When one watches the news regarding education in the State of Arizona, and listens to the debate over academic standards, student achievement, education financing reform, or myriad related issues, it is easy to focus on the negative and become fearful about the future. While these are critically important topics today, it is also important to reflect on the many strengths of our schools and community – the greatest of which is the relationship which has been nurtured between them. In times of transition, we can look to the strength of this relationship to guide us into the future.

In the face of today’s challenges to public education, the school-and-community partnership is one of the most important factors leading to high levels of school and student achievement, and it is an integral element of strong communities across the state and nation. The relationships of schools to the communities they serve exist at many levels – with students, parents, teachers, school leaders, community members, and local businesses and organizations. There is a synergy created by the community’s support of its schools, and the school’s support of its community. We are invested in each other, and it is that continued investment which will ensure our future well-being and success.

This issue of the District News and Views is dedicated to thinking abundantly in times of transition. We are highlighting our school

At Tanque Verde High School
Students Reflect on Giving Back to the Community

On Thursday, March 19th, a group of seventeen Tanque Verde students traveled to Amity to partake in a day of giving back to the community. Amity is a rehabilitation center, and a place that serves people in need. Students, along with Lindsay Ventola, English teacher, and Trudy Slanina, Community Based Instruction teacher, were asked to assist Amity staff in weeding the grounds and planting sunflowers within the community garden.

In addition to working in the garden, students had a rare and intimate chance to hear personal testimonies. Amity members reflected on their struggles, past and present, and imparted important life lessons to this group of students.

Students describe and reflect on their experience as an eye opening, if not life changing, day. For many students, this was the first school-based, volunteer opportunity.

When asked about the educational purposes of this day, Angelo Thomas, 17, remarks, “We volunteered to help Amity, but they helped us more. Amity is a very peaceful place…we pulled up grass so we had a place to plant sunflowers, a small addition to the amazing garden. This day was a breath of fresh air; it was my first time volunteering with school, and I enjoyed it. It is important to learn how to work with your peers, in and outside of the classroom.”

Students were asked to explain what they personally “gained” and took away from this experience.

Katie Renner, 17, explains what she enjoyed about this experience, “That it was...” (See Students Reflect page 8)
Tanque Verde Elementary Just Got a Little Brighter!

Tanque Verde Elementary has been a Ben’s Bells Kind Campus School for two school years. Kind Campus is a school-based program that emphasizes the importance of all members of a school community incorporating acts of kindness into their everyday activities and interactions. The Program was introduced to our school by Mr. and Mrs. Roberts as they are strong proponents of the message the programs conveys. Their family has supported us through their company, Agility Spine and Sports Physical Therapy.

Kind Coins are part of the program. At the start of the year, each teacher was given four coins. A child can receive a coin if a teacher witnesses them performing an Act of Kindness. The student should then observe others until they find someone acting kindly. Then they pass along their Kind Coin to a new person. The coins should continue to be passed around the school throughout the year.

Each month, students and staff members nominate children who have shown exceptional kindness towards others. A committee of Mrs. Roberts and five staff members read and discuss the nominations, then choose one student to be the recipient of a Ben’s Bell at our monthly Town Meeting. Last year, the committee started to put together a plan to install a Ben’s Bells, Be Kind Mural at our school. Agility Spine and Sports Physical Therapy sponsored the implementation of the mural.

Back in December fifth graders made the bright green tiles in the mural. Colleen, our coordinator from Ben’s Bells came to our school to direct the tile making. While she was here, we showed her where we planned to put the mural. At that point, we discovered that using ladders would be impossible due to a nearby brick wall. Scaffolding was the only viable answer. We needed serious help. Our hero of the moment was Lloyd’s Construction who immediately offered to provide scaffolding. Many thanks go to Brad and Holly Lloyd for rescuing us. We could not have done it without their assistance.

In January, 2015 several staff members and Mrs. Roberts spent the afternoon at the downtown location for Ben’s Bells. They painted the tiles the fifth graders had made earlier. Now we were finally really for our installation!

After a lot of hard work and coordination, our “Be Kind” mural was installed on January 30th. Working against an approaching rainstorm, and guided by Colleen, several teachers and parent helped install the tiles and grout the finished product. In fact, a two day project got compressed into one LONG day! Many to thanks to Mrs. Place and Dr. Price, who organized and provided a huge tarpaulin to protect our mural from the torrential rain.

