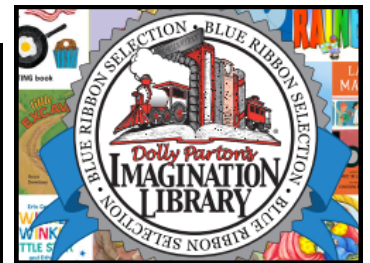


## REA<sup>3</sup>D Awards \$29,200 In Grants During 2022-23 School Year

*Fifteen Academic, Art and Athletic projects funded in REA<sup>3</sup>D's 26th year.*



*Clockwise from left: Reading Café chairs, Pike Lake Snowshoe project, Twig Hockey Zamboni repairs, Leveled Reading books, Youth Football pants, RAILS TV jackets, and Dolly Parton Imagination Library sup-*



## REA<sup>3</sup>D Boosts Playground for EveryBODY Effort Over the Top

BELOW LEFT: Proctor Mayor Chad Ward and community activist Jennifer McDonald originally posed for this *Proctor Journal* photo last fall, which demonstrated REA<sup>3</sup>D's pledge to fund remaining costs for completion of Proctor's new handicapped accessible Playground for EveryBODY (below, right), with a "blank" check presented by REA<sup>3</sup>D president Sherm Carlson. Other sources of support for this effort included MN DNR, the City of Proctor, Irving Youth Community Club, St. Louis County CDBG, and local fundraising activities. Costs for the playground totaled over \$350,000, which exceeded projections due to inflationary costs related to the COVID pandemic. As promised, following the highly successful 2023 REA<sup>3</sup>D by Candlelight Event, the REA<sup>3</sup>D Board voted to grant the playground's remaining balance due of \$16,500 from the REA<sup>3</sup>D event's proceeds. The Playground for EveryBODY is designed to be fully accessible for all children, and particularly addresses the needs of 1000+ regional kids with physical limitations. Read about another REA<sup>3</sup>D/city/school partnership effort in planning stages, the Pickleball initiative, on page 7.



Photo courtesy of *Proctor Journal*



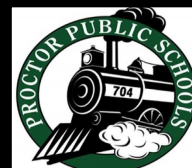
# REA<sup>3</sup>D BY CANDLELIGHT 2023

PAGE 2

*A big thank you to the businesses, school staff, students and community members who generously contributed to our highly successful 2023 REA<sup>3</sup>D by Candlelight On-Line and Dinner Event, which raised over \$30,000. Please support our generous business partners and let them know you appreciate their sponsorship of REA<sup>3</sup>D efforts.*



## PLATINUM SPONSORS



*Carol Lonke, in Memory of  
Laura Condon*



*Seth Oliver PHS Class of '97*

*Karen and Gerald Ruona*

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*Sherman and Louise Carlson*

*John Nordberg*

*Ted and Lynn Peterson*

*John Martin*

*The John Evans and Scott Witty Families*



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 Wayne Misgen  
 Zenith Bookstore



Heads and Tales proved to be a lively, interactive fundraising event. With the flip of a coin, people won or lost beads.



Mary Murphy (middle), enjoys the company of long-time friends, Diane Rauschenfels and Virg Boehland.



Many talented culinary artists contributed to the big success of the dessert auction.

## ISD 704 Programs, Students and Grads Contribute to REA<sup>3</sup>D by Candlelight Event Success!

The 2023 REA<sup>3</sup>D by Candlelight on-line auction and banquet raised a record breaking over \$30,000 for academic, art and athletic initiatives within the Proctor School District communities. Returning to a “live” celebration this year at Black Woods Event Center, the dinner event sold out early, with 185 guests purchasing tickets. The on-line, live, and silent auction venues generated a lot of competitive bidding. Guests at the dinner commented on how wonderful it was to be back to “in person.” Along with the wonderful outpouring of support from area business and community organizations, this year’s Candlelight event featured a great deal of participation and support from Proctor schools programs, teachers, students and alumni.

