

# PUSD

# PAGE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Monthly Newsletter Oct. 2021

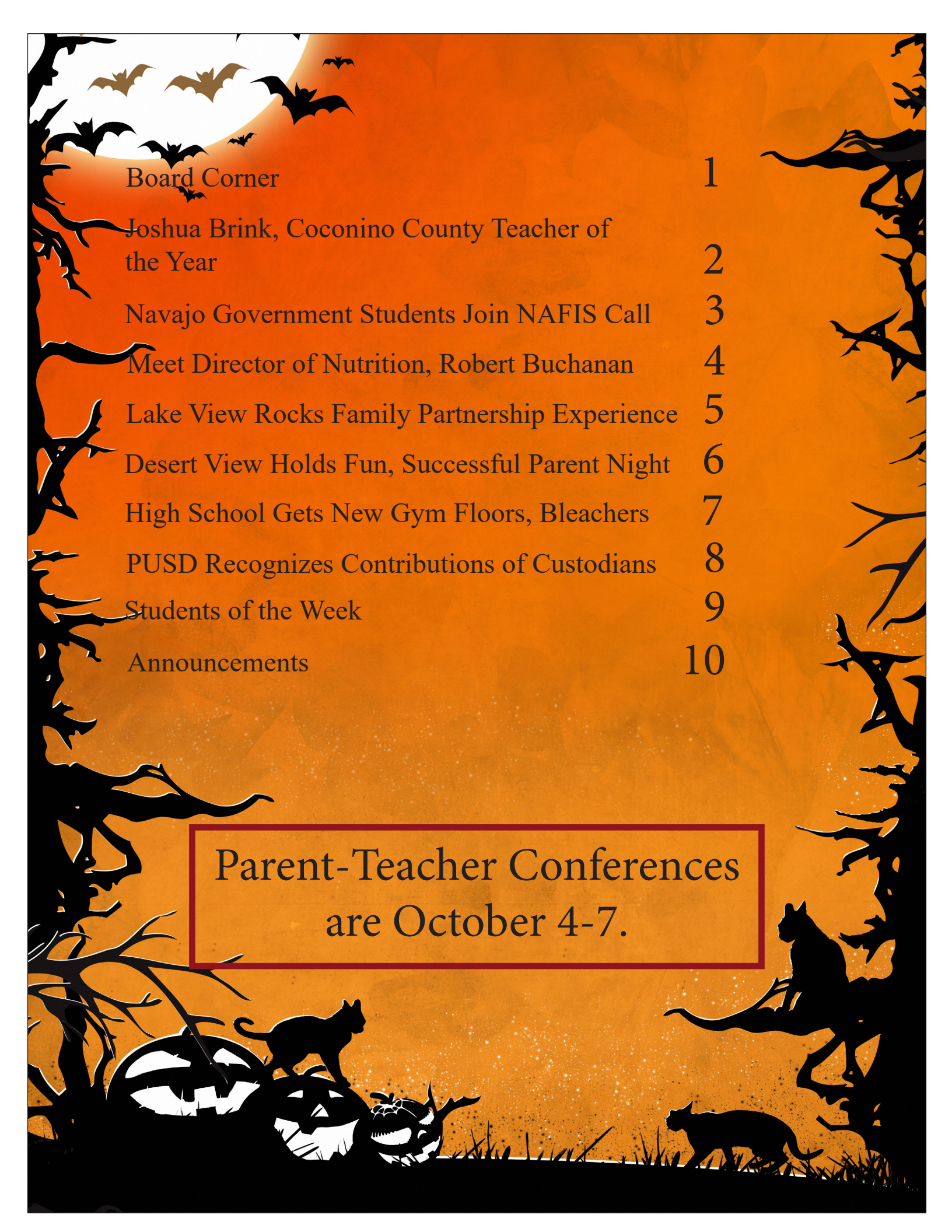
[www.pageud.org](http://www.pageud.org)



THANK  
YOU!

October is NATIONAL  
PRINCIPALS MONTH





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Parent-Teacher Conferences  
are October 4-7.



