

The Little Mermaid JR

By: Chloe Kim

The Rocky Hill Middle School Drama Production put on a musical based off of the Disney movie, *The Little Mermaid*. They performed on February 8th and 9th. They worked for months practicing for the show. I saw some of the practices and I thought they were better than the movie! Since I was able to attend some of the practices, I got to talk to a few of the cast members so here are some interviews with them.

First, let's hear from the 6th grader Luca, who plays Sebastian the crab.

Wildcat Roar: Who is your character in the play?

Luka: I play Sebastian, who is Ariel's friend. Sebastian is strict, funny, and sometimes anxious.

WR: What made you interested in joining the play?

Luka: I had a passion for acting so I wanted to join for fun.

WR: Now that you're in the play, what's interesting about it?

Luka: It's fun and I get to do many things with my friends.



Next, let's hear from the 8th grader Anusha, who plays Ursula, the villain.

WR: Who is your character in the play?

Anusha: I play Ursula, who is the villain who tries to use Ariel to be ruler of the sea. Ursula is selfish and persistent.

WR: What made you interested in joining the play?

Anusha: I've loved the movie The Little Mermaid.

WR: Now that you're in the play, what's interesting about it?

Anusha: You get the experience in acting, singing, and dancing.



Finally, let's hear from the 7th grader Emily, who plays the main character mermaid, Ariel.

WR: Who is your character in the play?

Emily: Ariel, the main character who wants to be human to be with Prince Eric. She is curious, adventurous, caring, and nice.

WR: Is this your first time acting in a play?

Emily: No, I've been in three other plays before.

WR: Now that you're in the play, what's interesting about it?

Emily: The choreography and memorizing the lines.

I went to go see the February 9th show with my family and we thought it was amazing! Sebastian and Scuttle were hilarious. We really liked that they changed up the plot a little bit to make it more humorous. The singing was fantastic! Thank you to the Rocky Hill Drama Production for putting on an incredible show!



Rocky Hill's National Junior Honor Society

Alyssa Bass and Vaishali Sukumar

In November, a new group of bright students was inducted into the Rocky Hill chapter of the National Junior Honors Society. Many students at Rocky Hill are involved in this organization or applied to it, but there are some who don't know what it is. The Wildcat Roar conducted an interview with Mr. Kalani Smith, the adviser of Rocky Hill's NJHS chapter to go in depth about what NJHS truly is for our school, and more importantly, for our community.

WR: Many students know NJHS stands for the National Junior Honors Society, but what is NJHS exactly?

Mr. Smith: The core of NJHS is a service organization at heart. It is a non-profit organization under the umbrella of the National Association of Secondary School Principals. NJHS seeks academically high standing students to serve the community. Although your academic standing gives you an opportunity to join, it is not just about scholarship. It is equally important that you possess citizenship, character, and leadership.

WR: Why did you introduce NJHS at Rocky Hill?

Mr. Smith: The Rocky Hill NJHS chapter was introduced here by another teacher before I took over three years ago. My daughter was in NJHS, and I think it is a great service organization. NJHS kids are a great group with high motivation, and NJHS is just a great organization as a whole.

WR: What do NJHS members do during the meetings and what do they do for the community?

Mr. Smith: NJHS members will participate in the Wildcat Welcome, and they will support the school by: helping with school activities such as International Night, doing their own community service projects, and organizing Relay for Life by doing the Luminaria Ceremony.

WR: How many kids are in NJHS at Rocky Hill this year?

Mr. Smith: There are a total of fifty-four students participating this year, both seventh and eighth grade.

WR: Will being in NJHS look good on a college resume?

Mr. Smith: Having NJHS on your college resume will not hurt you. It shows that when you were young, you were involved in the community. It really speaks toward character. Community Service counts just as much as being a good student.

NJHS is a lot more than community service. It is also about scholarship, citizenship building character, and gaining leadership. Maybe next year, some more of Rocky Hill's many bright students can be involved in this outstanding organization. Congratulations to the NJHS members of 2018-2019!



