

MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS

Volume 8 Issue 2

HAMS

November 2013

Principal's Message

Dear Parent/ Guardian,

I hope you are all well and in good spirits! As we look forward to November and the following Winter months, I would like to highlight some events that have occurred at HAMS as well as events that are on the horizon.

Parent conferences are scheduled for Tuesday November 5 and Thursday November 7 from 3:00pm - 6:30pm. Monday November 11th is a staff development day for faculty and administration, students are not in school that day. We will be dismissing early (noon) on Wednesday November 27, 2013 to begin Thanksgiving vacation, students are scheduled to return Wednesday December 4. CDT testing has been completed in Math, Reading, Science and Writing. This data will be used to drive instruction, create a baseline of data and benchmark where you child's strengths and areas of growth are in accordance with PA state standards. Math and Reading will test two more times this school year, while Science and Writing will test one more time.

The first activity night was held on Friday October 25 at HAMS and 153 students attended.

Students had the opportunity to dance in the cafeteria, use iPads in the library, paint pottery in the art room, eat pizza in the lobby and play flag football in the gymnasium. The evening was a success and we are looking forward to planning future activity nights.

A meeting is planned for parents/guardians interested in coming together for the betterment of all students at HAMS. The meeting is scheduled for Monday November 11 from 5:00pm - 6:00 in the LGR here at the Middle School.

We are excited to able to offer 7th and 8th grade field trips this year! The 7th grade will be visiting the Carnegie Science Center in Pittsburgh, Pa on Friday February 28, 2014! There will be many interactive exhibits and



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activities for these students to explore! Any parent interested in chaperoning can contact me directly, the fee for parent admission is \$10. 8th grade students will be visiting Washington, DC. The plans for the 8th grade trip are still coming together but we are thrilled to able to offer the opportunity to experience the nation's capital. HAMS celebrated Writing Day on October 31, all core classes participated in the "writing process" which is a five step process that includes pre-writing, drafting, editing, revising and publishing. The students were given three informational prompts, they were..... 1. ***"How do you show your Bearcat Pride in School?"*** 2. ***"How can you make your school a better place?"*** 3. ***"How do you show pride in your community?"*** Any student that was on task and put forth an effort received a "ticket" each period which was then put into a bucket from which names were drawn and prizes awarded at a school wide pep assembly. Students and staff dressed up as their favorite literary authors and/or literary characters. There was great enthusiasm on part of the students, faculty and staff! This day brought our school together and we are looking forward to planning many more school-wide activities in the coming months!

Sincerely,
Brian J. Pelka
Principal

**Have a safe and
Happy Thanksgiving.**



Sixth Graders Step into History

Recently, our sixth graders had a special visitor. Mr. Lesniewski, a local Civil War enthusiast, shared his knowledge with our students. They were fascinated and bombarded Mr. L with questions. He engaged the students with visual aids and video clips on the Smart-board. The students found it unbelievable that anyone would be willing to be the “flag bearer” in battle since that soldier was an easy target - unable to carry a weapon and defend themselves.

Mr. Lesniewski brought a regimental flag from the 20th Maine. He explained the many dangers the soldiers faced both on and off the battlefield. The students were surprised to learn that more soldiers died from illness and infections rather than in battle. He also discussed the role of women in the war; including those who worked as spies, other women who served as nurses in the medical field, and some who chose to cut their hair and disguise themselves as men to fight for a cause they believed in.

Mr. Lesniewski discussed the many weapons used by the infantry, sharpshooters, and officers during these battles. The students found the story of ‘Sherman’s Bow Ties’ intriguing and asked several questions about how the Union soldiers could wrap railroad ties around trees. At times, it can be a difficult for teachers to motivate our learners, but inviting presenters to share their knowledge and experiences with our students is an invaluable tool and just one way our local community supports learning at HAMS.

By Mrs. Streightiff



Chromebooks and Math

This year the 6 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. Some of the early part of the year the students worked in groups of three, four, or five and other times they have worked individually. We have also had the privilege of using the Chromebooks from time to time to help supplement lesson using some fun math games.

