

# Meteor Chronicle

Produced by the students of the Montrose Area Junior/Senior High School

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Montrose Area School District

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## NEWS BRIEFS



Emily Gow/Meteor Chronicle

**Senior Abbey Hewitt is one of five McKeivey Scholarship winners this year. Each scholarship is worth \$3,000 a year, renewable over four years. Abbey will attend Marywood University in the fall to become a physician's assistant.**



G. Bistocchi/Meteor Chronicle

**Senior Graham Harwood has qualified for Pennsylvania's All-State Band to be held in Valley Forge April 23-26. This is the second time Graham has attended All-State Band.**

## Students Represent MAHS in Computer Competitions

By Matt Rucker

Junior Chris Stevens placed third in the Great Valley Computer Contest held at Wilkes College in March. Open to all schools in NEIU 19, contestants designed business Web pages for real clients, computer teacher Mike Clifford says.

"The [individual or] teams needed to work hand in hand with the business to develop goals and requirements for the business Web site," Mr. Clifford says. "Basically the site needed to be aesthetically pleasing...and contain all the needed requirements assigned by the business partner."

Chris designed a Web site for Prestige Web Hosting in Malvern, Pa., near Allentown.

Another group of students is preparing to compete in the State Computer Fairs to be held in Carlisle, Pa., in mid-May.

Seniors Joe Thomas and Ian King and junior Chris Ralston are designing a multi-level educational video-game named "Trivial Crusader." Joe works on the game's coding while Chris and Ian design the graphics and create trivia questions.

After taking first place in regional competition with an earlier version, the team hopes to improve the game for state competition by giving it "better user interactivity and more educational value," Ian says.

Eighth grader David Koloski will enter the State Middle School Computer Fair in the Web design category. He has designed an interactive HTML Web site that teaches basic design techniques, such as bolding text and changing its color.

## Students Talk With Governor in Teleconference

By Eli Gere  
Editor-in-chief

When senior Madison Legg heard Governor Ed Rendell discuss his proposal to consolidate Pennsylvania's 501 school districts into around 100 as a cost-cutting measure during stressful economic times, she could hardly contain herself.

"I was so mad I almost blew a gasket," Madison said. "He made it sound like it wasn't a big deal.... They'd be saving transportation costs, but the building costs would be a nightmare," she said of the idea of new schools being built to fit all of the students combined into one school district.

Madison was one of students in Mr. Joe Festa's AP government class who had the opportunity to listen and talk directly to Governor Ed Rendell Feb. 25, through a video teleconference held in the Community Learning Center at the high school.

The teleconference discussion focused primarily on the governor's proposed college tuition program and the state budget plan. Via a large screen and digital projector, students were able to see and hear the governor talk to them and 10 schools from all over Pennsylvania that were invited to the teleconference. They also had a chance to ask the governor questions.

The governor spoke briefly of President Obama's new economic plan but mainly discussed his own budget plan for Pennsylvania, which he predicts if passed will change the state's economic growth rate from zero to three percent. His plan consists of several cost-reducing measures such as "cutting" funds museums, and eliminating funding for the Pennsylvania Governor Schools. He also proposed putting all schools under one healthcare plan



Elijah Gere/Meteor Chronicle

**Seniors John Maury, Mike O'Malley and Kristy Birchard, along with students from 10 other schools, watch Governor Ed Rendell speak during a teleconference Feb. 25.**

which he said would cut health care costs around 30 percent.

The governor also spoke of the new Tuition Relief Act which he proposed to aid Pennsylvania's youth in going to state schools. The Student Grant Program will receive an 11 percent increase, and \$7,600 in addition to federal and state financial aid. However, this is only for students entering community colleges and the 14 public universities of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE). The program will be funded through the legalization of video poker, a form of poker that is played in bars and other places.

"I'm not a proponent of gam-

bling," he said, "but gambling exists.... We estimate that in four years, they'll make \$5 billion a year."

Madison and senior Katherine English don't have a problem with funding for the tuition program coming from the legalization of video poker.

"I guess we could have a personal bias because it will help us," she said.

"I'll take whatever money they give me," senior Bridget McNamara said.

The governor's teleconference was not the only opportunity for students to focus on educational issues beyond their own school through the use of technology.

Mrs. Janet Ross's AP European history students and Mrs. Mary Keihl's women's issues students attended another teleconference held in the Community Learning Center March 11. Suraya Pakzad, an Afghani woman who has spent much of her life fighting for the education of girls and women in Afghanistan met with students from 18 schools across Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

Suraya told of the time she spent when the Taliban was in power teaching girls illegally in underground schools. At the time, education of females was illegal. She talked of the importance of education for all women in Afghanistan, not just the girls but the mothers as well.

"We are struggling to improve the life of women in Afghanistan," Suraya said. "... I don't want the next generation to suffer.... We have to be strong and keep our commitment to helping others."

Suraya started teaching girls illegally in a school of only 25 girls. She believes the education of only a few women was a major step in the equality of women.

"When we improve the lives of a few women in the country," she said, "... I think that is a big movement."

Some students who attended the teleconference were unaware that women's education was illegal in Afghanistan.

"I knew women had it bad," junior Makenzie Dearborn said, "that they had to cover themselves, but I didn't know education for them was illegal."

Junior Brittany Bartok found learning about the culture of Afghanistan interesting.

"I learned a lot of things," she said, "and I broadened my cultural perspective."

See **Teleconference**, Page 2

## Drivers Stress Bus Safety

By Leah Cronk, Junior high editor

Sarah hurries to the bus, carrying a tray of brownies left over from a class party. She gets on the bus, almost dropping the brownies in the process, and finds her seat. As more and more kids pile onto the bus, they spot the tray of brownies in Sarah's lap. By the end of the bus ride, the brownies are gone, and crumbs are all over the bus.

Carrying desserts, large musical instruments or any other large objects on buses is a problem, bus driver Dennis Bunnell (Bus #20) says, because there is not enough room, and the food makes a mess.

Behaviors such as not listening to the bus driver when he/she asks riders to sit down, walking in the aisles and yelling are also problems.

"Kids today won't listen. When you ask them to sit down or be quiet, they won't do it. Right after I ask them to sit down, only a few minutes later, they get right back up," Mr. Bunnell, who has driven bus for over 30 years, says.

Mr. Bunnell is not alone in his concerns about inappropriate student behavior.

"Not sitting up properly, turning around, being in aisles and not listening are some of the things I see students do that are inappropriate,"

Mrs. Taylor, who has driven for 23 years, says.

Mr. Bunnell says he often has to tell kids to stop whatever inappropriate action they are doing. He says that he doesn't understand why some students refuse to just get on the bus, sit in their seats, and mind their own business. Mr. Bunnell says he doesn't mind the students' talking, but yelling and shouting from the back of the bus to the front is inappropriate.

"Those things are such a problem because they are a distraction. If just for a second the bus driver gets distracted because kids are misbehaving, it could lead to an accident," Mr. Bunnell says.

On the buses students are behind the driver, unlike in a classroom when the teacher is always facing the students, and this makes it much more difficult for bus drivers, Mr. Bunnell adds.

Inappropriate behavior on buses is sometimes dealt with by moving students' seats, Mrs. Taylor says.

"Older kids try to keep the younger kids in line, which kind of helps the driver," Mr. Bunnell says.

Knowing the rules for appropriate bus behavior is important, Mr. Bunnell says. The rules on his bus include no

See **Bus Safety**, Page 2

## Fulbright Blends Cultures

By Eli Gere and Chelsea Hall

"Terrorists."

This was one of the common responses French teacher Polly Pritchard heard when she asked the students in her French classes to reveal their typical thoughts of Muslim people.

"Gun-happy, people who start wars," are what some of English teacher Fatima El Addaoui's students call Americans back home in Morocco, she said.

Breaking down stereotypes was one of Mrs. Pritchard's and Mrs. ElAddaoui's primary goals during each teacher's visit to the other's homeland this year as Fulbright scholars.

"The American students were shocked," Mrs. Pritchard said, when they heard how some Moroccan

students see them. Many had no idea that Moroccans share similar negative

attitudes about Americans.

Mrs. Pritchard and Mrs. El Addaoui met last October in Morocco, through the Fulbright Teacher Exchange Program named for Senator J. William Fulbright, who in 1945

"viewed the program as a much needed vehicle for promoting mutual

understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries of the world," according to information provided by Mrs. Pritchard. His program was



Photo courtesy of Polly Pritchard  
**Fulbright scholar Polly Pritchard rides a camel in Tangiers during her visit to Morocco last fall.**

See **Fulbright**, Page 2

## News

**Principal's Perspective**

By Jim Tallarico

**Peer Tutoring: A Positive Change**

As is the case in all high schools, change is constant. That change can come from year to year, month to month, week to week or even day to day. As administrators, we hope that although change may be difficult for some, it will lead to a better learning experience for our students.