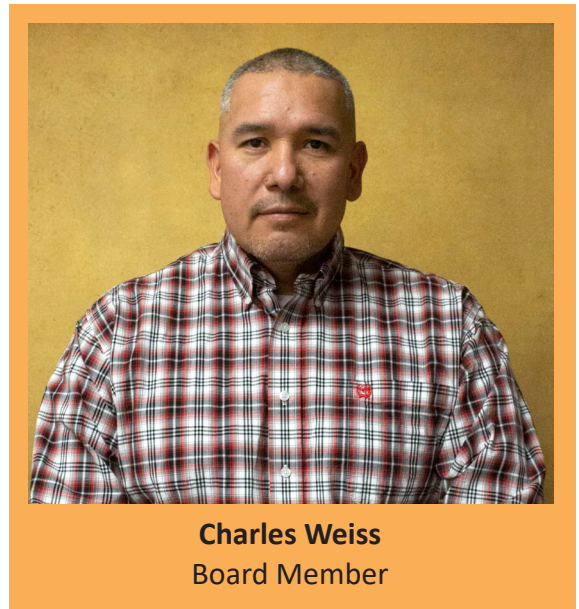
# BOARD CORNER

## Extra-Curricular Activities

COVID has had a tremendous impact not only on student learning but on our students' ability to cope and handle social-emotional issues. I believe that extracurricular activities, whether it's athletics, music, or robotics, play an important role in developing a student's social and emotional skills. All students should be afforded the opportunity to participate in activities in their specific area of interest. Social-emotional learning is the process of developing and using social and emotional skills. People with strong social-emotional skills are better equipped to manage daily challenges, build positive relationships, and make informed decisions. Developing them helps students and adults thrive in school and in life, and these skills can grow from preschool all the way through adulthood. With that being said, I believe that students who participate in any type of extracurricular activity at school will be stronger both emotionally and socially in their interactions with their peers and as they navigate their choices for their future. In addition, a strong emotional well-being will have a positive impact on their academic success in school.

Extracurriculars are what many students look forward to every day after school. When kids are participating in activities that they are passionate about, it can increase their brain function. Additionally, activities will help them learn to concentrate and manage their time better, all of which contribute to higher grades. High endurance sports, for example, will train you to focus and build stamina in the face of intense difficulty. This gives you an advantage when it comes to studying and taking exams.

Many studies have been conducted on the relationship between extracurricular activities and academic performance, and they all show that students who participate in them have higher grades, more positive attitudes toward school and higher academic aspirations. First, they allow the students to connect with other students outside of their classroom. This helps in strengthening their social and communication skills, motivating them to be more participatory, and promoting their self-esteem. Second, it helps them to discover their passions and abilities. They develop innate talents that will serve them in their professional life. Third, creativity, imagination, and curiosity



**Charles Weiss**  
Board Member

to discover new knowledge are stimulated. This helps the child to enjoy learning.

In the end, extracurricular activities can provide opportunities for students to express themselves in varying areas depending on their interests, skills and talents. The diversity in student's areas of interest is great: languages, music, robotics, sports, art. It does not matter which area of interest a student pursues, it only matters that they have the opportunities available to them to get involved. Schools need to provide options which meet the many needs and desires of students which allow for greater involvement. Providing options is necessary so that all students have the opportunity to get involved in extra activities and meet new people which will develop their social skills and motivate them to increase academic achievement.

Lastly, I would like to thank the student athletes, musicians, artists and students involved in club activities for all their hard work and effort, including keeping their grades up. I would also like to thank the teachers, staff and coaches for their efforts in leading and inspiring them to be good team player.



# DVI Music Teacher, Josh Brink Coconino County Teacher of the Year

Joshua Brink was awarded 2021 Coconino County Teacher of the Year at an awards banquet Friday night. Brink is a music teacher at Desert View Intermediate School in Page, Arizona.

This is Brink's eleventh year as an educator and his third year teaching at Desert View. He's married to Brittany Brink.

"I am deeply honored to have the opportunity to represent Page Unified School District as the 2021 Coconino County Teacher of the Year," Brink said after the event. "PUSD is filled with masterful teachers, many of whom I look up to myself. The work in my classroom is just a small piece of the greater work our teachers, school families and community stakeholders do to enrich our students' lives. Ahéhee to my family, friends and colleagues for supporting me and my students. I look forward to representing Page well."

The Teacher of the Year award ceremony was held last Friday evening at the Museum of Northern Arizona.

"We're so happy he's with us at Desert View" said Mary Stahl, Principal at Desert View. "He's in it for the kids, one hundred percent, and that attitude really comes across to the kids. The students love him and his class."

All 509 students at Desert View attend Brink's music class, which is known throughout the school for its high-energy, participatory atmosphere. When Brink introduces a new concept, such as rhythm, or different note lengths, he first demonstrates the concept – often through clapping or using instruments – and then has his students repeat the action. In Mr. Brink's class, the students are always moving; there are no chairs in his room.

Having his students perform the lesson they're learning is a great way to incorporate the lesson concepts into their memories, said Brink.

That hands-on, interactive approach to learning was difficult to reproduce in last year's virtual classrooms. But Brink still found ways to keep his students engaged and thinking about music. One of the assignments he gave his students during first semester was to record themselves telling him what music meant to them and their family. He did in conjunction with a unit on culture. He then uploaded the recordings to his Flipgrid account and shared them for his class to see.

Desert View Principal, Mary Stahl, nominated Brink for Teacher of the Year because of the extra work he did at the beginning of last year, when he helped the Desert View teachers, students and parents make the switch to virtual learning, which was new, strange and filled with daily challenges.

