

Potter Pride Newsletter

Volume 1 ○ Issue 2 ○ December 2018

It's a Jolly Holiday at MJHS!

By Audrey Hellinga and Caroline Easley, 7th-grade reporters

Get ready to step back in time this February 1-3 at this year's MJHS musical, *Mary Poppins Jr.*!

Early this year, students auditioned for various roles. They had to sing one song from the musical and recite lines for the directors, Mrs. Glass, Ms. Henrichs, and Mr. Beutel.

Musicals are a fun way to get involved with friends after school. Arlie Akers, 7th-grader playing the lead role of Mary Poppins, said, "I like how when you meet all of these new people that you didn't know before, you might think they're one way, but then when they're acting, you see them in a whole new perspective."

Studies have shown that being in plays helps develop self-confidence, cooperation, and empathy. You can also get some great acting advice and pointers from the directors that can help you grow as an actor.

Akers has enjoyed getting to know her fellow students while doing something they all enjoy.

Akers said, "I like being a lead role because I get to interact with the directors a lot. They give really good advice."

However, being the lead role isn't the only thing that makes up a production! Even smaller roles are significant and important, and they can be a great way to be involved if you are in other school activities.

Mary Poppins Jr. displays smaller characters such as statues, clerks, businessmen and women, kite flyers, and more! These equally talented actors learn a great deal of choreography and catchy songs to go with it like a cherry on top.

Alex Soza, 7th-grader cast as a chimney sweep,

says that the best benefit of a smaller role is not having to memorize as many lines.

"A benefit for having a smaller role would be not having a lot of stress. You really just have to practice and memorize the music, choreography, and cues," said Soza. Regardless of the size of the role, Soza adds, "You should still put effort into what you are doing."

A musical, overall, is a team effort, made possible by everyone involved, and we wouldn't want it any other way!

"I'm really excited for the production because everyone is super talented," says Akers. "I hope everyone comes to see the show!"



Writing Center Members

Ava Ciocca
Olivia Collins
Caroline Easley
Audrey Hellinga
Rachel Kaspar
Emily Koranda
Lainie Kurtz
Lanie Springer
Layne Watson
Haley Webb
Advisor: Ms. Shore

Upcoming Events

ACADEMICS

Dec. 21: Half-Day for students (8-11 am)

Dec. 24-Jan. 4: Winter Break

Jan. 7: School Improvement Inservice

Jan. 8: School resumes for students

ATHLETICS

Jan. 5: Volleyball vs. Farmington @ MJHS, 10 am

Jan. 15: Boys Basketball vs. Washington @ MJHS, 4:30 pm

Jan. 21: Wrestling vs. El Paso-Gridley & Lincoln @ MJHS, 5 pm

GENERAL

Jan. 17: Red and White PTO Meeting @ MJHS LMC, 7 pm

Feb. 1-2: MJHS Musical @ Bertha Frank, 7 pm

Feb. 3: MJHS Musical @ Bertha Frank, 1 pm

Students and Staff

Student Spotlight

By Rachel Kaspar, 7th-grade reporter

For this issue's Student Spotlight, I interviewed 7th-grader Allie Kellum. Read on to learn more about this MJHS White Team student!

Q: When were you born? **A:** "My birthday is the 17th of May, 2006."

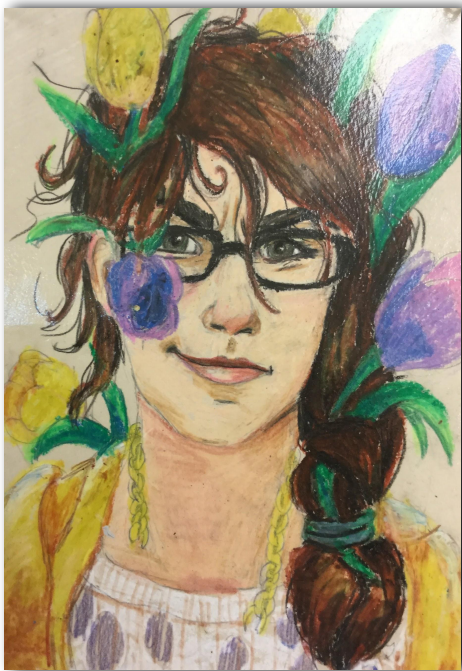
Q: Where were you born? **A:** "I was born in Peoria, Illinois."

