

Referendum passes for school district

By Jacob Prado
Cometeer staff

The school year for Delavan-Darien students is well on its way and if you feel that this year there are double the amount of students in school, you're not the only one. Perhaps, after the Nov. 6 referendum, that will change in the near future.

Voters passed a \$2.8 million non-recurring operational referendum for the Delavan-Darien School District, with 850 people (56.5 percent) approving it.

Last spring, a referendum put out by the district failed, resulting in a massive layoff for teachers across the board, while also shutting down a local school.

Due to the failed \$3.5 million referendum, 39 teachers were laid off and Darien Elementary School was shut down at the end of the last school

year. Because of the amount of layoffs, classes sizes at the high school have increased, which makes it seem like there are more students than are actual. Phoenix had another grade level added to the building, with fifth-grade students now attending the school instead of being in Darien.

This year, once again, the school district proposed a referendum that was voted on Nov. 6. This year's referendum was different than last year's, with the ballot reading, "Shall the School District of Delavan-Darien, Walworth and Rock Counties, Wisconsin be authorized to exceed the revenue limit specified in Section 121.91, Wisconsin Statutes, by \$2,800,000 per year for four years, beginning with the 2019-2020 school year and ending with the 2022-2023 school year, for non-recurring purposes consisting of operational costs to reduce class sizes, and support curriculum and instruction?"

What this said was the school district would receive \$2,800,000 more per year for four years in order to keep the school functioning, reduce the increased class sizes, and update the school district's curriculum.

What made this year's referendum different is that the money the school receives every year would only be for four years, rather than last year's proposed recurring referendum. This year's ballot also no longer included an increase in funds for fixes to Borg Memorial Stadium, and funding for extracurricular programs.

Similar to last year's referendum, the school district put out information relating to the increase in property taxes for residents.



Dr. Jill Sorbie

When compared to last year's increase in property taxes to this year's expected rise in property tax, there is a \$127 difference as last year's expected rise in property tax was \$202 for every \$100,000 of property value.

After past superintendent Dr. Robert Crist left at the end of the 2017-18 school year, the Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Dr. Jill Sorbie, took over as interim superintendent. Sorbie met with all students at Delavan-Darien High School to introduce herself and talk about the referendum. Sorbie answered questions students had about the referendum, including future goals and expectations for the district.

Because this year's referendum does not include funding for extracurriculars, Sorbie proposed taking advantage of advertisements



with companies that will be able to provide the necessary funds to provide for the needed extracurriculars.

Sorbie, along with the district, did a lot in promoting the November referendum to community members in order to ensure that it passed. When ballot time rolled around, the November referendum passed. (Last year's referendum fell short by more than 500 votes.)

Now that it has passed, Sorbie has many plans and high hopes the district can be even better than it is now. One of the biggest focuses this year is to build up Comet Pride and show spirit, not just for the schools, but for the local communities, she said.

One of the things Sorbie has been doing is working closely with the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater in order to recruit student teachers for next school year to hire and help decrease class sizes. Sorbie, interviewed two days after the election, said she feels this is a big responsibility and, in order to do the best for the students, they need to recruit the best teachers they can for next year. Already, Sorbie is looking to bring in two student teachers for the history department, one for English, one for math, and has hopes of hiring another woods teacher for next school year.

The district will look to hire about 18 more teachers, according to Sorbie. Class sizes would shrink and the district's low fund

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Homecoming 2018 adds more excitement

By Morgan Lock
Cometeer staff

Homecoming week, one of the most fun, school spirit filled weeks of the entire school year, is loved throughout by students, school staff and alumni. This year's Homecoming week at Delavan-Darien High School had some differences than in years past. These include a bonfire, bowling, including all of the classes in powderpuff games, and more floats in the parade than usual.

Although these changes in tradition did cause some mixed reviews, most of them were positive. Of course, a couple of things did stay the same, such as the concept of spirit/dress-up days, a football game, and a dance - the classics of any Homecoming week. Participation in these activities for students encouraged them to be active in their school and to be social with others.

