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'Education in Action' at Suttle-Straus

We're pleased to kick off our new "Education in Action" feature with 25 students at Waunakee Community Intermediate School. For the past five years, Jacqueline Wells' 5th graders have produced a magazine profiling people who live and work in their Wisconsin town. Wells coaches them on handwriting, spelling, language arts and computer skills. Roger Hamilton, a photographer and reporter for the *Waunakee Tribune*, helps the students understand photo framing, composition and camera angles. The yearlong project culminates with a trip to Suttle-Straus' printing facility to see the magazine being printed on a digital press.



President John Berthelsen personally conducts the class on a tour and provides an overview of the printing process. The 2008 trip made quite an impression on some of the 10- and 11-year-old visitors.

"We loved coming out to your company," wrote Koy Smith in a thank-you note. "It was so much fun. I was shocked to hear that you used 15 million pounds of paper. I learned that you have a lot of positions in the office. I am amazed at how much mail you mailed, 100 million pieces of mail!"

"The thing that *I thought* was the coolest is that you only use the colors red, yellow, blue & black to print." —Alisha Nolden

Ana Prusha approved of Suttle-Straus' environmental efforts: "It is inspiring how you saved 44,000 trees last year. It's so cool that your web press ran 90 million impressions and your sheetfed presses generated 60 million impressions."

Miranda Kissane marveled at the technology. "All of your machines look very complicated. I was impressed that the digital ones ran 25 million black-and-white photos and 5 million color photos!"

Alisha Nolden appreciated the CMYK discussion. "The thing that I thought was the coolest is that you only use the colors red, yellow, blue and black to print. Just think. I didn't even know my printer does that at home. I had no idea."

Liz Hillesheim thanked Berthelsen for printing the magazine. "If you did not, then we would have ugly, boring, black and white. Other establishments would not print our magazine, which costs 1,000s and 1,000s of dollars." She further applauded Suttle-Straus' good housekeeping and Berthelsen's management style: "The machines were so high tech and it was very clean. It smelled very nice. Also, you are the nicest boss I ever met."

Berthelsen, who has long championed careers in the graphic arts and recently assumed the chairmanship of the Education Summit, particularly enjoyed Alex Rosencrance's note: "The tour was so interesting that I might want to work there one day. Good thing your workers wear earplugs because if they didn't you would not be able to give them orders. Thank you for the tour and the magazines. You are so nice!"

Who are the people in your neighborhood?

Published in the spring of 2008, the students' magazine features townspeople from all walks of life. Rosencrance profiled Eric Zett, "the coolest [Subway sandwich] maker in the world." Brooke Falkner wrote about Lori Meyer, "a great piano teacher." Teagan Fix remarked on third-grade teacher Trish Chaimson's "awesome personality," while Chandler Darger notes that Heidi Gaugert is a "fun, outgoing preschool teacher." Bob Krolnik is "an amazing" karate teacher, according to Kristin Loeffelholz.

Ricci Martinez fixes arcade games for Rocky Rococo's. "The machines can be hot to touch," observes Miranda Kissane. "In this photo you can see the pain on his face from all the heat."

"You can't have a weak stomach if you want to be a doctor," advised Dr. William Ranum in an interview with Taylor Wolfe. "Dr. Ranum said his favorite thing to do is deliver babies. His favorite tool is a scalpel," Wolfe added.

Waunakee librarian Aggie Steichen bravely endured all manner of zoological events during her 33-year career. As a child, Steichen hated snakes. "They had so many snakes come in for programs, she got over her fear," reported Danielle Semler.

Several years ago, Roger Hamilton photographed a library program featuring an alligator. "The kids weren't very eager to hold and pet the alligator, even though its snout was tied with a length of tape," he told Megan Binkley in the 2006 publication.

Tony Solaris, a dairy farmer, spoke with Luke Meffert. "One of the stories he told is when he helped a cow give birth for the first time. He said it was absolutely amazing to see." Solaris works 13-hour days. "Tony will never give up and plans to always stay in business," writes Meffert. "He will help make sure the small family farm never completely dies out."

For more about our Education in Action series, see pg. 48.

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Hooked on printing

Suttle-Straus introduces 5th graders to the graphic arts

Only 10,000 people live in Waunakee, WI, but you would have to go a long way to meet a more interesting bunch. If you saw Paul Kennedy working at the local bank, you might never guess he's also an actor. (He played the Food Way manager in "The Shawshank Redemption.") Or that Dave Hess was on duty at the Village Mobile when former Yankees pitcher Ryan Duren needed some gas. Expect a cheerful welcome from Pastor Bruce Engebretson at Peace Lutheran. It might take some

driving to find veterinarian Bruce Kleppe, but it would be worth it to shake hands with one of the few people to deliver live triplets from a Holstein cow.

