

# THE HEWITT BUZZ

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Issue 1



## Hewitt-Texas Blaze

By: Lauren Dell  
From: The Hewitt Buzz

Have you ever wondered about our school's history? What happened before even the oldest 5th grader went to school here? Well, a big part of that history is the Hewitt-Texas fire. The fire happened on December 2, 1981, after 8 pm at least. Due to the fact that nobody was working there at the time, because of the hour, a car driving by saw the flames gulping hungrily at the school and reported it. The fire department came soon after and put out the fire. The two boys who caused the fire, Kenneth McGovern and Darrell Schwartz, ended up going to prison for their crimes.

The fire was caused when pair of boys was drinking beer when their car broke down near Hewitt. They decided to, in the words of one of the boys, "have a little fun."

The duo broke into the school through a window during the night, 8 pm at least, and damaged several areas before setting fire in the Central Office and leaving.

After the fire and during the rebuilding, there was a tremendous amount of concern from the public, especially from the Hewitt community. Nobody was injured. The fire was so bad, they

couldn't use the school anymore until they remodeled the inside. Because of this, the students were split into groups; K-3 went to Franklin Elementary, and 4-6 went to John Marshall Elementary (6th graders went to school at the elementary schools). Teachers went wherever their grades were, and Mrs. Trantow, who was secretary at the time, went to Franklin also.

Some teachers who had been working there for many years lost most of their belongings. There was not much structural damage, but after the fire due to the devastation from smoke as well as the fire itself, no supplies could be used. The smoke smell never really left the building," says Mr. Paul Dimka, who was a teacher during the time. "Many years later when I would come home from work my wife could smell the smoke on me and my clothing." One of the teachers was so sensitive to the smoke smells that she ended up transferring schools the following year.

The winter concert that year was held at the Grand Theater. It was one of the first times that the school was brought back together that school year. (Quote from Mr. Dimka)

## Rocks Can Rock Someone's World

By: Calysta Welle  
From: The Hewitt Buzz

Lots of people in our community participate in a program called Wausau Rocks. Wausau Rocks is a program on Facebook for families and friends to spread kindness and a positive attitude toward others. Wausau Rocks is when people hide rocks in parks and public places for someone else to find and rehide. People also paint them, with positive messages or pictures on them. Someone or more than one person

started this program to spread happiness. Some local businesses also participate in Wausau Rocks, if you find their logo on a rock, then you can return it to that business for a prize. Mrs. Berghammer, a speech and language pathologist at Hewitt- Texas and Franklin Elementary, participates in Wausau Rocks.

Mrs. Berghammer takes part in Wausau Rocks with her children. Her children are 10 years old, 7 years old, and 4 years old. Some teachers she knows also participates. She hides them again and paints them. She paints them more often than she looks for them. Mrs. Berghammer paints rocks in her free time and on weekend. She mainly hides them in the spring and summer and paints them more often in the winter and the fall. Mrs. Berghammer looks for them specifically if she is going to a park, and randomly if she's at a store near the rock piles. If she notices that a picture is posted on Facebook of a rock was hidden, and they're out and about, they might go and look for that specific rock. She started carrying out this new hobby about 2 years ago. There is a book that she recently purchased about Wausau Rocks called, "Rocks on Kindness! Pass it on!" Written by Stepheni Curran and Illustrated by Samantha Williams. Mrs. Berghammer enjoys Wausau Rocks because she likes to spread happiness, and that's the main idea of the program.

Wausau Rocks is a way to send joy and happiness. We are approaching summer soon and I think you and your family should try this program. [You don't need to have Facebook].



# OPINION

## Later School Start Times: A Positive Move for Students



By: Koen Schiefelbein  
From: The Hewitt Buzz

Have you ever had trouble getting your teen up to go to school in the morning? This may be related to early school start times.

Students aren't getting enough sleep. The University of Minnesota conducted a study on 9000 students over three years and figured out that, for teens to do well in school, they needed at least 8 hours of sleep, and with the current start times, not many students get that amount. When schools start at 7:30, only about 35% of students get 8 hours of sleep, but when they start at 8:30, 60% of students get 8 hours.

As students get older, their inner sleep cycles are always changing. Way back in the 1990's, researchers found out that, when a body is going through puberty, the body wants to move bedtime farther into the night. The body would still get enough sleep though. It would just go to sleep later in the night and wake up later in the morning. Then, researchers showed that from the ages 10-20, the body's sleep cycle shifts 12-18 minutes later into the night each year. So, once someone hits high school, his or her body may want to go to sleep at 9:30, instead of

8:30. Without schools factoring this in and making school start later, students are virtually zombies when they get to school.

Other benefits of later school start times and more sleep besides improved academic performance are that students are less likely to depend on caffeine to get through the day, have less chances of suffering from things such as depression, and have less chances of making poor choices such as indulging in drugs and alcohol. A recent study made some sleep deprived teenagers to play a risky computer game. The study showed that, when teenagers are sleep deprived, they take more risks in that game than they would normally

Of course with this change, there would be many disadvantages to it. One is that students with school sports wouldn't get home until even later. Maybe the biggest disadvantage is that the district would need to figure out how to make bussing with the change, because it would completely mess that up. Then there's the possibility that this change would not help at all because, maybe if teens didn't have to get up as early, they would stay up later and get the exact same amount of sleep.

