HARTSBURG-EMDEN CUSD NO. 21
MAY 2026 NEWSLETTER

Principal's Desk

Ashley Tetter-Rowden, GS Principal

As we move through April, it's hard to believe how quickly the month has flown by—especially as the warmer weather begins to arrive. The sunshine and longer days bring renewed energy to our classrooms and school community. After a very busy March filled with activities and events, April has provided a welcome sense of calm while still keeping us focused on meaningful learning.

Our primary focus this month is continuing to work diligently with our new curriculum and ensuring that we finish the school year strong. I am incredibly proud of the dedication shown by our students and staff as they embrace new learning opportunities and strive for excellence each day.

One exciting highlight of April is the start of the **DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education)** program for our fifth-grade students. This important program equips students with the skills they need to make safe and responsible choices. Throughout the program, students will also participate in special activities designed to reinforce the valuable lessons they are learning.

We are also looking forward to celebrating **Earth Day** with a week full of engaging activities. Students will deepen their understanding of environmental stewardship through guest readers, hands-on learning about the different parts of the Earth, and a fun dress-up spirit week. These experiences help foster a sense of responsibility and appreciation for the world around us.

In early April, we had the pleasure of celebrating **Paraprofessional Appreciation Day** by honoring Mr. Folkman. His dedication, kindness, and unwavering support make a tremendous difference in the lives of our students and staff. We are incredibly grateful for all that he does for our school community.

Later in April, we will also recognize Mrs. Zinser for **National Administrative Professionals Day**. Her organization, positivity, and commitment help keep our school running smoothly each day, and we are thankful for her many contributions.

As we look ahead, please stay tuned for updates about the exciting events planned for May. There is much to anticipate as we approach the final weeks of the school year. We will send out emails when events get closer, such as field day, possible field trips, 5th grade orientation, and the talent show.

Thank you for your continued support in making our school such a wonderful place to learn and grow. Enjoy the beautiful spring weather!

GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT

Elizabeth Hilgert, Student Coordinator/Guidance Counselor

Finishing the Year Strong

As we head into the final stretch of the school year, I find myself reflecting on just how much our students have grown—academically, socially, and personally. It's been a year full of challenges, successes, and moments that have truly shaped who they are becoming. While some days may have felt long, the year as a whole has gone by incredibly fast.

Even with summer right around the corner, we're not quite there yet. These last few weeks matter. This is the time to stay focused, keep pushing forward, and finish strong. Every assignment, every class period, and every bit of effort still counts. There is so much to be proud of, and there is still time to build on that progress—whether that means improving grades, staying consistent, or simply giving your best each day.

I also want to remind students that they are not in this alone. Our teachers and staff are here to support, encourage, and help in any way we can. If something feels overwhelming or confusing, please reach out—we are here for you.

As you start thinking about summer, I encourage you to consider how you might use that time in ways that are both meaningful and fulfilling. Whether it's working, helping your family, exploring career interests, spending time with friends, or simply taking time to recharge, each experience contributes to your growth. Learning doesn't stop when school ends—it just looks a little different.

Let's make these final days count. Finish with pride, support one another, and take a moment to recognize how far you've come this year. Summer is almost here—let's walk into it feeling accomplished, confident, and ready for what's next.

A Message to the Class of 2026

The countdown is on, and soon you will walk across the stage, marking the end of your high school journey. This moment represents years of dedication, perseverance, and growth. It has been a privilege to

witness the paths each of you has taken and the individuals you have become.

Graduation is not just a milestone—it is a turning point. While you leave behind familiar routines, you step into a world full of new possibilities. Each of you carries unique strengths, talents, and experiences that will guide you forward.

As you move into this next chapter, remember that success is not defined by a single path. Be open to change, willing to learn, and courageous enough to take risks. There will be challenges, but also countless opportunities to grow, adapt, and succeed. Trust in your ability to navigate whatever comes your way.

Most importantly, stay true to who you are. Lead with kindness, show resilience in difficult moments, and continue striving toward your goals—even when the path is unclear.

Class of 2026, you have already accomplished so much, and this is only the beginning. We are proud of you and excited to see the impact you will make in the world.

Congratulations, and best wishes for all that lies ahead!

HARTEM ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

Ron Spencer, Athletic Director

Jr. high track has just 3 regular season meets remaining in May. The Stags will compete in sectionals at Lincoln High School on Saturday, May 9th starting at 9:00am.

The bass fishing team will begin the postseason on Thursday, May 14th in Rochester at SangChris Lake. Qualifiers will advance to the sectionals on May 21st at Lake Springfield. State is June 5th & 6th at Lake Shelbyville. Good luck, guys!!

Post season for the Illini Central/Hartem high school baseball coop begins with regionals on May 25th. Good luck to Devin and Hudson!

The spring awards banquet will be at 6:00pm Thursday, May 28th in the high school gym.

English Department

Eric Gardiner, HS English Teacher

As the year comes to a close, here is what the various English classes have been up to.