Q: What is your favorite book? **A:** "My favorite is *The Dragonfly Song* by Wendy Orr."

Q: What is your favorite subject in school? **A:** "Orchestra and social studies."

Q: What do you do in your spare time? **A:** "I like to draw."

Q: If you could spend one day anywhere in the world, where would you go? Why? **A:** "I would go to Japan because the culture is interesting."



Mrs. DuPont's Self-Portrait

Counseling Corner Q&A

By Danielle VanMeenen and Beth Spaniol, MJHS Counselors

Adopted from Middle Years, Resources for Educators, a division of CCH Incorporated, 2017

Q: I've heard that students need "grit" to be successful. What is grit, and how can I develop it?

A: Grit involves perseverance, courage, and resilience—basically sticking with tasks or goals until you see them through. Having clear goals will help you to develop grit, enabling you to stay with something when the going gets tough and to overcome problems along the way. Those who have grit see failures, rejections, and challenges as opportunities to learn. Instead of feeling defeated, they feel empowered to make changes that will help them get closer to their goal. You can foster grit by looking for examples of people you admire

persevering when times are difficult. Try to notice how they handle adversity, and adapt those skills to difficult situations you may face in your life. It can also be inspiring to read stories about famous people who have overcome obstacles on their path to success. For instance, Dr. Seuss had his first book rejected by 27 publishers before it was accepted.

Ask Mrs. Akers in the LMC for recommendations for books where people demonstrate grit! A final suggestion is to always look for what lesson can be learned when things do not go as planned. Even if it was a tough lesson, coming away with new knowledge can always be looked at as a win.

Faculty Feature

By Olivia Collins, 7th-grade reporter

Mrs. DuPont, MJHS art teacher, grew up in Tuscola, Illinois. She went to college at Eastern Illinois University and began her teaching career after.

Before MJHS, she taught at Schiller Park, and one thing she remembers from there was how diverse it was. Many of the kids there spoke languages other than English. One of the classes had six different languages in it.

Mrs. DuPont wanted to become a teacher because she realized she liked

working with people.

Something Mrs. DuPont would like everyone to know is, "Everyone is born with 10,000 bad drawings." In her free time, she enjoys journaling and creating her digital scrapbook. Another fun fact about her is that when she was 14, she started pen-pal writing to a girl from South Carolina; she's been writing her pen pal letters ever since!

Mrs. DuPont is a great art teacher, and MJHS is very lucky to have her!

Book Love

The Reading Nook

By Melissa Kruse, MJHS Instructional Coach

One of the best ways to encourage tweens' literacy growth at home is to talk with them about what they are reading. Maybe you want to do this but aren't sure where to start? Here are some questions you can use to spark discussion with your child. Using these as casual conversation pieces opens the door for important heart-to-hearts about real-life issues as well as supports students' development as readers.

Before Reading

What interests you about this book?
Have you read anything about this topic before?
What are you wondering about as you look at the cover and back of your book?
What do you think the setting will be? Why?
What do you think this book will be about?

During Reading

What has happened so far in the book?
Would you want to be friends with the main character? Why or why not?
What would you have done in that situation if you were the character?
Are you visualizing the story in your mind as you read? What's the most memorable part so far?
Is this book realistic? Explain.
What is the setting of the story? How is the setting impacting the characters' emotions, behaviors, and thoughts?

After Reading

If this story had a sequel, what do you think it would be about?
What do you think the theme of this book is?
If you could talk to the author, what would you ask?
Is there a movie version of this book? Do you want to watch it together?



Need help with a
writing assignment?
Stop by the Writing
Center for peer
tutoring!

Tuesdays 3-3:45 pm
Thursdays 7:15-8 am
Ms. Shore's classroom,
Room 212

Online tutoring also
available at
goo.gl/ZdwUfe

We'll help you get it
write!