Mr. Craig Honkala’s Technical Education students fashioned beautiful engraved acrylic centerpieces with wood bases that featured the names of GOLD and PLATINUM Table Sponsors. These students also constructed an American flag that was included in the online auction. Mr. Tyler Blom’s class contributed a bulldog metal art piece that was included in the on-line auction. One of the most successful live auction items was an eight-course dinner for eight guests, paired with spirits to be held at the home of Mr. John Martin, PHS culinary arts instructor. The bidding for this dinner was fierce with the winning bid reaching \$1,500. Proctor alumni support was ever-present with table sponsorships and generous donations. The dessert auction alone raised over \$4,500. Other student produced items included a Kubb game created by Ian Dobsenski, who had received a REA<sup>3</sup>D grant for the project, and a sparkling hand crafted necklace for the silent auction created by Proctor alum Britta Kaupilla.

Due to the increasing number of guests this event is attracting, the 2024 REA<sup>3</sup>D by Candlelight Event scheduled for Friday, February 16, 2024, will be moved to Greysolon Plaza, which can host a larger number of guests. Ticket sales will begin in December of 2023, and can be purchased at [rea3d.org](http://rea3d.org), or by contacting any of our REA<sup>3</sup>D Board members, listed on page 8. Next year’s entertainment is already in the planning stages. Famed photographer Daniel J. Cox (left), Proctor alumnus, will be the keynote speaker, and to quote one guest this year, *“Can I buy tickets yet? I can’t remember when I have had this much fun!”*



John Awsumb charmed the crowd with his original rendition of “Let’s Stay Home Today.”



As the top bidders, Chrissey Evans, Angie Koski, and Stacey Heine enjoyed their sumptuous dessert.



John Martin and Sherm Carlson exchanged witty banter to raise funds during the live auction for the dinner to be held at Mr. Martin’s home. The bidding was lively!

**Above Photos courtesy of Proctor Journal**

**Daniel J. Cox, PHS’78**, Award-winning Nature Photographer will be the featured speaker at the 2024 REA<sup>3</sup>D by Candlelight Event. Dan’s photographs have appeared in 20+ books and numerous periodicals, including two covers of National Geographic.



## Beloved Educator Leaves Lasting Legacy

For those who were fortunate to have known Patty Muckala, they remember her as a fierce advocate for all things educational. To know Patty was to know a teacher who dedicated her 40 year career inspiring and guiding young minds at Proctor Public Schools. Her enthusiasm for life and her ability to accentuate the positives are what made her career happy and successful. She gave every child a voice, listened without prejudice, and gave courage to those children waiting for someone to believe in them. Patty also taught many summers in the Upward Bound Program at UWS. Following her retirement in 2009, Patty taught at the College of St. Scholastica where she continued to inspire and guide older students.

Patty was an avid reader, and she always had a book to share or discuss with her book club friends, her neighbors, and former students. In addition to purchasing books, Patty was always on the list at the Duluth Public Library for recent publications. Post retirement, this amazing woman read close to 1,500 books and kept a running list. Literacy was a cornerstone in her life. Her book club organized a book drive in her honor, which to date has garnered over 300 children's books. Watch for the Patty Muckala mini-memorial library in the near future.

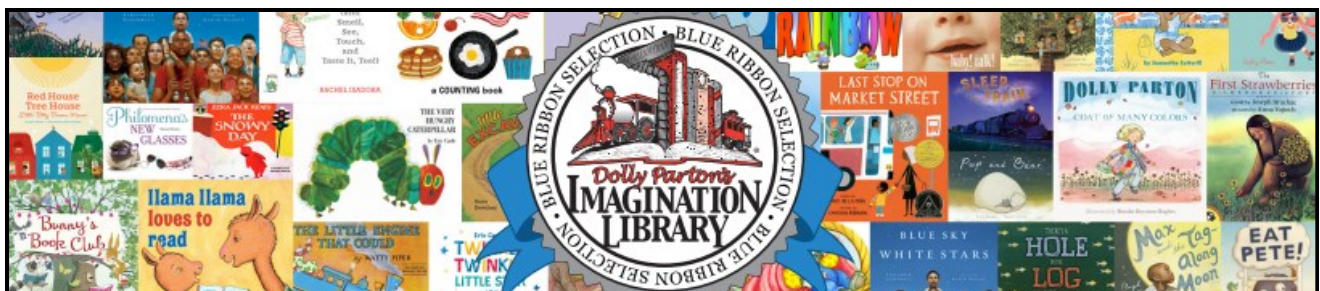


Patty was awarded one of the first REA<sup>3</sup>D grants in 2009. In typical Patty fashion, she decided to pair her eighth grade students with senior citizens who resided at the Railview senior apartments in Proctor. She guided her students through the process of interviewing older adults and then writing biographies. This innovative idea produced not only writing, but it sparked friendships between generations. Several teachers commented that they “borrowed” her idea and have used that method of teaching in their own classrooms.

