



HOMECOMING

Photos from a memorable night
SEE PAGES 4-6

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Pioneer

THE ELYRIA SCHOOLS



Press

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Fall 2015

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Car raffle benefits kids

Amy Higgins

Communications director

Close your eyes and think, "cruise." Does your mind conjure images of smooth rides, unfettered passages and good times?

That must have been Chevrolet's mission when it developed its all-new sporty compact sedan, the 2016 Chevy Cruze.

Car buffs call the Cruze, "roomy, zippy and techy." It's the first redesigned model since the car debuted in 2011 and according to auto enthusiasts, buyers won't be disappointed.

Why is this relevant to the pages of Pioneer Press? Because readers can snag their own 2016 Chevy Cruze with one lucky ticket in a booster club fundraiser benefitting Elyria Schools.

Members of the Elyria High School Pioneer Marching Band Boosters, Elyria Pioneer Club and Elyria Schools Endowment Board are selling chances to win a jazzy new Cruze in a bright, bold Pioneer-red color at \$10 for one raffle ticket, or \$20 for three.

The car will be donated by Sunnyside Chevrolet in Elyria. Sunnyside Sales Manager Jason Higgins said the donation is a way to help the schools.

This is the second time Elyria Schools has been on the receiving end of Sunnyside's generosity. The company donated a new Chevy Malibu in 2012 to the same three booster clubs and through ticket sales, the clubs raised nearly \$25,000 to split among the programs each group supports: athletics, music and classroom projects.

Ticket holders in that drawing waited with bated breath for their name to be called during the grand opening celebration of Elyria High School on June 12, 2012. The winner was Elyria resi-



ELYRIA SCHOOLS PHOTOS

ABOVE: Elyria resident Carol Guignette celebrates winning a new Chevy Malibu in 2012.

BELOW: A 2016 Chevy Cruze is up for grabs in the booster club raffle for Elyria Schools. The drawing will be May 20 next year.



dent Carol Guignette.

The 2016 Chevy Cruze is valued at \$22,250. The car is the obvious grand prize, but ticket holders also have a shot at winning cash if their ticket is drawn as a second or third place winner.

Tickets are on sale now. To get yours through Pioneer Club in support of the

athletic program, call Becky Stewart at (440) 315-7264.

To buy them through Band Boosters in support of the music program, contact Laura Schramm, (440) 281-0420.

And to purchase through the Endowment Board in support of teacher and classroom projects, call Jim Backs at (440) 666-6850 or Amy Higgins at (440) 284-8183.

Winning!

Great pay.

Great opportunity.

Great schedules.

Filling in as sub, working part-time fills need for school district, creates opportunity for candidates

Amy Higgins

Communications director

It may be surprising to learn you don't have to be a teacher or a principal to work in a school district.

There are food servers and cashiers to ensure the daily delivery of school meals.

There are custodians and maintenance personnel to guarantee buildings and grounds remain ship-shape each and every day.

There are aides and attendants to give one-on-one care and assistance to students with special needs.

There are office professionals like secretaries and administrative assistants to manage the swarm of day-to-day activities in any school building or department.

There are specialized positions, too, like nurses, counselors, physical and occupational therapists, psychologists, speech and hearing therapists, school administrators and so on.

And of course, there are teachers, lots of them, to educate and serve the nearly 6,400 students who attend Elyria Schools.

And what's perhaps even more surprising than the variety of jobs within the schools, is the range of hours in which to work.

The district looks for qualified people to fill in for classroom teachers almost on a daily basis. To be a substitute teacher, you must hold a bachelor's degree but it can be in any field. And substitute teachers are

See **WINNING**, 6

A is for Apricot, Z is for Zucchini

Fruit, veggie samplings on school lunch lines let kids taste out-of-the-ordinary foods, flavors

Amy Higgins

Communications director

Ever heard of an ugly fruit? How about jicama? Okra? Quince?

If the names of these non-traditional fruits and veggies aren't naturally rolling off your tongue, you're probably not alone.

In fact the only people to know if these foods are tasty enough to enhance a recipe or to be gobbled as standalone snacks are professional chefs and self-proclaimed "foodies." Oh, and also the students in the Elyria Schools.

You might be wondering how a 5-year-old and his kindergarten classmates can tell the difference between a date and fig. Probably because he and his friends sampled both fruits on the school lunch line just a couple weeks ago.

Dates and figs, ugly fruit and jicama, okra and quince, these are but a sampling of dozens of foods that will earn a turn alphabetically on the A to Z Salad Bar.