Top Scholars

An up close look with an Owl

The Great Horned Owl

By: *Chloe Kim*



About the Great Horned Owl

Great Horned Owls are named after the feather tufts or plumicorns, above its ears that resemble horns. Great Horned Owls are the most common owls in America. They can live for five to fifteen years weighing 2 to 5.5 pounds. Their body is 18 to 25 inches tall and their wings can stretch to 3.3 to 4.8 feet wide. Great Horned Owls live for 5 to 15 years.

Habitat

Great Horned Owls are adaptable birds and live from the Arctic to South America. They live in suburbia, woods, and farmlands. Northern populations of Great Horned Owls migrate in winter, but most of them live permanently in more temperate climates.

Food

Great Horned Owls are actually carnivores. Since they have an incredible digestive system, they sometimes swallow their prey whole. Later, they regurgitate pellets made of unwanted parts of their meal. Great Horned Owls are nocturnal so they are efficient nighttime hunters. They use their powerful talons to kill and carry animals several times heavier than themselves. Great Horned Owls eat many different types of creatures such as raccoons, frogs, scorpions, skunks, rabbits, squirrels, falcons, and sometimes other owls! Sometimes, they hunt for smaller things by walking on the ground. They have even been known to eat cats and dogs!

Parenting

Great Horned Owls nest in tree holes, stumps, caves, or in the abandoned nests of other large birds. They can have up to five eggs and both parents keep the eggs warm and hunt for food. Great Horned Owls are powerful birds and fiercely protective parents. They have even been known to attack humans who wander too close to their young.

**Winter Dance
on Thursday,
Feb. 28th
Don't miss it!**

Horoscopes

Horoscopes for February, 2018

By: *Sasha Golubchyk*

Aquarius: February is the month for you, Happy birthday. You are the signs of a Water Bearer, and this year you will experience a solar eclipse. Venus will be busy in your sign in the beginning of the month, making you feel cute and charming. Jupiter will bring you a lot of fun but pace yourself, after too much good time you might crash. Uranus will bring new conversations and surprises your way, you will find yourself trying some unusual ideas. This February holds a lot for you.

Pisces: The sun is creating a private and quiet sector of your chart. It will encourage you to relax, rest, and connect with your inner voice, this month will not be boring though, an eclipse is coming. Planet Venus will bring you love and money, big ideas will be shared, do not believe everything you hear, it sometimes will sound too good to be true, and it is. Things for you will just work out, the Sun's meeting with Jupiter will bring you a boost of confidence. This month will be a busy one.

Aries: This month you will be socializing and dreaming about the new goals for the future. February 3 will be a special and fantastic day for planning and networking, on February 10, love and money will come to you, it will put in a gentle, and empathetic mood. You will value your alone time, when you are with your family, you will value physical connections. February 21 will be a romantic day for you, you will have time to enjoy art.

Taurus: You will have a lot of energy in the beginning of the month. On February 2 you will have a good experience with your social life. On February 4 you will have a dramatic vibe, but you will still have a lot of fun. On February 6 you will not worry about fitting in, it will all be about taking risks and being yourself. On February 10 you will be making lots of new friends and your social life will be your main focus. This month you will find tons of new friends and you will be improving your career.

Gemini: This month will put you in the mood for adventure, things won't go as planned. February 13 will bring a lot of communication for you too. Watch your exaggeration during that day. On February 10 your career and reputation will be improved. It's a fantastic time to create art, you will be highly imaginative. On February 25 things just won't make sense, however it's a good day to make art as well. You gotta trust your intuition, and watch out for paranoia.

Cancer: This month will bring a lot of changes, you will feel optimistic and ready for adventure. On February 4 will be exciting and fun but also a little dramatic.. And you will be ready

to fall in love. On February 10 you will have tons of confidence, stay realistic though, optimism will be in the air, but do not stop being cautious. On February 18 you will be expanding your mind. On February 25 romance will be in the air, you will feel creative and inspired, your imagination will get the best of you, you will have fantastic journeys.

