



Retired educator makes splash with book

Bob Erickson's "Minnesota Splash" written from experience, love of sport

By Sydney Hall

Many years of experience as a swim coach and educator at Park gave Bob Erickson his inspiration to write "Minnesota Splash," describing Minnesota high school swimming and diving and its changes over the years.

Erickson said he was inspired to write the book to educate people about swimming.

"It hadn't been done and as far as I can tell, no state has ever written a history of high school swimming for girls and boys," Erickson said.

Erickson started working at Park in 1959 and worked there for 34 years, creating the strong connection to the school district which he still feels today.

He said he supports St. Louis Park public schools for many reasons.

"I support St. Louis Park public schools because of what they have done for so many people and for what they stand for in terms of education, integrity and supporting the teachers and students," Erickson said. "Through my teaching, I found that parents together with the administration were extremely supportive of everything we did in school and in this day and age, that's a tough thing to find."

Erickson said he made life-long friendships with students and staff at Park.

"I thoroughly enjoyed the staff," Erickson said. "Every Wednesday we get together (for a retired staff breakfast), which is a rarity among educators."

Erickson spoke about the upcoming event next week to celebrate his book and Park swimming alumni.

"A number of swimmers and divers told

me that they're going to come and they want to hear stories I have to tell," Erickson said. "They want to know more about swimming in Minnesota that they don't know. It's going to be a very enjoyable and fun evening."

To learn more about Minnesota high school swimming and meet with fans of the sport, come hear Erickson discuss his book at 7 p.m. Nov. 5 in C350 at the high school. An admission fee of \$10 is encouraged, and all proceeds to go to support the SLPPSF.



3D printing technology turns concepts into reality

Grant-purchased equipment brings students' ideas to life

By Jonah Kupritz

The new 3D printer at the high school purchased by a grant from the St. Louis Park Public Schools Foundation allows students to move past the conceptual stage and create physical prototypes of their ideas, according to engineering teacher Trevor Paulson.

"We're finally able to start getting stu-

dents to do things physically," Paulson said.

Paulson said the printer mainly gets used for his introductory engineering course. In an hour, students can make a low-resolution print of their concept to improve their design. He said he feels grateful to integrate technological advances into his classes.

"I'm always excited when we start getting up-to-date with current technology and current standards that allow students to gain more real world applications of their work," Paulson said.

Senior Totaram Brijmohan said he has already gotten the opportunity to print one of his designs in engineering class.

"I've used it so far to design a remote holder in my engineering class," Brijmohan said.

Brijmohan said he's thrilled to have access to this advanced technology in high school.

"The fact that Park has one and that Mr. Paulson worked so hard to get it, it's a good feeling, one that I really don't know how to describe," Brijmohan said.



Give to the Max Day, hosted by GiveMN, takes place Nov. 12. It provides a way for anyone in the district to donate and contribute to their community. To learn more, visit givemn.org/resources-gtmd.

Approved grants for 2015-2016 total \$53,518

School	Grades	Grant Title	Amount Recommended	Objective
Aquila	K-2	Book Club	\$3,000	Establish book clubs
Aquila	K-2	Classroom Library	\$4,500	Create classroom libraries
District	5-12	Harmony Bridge	\$5,000	Provide a variety of music for performance opportunities in and out of school
High School	9-12	Engineering	\$10,000	Assist in offering engineering elective
High School	9-12	3D Printing	\$3,074	3D printer equipment to create objects
Middle School	6-8	Painting	\$1,904	Incorporate an acrylic paint unit into the curriculum
Peter Hobart	ELL, K-2	Bring it Home	\$4,766	Assist Somali and Hispanic parents to help their kids at home
Peter Hobart	K-5	Opening the World of Vocabulary	\$343	Increasing literacy and science skills through vocabulary
Park Spanish Immersion	K-1	Creating More Opportunities	\$10,000	Leveled classroom libraries to support all reading levels
Park Spanish Immersion	K-5	Somos Uno - We Are One	\$2,902	Assist parents of Spanish-speaking children to help their kids at home
Susan Lindgren	1-2	Bring It Home	\$4,725	Assist parents of Spanish-speaking children to help their kids at home
Susan Lindgren	1	"Front Row Seat"	\$1,200	Magnify information so all students can see
High School	9-12	The Even Better Book Club	\$1,000	Build reading skills through book clubs
Aquila	1	Whisper Phone	\$1,054	Allow students to have reading time on their own to improve skills

Last year on Give to the Max Day, corporate sponsors and volunteer board members matched donations from 57 donors to raise almost \$14,000. This year, GiveMN hopes to reach \$20,000.