Mrs. Frances Verbois, Librarian, Tanque Verde Elementary School

“Excellence is our goal, understanding our foundation.”
District Vision
TVUSD will be the premier choice for K-12 education. Our students will achieve academic and personal success in an ever changing world.
District Mission
TVUSD will ensure effective communication, collaboration, school partnerships and state of the art facilities that support our vision for students as well as benefit all constituents. Our balanced budget ensures continuity of programs and empowers growth.
Community Programs for Youth, Teens & Adults

Happenings in Adult Leisure Program

In addition to our usual class offerings the adult community program teachers have been bringing interesting opportunities to our community.

Projects with Tanque Verde art students

It is always a pleasure to host the Emily Gray art students from Ms. Grisez’s classes. Her pottery students, with the assistance of pottery teachers Linda Baker and Karen Reifschneider, made butterflies that were fired in the high fire gas kiln and are now adorning the fence near the community center.

Melanie Abel, one of our fiber teachers, is conducting a weaving project with some of the Emily Gray art classes after which we will loan them a table loom to be used in the art room where students may create a woven project to hang in their classroom.

Special Interest Workshops - Mata Ortiz Event coming soon

Twice yearly, our program sponsors special interest workshops, one of which is the Mata Ortiz Event. For this year we will again be bringing our friends, a family of amazing potters from the village of Mata Ortiz, Mexico, as they bring wonderful examples of their work and the work of other fine potters from the village. Each Spring we offer a workshop, as part of this event, in the making of Mata Ortiz pottery in the traditional way. The workshop presenters bring clay (“barro”) dug from the ground in Mata Ortiz, traditional glaze (“pinturas”), cottonwood bark for firing “las ollas,” and the materials for participants to make their own brushes from a few strands of human hair. Previous pottery experience is not necessary. The workshop is two days long, includes lunch with the potters, a complimentary greenware olla to decorate, and it culminates in the firing of the precious pots in an open flame! This year this wonderful multi-cultural opportunity is scheduled for April 10, 11, and 12 with the workshop on Friday and Sunday and the sale and demonstrations on Saturday. More information may be found on the district website, www.tanqueverdeschools.org, under community programs, adult leisure classes.

Adult learning opportunities – Beat the Heat – Exercise your Creativity this summer

We are also planning a full schedule of class offerings for the summer months. This means that members of our community may enjoy the benefits of our first class facility and state-of-the-art equipment in air conditioned comfort throughout the summer. The classes are too numerous to list here, but we have daytime, evening, and Saturday options.

Please watch for our summer listings and online registration coming soon on the school website, www.tanqueverdeschools.org, by clicking on community programs, adult leisure classes.

Summer Fun in Youth and Teen Programs

Tanque Verde Community Programs for Youth, Teens & Adults was established in September of 2006, and over the years has offered a variety of classes such as martial arts, sports & fitness, academics, theater & fine arts, foreign language & culture as well as many STEM based programs.

During the school year classes are offered on a quarterly or semester long basis and usually take place afterschool. This enables students the convenience of being able to stay on campus as well as the opportunity to extend their learning beyond the school day.

Community Programs Summer Camps

For summer 2015 we will again be offering many camps in the month of June. Some of these include KidzArt, Japanese Language & Culture, Jump Rope with the Tucson Twist Its, Happy Trails to You Hiking on Mt. Lemmon, Kung Fu, Teams of Tomorrow Basketball, Musical Theater, Legos with Bricks 4 Kidz, & Young Rembrandts.

Registration for school year classes takes place each August, October, January & March. Summer registration this year begins April 8th and classes will range in price from $30 to $135 and are either one or two weeks long.

Tanque Verde Extended Care Program (Aka CC Club) offers before and after school care as well as a summer program starting the last week in May and ends July 24, 2015.

We are located on the Tanque Verde Elementary campus and offer students a variety of enriching learning opportunities through social interaction and fun activities.

CC Club has a low staff to child ratio and offers developmentally appropriate curriculum, homework help and many choices for active fun. These may include Science, Arts, Sports, Creative Problem Solving, Techno Kids and Gardening.

Our upcoming summer program is filled with fun and enhanced learning. Create a pyramid, build an aqueduct, make tortillas, train like an Astronaut, invent a solution to a problem, play balloon volleyball and program with Scratch.

Youth are divided by groups according to age for most of the time and experience in-depth learning within a subject area each week. We also take field trips to emphasize learning and some just for fun. Three mornings a week students choose enrichment classes so they experience learning with others who are interested in the same subject or enjoy the same leisure activity.

