

MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS

Volume 9 Issue 2

HAMS

November 2014

PRINCIPALS MESSAGE

Greetings from HAMS!

We have had a great start to the beginning of the 2014-2015 school year.

The entire school year is involved with Positive School Wide- PRIDE. You will read more about PSW from Mrs. Venios, Mrs. Canner and our Middle School Musicians just completed their first concert on October 22nd. The students did a fantastic job playing their instruments and singing for families and friends. The 8 Bears Team completed a Passenger Pigeon Project- check out Mr. Mazurowski's article for more details!

In looking ahead, we have a busy November planned.

*Parent Teacher Conferences are coming up on November 5th and 12th . Please make sure that you contact the office to select a time to visit with your son or daughter's teachers.

*During parent teacher conferences, the BOOK FAIR will be available in middle school conference. Please stop by before or after your conference to purchase some early Christmas gifts! :)

* The Middle School will be having the first ACTIVITY NIGHT for students on November 7th! There will be a special session for PARENTS- Dinner with Data. Please RSVP to Mrs. Mykut or myself by November 5th so we can have your son or daughter's data to review during the evening. This is an opportunity for moms and dad to better understand the PSSAs and Keystones and the results!

* We will be celebrating Writing Day on November 14th! Our theme this year will be PRIDE! Students will be spending the entire day on the writing process and celebrating WRITING!

The excitement in a middle school comes from your son or daughters and the energy they bring everyday to school! The teachers feel very lucky to have such neat students in their classes everyday! Thank you for sharing your sons and daughters with us!

Educationally yours,

Mrs. Luffy

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School Wide Positive Behavior

BY: Mrs. Venios

Middle School is full of challenges. Your children are developing into young adults who are learning how to be responsible citizens and take ownership of themselves and their behaviors. The process can be confusing and difficult, especially when it's mixed with social and academic pressures. As a result, negative behaviors may occur as students are trying to learn how to juggle all of these changes. In order to focus on the positives in your children's lives at school, we have implemented a School Wide Positive Behavior Support System.

Students are rewarded with Bearcat Buckaroos when they model positive behaviors in the classroom, hallways, cafeterias, and/or bus. They then have the opportunity to cash in their Buckaroos at the Buckaroo-Mart for items such as snacks, pencils, certificates to eat lunch with teachers or principals, and fast passes to the front of the cafeteria line. When students buy an item from the store, their money is turned into the Team Jar so each team can track how much money it has collected.

The teams have set their own team rewards, so once their team reaches its Buckaroo goal, the students will be rewarded as a group. When a team hits their goals, we put an ice-cream scoop on the ice-cream cones that proudly represent each team in the main hallway with a sign that says, "Pride is Sweet." When each team has a scoop, the entire school will celebrate. Teams can ultimately receive three scoops of ice-cream with a cherry on top, resulting in the opportunity to earn four school-wide celebrations. The first rewards for each team (determined by the teachers and students) are as follows: 6 Bearcats will have a Day of Fun outside, 7 Bears will have an Activity/Game Day, 7/8 Cats will have students perform in a Gong Show, and 8 Bears will offer special dress days and/or sports tournaments.

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School Wide

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Battling the social and academic stresses can be overwhelming, but we focus on the positive behaviors in order for students to reach their goals and potentials. Hopefully you have been hearing your children speaking with great excitement about earning Bearcat Buckaroos and cashing them in for fantastic prizes. It's certainly been a pleasure seeing the smiles on the students' faces when they realize they've been recognized for doing the right thing, not the wrong.

Emotions in the Middle Years

Moody, private, self-conscious...if this sounds like your middle schooler, you're not alone. At this age, their body and emotions are changing rapidly. Here are ways to help them cope.

Managing Moods— Physical growth and worries about friends, sports, and schoolwork can cause moodiness. Let your child know you're available to talk. A quiet statement, such as "I remember what it feels like not to be asked to join an team," can invite him to open up about what's bothering him.

Finding Privacy— It's natural for your middle schooler to want some time to themselves. They might close their bedroom door or walk outside to take a phone call, for example. Show them that you respect their growing need for privacy by giving them space.

Fitting In— Many middle schoolers feel self-conscious. Being part of a group or people who share the same interest can help your child focus on their strengths and feel more confident. Encourage him to participate in at least one activity (basketball team, student government, math club).

Solving Problems

By: Mrs. Vescovi

This year the 7 Bears have been doing a number of different things in math class. All of the classes have started the year by working on numbers and operations and solving one step equations.

The 7 Bears, as well as the rest of the school, have also been taking the CDT (Classroom Diagnostic Tool) test in the subjects of Mathematics, Science, Reading, and Writing. These tests are done on the computer and their scores are then accessible to the specific teacher of each subject. The students are setting goals for areas they can improve upon between now and the next time the CDT test in each subject.

