

Kerby students see life through red glasses

By Mary Anne Brush
Staff Writer

Live boldly. Love big. Pass it on.

This was the living legacy of Audrey Jandernoa, a little girl who turned strangers into friends the moment she met them and loved without restriction. In honor of her daughter's approach to life, Kelly Jandernoa started the Red Glasses Movement to spread Audrey's message and inspire others to share her vision.

Born with Down syndrome and a congenital heart defect, Audrey, of Grand Rapids, died on Jan. 26, 2018, from a severe infection at age 5.

"Even though Audrey was only on this earth for about five years, she taught us a lot about living," said Jandernoa during an all-school assembly at Kerby Elementary



With Red Glasses Movement founder Kelly Jandernoa are, from left, first-grader Stella Papista, second-grader Lydia Lundberg, third-grader Lala Mansour, kindergarten Jack Dzybak, fourth-grader Krish Menon and fifth-grader Grace Vollmer.

School April 17.

Jandernoa visited the school to encourage students to see the world

through Audrey's eyes by wearing a pair of bright red glasses, her signature accessory.

Jandernoa briefly described the chromosomal abnormality resulting in Down syndrome.

"Most people have 46 chromosomes in each of their cells. People with Down syndrome have 47 chromosomes," she said. "... Because of that, people with Down syndrome may look and learn differently. That's it. So simple.

"Knowing that Audrey had Down syndrome was helpful, but it was just one part of who she was and she did not let that define her," Jandernoa continued. "Audrey was defined by her big and contagious smile, her giant, crushing hugs and her bright red glasses."

The Red Glasses Movement was inspired a few days before Audrey's funeral when a friend "came up with a crazy idea," according to



PHOTOS BY RENEE LANDUYT

Katie Denbow wears her new red glasses over her regular glasses.

Jandernoa — to bring 1,000 red glasses and pass them out to friends and family members as they left the church.

Since then, more than 12,000 pairs of glasses have been shared all over the world, reaching the top of Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, East Africa, and passed out daily at a winery in Portugal.

"They've been given to the Pope in Rome, Michigan State basketball stars, such as Cassius Winston and Nick Ward," said Jandernoa. "... They've been worn on baseball diamonds big and small. ... They've inspired students in classrooms and started conversations across dinner tables all over the United States. They've even inspired marathon runners, just to name a few."

Glasses also were passed out to Grosse Pointe students across the district. In addition to Kerby, Jandernoa or a representative from the Red Glasses Movement

visited Monteith, Ferry, Mason and Defer elementary schools.

"We hope the glasses will inspire you to be bold, to try something new, maybe a new sport, or reach higher and try harder at school," Jandernoa said. "We hope you're inspired to step out of your comfort zone. It could be as small as dressing the way you truly want instead of trying to blend in or maybe standing up for someone or something you believe in even if it sets you apart from your friends.

"Living bold is being honest and open and true to yourself," she continued. "If you get nervous trying something new, that's OK. That happens; it's hard for all of us. But look at your red glasses and remember Audrey and all the other people out there trying something new or fighting for something on their own."

In addition to her

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Teacher of THE WEEK

Susan Chaklos

School: Poupard Elementary School
Years at Poupard: 16
Grade/Subject: Grade 1
Nominated by: Hussain Ali, principal

Principal's quote:

"Mrs. Chaklos has been a tremendous teacher leader at Poupard. During my first two years at Poupard, Sue has been constantly learning and growing as an educator. She is always an early adopter when we're implementing any new programs or technology within the building. She is a constant advocate for all of our students at Poupard and is active in serving their needs. Simply put, Sue rocks!"

What do you enjoy most about teaching?

I love sharing my love of learning and reading with my young students, who are just launching their academic career. First grade is the foundation year for future learning and I feel my greatest accomplishment is when I can instill in a young child a thirst to gain knowledge about the world around them. I get extremely excited when a student realizes they can read and starts to grab every book in the room. It happens for every child at a different time, so first grade is a year of great changes and growth. I love the "aha" moments when the light bulb goes off and a child's face beams, and they shout "I got it!"