This year a very big change was implemented in our school. That change was the introduction of peer tutoring for students in grades seven through 12.

With the help of National Honor Society adviser Kathy Ohler, honor society members began tutoring fellow students to help them improve academically.

The tutoring serves as credit toward the hours of service required of each NHS member. Students are scheduled during study halls to get the help they need. Each and every day a schedule of tutoring is posted by Mrs. Ohler, and throughout our guidance department during the day,

you will see students helping other students with the ultimate goal of academic achievement for all.

Two tutors are seniors Brian Davis and Travis Poirier. Both young men are positive role models for our younger students. They are the definition of successful student athletes.

"It's been a very rewarding experience for me, and I am very happy to help some of these young students through peer tutoring. There is no question, the program works, and it's been a success," Travis said.

Brian agreed.

"This program clearly shows the willingness of our students to help one another and donate their time to help our younger students succeed academically."

I've watched this program work well all year, and I remain very proud of our students here. There is no question that this has been a change in a very positive direction for everyone involved in peer tutoring.

**Bus Safety** continued from Page 1

gum chewing, or throwing things, or walking while the bus is in motion.

Mrs. Taylor's rules are similar, she says. And in September and March when the bus drivers conduct practice evacuations as mandated by the state, she explains the necessity of the evacuation drills and why it is important for students to stay seated at all times when the bus is moving.

After being in school all day, the students are excited to be out and have built-up energy, Mrs. Taylor says.

"I think kids act this way because they haven't been taught the correct way to be appropriate on buses," Mr. Bunnell says.

Schools should be educating students about how to behave appropriately on buses, Mr. Bunnell says, and whatever the students are taught, the bus drivers need to know so they are able to enforce the behavior.

"The behavior on buses should be the same as in classrooms. The bus is not a gymnasium," Mrs. Taylor says.

When students misbehave on his bus, Mr. Bunnell usually tries to handle the situation himself, he says, by moving the student's seat, for example.

If Mr. Bunnell isn't able to handle the situation and has to go to the administration, the student is usually written up and his/her parents or guardians are notified either by phone or letter, assistant high school principal Russ Canevari says.

Mrs. Taylor also tries to handle

bus behavior herself, she says. Sometimes she talks with a student about his/her inappropriate behavior. If the situation is severe enough, she reports the student to the administration. Mrs. Taylor says a lot of facts get lost from the time the student is reported up to the time the school actually talks to the student.

"I don't see the action; I see the reaction," Mrs. Taylor says, meaning that if a student is picking on another student, she often doesn't see or hear that, but what she does see is the bullied student jump over the seat and punch the other student.

Mr. Bunnell says more students and parents should read and study the rules of appropriate bus behavior that are included in students' handbooks because bus safety is extremely important. However, bus safety also involves drivers who are in the vicinity of buses.

"Students driving at the high school need to be more considerate and careful of buses," Mrs. Taylor says.

Mr. Bunnell says he has had many people drive right through his flashing red lights, showing that people don't pay attention and need to be more careful before someone gets hurt.

The main goal of bus drivers is safety because buses are supposed to be the safest vehicles for students, Mrs. Taylor says. Stressing appropriate bus behavior is a way to keep students safe.

**Fulbright** continued from Page 1 signed into law by President Truman in 1946.

Fulbright grants are awarded for many purposes, such as university lecturing, advanced research and teaching in primary and secondary schools. Since the program began, 279,500 people have been named Fulbright scholars, based on merit, by the presidentially appointed J. William Fulbright Scholarship Board, according to the Fulbright program's Web site.

Following a six-month application process consisting of essays, conference calls and interviews, Mrs. Pritchard was selected to visit Morocco last fall for six weeks. Living, working and traveling with Mrs. El Addaoui allowed Mrs. Pritchard to immerse herself in the culture and routine of everyday Moroccan life.

"I did exactly what her family did. We didn't get up early. . . . If they were going to the Hammam, I went to the Hammam. If they were going to work, I went to work. Then we would have tea time. . . . Dinner was at 9:30, which was hard for me. I did everything they did except pray."

In late February Mrs. El Addaoui arrived in America only to find a very different routine.

In Morocco Mrs. El Addaoui awakes and prays at 7:30 a.m. and then goes to work at El Ghazali High School to teach English to approximately 50 students at a time in 60-minute classes. Moroccan teachers work approximately four hours a day either in the morning (8 a.m.-noon) or in the afternoon (2 p.m.-6 p.m.). Muslims pray five times a day.

In America, Mrs. El Addaoui woke and prayed at 5 a.m. and arrived at school by 6:30. She and Mrs. Pritchard taught four classes before lunch at 11:50 and then two more classes in the afternoon. She left school by 3:30, arriving at Mrs. Pritchard's home to pray before dinner at six, followed by more prayer and bed by eight.

"Fatima was exhausted," Mrs. Pritchard said. "She never did get used to going to work in the dark. That just blew her mind."

During her stay in Morocco, Mrs. Pritchard taught English with Mrs. El Addaoui and lived in her home with Mrs. El Addaoui's mother and sister. Having the chance to live in a typical

Moroccan home rather than in a more modern, Westernized home was an opportunity Mrs. Pritchard appreciated.

"It was like being in the true Morocco," she said, "and not being a tourist."

Coming to America, Mrs. El Addaoui said, was a rewarding experience but not one without sacrifices.

"I left my students for six weeks, and this will influence how I deal with the syllabus, especially for the Baccalaureate students," Mrs. El Addaoui said. "They will take the [national] exam on June 2. I will have to catch up the missing classes, and I'm very close to my family and I'm newly-married. It was hard for me to be away from my husband and family for six weeks. I miss my family, the Moroccan food and the Hammam."

The Hammam is a communal bath, according to Mrs. Pritchard. Men and women go into separate bathhouses, which are very hot and steamy. It is almost a social event for women.

Mrs. El Addaoui was very thankful, she said, for the way she was treated in America by many people.

"I was treated very well," Mrs. El Addaoui said, "and I seize the opportunity to thank Mrs. Pritchard and her husband very much for being so kind and helpful. Also, the students were very respectful and cooperative. The teachers were kind and very interested to know about Morocco. My thanks should also go to people in the tech department. They helped us whenever we had a technical problem in the computer."

Mrs. Pritchard also enjoyed the hospitality she received from Mrs. El Addaoui's family, especially the food made by her mother.

"She was the best cook," Mrs. Pritchard said. "I could definitely get used to their food. There was only one dish I didn't like, bissara, a Moroccan dip, made of fava beans, just because it was bland. Everything else I not only liked, I loved."

Mrs. Pritchard did find some things difficult to get used to in Morocco, most notably the pace of daily life, which was much more relaxed, and the "personal space" of people in general.

"When I would go for walks, people would pass by so closely that

I wondered if they were pick-pockets, but no, their idea of close is just different," she said. "There isn't the urgency that we have here. It was hard to accustom myself to that, but I think there are some benefits."

Mrs. El Addaoui's saw this as a big difference as well.

"The main difference [between America and Morocco] is personal space," Mrs. El Addaoui said. "In Morocco, people are closer to each other. One of the similarities: American people appreciate family life as much as Moroccan people do."

In schools, Mrs. Pritchard said, the dress and hairstyles among students are very similar [to American students] as are their pastimes/interests, such as music, movies and cell phone texting. However, there are no clubs or dances. Their social life is not school-centered.

"In Morocco the students dress in the same way the American students do; however, the girls aren't allowed to wear mini skirts, shorts, and so on at school," Mrs. El Addaoui said. "The girls all wear smocks as uniforms."

She also noted differences in school systems.

"There are more differences than similarities," Mrs. El Addaoui said. "The students in Morocco take a national exam (the Baccalaureate) after studying at high school for three years. The students all over the Kingdom [Morocco is a constitutional monarchy] have the same school syllabus, administered by the Ministry of Education, and the school time is different. In Morocco the students study from 8 a.m. to noon. They go home for lunch, and then they come back to school at 2 p.m. until 6. They study six days a week."

Mrs. Pritchard and Mrs. El Addaoui said they hope their Fulbright Scholarships have benefited students in both Morocco and the United States by changing some of the ideas and stereotypes that people in both countries have formed. Stereotypes are what Mrs. Pritchard believes to be one of the biggest cultural barriers between Morocco and the United States.

"We feel like diplomats," Mrs. Pritchard said. "We've tried to do a great deal for both countries by stereotype-busting, but we still have a long way to go."

**Teleconference** continued from Page 1

Mrs. Ross was fascinated by the passion that drove Suraya to endanger herself for the education of others.

"The one thing that I found to be the most interesting," she said, "is the fact that there are still people in the world that are willing to risk their lives to make a better

world for their fellow man."