Book Recs

By Lainie Kurtz,
7th-grade reporter

Jane Goodall by **Lisa Kozleski**: In this great book, Jane Goodall becomes obsessed with monkeys as a young child. Later, she works with primates. This book is special because you get to see a whole new perspective on primates. I would recommend this book to people who enjoy nonfiction and biographies.

By Layne Watson,
7th-grade reporter

Echo by **Pam Muñoz Ryan**: If you like historical fiction, this is the perfect book for you. Pam Muñoz Ryan tells the story of four kids who get caught up in complications from World War II and are all connected by a seemingly magical harmonica. These children all have problematic families and find enjoyment in the harmonica. Decades later, the four kids meet as adults where they play their magical music.

By Audrey Hellinga,
7th-grade reporter

The Hunger Games by **Suzanne Collins**: If you're looking for a thrilling and yet touching book to read with a bit of intriguing dystopian flair, you should read Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games*. This book is about a 16-year-old girl who is drawn to be part of the Hunger Games, a 'game' where 24 children fight to the death. I'd recommend this book to anyone looking for an adventure!



Sports

Achieving More Together

By Lanie Springer, 8th-grade reporter

For the Morton Junior High School 8th-grade boys basketball team, teamwork takes priority over personal achievement. They strive to improve their individual game for the benefits of the team as a whole, and not for their own glory.

Jackson Frank, an 8th-grade basketball player, describes exactly what it means to be a part of this Potter team.

“One thing that’s really special about the team is that we are all very good friends, making it a great environment to be in. Our

coach is probably the best coach you can have. He cares an awful lot about us, and he’s just a great person in general.”

A team’s ability to cooperate with one another is equally as important as the team’s talent.

Finding a good rhythm and knowing each of your teammates’ strengths and weaknesses can make the difference between victory or defeat. With teamwork and talent, the team has been very successful, but what makes them truly stand out is their unwavering Potter pride.

“It means the world to represent Morton, and I think the team as a whole can say the same. Knowing that I’m a part of something like the MJHS basketball team is just a wonderful feeling,” says Frank.

With their season just underway, the team has already shown a great amount of skill, representing Morton honorably, as they let their teamwork drive them to the way of success.



The basketball team played a scrimmage game at the beginning of the season.

Dance Team Takes the Spotlight

By Haley Webb, 7th-grade reporter

The Morton Junior High School dance team has been working very hard all year! Dancing at two practices a week, performing at two to three boys and girls basketball games a week, and having to be at practice from 6:00 to 7:15 am must take its toll on the dance team members.

However, Gabby Hasinger, dance team member, says it is very fun. “We get to do what we love while bonding with our friends,” she said.

Dance team is a great activity to be involved in. It seems to be much of a team-building activity. You have to rely on your teammates to support you and do their part during the performance just like they’re relying on you to do your part. Dance team sounds like it would be a whole lot of fun to participate in. All of the team members’ hard work pays off through their amazing performances!



The dance team performs creative routines at all home basketball games.

Word Power

Compiled by Valerie Smith, MJHS Secretary

-Word: Coruscate
-Part of Speech: Verb
-Definition: 1: to give off or reflect light in bright beams or flashes; sparkle, glitters; 2: to be brilliant or showy in technique or style

How might you use “coruscate” in your writing?

The holiday season sparkles with opportunity to introduce the word “coruscate” into your vocabulary. Here are three glittering examples...

Examples:

“The winter pond began to coruscate under the full winter moon like diamonds.”

“The Sugar Plum Fairy’s elegant costume coruscated magically with every twirl.”

Clubs and Activities

Art Club Ignites the Imagination

By Emily Koranda, 8th-grade reporter

What do you do after school on Mondays? Do you go right home and do your homework, or do you stay after school for a sport or activity? Art club is one of those after-school activities at Morton Junior High School that you can do on Mondays.

It's a very relaxed club, with an incredible teacher to help lead the equally wonderful club. The club does all sorts of things. Some days, students get lessons on new styles or techniques, and last year they even made pancake art! Don't be worried

or concerned if that's not your style, though; art club may still be for you. There is a lot of free time included.