The 6 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 6 Bears were also well represented in October during spirit and participated in a pep rally at the end of October.

By Mr. Vescovi





A Note from the HAMS Music Department By Mrs. Canner

Hello! My name is Mrs. Canner and I am the middle school music teacher here at HAMS!

Since school started, the 6th grade choir has been very busy! This year, the choir is made up of 34 dedicated students. Rehearsing on A and F days during 6th period, we have begun preparing for the winter concert. At the winter concert, you will hear selections including, *The Sounds of Christmas*, *Tambourine Navidad*, and *Ring the Bells!* Student accompanists will also be featured with 6th grade choir on piano, bells, claves, and handbells!

Rehearsing during Activity Period (B and C days, 7th period), the 7th and 8th grade choir is creating music together such as *A Holiday Sleigh Ride*, *Traditions of Hannukah*, *Born Today* and *Bring A Torch, Jeanette Isabella*. Student accompanists featured in these selections include Sabin Fisher and Alex Rothstein. Comprised of 63 members, we are so excited to prepare wonderful music to get you in the holiday spirit!

Not only are the choir members exploring the music world, the band students in the music department are discovering ways to get ready for Christmas. The 7th and 8th grade band, some 49 members, is preparing a variety of pieces including *Holiday Swing Along*, *Deck the Halls*, and *A Season's Carol*. Each time we rehearse, we get more and more excited for wintry weather and the coming of the holidays.

Hark the Herald Angels Sing! and *I'll Be Home for Christmas* are two pieces the 6th grade band are readying for the holidays. All 32 members are really looking forward to putting on a great performance for you and your family to enjoy.

So, when is this holiday concert we're so excited about?

Monday, December 16th, 2013

High School Auditorium ~ 7:00pm



Please bring your family and friends to support these musicians and get ready for the most wonderful time of the year!

Sixth Grade

On November 19 (Bears) and November 21 (Cats), the sixth graders at Huntingdon Area Middle School will be participating in an outdoor educational program at Shaver's Creek Environmental Center. Some of the goals for the day include building a sense of unity among students, building cooperation and teamwork skills within small groups, and working on problem solving and leadership skills. In addition, students will practice treating each other with respect and understanding that all students are equal and have different perspectives. In the afternoon, students will be enjoying a scavenger hunt in the discovery room and raptor center, and taking a hike through the wetlands.

Since the program will continue regardless of the weather, students should dress in layers. From previous years, we have learned that many students do not dress warmly enough. Temperatures at Shaver's Creek can be up to ten degrees cooler than Huntingdon and most activities take place in the shade, so please be sure that your child is dressed in sweatshirts, winter coats, warm shoes, gloves, and hats. If it warms up in the afternoon, students will be permitted to shed layers. Raincoats and mud boots are suggested for rainy weather. Students will be outside for approximately five hours, so please dress accordingly.

Kudos to Shaver's Creek for reaching a goal of being a zero waste facility! This means that whatever students carry in, they will carry out. No trash will be thrown out. Please bring drinks and lunches in reusable containers. Also, pack a water bottle for your child – preferably a reusable water bottle. When preparing for the Shaver's Creek Field Trip, remember the philosophy, "Pack It In, Pack It Out!"

Soon, parents will be receiving permission slips. We would like all permission slips to be returned by November 15, 2013. We at the Middle School are enthusiastically anticipating this trip! Thanks to all who have helped and who will help to make this trip to Shaver's Creek a positive experience!

By Mrs. Brown



Patriot's Pen Essay Competition

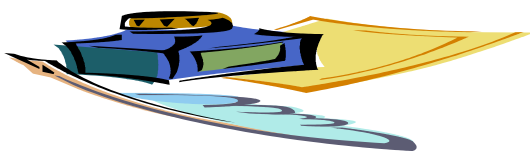
Getting paid to do homework could be a nice incentive! That is a possibility for the 44 HAMS students who participated in the Patriot's Pen essay competition in October. This program, sponsored by the VFW, gives participants the chance to exercise their writing skills while exploring what it means to be an American.