Classrooms for the Future Patty Smith said the teleconference was a great means for the students to learn about Afghanistan and to talk directly with someone who has had first hand experiences there.

"I thought it provided a won-

derful opportunity for students to hear directly from a person...." Mrs. Smith said.

"Although we hear how things are in other parts of the world, until we see and hear it personally we can't fully comprehend and understand what it is like."

**Help Available for Teen Addictions**

By Gabi Burgess, Staff reporter

tute of Drug Abuse (NIDA), more than nine million people use prescription medication for non-medical reasons. A new study concludes that nearly 1.3 million Americans ages 12 and older abuse prescription drugs and require treatment for their problems.

Three of the main types of prescriptions misused, The National Drug and Alcohol Abuse Helpline says, are opioids, central nervous system (CNS) depressants (Valium, Xanax and Nembutal) and stimulants (Ritalin, Adderall and Dexedrine).

The helpline also says that in 2004, 2.4 million persons 12 and over used prescription pain killers in 2003, surpassing the abuse of marijuana for the first time the survey had been done.

Symptoms of withdrawal from narcotics can present the most dramatic of the withdrawal symptoms; vomiting, uncontrollable shaking, sweating, hot and cold flashes and diarrhea can occur.

Zara no longer takes prescription drugs.

"It just kind of hit me that I was being so stupid. I lost someone I loved to an overdose, and I was wasting my life."

Zara was able to quit her drug abuse without help, she says.

"I didn't even know where to turn. I didn't want my parents to know," Zara says. "If I had been able to find help, it would have definitely been easier, but I'm still glad I gave it up."

According to nurse practitioner Jean Hollister, any students who need help for a drug or alcohol problem can either fill out a Student Assistance Program (SAP) form located in the nurse's office or talk directly to Mrs. Hollister, any of the guidance counselors or Student Assistance Team members.

If one decides to fill out a SAP form, he/she may place the completed form in the box underneath the table near the doorway of the nurse's office.

The box is checked twice a week, and students with completed sheets will be approached to ensure he or she would in fact like help. Once this is done, Mrs. Hollister and other members of the SAP team begin to get the student the help he/she needs.

One of the places that teens may be referred to is Susquehanna County's TREHAB, an outpatient program that assists people in the county with addictions. TREHAB offers individual and group therapy as well as assessments.

TREHAB also offers an adolescent recovery group. In the group adolescents are given readings, handouts and assignments to complete before the next session.

To learn more about TREHAB or get more information, call 570-278-522 or e-mail the Susquehanna County branch of TREHAB:

susquehanna@trehab.org .

Amanda Rebello contributed to this story.

**Life As We Know It...**

"My eyesight started going, a little bit fuzzy. A powerful numbness shot through my entire body, and I lost feeling in my tongue and everywhere else. All of a sudden my body felt like I was being pulled backwards, and everything was dark.

"In a split second I went into reaper vision, meaning you see the grim reaper and your death. I saw my death and went into extreme pain.

"In a split second I came back, and everything was normal. In that split second everything started to stretch like I was in a tunnel. I felt like I was falling and spinning in circles. I tried to feel for my hands because everything felt cold, and I was freezing because I fell into the snow. I tried to feel for my hands, but I couldn't find them. I couldn't feel anything.

"No matter what I did I couldn't stop anything that was happening. The same things just repeated over and over again. Throughout the rest of the night

my mind kept spinning."

Paxton\* used marijuana whenever possible for the past two years, he says.

According to a 1999 survey done by Adolescence Substance Abuse Knowledge Base (ASK), 53 percent of people age 12-17 agreed that it was easy to obtain marijuana.

Paxton has not smoked since the first week in February.

"When I did use (marijuana), it made everything unclear," Paxton says. "Everything's clearer now. I can make my own decisions without thinking about smoking."

According to ASK, 14 million Americans were illicit drug users in 2000.

"I used to never take anything, not even smoke, but when things started to get hard in my life, I just took whatever I could get my hands on," says sophomore Zara\*.

According to the National Insti-

\* Editor's Note: Names have been changed to protect students' privacy.



# Opinion



## Editorial

### Exchange Students Bring Culture to MAHS

Foreign exchange is an experience that is not only eye-opening for the exchange students themselves but also for the students and others who are fortunate enough to interact with the foreign visitors.

Through the years, MAHS has received exchange students from all over the globe, and for the American students, it has been an experience that rivaled the excitement the foreigners themselves felt. Exchange students bring a new perspective to people who may never have been outside Pennsylvania, let alone their country.

MAHS junior Carmen Vanness is on exchange to Brazil this year, thanks to Rotary International. She says during her classes in Brazil, she can confirm or deny people's comments and ideas about her country that are otherwise just assumed. The opportunity exchange students have to be ambassadors to educate people in other countries about their culture and beliefs is an incomparable and powerful force.

Carmen says Brazilians often want to know what she thinks about the new U.S. president. She says she serves as a firsthand example of the similarities and differences of people between two countries. Brazilians frequently ask her what state she is from, what school and food are like in America, and some even ask if America has trees.

Exchange student Pablo Mijares, who currently attends MAHS from Mexico, says that the most commonly asked question he gets in America is simply which country does he like more.

Former exchange student Leticia Sangaletti from Brazil attended MAHS last school year.

Leticia says her experience showed her that the human race has so much in common.

"Even knowing we have different cultures, religions and customs, we all love, we all laugh, we all live; we are all together in this world. I've learned a lot from people from every continent. It is just great," Leticia says.

Pablo says that the best thing about foreign exchange is making a lot of great friends. He says that the biggest difference between the Mexican and American cultures is the food.

Exchange students make us think not only about the different aspects of their lifestyles but also about our own. Carmen says something she has realized about Americans is that "sometimes the pride in America turns to ignorance in the form of egotism. We are not the only country that matters, and I think we need to improve educating the youth of our country about worldly matters."

Exchange students make us wonder if perhaps we'd be better off with different customs and show us that there are different ways of thinking. There are also different ways of celebrating holidays as well as different fascinating traditions all over the world.

No matter where exchange students come from, they can make us more appreciative of the things we take for granted in our own lifestyle. The contrast and cultural diversity that they offer is something that is difficult to imagine unless one actually experiences it.

### Sticks and stones may break my bones, But rumors can destroy me!



"Have you heard the latest about her? Did you hear who she hooked up with?"

"Dad, I have to change schools. I can't handle this anymore."

### Another Voice



By Amanda Rebello  
Photo co-editor

"Have you forgotten?"

This is one line from a song by country singer Darryl Worley. The song poses the question of whether Americans have forgotten why we fight for our freedoms.

If you really stop and listen, the three words from Worley's song make you think. Have you forgotten how to respect our military, our flag and our country? A good portion of America's youth has.

How did this happen? Where did so many young people's national pride go? Is it the fault of parents for not instilling in their children the respect for our country that they were taught? Do we take our freedoms for

### Teens Lack Patriotism

granted because we've never been without them? Is that why young people display so little patriotism? Or is this generation just naturally ignorant? Who knows? The point is, the respect our country and our military deserve is seriously lacking.

Memorial Day, Veterans Day, Independence Day. They are just days off from school or work to most teens today. But there was a time when they used to mean something to young people. History teacher Jan Ross says when she was young, the whole family watched a parade and then packed up and went to the park to enjoy a picnic and sparklers.

These holidays should mean something still. They should mean remembering why we are free and thanking the people who fought to make us that way as well as those who continue to sacrifice. They should mean saluting our country just because it's a good place to live.

U.S. military men and women used to be respected, even revered, at home. That respect is slipping. The military is about serving our country, not just getting college money or employment

because no civilian jobs are available. The people who are willing to sacrifice everything deserve more respect than they get from today's teens.

How do teenagers look in the eyes of the men and women who fight so they can keep their freedom of speech and look down on them? People decay not being able to say what they want when they want and voice whatever opinions they have, but they won't stand up and shake the hand of a military person and say, "Thank you, sir/ma'am, for giving me the chance to enjoy the freedom you won and protect."

The way I see it, it doesn't matter if you are a liberal or a conservative or if you supported Bush or Obama or any of the decisions that the government has made. If you live on American soil and you're a U.S. citizen, you have a duty to your country to respect it.

America is a free country. To keep it that way, its people need to support her unconditionally.

Just because someone fought for your rights, and those rights include the one to disrespect your country, that doesn't mean you should.

### Corrections

The staff of the Meteor Chronicle regrets misreporting the following information in Issue 4:

On the front page, the athlete in the powerlifting photo was misidentified. She is senior Rachel Davenport.

Seventh and ninth grade history teacher Kevin Kloss is the boys' and girls' varsity mid-distance and long distance track coach. Special education teacher Kristi Kropa coaches sprinting events.

