

# HILLE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Volume 3, Issue 9

May 2009

## Hille Middle School

Mrs. Courtney Orzel,  
Principal

Mr. John Orth,  
Assistant Principal

## From the Principal...



Dear Parents,

Writing to you during our May issue of the newsletter is a bittersweet experience for me. The end of year allows us to reflect upon our successes this past year and it is also a time to say goodbye to our 8th graders as they enter their next journey into high school.

This past year at Hille has proven to be yet another successful year for our student body, and as we look towards next year, we will be **expanding our opportunities** in the areas of our Encore classes. Specifically, we will be offering a **public speaking course, a differentiated reading course, and a new applied technology lab** which will be available to all three grade levels.

We will also expand our offerings of music to all students, **enabling students to participate in both Choir and Band** during the regular school day if they desire to do so. Any students or parents who are interested in

this opportunity should contact Mrs. Orzel.

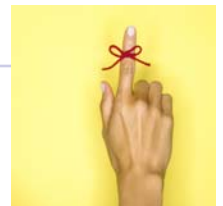
This month's issue includes pictures and information regarding our recent **Community Service week** in which our students and faculty joined with OFHS and Arbor Park MS to support the OF community. We are proud of our students and faculty's efforts in supporting the larger context of the school community.

We continue to **assess our progress** through multiple measures including parent feedback, student feedback, and analysis of state and local assessment data.

Student learning and achievement continues to be our focus, and we will also continue to emphasize the social and emotional piece as we work with the whole child.

As always, please contact me with any questions, suggestions, or concerns.

Sincerely,



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### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Community Service
- Choir/Band Concert Dates
- Gifted News
- Student Council

## 8th Grade Information– Upcoming Events

Washington, D.C. trip- May 12-15

May 22- 8th grade class trip to Chicago

May 27- 8th grade awards night at 7:00 P.M.

May 29- 8th grade dance at Gaelic Park

June 2- Graduation at Trinity College at 6:00 P.M.

## Hille Library News

Just a reminder that we are holding a Scholastic Book Fair on May 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>. Proceeds of this sale will go toward new books for our library shelves.

A big thank you goes out to our Battle of the Books participants. As of today we've had two elimination rounds with the final battle being held May 19<sup>th</sup>. The students have really enjoyed this year's selection of books. Parents looking for some summer reading ideas could refer to our Battle of the Books list. Those books included the following titles:

*Drowned Maiden's Hair* by Laura Schlitz

*Schooled* by Gordon Korman

*Book of Time* by Guillaume Prevost

*Alabama Moon* by Watt Key

*Revenge of the Witch* by Joseph Delaney

*Heat* by Mike Lupica

*Found* by Margaret Haddix

*Green Glass Sea* by Ellen Klages

*Black Duck* by Janet Lisle

Please remember that the library closes soon for book checkout. Any student who has an overdue book or owes money should clear up their fine immediately.

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## Read to Succeed

In May, we will focus on study skills. We have been incorporating technology with the use of a Discovery Study Skills workshop. The skills we are focusing on are organization, time management, listening skills, note taking skills and summarizing.

The students have been working very hard on fluency with 6 Minute Solutions. They enjoy competing with themselves and charting their progress. We are also working on comprehension with Jamestown Reading Drills and the Wild Side Series.

## Community Service Project with Mrs. Stalla, Mrs. Berry, Ms. Sanchez, and Mrs. Mamich

On Friday, May 1<sup>st</sup>, the connections classes of Mrs. Stalla, Mrs. Berry, Ms. Sanchez, and Mrs. Mamich gave back to the community of Oak Forest! These teachers with 18 of their students donated their time by brightening the day of the residents at The Pointe At Kilpatrick, an assisted living facility. Many smiles were brought to the faces of the residents, as well as the students, during a banana split ice cream social as well as a round of BINGO. We truly learned a lot from our experience and would love to return! Special thank-yous go out to all of the students who volunteered their time after school as well as the teachers, residents, and The Point staff. It was an experience not to be forgotten!