You can access our web sites via the Tanque Verde Unified School District main web page (www.tanqueverdeschools.org) and click on Community Programs and/or Extended Care. For questions please call 749-0147, email tvcommschools@gmail.com or office @tvecp.org
Dr. Douglas E. Price, Superintendent of the Tanque Verde Unified School District, will be resigning his position at the end of this school year, and returning to his home in the Phoenix area to work as the Superintendent of the Sacaton Elementary School District, in the Gila River Indian Community. Dr. Price will be greatly missed by those whose lives and work he enriched through his years of service here.

When asked what he was most proud of in his six years here, Dr. Price noted, “The level of student achievement, the support from teachers and the community that enabled that achievement, and the Superintendent-Board relationship that we have developed to help create capacity in challenging times.”

Doug Price has been a tireless advocate for our students, staff and schools. He has provided exemplary leadership in school and community relations. His engaging sense of humor, generous nature, and down-to-earth approach have allowed him to develop a genuine rapport with students, faculty members and staff; while his intelligence and vision have earned the respect of community members, as well as business, educational and political leaders throughout our community and state.

Ms. Kim Sharp, TVUSD Director of Human Resources, said of Dr. Price, “We will miss Doug - his energy, his visionary approach to leadership, and his expertise - these attributes have all brought our district to a new level.” During Price’s tenure, the district has excelled in student growth and achievement, and is rated an excelling, “A” District, ranked in the top ten public school districts in the state. Price attributes the strengths of the district administrative team, leadership from our school principals, and the talents of our dedicated teachers and staff to the district’s overall success. Educational advances made during his tenure include: promoting staff instructional development through Professional Learning Communities, initiating innovative curriculum strategies, developing technology pilot programs, implementing after-school tutoring programs for students in need, and ensuring effective, efficient delivery of student support programs and services.

“We sincerely appreciate Dr. Price’s years of service to our district and the selfless dedication he has shown us through our challenges and our achievements,” noted Claire Place, Governing Board President. “Doug’s enthusiasm and creativity are boundless, and he has instilled in those around him his belief in the value of thinking abundantly. All that he has given us, through his leadership and mentorship, will continue to guide and support our district, our staff, and our students well into the future.”

Price’s accomplishments include many initiatives which have added capacity and increased programs and facilities serving students in our district schools. Some of the more visible projects accomplished during Dr. Price’s tenure include: The new Emily Gray Junior High facility; the Adult Community Education Building, the Tanque Verde High School Gymnasium and Classroom Buildings; the district-wide TEP/Solon Solar Power Project (at no cost to the district); the TVHS Greenhouses and hydroponic and aquaponic organic gardening projects; the Annual TVUSD Make a Difference Day Community Service Programs (utilizing well over 200 volunteers annually to accomplish needed facilities maintenance and improvement projects).

Dr. Douglas Price’s last day at the helm of TVUSD will be June 30, 2015, but his legacy will remain with us always.

A.J. Malis Named as TVHS Principal

A.J. Malis has been selected as the new Tanque Verde High School Principal. Mr. Malis is a veteran administrator currently serving as the Assistant Principal at Ironwood Ridge High School in the Amphitheater School District. Malis will begin his tenure at Tanque Verde High School on July 1, 2015.

Mr. Malis began his teaching career at Salpointe Catholic High School in 1999 where he taught chemistry and physics. He was also employed as the Girls Head Volleyball Coach and the Director of the Salpointe High School Girls Volleyball Program. After that, he taught AP Chemistry and honor science classes at Palo Verde High School in the Tucson Unified School District for eight years. In 2011, Mr. Malis moved into the Amphitheater School District as the assistant principal at Amphitheater Middle School. Since 2012, Mr. Malis has served as an Assistant Principal at Ironwood Ridge High School.

Malis received his Bachelor of Science Degree in Chemistry at the University of Arizona in 1994 and his Master of Education Degree from Northern Arizona University in May 2013. A.J. Malis is the Director of the Zona Volleyball Club, Incorporated, a non-profit volleyball club located in Tucson. Malis has served as the director since 1995.

“I’m absolutely excited to be named as the Principal. I am honored to have been chosen to be a part of this very successful high school. I am looking forward to my association with and to begin my work with the Tanque Verde High School students, staff and parents,” Mr. Malis noted when accepting the position.
District Update: District Plans Next Year’s Budget

As the Arizona State Legislative session winds down, traditional school districts and public charter schools are taking note of how their school budgets will be affected for the upcoming school year now that the Governor has signed off on the Legislature’s 2015-16 education budget. Tanque Verde Unified School District is no exception and is beginning to frame up its SY 15-16 budget.