Sodexo Foodservice is to thank for coming up with this creative,

COMING SOON TO A LUNCH LINE NEAR YOU!

November

J – Jicama
K – Kiwi
L – Lemon

December

M – Mushrooms
N – Nectarine
O – Okra

January

P – Snap peas
Q – Quince
R – Radish
S – Squash

February

T – Turnip
U – Ugli Fruit
V – Vine-ripened tomatoes

March

W – Watermelon
X – Xtra fancy star fruit
Y – Yams
Z – Zucchini



AMY HIGGINS / ELYRIA SCHOOLS

Students sample vegetables and fruits of all varieties at Ely Elementary School.

tasty way of introducing healthful foods to young palettes.

"Once a week, on Wednesdays, we go through the alphabet, adding a new item to the regular menu for kids to sample," said

Jacob Latsnik, unit controller.

"Students are sometimes afraid to try new fruits or vegetables but when they do, they often

find they like them and they may add at least one of the foods to their regular diet.

"Almost all of the kids will give

it a try," Latsnik said. "We do this for the educational component, so kids are aware of what's out there."

FA LA LA LA LA! HOLIDAY MUSIC SCHEDULE AT THE PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

Fri. Nov. 13

7 p.m. EHS Musical "Little Shop of Horrors"
Where: Elyria High School Performing Arts Center

Sat. Nov. 14

7 p.m. EHS Musical "Little Shop of Horrors"
Where: Elyria High School Performing Arts Center

Sun. Nov. 15

2 p.m. EHS Musical "Little Shop of Horrors"
Where: Elyria High School Performing Arts Center

Tues. Nov. 17

7 p.m. Eastern Heights 7th and 8th Grade Band Concert
Where: Eastern Heights Middle School

Tues. Dec. 1

7 p.m. Windsor School Concert
Where: Elyria High School Performing Arts Center

Wed. Dec. 2

7 p.m. Prospect School Concert
Where: Elyria High School Performing Arts Center

Thurs. Dec. 3

7 p.m. Oakwood School Concert
Where: Elyria High School Performing Arts Center

Tues. Dec. 8

7 p.m. Franklin School Concert
Where: Elyria High School Performing Arts Center

Wed. Dec. 9

7 p.m. EHS and Northwood Orchestra Concert
Where: Elyria High School Performing Arts Center

Thurs. Dec. 10

7 p.m. Crestwood School Concert
Where: Elyria High School Performing Arts Center

Fri. Dec. 11

7 p.m. EHS Choir Concert
Where: Elyria High School Performing Arts Center

Mon. Dec. 14

7 p.m. Kindergarten Village Concert
Where: Elyria High School Performing Arts Center

7 p.m. Westwood Music Department Concert
Where: Westwood Middle School

Tues. Dec. 15

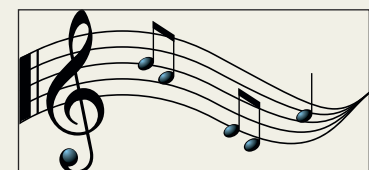
7 p.m. Eastern Heights Choir and Orchestra Concert
Where: Eastern Heights Middle School
7 p.m. Northwood Choir and Band Concert
Where: Elyria High School Performing Arts Center

Wed. Dec. 16

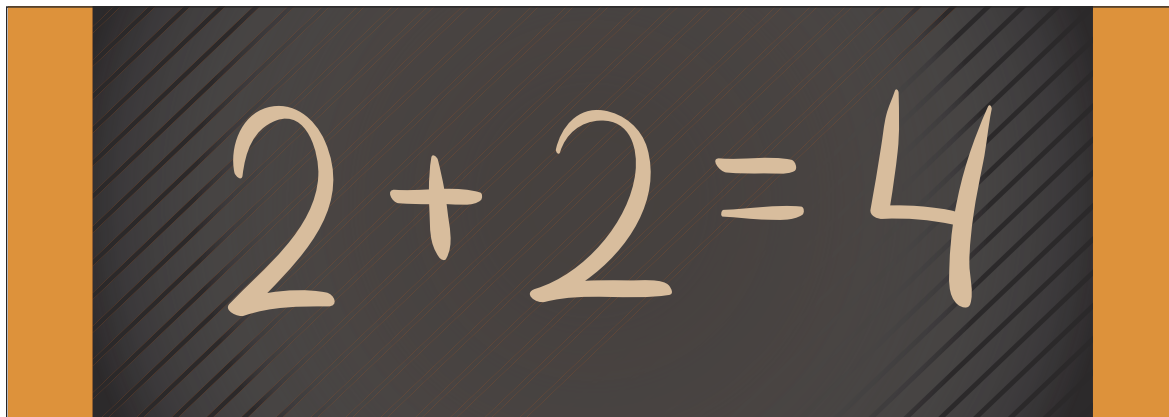
6:30 p.m. Ely School Concert
Where: Elyria High School Performing Arts Center