The theme for this year's Homecoming was, "Through the Decades," so, of course, there was a decade dress-up day on Throwback Thursday. This was also the day of the boys volleyball and girls powderpuff games, with the senior class winning each of these events. Although the games are competitive, there was more inclusion this year, with the freshman and sophomore classes participating.

Something else that was made for including students and bringing them closer together was the bonfire. The bonfire was a tradition brought back from many years ago. The D-DHS bands also played some pep band tunes for everyone to listen to and enjoy while gathered around the fire.

There was also the annual parade, but it was especially spectacular this year. There were way more floats than ever before. There had been floats for all sorts of sports, clubs, classes, and

classes from years past in the community. It was a very exciting spectacle to see and many enjoyed watching or participating with their friends and family.

On Friday, there was the assembly, with the eighth graders watching and seeing what they can look forward to in high school. There were lots of fun games that have been seen before, such as the relay races, cup stacking, and the classic tug-of-war, but there were also some new ones, including the Cheeto toss onto the shower caps (a crowd favorite) and knocking water bottles over with tights attached to the students' heads (which is harder than it looks).

Also on Friday, there was the Homecoming football game against Westosha Central. Although the Comets did lose, students still had a fun time watching the cheerleaders pep-filled routines, and the D-DHS marching band's halftime show to the song "Thriller" by Michael Jackson. Even a dance break was in-



cluded, with choreography from the original music video!

After the students enjoyed the football game, Delavan Lanes had a new deal for laser bowling for students, including tickets for pizza and refreshments.

On Saturday, there was the Homecoming dance, which included fun song recommendations by students, as well as snacks and a photo booth. Most kids had fun dancing to their favorite songs and jamming out. It was a night for everyone to enjoy. As everybody can tell, the week was a blast from the past, but also a blast in the present.



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Photos From Delavan-Darien High School Athletics/Activities Facebook Page



Opinion: CIT experience very rewarding

By Morgan Lock
Cometeer staff

This summer was my second year being in the ELITE teen leadership program and a counselor in training (CIT) at Holiday Home Camp in Williams Bay. This year, I was in a cabin of 10 girls aged 8 to 11 years old, the second-to-youngest age group.



Morgan Lock

During the stay, campers can pick three skills that they will do every day in the week. Their choices are waterfront, art, dance, rec-sports, nature, drama, and archery. During skills, I was in the nature hut, helping kids make bird houses and look at animals.

Being a CIT isn't just all fun and games. It is hard work, preparing and training to possibly be a full-time counselor in the future. I was definitely more confident in my skills and

leadership ability after being in the program for a year already.

I think one of the trickiest things about being a CIT is having to be enthusiastic all the time. It may sound easy enough and, if you know me, I'm usually a pretty energetic person. Although, it can take hours of staying up to get these kids to fall asleep, so it can sometimes be hard to find energy. Your job isn't really over, but you have to remember why you're there, and that is for the kids.

The easiest thing, without a doubt, is bonding with the amazing Holiday Home Camp family surrounding you. Everyone there is so supportive and will be there for you, always. There's a balance that you need to find, between bonding with the campers, but also being a role model and keeping up with your responsibilities.

Giving campers a clean slate is another one of the most important things you should do. No matter how a kid has behaved toward you, you still respect them and treat them the same as all the campers; just don't hold a grudge. I didn't realize how truly tiring, but, most importantly, rewarding this experience was, until I did it, but I am so glad I did. Not only do you get the opportunity to change kids' lives, you'll also learn a thing or two about yourself that you didn't know before.



Morgan Lock (left) worked at a CIT camp this past summer.

Halloween

Story of giant's remains found in Delavan Lake

By Trinity Dement
Cometeer staff

Welcome to a special (belated) Halloween treat where we talk about 1900 and what articles have said about some interesting creatures living in Delavan.

It is still a debate whether this is a fact or a myth for people who have been here have never heard about the unknown creature in Delavan Lake. Those creatures were called Nephilim giants. They were found in a chamber in Delavan Lake.

