

local news

ATHENS SCHOOLS



Alexis Bortle/Morning Times

Pictured are the students of the Athens Lynch-Bustin Elementary school's multi-disability support classroom, led by teacher Adrienne Cardona, as they thank Mr. and Mrs. Hicks for helping to secure a donation from Elmira's Kennedy Valve for the purchase of a new special needs stroller.

Kennedy Valve donates to Lynch-Bustin classroom

By ALEXIS BORTLE
Staff Writer

ATHENS — When two co-workers get together, the topic of conversation can easily turn to the usual work day complaints or other meaningless small talk, but when two teachers from Lynch-Bustin Elementary School got together, they spoke only about what they could do to enrich the experience for the students in the multi-support disability classroom.

Classroom teacher Arienne Cardona and speech and language support teacher Christa Hicks met recently and brainstormed ideas with each other about the things they might need to make their classroom the best it could be for their students.

One of the high cost items that would

do the most good in the long term would be the purchase of a large safety stroller to accommodate the bigger students who may function without a wheelchair, but could benefit from the stroller.

Special needs strollers offer children and young adults the ability to be easily transported without the hassle of a large wheelchair.

In their classroom, there are seven students, all with various stages of physical disability. Three use wheelchairs for the majority of their day, while the other three can function on their own, but tend to tire easily.

Because of the limitations of the students and the lack of necessary equipment, outings must be short and the students are often stuck inside where they can sit.

After discussing the needs with Cardona, Hicks went home and lamented to her husband, Kennedy Valve Safety Manager Matt Hicks. Once she explained the need to her husband, he took the issue to administration at Kennedy Valve.

Kennedy Valve issued a donation in the amount of \$1,100 — enough to purchase a new special needs stroller for the Athens classroom.

Students Maddie, Kenny, April, Jimmy, Joy, Kyle and Yamira, along with their teachers and aids are thankful for the donation and happily presented the Hicks with hand-made “thank you” cards during their classroom visit Friday.

Kennedy Valve is located in Elmira is a subsidiary of McWane Inc., and employs over 400 people locally.