### Letter to the Editor: Student Supports PASS+

With this letter I'm hoping to make a difference in the administration's decision to drop the high school's elective PASS+ class.

I took the PASS class when I was in eighth grade, not as an elective but as a class that every eighth grader not in band or chorus took. That class made me more outgoing and more comfortable with my classmates. It also helped me get ready for high school.

When I reached tenth grade, I

didn't hesitate to take PASS+. I learned what to expect after high school and how to deal with different life challenges. Teacher Charlotte Sherwood discussed social skills and taught me how to be comfortable talking to anyone any time.

Going in, I thought this class would be a great way to meet students in different grades. Coming out, I can say that I made friends I wouldn't even have thought of befriending. Before this class I stayed with my own group of friends and no one else.

My concern is that this class is being dropped because of the school's commitment to technology, and that classes that do not focus on technology are the first to go when budget cuts are necessary. Despite the importance of understanding technology and knowing how to utilize it in the 21st century, other classes are important too. PASS+ teaches

students things that technology doesn't. In this class we learned how to deal with death, another reality of life. We also discussed living independently and making everyday decisions about our personal lives, careers, families, finances and many other issues.

Mrs. Sherwood creates Town Sherwood, for example, a make-believe town in which every student has an apartment with bills to pay and problems with roommates. We were also taught to construct job résumés and handle difficult relationships with friends, parents and partners.

My PASS+ class last year was recognized by the school board for its Days of Difference project in which the students designed a number of activities involving the entire student body to encourage young people and adults to treat one another more positively and compassionately. And this valuable class is being eliminated? Taking away the PASS+ class year after telling its students and Mrs. Sherwood what a great job they did is hypocritical to me.

This class changes people's lives in ways some people can't even imagine. It changes the way people think and react in the type of world we live in today. Students should not be robbed of the opportunity to take this class.

Junior Angela Short

## Meteor Chronicle

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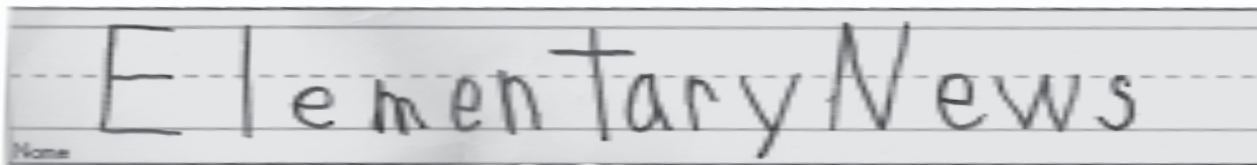
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## Morning Show Delivers More Than News

By Emily Gow, Elementary editor

Morning announcements aren't what they used to be at Lathrop Street. At least not on Fridays.

In early January principal Greg Adams started the Friday Morning Show with a group of sixth graders whom he and English teacher Chris Brown had selected.

"We started the morning show because the idea . . . has always been intriguing to me," Mr. Adams says. "Many elementary school morning programs have a daily assembly, but that seemed like it would be too much for us."

"What I like about the Morning Show is that we have it on Friday's, and it is all student-centered. The kids find the stories and interview guests, and then they deliver the information to their schoolmates."

Eight students— Sabrina Bolado, Devon Hewes, Caleb Hoal, Kosta Konstas, Maddie Pasteka, Tatiana Sangadzhieva, Ethan Stankiewicz and Elauria Timm— make up the cast of the Morning Show, according to Mr. Adams. Each student has a certain area to cover for the next week's show.

Sabrina and Elauria cover the announcements and weather, Ethan and Caleb report news in and out of school, and Tatiana and Maddie add sports and entertainment.

Every Wednesday the students meet in Mr. Adams' office to hold a "pitch meeting" where that week's topics are discussed and planned. After the stories have been put together, they rehearse on Thursday.

The show is broadcast from the gymnasium from 8:15 to 8:30 each Friday, and students are welcome to go to the gym to watch the show. Others may watch the show on its Web site, [www.themorningshow.webs.com](http://www.themorningshow.webs.com), created by Kosta.



Sixth graders Kosta Konstas (left) and Devon Hewes prepare for the Friday Morning Show at Lathrop Street March 13.

Emily Gow/Meteor Chronicle

Putting on the show is not always easy, the students say. With many dropouts (students changing their minds about helping with the program) and technical issues, the show has run into delays more than once.

However, these problems have not been

the most difficult challenge.

"The hardest part is sitting in front of people, not knowing how you sound and to stay focused," Sabrina says.

"It's hard to find stories that are kid-friendly," Maddie says.

With students dropping out and cast members not coming to school on the day of the show, it can become difficult "dealing with last-minute corrections," according to Kosta.

But lessons have been learned from the challenges, the students say.

"You learn that not everything goes your way, and you just have to deal with that," Devon says.

"You learn to deal with constructive criticism and destructive criticism, and you just learn to get over it," Sabrina adds.

Even with the hardships of putting on the Morning Show this first year, there have been plenty of wonderful experiences to remember too, the students and Mr. Adams say.

"I love just being out in front of everybody and telling them about new things going on that they probably don't know about," Caleb says.

Ethan also likes teaching his peers about what is happening.

"You learn about events happening in the world. It's a fun way for kids in the school to learn about that," Ethan says.

For Mr. Adams the actual show is not what impresses him most.

"The best part for me is not watching the show but them preparing for it," Mr. Adams says. "They all work really hard to make it good, and I love being a part of it. It is pretty satisfying to watch the students pull it all together."

"I think it's a great opportunity for them. They have that cooperative learning with each other. Even though they are classmates, they are making connections they wouldn't normally make."

The teamwork is rewarding for Sabrina, she says.

"You enjoy working with people and getting to know them," Sabrina says. "You start to look forward to working with them and seeing them in school every day."



Britny Montonya

Third Grade

Choconut Valley

"Field days because there are fun activities, and it gets your body pumped."

Ian Ticonchuk

Fourth Grade

Lathrop Street

"The sign language show with all the fourth graders."



## Little Voices

"What end-of-the-year activity are you most looking forward to?"

Emily Gow/Meteor Chronicle



Ericka Howell

Third Grade

Lathrop Street

"My teacher picking the star student."

Zach Evans

First Grade

Choconut Valley

"Getting a [craw]fish in the 'crick.' We go with the classroom."



## Learning Goes Virtual Gifted Students Participate in Teleconferences

By Emily Gow  
Elementary editor

They sit in the computer lab at Choconut Valley and wait. Nerves and excitement fill the air as the Web cam comes to life. The screen shows five other schools from across Pennsylvania. It's show time.

Gifted students in grades third through sixth at Choconut Valley and Lathrop Street elementary schools participated in teleconferences hosted by MAGPI PowerNetworking in early March, according to gifted teacher Debbie Andre.

Choconut's teleconference was an "International Math Challenge Game" on March 4, which is international Math Day. Each participating school chose a math game from a foreign country and taught it to the students from the other schools.

After playing several games online to determine which one they'd like to teach, the students and Mrs. Andre chose The Tower of Hanoi from India. The game includes disks of increasing size and three poles (towers). The object is to move one-by-one all of the disks on the first pole to the third pole, arranging them in the same order as on the first pole, in the least number of moves. The second pole may be used as a temporary holding area, since larger disks may not be placed atop smaller ones.

During the teleconference fifth grader Jonathan Best played the game while Marty Conboy, another fifth grader, counted his moves.

"Before the teleconference began, I was kind of anxious because I was afraid I would make a mistake and do it wrong," Jonathan says. "During the conference, I felt more confident because I knew most of the moves I was going to make."

Marty was nervous as well but for different reasons.

"I was kind of nervous because I've never been on a Web cam before, and I stutter," he says.

As the teleconference went on, Marty says, he began to gain confidence and was not so worried.

"I felt like we did really well," Marty says. "The last school was stuttering, and I knew what I was saying."

While Jonathan demonstrated the game, fifth grader Kira Karpov narrated, telling the students from the other schools how the game is played. "I felt confident because it was all going smoothly, and I'm usually a chatterbox, so it was easy to

talk!" Kira says.

Students in grades three and four at Lathrop Street participated in the "Animal Quest" teleconference on March 11 with schools from Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Kentucky. The students at each school selected an animal and learned as much about it as possible. Then at the teleconference, each school presented clues about its animal, and the other schools had 20 minutes to figure out the animal's identity. The olm, which is a type of salamander, was Lathrop Street's choice.

"[I wanted my students to be a part of the teleconferences because] it is just a great experience to speak in front of a camera, to work as a team, to work under pressure, and just to have an experience outside of the regular classroom," Mrs. Andre says. "I think the most beneficial part for the students is having to work as a team and to work quickly under time restraints."

The most difficult part of the teleconferences for the students is "getting over the fear of speaking in front of a group of other kids and having to answer their questions on the spot," Mrs. Andre says.