As part of the education funding, the State Legislature added inflationary dollars to the Base Support Level (BSL) for both traditional and public charter schools with just over a 1.59% increase. The Governor’s budget included $74 million in the public education budget as a one-time down payment on the inflationary lawsuit, currently being negotiated by the state and the education agencies addressing the issue on behalf of public schools. Additionally, the Tanque Verde Unified School District has had an increase of nearly 90 students from the previous school year and this increase adds BSL funding in next year’s budget. These funding factors, along with the passage of the 15% M&O Override, approved by TVUSD voters in November 2014, positively impact the school district’s budget.

Conversely, there are several factors negatively impacting the District’s SY 15-16 budget. The State Legislature has mandated the discontinuation of all school district sponsored charter schools established after 2012. The Legislature has also mandated an additional five percent cut in the District Additional Assistance funds for all traditional school districts and charter schools. Medical insurance costs will be increasing next year, and the school district is working with its insurance broker to mitigate a projected 10% increase as best it is able for its employees. As a result of these dynamic financial factors, the Tanque Verde School District is projecting much the same budget for the 2015-16 school year compared to the 2014-15 school year.

“We are very fortunate that our constituents passed the M&O Override in November,” said Dr. Douglas Price. “These local tax dollars will help fund the programs and people that continue to keep our schools performing well.” This year’s budget was $12.20 million and next year’s budget is projected to be $12.26 million, according to TVUSD Business Manager Adam Hamm.

“Our schools are nearly at capacity, so we won’t see the kind of growth we have over the last five years. The high school will grow as a smaller Senior Class exits (111 students) and a new Freshman class enters (approximately 150 students),” added Superintendent Price.

Board President Claire Place noted, “We will honor the commitments we made to maintain the $1,000 increase in certified staff pay and implement the two percent increase in classified staff pay beginning in the 2015-16 school year.” She also noted, “We pledge to deal with technology, transportation and safety as best we are able. With the mandated 5% cut to all district budgets, we will have to be creative in attending to our increasing technology, transportation and ongoing maintenance and safety needs. That mandated cut took away funds that may have otherwise helped us move more quickly in some of these matters.”

According to Dr. Price, “We are standardizing our computer purchases now that we know more about the state-mandated testing. We will purchase and implement more Chromebook carts on each campus. Additionally, we have been working with our Transportation Department in attending to the acquisition of additional buses for our fleet. Our activities participation has grown and the demand for bus transportation is increasing for both special needs transport and for sports and other field trips. Facility maintenance, mainly roof repair and AC unit replacement and repair, is on top of the list for our summer work,” added Price. The District may add surveillance equipment on a limited scale and may add lock replacement hardware on at least one campus. Additional and/or replacement fencing will begin being installed on a limited basis this summer at the elementary schools.

“Through the years our teachers have done an outstanding job of teaching reading and attending to the needed interventions in helping our students improve these skills. There will be more demand for mathematics interventions with the advent of the new Arizona College and Career Readiness Standards. Although our math scores are high, we anticipate that we will see a greater need for student support in this area,” said Dr. Price. “More math and technology support are two areas that our teachers are calling out for more support. We receive limited Title I federal funds, so any additional help in math intervention will have to be carved out of our local M&O budget,” noted Price. “We will also need to help our teachers and students with more technology support. We would like to see Technology Integrated Specialists working with students and teachers throughout the district. As we move to more digital curriculum formats, we will need the kind of technology support that will help our teachers and students seamlessly use technology in their classrooms.”

Thinking Abundantly (Continued from page 1)

and community partnerships, and announcing some important transitions occurring in our district. We are also proud to feature some of the many examples of our student and staff achievements. We welcome you to become involved with our schools, and invite you to attend our academic and fine arts showcases, performing arts programs and athletic events, or enrich your summer experience by enrolling in any of the Tanque Verde Youth, Teen and Adult Community Education classes. We hope to see many community members at the Taste of Tanque Verde, on Saturday, April 25th and at the Graduation Ceremony for the TVHS Class of 2015, on Wednesday, May 20th. Thank you for your support of our schools.
TVUSD Students STEAM Ahead at SARSEF
Many Awards Won at the Southern Arizona Regional Science and Engineering Fair

At Tanque Verde Elementary and Agua Caliente Elementary Schools, students are introduced to the scientific process as early as kindergarten. They are encouraged to apply the scientific process by doing a science fair project. Both schools hold a “science movie night” in the fall to kick off the science fair season. The elementary schools invite staff from the Southern Arizona Regional Science and Engineering Fair (SARSEF) to speak to parents and their children about doing a project. School science fair coordinators also have project guides and other resources available for students and their parents. This year our schools added the engineering design process so students had the opportunity to select an engineering problem to solve in addition to the researching and testing a science question. Over 200 projects were completed at each of the elementary schools.