These are just a few of the friends and neighbors profiled in an annual publication written and illustrated by some 5th graders at Waunakee Community Intermediate School. For the past four years, a total of about 100 10- and 11-year-olds have produced a 16-page magazine with the help of teacher Jacqueline Wells and photographer Roger

Hamilton. John Berthelsen, president of Suttle-Straus, donates the printing and hosts a field trip at his plant. "Having a Kodak NexPress works out great," says Berthelsen. "It's easy to generate this book, and the kids can see it actually coming out of the machine. They get a big kick out of that."

Reading, writing and photography

Over the course of the school year, the students learn about photography and practice their writing skills. Each student chooses a subject to

Taking action

"Despite the current economic situation, we still need to ensure we're attracting young people to the graphic arts," John Berthelsen told us in the December 2008 issue of *AMERICAN PRINTER*. "We've got a critical situation, especially as high school programs are shutting down. We're losing vehicles for getting young people trained in the industry." Berthelsen chairs the Education Summit and works with Waunakee Community Intermediate School and other student groups. Do you have an Education in Action story to share? See pg. 72.

photograph and interview that person. When the first group of students tackled the project, Wells was swamped with pictures of horses, dogs and cats. Moms and dads also proved to be popular choices. Since then she has implemented some ground rules: no pets or relatives, and the person must live in Waunakee.

Although some might argue that a picture is worth a thousand words, students in Ms. Wells' class must compose a paragraph with a main idea sentence and a strong conclusion. "Even pictures in the newspaper have captions," notes Wells. "It's good practice."

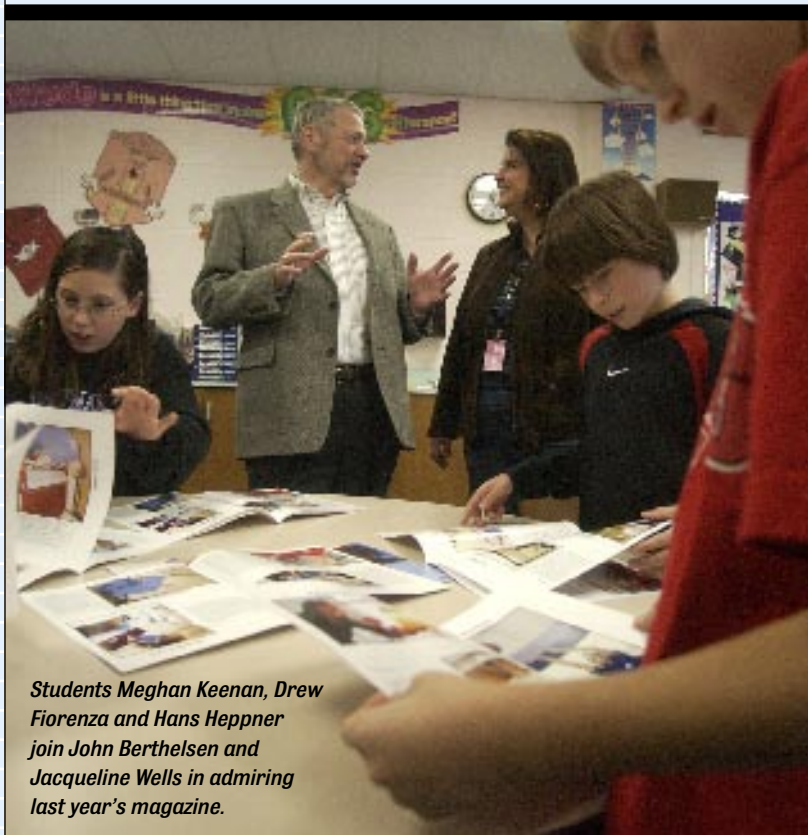
The project got started several years ago, when Gabby Leonard, then a student in Wells' class, saw Roger Hamilton taking pictures at a high school basketball game for the *Waunakee Tribune*. "I really like photography," she told

him. "How can I learn more about it?"

Hamilton said he would be happy to talk to her class and that Leonard should have Ms. Wells get in touch with him. "Roger talked to the class for about an hour," recalls Wells. "It was intriguing. He said he'd always wanted to do an extended project and asked if I would be interested."

During the kick-off meeting with each fresh crop of photojournalists, Hamilton shows some examples from his own work and explains why he chose a particular angle or composition. After choosing a subject, student use digital cameras—generally on loan from their parents—to take 25 to 30 photos in locations ranging from gyms, churches, real estate offices, dental exam rooms, barber shops and the police station.

"We try to avoid repeat [subjects],"



Students Meghan Keenan, Drew Fiorenza and Hans Heppner join John Berthelsen and Jacqueline Wells in admiring last year's magazine.

says Hamilton. “If a student wants to photograph someone that works in a challenging environment, such as an emergency medical technician, we’ll invite that person to visit the class. It’s a great opportunity to demonstrate what they do.”