Close To Home



Suspecting that just such a word problem might be on the algebra midterm, Gary came prepared.



You Can Make a Difference!

BY: Mr. Mazurowski

Mr. Quinter was perusing a Smithsonian magazine when he came across an origami project for a passenger pigeon. He removed the insert, folded the pigeon and then his curiosity got the best of him. He learned that at the time of the European arrival, passenger pigeons accounted for nearly 40% of North American birds. Their flocks were so numerous that they could eclipse the sun. However, as the human population grew and demands for food increased, the pigeons were hunted for their meat. In only 50 years, with no restrictions in place, the last wild passenger pigeon was shot in 1900. The last captive pigeon died in 1914, leaving the once thriving species extinct.



All of this information can be found at <http://foldtheflock.org>. “Fold the Flock is an initiative of The Lost Bird Project, an arts-based environmental non-profit that connects people more deeply with the earth through art. We believe that art can touch each of us in a way that ideas and intellect alone cannot. It is our hope that Fold the Flock will encourage further projects and increase sensitivity to the plight of endangered species.” Their goal is to have volunteers fold over one million passenger pigeons. The 8 Bears team has currently folded over 250 pigeons and encourage everyone to join in this effort.

We also decided to take this initiative and extend it beyond the environment and conservation. The concept of standing up for what you believe in and conserving or improving our environment can be applied to almost anything. No matter how big or small, we are challenging people to make a difference. Initiate a change that will better your family, community, school, workplace, organization, etc. Participate in an “Adopt a Highway” program, beautify your community, join or create a charitable organization. Don’t accept something you don’t like because you feel you don’t have say in the matter. Everyone has voice; you have to find a way to make it be heard.

Rewards of Learning

BY: Mrs. Botteicher

Students spend most of their days completing assignments as a whole class. As a reward for doing their best all week, students who have completed all assignments with a high level of proficiency in Room 111 are given the opportunity on most Fridays to choose their individualized learning goals from a list of valid learning options.

Student ownership is an important element of these activities, and the classes decided to give the day a name. The seventh graders chose Happy Individualized Thinking Days and the eighth graders chose Multifarious Learning Days, HIT Days and MLD for short.

During these classes, it is common to see a small group with their heads together debating various viewpoints to solve a critical thinking challenge, a student intensely focused on a computer screen to improvise a poem she’s writing to submit to a periodical, another student busily researching and cataloging an array of pathogens, a small group analyzing the various literary elements of a work of classical literature, and a group of historical fiction writers researching and writing a script that the class will perform later in the year.

These experiences are fun ways to practice the language arts skills of producing and receiving communication that have been presented during the week, and it is a great incentive to get work completed on time.



Nurse's corner

BY: Mrs. Felton

School Nurse

An Apple a Day...

I'm sure you have heard the phrase "*An apple a day keeps the doctor away.*" While you will need to live a healthy lifestyle as well, apples are a great option for an 80 calorie snack on the go, a colorful side, or a healthy dessert. Did you know that almost half of the vitamin C content of apples is found in the skin or that apples can cleanse your mouth of more than 95% of bacteria that causes tooth decay. You will also be getting fiber which will help you stay fuller longer, aid in digestion and can reduce cholesterol levels. So take a bite of an apple today and be happy knowing that you are taking the next step in keeping your body healthy.



How can I protect myself from illness?

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 15 seconds.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid kissing, hugging, and sharing cups or utensils with people who are sick.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces, such as toys and doorknobs, especially if someone is sick.
- Cover your cough and sneezes with a tissue or your shirt sleeve, don't use your hands. If you do use your hands, make sure you promptly wash your hands to avoid spreading the germs to yourself, others, and the environment.
- Stay home when you are sick!

Motivating Your Child Through Television

By: Mrs. Mykut

Many parents are concerned about the influence of TV on their children's reading development. Television has become a major source of entertainment for many American families and its influence can be felt in several aspects of our daily lives. TV can also have a positive effect on your child's growth in reading. It can spark and illuminate many new and exciting adventures for your child. You may find the following ideas appropriate for blending TV and reading.

- * Note your child's special TV interests and provide him or her with books about those interests.
- * Join your child in watching some of his or her favorite TV programs. Bring up the ideas of cause and effect by asking questions such as: "Why did the character do that?" or "What do you think will happen next?"
- * Listening is a natural TV skill that can be transferred to reading. Select an article about an upcoming TV program or noted TV personality and have your child read it. Have your child give you specific facts or ideas about what they read.
- * Encourage your child to read the newspaper regularly. Suggest that your child look for articles about TV personalities or special programs.
- * Help your child determine what is real or unreal, fact or fantasy, true or false, on TV. Discuss TV programs your child watches that may involve these elements as well as those which portray different cultures than yours.