# 6th Grade Team News

## 6th Grade Field Day Coming Soon

As a reward for good behavior and academics, the sixth grade team will be hosting a field day on Wednesday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>. In order to participate in the field day, students must meet the following requirements for now until June 3<sup>rd</sup>:

- No grades below a C in any of their classes
- No after school detentions
- No in school or out of school detentions
- No more than 3 lunch detentions

A letter with more information about field day was sent home on Friday, May 8<sup>th</sup>. If any parents/guardians would like to help us supervise the field day please fill out the bottom of the letter and have your child return it to their Connections teacher by Friday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>.

## Math (Regular and Advanced) with Mrs. Reilly, Ms. Leahy, Mrs. Stalla, and Mr. Squibb:

Students have positive energy and no negative feelings about integers. They continue to work on all the operations and will soon be all about algebra. MAP testing has just concluded and we saw very positive growth from the beginning of the year. It has been our pleasure helping the students expand their math knowledge and we wish them the best as they move on to seventh grade.

## Science with Mrs. Mamich, Mr. Squibb, and Mrs. Voris:

It is that time once again; the end of the school year! Wow, has time really flown by! For the remainder of the year, your child will be discovering the wide world of environmental science! Throughout this unit, we will explore topics such as: characteristics of living and non-living objects, plant and animal adaptations, and the water cycle. Many new vocabulary terms will be introduced; make sure you question your child about these; a great way to review at home! It has been a pleasure working with your child this year. We wish them well in 7<sup>th</sup> grade!

## Social Science with Mrs. Zamora, Mr. Raleigh, and Mr. Squibb:

The first two weeks of May we will "witness" the transition of the Roman government. Our previous learning taught us that the Roman Republic was a powerful system of government. The Republic established a checks & balances system and involved the citizens (patricians and the plebeians) working together to create a unified society.

Currently, we are experiencing an unfortunate turn of events. The Ancient Roman Republic takes a turn for the worse. Julius Caesar made a valiant effort to solve Rome's problems. Despite his failed efforts, his allies continued his quest by transforming the government from a Republic to an Empire.

There will be an "upside" to our learning. We will learn about the Pax Romana (Roman Peace) and end on exploring the Ancient Roman accomplishments and how they apply to us present day.

## Language Arts/Literature with Ms. Beirich, Mrs. Ciesiun, Ms. Leahy, Mr. Myrmingos, and Mr. Squibb:

As the year comes to a close all classes are reading L. Frank Baum's classic fairy tale, *The Wizard of Oz*. The students are enjoying the journey of Dorothy, Scarecrow, the Tin Woodman, and the Lion as they navigate their way through the Land of Oz. The students have also been recognizing the numerous differences between the movie and the book. On the writing front, the students are applying their six trait knowledge to complete various creative writing activities such as science fiction stories and fairy tales. Also, the advanced literature classes have been busy filming their imovie of *Macbeth* with Mrs. Law.

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Well, that wraps up our news for this month; don't forget to check for current class updates on schoolnotes.com and/or power school.

The 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Team

# 7th Grade Team News

New knowledge is the most valuable commodity on earth. - Kurt Vonnegut

## Social Science (Mr. Tselepis, Mrs. Bruce, and Mr. Raleigh)

Students have been working hard preparing for the Illinois Constitution test. The test is scheduled for Tuesday, May 19<sup>th</sup>. Like the U.S. Constitution test, the Illinois test is just as important and must be passed to move on to 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Students will be successful if they participate in all of the review activities planned prior to the test. Students have also found success outside of the classroom by planning study sessions with family and friends. Aside from the Illinois Constitution test, students are also creating an *ABC Book of Illinois*. This lengthy and informative project is a large part of their 4<sup>th</sup> quarter grade. Good luck to all of the 7<sup>th</sup> graders and have a great month of May.

## Language Arts: (Miss Beirich, Mrs. Carney, Mr. Kantor, Mrs. Lewandowski, Mrs. Moisan)

The 7th graders have successfully completed the play Romeo and Juliet. The students really enjoyed reading this classic piece of literature. For the remainder of the school year, the students will be reading the novel, Animal Farm which is a satirical view on the Russian Revolution. The students have been working hard to research information on their chosen country for their written report. The final draft will be due May 20<sup>th</sup>. The students will be graded on incorporating the 6 traits of writing into their paper.