At the beginning of the year when teachers, students and parents were learning how to use Chromebooks, Google Classrooms and other technologies, Brink was asked to serve

as Desert View's Technology Coach.

And he did an amazing job, said Stahl. "He shared with us how to use Flipgrid, Screencastify, and other tools to enhance student engagement in a virtual setting. He has made the virtual teaching environment accessible to all of our teachers."

Brink is well-known throughout the district for his willingness to go above and beyond for his students, his school and his music program.

Last year he drove from Page to Flagstaff, after school, to petition a non-profit organization for money to purchase ukuleles for his students. The organization gave him the grant and Brink used the money to purchase two dozen ukuleles. He has since incorporated ukulele playing into his curriculum.

Brink is currently in talks with the United States Marine Corps band, trying to get them to do a Skype call and possible performance for his music students.

Brink was one of three finalists for Teacher of the Year, along with Susan Burdick, a teacher from John Q. Thomas Elementary School in Flagstaff, and Trina Siegfried, a teacher from Williams Elementary/Middle School in Williams.

Other educators from Coconino County were also honored at Friday's award ceremony. Sheryl Wells, a teacher at W.F. Killip Elementary School was awarded STEM Teacher of the Year. Jessica Spink, a Spanish teacher from Sinagua Middle School in Flagstaff, was named Coconino County Rookie Teacher of the Year.

Oscar Manuel Landa Samano, a student from Coconino High School, was recognized at the STEM Student of the Year.

The Teacher of the Year award comes with several prizes, including a one year lease of brand new Toyota, courtesy of Findlay Toyota, \$1,000 cash from Findlay Toyota, \$2,000 cash, two tickets to Theatrikos, and one, three-credit course from Coconino County Community College.



**Desert View music teacher, Josh Brink.**



# Navajo Government Students Join in NAFIS Call



**Chaunacy June, Arianna Jenkins, Tyler Tsosie and Tehyah Black**

In September, PUSD Superintendent Larry Wallen and two district board members, Des Fowler and Dee McKerry, attended the annual National Association of Federally Impacted Schools (NAFIS) conference, and this year some students from the high school's Navajo government class got to attend part of the conference.

NAFIS is an organization that offers school districts that qualify for federal Impact Aid monies up to date information and a professional network and technical assistance and support on the program.

During a typical year, the superintendent, board members and other representatives from Page Unified School District have traveled to Washington D.C. to attend the three-day NAFIS conference, but last year, due to Covid restrictions, the NAFIS conference was held virtually. This year the NAFIS conference was also held virtually.

During the first two days of the conference, PUSD representatives attend virtual meetings and break-out sessions regarding the latest news and developments affecting Impact Aid.

On the third day of the conference, districts and school seeking Impact Aid have a chance to meet with staff members of Arizona Congressmen.

Last year, when Des Fowler, one of PUSD's Board Members, had a virtual meeting with a Congressional staffer, she made the virtual Zoom call from the back of her pickup truck from her property in Coppermine. A big part of the face-to-face meetings allows the PUSD representatives a chance express to the congressional staffers how PUSD will utilize its impact aid funds. Fowler's remote locations was visible and apparent during the call and she believes that had a positive impact, as part of her message was expressing to the congressional staffer that Impact Aid could play a big role for PUSD's students liv-

ing in remote parts of the Navajo Reservation, trying to attend classes virtually.

This year, Fowler had the idea to make that same Zoom call to congressional staffers during Page High School teacher, Carlos Begay's, Navajo government class. She was joined on the call by Board Member, Dee McKerry.

The benefits were two-fold, says Fowler. "I thought it was a great opportunity for some of our students to witness firsthand some of the workings of government at that level," she said. "It had the second advantage to let the staffers see a class of Navajo students in class."

Prior to making the Zoom call to the congressional staffers, Fowler and McKerry talked to the

students about community advocacy.

"At the last minute we asked the students if any of them wanted to take part in the call," Fowler said. "If so, we wanted them to talk about their experience of home life and commuting to school, and all that was involved in that."

"As a board member, we're a voice for our students, and this was a great chance for the students to be their own voice," Fowler said. "It's always good to hear the students voice, and get their point of view. I think it was beneficial for the staffers to hear that too."

Four students from the Navajo Government class, shared their stories and experiences to the congressional staffers. The students were Tyler Tsosie, Arianna Jenkins, Chaunacy June and Tehya Black.

Tsosie said he was happy to be involved and help if he could.

"They [Congress] have the ability to help us, or not," he said. "It's important to get their attention. At the time of the call, their attention was on Covid-19 issues, Afghanistan and the economy. It's important to remind them that small communities like ours are also affected by their decisions."

Jenkins told the congressional staffers about her personal experience attending Page High School. Jenkins lives in Tuba City, but travels to Page every day to attend school here, because she and her family believe the educational opportunities in Page are better.

