

Board game day scores with kids

Mike Latona/Catholic Courier

HENRIETTA — It was a game day made in heaven.

Trouble and Twister. Cranium Cadoo and chess. Battleship, Battle Ball, bingo and Lord of the Rings Baekgammon. Password and Pictionary Junior.

Clue — both the original and "The Simpsons" version. Sorry — the original as well as a "Pokemon" spin-off.

Yahtzee. Stratego. Harry Potter. Mancala. Guesstures. And much, much more. This offering of board games would rival that of many toy stores — with one key difference,

Bobby Exler observed.

"You actually get to play these games instead of just seeing them in the boxes," said Bobby, 9.

That is, if you're lucky enough to attend Good Shepherd School. Bobby, a third-grader, was joined by his peers in grades pre-kindergarten through 6 for Board Game Day on Wednesday, Jan. 28. The fun-filled event was a highlighted activity at Good Shepherd for Catholic Schools Week.

For up to an hour's time during the school day, students hauled out their own board games and got down to some serious playing. They either



Mike Crup/Catholic Courier

Eight-year-old Julee Martin, a third-grader at Good Shepherd School in Henrietta, uses decoder glasses to read a Cranium Cadoo answer card Jan. 28 during Board Game Day at the school.

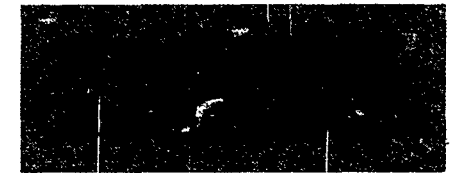
spread across their classroom floors or filled up parts of hallways, as was the case with Good Shepherd's second- and fourth-graders. There, one of Board Game Day's more suspenseful contests centered around a game of "The Simpsons" Clue. Kyle Joseph, a second-grader, was on the winning team that determined Mr. Burns was done in by Bart Simpson, with the slingshot, in Barney's Bowl-A-Rama.

"I figured it out. I'm the one that got them to win," said Kyle, 8, adding that he had never before played Clue.

Allison Fox, a fourth-grader, said she owns "a stack of games that's about this tall," stretching her arms up and down. Out of that collection she opted to bring in the Clifford the Big Red Dog Happy Birthday Game — an appropriate choice being that Allison was due to turn 10 years old on Feb. 4.

Tess Newell, a third-grader, said that she, also, has a large collection of board games at her house, some of which she just received for Christmas. "I got American Monopoly and Outburst Junior this year," said the 8-year-old, who brought in Trouble to share with her classmates.

Meanwhile, Bobby selected Monopoly from his home collection — not a junior version, but the original adult game. "It's one of my favorites. My mother's been playing awhile, so she taught me," he said.



The chance to hop from game to game was a big hit with Kyle and Bobby. "I think it's a pretty good idea. If someone hadn't played (a game) before, you get to try it," Kyle said. Bobby added that one of Board Game Day's highlights was "seeing what all the different kids have."

Allison found another bonus: "It's a lot longer than our regular recess," she noted.

Marie Arcuri, principal of Good Shepherd, acknowledged that Board Game Day was one instance where everyone was eager to attend school. In fact, she laughed as she recalled the student who one day earlier had worried that school would be cancelled due to a predicted snow storm, and wanted to make sure Board Game Day would be rescheduled if that occurred.

Arcuri said she plans to have another Board Game Day before the end of the school year, saying the activity teaches valuable skills such as teamwork and socialization.

"So many kids spend so much time on video games, they don't realize there's this whole world out there. Getting together in groups of three, four and five — you can't do that with video games," she pointed out.

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