

WP fifth graders making a difference, you can help

Written by Wauneta Breeze

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After attending a youth leadership conference in January, Randii Reikofski and Kendra Bley came home with the idea for a class project to collect pop tabs for the Ronald McDonald House Charities. Class members are (front row, left to right): Romeo Dirk, Isaiah Roe, □ Kendra Bley, Randii Reikofski, Zoey Boos, (back row, l to r): Anthony Sramek, Cory Barrett, Haylee Davis, Maycee Wheeler, Payton Yearous, Haylee Sandman, Destany Simpson and teacher Denise Bales. (Diane Stamm | The Wauneta Breeze)

By Diane Stamm

The Wauneta Breeze

The Wauneta-Palisade school was well represented at a leadership conference in January.

Fifth graders Kendra Bley and Randii Reikofski were chosen by fifth grade teacher Denise Bales and sixth grade teacher Marilyn Kunkel to attend the Nebraska Association of Elementary

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Principals conference based on the girls leadership characteristics demonstrated in the classrooms.

Mrs. Bales and elementary principal Roger Reikofski also attended the event in North Platte. Mr. Reikofski is a member of Nebraska Association of Elementary Principals.

It was the first time anyone from WP has attended the event.

Kendra and Randii agreed that it was a good time.

The girls were in different groups for the day and attended different classes, although they followed similar concepts. Mrs. Bales was in charge of a different group.

Topics included planning goals and achieving them, following your dreams, anti-bullying and recycling, among others.

It was while Randii's group was listening to a presentation on charities to start that the pop tabs came up. Randii liked the idea because it was simple to start and everyone can help.

Kendra and Randii agreed, "Any one can do it, it's very simple. One pop tab can make a difference."

"We hadn't gotten very far out of North Platte on our way home and the girls were talking about the idea," said Mrs. Bales. She agreed it was a good idea and Mr. Reikofski and Superintendent Randy Geier gave their permission.

Geier was happy to approve.

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“The project is an excellent idea. This project is an educational experience for our students and it allows them to get involved and help others,” he said. The class set a goal of \$25 to \$30 and have been working hard to get there. For each pound of pop tabs, \$1 is donated.

So far the kids have filled seven ice cream pails. With just under a month still to go and a bucket and a half left, the class is looking for more ice cream pails to fill and reevaluating its goals. “This is a good group of kids,” said Mrs. Bales.

Many in the classroom said the project is fun. Payton Yearous added that it is interesting to know where the money goes and how it helps.

Romeo Dirk said it’s been a hard project because “it’s tough to get the tabs from his family before they drink from the cans.”

Mrs. Bales’ husband will be taking the pop tabs to the Omaha Ronald McDonald Chapter in late March. From there they are prepared for recycling and taken to Alter Metal Recycling in Omaha, according to Mr. Reikofski.

Donations are being accepted and need to be at the school by March 29.