

Magic in the Middle



February 2010

Volume 8, Issue 6

Feb. Calendar Marks

- 5—Greg Koch, Guitarist, Assembly 2:00, Theater
- 12—Teacher In-service
Students day off
- 15—No School
- 18 —STAAR Night, 2:30-5:30
- 19—Fun Night 3:05-4:30
- 22—Parent/Teacher Conf.
3:30-7:00
- 25— Parent/Teacher Conf.
3:30-7:00

Principally Speaking...What's Right With Our School!

Sometimes we find it easy to pass on the “doom and gloom” news, because it gets people’s attention and is generally more “sensational” than good news. And while there is no question that our middle school is far from perfect—the good things kids do truly does far outweigh the bad.

That being said, I would like to share with you what our middle school students accomplished recently. Student Council (under the advisement of Ms. Anderson), came up with the idea of kids paying to bring their i-pod to school for a day, with the proceeds raised

going to two very worthy causes.

The brainstorming for this project started several weeks ago, and the kids wanted to not only raise money, but also do it in a way that could be fun and not disruptive to the educational environment. Hence “I-pod For A Day on January 22” was born. Student council members came up with the guidelines, rules, and consequences all on their own. Basically, students paid \$5 in order to bring their i-pod to school and be allowed to listen to it during study hall, “SSR Time,” lunch hour, and in-house,

with teacher permission. The \$745 raised was split between Leukemia/Lymphoma research and a classmate’s sibling currently undergoing treatment for leukemia.

Staff were very supportive, the kids well-behaved, and overall, the day was a great success! With student cooperation such as this, it’s possible that we might do something similar in the near future. Be proud of your student and ask him or her about this special day!

Mr. Ross, Principal

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What's Happening in Sixth Grade?

Grade sixth students just experienced their first **Mini Course Days**. Ask your students about their favorite activities. Mini courses are for the kids to explore new hobbies and find a new interest they might want to pursue. The teachers enjoy sharing their hobbies with the kids too. In **Math** class students are

moving into a unit called Shapes and Designs otherwise known as Geometry. Students will be able to name polygons, recognize symmetry, and identify, measure, and draw angles.

Social Studies have the students traveling to Ancient China studying about Confucius and then moving on to Greece.

The endocrine and nervous systems are the body systems that sixth graders direct their focus to in **science** in February. Each sixth grade classroom continues to be involved in various literature novels for **reading** and effective writing skills using editing and spelling skills for **English** class.



BOOK VS. MOVIE 8TH GRADE READING



This month students will be selecting a novel that has been made into a movie.

These are the expectations for this unit:

1. The movie must not be "R" rated.
2. They must select a book and movie that they have not read or viewed.
3. They must select a book that has been made into a movie and not a movie that has been made into a book.
4. They must bring in a signed permission slip from a parent/guardian that okays the selection and indicates they have the movie available to watch. (Every year I have students that read a book and cannot find the movie to view.)
5. They must have their book

in the classroom by Monday, January 27th or I get to assign their book. This unit starts February 1 and power point presentations will start February 25th. *If your child is set on a certain book, please make arrangements to rent, buy, or borrow the book by the above date.

6. At the conclusion of the book, students are responsible for viewing their movie on their own time (not in school).

Please ask your son or daughter about their selection. This is also an opportunity for you to read, discuss, and compare/contrast the same book and movie together.

At the conclusion of their book they will be presenting the similarities and differences of their book and movie through a power point presentation.

Making Decisions

Teach your preteen to research options before making decisions

Before your child can make a good decision about an important question, he should do some research. Then he can act. Guide your child to:

- Get the facts. If he is asked to look after a neighbor's dog for the weekend, he should find out exactly what he needs to do. How often should he feed the dog? What times? Should he walk the dog? How often?
- Consider conflicts. Your child has to study this weekend. He is also invited to a friend's party. Can he do both and still care for the dog?
- Think about the feelings of those involved. Say that the dog needs to be let out at 8:30 p.m.

and the party starts at 7:30. If he misses the party will his friend be upset? If he turns down the job, will the neighbor ask another person to care for the dog in the future?