The chamber was seven to nine feet underground and was covered in white sand and blue clay. In the chamber contained 14 unknown creatures who had six fingers, six toes and had monkey-like jaws. They also were 7.5- to 10-feet tall. The giants were discovered by the Phillips brothers. They found 14 the first time and, when they went back to Delavan Lake in 1912, they found four more of these unknown creatures, making a total of 18 Nephilim giants.

This made headlines in a Madison article and, when asked about it, the Delavan Republic newspaper said: "The skeletons appear to be those of warriors of powerful frame and immense size when compared with people of this day and age."

The Delavan Enterprise noted that "the cranium of one of the ancient warriors was of unusual size, and the other bones found would indicate that they were a race of giants."

Delavan is not the only city that has found these giants. There were some in Madison and Maple Creek, plus six other states have found these race giants and so have other countries.

There have been 200 giant digs so far in the U.S. Although the weird part is they stopped making headlines about it in the 1950s and, from that point on, most people didn't even know these things existed. Some people believe it's because the American government could be hiding information from us. Others believe it didn't exist.

Either way, what I would like to know is who killed the giants and why leave them in the bottom of Delavan Lake?

National Frappe Day celebrated

By Trinity Dement
Cometeer staff

National Frappe Day was on Oct. 7th, so it meant going to Starbucks, right?

Here's some facts about the drink that we love so much. A frappe was created in 1957. It was supposed to be a chocolate beverage for children, but then a guy who was working to make the chocolate beverage couldn't find any hot water to go with his coffee. Instead, he used cold ice cubes with coffee and shook it up.

This sparked a new invention called - you guessed it - a frappe. Believe it or not, a frappe is most popular in Greece. Here in America, Starbucks sells \$4 billion worth of frappes in a year.

Now there's something you should know - are frappes and frap-puc-cinos the same thing? The answer is yes! Frappe is just a shorter name. Now go and enjoy your most amazing drink.

Fall sports recap: Football, soccer

By Jacob Szczap
Cometeer staff

Football:

The Delavan-Darien High School Comets' 2018 football season was a rough one, but something certainly to learn off of and build on. Led by first-time head coach Hank Johnson, the Comets struggled to a 1-8 record (0-7 in the Southern Lake Conference).

Most of the coaching staff was hired very late in the offseason, which didn't give the team much time to completely learn the offense and defense, which didn't give them much time to prepare for the season.

Even though the players came to work every day, and did their best to learn the offensive and defensive formulas, it wasn't enough for a Week 1 win. While the defense showed some serious grit, the Comets' offense failed to move the ball for most of the game and lost to Lodi, 13-7.

But in Week 2, Delavan-Darien bounced back in a big way, defeating an undermanned Milwaukee North; 71-0. Jay T. Greenwald passed for two touchdowns and also ran for a score. Reese Crull threw two touchdowns as well for the Comets.

However, that was the only win the Comets could pull off, as they went 0-7 in conference play. One bright side for Delavan-Darien (which is listed as a co-op team with Williams Bay) was Sean Wiese, who led the team with seven interceptions. Those seven interceptions tied him for the third-most interceptions in the state, and he will be participating in the Blue-Grey All-American Bowl in Dallas, Texas.

Knowing they would be playing bigger schools, Delavan-Darien still showed great fight throughout the season. When asked about his favorite part of the season, Coach Johnson replied, "Honestly, just being with this team. We appreciate everything they have done this past off-season and how they gave us effort all the way through the season."

That shows the true fight of the Comets, as they showed maximum

effort and fight in a tough season.

Soccer:

After an appearance in the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association State Championship game last year, the Delavan-Darien soccer team went 15-6-4 and was knocked out in the WIAA regional final. The Comets started the season great at 4-0, with blow-out wins over Cambridge, Walworth Big Foot and Whitewater. They tied a game and won another before their first SLC meeting against rival Elkhorn. The Elks were able to score two first-half goals and win 2-0.

