

Teacher's ongoing love of broadcasting has fueled high school Media Club

When Dave Claerbaut decided to become a teacher, he wanted to keep up with his first love of broadcasting.

Since 2003, Claerbaut, who is a history teacher, has been the advisor of the Media Club, a volunteer group run by students at Cedar Grove-Belgium High School.



“I went to broadcasting school originally. I still wanted to use some of what I learned, and I knew the kids would kind enjoy it,” Claerbaut said.

After getting approval from the Cedar Grove Village Board, Claerbaut asked Time Warner Cable if the club could be the steward of the community station.

It broadcasts football and basketball games, news programming, choir and band concerts and church services for First Reformed Church and Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church on Channel 20 in the area.

The channel can be seen on Time Warner Cable in Cedar Grove, Belgium, Oostburg and parts of Random Lake and northern Ozaukee County.

Most of the Media Club students are involved with the school play right now, which makes it difficult to dedicate a lot of time to the club.

“Once the play is over, we’ll be right back at it and able to do so many more things,” club member Katie Gruel said.

Learning life behind the camera

Written by MICHAEL LoCICERO
Tuesday, 26 November 2013 18:06

She appreciates all the work Claerbaut has done as the advisor to the group and as a teacher.

“He is so fully dedicated to everything he is involved in and just gives 110% into everything he does,” she said.

Gruel said she wasn’t sure about joining the club at first, but likes that it’s different from other clubs and groups at school.

“A lot of the school is focused on sports. This is just a different thing that lasts all year and the people in it are awesome,” she said. “There really isn’t anything else here like it.”

The group meets in Claerbaut’s classroom, but it isn’t officially affiliated with the school.

“We don’t have an actual studio, we just kind of put it together in my classroom and then I take it down the next day,” Claerbaut said. “We are able to do community stuff in addition to what we do for the school.”

This year, the club has 14 members and two co-presidents, a treasurer and a secretary who help plan fundraising events and programming.

The club sponsors a 50/50 raffle at athletic events to raise money for new equipment.

All of the equipment – including a TV, 11 computers and a few video cameras – was donated by Claerbaut and his wife Mary or community members.

“Some of the things we have are better than others, but we make due with what we have,” Claerbaut said. “A lot of the cameras and things aren’t the best quality, but it’s what we could get on eBay for cheap to get us started.”

Claerbaut went to Brown College in Minneapolis for broadcasting and worked at WHBL in Sheboygan before completing his undergraduate degree in education at Cardinal Stritch University in Milwaukee.

But he never lost his passion for media and still does play-by-play broadcasts during football games.

“I still want to keep some of that broadcasting spark alive,” he said.

The club meets every Tuesday during the school year but work doesn’t shut down when students go home for summer break.

“We film things like the Hollandfest parade in the summer and have put together things like a drinking and driving awareness video for the fire department and a few other community projects,” Claerbaut said.

Learning life behind the camera

Written by MICHAEL LoCICERO
Tuesday, 26 November 2013 18:06

One project the group is working on is a history of Cedar Grove and Belgium that the club plans to donate to the TeRonde House and Het Museums.

“We have interviews lined up and we just kind of started working on it, but it’s going to happen really soon,” Claerbaut said.

Image Information: THE CEDAR GROVE-BELGIUM Media Club was the creation of adviser Dave Claerbaut in 2003. The group produces content for Channel 20 in Cedar Grove and northern Ozaukee County. Pictured along with Claerbaut (back row, left) are club members Adam Dunn, Derek Arndt, Abby Sauer, Katie Gruel, Kim Mueller, Sarah Kiskunas, Jenna McConnohie, Tyler Garside, Andrea Popp, Sarah Parker, Megan Strand and Amanda Strand. Not pictured is Zack Riesselmann. Photo by Sam Arendt