

Discovering Our World

by Julia Morriss, a senior and co-president of El Club de español at the High School of Saint

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Whether you want to explore Italy, dance as if you are in the Dominican Republic, or take a twenty minute crash course in Swahili, GlobalFest is the place to go. Once a year, high schools from across Illinois gather together to create and discover an explosion of culture. Lasting from a Friday night through the Saturday late afternoon, GlobalFest requires an abundance of energy and a willingness to go out on a limb for new experiences.

The Friday night is filled with activities brought from different schools. International exchange students give presentations about their daily lives in their home countries. Over a dozen languages are taught by native speakers from around the globe. There is cooking and crafts from more countries than you can count, as well as lessons in things like singing and dancing. The High School of Saint Thomas More participated by hosting “Krazy Olympiks” that separated students into different country-based teams and emphasized teamwork and inter-country cooperation with everything from a country quiz, to games like Hop the World and The Human Knot.

On Saturday, the opening ceremony started with a parade of students carrying flags and banners, as well as many people in costumes representing various cultures. The audience was welcomed in several different languages including Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, and Esperanto. A Slavic band provided the music, inviting everyone down onto the floor to polka. After this, students sped off for more activities. Taylor Casino, a junior at STM, taught the Spanish lyrics and dance to Shakira’s song “Waka Waka” from the 2010 World Cup.

GlobalFest also includes international crafts and photography competition. Students from around the state are able to submit paintings, drawings, models, posters, piñatas, and various other crafts that are then voted on. The revenue earned from each vote is donated to Pennies for Peace, an organization which assists students in learning and creating service around the world. STM took home several awards this year. John Walker, an artistic freshman in Spanish I, received 2nd place in the state banner competition entitled “North, South, East, West, 2011 GlobalFest”. First place in the Best of Show category was earned by Lindsey Helm, Elizabeth Franey, and Jamie Simmering for their Day of the Dead altar for Celia Cruz. Second place Best of Show went to Anna Sikorski, Jade Brinkoetter and Janie Skulborstad for their Curious George piñata and third place Best of Show was awarded to Mary Cimasky for her drawing of a *calavera de azúcar* (sugar skull). Anna Poulsen won a second place ribbon for her pillow embroidered with a map of Central America. Keeley Scott designed a model for a Roman village and also received a second place ribbon. Ashley Nussel and Maddy Kangas received third place for their piñata featuring Elmer the Patchwork Elephant.

GlobalFest is designed to bring cultures from across the world together. Students gather and spend the day or the weekend discovering the world, as well as interacting with people from different lands and languages. GlobalFest is organized by the National Resource Centers for International and Area Studies at the University of Illinois, the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at Northern Illinois University, and by a committee of dedicated language instructors throughout Illinois.







