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Ross Elementary students attempt to make world's longest friendship bracelet



AIMEE DILGER PHOTOS/ THE TIMES LEADER

Ross Elementary school art teacher Jill Vanderhook takes a lap after finishing measuring a chain of friendship bracelets over 2,000 feet long.

TYING TOGETHER bracelets AND friendship

STORIES By DOTTY MARTIN / dmartin@mydallaspost.com

Principal Donny James held the stick wound tight with brightly-colored string high above his head and the Ross Elementary School students cheered.

Art teacher Jill Vanderhook took a victory lap, holding the stick like an Olympic torch, and students roared while "We Are The Champions" blared through disc jockey Frank Prest's speakers.

Although still unofficial, the record of the world's longest friendship bracelet belongs to the Ross Elementary students with a measurement of 2,678.02 feet (816.262 meters) measured by professional land surveyors Jess Kronenwetter and Bill Bolton from Borton Lawson Engineering Firm.

For seven months, students at the school have been tying friendship bracelets, using colored embroidery string. They tied in homeroom. They tied at lunch. They tied at recess. They tied at home.

They tied and tied and tied.

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Breaking a world record is fun, but not easy to do

If you think getting into the Guinness Book of World Records is easy, think again.

As the official witness to the Ross Elementary School students' attempt to get into the book for the world's longest friendship bracelet, I learned firsthand that having your name entered into the official world record book for anything is no easy task and I'm now even more impressed with anyone who does get their name in the book.

After intense research as to the kind of project to be attempted, there's all kinds of documentation to be completed before your record-breaking attempt even begins. Ross Elementary School Principal Donny James can attest to that.

Everything - and I mean everything - has to be done exactly as Guinness requires it to be done.

In the Ross Elementary case, the measurement of the length of the bracelets needed to be recorded by



Bracelets chained together.

professional land surveyors. Don Bolton and Jess Kronenwetter of the Borton Lawson Engineering Firm did just that. Their boss, Don Spencer, is the father of Ross fourth-grader Jessica Spencer. Because of his relationship to the school, Spencer could not participate in the official measurement so he volunteered the services of Bolton and Kronenwetter, who not only offered their expertise but their

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CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

Lindsey Jorda, a student in the Dallas Middle School, holds up the iPad she uses to present her science project.

A new kind of apple for the teacher

Dallas Middle School science students use iPads to learn.

By SUSAN DENNEY
Dallas Post Correspondent

Sir Isaac Newton said that a falling apple taught him the law of gravity. And today, Apple iPads are helping Dallas Middle School students learn about Newton's laws of motion.

Sam Barbose's sixth-grade science class at the Dallas Middle School recently used a class set of iPads to create impressive multimedia presentations about Newton's three laws of motion.

Although the topic may seem difficult for sixth-graders to grasp, Barbose's students used graphics and created videos to illustrate a law of motion.

Barbose explained that the students used the iPads to make the videos and then used an application called Keynote to create their slideshows.

The iPads connect with the Internet via the school's Wi-Fi network. The classroom uses Airplay, a go-between device which allows students to stream their presentations to the large digital whiteboard in the room.

While the presentations were being given, students were expected to take notes on the presentations of other students and most chose to use their iPads for note-taking. Barbose said students could then email their notes to themselves. Students also liked making their own flashcards on the devices.

Sammy Dixon, 12, of Dallas, chose Newton's first law to present. "I learned a lot about Newton," she said. "I learned that if you roll a ball, eventually it will stop. The friction against the floor or the wall will stop it."

Of the iPads, she added, "They're really fun. It makes class more fun and not boring like reading from a book."

Ryan Schmid, 12, of Dallas, chose Newton's second law. "It seemed the easiest at the time," he said. He, too, likes using the iPads. "We use them a lot in science. We have a lot of apps that help us with everyday stuff we do. Instead of writing things, we use the notes app."

Barbose showed off the specialized cart which contains the iPads and a MacBook Pro computer. All the units can be recharged and downloaded with new applications at the same time. He said the iPads have been in place since October and there hasn't been a single incident of damage to the devices.

About 100 students use the iPads, including science and reading classes.

Barbose's dream of using iPads in his classroom came true because of the Dallas Foundation for Excellence in Education, Inc.

The foundation is a non-profit organization which was created in 2011. It is a 501 (c) 3 organization which can provide tax credit benefits to business contributors.

According to Kristin Gattuso, the foundation's treasurer, the iPad cart with MacBook Pro computer and 30 iPads cost \$16,448. The money was donated by local businesses who took advantage of the state's tax credit program.

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LL music students head to regional competition

Dallas, Lake-Lehman girls square off in annual benefit game.

TOM ROBINSON
For The Dallas Post

What do James Bond, mirrors and a GPS have in common? They are the themes of three award-winning shows by Lake-Lehman musical groups. And Lake-Lehman students are aiming for bigger wins at the regional championships in Wildwood, New Jersey this weekend.

The student musicians performed their programs for the public on May 1 in the high school gym before packing up to go to the Tournament of Bands competition this weekend. The Tournament of Bands (TOB) is one of the

largest competitive band organizations in the United States.

James Bond is the theme of the Elementary Percussion program. The indoor percussion group just won a silver medal at the Chapter 7 regional competition in the Tournament of Bands program.

Fifth and sixth-graders dressed in tuxedo-print T-shirts played a variety of percussion instruments, including a wide range of drums. The melody was provided by marimba, xylophone, vibraphone and synthesizer and included jazz elements, tricky rhythms and even a voice clip of the famous Mr. Bond himself.

The group is directed by Patrick

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BILL TARUTIS/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

Lehman-Jackson Elementary fifth-grader Sarah Salus performs 'James Bond, 007' with the Elementary Percussion Ensemble during a preview show at the high school gymnasium.



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