At Emily Gray Junior High, all students in the challenge science classes in 7th and 8th grade spend months working on a science fair project. Out of 65 Science projects submitted by the EGJH Challenge Science students, judges at the EGJH Science Fair selected ten to send to SARSEF to represent our school. Out of the ten projects submitted to SARSEF, seven won Grand Awards with two of those projects winning additional sponsored awards.

This was an amazing year for our district students at SARSEF. ACES had 14 winners of 18 submitted, TVES had 13 out of 20 submitted, and EGJH had 7 winners of 10 submitted. That’s 34 total projects, or approximately 70% of projects entered, that won one or more awards.

All schools bring in professional scientists and engineers to judge the student projects. Some of the professions include a biologist, ecologist, geologist, medical staff, oceanographer, architect and engineer. The judges follow the same judging criteria used by judges at SARSEF. The top rated projects are the school winners selected to enter their projects at SARSEF. The student projects ranked below the top level become the honorable mentions.

Award Winning Science Teachers and Programs in TVUSD – ACES was distinguished as the SARSEF Elementary School of the Year in 2014. TVES had honors as the SARSEF Elementary School of the Year in 2011 and 2012. ACES Fourth Grade Teacher Ms. Svea Anderson was awarded the Elementary School Science Teacher of the Year in November, 2014 by the Arizona Science Teachers Association. EGJH Science Teacher Ms. Leanna Stetson received the National Science Teachers Association’s Maitland P. Simmons Memorial Award for New Teachers in March, 2015. TVHS chemistry teacher Dr. Grazyna Zreda was selected by the Southern Arizona Section of the American Chemical Society (ACS) in April 2014 as the Outstanding High School Chemistry Teacher of the Year.

SARSEF award winners will be presenting their projects to the Governing Board at the April 23rd meeting.
Leanna Stetson, Science teacher at Emily Gray Junior High School, has received some extraordinary recognition for her hard work. Ms. Stetson was selected by the National Science Teachers Association to receive the Maitland P. Simmons Memorial Award for New Teachers.

As a Maitland P. Simmons Memorial Award recipient, she received a trip to attend the NSTA National Conference in Chicago from March 12th - 15th and a check for $800. The award was presented during the NSTA National Conference at the NSTA Teacher Awards Gala on Friday, March 13th, at the Palmer House Hotel in Chicago.

Ms. Stetson reflects on her observations and feelings at the conference: “Staring at a sea of science... but words fail me...it was so much more than that. In addition, the Windy City during St. Paddy’s day...the Chicago River was dyed green to celebrate... architecture...food...oh my, the food...Bill Nye, the Science Guy, Einstein’s Birthday party... free resources...real penguins, a sloth, a screech owl... vendor sponsored dissection labs and freebies galore... On award night, I felt like I was at the “Oscar’s for Science Teachers!” Amazing!

I had the opportunity to thank people who helped me be the teacher I am today...met new people and new ways of thinking about teaching science... it was an experience of a lifetime that could not have been possible without this award.”

Leanna Stetson
National Science Teachers Association
Maitland P. Simmons Memorial Award Winner

Svea Anderson
Elementary School Science Teacher of the Year

The Arizona Science Teachers Association has announced its winners for the 2014 Teacher of the Year Awards. The winning teachers have demonstrated the scientific attitudes, skills, and knowledge to guide students in 21st Century learning and STEM education in Arizona. Their classroom practices and leadership have singled them out as highly effective teachers of science. Tucson’s own Svea Anderson was named the Elementary School Science Teacher of the Year. Ms. Anderson is an Elementary School instructor at Agua Caliente Elementary School in Tucson. She was honored by the Arizona Science Teachers Association on November 7, 2014 at the annual ASTA Conference located at the NAU Phoenix Campus.