Thurs. Dec. 17

7 p.m. McKinley School Concert
Where: Elyria High School Performing Arts Center



METRO CREATIVE



METRO CREATIVE

Math pilot shows promise

Kathy Koepp
Content area specialist,
math and science

Elyria students, parents and teachers are test-driving new math programs in kindergarten through eighth grade.

After a year of reviewing a multitude of resources that not only met new standards for math but also met, and even surpassed, our expectations for math instruction, our team of reviewers selected two programs to test this school year.

The first, “enVisions2.0” targets the needs of students in kindergarten through fifth grade. The other program, “Digits,” is designed for students in sixth through eighth grade.

The idea of test-driving or piloting a program for study in schools might seem strange but here’s a bit more on how we do it and why it’s effective.

Q: What’s a math “pilot” and who’s doing it?

A: Many times, before we make a commitment to purchase curriculum materials for the entire district, we test or “pilot” the materials to make sure they meet the needs of our students and teachers. It’s imperative we make the best choice on materials because in purchasing them, we are committing to those resources for many years. In this particular math pilot, one teacher per grade level, per building, in kindergarten through second grade is using the program, and all math teachers in third through eighth grade are using the programs.

Q: Why switch programs?

A: With new math standards, our current programs aren’t meeting the needs of our students, and math teachers are finding ways to supplement and fill gaps where the programs fall short. Our expect-



Koepp

Q: Why does math look so different from when I went to school?

A: Researchers say the United States isn’t keeping up with other countries when it comes to math. What’s lacking, they say, is the ability to make connections between numbers. Day-to-day connections like calculating a tip at a restaurant, making change or figuring interest are struggles for many people.

Past practices had students learning to apply a process, also called an algorithm, to solve math problems. And while they might have been successful in this method to solve the problem, they rarely understood *why* they were applying the process. This created a “disconnect” for generations of math students.

Today educators are teaching students to build a conceptual understanding of math *before* applying the algorithm. They focus on *how* to solve a problem using various strategies rather than only allowing one way of doing it. The goal is for students to think flexibly about numbers so that they can problem-solve in a variety of situations.

Q: I hear the media talking about “rigor” in math, but what is that really?

A: There are three aspects of rigor that teachers must pursue, with equal intensity, within their instruction:

■ Deep conceptual understanding

tations are for math programs that meet the standards at each grade level and build from one grade level to the next so students gain a deep understanding of math.

so students really understand *why* they are doing it.

■ Procedural skills and fluency so students gain speed and accuracy in simple calculations, thus getting to the complex concepts and procedures more quickly. For example, if a student is solving a three-step equation, he or she shouldn’t get stuck on 8×9 . When students need to stop and think about simple calculations, they lose the momentum of problem solving.

■ Application of mathematical concepts so students learn how to use math correctly in real-life situations. After all, *life* is one big story problem!

Q: Are students really doing math on computers?

A: Students are still doing math with paper and pencil but they are inputting answers into a computer and gleaned instant feedback — so no more practicing 20 problems incorrectly. Another advantage to digital problem solving is instant access to math help: Videos that explain a concept or offer interactive walkthroughs, online animations or glossaries, and test questions of a similar nature to help ensure the student has a true understanding of the concept or skill. Online access helps build students’ confidence in their math ability because they know they are solving the problems correctly.

Q: How long will this “pilot” last?

A: Students, parents and teachers in the test group will be using the material throughout the 2015-16 school year, but the district will soon begin gathering their feedback on how the resources are working out. If reviewers give the programs the green light, the district will recommend a full-scale adoption at a Board of Education meeting this spring.

Moments that change the entire community

In May, it will be nine years since Elyria residents decided it was time for a new high school.



AMY HIGGINS

If you were one of the hundreds of volunteers on that campaign, you were probably with the army of friends and supporters on Election Night as they crowded into the stuffy cafeteria at the old high school.