World Literature: After returning from spring break, students have been reading short stories by multiple Russian authors, as part of our Russian Literature unit. Within this unit they are learning about propaganda, as well as the cultural and historical significance behind classic short stories like " The Nose", "The Bet", " How Much Land Does a Man Need", and "The Queen of Spades".

British Literature: Students are finishing up reading Brave New World. Within this unit students have learned and discussed many topics such as: Utopia, propaganda, and what it means to be civilized. All while examining the essential question, How do reason and emotion help us understand the world?

American Literature: Students are heading into our final unit, Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*. In this unit students will explore aspects of modernism, gain understanding of the "Lost Generation, and learn about American disillusionment. In studying these aspects of the early twentieth century, students will answer the essential question: How do ideologies affect our lives?

English I: As the Freshmen get closer to the end of the year, they are reading Ayn Rand's novella, *Anthem.* As they work through this short work, they are learning about individualism vs collectivism. How thoughts and ideas can be manipulated, and who might be vying for control of what we think/how we think.

SCIENCE FAIR

Jenn Hayes, JH Science Teacher

The Hartsburg-Emden Jr. High Science Classes will be hosting a Science Fair on Monday, May 11th from 5:00-6:00 in the High School Cafeteria! All Science Students 6th-8th Grades will be displaying their projects! We have been working really hard learning new things all year! We are excited to share with you!

HARTEM Alumni Banquet

Ron Spencer, AD

The 97th Annual Hartsburg-Emden High School Alumni Banquet will begin at 6:30pm on June 13, 2026. This year the banquet will be held at the Community House in Emden, Illinois. The banquet will be catered by the Dovetail Inn. Invitations to the

banquet will be sent out in early May. Anyone who does not receive an invitation, but would like to attend the banquet may send a request via email to Ron Spencer at coach_spencer@hotmail.com or you may call/text him at 309-838-0360. Anniversary classes being honored this year include: 1946, 1951, 1956, 1961, 1966, 1971, 1976, 1981, 1986, 1991, 1996, 2001, 2006, 2011, 2016, 2021 and the Senior Class of 2026. Any HARTEM Alumni is welcome to join us! The winner of the "Wall of Fame" award will be selected and announced at the banquet. This year's award will be represented in the category of Athletics. Please mail nomination letters to Ron Spencer, 8923 Blooming Grove Road, Bloomington, IL 61705.

Hartsburg-Emden Music Department

Marlee Hafley, Music Teacher

The Hartsburg-Emden Spring Band Concert, themed, "A Night at the Movies" has been rescheduled for **Wednesday, May 6 at 6:00 PM**. The concert will feature the 5th Grade Beginning Band and the 6–12th Grade Hartem Band. Admission is free—please join us in celebrating the hard work these students have put in throughout the school year.

Incoming 5th Graders: Instrument Try-Out Night will be held on **Wednesday, May 13 from 3:30–7:00 PM** in the Emden gymnasium. Students will begin learning about the available instruments in class soon. Additional information will be sent home to schedule a specific time slot.
If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Hafley at mhafley@hartem.org.

Yearbook

Eric Gardiner

This year's yearbook is nearing completion. If you would like to pre-order your copy of the 2025-2026 Antiler yearbook, the link has been posted to the school's website. In addition, we have back issues of past yearbooks . Please email Eric Gardiner at egaridner@hartem.org for more information and the year you would like.

In other news, ad sales are underway, and our students are looking for local business and business owners to help support our yearbook. If your business would like to help support the yearbook, you may purchase one of the following plans:

Advertisement Plans:

- **Basic Plan — $50:** 1/8 page advertisement in the yearbook
- **Black Plan — $100:** 1/8 page advertisement + donate one yearbook to a student in need
- **Orange Plan — $200:** 1/8 page advertisement + donate three yearbooks to students in need.

The ad order form with the plan options and next steps is also included in this newsletter.

Hartem Lincoln High School Chess Team

Kent Hieronymus, Chess Coach

The Hartem-Lincoln Chess Team had a great chess season this year. We won the MCICL chess league this year defeating: Olympia, Franklin, Greenview, Sangamon Valley, Christian Life Academy, and Notre Dame LaSalette. The team also qualified for the fourth time for the IHSA state chess tournament. The high school chess team has qualified for IHSA state 4 out of the 7 years we have had the chess program.

The chess team graduated a great class of seniors. We are eagerly anticipating
The freshmen chess players joining the team for the coming school year.

Hartem JH Chess

Kent Hieronymus

Starting in August, the Hartem Jr. High Chess team will be starting up again. All 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th graders are invited to participate. If you are interested please contact Kent Hieronymus (khieronymus@hartem.org) at the high school. Austin Hayes is the coach of the Hartem Jr. High Chess team. If you do not know how to play, we will teach you!

Spanish 1, 2, 3, and 4

Kent Hieronymus, HS Spanish Teacher

All the Spanish students at Hartem attended the annual field trip to the Mexican restaurant referred to by our students as "El Maz" (Mazatlan). The students ordered and conversed in Spanish with the restaurant staff. The Spanish classes have been making and practicing restaurant dialogues before going to El Maz. The students did very well with their Spanish conversations at El Maz.