Svea is an exceptional teacher who particularly excels in teaching science, math and engineering to her students. She has instituted a “Science Friday” every Friday of the school year in her classroom. She received a multi-year NSF grant with the University of Arizona to have a biomedical engineering graduate student, a fish and wildlife biologist, and now a PhD candidate in applied mathematics to teach math and science every week to her students. Every Friday they have a wonderfully interactive and engaging science curriculum where the students thrive on their experiences. One of the primary goals of the partnership is to show students that mathematics is present in nearly every aspect of life including art, nature and science. For example, to illustrate the mathematics principles present in many parts of nature, the students have investigated the Fibonacci sequence. They completed scientific observations on pine cones, daisies, sunflowers, pineapples, and artichokes. Fibonacci numbers are present in each of these objects. By observing the physical objects, not only the students learned about the mathematical principle, but their world view was expanded.

Part of Svea’s desire to make science come alive for her students is taking advantage of all there is to offer her as a teacher from the National Science Teacher Association (NSTA) and the Arizona Science Teacher Association (ASTA.) With ASTA, she assists with matching new elementary school teachers in the state with experienced teachers to serve as their mentors.

Under Svea’s leadership, her 4th grade class is responsible for the school-wide recycling program which she incorporates into the science curriculum. She has also written and received grants to start up and maintain the elementary school gardens which are now in full swing at Agua Caliente Elementary.
a really great atmosphere and everyone worked together. My favorite part of the day was hearing member's stories and being inspired. They taught us that even though you've faced hardships and made bad decisions, you can overcome them and there's always someone willing to help you. I would love to be a full time volunteer at Amity. I would like to help them and get to know the members more."

Nick Cooper, 17, summarizes his day, "I enjoyed every part of the day, but I especially enjoyed hearing testimonials from the members. I love being in the presence of and inspired by people who are overcoming struggles. I gain a new perspective every time I volunteer, especially with peers."

When asked about her future, Karly Grimshaw, 16, elaborates that, "I took away such a sense of peace, and accomplishment. I love volunteering, and I liked being there with my teacher, and together doing something good for the community. Everything at Amity has flourished so nicely; I would love to return and be a part of the continuing growth."

Cisco McDonald, 17, also adds, "I took away that there is hope for everybody to continue and improve and get better, no matter what. I really want to volunteer again – wherever I can be of help."

Angelo Thomas foresees volunteering on a routine basis as well. Angelo states, "I'd love to volunteer again. This setting was better for me; it was a real learning experience that a classroom can't provide. What I took away? Is that there are places and programs that truly do want to help people that are struggling, with no expectations of anything back. Amity is one of those places."

In the span of a few hours, students learned much about living a self-sustained and healthy life; students learned about what it means to have empathy; students learned the value of collaborating and working as a team; students learned about decision-making. Most notably, students realized how much we have to give back.

Students continue to ask when they can return to Amity; some are currently arranging a weekend group dedicated to serving the Tanque Verde community. Karly Grimshaw summarizes, "I told my teacher I wanted to go back, I don't have a preference on where, as long I am helping out."

Lindsay Ventola, Teacher of English, M. Ed., Tanque Verde High School
Victor Bostick Headed to Nationals

Victor Bostick, a junior at Tanque Verde High School, will participate in this year’s National Thespian Festival in Lincoln, Nebraska this June 22-27. According to Jim Curtis, Educational Program Manager for the Thespian Festival, “This is quite an honor showcasing Victor’s outstanding talent.”

“Victor is the first Tanque Verde High School student to qualify to compete at Nationals,” according to TVHS Theatre Instructor Debbie MacKinney. “We are delighted that he will be able to compete at this level. He’s a great example of how our program is growing and improving. We are delighted that he has this opportunity,” MacKinney added.

Bostick qualified for the event after receiving a top rating on his individual event at the recent State Chapter Event for Arizona students.

Every summer, thousands of high school thespians brings their love of all things theatre to the Thespian Festival, a celebration of student achievement in the arts. Organized by the Educational Theatre Association and hosted by the University of Nebraska in Lincoln, the Festival is a one-of-a-kind, weeklong immersion experience in singing, dancing, acting, designing, directing, creating, writing, and memory-making.

The Festival features workshops presented by theatre professionals, individual and group performances, programs for technical theatre students, and opportunities to audition for college admission and scholarships.