"I told them about using Chromebooks and hotspots to attend the first part of the school year last year, and how that wouldn't have been possible without Impact Aid."

One of the staffers related to Jenkins, and the government class, that she too had traveled an hour a day to attend school when she was a student. "I think she really related to my story," Jenkins said. "I think it helped. I think it had a deeper impact on them to let them see my face and hear my story."



# Meet Robert Buchanan

## Food & Nutrition Director



**Robert Buchanan**



Robert Buchanan took over as Page Unified School District's Director of Food and Nutrition in mid-July.

Buchanan moved to Page from San Jose, Calif., where he was the Assistant Director of Dining Services for San Jose State University. Buchanan moved to Page because it offered him the opportunity to advance into a director role.

Buchanan admits he had his doubts when it came to moving to a small town such as Page. Buchanan spent the first 34 years of his life living in Chicago, and has most recently lived in the Bay Area. He's used to large crowds, tall buildings, cityscapes and the generous assortment of amenities that can only be found in a big city.

But the more he looked into Page, its surrounding area and the new job opportunity, the more he was convinced to make the leap. "Being a director was really appealing to me," he said.

Outside of work, Buchanan enjoys photography, hiking, camping and writing poetry. Page and the surrounding area could provide those opportunities on a scale he'd never experienced before. Buchanan is happy with the choice he made to move to Page.

"I'm surprisingly shocked by how much I like Page," Buchanan said. "I like the small-town feel and how friendly everyone is to me. People are genuinely nice. It was kind of weird to me how friendly people were to me. That's one thing they didn't have in the Bay Area."

Buchanan says his co-workers give him a lot of ideas about places to visit and things to do, and usually follow-up with him on Monday morning to see if he got out.

Buchanan will soon be implementing a new program at

Page High School called Discovery Kitchen. To make it happen, he will be hiring a new chef who create new dishes and discovering new menus. The menu-creation will involve input from PUSD who will serve as taste-testers. If the students like the new menus, they could then get added to the school lunch menus.

"This is the creative part of the job. I like working in this round," said Buchanan. "We get to be creative, and we can get the students involved."

Buchanan also has a busy life outside of work. He's the author of two books: one is a book of poetry he wrote in his twenties, called *Blue Emotions*, and the other book is about personal accountability and taking positive actions to better one's life, titled *Letter-9. Under Construction*.

"Letter-9, Under Construction is about going from Action to Zest, or A to Z," said Buchanan. "It has 52 chapters, one for each week of the year."

The book grew out of motivational texts Buchanan would text to his friends each morning. "I did it for about three months, then I got busy and stopped doing it," Buchanan recalled. "I didn't realize my friends were even reading them until I stopped doing it. Then I got a bunch of texts saying, 'Hey, where's my motivational text?'"

It was then that Buchanan thought he might be onto something bigger and decided to take what he was doing and expand it into a book. "I thought it was just going to be a little a short book," he said, "but it grew and grew. I kept





# LAKE VIEW ROCKS FAMILY PARTNERSHIP EXPERIENCE



Students and parents of Lake View Primary had a great time at the school's Family Partnership Experience which it held in early September.

The event was a great success, with more than 500 students and their families in attendance.

"It was spectacular," said Brian Henderson, Assistant Principal at Lake View Primary. "It exceeded our expectations in both activities and attendance."

The event featured information booths for parents and fun activities for elementary-aged kids, including a jumping castle, an inflatable slide, and a dunk tank with Assistant Principal Henderson, and several teachers taking turns on the dunk board. Other stations had jump rope, corn hole toss, obstacles courses and other games.

Several community organizations and businesses joined the event too. Page Animal Adoption Agency, Canyon Walls Climbing and Boxing Fitness, Page Public Library, National Park Service, Lake View Site Council all had representatives and information booths on the premises, while

Hot N Sweet Donut Shop, Big Water BBQ, and Stay Grounded Coffee offered food and coffee.





# Desert View Holds Fun, Successful Parent Night



**D**esert View Intermediate School held their Parent Night last night (Thursday) and it was great success, with a high number of Desert View students and their parents in attendance.

"I thought it was a great turnout," said Desert View assistant principal, Kevin Anderson. "I think the parents and students enjoyed themselves and got any information they needed."

The event was held in the Desert View gymnasium, where staff had arranged a mix of information tables and game stations.

The two big aims of the event were to push student literacy and encourage students and parents to meet the Desert View teachers.

To achieve this, students were given a bingo card when they entered the gymnasium. The squares on the bingo card contained the names of every Desert View teacher.

To check off a square, students and parents had to find the teacher in person and have the teacher sign the space. When the teachers were presented with a card, they took a few moments to converse with the students and parents before signing the card.