But Delavan-Darien continued its winning ways and won four out of its next five games. Led by Zeus Huerta, the Comets rolled into the New Berlin West Invite, ready to win. They had won four straight games entering the tournament and were prepared to face great competition. In the first game of the invitational, D-DHS beat Kenosha Indian Trail 4-2, as it was able to pull away in the second half, thanks to Pablo Guzman-Martinez's two goals. In the next game, the Comets tied with Saint Anthony's. In the final game of the tournament, they lost a tough one to Waterford, 2-1.

Heading into the regional round, the Comets were 5-2-2 since the Waterford Invite. Their first game was against Grafton and the Comets steadily pulled away for a 6-1 victory. Behind goals from Guzman-Martinez, Estevan Colin, Huerta and Isaac Calixto, Delavan-Darien easily moved on. In the next game, the Comets narrowly lost to the New Berlin West Vikings in a 2-1 final. The Comets struck first on a goal just four minutes into the game, but a pair of late goals by New Berlin West ended the season for the Comets.

West ended up losing in the Division 3 Shorewood Sectional final, for the right to go to the state tournament, to Pius XI of Milwaukee. The game was 3-3 in overtime, with Pius winning on penalty kicks.

Elkhorn (17-2-2), which also defeated the Comets 5-0 in a second meeting, lost 5-4 in a penalty shootout against Oregon (19-2-1) in a Division 2 sectional final at Elkhorn. The game was 1-1 after two 10-minute overtimes.

Cross country built as season developed

By Calvin Lumkes
Cometeer staff

The season started off a little bit rough for the Devan-Darien High School cross country team as only five people showed up on the day of the first practice. As the season went on, the cross country team snowballed into eight runners in total. With a final number of two girls and six boys, the Comets went on and tackled the season as a team.

The first race at the Palmyra-Eagle Invitational 5-Kilometer consisted of only four Delavan-Darien runners, the best time being 20:19 by senior Eliberto Gomez. Another runner finished five minutes later and another had taken the wrong course and had been disqualified. Gomez had forgotten his shoes and had to run with another runner's shoes so that person couldn't run.

They then went on to go to the Duck Pond Invitational race, which was hosted by Big Foot High School. Gomez improved his time by nearly a minute and a half and placed in the top 20 runners. A freshman runner finished with another race under his belt and a



Photos From Delavan-Darien High School Athletics/Activities Facebook Page

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Last spring's sports awards



Special Award Winners (L-R) T Oren, Chase Castel, Johana Mendez, Lizabeth Gomez, Paige Johnson, Bridgette Kolego, Jaida Speth, Seth Grabow, Eric Gonzalez, and Luca Lopez.

Photos From Delavan-Darien High School Athletics/Activities Facebook Page



All Conference Award Winners (L-R) Miguel Sanson, Andrew Logterman, Jaida Speth, Kailea Timmerman and Zach Weerts



Sportsmanship Award Winners (L-R) Paige Johnson, Michael Ream, Andrew Logterman, Jason Cano, Sydney Anderson, and Beatriz Garnica.

Cross Country...

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better time than before by another minute. Junior Jordan Ivans had his first registered time of the year. The two freshmen girls ran the course with only a 40-second difference.

The next race was a big race for the team, held at the Blackhawk golf course in Janesville. There was a total of 2,126 competitors through six races. Freshman Grayson Morris competed in his first race and received a time of 18:44 and the other runners improved their personal records by around three minutes. The girls also improved their times by almost three minutes. Gomez improved his time from the previous race by a whole minute. He placed in the top half of the runners in a large race, with competitors coming from Green Bay to La Crosse.

The team's next race was in Fort Atkinson in the Koshkonong Klassic. This was freshman Michael O'Dell's first race and it was a full team for Delavan-Darien, consisting of eight runners. Morris experienced cramps and had to pull out of the race shortly after the start.

The end of the season was approaching for the Comets and they had two races to run before the season was over for them.

The first race was the Southern Lakes Conference Meet. The course location had to be altered due to the recent amount of precipitation received on the original course. The course was very slow for all of the runners; the D-DHS boys were about 30 seconds slow and the girls beat their personal best times and got muddy while doing it.