Hamilton reviews the students’ portfolios and asks each to choose their five best pictures. “I’ll ask them to tell me why they like a particular shot,” says Hamilton. “Sometimes they’ll have a good reason and sometimes I don’t agree with them. We’ll discuss it and their eyes will light up as they grasp the concept. That’s fun to see.”

“It can really help kids who have a different learning style,” adds Wells. “It lets visual learners shine.”

After finalizing their photo choices, the students describe their subjects, often noting the educational requirements for certain jobs and passing along career advice gleaned from their interviews.

Eventually the 5th graders keyboard their handwritten drafts. Suttle-Straus handles the actual imposition, but the students determine which photo will run on the cover.

“You can’t choose the photo just because you like that person,” Hamilton reminds them. “It should be the best photo.”

Stepping up to color

The first two issues were produced on a black-and-white office copier. Wells wanted to print the Spring 2007 issue in color, but the

cost far exceeded her classroom’s budget. A visit to the Waunakee/Westport Chamber of Commerce in search of potential sponsors led Wells to Berthelsen and Suttle-Straus.

Berthelsen has helped the Boy Scouts, the Ronald McDonald House, the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra and many other worthy groups, but he particularly likes this project. “I really enjoy that age group—it’s a blast working with 10- and 11-year-old kids,” he says. “They’re bright and ask a lot of questions. It’s totally different than hosting a tour for high school or vocational school kids.”

Berthelsen got his start on the production side of the business and enjoys explaining the printing process to the students. Highlights at Suttle-Straus include 1- through 6-color sheetfed and web printing, digital imaging, mailing, Web linked ordering and distribution services. The 5th graders were particularly interested in one piece of equipment that seldom draws a second glance from older visitors. The entire class climbed on Suttle-Straus’ skid scale to determine their collective weight.

Shortly after the field trip, Berthelsen received a stack of colorful thank-you notes written in cursive on construction paper. “I learned a lot and had fun at the same time,” wrote Payton Statz.

Taylor Wolfe learned a lot about magazine printing and thanked Berthelsen for “the GREAT tour of your building.”

Are you funnier than a 5th grader?

Jacqueline Wells has taught at Waunakee Community Intermediate School for 15 years. “The fabulous thing is that 5th graders are still very respectful, they know there are rules and they try hard to follow them,” says Wells. “They are children, but a bit more independent, they can plan out a longer project. Their sense of humor is just starting to develop.”

Chandler Darger was equally enthusiastic: “I am impressed by how many things you make! We liked watching all of your cool machines. We loved all that you taught us!”

Danny Skinner’s note included a drawing of the plant’s exterior with a caption: “Suttle-Straus is the Greatest ever!!”

Although Wells knew what to expect from a prior tour, she told Berthelsen that she was “still amazed, impressed and awed by all of the work your plant does.”

A few students told Wells that visiting the Suttle-Straus plant is the highlight of a field trip season that includes excursions to the Wisconsin Veterans Museum in Madison and Tommy Bartlett’s Robot World and Exploratory in Wisconsin Dells. “I was genuinely surprised,” says Wells.

Suttle-Straus’ prints several hundred magazines, enough for students to share copies with their families as well as newcomers to Waunakee. The Chamber of Commerce includes the publication with every welcome packet.

After the magazine is printed, Wells’ class invites the people they’ve profiled to a publication party. “The kids are so proud,” says Wells.

“The magazine displays our community in such a positive light—it makes them feel important and valued.”

Berthelsen says working with the 5th graders is a fun way to give back to the industry he loves. He credits a junior high Industrial Arts class with inspiring his career choice. As more schools scale back their graphic arts education programs, he’s concerned about finding qualified employees.

He’s hoping some of the young

photojournalists in Ms. Wells’ class will return as job applicants. “I can’t wait until the first class that we met a couple of years ago reaches hiring age and we get our first employee,” says Berthelsen. “That will bring the story full circle. But even if one 10-year-old kid says ‘Gee, that’s a great place to work,’ our mission will be accomplished.”

Katherine O’Brien is the editor of AMERICAN PRINTER. Contact her at KOB@americanprinter.com.



On the cover

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. John Berthelsen | 13. Taylor Lovick |
| 2. Meghan Keenan | 14. Jordan Reid |
| 3. Claire Pertzborn | 15. Alex Miller |
| 4. Gabby Guitzkow | 16. Anika Hauck |
| 5. Nathan Kersten | 17. Lexi Cords |
| 6. Drew Fiorenza | 18. Hannah Teasdale |
| 7. Hans Heppner | 19. Jacqueline Wells |
| 8. Austin Schleis | 20. Hunter Schoepp |
| 9. Emma Schettler | 21. Johnathan Weisensel |
| 10. Grant Gulland | 22. Preston Ernst |
| 11. Matthew Dynneson | 23. Payton Davis |
| 12. Darrin Helt | 24. Ellen Peterson |

Photos courtesy of Roger Hamilton