"We want our students to build relationships with all the teachers in the building, not just their teacher," said Anderson. "I think one of the most important things teachers can do is build relationships with students and the community."

When the students completed their bingo card, they could turn it in and receive a book as a prize.

"Literacy is one of the most important things for our students to achieve and it's something we promote all year long," said Anderson. "It's a need in our school. Reading is an important life skill, and we look for ways to promote that."



## New PHS gym bleachers, floors debuted at volleyball game



After three months construction, Page High School showed off its newly refurbished gymnasiums in late September.

Both the high school's main gym and the pool gym had new bleachers installed, and the floors sanded and repainted. The installations were finished Monday, Sept. 27th.

The Sand Devils volleyball team had the honor of playing the first game on the new courts later that same day when they hosted Monument Valley.

The high school volleyball team has been practicing and playing its games at the Page Middle School.

Volleyball head coach, Dana Chee, was happy to have her team back in the high school's facilities.

"I have one word: Finally!" she said. "The middle school was starting to feel a little tight. It's great to be back at the high school, with room to spread out."

Chee loves the look of the new gym. "It's clean and simple. It's nice. I like it a lot."

The cost of adding the new bleachers was \$501,000, all of which came from grant money obtained by Cody Chischilly, PUSD's Maintenance and Grounds Director. The cost of sanding and repainting the floors was paid for with District funds, at a price tag of just over \$150,000.

"With the bleachers removed and completely out of the way, it was the perfect time to redo the floors," said Chischilly.



# PUSD Recognizes the Vast Contributions of Custodial Crew



**Custodians for Lake View Primary, Lopez Fowler and Tammy Jim.**



**Custodians for Desert View Intermediate, Bernita Bennet and Jamie Farrell. Not pictured: Lariat Williams.**



**Custodians for Page Middle School, Esther Salt, Rosita Benally and Bobby Nez.**



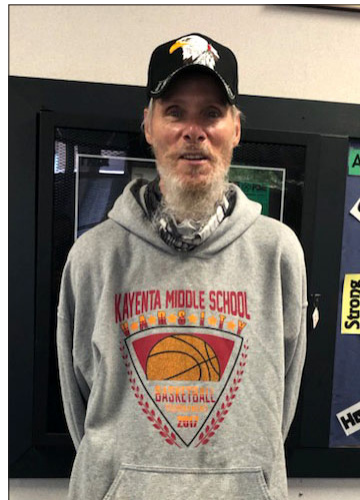
**Custodians for Page High School, Effie Grey, Marilyn Jumbo, Johnson Fowler, Ben West and Julian Augero.**



**Leonard Edgewater**



**Eugene Trujillo**



**Bill Tresh**



**Lynette Rehma**

October 2nd was National Custodian Day, and at Page Unified School District we wish to take the opportunity to thank our hard-working custodians for the great job they do keeping our schools and facilities safe,

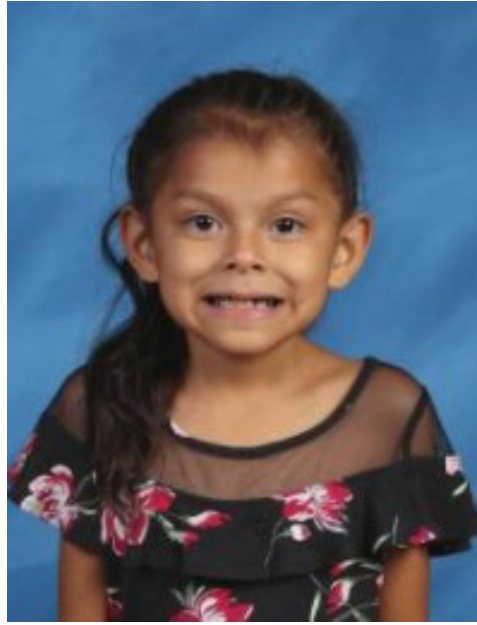
clean and looking good. PUSD's lead custodians are Leonard Edgewater, Bill Tresh, Alex Garcia and Eugene Trujillo.



