

Young entrepreneurs pursue passions

The Pursue Your Passion entrepreneurship class at Sisters High School convened on Wednesday, March 2, to complete their final presentations of their ideas for a business.

The mission of the class is for students to define their passion, create a feasible business model, and turn that into a presentation as if to gain support and consent to a lobby of bankers or investors.

The presentations last Wednesday ranged from portable tsunami shelters, guitar and bass retailers, technology tutors, sports media outlets, even going as far as an authentic Italian cabaret theater.

The parents and members of the community in attendance were impressed, and all of the presentations were nothing less than what the mentors and teachers expected: fantastic.

The class as a whole had

come much closer together the week before, after the original presentation was cancelled due to the tragic event of Bob Chandler's sudden collapse at FivePine Lodge & Conference Center.

As program leader Bill Willits stated as they gathered the next class: "We are all connected — we are all part of a little family now," because of the experiences they had all shared:

Izaak Kanzig said, "As part of the class myself, it was awe-inspiring to see such forward thinking and introspection from my peers."

The top three projects were:

- Maggie Bidasolo — Yes You Can: technology classes for seniors;
- Dallas Knoop — The Life Bubble: tsunami protection device;
- Rob Merola — The Cosmic Cabaret: authentic Italian cabaret experience.

Traditionally around \$2,000 dollars is awarded to the top three presenters chosen by the judges, as well as a nominated prize that is decided by the students. However in light of the recent events, the students, led by Ellie Chandler and directed by Bill Willits and John Renner, were moved to create a scholarship in honor of Bob Chandler. The scholarship will be administered through Sisters GRO (Graduate Resource Organization), an organization dedicated to assisting local students who are diligent and hardworking to get a foot up for what comes after high school and aim to help students obtain a higher education.

The group was influenced by Bob's passion for hard work. As explained by Ellie, Bob loved helping and working with kids that work extremely hard and



PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK

Maggie Bidasolo, center, Dallas Knoop (right), and Rob Merola were the top finishers in Pursue Your Passion.

take nothing for granted. The class and parents hope to see the scholarship expand in the years to come, and become a prominent local scholarship.

"The PYP program is one of the best learning experiences for aspiring

entrepreneurs at Sisters High School, and made possible by the generosity of the community," said Kanzig. "A special thanks to Julie Benson, John Griffith, Ted Johnson, Jon Renner, Ann Richardson, Gary Wehrle and Bill Willits."

bump ahead. congratulations!

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