

What's happening

Today

Parents are invited to take the night off during **"Parents Night Out"** at the Civic Center Gym. Children ages 6-13 will be supervised by city staff from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m., enjoying gymnastics fun and games. The cost is \$12 in advance or \$17 at the door. For more information, call 530-757-5626.

Saturday

The **Origami Club** welcomes all skill levels and ages — including beginners — to an afternoon of origami beginning at 1 p.m. at the Stephens Branch Library, 315 E. 14th St. in Davis.

It's **International Games Day** at the Stephens Branch Library, 315 E. 14th St. Come for a fun time and play lots of different games at the library, beginning at 2 p.m.

Nov. 21-23

Calling all young Jedi engineers! The city of Davis' **Play-Well Lego Engineering classes** teach participants to design and build creations such as X-Wings, AT-AT Walkers, R2 Units and Cloud Cities and understand the engineering concepts and principles that it takes to create them. The beginning class will run from 9 a.m. to noon and the advanced class will run from 1 to 4 p.m. each day. Each class costs \$110. To sign up, visit the city of Davis website at community-services.cityofdavis.org; click the "online registration" link and search for activity number 831400. Registration also can be done in person at the Parks and Community Services Office at City Hall, 23 Russell Blvd.

Saturday, Dec. 3

Past cast members and staff are invited to the **"Davis Children's Nutcracker's" 40th anniversary** celebration from 5 to 8 p.m. at the Veterans Memorial Center, 203 E. 14th St. The family-friendly event will feature performance memorabilia and sets, picture slide shows, performance solos and more. Light refreshments will be served and donations are appreciated. RSVP to Ajay Raj by Nov. 30 at nutcracker@cityofdavis.org, including name, the year (or years) you participated and what parts you played. For more information, call 530-757-5626.

Thursday, Jan. 12

Today is the deadline to nominate a deserving teen for a **Golden Heart Award**. Awards are given in two categories — for contributing meaningful service to the community or for overcoming significant challenges in life. Nomination forms are available online at <http://www.cityofdavis.org> (search Golden Heart Awards) and can be emailed to cdyer@cityofdavis.org. Awards will be presented in the Community Chambers at City Hall in February.

Tuesday, Feb. 28

The Davis High School PTA presents a **Gap Year Fair** for students to learn more about gap-year options at the Veterans Memorial Center, 203 E. 14th St., with speakers presenting in the theater from 6 to 6:45 p.m. and the fair in the multipurpose room from 6:45 to 8:30 p.m. The event is free but space is limited. Reserve a spot at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/usa-gap-year-fair-2017-davis-ca-registration-28152618239?aff=Davis2017USAGYF>

Writing program marks another successful session

By ANNE TERNUS-BELLAMY
Enterprise staff writer

As the third-graders in Cheri Burau's class filed into the multipurpose room at Patwin Elementary School on Wednesday morning, their eyes searched the group of adults assembled there, looking for their special buddies.

One by one, they found them, the adult mentors who had spent the past five Wednesday mornings with them, reading a book, discussing it, then writing their own stories.

Wednesday was their final day together, their "publishing celebration" when they would share the books they wrote together, enjoy some fun presentations and do a little singing and dancing.

So ended another session of the popular "Writing Buddies" program.

This was the ninth session that Davis residents Robbie and Tony Fanning have led in Davis since 2013, when Writing Buddies debuted at Montgomery Elementary School.

That first session required some public outreach to find enough adult volunteers to serve as one-on-one mentors for each student in a single classroom. So popular has the program become that there is now a waiting list of adults wanting to be mentors.

It's hard to say who loves the program more.

The joy the children take in their newfound friendships is evident in the happy chatter and laughter they share with their mentors. But their mentors — many now retired with mornings



FRED GLADDIS/ENTERPRISE PHOTO

Kathy Friebertshauser, left, and Maddie Moffitt have spent the past few Wednesdays reading and writing together as part of the Writing Buddies program at Patwin Elementary.

to spare — clearly enjoy the work as well.

Susan Billings is a former high school teacher who wanted to spend time with young kids. She signed up to be a Writing Buddies mentor last year and has participated in three sessions now.

The former teacher knows well the benefit to the students.

"The one-on-one interaction, when kids get time devoted to them," Billings said, is hard for an individual teacher to provide to a class of 21 students.

"That's the most valuable part," she said.

On Wednesday, she was sitting with her little buddy, Shahaf Spiegel. They were chuckling over Shahaf's favorite page in their book, where he drew a picture of and wrote about playing hide-and-seek when he was younger, when his favorite place to hide was in a garbage can.

Nearby sat student Maddie Moffitt and her buddy, Kathy Friebertshauser.

Asked what her favorite part of

the buddies program is, Maddie thought for a minute before saying, "I liked that we got to write together, and not just on our own."

Friebertshauser agreed.

"What's fun is how we talk to each other and give each other ideas as we write," she said. "So we both grow... and teach each other things."

Friebertshauser learned about Writing Buddies from a friend a couple of years ago and has been participating ever since.

In all, 21 volunteers participated in this session at Patwin. Each week they read a different book with their buddies — beginning with "The Important Book" by Margaret Wise Brown and ending with "When I Was Five" by Arthur Howard.

Then, in pairs, they would create diagrams and story maps, draw an illustration and write their stories.

After last week's session, Tony Fanning gathered up all of their work and created individual books

for each participant, with each book containing the work of the student as well as that student's adult buddy.