# STUDENTS OF THE MONTH



**Tylar Abbott**  
Lake View Primary



**Audralynn Clark**  
Desert View Intermediate



**Emmalynn Faye Wischmann**  
Page Middle School



**Aaliyah Billah**  
Page High School



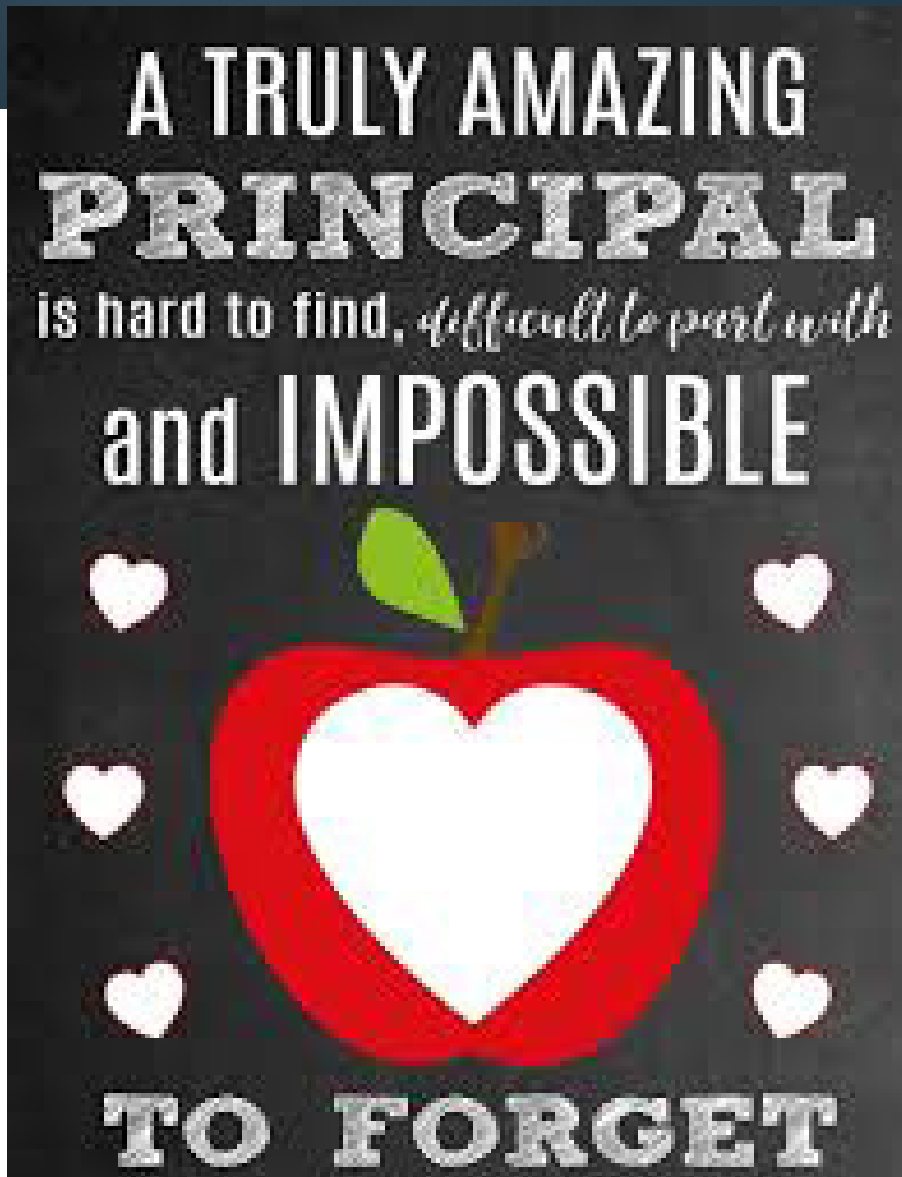
**Tristan Tso**  
Manson Mesa High School



**Rhiana Daw**  
Sage & Sand Virtual Academy



**PUSD wishes to recognize our outstanding principals  
and thank them for the hard work they do to  
make a difference in our students' lives.**



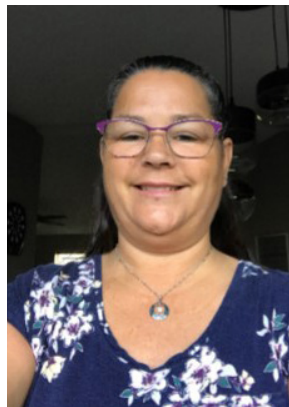
**YOU ROCK!!!**



**Nancy Warner**  
Lake View  
Elementary



**Mary Stahl**  
Desert View  
Intermediate



**Wanda Burton**  
Page Middle  
School



**Anne Martin**  
Page High  
School



**Dr. Trina Hubbell**  
Manson Mesa,  
Sage & Sand





# Announcements

## Help PUSD reduce school violence by taking our Stop School Violence survey

**P**age Unified School District is the recipient of a grant through the Stop School Violence Grants from the Department of Justice. Through this grant one of our objectives is to increase our students' feeling of being safe on our campuses. In order to create our baseline, and to continue to measure our progress, we are asking students, staff and parents to complete a survey twice a year. The first time the survey will be available to take is October 2021. Students grades 4 to 12 will receive the survey through their school email. Parents can see the survey and complete the parent survey through the district website at <https://www.pageud.org/restorativejustice>