The first Festival was held in 1941 at Indiana University. Festival was then suspended due to the outbreak of World War II, but resumed in 1947 and was held again in 1949. The next Festival did not take place until 1952 and was held every other year until 1982 when it became an annual event. Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana hosted the Festival from 1972-1993. In 1994, the Festival moved to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. In 2014, the Thespian Festival celebrated twenty years at UNL.

For the past six years the University of Arizona mall has been transformed into a small city of exhibitor booths where attendees meet new authors, discover literacy services in the community, get great deals on books (and other book related merchandise), and can learn of public and private school opportunities for students and their families here in Tucson and southern Arizona. The Tanque Verde Unified School District has been participating in the Festival for the past five years.

“We have really enjoyed our participation in the Festival over the years. Our volunteers have met so many wonderful folks and been able to showcase our school district in this very successful event. It’s fun to be a part of this very dynamic and energizing atmosphere. It’s heartening to see our students being honored as writers and artists, too. Each year we’ve had a number of students celebrated for their academic and artistic efforts,” stated Douglas Price, Superintendent of the Tanque Verde Schools.

Students Honored

Andrew Smith, second grader at Agua Caliente Elementary School (ACES), was named as a finalist in the Festival of Books ‘Young Authors Competition’ this year. He received the honor from Mayor Rothschild at the Festival awards ceremony on March 14, according to his teacher Ms. Meg Wilson.

Daniel Homoki and Brett Lewis were also honored at the Festival this year as Festival of Books 2015 Young Illustrator winners. Mrs. Alicia Moreno, ACES Art Teacher, said, “Daniel is a second grader at ACES and Brett is in the fourth grade. We are so very proud of these students for their artistic effort.” Each received a $100 gift certificate to Sarnoff Art Supply and they, too, received their awards from the Mayor.

“We see our participation in the Festival as an opportunity to thank Tucson for support of the Tanque Verde Schools,” noted Steven Auslander, TVUSD Board Member. “We are grateful to be able to highlight our schools and to celebrate our students at this impressive event.”

Students, staff, parents and other volunteers surrounded themselves with fellow book lovers and literacy advocates at this year’s Tucson Festival of Books. As one of over 250 literary and educational organizations, Tanque Verde Unified School District (TVUSD) sponsored a vendor booth at the two-day Festival held on March 14th and 15th. Volunteers shared TVUSD information with many of the 130,000 guests who visited this year’s Festival.

TVUSD helps Celebrate Tucson Festival of Books

District Students Honored

Students, staff, parents and other volunteers surrounded themselves with fellow book lovers and literacy advocates at this year’s Tucson Festival of Books. As one of over 250 literary and educational organizations, Tanque Verde Unified School District (TVUSD) sponsored a vendor booth at the two-day Festival held on March 14th and 15th. Volunteers shared TVUSD information with many of the 130,000 guests who visited this year’s Festival.
**TVHS Students Selected for the Carondelet Neurological Institute’s 2015 Brain Academy**

Savannah Ash and Keilah Robinson, two Tanque Verde High School Juniors, have been selected to attend the exclusive Carondelet Neurological Institute’s Brain Academy this year.

Each year, Carondelet Neurological Institute (CNI) at St. Joseph’s Hospital selects 20 outstanding students based on a competitive application process to participate in the CNI Brain Academy. This event provides students with the opportunity to take part in interactive learning in a state-of-the-art institute dedicated to the Neurosciences. This year the Academy will be held at the JW Marriott Staff Pass Resort and Spa on May 2, 2015.

Savannah Ash and Keilah Robinson, both juniors at TVHS, met criteria to be eligible to attend this year’s conference. Both students are outstanding scholars who submitted applications worthy of being chosen for this opportunity. “It was very difficult for the Brain Academy team to select students for this year’s academy, and we only had 20 spots available. This year was extremely competitive, as we received more applications in number and quality than in previous years. As an educator, we thought this speaks loudly to the quality of education our students are receiving in our community,” noted Melissa Shafer, Community and Government Relations Manager for the Carondelet Health Network.

**TVUSD thanks Tanque Verde High School Interim Principal Mr. Kevin Davis**

TVUSD would like to thank Mr. Kevin Davis for coming onboard late last summer and accepting the Interim Principal position at Tanque Verde High School. Davis began his work just as the school year got underway as a result of a late administrative resignation.