Using TV as a tool you can help your child to discover all the joys of reading as well as sharing time together. When you take time to read with your child, you are demonstrating to him or her that reading is an important part of their lives.



Sixth Grade Teambuilding Field Trip

By: Mrs. Brown

In late November, the sixth graders will be participating in a outdoor education program at Shaver's Creek Environmental Center. In the morning, students will be participating in a series of team building activities to learn about skills such as teamwork, communication, respect, and leadership. Penn State students have been busy planning the activities in which the students will be participating.. During the afternoon, students will explore the discovery room, take a hike in the wetlands and learn about the raptors. Rain or shine, wet or dry, this team building day is always an exciting and educational day!

Since July of 2011, Shaver's Creek has been a zero waste facility. To assist with student awareness of waste production and reduction, students will practice the "Pack it In, Pack it Out" philosophy. Students are expected to bring drinks and lunches in reusable containers, such as a lunch bag, cooler, or backpack. Any trash generated by your child's lunch will be returned to the student's lunch bag, cooler, or backpack. They will not be permitted to throw any trash away. Please start to plan now to support this valuable reduce, reuse, and recycle lesson.

Brrrr! One of the biggest mistakes past students have made is to not dress warmly enough for temperatures at Shaver's Creek which can be ten degrees cooler than other locations. Be sure that your sixth grader dresses in layers. When we arrive, it is normally extremely frosty, but sometimes by afternoon temperatures are much warmer. Sweatshirts, winter coats, warm shoes, gloves and hats are recommended. Raincoats and mud boots are suggested for rainy weather. Many of the activities are active, so boots in which the students can walk fast are preferable. We will be spending five hours outside, so please be sure that all students are dressed appropriately.

We are grateful to Penn State and Shaver's Creek for providing this valuable program free of charge.

Normally, a program such as this would cost around \$2000.00. This will be the third year that the Huntingdon Area Middle School has been able to participate in this outdoor educational experience.

Indeed, it is an experience that this group of sixth graders will long remember!

ATTENDANCE

When a student returns to school after an absence, they must present a properly signed excuse during homeroom. When visiting a doctor please obtain a written excuse from them. Students have 3 days after their return to school to bring in their excuse. Each day that is not covered by a legal excuse will result in an unexcused day on record. Excuses do not have to be accepted after the three day window has passed.

If your son or daughter participates in any extra-curricular activities they must be in school by 9:30 AM to participate in that day's event or practice. If a student is absent from school during a semester for a total of 20 or more school days, the student will be in jeopardy of losing his/her eligibility until he/she has been in attendance for a total of 45 school days following the 20th day absence.

Students participating in extra-curricular activities must pass at least four (4) of the core subjects to be eligible. Eligibility will be cumulative from the beginning of a grading period and will be reported on a weekly basis. A student not meeting this requirement will be ineligible for 15 school days. Extra-curricular activities cannot be an excuse for missing detention. In addition, failure to report to detention will result in an additional detention hall assignment or suspension.



7/8 CATS

By: Ms. Goodman

Bats

This week is, though likely unofficial, the Week of the Bat. Mr. Miller's Language Arts and Reading classes, along with Ms. Goodman's Science classes will be participating in educational activities and readings to better understand and gain an appreciation for these critters. All of the species that inhabit Pennsylvania are insect eaters, helping to control bug populations and keep the number of itchy mosquito bites down! With the spread of White Nose Syndrome, a huge portion of our bat population has been decimated and the future is uncertain. We're working to develop a sense of how important these animals are to us and what we can do to help protect them as a species.

Science Labs

Labs will be taking off in the very near future. We have done a few lab-type activities in class already, but with the new chemical reaction section coming up for eighth graders, you'll hear more and more about these fantastic activities! 8th Graders will be identifying mystery solutions next week. After noting reactions with known chemicals, the students will again mix the substances, but...without knowing what they are. They will have to look back over the reaction notes to decide which chemical is which.

7th graders will be working with the "Town Hall Meeting" where they will mix cups of solution with every new person they "meet," similar to shaking hands with many people at a gathering. At the end, we'll test to see who ends up with a certain set of "germs" and see if we can trace it back to the origin.

Both of these labs are provided to us by Science in Motion!

YEARBOOK

2014/2015

The deadline to order yearbooks is rapidly approaching. All school orders **MUST** be placed by November 21st. Basic book price is \$23.32 (including tax) and checks can be made out to Jostens.