Leo: This month you will take care of your loved ones and inspire people. On February 10 you will ask yourself what you want, you'll want to get closer to someone emotionally, but you'll have to work out of your financial debts. It's a good time to examine who you trust. On February 17 you will be focused on your emotions and will be experiencing different emotions. Don't worry you'll find opportunities to heal. On February 25 you will have tons of energy, it's a lovely time to exercise and get your body together. You got to listen to your own gut.

Virgo: This month you will make tons of new routines and schedules. On February 16, you gotta let it be and flow. This month you have to trust your intuition, it will get you a long way. If you think too much about your actions, the whole vibe will be ruined. You will meet tons of new people, some good, some bad. But don't let it ruin this month, do not let yourself be sad over someone who doesn't care about you, it's not worth your time. You gotta get up and start breaking the records, step out of your comfort zone.

Libra: Your sign is connected to water, take a swim this month, maybe a little break from the world, a vacation. This month don't spend all your time inside, breathe in the fresh air and enjoy nature, don't let anyone tell you what you can do or can't do, you can do anything this month. Think about the people you let into your life, are they worth being in it. Work in a team, and balance your interests

Scorpio: You are in control, you have power of your life, this month you may find yourself pushing people away and creating your own personal bubble, think about your past during that time. Rethink your options, spend time with your loved ones, never think you're not worthy. Make sure you listen to your emotions, if you don't you will have a hard time.

Sagittarius: This month you will be even more exuberant than usually, you will see the glass half full, because you have an open mind. Dig deeper into your emotions and thoughts, consider things and make plans for the future. Don't try to seek answers outside of your life, seek it with your family, where you feel at home.

7 Short Classes or 5 Long Classes A Day?

By Marley Pinsky

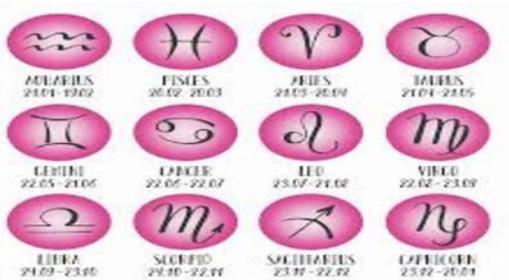
Do you dread sitting in the same class for at least an hour, especially if it's one you don't like? Well, at other schools, classes go by much faster. On the other hand, they may not get as much work done. Also, they might have the same order of classes every day. Many middle schools and high schools across Montgomery County operate on a 7-block-a-day schedule. However, Rocky Hill is unique. Instead of 7 short classes a day, our schedule consists of 5 long classes, the order of which rotate regularly. But why is our school different? Is our schedule better than other schedules? Or are there disadvantages as well as advantages to having 5 long classes a day?

According to Dr. Eldridge, the schedule that we operate on now was created before she came to Rocky Hill. The staff wanted a different schedule to "meet the needs of the adolescent learner". In order to come up with a schedule that was neither a 7 period day or a traditional block schedule, staff members talked with students and parents. Traditional block schedules have 4 periods a day that are 93 minutes each, while other schools have 7 classes a day that are 45 minutes each. Our staff believed that 90 minutes was too long and 45 too short, so they settled on five 70-minute classes a day. Dr. Eldridge remarks that a benefit of this schedule is that students don't have the same class at the same time every single day. Students who work well in the morning might have their favorite class sometimes in the morning and sometimes in the afternoon. Students "respond to instruction differently at different parts of the day", and with a rotating block schedule, time doesn't impact your learning.

While there are many benefits of having a rotating block schedule with longer classes, there are some cons to our schedule. According to Dr. Eldridge, the schedule can be confusing for substitutes; however, students get the hang of the schedule quickly. Additionally, a rotating block schedule can be difficult for a part time staff member. Also, sitting in one place for 70 minutes can be hard for some students. They may start to lose focus or become fidgety. Physical activity helps students learn, and staying in one class for too long could make it hard for students to work or understand lessons.