The second race was at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater. The course went around the baseball stadium and by the football stadium. Every D-DHS runner competed and ran around their new average.

Referendum...

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balance will be reinforced.

As part of her plan to better help students, Sorbie has been putting together a survey regarding the future of World Language at the high school that will be sent out to students and other community members. Sorbie is looking into a Birth-to-Three program to implement into the school district, but as of right now it is simply something being considered.

Pioneering: School newspapers return, with changes

By Thom Aiello

Advisor for Cometeer and Phoenix Rising

The 2018-19 school year has been up and running for about one quarter now and it brings with it some changes, including with the school newspapers.

Last school year saw the revival of The Cometeer, the newspaper at Delavan-Darien High School. Since the newspaper club there was new and limited in numbers, the meetings for the Cometeer were combined with the meetings for the Phoenix Rising, the newspaper that was continuing at Phoenix Middle School, at the library at Phoenix.



Also, as the newspapers were printed (in limited numbers) and sent out electronically to all students, parents/guardians and also posted on the school district's Web site, the "covers" were reversed. The high school editions led with the Cometeer on the front cover and the Phoenix Rising on the back side. The Phoenix Rising, then, led the middle school editions, with the Cometeer on the back. So, in essence, it was two newspapers in one.

With the returning members of the Cometeer hopeful of having their own meetings at the high school and having more recognition as a club, change was also afoot at Phoenix. Because of a failed referendum, there were staff trimmings and Darien Elementary School was closed. That led to fifth-grade students moving from Darien to Phoenix for the first time. Suddenly, the "population" at Phoenix grew one more year younger.

As some members, and potential members, of the Cometeer were interested in addressing some more high school/societal issues, there was a feeling that some of their topics might not be as appropriate for those younger students at Phoenix. There is a world of difference between grades 9-12 than grades 5-8.

So it was decided to give a try to having separate meetings and separate issues. The D-DHS meetings so far have been held after school on Wednesdays in the high school library. The newspaper will run separately, though it is still possible some items, such as this column or possibly stories that relate to both schools, will still appear in both editions. The Phoenix Rising meetings continue to be held after school on Thursdays in the

Phoenix library, the same as the past school year.

If the participation numbers get too low, or if there are scheduling conflicts, it could still be an option to return all meetings to Phoenix. Also, there will be times the high school staff members might be asked to come to some meetings at Phoenix to help mentor the middle school students.

The other change will likely have less effect. D-DHS remains on a quarterly school year schedule, while Phoenix has moved to trimesters this school year. Last school year was the first time it was attempted, and accomplished to have newspaper editions published at or near the end of each quarter.

The goal is to again have four newspapers for each school during the school year. It will follow closer, then, to the high school quarterly timetable.

Meanwhile, more students are needed.

The high school has added a few students, but even more would really help. There is the potential of some excellent additions, but the proof is in the production, to paraphrase a saying.

The middle school numbers at the first meeting were impressive. But, again, production is the key. Also, sticking with a club is another factor. The meetings can be fun, and snacks and beverages are provided. It takes about 45 minutes every two weeks or so. Students have reported that working on articles, from the start of preparing questions to finishing the write-ups, takes anywhere from 30 minutes to two hours. Even if a student did a couple of articles per quarter, that is a pretty limited amount of time involved.

Many students are involved in other clubs or after-school activities. Sometimes those conflict with the newspaper clubs' meeting times, but the students can still participate by staying in email contact if they cannot make meetings. All articles and photos are sent through email.

The papers are fortunate to again have the talents of Wendy Shafer to do the design work. It is a process to get everything put together, but it is important for students to have a "voice" in their schools. Those involved believe in that.

That's what this is all about. Hopefully you, the reader, will enjoy it and learn more about what is happening in the schools and find out about some of the issues that students, from grades 5-12, are facing these days.



It's Never Too Late To Get Involved and
Contribute to

THE D-DHS COMETEER

If Interested, Contact Mr. Aiello at

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