Ordering can be done online at www.jostensyearbooks.com and many extras such as personalized covers, icons and protective coverings are available. Orders are closing early and there will not be a general sale of them at the end of the year.

Eight (8th) graders may submit a baby picture for use in the yearbook. Have these in by November 21st. They can be emailed to agoodman@huntsd.org or scanned in room 217. Scanned photos will be returned!

HAMS yearbook would love to use your sport or other school-related activity photos for our 2015 publication. Please send any photos to agoodman@huntsd.org.



EVENTS AT H.A.M.S

Nov. 2—Daylight Saving Time Ends
Turn your clock back 1 hour

Nov. 5— Parent Conferences –3:15-6:30

Nov. 6- No School for students

Nov. 7– Activity Night 6-8 PM.
Dinner With Data for Parents 6-8 PM.

Nov. 10—Picture retakes

Nov. 11—Vacation
Day/Veterans Day



Nov. 12– Parent Confer-
ences—3:15-6:30

Nov. 14– Writing Day

Nov. 18– 6th Grade to Shaver’s Creek

Nov. 19– Fundraiser Arrive

Nov. 20—6th Grade to Shaver’s Creek

Nov. 20– Mrs. Miller to the Vo-Tech

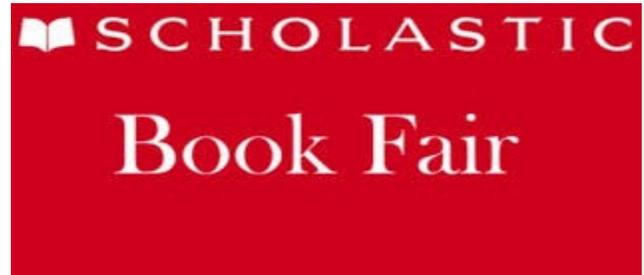
Nov. 24– Mrs. Miller to Juniata College

Nov. 25—Progress Reports sent home

Nov. 26—Early Dismissal –12 noon

Nov. 27-Dec. 2 -Thanksgiving Vacation

COMING TO A MIDDLE SCHOOL NEAR YOU!



<http://www.meadpac.org/scholastic-book-fair.html>

The Huntingdon Area Middle school is having a Book Fair next week! It has been a little while since we have had a Book Fair here. Let’s make this one such a **huge success** that we **HAVE** to make it an annual event!

Students will have the opportunity to attend the Book Fair during Reading or ELA class. Here are the dates: Tuesday, November 4 (Mr. Urich)...Wednesday, November 5 (Mrs. Botteicher, Mrs. Gibb, Mr. Miller)...Friday, November 7 (Mrs. Watkins and Mr. Secret)...Monday, November 10 (Mrs. Mykut and Mr. Mitchell)... Wednesday, November 12 (as needed). With teacher permission, students may also come to peruse and make choices during study hall. For your convenience, the Book Fair will be available during Parent-Teacher Conferences. Please stop in and take a look!

To make this awesome event even better, it is online! While the selection at the school itself will be hundreds, the options online include thousands of titles for a wide range of ages! A letter was sent home on Monday, October 27 indicating how to locate and use the Online Book Fair. If you need this information, please e-mail Melissa Decker at mdecker@huntsd.org.

All proceeds generated from the Book Fair will increase the offerings of our very own library here at the middle school.



Tasty Tidbits

By **Margaret B. McNitt,**

Food Service Director

Sodium

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010 recommend that America aged 2 and up reduce sodium intake to less than 2,300 milligrams (mg) per day.

Depending on your food choices, it doesn't take much to consume more sodium than recommended.

One slice of bread can contain anywhere from 80 to 230 mg of sodium, and a slice of frozen pizza can

contain between 370 and 730 mg. Some breakfast cereals contain 150 to 300 mg of sodium before milk is added.

Cutting down on salt consumption can keep your child healthier today and in the long run. Consider these tips:

- Cook with little or no salt. Your family will get used to the taste of food without added salt—and won't miss it.
- Limit packaged and canned foods. They can have particularly high sodium content because salt is used to extend shelf life. Note: Be cautious even of foods marked "low salt." They might have less salt than others, but still too much.
- Rinse canned beans and vegetables under running water to get rid of extra sodium.
- Keep salt off the dinner table. If it's not there, your child won't add salt to her food.

Remember, not all foods are high in sodium. But when you combine foods with varying levels as part of your daily diet, sodium can add up quickly.

Counselors Corner

By: **Linda Miller**

Career Vitamin

On November 12, 2014, Mindy Sullivan, a physician assistant, from Pediatrics and Beyond will meet with students during the lunch periods regarding career exploration. Participants will listen to a brief presentation and ask questions pertaining education, work environment, and skills needed to be a physician assistant. Students should sign up in the school counseling office.



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