- Come up with alternatives. Perhaps your child can explain to his friend that he really would like to have steady work caring for the dog. Maybe your child and his friend can do something together next weekend instead.
- Realize that decisions are not always perfect. If your child decides to miss the party and care for the dog, he is giving up fun with friends. But he is gaining a chance to look after the dog when his neighbor travels. Sometimes good decisions require a small sacrifice to achieve a long-term benefit.

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Friend's Food Shelf

Friends' Food Shelf open for those in need.

For more info, call 284-2456.

The Friends' Food Shelf, located in the 4-H food stand at the Jackson County Fair Park, will be open every Monday at 3:00 p.m. until the food is gone. The Friends Food Shelf offers free perishable food (produce, bakery, dairy, meat) to those in need. Bring your own bags or boxes.



Congratulations

Artists

15 Artists are Represented at Art Show at the West Central Regional Art Exhibit in Tomah

Fifteen student artists from Black River Falls have been selected for the West Central Region Youth Art Month Exhibit. This art show is a big deal; the art teachers can only choose three works of art from all the students that they teach.

This exhibit is organized by the Wisconsin Art Education Association, of which all Black River Falls Art and Design Department Faculty are members of. The student exhibit will take place in Tomah at the Area Community Theatre, 907 Kilbourn Ave.

The dates for the exhibit are

February 5 to March 2, 2010. A reception for the student artists, their families and friends will be on Friday, February 5, 2010 from 5:30 to 7:30 PM at the Area Community Theatre (ACT) 907 Kilbourn Ave in Tomah, Wisconsin. WAY TO GO ARTISTS!

Black River Falls Middle School is well represented in this art show by students from all three grades. Representing the Sixth Grade is Megan Engebretson with her "Portrait of my Classmate", DeJaye Roskos is representing the Seventh Grade with her drawing, "Lizzie the Lizard", and Kelsey Van Treeck is representing the Eighth Grade with her acrylic painting titled, "Are You My Lunch?". Kelsey's painting is of a Mountain Lion. Congratulations to these three young artists!



7th Grade English

The middle school **FFA Quiz Bowl Team** is practicing **Wednesdays (2/3 & 2/10) during in-house** in the Middle School commons. Students in this contest should be studying information between practices!

The **FFA meeting** is **Tuesday, February 9** from 3:15-4:15 p.m. in the HS ag room. We will be discussing Speaking Contests, FFA Week and lots more...

Black River Falls hosts the **District 7 FFA Speaking Contests** on **Monday, February 15**. Students not participating in a contest are asked to help with timekeeping, door monitoring, etc. See Mr. Markhardt to sign up.

We will need parent volunteers to help with Black River Falls hosting the District Speaking Contests on Monday, February 15. Set-up beginning at 2:15 and cleanup ending around 8:00. Please contact Brad Markhardt if you are able to help out.

National FFA Week is February 21-27!

FFA Alumni Donkey Basketball is **Sunday, February 21**, 2 p.m. in the Sam Young Gym.

FFA is a leadership organization for 7th and 8th grade students. It's mission is to make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through agricultural education.

Please contact the FFA Advisor, Mr. Brad Markhardt, if you have any questions: 284-4324 ext. 2210 or bradley.markhardt@brf.org



Substance Abuse

Parents are middle schooler's best defense against substance abuse

You probably realize that at this age, your child may be tempted to try alcohol or drugs (including tobacco). You likely will not be there when this happens. But your child carries your love and support with her. It can make a big difference in what she decides to do at that moment.

Remember that:

- Providing a strong family life is the best thing you can do for your child. Does your child know how much you love her? If so,

she is less likely to disappoint you by drinking or using drugs. A child who eats meals with her family and enjoys spending time at home has less opportunity and desire to drink or use drugs.

- Your child should know you don't take this issue lightly. Make clear to your child that you absolutely disapprove of underage drinking and any drug use. Let her know you won't let it go "just one time." Emphasize that you will take immediate action, such as monitoring her more closely, at the first hint of drinking or using drugs.