These students responded to the prompt "What Patriotism Means to Me" by reading about the history of our country and talking with parents and military veterans. They discovered that service for our country comes in many forms and that they can be part of this even now as they thought about JFK's famous words, "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country."

The local Post will judge the contestants and award monetary prizes for the top three essays. The local winner will then be entered in higher levels of the competition.

Students were positive about the experience, and Cecilia Crayosky summed up what she learned: "Patriotism used to just mean a day off from school; now I realize it's a way of life."

By Mrs. Botteicher



Feel Free To Contact Us

HAMS

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Classroom Diagnostic Tools (CDT)

This year, our students are using an online based program through the Pennsylvania Department of Education called Classroom Diagnostic Tools (or CDT, not to be confused with the *Centre Daily Times*).

As described on their website, <https://pa.drceidirect.com>, "the CDT are a set of online assessments designed to measure specific student strengths, weaknesses, skills, and knowledge throughout the school year to help guide instruction and remediation. The online assessments are available for students in grades six through high school and are fully aligned with the Standards Aligned System (SAS). The assessments are based on content covered by the Keystone Exams and the Pennsylvania System of School Assessments (PSSA)."

Our students have taken these assessments in the content areas of math, reading, science and writing. The first round of testing established a base line to identify the strengths and weaknesses of each student. They will be administered throughout the year to monitor progress, and will also be used to adjust the curriculum to address areas of need. This is an invaluable tool that will help individualize our classes and help our students reach their full potential.

By Mr. Mazurowski



7-BEARS

November unofficially represents the end of fall sports, marching band, and even the completion of the first round of CDTs. This is also the usual time for bears to begin their hibernation plans. Well not these Bearcats! Colder weather and upcoming holidays only indicates that winter sports, winterguard and concerts are about to go full swing. Just in case the first round of the AR tests had you considering the bear hibernation, do not give in because the AR Store is opening soon and you do not want to miss out!

Since the school year is one fourth of the way over (yes, that was an intended use of math terms so you can remember your fractions!) I thought it would be a good time to get your thoughts so far. So, I set out to see what your favorite parts of the year have been and what you are looking forward to for the rest of the year.

For starters, I hope everyone can agree with Desiree and Paige in "liking their teachers." Evan and Maddie really enjoyed the pep rally while Triston says his favorite is the "fly tying activity". Wish you could claim to have built a catapult or a bridge, who wouldn't? Well, thanks to Industrial Arts; Hailey, Taylor, Sheth and Kirsten are among those that can declare they have done this and of course it was their favorite moment! As for Christian, well his favorite time was "archery in gym class." No wonder Alice says her favorite thing is "the way teachers make learning fun!" Unfortunately for Cody and Kali (and even myself!), the high school football games on Friday nights are ending, but way to go Bearcats on a great season. If you agree with Brie, you can be excited for the Christmas Choir Concert that will be quickly approaching. Jacob has a positive outlook for the future and says he is "looking forward to writing short stories in language arts." But whether you've had a great year so far or have something to look forward to, I hope that you can help to continue making my favorite thing happen which is seeing you all learn AND have fun!

By Mr. Thurber



EVENTS

November 5 Parent Conferences 3:00-7:00
 November 7 Parent Conferences 3:00-7:00
 November 11 Staff Development—NO School
 November 19 6 Bears to Shavers Creek
 November 21 6 Cats to Shavers Creek
 November 27 Early Dismissal—12 Noon
 November 28 –December 3—Thanksgiving Vacation

Yearbook

Orders can be placed NOW for the 2013-2014 Yearbook. Orders can be placed ONLINE with Jostens, Inc.
www.jostens.com
 Search Huntingdon Middle School
 Cost: \$22.00 + Tax= \$23.32
 Order your Yearbook now.!