## Math (Mrs. Stalla, Ms. Bonk, Mrs. Moisan)

We are in the home stretch and have been working diligently to incorporate all the concepts learned throughout this past year. Students in 7th grade have been working on geometry concepts as well as conversions and equations. In addition, Mrs. Stalla's math class is working on a "Dream Home" project where students are designing their dream home, creating floor plans, and completing scale drawings. All classes will continue to reinforce math skills to help students continue their success.



## Science: Mr. Krol, Mrs. Voris, Mrs. Bruce)

We can't believe the year is already over! It seems just like yesterday that introductions were being made, expectations were being set, and the year was just getting started. It has been wonderful to see the academic, social, and emotional growth of each student over the course of the last nine months.

To end the year, we are studying the concepts of density, speed, and energy. To coincide with this unit we will be involved in a variety of labs that will allow us to apply the content we have examined in a practical way. We will be constructing and testing boats to examine how different volume impacts the overall density of a ship. We will also be performing various activities examining how speed, force and energy show a direct correlation to each other. Have a safe and enjoyable summer! See you next year!

## 8th Grade Team News

### 8th Grade Social Science with Mr. Tsoukalas, Mr. Tselepis and Mrs. Bruce

The 8th grade Social Science classes will be finishing out the year by covering several different topics. They are:

1. The Cold War
2. Korean War
3. Civil Rights Movement
4. The Vietnam War

It has been an exciting year learning about all of the different topics in American History. Mr. Tselepis and Mr. Tsoukalas would like to wish all of the students graduating from Hille good luck in high school. It has been a pleasure to work with all of you!!!

### 8th Grade Math with Mrs. Trojan, Ms. Angone, Ms. Bonk and Mrs. Hoffman

8th grade Pre-Algebra students are finishing off the year strong by preparing for freshman math! Students began to study polynomials by defining, identifying and classifying polynomials. They will complete their study by doing all operations with polynomials.

Algebra students are completing their 8th grade year in math building their understanding of rational expressions by doing operations with improper and complex fractions, and complex fractions containing variables. They will apply their new knowledge to solve rational equations. We will wrap up the year by dabbling in radical expressions and equations.

### 8th Grade Science with Mr. Krol, Mrs. Ryan and Mrs. Hoffman

At Family Science Night, Mrs. Ryan's 8th grade students had the opportunity to show off their electronic games and share what they learned about electricity earlier in the semester. Mr. Krol's students explored the world of engineering by designing protective "egg-drop" containers. The designs were put to the test by dropping the eggs in their containers from the top of the bleachers in the gym. Great fun was had by all!!!

We continue with our study of chemistry by looking at the history of atomic models. We will then look at the parts of the atom. The students will be assigned an element, that they will research and display in a project.

### 8th Grade Lit/La with Mrs. Carlson, Ms. Angone, Mrs. McCormick, Mrs. Lewandowski and Mrs. Hoffman

With less than a month till the end of the school year, we are finishing up our novels. We have completed two essays, Contribution to Society and Patriotism, which are both contests, the winners of which will be announced at 8th grade awards night and graduation. We continue to work on stubborn grammatical issues and are writing daily. Our Department wishes our eighth graders all the best of luck as they begin their high school careers.

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## Encore Team News

### 7th Computer Science -

A current event newspaper was created by all computer science students. Students referred to Time Magazine for Kids, an online magazine, to research current events of interest and formatted a Microsoft Word document. Formatting skills included; setting columns, inserting a footer, justifying the alignment of the document, & graphic techniques. Students were required to type at least one bibliography for this assignment.

Students in computer science classes have been working a great deal on Internet search techniques. Students have practiced identifying keywords and insignificant words while searching a specific topic. Students learned that synonymous words can be used while searching as well as words that are similar, but not synonymous. Also, students have been instructed to refer to "snippets" that come up when results are displayed to determine which sites will best answer the question. Students have continued to improve on typing skills throughout the semester.

### Drugs and Guidance-

We have just finished the tobacco unit . Once again, many students have made a commitment to never use tobacco products after hearing the risks to their health, and the impact tobacco use has on a family. Also, I appreciate the commitment so many parents have made to quit after their child has shared our unit information with them. It is not an easy decision to carry out- but you CAN do it. Our next unit will cover alcohol, marijuana, cocaine, steroids, amphetamines, ecstasy, and many other over the counter as well as in the news drugs.