“We are grateful to Mr. Davis for his service this year as the Interim Principal at Tanque Verde High School,” noted Dr. Price, superintendent. “The beginning of the school year was especially difficult this past year. With the late hire of an interim principal, as well as the passing of a long-time and beloved Tanque Verde Elementary School employee, Kathy Slade, things were hectic and emotional at the same time. Mr. Davis stepped in and helped us in this transition, and we are fortunate that he was available to do so,” commented Dr. Price.

Mr. Davis assisted in the efforts for recruitment and retention of our potential freshmen students who are current 8th graders at Emily Gray Junior High School. “This year’s Hawk Fly-In for the EGJHS 8th graders and the Hawk Night program for potential TVHS freshmen and their parents were two great activities with which Mr. Davis assisted,” noted the superintendent. “His work with the junior high school administration and guidance staff helped pave the way for these two well-received programs,” added Dr. Price.

**Part Time Opportunities**

Are you a person who would enjoy working very part-time in our school district? TVUSD will sometimes seek very part-time employees, and at times, these positions can be very difficult to fill. It is not attractive to employees to drive out here if the position posted is only ten (10) hours per week. This is not typically an issue for district residents.

*If you or someone you know is interested in working at TVUSD, even on a very part-time basis, please call Human Resources (749-5751, ext. 4107) or visit our website (tanqueverdeschools.org) to see what is available.* As an incentive – all TVUSD employees are eligible to take one Community Programs class per semester with no registration fee!
Agua Caliente Elementary School Spring Carnival
Reminiscent of Old-Fashioned Community Fair

The Agua Caliente Elementary School Parent Teacher Group hosted an old-fashioned fair on March 14th, with activities that evoked nostalgic images of yesteryear. With fortune tellers, carnival games and pig kissing contests, students, teachers and their families enjoyed a leisurely afternoon of community and camaraderie. ACES Principal Sherri Rosalik was on hand to participate in the fun. Ms. Rosalik said of the festival, “It was reminiscent of an old-fashioned community fair, with lots of games that reminded us of bygone days. It was a celebration of a more innocent time.”

In keeping with the spirit of community, several local performers and groups entertained festival-goers, including Tucson Circus School, ACES Musical Theatre class, who sang songs from their upcoming musical “Annie,” Michael Howell - Illusionist, Maguire Irish Dance Academy, Ballet Folklorico, Dasia Greer - Soloist from Sabino HS, Tucson Twist-its, and TVHS Jazz Band under the direction of Tom Broccolo. Approximately 300 families attended the carnival, with well over 1,000 children and adults having enjoyed this outstanding community event. The event was entirely organized and run by community and student volunteers.

The ACES PTG is conducting a survey for feedback on the festival. If you would like to respond, the survey may be found on their Agua Caliente Elementary School ACES PTG Facebook page.

Awards Flow for ACES in Living River of Words

Pima County Environmental Education Program’s Youth Poetry and Art Contest

ACES had six students whose work was chosen for an award by the Living River of Words Youth Poetry and Art competition sponsored by Pima County’s Environmental Education Program! There were over 900 entries of poetry and artwork.

The children’s work will be published in a book which they will receive a copy of, and the original will be displayed at various libraries and parks around Tucson for a year. Students will find out whether they received an award for their poetry or their artwork at a ceremony on April 4th. An Artist in Residence and a Poet in Residence came to our schools on several occasions to provide enrichment and lessons to enhance the students’ experiences in environmental poetry and art.

The winners at ACES are: Richard Knott, Dylan Louis, Marina LaFoley, Andrew Schalk, Cade Young, and Josiah Santamour. Their work may be viewed during a traveling exhibition from June 6 – July 1, 2015 at Agua Caliente Park – Ranch House Art Gallery • 12325 E. Roger Rd.

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The Tanque Verde Foundation will be hosting its 28th annual spring fund-raiser featuring the “Taste of Tanque Verde” presented by Rockridge Construction. It will be held at the Forty Niners Country Club on Saturday, April 25th, from 6:00 – 11:00 pm. It is always a fantastic event with a spectacular variety of food and wine. Many of Tucson’s great restaurants will be serving gourmet treats to pamper your palate. Music entertainment will be on hand as the sun sets with the Catalina Mountains in the background. Enjoy the evening dancing under the stars. Silent Auction featuring weekend getaways, gift cards and more.

Tickets for the “Taste of Tanque Verde” are $40.00 a person or $75.00 per couple and may be ordered online at www.tanqueverde.org. Come have fun while giving back to the Tanque Verde School District. For further details on donations or contributions please contact Melody Leavitt, Event Coordinator, 520-270-5357.