

Bleachers, pool, building repairs top school work

Written by STEVE OSTERMANN
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With resounding win in Goodwill donation contest, John Long School earns a visit from Packers great

It will soon be Donald time at John Long Middle School.

By swamping the competition in this year's Pack'er Up Donation Challenge to benefit Goodwill Industries of Southeastern Wisconsin, students and staff members at the Grafton school have earned a visit from retired Green Bay Packers player Donald Driver.



During the April contest, John Long School donated 78,022 items to the agency, including gently used clothes, toys, games, housewares and other items for needy families. That total was nearly double the second-place effort of 39,185 by Greenfield Middle School.

More than 850 schools participated in the event.

For the grand prize, John Long will receive a personal appearance and thank-you from Driver, who serves as a Goodwill spokesperson; 12 autographed copies of his popular children's book; and a Packers helmet signed by him.

Beth Anzia, a sixth-grade teacher and Student Council adviser who helped organize the John Long campaign, said word of the victory sparked a schoolwide frenzy.

"Everyone went crazy when we made the announcement," Anzia said. "They all worked so hard for this, and it's very exciting."

Besides receiving donations throughout April, the school held two "Driver on Over" collection Saturdays that added 26,000 items to the total. Community members were also able to

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contribute items and designate the elementary or middle school of their choice for contest credit.

Although details of Driver's Grafton visit are still being worked out, he is expected to be the guest of honor at a school assembly in the next two weeks, Anzia said. Students will be busy making decorations, signs and other greetings for one of the state's most popular sports figures, she added.

Beyond the excitement of attracting a celebrity, the real significance of the John Long collection drive hasn't been lost, according to Anzia.

"I think this goes to show what a school and community can do if they work together," she said. "It's all about helping families."

Image Information: JOHN LONG MIDDLE SCHOOL will receive a visit from Donald Driver for winning the Pack'er Up Donation Challenge. Photo by Sam Arendt