Hallie Wells Middle School operates on a modified block schedule. Students go to 7 classes a day, the length of which vary depending on the week. During week 1, students have Empower Hour on Tuesday and Wednesday and homeroom on Thursday. During week 2, students have Empower Hour on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Empower Hour is a time for students to have an extra elective sponsored by teachers. These programs include fantasy football, mandala coloring, guitar club, balloon animals and more. There are tons of random, light-hearted activities to choose from to give students a break from the pressure of the school day. Perhaps our school would benefit from a similar schedule and program.

Our school's schedule has many pros and cons. If students dislike the schedule at Rocky Hill, they have high school to look forward to. Clarksburg High School operates on a 7 period schedule. Meanwhile, there are many things to enjoy about a rotating block schedule.



Television in the cafeteria?

By: Sean Jean Baptiste

For the most part, TV is used for entertainment. It can broadcast channels from hundreds of miles. It can also be set up as a game station for Wii, Xbox, or Playstation. It keeps people from becoming bored, giving them something to do in the meantime. They are placed in many places for tourists and citizens alike. Who knows, a cafeteria might be one of them!

A TV in the cafeteria is perfect for some kids, so they can have all more relaxing for the 30 minutes they have to talk and hang out. It can show appropriate and educational channels. They would eat and watch if they have nobody to talk to in the free time they have. It might not only be for the students, the staff could watch while working so they could have simple entertainment to make them laugh. It might inspire kids to do good things as they watched from the show.

Though it might be acceptable for students, teachers most likely think otherwise. It might distract students from eating, the food that the cooks worked hard on will just go to waste. It also might let kids have the idea that electronics are ok to take out in school. Students could be frustrated or stressed if it is not the show or channel they wanted. They would make a fuss for the teachers that already have to work as hard as they can. Television can lead kids to make bad decisions, thinking it's ok because they did it in a TV show. If you were to add 30 minutes of TV every weekday to your average Television time at home, it can gradually do significant damage to one's brain and eyes.

Furthermore, TV can be good, but also has its cons. Too much of it can be unhealthy, but it is fun and addicting for most people. There is a risk you take every single time you look at an electronic screen. Should they be used at lunch, that is a question that awaits to be answered.



Boys Basketball 2018-19

Head Coach— Mr. Shull

The Boys' basketball season ended with the Wildcats going 2-4 with wins over Clemente and Ridgeview. The team played incredibly hard and competed in all of the games. The leading scorer was Jefferson Dao with 92 points. As a coach I am very proud of the hard work and growth of the team throughout the season.

Roster

Haynes, Miles	Allen, AJ
Afanou, Yannick	Blamoville, Julian
Dao, Jefferson	Harshey, Colton
Hodo, Brandon	Hogarth, Rony
Klock, Malachi	Thompson, Carter
Torres, Daniel	Whitley, Desmond



BUCKETS!

Motivation To Keep Your Head Up

~Sage Jean-Baptiste

"The problem is not the problem. The problem is your attitude about the problem," by Jack Sparrow from Pirates of the Caribbean. In the movie Jack Sparrow is known as a mischievous, cruel, selfish, and coward type of pirate but he does make valuable types of points. Many kids from, Rocky Hill Middle School, are unmotivated because of homework, friends, drama, living up to standards, etc. Here are some quotes that can lift your spirits to get you through the rest of the year or life.....

"The mind that opens to a new idea never returns to its original idea," by Albert Einstein.

"Whether you think you can, or you think you can't- you're right," by Henry Ford.

"Discouragement and failure are two of the surest stepping stones to success," by Dale Carnegie.

"Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance you must keep moving," by Albert Einstein.

"No one can make you feel inferior without your consent," by Eleanor Roosevelt.

"Failure is not the opposite of success, it's part of it," by Arianna Huffington.