Huntingdon Area

Middle School

“Working together so all students can learn”



HAMS Writing Day By Mrs. Decker

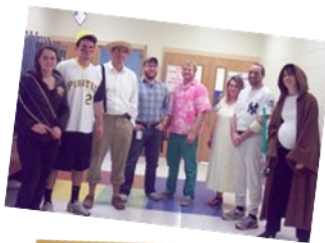
On Thursday, October 31, 2013 the students at the middle school had a distinctive day. As an entire school community, we focused on writing. In each class, students completed one step in the Writing Process towards writing a well-developed paragraph. The steps included Prewriting, Drafting, Revising, Editing, and Publishing.

The day had a variety of interesting features. Bearcat pencils were provided for all students. After the Revising and the Publishing steps, students received a small reward for their efforts. Likewise, students doing an exemplary job received Bearcat Tickets which gave them the potential to win prizes later. "Guests" arrived throughout the day in the form of well-known authors and favorite characters from books. Periodically, a guest or two would stop in to classrooms to hand out Bearcat Tickets to students who responded accurately to trivia questions.

Our festivities concluded with a Writing Achievement Celebration. Students flooded into the middle school gymnasium. At this event, Junior High football players were introduced, Junior High cheerleaders cheered, teachers and students competed in relay races, the wave was done for each step in the writing process, a teacher costume contest was held, and prizes were awarded to students whose names were drawn. It was definitely an amusing occasion.

Thank you to all involved for a fun, successful learning experience!

We would like to thank the local businesses who made the prizes possible - WalMart, Giant, Weis, the Clifton Five, Juniata College, The Bookstore, Holiday Bowl, and MacTown Pizza. In addition, thank you to HAMS Student Council for donating Bearcat T-shirts and HAHS for providing complimentary passes to a Bearcat sporting event.



7/8 Cats

Recently, *eighth graders* took part in a problem-solving lab. Each group was given two identical sets of chemicals, one set with labels and one without. Students designed an activity that, based on the reaction of the known chemicals, would help them identify the unknown solutions. Through some trial and error and lots of charting, students were successful in identifying all of the chemicals properly. This lab is called Mystery Solutions and comes from Science In Motion. We modified it slightly by not providing directions, but rather allowing students to devise their own methods for testing, recording results, and figuring out the mystery chemicals.



Seventh graders are working on forces and motion. Groups of students were given wind up cars and asked to find their speed. Each group designed an activity that tested the car either on a set distance or for a certain number of times the car was wound up. Students then timed the car traveling and calculated the speed for the particular vehicle with which they were working

By Ms Goodman



Guidance Counselor

Adolescent Coping Skills

During the 2013-2014 academic year, counselors from Mainstream Counseling, Youth Advocate Program, and Huntingdon Middle School will be offering a peer group. Students, with teacher permission, will meet twice a month during enrichment to discuss an array of issues which may include: careers, study strategies, friendship skills, conflict resolution, grief/loss, setting goals, divorce, bullying, drug and alcohol prevention, coping skills, peer pressure, tolerance, health & wellness, or depression. The goals of the group are to generate positive thinking and enhance the social, academic, as well as career growth of young people. The group is limited to 6-8 students. If you would like your child to participate in this unique experience, please contact the school counseling office.

Huntingdon County Career and Technology Center

Pending approval, a group of seventh and eighth grade students will visit the Huntingdon County Career and Technology Center in Mill Creek, Pennsylvania during November. The purpose of this experience is to allow young people to explore the diverse curricula offered by the staff at the Career and Technology Center as well as employment possibilities after graduation. Seven participants will observe instructors in various classrooms involving cosmetology, culinary arts, health occupations, air conditioning/refrigeration and heating, plumbing, construction, electrical, welding, automotive body repair, automotive mechanics, and computer servicing technology. If you would like your child to participate, please contact the guidance office.



Teaching Assistants

Through the collaboration between the Huntingdon Middle School and Standing Stone Elementary, eighth grade students will have the opportunity to assist teachers in the classroom. Students are permitted to visit Standing Stone Elementary one day per cycle during enrichment time. The purpose of the endeavor is cultivate an interest in helping others, while pondering education as a career possibility.