Hannah Brown, art club member, said, "I love how much freedom we have. Even if we are doing a lesson, there's so much freedom in what we get to do. It's so fun, and I love it."

What if you think it's too late to join? Well, it's never too late! You can show up any time in the year, and you will be welcomed with open arms.

Another reason to join art club is that it may give you extra time on your

work for art class. Just need to add a few extra details but don't think you'll have enough time? Come in, hang out, and work on your project.



T3 Club Takes Students to a Whole New World

By Lainie Kurtz, 7th-grade reporter

T3 is a club that is about taking you to a whole new fantasy world. In T3, students play board games, such as Dungeons and Dragons and other mythical games. Right now they're working on their characters for the game.

T3 came up with its name because the original name was Tabletop Time and they meet on every day that starts with a T (Tuesday and Thursday). There are about 15 students involved now and plenty of room for new students to join.

Mr. Parrott, one of the faculty sponsors, said it gives students a place to hang out with friends and still meet new people.

Students in the club are very creative. They come up with their own designs for Dungeons and Dragons. Brecken Carter, a 7th-grade club member, said, "It's a team game. We go through missions to complete the challenge."

Brennan Bjorling, 7th-grade club member, said it's the best part of his week. T3 is about making new friends and knowing you have something in common. It's open for anyone to join!

MJHS Students Band Together

By Ava Ciocca, 7th-grade reporter

Band is a huge part of the Morton school district, so we interviewed one band student, 7th-grader Elyse McNeer, who shared her thoughts on the program!

Q: What instrument do you play, and why did you pick it?

Elyse: "Clarinet. It was not really a common instrument, and I wanted to try something more unique. It also looked cool."

Q: How has band influenced you the most?

Elyse: "I would say it helps with education because it makes you multitask and know the rhythms, and it helps you

in the long run."

Q: What do you like the most about band?

Elyse: "It's really fun when you are in band because you can make new friends and you can relate to them."

Q: Is there a certain reason you joined band?

Elyse: "My friends were in band, so I joined, and I have enjoyed it since."

Q: Do you think you are going to stick with it next year, and if so, why?

Elyse: "Yeah, I will stick with it. It's not something I want to quit, even if it's just a hobby."

Games

Winter Wordsearch

E W M P M F E Z R T J W
K C T N R I Z C E A J I
V D A O U C T S B O L N
Y F Z L T K Y T M C H T
M E R G P A T X E W M E
N X C A D E O T C N G R
T U Y I C N R V E H S D
F M L V O S X I D K L H
T O V E P O S Z F O B R
H S N O W M A N C V I J
E T A L O C O H C T O H
C Y B Z C S T S O R F U

Coat
Fireplace
Holidays
Scarf

Cold
Frost
Hot chocolate
Snowman

December
Frozen
Mittens
Winter



Winter Word Scramble

1. EGISLH
2. INNUPEG
3. ILCEIC
4. TESLE
5. PLSIERPY
6. LSHVOE

Answer Key: 1. Sleigh; 2. Penguin; 3. Icicle;
4. Sleet; 5. Slippery; 6. Shovel

Fun Facts

*Compiled by Caroline Easley,
7th-grade reporter*

The largest ever recorded snowflake was in Keogh, Montana in 1887 and was 15 inches wide!

Scotland has 421 words for "snow"!

According to the website mentalfloss.com, in each winter in the U.S., at least 1 septillion ice crystals fall from the sky. That's 24 zeros!

Jokes

*Compiled by Olivia Collins,
7th-grade reporter*

Q: Why did the M&M go to school?

A: Because he wanted to be a Smartie!

Q: What goes through towns and up and over hills but doesn't move?

A: The road!

Q: Why did the boy keep his trumpet out in the snow?

A: Because he liked cool music.

Sudoku

5	3			7				
6			1	9	5			
	9	8					6	
8				6				3
4			8		3			1
7				2				6
	6					2	8	
			4	1	9			5
				8			7	9