"When something is important enough, you do it even if the odds are not in your favor," by Elon Musk.

"The choices we make determine our destiny," by Thomas S. Monson.

"If you are always trying to be normal, you will never know how amazing you can be," by Maya Angelou.

"You don't drown by falling in the water. You drown by staying there," by Louis Cole.

"You might think this is cheesy, but these quotes can make you feel good about yourself and we all need that," by Sage Jean-Baptiste.



Interesting Facts

Article By: Vaishali Sukumar

1. McDonald's once had bubblegum-flavored broccoli on their menu.
2. There is not a single US state with a name that starts with the letter Q.
4. If you cross-breed a cow and a bison, you get a Beefalo!
5. In Scotland, there are 421 words for snow. Don't confuse a *feefle* with a *flinkdrinkin!*
6. Armadillos are bullet-proof.
7. Because of 3D printing, it is possible for scientists to literally email tools to space.
8. It is impossible to snore and dream at the same time.
9. Men are 600% more likely to be struck by lightning than women. Crazy, right?
10. A broken clock is right twice a day.
11. Male ostriches can roar like a lion. Imagine that!
12. In France, it is legal to marry a deceased person!
13. There is a town in Nebraska which has a population of 1 person. Imagine having a whole town to yourself!
14. The thirtieth U.S. President, President Coolidge, enjoyed buzzing the emergency button on his desk, then hiding when the Secret Service rushed in.
15. A shrimp's heart is located in it's head.
16. Cardinals enjoy covering themselves with ants.
17. The shape of pringles has a name- Hyperbolic Paraboloid
18. Most home-use toilet paper in France is pink.
19. Just like there are albino animals which are white, there are fully black animals which are called *Melanistic animals*.
20. A Mantis Shrimp can make a sound louder than a blue whale!
21. Penguins "propose" to their lifelong mate by giving them a pebble. How cute!

10 Facts About You:

- 1: You are reading this right now.
- 2: You're realizing that is a stupid fact.
- 4: You didn't realize I skipped number 3.
- 5: You're checking now.
- 6: You're smiling.
- 7: You're still reading this even though its stupid.
- 9: You didn't realize I skipped number 8.
- 10: You're checking again and smiling because you fell for it again.
- 11: You're enjoying this.
- 12: You didn't realize there's only supposed to be ten facts.



Student Poems

The Koala

By: *Chloe Kim*

Big ears, small eyes, and a black nose

I have gray fur and claws on my toes

All day I sleep and eat and doze

Living in trees, eating green leaves

My big ears are furry, I'm not in a hurry

My lovely fur is a shade of gray

I sleep twenty two hours a day

I slowly chew on juicy leaves

To get the water that I need

While other animals run and play,

I'm busy sleeping my life away

I'm a cute little marsupial, I munch on greens

My babies are the size of a jellybeans

They snuggle up in their mommy's pouches

And then they relax like potatoes on couches

I live in Australia, not Guatemala

For I am the adorable cuddly koala

I wrap my arms around my tree

And close my eyes... and fall asleep



Check out Ms. Quinn hanging with a Koala in Australia.

An Interview with Ms. Demosky- Tippett: Coach of the Lady Wildcat Basketball Team

By Marley Pinsky

The basketball season is always an exciting time for our school, especially because of how hard our student athletes have been working. Ms. Tippett, the coach of the girls' basketball team, took time to answer some questions with the Wildcat Roar.

Ms. Tippett wanted to coach our basketball team because she's been coaching basketball since she was 19, and she has been playing all her life. She loves the sport, and she "loves helping young women learn to love it". Previously, she has coached volleyball, softball, and track. Her favorite thing about coaching is "teaching the nuances of the game that you really only gain from experience, and seeing the athlete apply it in a game situation. That's really fun for me".

