

# LOCALNEWS



Sixth-grade student Ella Bahr explains an energy project she and her classmates recently completed.

## Project educates about energy sources

BY EMILY GEDDE  
Staff Writer

Earth Day is one of Lisa West’s favorite days. The sixth-grade teacher at Falls Elementary has a track record of bringing her students outside to pick up trash on the annual day supporting environmental protection, but this year, she didn’t have anything planned.

However, she quickly realized teaching sixth-grade science, in a way, makes every day Earth Day.

This year, to recognize the April 22 event, The Journal sat down with four of West’s students to talk about energy projects they recently completed to gain an understanding of how energy is harvested and converted to everyday energy. West said the purpose of the project was to help students develop critical thinking skills based on the pros and cons of each type of energy source in regard to

economics, efficiency and the environment.

At first, Ella Bahr, was unsure how difficult the project would be.

“I’ve never thought about different energy sources,” the sixth grader admitted. “But, I got assigned solar power and I like solar power. It came easier than expected.”

The groups were asked to research and create a poster on a specific energy source, explaining how it works and listing pros and cons of their assigned source.

“They however, initiated on their own, the creation of PowerPoints and constructed physical models to enhance their presentations,” West said. “The discussion that followed led to more curiosity and questions.”

As the projects developed, students said the newfound knowledge was exciting.

“The project was a lot of fun,” Josh Slatinski said. “We learned so much about whatever source we worked

on as well as what our classmates worked on.”

West said she was hopeful students would take away the kind of awareness Slatinski described because ultimately, they are the decisionmakers of the future.

“We’re the future generation,” Slatinski said. “It’s important for us to know about the different energy sources and how each of them work.”

Bahr agreed.

“We’re going to be the ones making the decisions someday,” she said. “We’re learning it at a younger age and we can learn how to help our environment.”

As they described their projects and the process they went through to develop them, Bahr credited West for making learning fun.

“She does the lessons in such a fun way,” she said. “When making the posters, (West) told us to use a lot of color. It lets our imaginations kind of go crazy.”

## Rep. McCollum wins Sen. Franken’s annual hotdish competition

McCollum’s “turkey, sweet potato, and wild rice” bested fellow competitors

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

Minnesota’s Congressional Delegation came together earlier this week for U.S. Sen. Al Franken’s fifth annual hotdish competition. Franken started the friendly “Hotdish Off” as a way to bring the delegation together and celebrate a Minnesota culinary tradition.

Rep. Betty McCollum’s (D-Minn.) “turkey, sweet potato, and wild rice hotdish” took first place.

“It’s a great day when the Minnesota delegation is able to put our differences aside and enjoy some great hotdishes,” Franken said. “I want to thank all my colleagues for participating in today’s competition, and a huge congratulations to Rep. McCollum for her winning turkey, sweet potato, and wild rice hotdish. It was delicious.”

After blind taste testing each member’s hotdish, University of Minnesota President Eric Kaler, Star Tribune Editorial Writer Jill Burcum, and former MinnPost Reporter Devin Henry — who now writes for The Hill newspaper — named McCollum’s dish the winner of the 2015 Hotdish Off.

“Minnesota families from all walks of life come together around their dinner tables to eat hotdish, visit about their days and

Winning recipe

Turkey, sweet potato and wild rice hotdish by Rep. Betty McCollum

Ingredients:

- 1 lbs. ground turkey
- 2 large bunches of kale leaves
- 3 cups cooked wild rice
- ½ yellow onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ tablespoon red pepper flakes
- 1 tsp paprika
- 1 tbsb butter
- 4 oz crimini mushrooms, sliced
- 1/4 cup chicken stock
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1/8 cup cream
- ½ teaspoon thyme, minced
- 1 package frozen sweet potato tater tots

Directions:

- Brown ground turkey in pan with salt and pepper, set aside.
- Add kale leaves and 1 cup water to large saucepan and cover, stirring occasionally. Do this until water has evaporated and kale is wilted. Remove from saucepan and set aside.
- On medium-high heat, add mushrooms, onions and 2 tablespoons of olive oil to saucepan. Do not stir and let mushrooms brown and begin to caramelize. After about 5-6 minutes, stir mixture, add salt and pepper to taste, and allow to sit for another 5-6 minutes.
- Add kale, butter, thyme, garlic, salt, pepper, cinnamon, paprika, red pepper flakes to the pan. Cook for another 1-2 minutes.
- Add milk, cream, and chicken stock to the pan. Reduce heat, and cover, stirring occasionally until mixture thickens and reduces into a sauce. Add flour to thicken if necessary.
- Preheat oven to 425 degrees.
- In 9X9 baking dish, combine the sauce from your pan, the wild rice and the ground turkey. Top with a single layer of sweet potato tots. Bake until tots begin to brown slightly on top, about 35 minutes.

plan for tomorrow,” McCollum said. “Our congressional hotdish competition gives us that same chance to spend time together to build relationships as we work together to serve our constituents.”

Franken made turkey chow-minn hotdish and Sen. Amy Klobuchar made

gobble it up Minnesota hotdish. Franken hasn’t won the contest since 2012, when his “mom’s mahnomin madness hotdish” and former Rep. Chip Cravaack’s (R-Minn.) “Minnesota wild strata hotdish” tied for first place. Klobuchar took top honors in 2011 with her “taconite tater-tot hotdish.”

A black and white photograph of a woman with dark hair, wearing a patterned top, sitting at a desk and looking at a computer monitor. The monitor displays a digital mammogram image. There is another monitor to the right, and a keyboard is visible in the foreground.

This year’s must have

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Essentia Health works with the SAGE Program in Minnesota in an effort to provide care for those that qualify for financial assistance. For your convenience, the contact number for the SAGE Program is 1.888.649.2584.

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## Boise Paper employees award safety funds

Employees from 13 paper machine presented safety funds to representatives from the International Falls Recreation Commission and Ranier Recreation Club earlier this month.

Boise Paper, A Division of Packaging Corporation of America, donated the \$6,000 in recognition of employee safety participation. In addition to the recreation organizations, monies were distributed evenly to Littlefork Community Education & Recreation Council, Koochiching Aging Options, and Koochiching Senior Center.

“I congratulate International Falls employees on actively engaging in the safety improvement process,” says Bert Brown, mill manager. “The Safety Giving Program is a win for all involved. It supports our zero-incident goal while generating funds for local non-profit organizations.”

Those interested in information about the program are encouraged to call 218.285.5312.



L-R: Boise 13 employees Bonnie Fort, John Hopkins, David Mortenson, and Andrew Knutson join International Falls Recreation Commission representative Bill Mason and Ranier Recreation Club representative John Walls at an award presentation in April.

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