Teachers grateful for grant success

Dear SLP Public Schools Foundation,

Thank you so much for the grant of three very precise scales. It has allowed chemistry classes to save money by using less chemicals, expose students to fewer potentially dangerous chemicals and create less waste. Student investigations are more precise and the scales allow students to reach more accurate conclusions.

**Sincerely,
Jenny Magdal, high school chemistry**

Dear SLP Public Schools Foundation,

Thank you so much for your grant to fund the creation of safe, interactive websites for all third grade students, teachers and their families. The goal of this project was to show students media/websites in Spanish in order to enhance their reading, science and math skills. This grant made it possible for students to go online and review materials from class, share learning with their families and even listen to native Spanish speakers reading their spelling lists. The money from your grant has made all of this possible.

**Sincerely,
Melissa Hoffman, Park Spanish Immersion**

Dear SLP Public Schools Foundation,

This year, I received a grant for the High School's Media Center Book Club. This is very exciting because it allows us to acquire more recently published books, and to buy enough copies to meet demand. In the past, we have needed to restrict ourselves to titles with enough copies on the shelves in our local public library system. I am very grateful to the St. Louis Park Schools Foundation because this grant allows us to share more of the joys of reading with our students. I have always felt that if one reads for pleasure, a lot of other important things fall into place.

**Sincerely,
Ellen George, high school library media specialist**

Dear SLP Public Schools Foundation,

Thank you for the grant of \$10,000 for books this year. The grant allowed us to purchase 2,100 books for our eight kindergarten and first grade classroom libraries. We purchased books for beginning readers to read in class and to take home. Thank you for making sure our youngest readers have excellent books to read.

**Sincerely,
Frank Johnson, Susan Lindgren principal**

Dear SLP Public Schools Foundation,

Thank you so much for your gift of 12 bell kits to the elementary band program. Thanks to this grant, the band experience that the percussionists received was much more musically comprehensive and at a level equal to the rest of the band. Next year, 90 percent of our percussionists will continue on to middle school band. Additionally, all students in band received more instructional time because we didn't have to spend time making make-shift percussion instruments or stands and moving equipment.

**Sincerely,
Jini Block, elementary band**

Q&A: Mary Bloomgren



New foundation board member shares goals

By Genesis Buckhalton

Where have you previously worked in the district?

I was a media center specialist at Park Spanish Immersion and at Peter Hobart. I was also a kindergarten teacher. I retired at the end of the 2013 school year, but I worked in the district for 40 years.

What are your goals for the foundation?

Bring in money to do amazing things in the community and to have projects that will let teachers express their talents.

What does the foundation mean to you?

It means that there is a place where the community can go beyond being invested in paying taxes and focus on putting more dollars into the foundation to help students' education.

How does it feel to be taking on the Gratitude Greetings project?

I'm really excited because I want to put in new ideas with the board members to improve the community. Some of our ideas include wanting to do something during the holidays and while kids are in extracurricular activities.

Have you ever dreamed of having this kind of position?

I've always played a volunteer role in the district, so now that I'm retired, it gives me the opportunity to give back and help out wherever I can.

How has working with kids changed you?

All my life I have always wanted to be a teacher. I can't imagine my life without doing something with kids.



The mission of St. Louis Park Public Schools Foundation: To enhance learning for the students of St. Louis Park schools.

SLPPSF Newsletter

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Special thanks to Lori Keekley for allowing staff to use resources and to board members contacted for information.

How to donate:

1. Go online to the website at <http://www.slppsf.org> and click on "Donate Now."
2. Send your check to St. Louis Park Public Schools Foundation, PO Box 16367, St. Louis Park, MN 55416.
3. Donations of time and talent are welcome, too. If you are interested volunteering, visit the SLPPSF website and contact president Peter Levy.

Teachers speak about grant success on YouTube

The SLPPSF created videos of teachers speaking about the successes of their grants and these videos are available to the public in a playlist on YouTube. To access the playlist, visit the link <http://tinyurl.com/ptusqbk>.

There are eight grant review sessions, featuring teachers from across the district. Grants included calculators at the high school, books for early learners, elementary band equipment and kindergarten literacy enrichment materials, among others.

For more information about the grant review sessions, contact Curt Rahman at curtrahman@gmail.com.

Thank you, Barb Patterson!

The SLPPSF wishes to thank Park parent Barb Patterson for her dedicated work expanding and improving the Gratitude Greetings initiative.

Gratitude Greetings enable students and their families to send letters to teachers year-round, thanking them for their service to the community. All proceeds go to support the foundation. For more information and to send a Gratitude Greeting, visit <http://www.slppsf.org/gratitude-greetings.html>.

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