Describe a teaching accomplishment you're proud of or a "teachable moment" you experienced.

I cannot identify one accomplishment I am proud of or a teaching moment that stands out. I experience little successes everyday, but I feel a student's success in my classroom is when the parents and I work as a team together to encourage a child to be the best they can be. I have to admit, however, that I have had moments of pride and joy when I run into former students in the grocery store who struggled to learn to read, yet they are finishing degrees at university and are happy and self confident.

Please share a book or person that has inspired you or your teaching.

I have loved to learn since I was in first grade at Maire School in Eleanor Obermeyer's room. My parents and grandparents surrounded me with books, and to this day I'm a ferocious reader. I became a lifelong learner, and this is the primary lesson I try to teach my students — that you never stop learning new things. I was encouraged to enter the teaching



COURTESY PHOTO

field by my own children's teachers after volunteering in their classes and loving helping students work on their reading skills. Recently I have read numerous memoirs about people who have overcome adversity, deprived of formal education, and persevered to become successful happy adults. These stories have helped me realize that given the right love and encouragement, most children can overcome struggles and become successful and content adults.

Favorite quote:

I love what Ghandi said: "If we are to reach real peace in the world, we shall have to begin with the children." The world's future is our kids!

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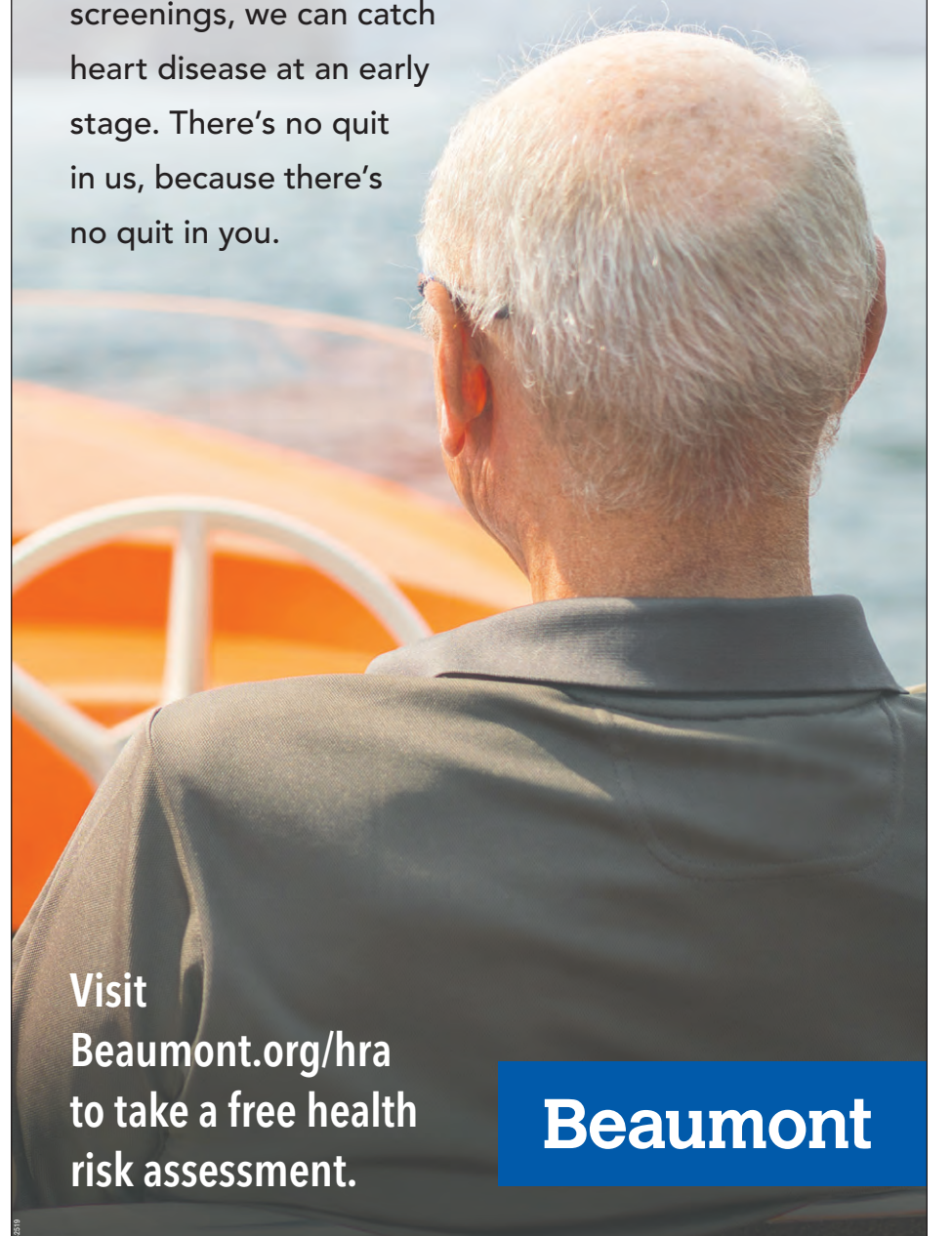
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10A | **SCHOOLS**