The Wildcat Roar asked Ms. Tippett about standout players on the team. "Each athlete brings something that the others don't," she remarks. She proceeds to talk about what makes some of the players special. She describes London Tracey as "a very vocal and encouraging leader". KeAsia Ames is "a good basketball player and also hustles more than anybody". Trinity Turner brings "a quiet, calm to the game. Her play is aggressive and instills confidence in those on the court with her." Genevieve Gleason is "a rebounding machine" and fights hard under the basket. Alyssa Lee "just glides on the court" and is the smoothest player on the team. Ms. Tippett comments that the team is very fun to watch and all players are outstanding. Currently, the team has 1 win and 1 loss.

Ms. Tippett has been working at Rocky Hill for 19 years, but worked at several different schools over a period of 10 years before coming to Rocky Hill. "I came here and found home," she wholeheartedly mentions. As a student, she was involved in many sports: she played basketball, softball, soccer, and ran track. When asked about her family, she replies, "I adore Denise and Charlie. Charlie is my world. She has completed my life. I enjoy every moment with her, even when she's being her 3 year old self and throwing a tantrum."

Asked about advice for student athletes, Ms. Tippett advocates, "Time management is key to success... both on the court and in the classroom."

2018-19 Girls Basketball	
Lauren Ceresini	7
Brie Cunanan	7
Emma Forbin	7
Layla Hamidzai	7
Katie Padilla	7
Madison Pier	7
Mackenzie Troffkin	7
Trinity Turner	7
Makyra Wachter	7
Ke'Asia Ames	8
Kristina Edwards	8
Genevieve Gleason	8
Alyssa Lee	8
London Tracey	8

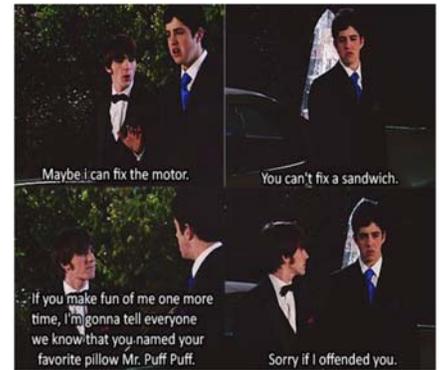
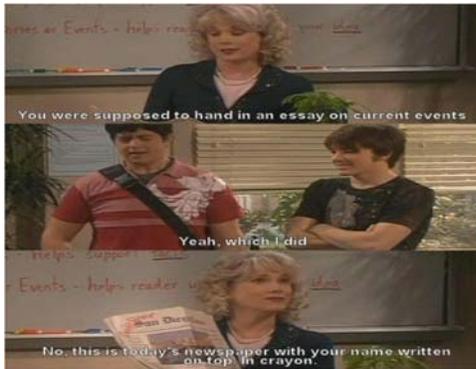


Congratulations to our Lady Wildcats on another tremendous season!

Drake And Josh

By: Sameen Farouk

We all know this great, unfortunately cut off show Drake and Josh. Everyone has at least seen one episode of Drake and Josh when they were a little kid. Or you might have seen the show 5 times as a kid because it always came on. We all know that Drake and Josh was one of the funniest shows on Teen Nick in my opinion. It beats all the shows, Icarly, Victorious (well maybe not Victorious) but Icarly, Sam and Cat, Rugrats, Big Time Rush. All those show are good but Drake and Josh is hilarious. In the show we have Drake the cool, good looking, funny, slick brother and then you have Josh, the funny, dorky, (sort of socially awkward teenager), and of course we have Megan the mischievous, mean, also slick sister. There are many reasons why I love the show. First of all the jokes that are in there like "Are you calling me a liar? I ain't calling you a truther." Classic lines from the foam finger episode 9 of season 3. "Who accidentally drops their cell phone in soup? It wasn't an accident I wanted to see if it would float." Another reason is Drake and Josh is so relatable is whether you identify with the nerd, the ladies' man, a teen trying to navigate life, or a kid figuring out their place in a family, the show provides plenty of character traits that the audience can relate to. The third reason While Drake and Josh are completely different and eccentric in their own ways, neither tries to dull the other's shine. Their quirks, interests, and talents are what make them fun and the audience love to watch. Now the fourth and final reason it was watching them grow up. Now I know they didn't age as much as other people on TV shows but to watch their journey and see them grow from awkward teens to upstanding men. Although they unfortunately didn't remain as close in real life, luckily, there will always be Drake and Josh to look back on. There are many more reasons why this show is great but these are the main ones that stand out to me. I love this show a lot.