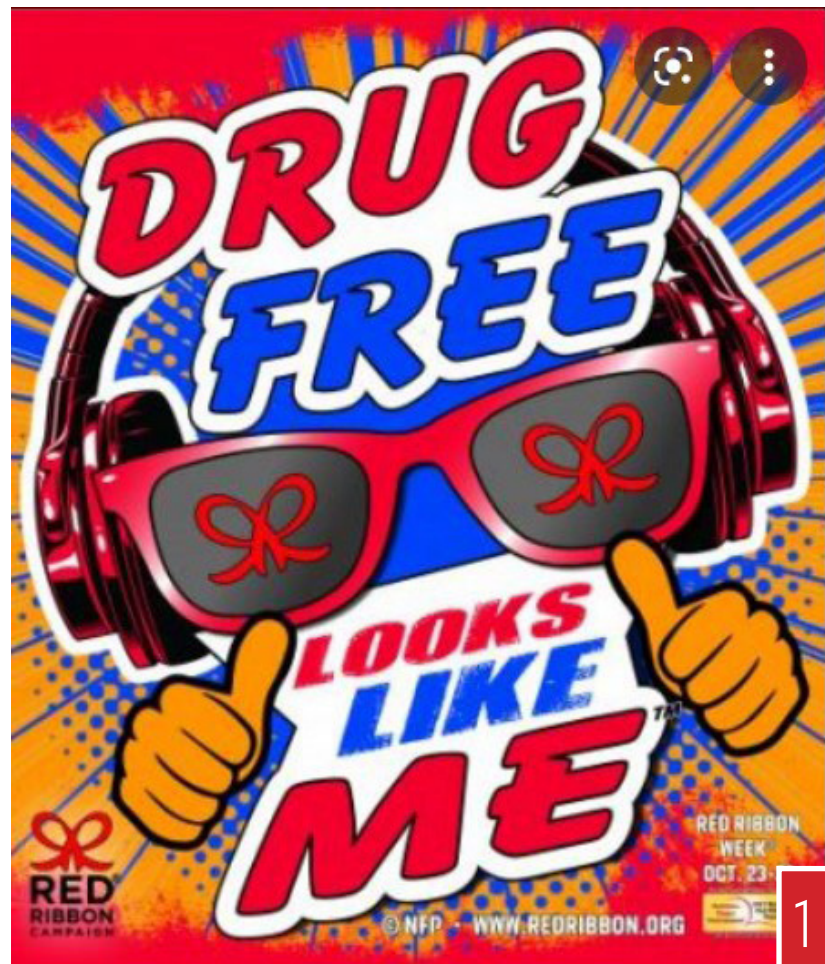
### Related information

In an effort to stop bullying in our schools, PUSD's Restorative Justice Dept. has begun using StopIt, an online tool designed to help deter bullying, cyber abuse and inappropriate behavior. You can read the District's statement regarding StopIt on page 12.

If you have something you'd like added to the district newsletter please contact:

Steven Law  
PR Coordinator

[slaw@pageud.org](mailto:slaw@pageud.org)







Dear Parent/Guardian,

We are excited to inform you that our school has enrolled with STOPit!

STOPit is an online reporting tool designed to deter and mitigate bullying, cyber abuse, and other inappropriate behaviors, consisting of an app and a back-end incident management system for school administrators.

Our students will have access to the STOPit mobile app, which has two simple but powerful features.

**Report** can be used by students to report incidents to school contacts anonymously.

**Messenger** can be used to engage in anonymous two-way communication with school contacts.

Both Report and Messenger empower students to stand up for themselves and for one another. Students have the power to help put an end to harmful and inappropriate behavior they see online through social media and other means. They can use STOPit to reach out for help if they or a peer are facing a personal crisis or experiencing bullying, abuse, or are otherwise in need of assistance. Our goal with STOP it is to create safer, kinder school communities both online and off.

No student information is needed to use STOP it. The only way personally identifiable information will be accessible through STOPit is if a student voluntarily includes it within the content of a report or message.

Both our school and STOPit are committed to protecting the privacy of student data. STOP it is a signatory to the [Student Privacy Pledge](#), spearheaded by the Future of Privacy Forum and the Software & Information Industry Association. You may review STOPit's Privacy Policy for details, including more information on how anonymous reporting works.

Please note that we will be launching STOP it at Page Middle School, Manson Mesa/Sage and Sand, and Page High School at the beginning of the 2021-22 school year. At that time, your child will be invited to download the STOPit app from the app store on his or her smartphone or tablet at no charge.

More information and resources can be found online at [stopitsolutions.com](https://stopitsolutions.com).

Knowing that our students have faced even more challenges during the COVID pandemic and isolation, we encourage your student to add this tool to support their social and emotional well-being. This way they can reach out for help before the problems they or their classmates are facing become overwhelming. Please take the time to learn about this program and talk to your student about using it to keep themselves safe.

Sincerely,

  
Larry E. Wallen  
Superintendent





Lake View Primary's Annual

# Fall Festival

THURSDAY OCTOBER 28TH  
5:00-7:00 pm

Come join us for the Fall Festival!