Even with these challenges, however, the students would like to do teleconferences again, they say.

"I thought it was exciting," Kira says, "and it was a really wonderful way to teach."

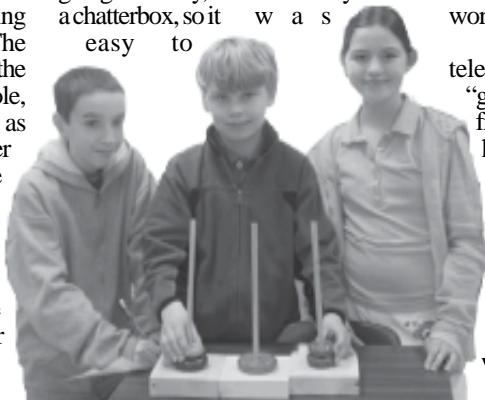


Photo courtesy of Debbie Andre

## Soccer Clinic to Focus on 'Technical, Tactical' Skills

By Samantha Vetri, Staff reporter

"Soccer is a great game for learning sportsmanship, athleticism and discipline," boys' varsity soccer coach Dan Lukasavage says, and this is why Coach Lukasavage is hosting a one-week soccer clinic in June for boys and girls ages five to 12.

Coach Lukasavage's soccer experiences began when he was only five or six years old in Dallas, Pa., and played for the Back Mountain Soccer League. When he was old enough, he played for Lake Lehman throughout junior high and high school. Prior to moving back to the area, Mr. Lukasavage coached a girls' soccer team in New Hampshire and assisted with several camps.

Now it's his turn to run a camp of his own.

"Off-season camps are a great way to stay fit and keep ball skills honed," Coach Lukasavage says. "If you choose to go to the right ones, the camps are a great way to get a whole season better in one week."

Coach Lukasavage's Northern Tier Soccer Clinic will be held on the MAHS practice fields June 29-July 2 for athletes from Elk Lake, Susquehanna, Mountain View, Blue Ridge and other nearby districts. Players will learn to improve skills, practice techniques and much more, Coach Lukasavage says.

The MAHS varsity soccer play-

ers, as well as others from local schools, will help during the camp.

"The varsity players [will be able] to relate to the kids," Coach Lukasavage says.

The coach has also invited two guest coaches to attend the clinic. MAHS alumnus Lee Hawley ('98) and Danville Area High School alum Chris Johns will run training sessions to focus on technical and tactical development, Coach Lukasavage says.

"I am currently in my sixth year as a high school science teacher in Lancaster County and interact with teens on a daily basis," Coach Hawley says. "I have also coached numerous teams during the six years. I am excited to be back home and to work with teens who play on the same pitch (field) that I played on."

Sophomore Danny Simonds says that as a clinic staff member, he will be coaching a team and the goalies. Simonds is excited to work with the kids, he says, because he wants to help spread soccer throughout Montrose and other school districts in Susquehanna County.

Young people interested in the summer clinic may find more information by going to the school district's home page at [www.masd.info](http://www.masd.info) and clicking on the link for the Northern Tier Soccer Clinic.



# DNA Solves Murder Mystery

By Katie Hibbard  
Staff reporter

The seventh graders walked toward Room 66, expecting another science class about their upcoming DNA activity. They had been going over background information for about three weeks by then, and they were ready to start their project.

When they arrived at the room, they found yellow crime scene tape over the door and around the back of the room. As they investigated, they saw a man in a button-down shirt and a pair of tattered jeans lying on the floor. Nearby lay a baseball bat with blood on the handle.

"First, I thought it was a real person," Corey Ross-Robertson said, "but then I saw all the newspaper stuffing."

In March seventh and eighth grade life science teacher Matt Oleniacz created a murder mystery laboratory project to help his students understand DNA fingerprinting. Five groups in each of his seventh grade classes were assigned different jobs: one to analyze the victim's DNA, three to analyze the three possible suspects' DNA, and one more to analyze any other DNA found at the crime scene.

Because the school does not have the technology to perform actual DNA fingerprinting, Mr. Oleniacz created a template of DNA sequences for each group to recreate, using pop beads. Once all of the information was collected, the groups compared their DNA segments to find a match, which would determine the murderer. The process was completed within three class periods.

"The steps in the lab are as follows: Build an anatomically correct DNA molecule that represents the victim, crime scene DNA, suspect one, suspect two, or suspect three, respectively," Mr. Oleniacz said. Next, the DNA is cut with two restriction enzymes that divide the DNA at locations based upon a specific nucleotide sequence. Next, these cut pieces of DNA are run through a simulated electrophoresis gel where they would be separated based upon their size.

"Then the DNA in the gel is subjected to a radioactive tag that will



Emily Gow/Meteor Chronicle

**The deceased victim lies on a science table in Mr. Matt Oleniacz's classroom after being beaten with a baseball bat. Students were responsible for investigating the crime scene and solving the murder mystery, using DNA evidence.**

bind to some of the DNA segments, again, depending upon the specific sequence.

Finally, the radioactive strands of DNA are exposed to x-ray film to make the final audio radiogram that would be used for comparison of each individual's DNA fingerprint and, consequently, will identify the person whose DNA was found at the crime scene."

Mr. Oleniacz said that the project itself was "a mouthful to say and can be confusing when trying to describe it," but the pop beads used to simulate each step and recreate the DNA molecules from a DNA template was helpful for the students.

"At first, I thought it was going to be easy when he described it," Justin Hartman said, "but when I did it, it was hard."

"[This project was] intended for sophomores or higher, so for seventh graders to try it took a lot of organization," Mr. Oleniacz said. "They took it seriously; the kids were very positive."

Students learned about the structure of DNA and how to pair up the different amino acids that form it,

thanks to the pop bead models.

"I liked building the model and figuring out which group was the actual killer," Corey said.

The caution tape, bat and scarecrow body were used to interest the students further.

"... Taking the extra time to actually stage a crime scene really helped in getting them engaged about learning how DNA fingerprinting actually works," Mr. Oleniacz said. "I'm always looking to find ways for students to connect to the real world. [I thought] if I could show them how professionals use it in the real world, it would increase their understanding, pique their interest."

However, Mr. Oleniacz hadn't told his students in advance that he was going to create an actual crime scene. Some were caught off guard. Students who were unaware of the project were even more surprised.

"I wasn't here when he explained [the project], so I didn't know there was going to be a dead body," Shelby Stocks said. "When I saw it, I was so surprised that I screamed really loud. Then, a few minutes later, I realized it wasn't a dead body."

# Haitian Trip Teaches Appreciation

By Leah Cronk  
Junior high editor

After a four-hour direct flight out of New York March 5, a team of 13 people, including seventh grade science teacher Anne Mory, reached its destination of Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

Sponsored by a non-profit organization, the Wyoming Conference Haiti Partnership, the missionaries were there to help a few of Haiti's approximately eight million poverty-stricken people.

The task of Miss Mory and the other members of her team



Photo courtesy of Anne Mory

**Seventh grade science teacher Anne Mory and a Haitian boy, Luke, move rocks March 11 from a field to the foundation of the manse, a building being built in Hermitage, Haiti, to house ministers during visitations or permanently.**

was to assist with the construction of several buildings being built in the town of Hermitage. Miss Mory helped paint a school that had been built by one of several missionary teams that visit Haiti annually.

"The Haitians I encountered in Hermitage had a lot of strong faith," Miss Mory says.

The religion in Haiti is mostly Christianity, Miss Mory says, but a part of Haiti also practices voodoo. During her visit Miss Mory attended a church service at the United Methodist Church of Haiti.

"The people in Hermitage were welcoming, smiling, and the kids wanted to interact with us. The kids were just like any other kids. They liked to take pictures, play soccer, and go to the beach," Miss Mory says. "Coming from here and knowing what we have, it's amazing how they live so happily." I got an appreciation for what I have here. It's obvious how fortunate we are, and yet we still take those things for granted."

## Student Profile

# Honesty Over Chocolate

By Johanna Hripto, Staff reporter



Amanda Rebello/Meteor Chronicle

## AJ Gardner

When seventh grader AJ Gardner walked into his English class March 3, he saw a box of chocolate bars and money sitting under his desk.

Without thinking, AJ picked up the box of candy and turned it in to his teacher, Mr. John Koloski, with all the contents still inside. He didn't think much more about what he had done, he said.

The box belonged to a junior who was selling candy bars to raise money for a local scholarship.

Before the student went away on vacation, she asked a friend to sell the candy in her absence. The friend had carried the box with her into Mr. Koloski's AP English class, planning then to take the candy to lunch, but she accidentally left it in Mr. Koloski's room.

AJ was the next person to sit at the friend's desk in Mr. Koloski's room and discovered the box that had been left behind.