Before she passed, Patty requested that donations in her memory be made to REA<sup>3</sup>D. An outpouring of love and support for Patty in the form of REA<sup>3</sup>D memorials arrived as a result of this directive. Her generous spirit and boundless energy will live on in learning grants and special projects made possible because of these memorials.

Although she fought a courageous eleven-year battle with cancer, this inspirational woman was filled with joy and optimism. It was not uncommon for her to remind everyone that “joy and laughter are the best medicine,” and she openly shared her love with all who knew her.

Patty was preceded in death by her parents Jack and Martha Gould; and sister Joanne (Stan) Pruszinske. Patty is survived by her devoted husband David; children Jonathan (Katy) and Michael (Cassie); grandchildren Max and Cameron Muckala; sisters Terri (Carmelo) Bianca and Andrea (David) Sabow; brothers John (Sue) Gould, Michael (Marnie) Gould, Frank (Sharon) Gould and many nieces and nephews.



**Sign your pre-schooler up for FREE children's books—details at [rea3d.org/imagination-library](http://rea3d.org/imagination-library)**



## REA<sup>3</sup>D Awards Discretionary Grant to Proctor Fire Department

Some may say, “What? A REA<sup>3</sup>D grant supported the purchase of thermal imaging cameras for the Proctor Fire Department?” Well it’s true, and it’s well within REA<sup>3</sup>D’s mission—REA<sup>3</sup>D is *dedicated to supporting life-long learning within the Proctor School District Communities*. The thermal imaging cameras in question can potentially save more lives and protect property by increasing speed and safety in emergency calls. The educational component of their use involves firefighters in teaching both kids and adults alike about their use in fire responses, year after year, in public venues such as National Night Out, school classrooms, and at sports events.

These are life saving devices that help firefighters see in zero visibility, locate kids, pets, family members and other firefighters and locate hot spots when every second counts.

They can potentially save our community members’ (and their pets’) lives. They also help keep our local firefighters safer. REA<sup>3</sup>D is one of several local groups supporting the purchase of this equipment so that each firefighter is equipped. The Proctor Fire Department responded to 546 calls in 2022, which included fire, medical and mutual aid.



REA<sup>3</sup>D funding helped the Proctor Trap Booster Club buy uniforms for students as they participate in competitions. At present, the Minnesota High School Clay Target organization is the fastest growing Minnesota High School sport.



A REA<sup>3</sup>D grant helped Proctor/Hermantown United Youth Wrestling purchase components to build portable electronic scoreboards for use in home wrestling meets. Through this project, students are learning to build and operate audio-visual equipment that serves a need in their sport.

## READING Café helps students increase reading scores



Anna Sederski, A.I. Jedlicka Middle School reading teacher, is passionate about helping students who struggle with reading comprehension. She has sought and been awarded REA<sup>3</sup>D grants for four reading improvement projects in the past. The most recent grant helped bring her vision of a “Reading Café” to life for Proctor middle school students. Anna says, “Students who struggle with reading comprehension often have a hard time finding a book to read that is high interest and at a level appropriate for individual reading time. Introducing the comfortable atmosphere of our Reading Café, and filling it with high interest books has made a real difference in our students’ motivation to read.”

It shows in their reading scores too, as Anna indicates 75% of her students increased their reading scores between mid-year and the fall assessment.