The campaign had been a highly charged, emotional endeavor, and anyone actively involved in the project craved the cathartic experience of gathering as a group to watch the election results come in.

That night, regardless of outcome, everyone was united.

I was there — it’s a memory etched in my mind for good.

The ballot updates came in tortuously slow.

I was on laptop duty. It was my job to anticipate when the Board of Elections would update its data online, with each precinct periodically updating new ballot numbers throughout the evening.

I was responsible for moving my computer cursor over a little arrow at the top of the Board of Elections website. When clicked, that arrow would refresh the screen — sometimes with new poll results.

I repeated that invigorating process all night long.

Click, refresh.

Wait 10 minutes.

Click, refresh.

Wait 10 minutes.

Click, refresh.

And so it went throughout the night, my “clicking” finger getting the best workout since the Internet Age.

About an hour and a half into it, substantial results began trickling in. Early signs showed strong support for a new high school, but for those in the room who’d had their hopes dashed in previous bids for a new school, it was way too early to celebrate.

With each refresh of the screen, however, the gap

The campaign had been a highly charged, emotional endeavor, and anyone actively involved in the project craved the cathartic experience of gathering as a group to watch the election results come in. That night, regardless of outcome, everyone was united.

between the “FOR” and “AGAINST” votes widened.

At some point, “FOR” began pulling ahead at a steady pace.

The energy in the room was electric.

At some point late into the evening, when the majority of votes were in and accounted for, it became clear with a final click of the refresh button: The city would tear down its old school and build its children a brand new one.

The next day’s headlines told the story, “Yes to EHS!”

In a school district with a legacy centuries old, this is but one of so many defining moments. Some moments are monumental, like the night the city of Elyria decided to build a new high school.

Such moments change the face of not just the school district, but the entire community.

Amy Higgins is communications director at Elyria Schools.

A night to remember

Amy Higgins

Communications director

Under the Friday night lights it was the biggest game of the year: Homecoming. And a fairytale was about to unfold.

A beautiful young girl, in a court of other beautiful young girls, waits for a magical moment.

A moment that will draw all eyes to her.

A moment that will see a glamorous crown placed upon her head.

A moment that she will be queen.

Football is the epicenter of Homecoming, but not on this night.

This night the crowd is watching this girl. And this night her fairytale has come true.

Elyria High School senior Elna Wright was crowned homecoming queen at Ely Stadium on Oct. 16.

Elna is nonverbal and bound to a wheelchair but it's never stopped her from doing everything her classmates enjoy.

"She's always participated in every school activity," said Tim Brown, Elyria High School principal. "She understands the themes of things and she has always participated with everyone else — her family has made sure of it."

Elna grew up in the Elyria Schools and Brown was her principal for a time at Erie Elementary, which was one of Elyria's first inclusive educational settings.

In the world of special education, the goal is to determine if a child can be successful in a typical classroom setting if additional supports are in place, like extra teachers or classroom aides or assistive educational tools. If the answer

is yes, then children who are typically developing ideally would be integrated into a setting with children who have special needs.

Children learn from one another and benefit socially, emotionally and academically. Those who are typically developing learn about acceptance, empathy and responsibility from daily interactions with their peers who have special needs. This builds a sense of community.

There's no more compelling example of this than what happened at Elyria High School during the homecoming festivities.

Even before the big game, magic was happening. Several students got to talking about kindness and paying it forward. They decided to make Homecoming truly special for everyone, and they extended invitations to their peers with special needs. Pretty soon, it caught on, and homecoming tickets were selling like wildfire, and *every* student was anticipating the event.

Amidst conversation about homecoming and the tradition of crowning a King and Queen, Elna's eyes lit up and her smile was radiant. That's when her family and friends knew Elna wanted to be Queen, and they set about making it happen. Elna's friends crafted posters and signs, they launched Twitter pages, and shared "Vote for Elna" across the social media spectrum.

Elna won by a landslide.

"Elna communicates with her eyes and her smile," Brown said. "Her smile speaks a million words."

And even the lights of Ely Stadium couldn't outshine that smile at Homecoming.



ELYRIA SCHOOLS PHOTOS

EHS senior Elna Wright celebrates as Homecoming Queen with parents Ebony and Ingrid Wright.



LEFT: Elna is crowned as queen.

RIGHT: Elna enjoys the pregame parade of golf carts with father Ebony Wright at Homecoming.





ELYRIA SCHOOLS PHOTOS

ABOVE: The Elyria High School Pioneer Marching Band takes the field at Homecoming.