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As second quarter comes to a close, we can't believe the year is almost half over! Students have been working on many things the first half of the year. Some examples are: 6-trait writing, mystery writing, fairy tale writing, speeches, poetry, and personal choice writing (PCWs). Students are given the opportunity to write a PCW every quarter to put into their writing portfolio. Writing portfolios are a required piece of 7th grade English. Please ask your child

periodically if they have been working on completing their portfolio for English.

Third quarter will bring new projects such as writing a "slice of life", writing a professional business letter, quatrain poems, and much more. Students will continue to work on creating many quality writing pieces.

- Mrs. Zillmer and Mrs. Kundinger

8th Grade Social Studies:

Starting the first part of 3rd term, Mr. Shepard's social studies students will have the opportunity to participate in the new district approved online MOODLE network as a complement to our in class work. Parents should be looking for a letter explaining this opportunity in the upcoming weeks.



After School Activities

Make sure your child's schedule isn't overbooked

Extracurricular activities can be great fun for your preteen. But don't forget that they're just that: extras. Your preteen's primary focus should be on school. So it's vital that his after-school activities not interfere with his performance in class. To make sure your preteen's schedule isn't overbooked:

- Keep an eye on his grades. Does your preteen start bringing home lower marks once basketball season starts?
- Pay attention to homework

habits. Is your preteen's before-dinner study routine suddenly stretching to bedtime? It could be a sign that he's over-scheduled. If that's the case, it may be time to drop an activity.

- Watch his mood. Is your easy-going preteen now stressed or irritable? Does he wake up exhausted or collapse into bed at night? He likely has too much on his plate.

Remember: After-school activities should enhance your preteen's education--not interfere with it. If he's doing too much, insist that he scale back on his activities, at least for a while.

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MIDDLE SCHOOL EXTENSIONS:

~ Dial 284-4357, then the extension of the person with whom you wish to speak.

Mr. Roou	3001	Mrs. Kunding	3103
Mr. Amborn	3114	Mr. Markee	3212
Ms. Anderson	3201	Mr. Markhardt	2210
Mrs. Boerger	3113	Ms. Massart	3214
Mrs. Bragee	3215	Mrs. Nelson	3006

Mrs. Carlsen	3205	Mrs. Nortman	3101
Mr. Cowley	3216	Mrs. Rodney	3110
Mrs. DeBerg	3208	Mr. Rufsholm	3150
Mr. Dokkestul	3102	Mrs. Rumsey	3117
Mr. Downie	3106	Mr. Schmitt	3214
Mr. Dutton	3202	Ms. Schwarz	3210
Ms. DuVall	3114	Mr. Shepard	3206
Ms. Erlandson	3003	Ms. Skogstad	3212
Mrs. Ferstenou	3002	Mr. Stanley	3022
Ms. Ghelf	3109	Mr. Stemper	3116
Ms. Henrikson	3207	Mrs. Swenson	3152
Mr. Jensen	3108	Mr. Tande	3111
Mrs. Jensen	3112	Ms. Weberg	3203
Mr. Johnson	3211	Mr. Wester	3107
Mrs. Krista	3105	Mrs. Zillmer	3204

Asbestos Notification

In compliance with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), this is notice that the School District of Black River Falls has an Asbestos Management Plan in each school administrative

office. The plans are available for inspection by the public, parents, and district employees. The district performs six month periodic surveillance of asbestos in January and July and full re-inspections every three years. For more information please contact the district office.

Parent Quiz

Take this quiz to see if you are encouraging your child to be responsible. This is one of the most important qualities for success in school and in life. Answer yes or no to the questions below:

___ 1. Do you emphasize the importance of being reliable and dependable by expecting your child to do what he says he'll do?

___ 2. Do you hold your child accountable for his actions? If he loses something he borrowed, do you expect him to earn money to replace it?

___ 3. Have you talked with your child about the importance of

good judgment?

___ 4. Do you work with your child on developing greater self-control? Model this by holding your temper and avoiding impulsive actions.

___ 5. Do you encourage your child to do some kind of volunteer work?

How well are you doing?

Mostly yes answers mean you are striving to raise a responsible child. For no answers, try those ideas in the quiz.

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