forms need to be submitted by February 14 (Valentine's Day) for anyone who wishes to receive financial aid for college. If you would like to fill out your form with the help of a financial aid expert, you can attend the FAFSA workshop at KCC on February 13 between 2 and 4 p.m. This is a free event and most of our senior families go!

**Seniors:** Please review the scholarship listings in the Stepping Out book. There are many scholarships for seniors and deadlines are approaching fast! Check the scholarship websites for most applications, and stop by the counseling office for the local scholarship applications.

*Kara Malone, Counselor*

### Athletics – Go Trojans!

After a successful fall campaign, congratulations are in order for two members of the Homer High School Girls Cross Country Team. Johnica March and Amanda Reagle represented the Lady Trojans at the State Finals held at Michigan International Speedway in November. Reagle garnered All State accolades in the last race of her freshman season. The future looks very bright for the female carriers as the team returns a plethora of underclassmen for the 2011 season.

With the temperature dropping, our athletes move their efforts indoors as competition heats up for our winter schedule. Coach Jim Huffman takes over the reins of the Varsity Boys Basketball Program after several years as an assistant and junior varsity coach. The Trojans look to lasso the Rangers on Snocoming, Friday January 28. New head coach and teacher Sarah Rayl leads the Lady Trojans into a very competitive conference schedule, highlighted by a pivotal league matchup January 18 against the Comets of Jonesville. Mike Eldred and the varsity grapplers entertain several area foes on Saturday, January 15 for the annual Caudill Invitational. Wrestling starts at 9 a.m. First year Varsity Competitive Cheer Coach Jen Huff looks to dazzle the crowd and judges on January 24 during the Homer Invitational. This is a make up from an earlier date that was snowed out.

The Homer Trojan Athletic Club will hold their annual Cash Drawing on February 26 this year. Mark your calendars and help our athletic teams by supporting this valuable fundraiser. The Trojan Athletic Club is always encouraging new membership at their monthly meetings the second Wednesday of every month in room #154. Come join the fun.

In closing, sportsmanship is something that we strive for throughout our athletic programs and school. Please be a positive role model for our student-athletes in the stands and at home.

*Drew Bordner, Athletic Director/Curriculum Director*

### Board of Education Meetings

The Homer Board of Education will hold regular meetings on the third Monday of the month at the HS/MS Media Center at 403 S. Hillsdale in Homer beginning at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting Dates: January 17, 2011; February 21, 2011; March 21, 2011; April 18, 2011; May 16, 2011 and June 20, 2010

Information about the Board of Education along with a listing of dates for committee meetings is located on the website at [www.homerschools.net](http://www.homerschools.net).

### School Calendar Second Semester

- January 17 MLK Day – No School
- January 24 2nd Semester begins
- February 11 Mid-Winter Break - No School
- February 14 Professional Development Day - No School for students
- March 17 Conferences 4:00-8:00 p.m. (Student dismissal 2:00 p.m.)
- March 18 No School
- March 22 Conferences 4:00-8:00 p.m. (Student dismissal 2:00 p.m.)
- April 4 Spring Vacation Begins
- April 11 School Resumes
- April 22 Good Friday – No School
- May 30 Memorial Day - No School
- June 5 Graduation Day – Ceremony at 2:00 P.M.
- June 8 Exams
- June 9 Exams
- June 10 Exams (Student dismissal 11:00 a.m. Last day of school)



Cyan

Magenta

Yellow

Black