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PHOTO by DAVID LIAS

Daisy Sitzman, at left, watches as her first-grade classmate, Brooke Neitzke, enthusiastically slices into a piece of ham Friday morning. At right is Dessivee Wright. The green eggs and ham breakfast, served Friday morning by the Vermillion Public Schools Foundation, celebrates the late children's author Dr. Seuss, whose 112th birthday was Wednesday.

Austin students discover they do like green eggs and ham

RIVA SHARPLES
Regional Reporter

Do Austin Elementary first-graders like green eggs and ham? Yes sir, yes sir, they did like them (mostly), Sam-I-am! Friday morning, wearing hats fashioned after The Cat in the Hat, the first-graders ate them in the gym and on the chair and just about anywhere as they listened to the story "Green Eggs and Ham" and celebrated all things Dr. Seuss.

The green eggs and ham event has become a beloved tradition at Austin Elementary, and the students look forward to the day with much

anticipation, say Vermillion's first-grade teachers.

"I love this day as a teacher, I love this whole week!" said first-grade teacher Callie Beach. "(Leading up to Friday), my students were very excited to eat green eggs and ham! About half of the class was as equally nervous as excited though. I had to promise them that it would only be food coloring and that it wasn't going to be rotten!"

Friday's event, sponsored by the Vermillion Public Schools Foundation, culminated a week-long focus on Dr. Seuss in first-grade classrooms in Vermillion. Mr. Smith's of Vermillion provided the breakfast, which was served in the Austin Elementary gymnasium by

members of the foundation.

"This whole week is about celebrating the love for reading and how reading can truly be fun," said Beach. "Dr. Seuss books are actually pretty hard to read for many of the kids this age because so many of the words are made up and don't really make a whole lot of sense to the kids, but they enjoy listening to them so much. They rhyme and are silly and playful and that's what 6- and 7-year old kids love!"

"The Dr. Seuss books stretch the imagination and show the kids it's okay to pretend and even be silly," said first-grade teacher Sara Hage. "(During the week), the kids learn a little about a famous author who used

this style in his writings. Eating green eggs and ham makes part of the book come alive for them."

First-grade teacher Jennifer Law agrees. "(This week) is an opportunity for us to focus on one of the most famous children's authors of all time," she said. "We read his books, learn about who Dr. Seuss was as a person, as well as the process he used to create his books."

Teacher Mary Fink sees the green eggs and ham day as a great teaching tool for first-graders.

"The green eggs and ham breakfast is a great community building

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