I personally like the idea of a later school start time. When you are parent, you don't want to go through that moaning and groaning every morning. I'm sure that my parents would agree to that. I hope the school district at least tries something like this to see how it goes. If it doesn't go well, then it will just revert back to normal.



## Scaly Business Partners

By: Dylun Wojcik  
From: The Hewitt Buzz

Mrs. DeMeyer, Hewitt's 3rd grade teacher's husband, has a business of raising and selling reptiles. This business is called Captive Reptile Specialties/Royal Constrictor Designs. Captive Reptile Specialties/Royal Constrictor Designs is located on East Wausau Avenue. In the business, he ships reptiles all over the world.

### Do you know why your husband started this reptile business?

*I do, because as a kid he loved reptiles. When he was a little boy he would go in the woods, and find frogs and snakes and he'd find Skinks and he just really liked reptiles. So anyway, then he decided that he could make a business out of selling reptiles.*

### Did your husband ever have reptiles as a kid?

*He did. And most like when he was a kid a lot of stores didn't sell the same reptiles as they do now. And a lot of them could be caught outside like frogs and things like that.*

### Do you know when he started the business?

*Yes, he actually started his business when he was in college. He had some animals at his mom's house, and he went full-time with his business I want to say 2000 or 2001. So, he's been full-time for almost 20 years already.*

### Do you know who inspired him to start this business?

*I know his dad would take him to the zoos, and things like that. So, I think maybe it was just between his dad,*

*and his mom liked to encourage him to do that.*

### **Do you like reptiles?**

*You know what, when I first started dating my husband, I did not like reptiles. I thought they were kind of creepy. But the more I was around my husband, and animals, and educated about them, the more I liked them. So, yes, I like reptiles.*

### **About how many reptiles do you have?**

*Oh boy, at my husband's shop, he probably has 2000 snakes, and he probably has a few hundred or so geckos. Yeah, a lot more snakes than snakes than geckos. But, when the snakes have babies, you know because he sells them so, some of them get sold, but then, more babies hatch. So I'd say an average of 2000.*

### **Who do you sell the reptiles to?**

*He sells them all over the world to be honest with you. He sells them here to people locally, he ships them with FedEx to people over the U.S.. He actually ships them around the world. He's got an exporter that takes his animals and that gentleman will ship them all over the world, so his animals are all over the place.*

### **From where do you get the reptiles?**

*Where did my husband get the reptiles? To start, he got his reptiles through other breeders like when he first started; he had to buy them. But as he bought more reptiles, they had babies and he would keep some of the babies and he would breed the different colors together to make new ones. So sometimes he keeps his own reptiles and uses them to make more reptiles, and sometimes he actually buys them from other people.*

### **What is the most dangerous reptile you have?**

*You know honestly we don't have any dangerous reptiles right now. Like everything we have is not poisonous or non-venomous. And everything we have would make a good pet. Years ago and this was a while ago, he used to have some really big snakes, like the Reticulated Python that got up to 7-8 feet, they were big, maybe even up to 10 feet. That those I would say were dangerous were not a*

*good pet. And we sold those because he doesn't want to work with animals that don't make good pets for people.*

### **Do you train the reptiles to be calmer?**

*The more you handle them, the more docile they become. So the more you handle it and hold it the reptile will get used to you and not be so aggressive.*

### **Do you have any employees in the business?**

*Yes, he actually has one full-time employee that helps him all day long. Then he has one high school student that comes in after school, and helps him wash dishes and does some cleaning.*

## **The Outdoor Classroom**

By: Lydia Winterhoff  
From: The Hewitt Buzz



Have you ever noticed a small white shelter surrounded by the trees at Hewitt Texas school? This shelter was built for the kids at Hewitt Texas school, to study nature around them and to expand their knowledge of plants, animals, and nature. The principal at the time, Bill Paul, wanted to give the kids an education on the environment. Weekly, students went out to the shelter with notebooks and learned about nature.

The structure was built by the parents from the area, they cleared the land and built it. A few people from the community also worked on it. The school obtained the land to build the shelter from one of the school neighbors, the

Burgeners. They donated some of their land to the school, for the kids to walk on the nature trails and study the land in the shelter. Bill Paul coordinated the building of the structure, he was part of a organization called the Kiwanis of Wausau, they did most of the funding for the structure, and got the community involved.

Bill Paul, the man who coordinated the shelter, loved nature and wanted the kids to learn about it. That is why he decided to have a nature habit for the students attending the school. He was involved in the Wausau School District for about 40 years! He died of pancreatic cancer in 2007. The shelter was then dedicated to him. They wanted to honor him for his service to the district and for coordinating the building of the shelter.

"The shelter is a real aspect to the school," Mrs. Trantow, retired school administrative assistant, explained.

# Comics