## REA<sup>3</sup>D Awards \$29,200 in Fall 2022 and Winter 2023 Grant Rounds

Amount	Name of Project	Contact Person	Population Served
\$1,000	REA <sup>3</sup> D Backdrop for Rails TV	Ted Kiefat	Community
\$700	Reading Café	Anna Sederski	30 6th-8th grade students
\$1,000	Twig Hockey Zamboni Repairs	Stephanie Peterson	51 K-12th grade students
\$1,000	Railstrong Nation T-shirts	John Awsumb	1200 K-12th grade students
\$1,000	Proctor Trap Booster Club	Sonja Carlson	30 9th-12th grade students
\$16,500	Playground for EveryBODY	Jess Rich	Community
\$1,000	Entrepreneurial Class Seed Money	Lauren Winter	11 9th-12th grade students
\$1,000	Dolly Parton Imagination Library	Russell Habermann	40 pre-K children
\$1,000	Proctor/Hermantown United Wrestling	Dave McNamee	500 K-12th grade students
\$1,000	Proctor Fast-pitch Association	Tammy Sundbom	125 K-12th grade students
\$1,000	Early Learning in Nature	Sarah Klyve	33 pre-K grade students
\$1,000	Educate, Engage and Inspire T-Shirts	Kerry Juntunen	160 K-5th grade students
\$1,000	Fixing Youth Baseball Dugouts	Ryan Matthieu	400 K-12th grade students
\$1,000	Proctor Fire Department	Christy Strohm	Community

### Pickleball Initiative Picks Up Steam

While the rules of pickleball are rather simple, and participants with limited athletic ability have come to enjoy the game, getting to the point of having a court to play on has become a bit more challenging. With the full endorsement of Proctor Public Schools, the City of Proctor, and the Proctor Area Hockey association (PAHA), REA<sup>3</sup>D continues to offer a coordinating role in bringing these courts to the Proctor Community. Narrowing down possible site locations, identifying possible funding sources, defining the decision making process, and assessing financial support from impacted parties, remains ongoing in a cooperative spirit.

Spring weather has also delayed visits to neighboring communities where installation of their pickleball courts have been warmly received by their citizenry.

*While the original intent was to inform the public in this newsletter of a more specific timeline for completion of this project, your REA<sup>3</sup>D Foundation remains committed to make the Pickleball effort happen.*







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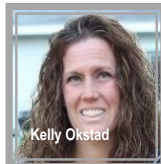
## REA³D Board of Directors, 2023-24



Long-time REA³D treasurer, Louise Lind and newly elected treasurer, Katie Cotrell take a moment from "bean counting" to enjoy the Candlelight dinner.



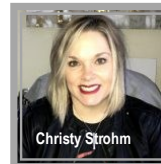
Lynn Peterson,  
Secretary



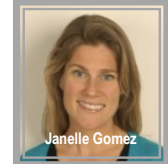
Kelly Okstad



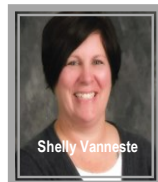
Sherm Carlson,  
President



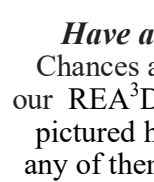
Christy Strohm



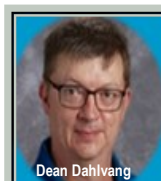
Janelle Gomez



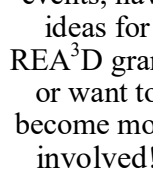
Shelly Vanneste



Barb Steen,  
Vice President



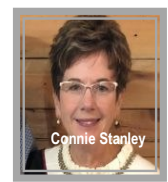
Dean Dahlvang



Rory Johnson



Katie Cotrell

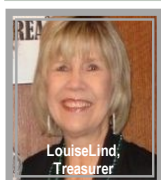


Connie Stanley

***Have a question about REA³D?***  
Chances are you know one or more of our REA³D Board of Director Members, pictured here. Feel free to reach out to any of them if you have questions about events, have ideas for REA³D grants or want to become more involved!



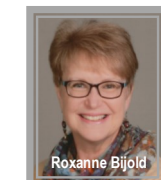
Gordy Westendorf



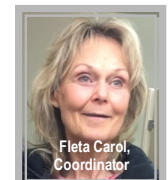
Louise Lind,  
Treasurer



Jim Ward



Roxanne Bjold



Fleta Carol,  
Coordinator

Do you have a great idea for a learning project? Consider applying for a REA³D grant! Next REA³D Grant Deadline is October 13, 2023. For more information go to: [rea3d.org/grants](http://rea3d.org/grants) or call 218-428-0098. Also check out our website to view REA³D grants funded in the past, memorials, donors and sponsors, and REA³D board membership.