### Industrial Arts-

Students have been working on Tool Safety and will be working with basic hand tools in the creation of their first project. As needed, students will be working after school to do the constructions due to time constraints here at the end of the year. In addition, daily attendance is especially important as students who do not fulfill the required safety material successfully will be given relevant alternative work to complete during class time.

### Art-

As we approach graduation, students are finishing up by exploring several significant concepts and trying some unique media. They are completing shoe collages. After selecting a theme, they are cutting out relevant magazine images and will assemble them on a shoe. We will then unmold the shoe to create a 3-dimensional piece of artwork. We are going to experiment with inking techniques and will end the semester by making an air-dry clay design that represents and/or symbolizes their education here at Hille Middle School.

### Choir-

The Choral Department is looking forward to our **Spring Concert on May 26, 2009 at 7:00pm** in the Hille Middle School Gymnasium. Groups performing will be the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade choirs, the Hille Show Choir, and a combined selection that will include all groups. Hope to see everyone in attendance for our final concert of the school year!

**I would also like to recognize the success of the 8th Grade Choir for earning a Division I rating at both the District Competition in March and the State Competition in April. Great Job 8<sup>th</sup> Grade!**

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# Encore Team News

## Foreign Language Survey-

We have just finished our unit on the Mayan and Aztec civilization. It seems that students enjoyed learning about some of their unusual customs. Currently we are exploring The Day of the Dead and the role it plays in the Hispanic culture.

## French 7 –

We are moving right along! Grammar, speaking and writing continue to be an active part of our class. Students have recently acquired many new vocabulary words. We will continue to use them on a daily basis as we close out the school year.

## French 8 –

Don't shut down just yet! This class still has a few more lessons to cover before I send them on to high school. They need to stay focused, ask questions, and strive to do their best. These students have learned a lot in the past two years, and I am proud of their accomplishments!

## Physical Education-

Currently, the physical education classes have been finishing up their Spring Fitness Testing. Students complete a battery of tests to measure everything from cardiovascular endurance to trunk flexibility. The National Standards can be seen on our [physical education wikipege](#), which is accessible through the district website. Once we finish fitness testing we will be transitioning in to track and field events and we will round out the year with a unit on softball. The track and field season is well drawing to a close and several Hille students have already turned in some excellent performances. The season officially ends on May 19th with the conference track meet being held at Bremen High School at 11:30 a.m. We are looking forward to the last days of school with enthusiasm and optimism as another year is coming to an end.

## FACS

7th grade FACS classes are studying nutrition and have just finished a group project on nutrients. Our next activity will have them analyzing their eating habits which should prove to be quite interesting. What they are really enjoying more than anything is putting their creative skills to work as they participate in the cooking labs. They are looking forward to finishing the school year with some surprise creations in the kitchen.

Choir Concert: Tuesday, May 26th @ 7:00pm

Band Concert: Monday, May 18th @ 7:00pm



## National Junior Honor Society (NJHS)

I would like to wish all my graduating eighth grade NJHS members all the best of luck in high school and in their future endeavors.

I especially want to thank my officers: Summer Abdallah, President; Lizzy Walker, Vice-President; Danielle Dougherty, Secretary; and Taylor Dazzo, Treasurer.

As a final activity to the year, our students sponsored Hat Day on April 24 and raised over \$130 for Together We Cope.



## Gifted News



6th grade pullout students recently began a unit on catapults and trebuchets, which tie into their upcoming Social Studies unit on the Middle Ages. Students have learned about the historical use of projectile artillery since the time of Alexander the Great in 500 BC, including some funny sounding catapults named "The Wild Donkey" onager, Cabulus, the great horse catapult and Ludgar the War Wolf. In the weeks to come we will build our own models and "storm the castle" at the end of the semester. In the photo, students place their siege machines in the appropriate place on a giant timeline.

7th graders recently studied the amazing abilities that our brains have to grow & develop. Using our right brains for pattern recognition, our students learned to draw upside down, producing some surprisingly good artwork in the process. For their next unit of study, students chose the topic of Tiki sculpture from the Pacific Island. We will learn about that culture as well as the mathematical approach to subtractive art.

