

Le Roy embraces anti-bullying campaign

By Brittany Baker
bbaker@batavianews.com

LE ROY — Parents, teachers and community members joined together for the “kick-off” of the anti-bullying campaign at Wolcott Street Elementary School Monday night.

“It’s a community-wide problem, so the solution should include everyone,” explained Casey Kosiorek, principal at WSS. “Usually in a bullying situation, most people address the bully and the victim, but we’ve learned that it is the bystanders who have the most power to stop it from getting out of hand.”

The school has implemented the Olweas Bullying Prevention Program, or OBPP. With OBPP, adults are trained to spot bullies and how to respond to their behavior appropriately. Everyone from bus drivers and cafeteria workers to administration and teachers get trained with someone from OBPP once the program is initiated.

Kate Cross attended the event with her 6-year-old daughter Madison Masters.

“I’m here because I want to be aware and be supportive,” Cross said. She has already explained to her first-grader that bullies are people who hurt feelings, and they usually end up with no friends.

The Le Roy Federal Credit Union sponsored keynote speaker Jim Jordan. Although Jordan isn’t a representative of OBPP, he commended Le Roy for embracing the program.

Monday night, Jordan spoke to a large audience that filled just less than half the auditorium. In attendance were concerned parents, siblings, and other LeRoyans.

— By Roger Muehlig

Open library program gets started tonight

BATAVIA — The city school district’s English Language Arts Department will host an open library for district students from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. every Tuesday starting tonight and continuing on March 9, 16, 23 and 29 at Batavia High School, 260 State St.

There will be access to computers, homework assistance and a free Movie of the Week.

This week will kick off with “The Great Debaters,” followed by “Akeelah and the Bee,” “The Power of One,” “The Pursuit of Happiness” and “Remember the Titans.”

There will also be door prizes for those in attendance.

Penny carnival set for March 20

BATAVIA — St. Joseph School, 2 Summit St., is sponsoring a Penny Carnival from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. March 20 at the school hall.

The event will feature a raffle, refreshments, a silent auction, a refresh-



Brittany Baker/Daily News

BULLYING STOPS HERE: Wolcott Street Elementary School officials thanked speaker Jim Jordan for educating parents and the community on how to spot and correct bullying behavior, including cyber-bullying. Jordan’s presentation kicked off an initiative to prevent bullies in the Le Roy community. From left, fifth-grade teacher Jon Wilson, Jim Jordan, Principal Casey Kosiorek and Vice Principal Carol Messura.

Their children were being supervised with arts, crafts, an obstacle course and an inflatable slide in the gymnasium.

Jordan is a motivational speaker, a magician, and an advocate for bullying prevention programs. He spoke to all the children at WSS in two sessions, one for kindergarten through third-grade, and one for fourth- through sixth-grade.

That evening, he addressed the adults. Jordan explained that bullying is different for boys than it is for girls.

“Boys are much easier to spot,” he said. “They push. They poke. You can physically see them misbehaving.”

Girls, Jordan said, are much sneakier with their forms of bullying.

“Girls will exclude, ridicule,

gossip and lie about other girls,” he said. “Of course they won’t do it when any adult is around, that’s why they are much harder to detect. In some ways, girls have found an avenue to do more damage than boys.”

Throughout the presentation and especially when girl bullying was discussed, parents were nodding at each other in agreement.

Jordan also addressed the “usually taboo” issue of cyber-bullying and how to prevent it. He said the best way is to not allow kids to have a computer in their bedrooms and to constantly check on what they are doing. He touted software that allows parents to read their children’s e-mails and chat sessions.

“It is best to tell your child that you’ve downloaded the software,”

he explained. “Tell them you will be checking up on them and once they demonstrate to you that they behave responsibly on the Internet, you can give them more freedom.”

Jordan also said that children should not be allowed to have multiple screen names or alias e-mails that would allow them to say something hurtful without repercussion under the blanket of anonymity.

School teachers from WSS told parents about a survey students had filled out that demonstrated an overwhelming response from kids who wanted to do something about bullies, but didn’t know how.

“With OBPP, we are learning how to give our kids the tools to take a stand for themselves,” explained Carol Messura, vice principal at WSS.

WSS has placed three “report boxes” throughout the school where students can fill out a form and slip it into the box to report bullying behavior. Once a bully is reported, teachers and staff can be on special alert with regards to that particular student.

If three reports are turned in about one student, a phone call will be made home to his or her parents and disciplinary measures will most likely be taken.

Parents were also encouraged to keep in close contact with teachers if they feel their child is being bullied.

The event ended with grateful parents thanking Jordan and Kosiorek for taking a serious stance on bullying. Planning for next year’s kick-off event is already in motion.