**CAKE WALK**

**HAUNTED HOUSE**

**GAMES & CRAFTS**

**HAY RIDE**

**HAUNTED HAYRIDE**

**INFORMATION**  
All activities will be paid for using punch cards. Food is for sale, cash only.  
\$5 for 1 punch card  
\$20 for 5 punch cards

If you would like to volunteer or donate an item, please contact Brian Henderson at: [bhenderson@pageud.org](mailto:bhenderson@pageud.org)

**Heading back to school?**  
Whether in-person, hybrid, or remote, students need internet access.  
See if the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program can help your family get online at [fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit](https://fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit)

COMMUNITY WELLNESS COMMITTEE

## GLOW RUN/WALK

THURSDAY

**This event has been CANCELED**

8:00-8:30 PM  
LIVE ENTERTAINMENT! DJ SERVITI

FOOD WILL BE PROVIDED  
Sponsored by: CWC, Page Danner Hospital, Canyonlands HealthCare, Incompass Health Center

DOGS ON LEASHES ARE WELCOME TO PARTICIPATE

## PUSD Community Forum

PUSD's next Community Forum will be held

**Thursday, Oct. 28th from 5-6 p.m.**

**in Lake View Primary's Library**

**For parents & guardians of students grades pre-k to 5th grade  
We'll hear from Lake View and Desert View principals  
and SPED and ELL Directors for the same grades.**

**This event will be held in-person.**



**H**ewatha Benally is the Custodian Supervisor. PUSD has 13 full-time custodians, and four lead custodians. One crew works during the day, and one crew works in the afternoons and evenings. Besides cleaning the schools and classrooms on a daily basis, the custodial crew also conduct a deep clean on every school during the summer recess, which involves pulling all the desks, and other furniture out of every classroom, after which they deep clean the carpets and walls.

During the pandemic the duties of the custodian increased and evolved greatly.

"We disinfected doors, chairs, tables and handles," said Benally. "Every surface that gets touched a lot, got cleaned a lot, and every few days every classroom would be thoroughly sanitized."

In January, when basketball games were played again, the custodial crews would come in the next day and spray down the bleachers with disinfectant.

"All of that was on top of their main cleaning duties," said Benally. "But they did it, they did a great job, and I never heard anyone complain about the extra work. That's just the kind of crew they are."

As the Custodian Supervisor, Benally says she expects a lot from her staff.

"It's easy to focus keeping the public areas clean, the places that everyone sees every day, but I also want the out of the way, unseen places to be just as clean," she said.

"I want the closets done. I want the sinks done."

Benally said that it ultimately comes down to pride. "We're an important part of the schools where we work," she said. "We want our students and teachers to be proud of our schools, and when they're proud, we're proud. We keep the school running, to some point."

"They've done a lot for the school, especially this last year keeping the school free of Covid."



**Custodians apply a new coat of wax to Desert View's lunch room last summer.**

## BUCHANAN from pg. 4

having ideas I wanted to add to it."

It took him four years to complete the book version, but an e-edition of the book is still ongoing. The e-edition of the book is meant to be interactive. It encourages the reader to journalize, to contemplate their own lives and actions and what consequences those actions have had on their lives. As a reader makes his or her way through the e-edition of the book, journaling as they go, it allows them to be the author of their own life story.

Letter-9 followed the publication of *Blue Emotions*, which is a collection of spoken word poems.

"Spoken word poetry was big in Chicago," said Buchanan. "That was the true poetry seen in Chicago."

Buchanan's interest in spoken word poetry came from watching a movie called "Love Jones", part of which was centered around the Chicago poetry scene of the nineties.

"I really connected with it," Buchanan said. "I started writing poems and performing them at a coffee shop called Rituals."

Buchanan and his friends would attend spoken word poetry open mics twice a week. "Sunday was the big day," he said. "I tried to have a new poem ready to go every Sunday."

Buchanan's poetry came from his life. "I talked about

love, politics, being a man, being black. As a poet I wrote what I felt. I used to title my poems but I stopped doing that. I might start with a certain intention, but the poems often took on a life of their own."

Buchanan published his first poem when he was ten or eleven. The poem was published in the *Chicago Tribune* as part of a school writing project.

"It was a very proud moment for me, and it was first time my dad told me he was proud of me. He must've bought 50 newspapers the day my poem appeared and gave them out to everyone he knew."

As involved as Buchanan is with literature and the literary life, you'd expect to hear that he majored in English, or journalism, but he got his degree in Business Administration from

Robert Morris University, and attended grad school at National Louis University, in Chicago.

"Poetry was actually my release from all that school and work," he said.

Buchanan says continuing to write and evolve the e-edition of *Letter-9* is his current release from work-life.

"When I go back and read it, it still rings true to me. It grounds me from where I was and how far I've come in life."