"[AJ] was very unassuming. He didn't even joke about what he'd get in return. He knew it was the right thing to do," Mr. Koloski said about AJ's turning in the candy and unspecified amount of money.

"I've heard about iPods and money being stolen and lockers

broken into [in the high school]. People think they're entitled to things, so they just take them. It's a social attitude. They don't work hard to get what they want. [AJ's act] was the first really honest, good thing I've

seen all year."

Mr. Koloski thanked AJ after class and asked him why he had turned in the box.

"That's just what you do," AJ said.

The friend was contacted in her next class, and the box was returned.

"I ran to get the box. I was worried at first. I was so happy nothing was taken!" the friend said.

She later wrote AJ a note, thanking him for his honesty. She also bought him a candy bar.

AJ said he didn't think anything about giving the box back.

"It's the way I was raised," he said.

While AJ believes he did the right thing by returning the box, he's not sure whether other students would have done the same thing.

"It was a box of chocolate after all," AJ said laughing.

## Outstanding Students



Amanda Rebello/Meteor Chronicle

**Outstanding Junior High Students for the second marking period were misidentified in Issue 4 of the Meteor Chronicle. They are (back row) eighth graders Daniel English and Aimee Cutri and (front row) seventh graders Allison Lewis (left) and Erica Reeves.**

Miss Mory says she appreciates turning on her faucet at home and not having to worry about the water making her sick. She also appreciates hot showers because in Haiti, the missionaries had to shower using water from the nearby river.

Haiti is one of the poorest countries in the world. According to Miss Mory, a Haitian lives on about 80 gourde, Haiti's form of currency, a day, which translates to about two American dollars. A teacher in Haiti earns about \$125 a month, or about \$4 a day. Haitians have to use that money to buy all the things they need for their families, such as food, water,

clothes and other necessities.

Supplies for the Haitians are severely limited, which is why Miss Mory and her team donated supplies to health clinics and schools and provided health kits, including tooth brushes, soap, washcloths and other items for better hygiene. Many Haitians don't have running water or electricity in their homes.

"I would like to go back to Haiti. At first I couldn't imagine why someone would want to go to Haiti, but after meeting everyone there, I see why people want to go. Haitians appreciate what little they have," Miss Mory says.



# Arts & Entertainment



## Featured Artist

### Dancing Gives DeLousia Confidence

By Stacie Rihl  
Staff reporter

The dancers come out on the stage, dressed as zombies, with ripped costumes and blackened eyes. The crowd gasps and the judges' eyes widen. The song "Rama Lama Bang Bang" begins, and the 15 dancers break into their hip-hop routine. When the dance ends, the performers receive comments from the judges, such as, "We love the costumes!" and "Very creative!"

Sophomore Alexis DeLousia recalls these moments in her dancing career with a laugh. "It was the most fun dance I've done because we got to put our own little spin on it, and the judges at competitions said the nicest things about it," she says.

Alexis has been dancing at the Helene Yelverton Dance Studio in Conklin since she was three. For three to four hours, three nights a week, Alexis studies seven different types of dance: tap, jazz, lyrical, ballet, hip-hop, musical theatre and contemporary. She performs both solo and group numbers.

In addition to her own classes, Alexis assists in teaching two acrobatics and one hip-hop class for children ages 8-10. She leads stretches, helps the students with their dance and demonstrates moves.

"I believe [her students] all admire her because she strives to achieve," Alexis' dance teacher, Helene Yelverton, says.

Alexis competes with students from her studio four to five times a year.

"Going to competitions helps us know how hard we've worked

by rewarding us with medals." Putting in these long hours, however, is tough sometimes, Alexis says.

"Sometimes when I have a lot of homework and with school, and when

it's flu season, I really don't want to go because I don't feel like it," she says.

"but I kind of just have to push through it and go anyway because I know it will pay off in the end."

Alexis's hard work has indeed won several awards including high gold, gold, highest platinals. She won the Sophisticated Dance" 10 years

Alexis will compete in New York state's Miss Dance Pageant April 10-12 in Buffalo. The competition includes an interview with the judges, mandatory dance classes and a prepared solo. The dancer who wins in Buffalo will compete in Washington, D.C., for the title of Miss Dance USA.

Alexis says she has been preparing for the pageant all year by working on the solo she's going to perform, a contemporary dance to the song "Just for Now."

However, not everything has come easily to Alexis.

"Leaps are hard for me because I'm not very flexible, so I've put a lot of work into them, like stretching a lot, and after working so hard on them, you wouldn't even be able to tell that they are hard for me," she says.

Dance has helped Alexis become the person she is today, she says.

"Dancing helps me not be so shy because you can't hide when you're on stage, so I've learned through dance to speak up about things instead of keeping them in," she says. "I've practiced a lot, and I've put my mind to what I want to do in college and what I want to succeed in."

Alexis plans to minor in dance in college or pursue a career in dance, such as a dance teacher, as well as dancing on a team for her college.

"I've learned that I should just show people the best of my dancing abilities and not be shy of something that I have a great passion for."

Alexis DeLousia

Photo courtesy of Alexis DeLousia

## Artist in Residence Returns

By Megan Henry, Sports co-editor



Megan Henry/Meteor Chronicle

Artist in Residence Earl Lehman works with senior Art IV student Eliza Ely on her acrylic painting of a gerber daisy March 17.

In the past few years, many art projects have been added to the high school as part of renovations in areas such as the main lobby and cafeteria. From stained glass near the school's side entrance to murals across from the band room, many of these projects have one thing in common: Earl.

A member of the Northeast Educational Intermediate Unit (NEIU) since 1989, Earl has worked with art students at all levels. He first became involved with the MAHS art program through former art teacher Bob Smith some 15 years ago.

The Artists in Residence program was "developed to provide students with additional exposure to the arts through their current high school curriculums," according to Superintendent Mike Ognosky. Earl is currently conducting his second residency this school year.

"I think [the students] missed his input [after the first residency], his personality and just having a fresh face in the room," art teacher Jen Flaherty said. "[Earl] brings more knowledge and a different perspective."

Although Earl has always integrated the students' art curriculum with that of other courses, the projects during his first visit this year had a new focus: to prepare for the PSSA writing exams.

"Beautiful paintings based on a forced concept," as Earl described them, were produced by eighth grade and Art III students, based on three objects: one to represent their personality, one to represent an educational subject area, and a miscellaneous object of their choice, according to Earl. When their paintings were complete, the students wrote papers to "help them write and also think about other curricular areas," Earl says.

"I really enjoy working with people, especially kids," Earl says. "I teach the language of vision in terms of paint and anything else you can see, hear, touch, feel or imagine in an atmosphere of delight and acceptance....The arts are integral to education."

## 'Better to Give Than to Receive' By Tom Davenport

Staff reporter

Eating cake and ice cream, opening wrapped presents, and visiting with friends and family—this sounds like a regular birthday party. However, for some students a regular birthday party just isn't enough.

To celebrate her seventeenth birthday last October, junior Sarah Kimsey came up with the idea of requesting donations for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee, in place of gifts. The hospital treats pediatric patients with cancer and other serious illnesses.

"I felt so bad for the kids at St. Jude, and I wanted to help, so I thought it would be nice to help the kids," Sarah said. "I rented out a bonfire at Miller's Orchard and made lots of food."

"The party was a lot of fun. We told stories around the campfire and ate some food. It was like any other party," Julia Koloski, a friend of Sarah, said.

Sarah's success, over \$100 for the hospital, inspired one of her party guests. Sophomore Emily Hewes decided to ask for donations instead of presents at her own birthday party last December.

"I held the party at my house, and we played games and hung out for a while," Emily said. "It felt like any other party, and it was a lot of fun."

Emily collected over \$1,200 to donate to the Spina Bifida Foundation, an agency that provides education,

advocacy, research and service to patients and their families.

"My aunt's brother (MAHS alumnus Darren Newman) died of spina bifida in November. His death made

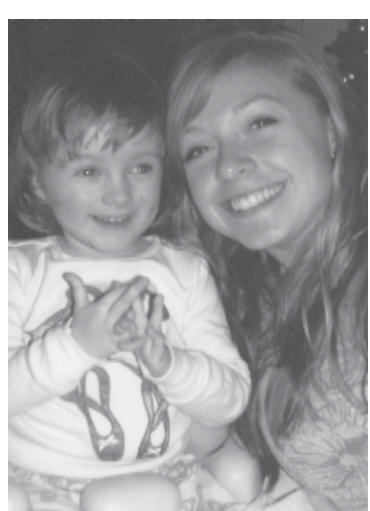


Photo courtesy of Debbie Andre  
**Sophomore Emily Hewes poses with her three-year-old cousin, Kaitlyn Andre, of Montrose on New Year's Eve. Kaitlyn is one of many spina bifida patients whom Emily hoped to help when she requested that her guests give her donations for the Spina Bifida Foundation instead of birthday presents on her sixteenth birthday in December.**

me realize how thankful I am for everything I have and made me want to give to people less fortunate," Emily said.