Writers of The Wildcat Roar		Teacher Advisor Mr. Kevin Conley	
<i>Chief Editors</i>	Marley Pinsky	Alyssa Bass	
<u>Journalists</u>	Sheilla Agopome	Rayn Anwar	Lily Baick
Julia Lyonga	Sasha Golubchyk	Sage Jean Baptiste	Sean Jean Baptiste
Nikole Liu	Vaishali Sukumar	Manha Tariq	Chloe Kim



RHMS Student Government Association Winter Dance and Fundraiser

Thursday, February 28, 2019 Time: 3:00 - 4:20 PM

Cost: \$5.00 (Cash or check made payable to "RHMS".)

Refreshments will be available for purchase during the dance (\$1 sodas/ chips).

SGA sponsor, Mr. Conley will collect completed and signed permission slips and your \$5 payment in the main hallway the mornings of Feb. 20 - 27th.

Students are expected to maintain **Rocky Hill PRIDE behaviors** that shows respect for self, others and the school building.

Appropriate dress is required as per RHMS Dress code.

If expectations are not met, students may be removed from the dance and they may lose the privilege of attending future dances at Rocky Hill.

Students cannot attend if they are academically ineligible from the 2nd marking period.

**Winter Dance
on Thursday, Feb. 28th**

Fun things to do indoor when you are bored during winter .

By Julia Lyonga

Winter break might be fun to the first few days, counting down the days till Christmas, setting up your Christmas tree. Well as the month goes on you will get more and more bored and that is not good. Winter break is your time to not worry about a test you have after studying for one class period so you need to take advantage of it. Here are some fun ways to spend your winter break:

1.

Redecorate.

When was the last time you redecorated your room. If you still have pink walls and Barbie pictures everywhere then you need this. Just turn it into things your more interested in know buy a new comforter for your bed or a more mature picture for your room. You can wear your PJ's and listen to you favorite music while you are doing it just to get in the mood.

2.

Weird food combination

You have tried normal people food now try weird people food. There are alot of different food items in your house that you have never tried together. Most of them taste great together like spaghetti and M &M's, Pizza and Nutella, chocolate chip cookies and cheese (don't forget to melt it) and ice cream and fries there are much more but I can't say them all.



3.

Closet fashion show

Your closet is full of clothes some that you didn't even know were there. Well it is everyone's dream to be on a runway show so why dont you make your own. Lock yourself in your room play music on your phone and maybe figure out how to do light effects. Then just put together clothes from your closet and walk around your room showing your styles to your stuffed animals. Have fun!



4.

Happy hour

When was the last time you had some time to yourself, time to just sit quietly and think. Just turn off all your electronics and maybe even bundle up with a good book to read or just have some hot chocolate while just having happy thoughts.

5.

Make a movie

Invite some of your friends over and recreate one of your favorite movies or even make your own. You can use some of your cloths or even halloween getups for costumes and have someone take a video of it all.

6.

Dance party

Play your favorite music loudly in your living room while you dance around and sing along like you "just don't care" you can invite you friends and family to join you.



Educational Commentary

What Should We Be Learning in Middle School?

By Marley Pinsky



“Shouldn’t I be taught this in school?” That’s what a young woman inquired after being asked to name any country on the world map. Jimmy Kimmel, talk show host, had his show crew approach passerbys on Hollywood Boulevard, showing them a map of the world and testing their geography knowledge. Locating any country, including the United States might seem easy, but surprisingly, very few ordinary people were capable of locating any country.