This is a labor of love for the Fannings. Since they started in 2013, they've conducted six-week sessions of Writing Buddies at Montgomery, Patwin and Birch Lane elementary schools, reaching 325 students.

Last year, the couple started organizing Buddy Days as well, condensing the program into single one-day visits to schools in Davis and Esparto.

One of those Buddy Days was held in Burau's class last year and she was thrilled to get a full session this year.

"I feel like I won the lottery," she said Wednesday.

"It's an incredible experience. Because of the connections that were fostered, every student was successful," she added.

Patwin third-grade teacher Leslie Zais and her students will be the next beneficiaries of the program, when Writing Buddies returns to Patwin in February for another six-week session.

To learn more about Writing Buddies or to volunteer, contact the Fannings at 530-231-5388 or mail@writingbuddies.org.

In addition to the Writing Buddies program, the Fannings also have placed individual adult volunteers in classrooms, primarily at Montgomery. There, volunteers have helped with kindergarten reading in Spanish, assisting first-graders in writing fairy tales, done small group work with second-graders and helped with the reading program, gardening and social studies stations with third-graders.

— Reach Anne Ternus-Bellamy at aternus@avisenterprise.net or 530-747-8051. Follow her on Twitter at @ATernusBellamy.

A very palpable hit



Damonique Champion and Annie Paul of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival square up in a display of Elizabethan fencing for Korematsu Elementary students on Nov. 9. This is the 45th year of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival's School Visit Program, which sends OSF actors on the road to visit schools throughout the Western United States. This year Champion and Paul visited students in grades 4-6 at Korematsu, treating them to a performance and workshop in the school's multipurpose room.

SUE COCKRELL/ENTERPRISE PHOTO

CSU has a few extra portals to pass through

This column is a shout-out to all of you high school seniors who have applied to, or will apply to, California State University campuses. You have submitted your applications by the Nov. 30 deadline, and now you just get to wait until March to hear back, right? Wrong. Sorry.

There are a few more hoops to jump through. I hate to be a downer, but trust me — it is worth it to stay on top of the post-application submission workload because if you miss a deadline, you may not be admitted.

Here's the deal ... once you have submitted your CSU application, you must check your email (you may need to search the junk folder, too) and then set up your portals. Portals? What are those?

Well, they are not some high-tech, user-friendly computer app, but instead just a link to each campus' online system. This is how the CSU campuses communicate with student applicants going forward. Hence, there will be new usernames and passwords to create and keep track of. Oh joy.

Unfortunately, each campus has its own maddeningly specific password requirements — such as you



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cannot use the same characters three in a row, for example — and students often are assigned email addresses for each campus. So, there may be the double digits of new usernames and passwords to create and use, depending on the number of campuses for which you submit an application. Even for the computer-savvy student, setting up portals is not an easy process.

What exactly must a student do to create a portal? First, be on the lookout for emails from the campuses you have applied to and read each email carefully. The email may contain an ID number to use in order to create an account and login. It also may contain the link to the website to create that account, which may be different from the link provided to login once you have set up that account

... it just depends on the campus.

Sadly, there is little consistency across the 23 campuses. For instance, Sonoma State does not send out emails with links for creating portals until after Dec. 1. CSU Long Beach provides two separate emails with the necessary information. San Diego State puts it all in one email but asks for a Social Security number as part of the set-up process, which students rarely have at their fingertips.

Once portals are set up, the next step is to check the portals weekly. You need to check to see if your applications are complete; i.e., have test scores been received? Sometimes scores get lost or sometimes a student thinks she sent her scores but didn't. Do not wait to find out that scores are missing when it is too late.

Usually submitting a transcript is not necessary until the end of the school year, if at all. It can depend on the student's grades and intended major whether a CSU campus will request additional information, so be aware that this may be required and keep checking emails.

Portals also are how campuses will ask for additional information if they deem it necessary. I have

experienced this first-hand. One student was asked to submit a transcript to Sonoma State while all of my other students had not been asked. If additional information is requested, make sure to submit it by the deadline.

Finally, portals are where you can check on admission status and then, if admitted, the portal is where critical information about orientation, registration and other activities for new students will be posted.

In case I haven't convinced you to set up and check portals weekly, I would like to share a few cautionary tales.

No matter how often I say to "check portals" to students and parents I work with, it can never be enough. I list it in several places on my senior-year checklist that I go over with all my families; I email students and text them to check on their application status.

Even with all this nudging, I still have students who create nail-biting situations for themselves. These students are just ready to be done with applications, so they take their eyes off the ball for a bit.

Several students I've worked with — who went over the checklist

with me numerous times, and who had answered my texts that all was going well after submission — did not double-check portals until it was too late to send a transcript or order missing scores to be sent. Yikes!

After many agonizing emails and calls to the campus admission offices, it worked out. But there were some weeks of excruciating uncertainty as these students waited to hear whether the school(s) would still accept them. This is an area where a vigilant parent can really make a difference by keeping track of passwords and checking the portals for students.

At the risk of repeating myself, I will say it again anyway: All of you high school seniors who have applied to, or will apply to the CSUs, please set up and check portals regularly. Do not let missing a deadline get in the way of going to the right college for you!

— Jennifer Borenstein is an independent college adviser in Davis and owner of The Right College For You. Her column is published monthly. Reach her at jenniferborenstein@therightcollegeforyou.org, or visit www.therightcollegeforyou.org.