While Emily's and Sarah's birthday donations were financial, not all party hostesses receive money.

Sophomore Bridgette Conboy thought about doing something unique for her birthday. She came up with the idea of accepting blankets and canned items to donate to the less fortunate.

"I couldn't think of what I wanted to get for my birthday, so I decided to go without presents for one year and accept donations to give to the needy," Bridgette said.

Bridgette's 20 guests gave her specific supplies that she had requested, such as non-perishable foods and used blankets. Bridgette passed on the food to a food pantry in Silver Lake, and the blankets were given to a church group that turns the blankets into sleeping bags for the homeless.

"The party was so much fun," sophomore Kati-Ellen Shelp said. "We roasted marshmallows around the campfire and played manhunt in the yard."

Bridgette said she was pleased by the donations she received and would consider doing the same again.

"I don't really need presents, but there are a lot of other people in the world who do need many items. It made me feel good to know that I had helped someone," Bridgette said.

## OUT AND ABOUT WITH ANGELA & GEENA

### Wilderness Women

By Angela Short and Geena Bistocchi

Sports co-editor and Photo co-editor



This could be a good time to talk with your friends and just hang out. And if you aren't athletic, you can get all your friends together and have a barbeque!

You can also take your younger siblings to the park. Going to the park can be very relaxing, and there are tons of things that you can do, like having a picnic or playing on the playground. Also, you can go to Salt Springs and go for a hike.

You can go into the woods and play "manhunt," or trying a new game could be fun. For example, you can try a game called Sardines. It's similar to hide and seek but a little different. Instead of all but one person hiding, it's the other way around. One person hides, and everyone else tries to find him/her. When one person finds another, that person hides with the first in his/her space, and the game keeps going until everyone is found crammed into one place.

Whatever you decide to do this spring, take advantage of the wonderful weather and go outside!

The snow disappears, and the green grass pokes up through the mud. The flowers start blooming, and the sun shines as the temperature warms. The adventures begin.

Being stuck indoors all winter with nothing to do, you find yourself spending more money, trying to find something to keep yourself busy. Whether it's going to the movies or to the mall or out to eat, it all requires spending money. With spring just around the corner, there are tons of things you can do by yourself or with your friends that don't require you to spend money.

This would be the perfect time to show your athletic side. You can get some of your friends together and play baseball, football, tennis, soccer, field hockey—any sport. You name it, you can play. It's the perfect time to just relax with some of your friends and have fun.

You also can go for a bike ride, hiking or rollerblading. You can exercise by yourself or with your friends.

# METEOR SPORTS

FEATURED SPORT

## Fishing Relaxes, Helps Friends Bond

By James Brewer, Staff reporter

The water is calm, not a single movement to be seen. The fisherman sits in his boat, waiting. Suddenly his line shoots across the water with a sudden force. He's gotten a bite. He begins to reel in his catch, hoping for a nice size bass or trout to take home.

"Fishing is one of the most relaxing things to do," sophomore Connor McNamara said.

McNamara is one of many students who like to spend their spring and summer days relaxing near the calm water of local ponds and streams. A lot of those students began fishing at a young age.

"My dad got me into fishing when I was five or six, and I've been hooked ever since," sophomore Brandon Blaisure said.

Nothing beats just sitting on a boat, relaxing his troubles away by fishing, Blaisure added.

"It's weird, the emotions you go through," Blaisure said. "You can be calm one second and the next second, really excited while you reel in a big fish."

"Catching a big fish can be really exciting after waiting on a boat for a few hours," junior Bobby McKeen said.

Sophomore Ethan Jones, who fishes during the summer months with McNamara, said that he, on the other hand, doesn't fish to relax, but instead to have fish to eat.

"Catfish is my favorite fish to



**Bobby McKeen holds a salmon he caught in the Oswego River in Oswego, New York.**

cook and eat," Jones said.

Blaisure likes to release the fish he catches so he can continue fishing.

"I like to release so I don't have to worry about cleaning and gutting them," Brandon said, "and it also keeps the pond stocked."

Fishing is also a bonding experience for friends. Blaisure and his friend, junior Dan Haberle, spent all of last summer fishing at a pond near Blaisure's house in Fairdale. Blaisure and Haberle, who have been friends since elementary school, say that one of their favorite ways to hang out is by fishing.

"Fishing is one of our favorite ways to get away from the world and just have fun together," Blaisure said.

Jones said he and McNamara like to fish on Silver Lake at a shaded area near the shore because it is a lot cooler than the open on a hot summer day.

McNamara said he and Jones use a variety of lures, but their favorite is Panfish Assassin lures because they're designed to catch small panfish, which is what the two fish for usually. Over the years McNamara and Jones have spent approximately \$300 on fishing equipment.

"I use a lot of different kinds of lures depending on the fish I'm trying to catch," McKeen said.

"It can cost a lot of money sometimes, but in the end it's all worth it for the relaxation we get," McNamara said.

## Tennis Team Shows Improvement

By Katy Swingle  
Staff reporter

Every time he stepped on the court during winter tournament play, he looked his opponent in the eye. He knew it would be a tough match, but that didn't intimidate him. He tossed up the ball and hit his serve. Sophomore Zach Warriner says it was always those opening serves that made him the most nervous.

Thanks to the Susquehanna County Tennis Association (SCTA) Winter Tennis Program, the Meteors began to prepare for their spring season weeks before it began. The winter tennis program was a way for anyone who was interested in tennis to learn a little more about the sport, according to the tennis coach Jim Hinds.

Practices were held on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Montrose Bible Conference from January thru March. Each player practiced one night a week for two hours doing various drills and some conditioning.

"The program is designed around those run at tennis centers across the country," Coach Hinds said. "[The tennis programs] are an effective use of time,

and they cover all aspects of the technical side of the game."

The team also participated in other activities during the winter, such as tournaments in Clarks Summit at the Birchwood Tennis Center, in Binghamton at the Binghamton Tennis Center and in the Poconos at Split Rock. Players were matched up with opponents from the USTA (United States Tennis Association).

"When you play USTA, you face the very best from several states," Coach Hinds said. "I wanted the players to see what was out there."

The team also participated in a Binghamton University Tennis Program several times during the winter. This program was led by college students from the BU teams. Players did specific drills such as plyometrics, strength training and speed workouts. Coach Hinds said the team is planning to return to BU weekly during the summer program as well.

"I felt like it helped me get in better shape for the season," Warriner said. "I got quicker and better footwork also."

## Baseball Team Heads to Warmer Weather

By Mindy Johnson  
Staff reporter

When 17 members of the baseball team set off for the Octorara Area School District 50 miles west of Philadelphia March 14, their purpose was clear: find warmer weather, according to baseball coach Todd Legg.

"The weather was pretty good this year, a little cool but dry and mostly sunny," Coach Legg said. "It was definitely warmer than it would have been here."

Senior Travis Poirier enjoyed the weather as well.

"Getting the chance to actually play on the whole baseball field was most beneficial to our team," Poirier said. "We are not able to play on our infield until around the same time as our games start due to weather conditions. Therefore, the chance to play on an infield helped to improve our fielding skills."

Several years ago Coach Legg was introduced to the baseball coach at Bishop Shanahan High School in Downingtown, Pa., outside Philadelphia, and he asked if the coach would be interested in hosting Coach Legg's team for some early-spring baseball before

the regular season began. The Bishop Shanahan coach agreed, and the Meteors have been scheduling games with the coach's team ever since, even after he moved to Octorara High School.

"I really don't mind playing a team that we haven't played before," senior Ricky Buckley said. "I like that best because you don't know who's good and who's bad."

The Meteors played two games of seven innings each against the Octorara Braves, a AAA team in District 1. Coach Legg wanted the Meteors to compete against players they wouldn't normally meet in regulation play to see different strategies and techniques that they may not have seen in local competitions.

"The most difficult part about playing this team was that we didn't know anything about them," Poirier said. "When we play league games, we have an idea of what to expect, but we didn't know anything about this team. It's hard to prepare to play a team when you don't know anything about them. Our team had to just go into the game with a positive attitude and play out best."

After getting used to the field, the boys performed quite well,

according to Coach Legg. They were able to try players at different positions and practice some plays to see what skills need more work. The Meteors also saw plays they haven't covered and made plans for how they were going to handle such situations during the regular season competition.

"I think the pitchers did well, and as long as the fielders come together, we should be competitive with our division," Coach Legg said.

Offense was just as well prepared, according to Poirier.

"As a team we were very successful at the plate," Poirier said. "Due to weather conditions, our team spends a lot of time at the beginning of the season inside hitting. Therefore, our team was very productive on offense, but our fielding skills were a little weak because we hadn't previously been on a field."