Save the date for college night

College Night, open to all area high school students, will be held 6 to 8 p.m. Tuesday, April 30, at Grosse Pointe South High School's gymnasium, 11 Grosse Pointe Blvd., Grosse Pointe Farms.

Representatives from 86 colleges, universities, technical schools and military organizations will be on hand to answer questions and educate students and their parents.

It's a good opportunity for a face-to-face conversation with college representatives, in particular those "that are not easy to bounce out and visit," according to counselor Beth Walsh-Sahutske, such as Dartmouth College in New Hampshire, new to

the line-up this year. In addition to walk-up visits, the University of Michigan and Michigan State, Oakland and Northwood universities will offer presentations in classrooms for interested students.

Military institutions include the U.S. Army, U.S. Naval Academy, West Point, Michigan Air National Guard and Air Force ROTC.

Some unique offerings include the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising in New York and the Douglas J. Aveda Institute, which offers programs in cosmetology.

Walsh-Sahutske recommends students do

their research beforehand, selecting colleges and universities to visit based on desired size, location and programs available. She also suggested students come prepared with questions suited to their individual interests.

While browsing for colleges and career opportunities, upperclassmen also may take advantage of the opportunity to register to vote at the League of Women Voters table. Students must be 18 by Nov. 5, and bring either a driver's license or state identification.

For more information, contact Liz Naporano at naporae@gpschools.org.
— Mary Anne Brush

North turns 50

Green and Golden Gala
GROSSE POINTE NORTH



Grosse Pointe North High School is celebrating a half century this spring.

A Green and Golden Gala marking this milestone is planned from 5:30 to 9:30 p.m. on Saturday, May 4, in North's gymnasium, 707 Vernier, Grosse Pointe Woods.

"If you graduated from North, worked at North, sent a student to North, one day will attend North or know where North is located, please come to the Green and Golden Gala," said Lesley Graham, vice president

Dinner will be provided by Licavoli's Market and flowers are by Moehring in the Woods.

A fashion show, birthday party, auction, class reunion and community event all

of events for North's Parents Club.

Highlights include music and fashion through the decades, auction items, entertainment by past, present and future Norsemen, special guest speakers, a historical video and virtual birthday greetings and a special appearance by Thor, the school mascot.

rolled into one will "celebrate 50 years of excellence while investing in the future 50," Graham said.

Funds raised will support grants and scholarships for current and future Norsemen.

Ticket information is available at gpsnparentsclub.com.
— Mary Anne Brush

BOARD:

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"The conversations are not as productive as they could be and the school improvement and the implementation of different strategies and ideas takes longer because it's not one continuous group or even the majority of the group that is together in morning and afternoon meetings," Bur said.

