

## High Notes

### Zumba fund-raiser set Friday

**KAYSVILLE** — Students at Mountain High School have invited 11 Zumba instructors to lead a fund-raising event at their school on Friday, Jan. 7.

The event, called Zumba Flash, will raise money for Career Technology Education (CTE) groups at the school, including DECA, FBLA, FCCLA and Skills USA.

Tickets are \$5 in advance and can be purchased at the school, 490 South 500 East in Kaysville. Those paying at the door will be charged \$11, or \$10 with a can of food. The dance begins at 7 p.m. Friday.

More information is available by calling the school at 801-402-0450.

### Ideas to help readers sought

**SALT LAKE CITY** — Ideas for fresh, exciting programs that will help encourage reading among students of many ages, are being sought by the Utah Humanities Council.

Proposals from organizations serving young people, including schools, community centers and libraries, are being considered for grants from the council, which provides funding to Utah groups and organizations conducting public projects in the humanities.

Application drafts are due by Feb. 1. They should include innovative ideas for programs designed to help encourage reading in early childhood, or to excite youth of high-school age to learn more about their world, tell their stories and stay engaged in school.

Applications are available through [www.utahhumanities.org/Grants.htm](http://www.utahhumanities.org/Grants.htm).

### Technology focus of showcase

**KAYSVILLE** — A New Technology Showcase will be hosted at the Okuma Technology Institute at Davis Applied Technology College next month.

Okuma America Corporation, a computer numeric controls (CNC) machine tool manufacturer, and distributor Hartwig, Inc., will host the showcase on Feb. 8 and 9. Seminars will focus on using new technology to drive increased productivity, improve quality and reduce costs.

More information is available at [www.datc.edu/node/5774](http://www.datc.edu/node/5774). Registration can be completed through <http://events.okuma.com/newtech>.

### Students design for builders

**LAYTON** — Five Weber State students, including Jacob Sommer of Kaysville, had their home designs selected for incorporation in a new Layton subdivision.

In a competition sponsored by Nilson Homes, students were asked to design homes intended for owners ages 60 to 80, with three bedrooms, two bathrooms, a great room, kitchen and laundry, all in 1,200 square feet.

Kirt Merrill, director of production at Nilson, and a Weber State graduate, said the students did more than just cram three bedrooms in a little box; they looked for features that came alive in their plans.

"We wanted something different," said Merrill. "We gave the students some basic requirements, and they came back with very inventive ideas."

Sommers plans to be an architect. He spent more than 150 hours on his design, which was developed after interviewing and seeking suggestions from family and friends in the target age range.

"I tried to incorporate small elements that the people I interviewed like," he said. "Taking the information we learned in class and applying it to the real world was an eye-opening experience."

# Exercise balls replace chairs, aid students

**BY LOUISE R. SHAW**  
Clipper Staff Writer

**KAYSVILLE** — Jamie Covington thinks the new way of sitting in class makes her smarter.

"I've been getting better grades," said the third grader at Kaysville Elementary.

Tyler Watts thinks he's maybe gotten a little smarter too. And that he and his classmates are developing better balance as well.

Jamie and Tyler are two of the 25 students in Ann Young's class that have been part of an experiment this year.

Instead of sitting on chairs, the students are balancing on exercise balls.

And they just may be right about the results: improved balance and enhanced learning are just a few.

Young, a teacher for 13 years, said the project started out as an experiment but because of its popularity and impact, they plan to continue using the balls through the end of the school year.

"It helps with posture and core strength," she said. "It can help with movement because it burns energy with exercise and as they move more it increases blood flow to the brain and helps them with their learning."

The experiment came through the efforts of Cassie Wilson, a student at Weber State studying



**STUDENTS IN ANN YOUNG'S** third grade class at Kaysville Elementary are enthusiastic about using exercise balls instead of chairs in their classroom. Photo: Louise R. Shaw

occupational therapy, who provided the research and training as part of a school project.

On her website, [no-chairclassroom.com](http://no-chairclassroom.com), Wilson lists additional benefits such as burning more calories, greater focus on tasks

and an exciting alternative for students.

Yes, there is fidgeting, said Young, who has a ball instead of a chair at her computer desk as well. "But it is good fidgeting — they're exercising and they don't even know it."

"They love it," she continued. "It's really lightened the mood, made school more fun, more playful. There's not been a problem with discipline and other kids at the school ask 'how come you guys get to have the balls?'"

## Parental engagement recognized by Governor

**SALT LAKE CITY** — Parent involvement is being emphasized in a proclamation signed by Governor Gary Herbert, declaring January Utah PTA Parent Engagement Month.

The proclamation states that "consistent, positive and convincing studies have shown that the number one factor in individual student success in schools is parent involvement."

It encourages schools, families and community groups to work together to support learning, thereby helping children do better and stay longer in school.

"Additional studies also show that students of involved parents earn higher

grades and test scores, enroll in higher-level programs, are promoted more often, attend school more regularly, have better social skills, show improved behavior and adapt well to school," it said.

The Utah PTA has as its aim, helping all children and youth reach their full potential.

The resolution they sponsored encouraged all parents to "increase their participation, commitment, and involvement in the education of their children and youth."

Budget cuts and over-worked teachers make parental involvement all the more necessary, said leaders.

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