Mr. Legg said he tries not to think about the variable early spring weather, other than when it rains or snows and impacts the team's schedule of practices or games.

"It wasn't warm, but it was nicer than it has been here, so it was just nice to get outside," Coach Legg said.

## Wizards Revisit MAHS



Photo courtesy of Autumn Ely

Harlem Wizard "Sky Cam" goes for a lay-up in front of senior Andy Burgh as Superintendent Mike Ognosky referees in the high school gymnasium March 19. Earlier in the day the Wizards visited Lathrop Street and Choconut Valley elementary schools to talk with the children and demonstrate their skills. The Wizards were last in Montrose in 1995.



**By Megan Henry**  
Sports co-editor

**SPORTLIGHT**  
Commentary

**Varsity Recognition Goes Beyond Numbers**

A group of muscular, well-groomed, male athletes saunter down their high school hallways, each sporting the school's varsity jacket. Their path seems to magically clear as they appear; girls pause to sneak a glance, and every guy wants to be a part of that group.

Okay, not really—actually, not even close—but even though unrealistically dramatized in Hollywood, the prestige and recognition associated with a Meteor varsity jacket used to be much greater than it is today. The jacket symbolized hard work, dedication and athletic achievement.

In order for an athlete to receive a varsity jacket, he/she must have participated in a varsity sport for two years or have received his/her first varsity letter, according to athletic director Joe Gilhool, with each coach having his/her own standards for awarding varsity letters. While most coaches require a certain amount of time played for an athlete to earn a letter, each coach has his/her own exceptions. These include athletes who would have otherwise started but were injured or sometimes even managers or statisticians. Basically, it is totally up to the coach's discretion.

It's great that athletes are recognized with letters and jackets, but sometimes they're not deserved. What about the freshman athlete who receives a letter and consequently a jacket off nothing but pure talent—little or no effort involved—while other athletes who don't have those same physical abilities but who attend every practice, fundraiser, pep rally, lifting session, team get-together and game get less recognition? Or what about the athlete who has been part of a team for two years but has contributed nothing substantial to the team? When the key word in the "two-year" requirement is "participation," does he/she deserve a letter or jacket?

Varsity baseball coach Todd Legg is one coach whose exceptions include those who are especially hard working, but he questions the myriad of varsity jackets.

"I think sometimes I have given

out too many letters," he says, "especially recently when I see kids wearing varsity jackets that were given to them simply because they participated for two years."

To many students earning a varsity jacket is a big deal, but the jackets' commonness is diminishing some of the appeal for students like junior Brittany Bartok.

"I was really excited [about getting my jacket at first]," Bartok says. "Now I really wish people had to work more to get a varsity jacket because then it would mean more. [It's like] everyone has to be equal, but in real life, you're not always going to be equal."

Junior Anna Konstas feels the same.

"I put my varsity jacket on the back of my desk chair when I got it, and it hasn't moved for two years," Konstas says. "It doesn't mean anything to me; it doesn't carry the same value it did before. You don't have to work for it like you did in the past."

Former MAHS athlete Teri Evans ('95) agrees that the prestige associated with a varsity jacket has diminished since she participated in field hockey, basketball and track.

"Overall, getting a varsity letter and jacket doesn't mean nearly as much as they did when I was a student athlete," Mrs. Evans says. "Athletes expect to get them both rather than work to earn them both. When we got our jackets, my friends and I thought we were so cool! But we also knew that we had earned these jackets by spending countless hours in the gym, running endless laps on the field hockey field, riding a school bus to/from games, respecting our coaches and representing Montrose to the best of our abilities."

All of the qualities Mrs. Evans mentions along with others such as leadership, work ethic, team support and dedication play a role in the success of a varsity team on and off the field. When so much more than statistics makes a successful varsity athlete, if one doesn't possess these qualities, not much justifies his/her wearing a varsity jacket.

**Coaches' Experience Inspires Athletes' Success**

**By Katelyn Spellman**  
Staff reporter

When former track coach Eric Powers threw discus, javelin and shot put for the MAHS track team in the early nineties, he often lacked a throwing coach. So to give current track athletes "more and better instruction than [he] received," Mr. Powers says, he volunteers once or twice a week to work with the Meteor throwers.

"It's hard to find a throwing coach. I went without one a lot in high school and never had one in college at York where I threw javelin and discus," Mr. Powers says.

Other track coaches are also experienced track athletes.

Coach Kevin Kloss, who ran the 800-meter, 1600-meter, 4x400-meter relay and 4x800-meter relay at Lackawanna Trail, coaches middle and long-distance events ranging from the 800-meter up to and including the 3200-meter and the distance relays.

"[As a former track athlete], I understand the type of work ethic the athletes need to succeed. I also understand the way the body reacts to training," Coach Kloss says.

Also a graduate of Lackawanna Trail, Coach Kristi Kropa ran the 100-meter dash, 200-meter dash, 400-meter run, 4x100-meter relay



Photo courtesy of Amelia DePhillips  
**Junior Casey Birchard jumps a hurdle during the track meet against Scranton March 31. The boys lost the meet to the Knights 98-52.**

and 4x400-meter relay. She coaches the Meteors' sprinting events. Hers and the other coaches' experiences as track athletes benefit the team, she says.

"Everything the athletes are doing [in track], I or the other coaches have done at some point in our lives. We know how they feel, and we know what they are going through," Coach Kropa says.

Coach Sean Castellani, who participated in track at Valley View, is a first-year head coach for the Meteors. In high school he competed in the 100-meter dash, 4x100-meter relay and the long and triple jumps.

"I have a personal view of how you should train for events in order to be successful," Coach

Castellani says. "When the athletes use a program that I used to use to train, I know it will be successful for them because it worked for me."

Track athletes also recognize the numerous benefits of having former track athletes as their coaches.

"[Coach Kloss] knows how to train us for races. He helps us mentally prepare too," distance runner Chris Preston, a sophomore, says.

Sprinter Laura Douglas, a sophomore, agrees.

[Coach Kropa] is able to coach us in our events because she has experienced them firsthand," she says.

At press time, the girls' varsity track team record was 2-0. The boys were 1-1.

**Senior High**

Boys' Track  
0-2

Girls' Track  
1-1

Boys' Tennis  
0-2

**Spring Sports Records**

**Junior High**

Boys' Track  
0-2

Girls' Track  
1-1

At press time other spring sports teams had not played their first regular-season games.

**Meteors Meet Mickey at Spring Training**

**By Sarah Feeney**  
Staff reporter

As 14 Lady Meteors stepped on the softball field March 19 for their first real game of the season, the sun was shining, and it was nearly 80 degrees. Obviously, this wasn't Montrose!

The players were in Orlando to participate in Disney's Spring Training Program March 18-22. They had flown out of La Guardia National Airport in New York City and landed at Orlando National. The team stayed at the Disney All-Star Movie Resort located just outside Disney World. Team fundraisers and private funding paid for the trip.

"Walking off the plane was a huge change," senior Madison Legg said. "Leaving chilly Northeastern Pennsylvania and walking into the warm Florida air was amazing. It was unreal. Honestly, it felt like we were dreaming. Just imagine leaving school and the cold and landing in the warmth in the midst of Disney. It was a great experience."



Megan Henry/Meteor Chronicle  
**Senior Abbey Hewitt swings for a base hit in the first game during the varsity softball team's spring training trip to Florida March 18-22.**

The Florida trip gave the Lady Meteors good playing experience on the field before their season started, players said.

The team played three official games, two scrimmages, practiced and spent time in the batting cages at the Disney Wide World of Sports Complex, located ten minutes from the hotel, where there are fields for softball, baseball, lacrosse and track. The girls played at the softball Diamond-plex, which features four fields in a circular pattern with two additional adjacent fields.

"The fields were very well kept, and it was nice to have them all together in one spot," freshman Sara Krupinski said.

"The pitching mound was shaped like Mickey Mouse, and the grass was very lush," senior Nikky Finch added.

The Lady Meteors played teams from Florida, Oregon, New Jersey and New York.

"The team got to see a lot of game situations that they don't normally get to see during practice," Coach Forys said.

"The teams we played against had a high skill level; almost every hitter in their line-up could hit the ball well," junior Katie Nemcek said. The Meteors got a chance to improve their own bats as well.

"Seeing good pitchers helps us [to improve] with our batting," Finch said.

In addition to competing against high-level softball teams, the Lady Meteors took some time to bond and have fun. The girls visited Magic Kingdom, Animal Kingdom, Epcot and Hollywood Studios.

"Going to the parks made the trip an even more memorable experience," Nemcek said.

"The trip not only better prepared the team for this year's season but also helped the team's camaraderie," junior Brittany Bartok said.