8th graders just attended a grade-level performance of A Midsummer Night's Dream, required reading here at Hille school. Professional actors from First Folio Shakespeare company brought the comedy to life for all of our students. Our pullout group has begun their independent study projects where students choose a topic to investigate in depts. So far we have a writing project, a movie project & math multimedia planned. Stay tuned for details!



## Community Service



On Thursday, April 30th, fifteen dedicated students from Mrs. Reilly's class returned to school at 5:15pm for a community service project. They worked as a team to make 6 pitchers of Kool-Aid and pop 25 bags of popcorn to make treat bags for a parent coffee.

The kids were so proud of the final product. They demonstrated how well they could work together to show their appreciation to the school community.

## Student Council

Happy Spring from the Student Council! As the year comes to a close, we reflect on our contributions for this school year and jump into planning for next year. The focus this year has been on keeping a good balance between service and fun, and the current officers have done a great job achieving that goal. We would like to wish our 8<sup>th</sup> grade students "congratulations and good luck" as they begin the next chapter of their lives. To Stephanie Avila, Raquel Villalobos, Gabriel Rodriguez and Alberto Jimenez; THANK YOU for your great ideas, spirited conversations and valuable contributions to the Student Council this year. The officers next year have big shoes to fill!

To wrap-up the school year, we are holding elections for next year's officer positions. Students interested in running for a position were required to obtain signatures from adults and students that support them in their campaign, as well as answer a set of questions about the role and responsibilities of Student Council. Speeches will be given on Wednesday, May 6<sup>th</sup> during lunches. Voting will take place that same day. Good luck to all those that decided to "throw their hats in the ring".

Finally, the Lights for Learning fundraiser is still underway until May 15<sup>th</sup>. Students have until that date to sell as many light bulbs as possible. All order forms and money collected should be turned in to Mrs. Baker in the main office. Hille students are great fundraisers, and this effort will have an impact not only on our school, but on our community as we try to improve the carbon footprint of our area. Thank you to those that have already been hard at work selling. There is still time to do your part!

## Community Service

The students in Mrs. Moisan's Connections class were eager to do something to help out during Oak Forest Community Service Week. Since there are only 8 students in the class and many had sports practices and after-school and weekend activities, it seemed like an in-school project would best fit our group. The students decided to split into 2 groups and go from classroom to classroom, washing down the student desks and chairs. For 2 consecutive afternoons, teams of students scrubbed and disinfected seats and desktops. The biggest surprise - community service can be fun!



On Wednesday, April 28<sup>th</sup> from 3:00 - 5:00 PM, students, Nora Lipetzky, Sydney Velez, Alyssa Cabrera, Taylor Thorne, Ryan Sullivan, Sarah Wazny and Kayla Hoehn volunteered to teach Internet skills to the Senior Citizens of the Oak Forest Community. Student volunteers instructed Seniors on Internet search techniques and helped create email accounts. Other student volunteers emailed back and forth to our Senior students as a form of practice. The volunteers were excited to teach and impressive in their kind approach to their

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“CHILDREN ALWAYS  
COME FIRST!”

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[www.d142.org](http://www.d142.org)



Hille Middle School

Best wishes

to our Hille retirees,

Mr. Jim Royer, Band Director

(27 years in D142)

and Mrs. Natalie Cuthbertson

(15 years in D142)!

## Hero Essay and Letters About Literature Contests

Students of Mrs. McCormick's classes painstakingly created essays and submitted them electronically to qualify for the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Hero Essay Contest.

Well, it paid off, for three students have been recognized! **Jack Cramer's** moving essay about his hero Elie Wiesel can be viewed on the [www.myhero.com](http://www.myhero.com) website, and he has received a t-shirt to honor his efforts.

Additionally, cross your fingers for students **Karalyn Collazo**, who said her sister is her hero, and **Manon Mischeck**, whose hero is her mom, as they are currently still among the finalists qualifying for the grand prize of a trip to Springfield!

These three students beat out 600 other students' essays!

On another note, Mrs. McCormick's students' participation in the Letters About Literature contest recognized three students who made it all the way to the State Level: **Alyssa Johnson, Maryanne Crosetto, and Ryan Pinkowski.**

This isn't too shabby considering there were more than 55,000 students who participated nationally!

Keep an eye on these names as I believe you will see them in print at your local bookstore one day!