Among social and emotional considerations, she added, any time a core subject or elective teacher or support staff member, such as a speech teacher, social worker, school psychologist or counselor, is traveling elsewhere, one less adult is available for students in crisis or to build relationships. Fewer adults available also results in larger advisory classes — another important time for students to build a relationship with a trusted adult.

"One of the tough decisions the board made two years ago was that we decreased counselors between Pierce and Brownell," Bur said. "Unfortunately, that's not a time that they can be in the building for those relationships, but even more importantly, middle school kids do not have issues on scheduled times. If a middle schooler today had an



issue, but their counselor happened to be at Brownell but they're a Pierce student, they had to wait maybe till tomorrow to come forward because that might be the only trusted adult in the building they can speak to. Or another trusted adult might jump in, but they have to do a lot of background information gathering before they can get to the root of (the issue)."

Trustee Christopher Lee mentioned an educator from Boston he met at a Michigan Association of School Boards conference. Kim Marshall, drawing on decades as a teacher, principal and central administrator, presents a weekly

roundup of ideas and research in K-12 education called "The Marshall Memo."

In response to Lee's email inquiry about optimal grade configurations, Marshall wrote, "My sense is that grade configurations are almost always driven by building availability, with educational rationalizations following. An argument can be made for almost every configuration, from K-12, Primary/Upper Elem/Middle/High, K-6/7-12, you name it. The key factor, of course, is good teaching and school leadership. Another consideration, which I've come across in a district in southern New Hampshire where I've been doing some work, is for there to be enough teachers at each grade level to have meaningful teacher teamwork."

"The thing that matters most is the teachers," Lee said. "And we are blessed with terrific teachers in this district. I'm confident if we go K-4, we're going to have a terrific school system."

GLASSES:

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strength and determined attitude, Audrey "was also a big fan of the high-five," said Jandernoa. "We made lots of new friends as a family because of Audrey. She helped introduce me to nearly every produce person, butcher and bagger at our grocery store. A trip to the park was always an adventure ... because of her bouncing around introducing herself or wishing happy birthday to strangers."

Jandernoa encouraged students to "love big" like Audrey.



Audrey Jandernoa was known for her big smile and signature red glasses.

"Loving big is being a good friend. Loving big is looking for a student in your class who may need an extra smile or a high-five. Loving big is including all kids on the playground."

"All these things that might seem little to us are showing big love to others," she continued. "You love big. We hope your glasses continue to inspire you after today. Whether you wear them or they sit on your desk or at your dresser, they are for you. We hope they remind you to spread love regardless of typical boundaries."

Finally, pass it on, Jandernoa said.

"Once you feel the red glasses have moved you, tell someone else about them and share the good feeling they give you and maybe share the glasses."

RACING:

Continued from page 8A

directly to support Run, Walk 'n Roll. Her husband, Tom, who participates frequently in races, will run, she and Louisa's older brother, Sam, will walk and Louisa will "roll" in her stroller.

Knowing down the road Louisa's chronic condition will lead to her seeking "really positive ways to manage her health and let her be a kid," Pietrowsky said she is inspired by the positive attitude and approach exhibited by Elizabeth and her family.

"Things like this really show you how cool the community can be and how supportive and helpful," said Turner. "It's really cool to bring it all together."

Said Sheeren, "It's going to be so positive, kind of just a light for all these families who are dealing with so much. It's something positive to look forward to."



COURTESY PHOTO

Participating in a 5K fundraiser two years ago for the WIWD Foundation served as inspiration for Audrey Turner, left, and Claire Sheeren, when they were looking for ideas to help Claire's sister, Elizabeth.

For more information on the event, including corporate sponsorships, contact Sheeren at (313) 682-8880 or crsheeren@gmail.com,

go to eastsideracing.enmotive.com or follow the Run, Walk 'n Roll 5K event on Facebook or Instagram @runwalknroll.

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