RIGHT: EHS junior Jeremiah Csizmadia, assistant drum major, stands on the field.

BELOW: EHS senior Josh Lewis is crowned Homecoming King.





ELYRIA SCHOOLS PHOTOS

LEFT: Homecoming princesses and candidates for queen take a turn around the track during pregame festivities.
RIGHT: Sophomore Myles Roseboro was crowned Homecoming prince of his class.

EHS senior Mikah Price, a wide receiver on the varsity football team, makes a break with the ball.



WINNING

From 1

paid well in the Elyria Schools, more than \$100 per day.

Backup cleaners, secretaries, aides and attendants and food service workers are also sought

on a regular basis. These positions don't require a formal college degree but an absolute "must-have" for any position in the Elyria Schools is a cordial, congenial personality and a desire to work with children.

Such positions earn competitive wages, from \$8.50 to more

than \$15 per hour.

If you're looking for more of a steady and predictable schedule than that of substitute work, but aren't interested in a full-time gig, how about part-time? The district regularly seeks part-time cleaners and custodians, food service employees and other

classified positions.

Even if a full-time job is your ultimate goal, kicking off your career as a substitute or part-time employee is a good way to get a foot in the door. From custodians to teachers, many of the district's full-time employees began their school careers the

same way: as part-timers.

If you're intrigued by competitive wages, flexible scheduling and an excellent work environment, please call the Elyria Schools Human Resource Department at (440) 284-8232 or (440) 284-8211.



The Herald

A supplement
to the
Pioneer Press

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 1

ELYRIA HIGH SCHOOL, ELYRIA, OHIO

Fall 2015

Students volunteer at EHS

Julia Benko
EHS senior

Big Brothers and Big Sisters (aka BBBS) is a nonprofit organization with a mission to, "Provide children facing adversity with strong and enduring, professionally supported one-to-one relationships that change their lives for the better, forever."

The program provides tutoring for kids, and helps parents if they are struggling to find time with their children or can't pick them up from school.

Recently, Key Club students at Elyria High School were interviewed to participate in the Big Brothers and Big Sisters program.

Key Club is all about community service.

"It is a great opportunity to encourage the students to volunteer in their community," said Trista Pretchel, EHS teacher and Key Club advisor.

To be a part of the Big Brothers Big Sisters program, applicants must go through an interview process in which they ask you about yourself and what kind of child you'd like to work with.

Sam Oswald, EHS junior and BBBS volunteer says, "I enjoy helping kids out and being able to just hang out with them." Together, Sam and her "little" would work on homework, play in the gymnasium and read.

Sam recommended this program and is still participating and paired with the same child as last year.

Yet another Key Club member, Kiara Garner, heard about the program and hopes to be part of it this year.

"I like to be around kids and I feel like it would be a good experience," she said.

BBBS works with Key Club members to accommodate their school and activity schedules by arranging for them to meet up with their "littles" at the nearby Boys and Girls Club.

Sam and Kiara can't wait for the year to begin with the children they mentor, and for all of the fun moments ahead.

"It brings me joy and happiness to watch my child having fun," said Sam, "and having them come out of their shell to become more social."



ELYRIA SCHOOLS PHOTOS

ABOVE: The Elyria High School Pioneer Marching Band performs under a rainbow at the Homecoming game.

BELOW: Senior Morgan Davis, drum major of the Elyria High School Pioneer Marching Band, performs a signature move.

New director, new band

Ariel Rodriguez
EHS senior

With the new school year, there's a new director of the Elyria High School Pioneer Marching Band: Aaron Putka.

Growing up in Cuyahoga Falls, Putka always enjoyed band. He started playing clarinet in fifth grade, and later switched to saxophone.

Before coming to EHS, Putka was the band director at Clearview High School. Leaving Clearview and coming to Elyria was a great opportunity, he said. He plans to stay with the Elyria High School Pioneer Marching Band as long as possible.

Elyria High School senior Morgan Davis also has a new job with the band, she is the drum major.

"I always knew I could be the drum

major one day. I was ambitious," she said. "It's definitely a job."

Morgan says as she has to be a leader to the band. Her job as the drum major is to blow the whistle to get everyone's attention, yell when people aren't listening, and also put on a fantastic show. She believes she'll build, "leadership skills, communication skills and confidence," as drum major.

Morgan plans to attend the Ohio State University and major in Psychology.

Putka's goals for the marching band are to improve Friday night performances and marching, and to get the audience hyped.