MAY 2026

Sun	*Mon*	*Tue*	*Wed*	*Thu*	*Fri*	*Sat*
Breakfast Menu					**1** **JH/HS-Cinnamon brown sugar oatmeal** **GS-Cereal** **Toast** **Fruit** **Juice**	**2**
3	**4** **Poptarts** **Fruit** **Juice**	**5** **Biscuits and sausage gravy** **Fruit** **Juice**	**6** **Bagels w/cream cheese** **Fruit** **Juice**	**7** **Coffee cake** **Fruit** **Juice**	**8** **Pancakes** **Sausage patty** **Fruit** **Juice**	**9**
10	**11** **English muffins** **Fruit** **Juice**	**12** **French toast sticks** **Sausage links** **Fruit** **Juice**	**13** **Assorted muffins** **Fruit** **Juice**	**14** **Frittata omelet** **Toast** **Fruit** **Juice**	**15** **Pancake on a stick** **Fruit** **Juice**	**16**
17	**18** **JH/HS-Nutri-grain bar** **GS-Chocolate chip granola bar** **Fruit** **Juice**	**19** **Fruit frudle** **Fruit** **Juice**	**20** **Cook's Choice** **Fruit** **Juice**	**21** **Cook's Choice** **Fruit** **Juice**	**22** **Teacher Institute** **No School**	**23**
24	**25**	**26**	**27**	**28**	**29**	**30**

A variety of milk is available every day. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

MAY 2026

Sun	*Mon*	*Tue*	*Wed*	*Thu*	*Fri*	*Sat*
Lunch Menu					**1** **Sloppy joe** **Nachos w/cheese sauce** **Lettuce** **Sour cream/salsa** **Applesauce**	**2**
3	**4** **Chicken patty on bun** **French fries** **Mandarin oranges** **Pudding w/vanilla wafers**	**5** **Walking tacos** **Lettuce/cheese** **Sour cream/salsa** **Corn** **Peaches** **Graham crackers w/icing**	**6** **Chicken strips** **Mac and cheese** **Peas** **Pineapple** **Oreo fluff**	**7** **JH/HS-Super salad** **Assorted lettuce** **Assorted dressing** **Assorted veggies** **Assorted meat** **Breadsticks** **GS-School Pizza** **Salad** **Corn** **Mix fruit**	**8** **Italian sub sandwiches** **Pasta salad** **Chips** **Pears** **Cookies**	**9**
10	**11** **Loaded nachos w/cheese sauce** **Assorted meats** **Sour cream/salsa** **Lettuce** **Cottage cheese** **Applesauce**	**12** ***Fair Day!*** **Corndogs** **Vinegar fries** **Funnel cake** **Frozen fruit cup** **Lemonade**	**13** **JH/HS-Quesadilla pizza** **Sour cream/salsa** **Pineapple** **Brownies** **GS-Breakfast for lunch** **Mini pancakes** **Sausage patty** **Yogurt/fruit** **Breakfast cookie**	**14** **Hamburger or hot dogs** **Tater tots** **Mandarin oranges** **Orange fluff**	**15** **Assorted sandwiches** **Fresh veggies** **Ranch/PB** **Chips** **Peaches**	**16**
17	**18** **Bosco sticks** **Marinara sauce** **Side salad** **Fruit**	**19** **JH/HS-Ham/Turkey cheese wrap** **Lettuce** **Chips** **Fruit** **GS-Quesadilla pizza** **Corn** **Lettuce** **Pineapple/mandarins mix** **Cake**	**20** **Cook's Choice**	**21** **Cook's Choice**	**22** **No School** **Teacher's Institute**	**23**

A variety of milk is available every day. Chef salad and side salads are available every day at the high school. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

MAY 2026

Sun	*Mon*	*Tue*	*Wed*	*Thu*	*Fri*	*Sat*
					1	**2** **JHTRK @ PORTA 9:00am**
3	**4** **JHTRK @ MWC 4:15**	**5** **JHTRK @ El Paso-Gridley 4:00**	**6** **JH/HS Spring Concert @ HS Gym 6:00**	**7**	**8**	**9** **JHTRK @ Sectionals TBA** **HS Graduation @ HS Gym 2:00**
10	**11** **6th-8th Grade Science Fair @ HS Café 5:00-6:00**	**12**	**13** **Instrument Try-Out night for incoming 5th Graders @ GS Gym 3:30-7:00**	**14** **Bass Fishing Regionals TBA** **8th Grade Promotion @ HS Gym 6:00**	**15** **JHTRK @ State TBA**	**16** **JHTRK @ State TBA**
17	**18**	**19**	**20** **HS Finals** **School Board Meeting 7:00**	**21** **HS Finals** **Bass Fishing Sectionals TBA** ***Last Day of School***	**22** **Teacher's Institute**	**23**
24	**25** **Memorial Day Office Closed**	**26**	**27**	**28** **Spring Sports Awards @ HS Gym 6:00**	**29**	**30**
31						

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