By Mrs. Miller

Mission

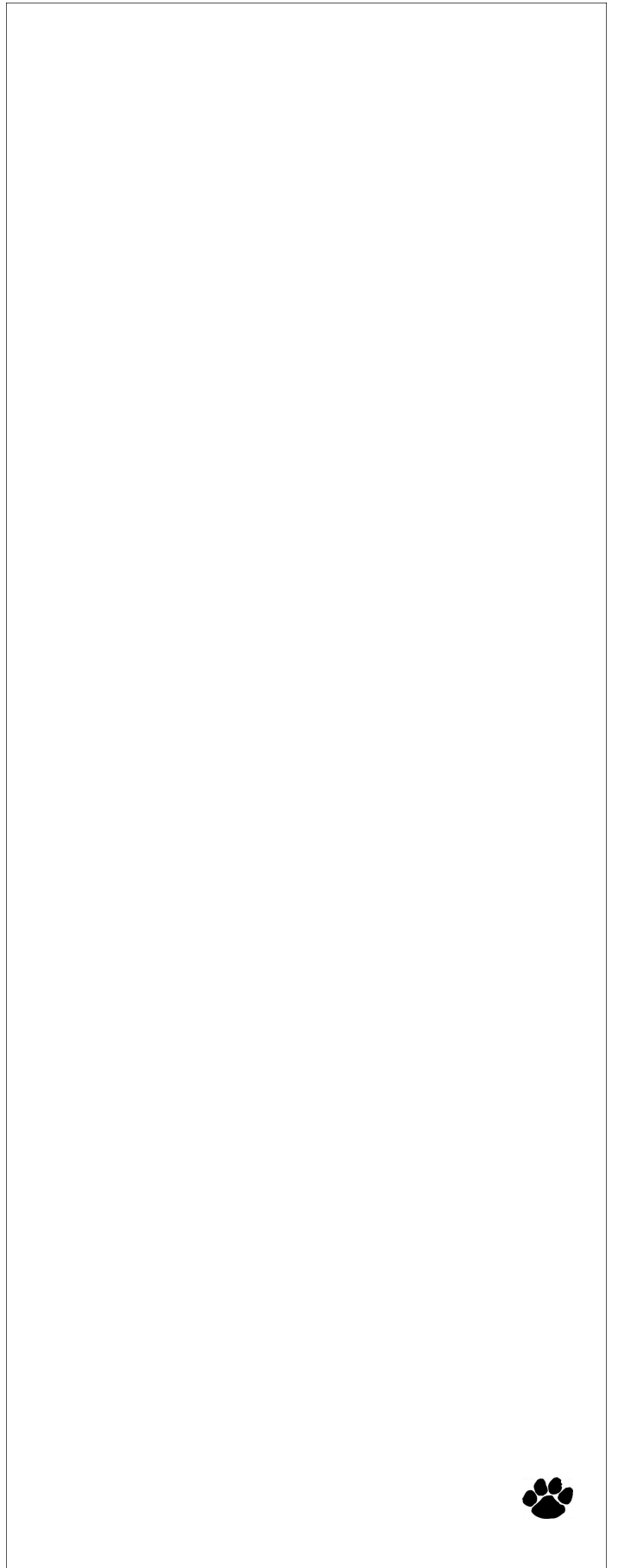
Our community engages all students to maximize their learning and leadership potential as global contributors.

Vision

Our students achieve their full potential and experience success, leaving school inspired to continue learning every day.

Values

Safety, Excellence, Respect, Integrity, Lifelong Learning.



Homework Help

Monday through Thursday of each week, help for students will be available. Our homework Help tutoring program is available to all students that need more time to develop academic skills and time to complete homework. Hours for help are 2:45 –4:00 PM and transportation will be the responsibility of the parents.

Please contact the school if you are interested in the program.