He said those who inspired him most were his father, his high school director and his college director at The University of Akron.



Academic Challenge is highly competitive team sport

Chris Howell
EHS senior

The Academic Challenge team is often overlooked by students as a club to join, but the students of Academic Challenge work hard and compete just as often as any sports team.

An anonymous survey at Elyria High School revealed opinions about Academic Challenge that ran the gamut.

Anthony Pintola, a senior, stood out when describing the Academic Challenge team.

"I think they are some of the most intelligent people our school has to offer," he said. "They work hard to succeed at something they enjoy and that is something that's hard to find."

Very successful and longtime member of Academic Challenge, Isaiah Krugman, joined initially because he, "liked Jeopardy and this seemed like Jeopardy." Over time he's grown to really enjoy the people and the competitive nature of Academic Challenge. Isaiah has had much success over the years. Just last year, the three-student main team which includes Isaiah, was featured in an article in the *The Chronicle Telegram*. The writer detailed the team's success at a regional event where Isaiah and his teammates outperformed the opposition.

Fellow Academic Challenge member Nathaniel Looney is determined to improve and achieve more success this year.

"I'm not happy with how I did last year," he



PHOTO PROVIDED

Last year's team, from left, Isaiah Krugman, senior, Kurt Warden, graduate, and Erica Uszak, sophomore, upset Lake Ridge Academy 450 to 170 points.

said. "I'm going to devote more time and work harder to improve over last year. I know that I would like to be a part of the main team, but will have to work harder to do that."

The Academic Challenge team is growing

and improving every year under the tutelage of teachers Jeremy Secaur and Matthew Daniels. The Elyria High School Academic Challenge team is expected to be a real threat this year and to go far in competition.



AUDREY BAUER

The Herald: Off to a great start

Greetings from The Herald! The school year is in full swing and already our club is taking off.

At the first meeting of The Herald in early September, we gained many new members, and they are dedicated and extremely enthusiastic about our work. While our group is small, it's mighty, and I believe we are off to a great start, adding to the strong foundation laid by our predecessors.

Our current members — old and new alike — are spinning out quality articles at an impressive speed. Their articles cover a broad expanse of new and intriguing topics, which I believe will help to increase our audience. We are seeing informative articles related to activities that we as adolescents find quite fascinating, including game reviews, up-and-coming events at Elyria High, and powerful poetry that readers may find quite relatable.

There are already so many exciting events happening at Elyria High and we the staff of The Herald are eager to write about as many as possible. We strongly encourage readers to visit our website at www.ehsherald.org. Our site is updated weekly with new and exciting articles.

Our door is always open. I am excited to move forward this school year and I have high hopes for a bright future for The Herald.

Audrey Bauer is a senior and the editor in chief of The Herald.

4H teaches responsibility, builds friendships

Ashley Gurchik
EHS senior

4-H is a global network of youth organizations whose mission is: "Engaging youth to reach their fullest potential while advancing the field of youth development."

There are many different individual groups that make up 4-H, such as horse clubs, showmanship of different animals like rabbits and cows, and agricultural programs.

Maggie Obitts, EHS senior, is an active 4-H member who is currently part of the Country Kids Club. Maggie has shown horses for the past two years, and the horse that's her regular companion is Dottie. Maggie goes to Dottie's barn at least four times a week to groom, bath, and train her.

Maggie showed Dottie at the Lorain County Fair this year and

had fun but said, "It was a lot of work and time."

Maggie encourages everyone to join 4H.

"Be brave and just go for it," she said. "Yes, it's a lot of work, but it will be worth it in the end. There are so many benefits out of it, (and one of the biggest is scholarships.)"

Maggie's mom, Leslie Obitts, encouraged kids to join, and said she's proud of how far Maggie has come socially. Leslie says that being in 4-H has taught Maggie the value of hard work and dedication, and also responsibility.

Moriah Garcia, EHS senior, is also an active 4-H member. She shows rabbits and just began doing so this past summer. Before showing, Moriah never owned a rabbit.

"I joined 4-H and needed a project," she said. "Someone was sell-



PHOTO PROVIDED

EHS senior Moriah Garcia shows off her prize-winning rabbit.

ing a rabbit for cheap, so why would you pass up that opportunity?"

To show rabbits, it's important to know as many facts about your particular rabbit as possible and to

be able to flip them over calmly, and explain the various parts of the animal, she said.

Moriah said she's learned so much from 4H and has made many new friends.