

Second-graders promote friendship

Community School class raises funds for The Advocates

By TERRY SMITH
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Thanks to its second-graders, the Community School in Sun Valley will soon have a new piece of playground equipment. It's called the "Buddy Bench," and its purpose is to help eliminate loneliness and to foster friendship.

Building the Buddy Bench is one of the ways the private school's second-grade class is using its "WOW" money for this year.



Courtesy photo

Second-graders at the Community School began painting a new Buddy Bench on Wednesday. Once finished, the bench, intended to eliminate loneliness and foster friendship, will be installed on the elementary school playground at the school's Sun Valley campus.

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Tricia St. George
Second-grade teacher

The WOW money comes from the Wood River Foundation, which each year gives every student in Blaine County \$25 to support a nonprofit charitable organization. The purpose of the WOW Students project is to teach youngsters about generosity and communal responsibility.

The students are also using WOW funds in raising money with a free movie, Disney Pixar's "Toy Story," showing tonight at the school theater on the Sun Valley campus. The students, with the assistance of parents and teachers, will be selling popcorn

and water and accepting donations. Proceeds will be donated to The Advocates for Survivors of Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse.

Doors open at 5:30 p.m. and the movie starts at 6 p.m.

Also showing at the Friday night event is a short film on the Buddy Bench. The film stars the second-grade class and was coordinated and produced by Peter Burke, Community School's upper school media specialist and elementary school drama teacher.

The Community School reported in a news release that the Buddy Bench will be on display at the theater on Friday evening. The bench will later be in-

stalled on the elementary school playground at the Community School.

"The idea behind the Buddy Bench is to eliminate loneliness and foster friendship," said second-grade teacher Tricia St. George. "It helps spread the message of inclusion and kindness. We are a community, a family, and we all need to look out for one another."

The bench was built, using scrap lumber, by parent Scott Miller. The children helped with the design and put a first coat of multi-color paint on the bench on Wednesday. Other parents who assisted with the bench are Laura Vogel and Scott Carlin.

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