When asked to name any country, the most common response was pointing to the continent of Africa, that being their answer. The interviewer asked one young man if he knew any countries in Africa. He replied by pointing to the upper half of Africa and saying, “Is that South Africa?” Another person pointed to Russia, claiming it was the country Asia. Yet another pointed to Alaska, replying “England or Iceland or something.” Finally, another young woman was asked if she knew where the United States of America was. “I would say this big one,” she guessed, pointing to the continent of Europe. So to answer the first interviewee’s question, yes! Students should be taught geography in school. Dr. Seuss, legendary children’s author, writes, “Oh, the places you’ll go!” But how will we get anywhere if we can’t pick out a single country on the world map?

Speaking of getting places, another skill that students should learn early on is transportation skills. This is just one of the many life skills that kids should begin to work on in order to prepare for the ‘real world’. Once you are a young adult, budgets could be tight at first, and it would be easier to use public transportation than buying your own car and paying for gas. Plus, public transportation is the eco-friendly alternative. But in order to get around efficiently, save money and go green, students first need to know how to get on a public bus.

Did you know? Montgomery County kids of ages 18 years and younger ride free Monday through Friday from 2-8 P.M. All you need is a valid student ID. Just hop on bus 75 outside of our school and you can go to the Clarksburg Outlets or the Regal Theater in Germantown without your parents driving you.

There are many economical advantages of public transportation, but an additional benefit of letting someone else drive for you is stress reduction. Stress and mental health are significant issues for adults and young people, which is why this month (November) is Mental Health Awareness Month. Many adults talk about how it’s so easy to be a kid, but that is not the reality. Children and teens are faced with many problems including busy schedules, academic pressure, and social issues such as bullying or trying to fit in. Learning how to manage stress at an early age in school would have long term mental health benefits.

According to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, each year, 44,965 Americans die by suicide, but for every suicide, there are 25 attempts. Teenage suicide rates have been on the rise in the past decade. Maybe a year-long health class that covers both physical and mental health could help bring those numbers down.

One of the many problems people of all ages face is discrimination. According to the American Psychological Association, “Often, discrimination stems from fear and misunderstanding.” One way that we can erase fear, understand one another and abolish discrimination is early education about different cultures. Schools should teach students to understand and respect all types of people, which is what people need to know in order to make the real world a better place.



Educational Commentary cont. and Spirit Animals

Throughout middle school, students study all sorts of different topics, from calculating the volume of 3D figures to identifying traits in Shakespeare characters. But when we're all grown up with our own jobs and families, it is very unlikely that we will be using everything we've learned in middle school from day to day. So if we aren't learning more essential skills such as geography, stress management and more, why are we learning these things anyway? The truth is, middle school isn't all about the material we are tested on. Middle school is about learning to enjoy learning. Mr. Sweeney, seventh grade world studies teacher, has a wise analogy that answers the question, Why are we learning all of this anyway?

"Even though what we are doing in class isn't exactly how we use that information in our normal lives, we are training our brains to be prepared for the thinking we will have to do in real life situations," he explains. Additionally, he compares our studies to athletes. "Athletes don't lift weights while they are running down the field or court or playing their sport, but they lift weights beforehand to train their muscles to be prepared for the games."

It's true that a lot of topics covered in middle school won't apply to our daily lives as adults. Nonetheless, we need to work hard in school in order to learn to be better students, which will prepare us for high school and college. We need to take this time to grow as hard workers and grow personally, which is what will truly benefit us in the future.



What is your spirit animal?

By Julia Lyonga

Have you ever wondered which animal fits you the most? Well if you have or haven't it will be a good to know which of the millions of animals is your spirit animal. Find the month you were born down below and which ever animal is next to it is your spirit animal.

January- Owl

February- parrot

March- kangaroo

April- tiger

May- lion

June- bird

July- panda

August- snake

September- cheetah

October- horse

November- fox

December- wolf



Blue and Gold Macaws (endangered)

