

Potter Pride Newspaper

Volume 3 ○ Issue 1 ○ November 2020

Newspaper Contents

Students and Staff
(pages 2-5)

Book Love
(pages 6-8)

Sports
(pages 9-12)

Clubs and Activities
(pages 13-14)

Opinion
(page 15)

Games
(pages 16-17)

Writing Center Members

Ella Arthur
Emma Belsly
Rachel Clauson
Lexie Dentino
Kylie Donnelly
Ethan Estes
Abigail Foster
Addie Gosteli
Ella Grayson
Holly Hixon
Chloe Holland
Olivia Huff
Aaden Lamar
Caela Myers
Delanie Nichols
Laynie Reed
Gen Reinhart
Taylor Rice
Lydia Smith
Hannah Strubhar
Avery Studebaker
Lilia Volkova
Olivia Walraven
Advisors: Ms. Shore &
Mr. Giovanetto

Weathering Pandemic Changes

By Emma Belsly (8th-grade reporter) and Aaden Lamar (7th-grade reporter)

Covid-19 has been playing a big role in schooling this year at MJHS. The teachers and students have had to persevere through many challenges to keep everyone safe.

No one knew how these changes would impact everyone, but it has turned out well so far. Mr. Hoffman, MJHS principal, said that students have dealt with these challenges amazingly.

One of the biggest changes at MJHS is having to wear masks. Both students and teachers have done a great job cooperating with that new requirement. Carly Whitaker, 8th-grader, states that "we wear masks, which aren't a big deal. Everyone is handling them really well!"

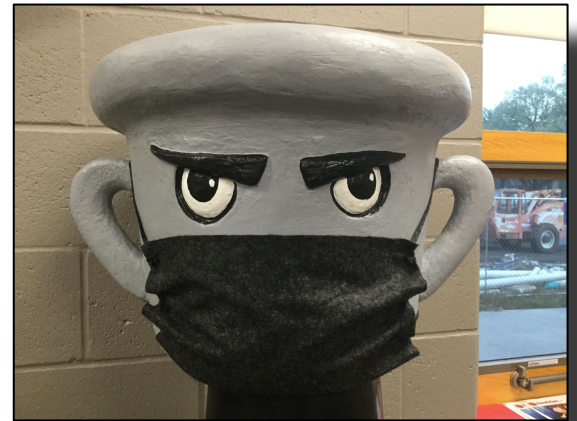
Another big change is that teachers have had to adjust classrooms to maintain social distancing. A lot of teachers typically have group tables with people sitting close together, but this year most of them have had to go back to individual desks or only a couple of students per table.

To keep everyone safe, the teachers have to sanitize shared resources including desks, books, and writing utensils. Many have used this to their advantage, turning "cleaning time" into a time for students to help out, chat with classmates while distanced, or play review games while completing the new sanitation

procedures.

Students want to talk to their friends, and the teachers have been working hard to add teamwork and discussion in their lessons as much as possible while still maintaining social distancing requirements.

Overall, teachers and students alike have done a fantastic job improvising to turn "social" distancing into just "spatial" distancing. As Mr. Hoffman says, "we need to be wise and reasonable" in order to keep everyone safe and healthy.



Even our mascot, Clay the Potter, is wearing a mask!

Upcoming Events

NOVEMBER

Nov. 11: No School
(Veterans Day)

Nov. 25-27: No School
(Thanksgiving Vacation)

DECEMBER

Dec. 2: Early Dismissal at
11:00 A.M.

Dec. 18: Early Dismissal
at 11:00 A.M.

JANUARY

Dec. 21-Jan. 3: No
School (Winter Break)

Jan. 4: Early Dismissal at
11:00 A.M.

Students and Staff

Green Team Student Spotlight

By Ella Grayson, 7th-grade reporter

Each issue, we highlight different students from Morton Junior High School. For the first Student Spotlight, we interviewed Zoe Keltner, a 7th-grader. Keep reading to learn more about this MJHS Green Team student!

Q: When is your birthday?

A: "November 23, 2007."

Q: What is your favorite subject in school?

A: "Social studies, because I like learning about historical events that happened and discovering how life was back then."

Q: What is your favorite book?

A: "*Forget Me Not* by Ellie Terry because it's in poetry form, the book is very descriptive, and the author goes between both characters' perspectives."

Q: What's the most recent movie you've watched?

A: "*Enola Holmes*, and it's become my new favorite movie."

Q: What do you enjoy doing in your free time?

A: "Being with my cousins, watching movies and playing card games with my family, and taking road trips to different places."

Q: Are you in any extracurricular activities or clubs?

A: "I was in cross country on the JV team, and the dance team will be starting soon. I'm also in the band."

Q: How would you spend the perfect day?

A: "I would spend the perfect day by waking up around 8:30, going swimming, eating ice cream, eating ribs, steak, or fish, and ending the day with a family game night."



Zoe Keltner, MJHS Green Team student

Counseling Corner

*By Danielle VanMeenen and Beth Spaniol, MJHS Counselors
Adopted from Middle Years, Resources for Educators, a
division of CCH Incorporated, 2017*

Q: Several of my friends and neighbors have mentioned that their kids have anxiety. My child gets stressed out sometimes — could they be suffering from anxiety, too?

A: It's normal for middle graders to feel stressed from time to time about school, friends, or growing up. It is important to point out to them that this is a normal emotion to feel once in a while. No emotion is "bad." Rather, we should recognize our emotions as pointing out something that may need attention. For example, if a student gets anxious for a test, this emotion may be pointing to the reality that they need to spend more time preparing in advance. Or, if your child is anxious around their friends, that could be a signal that their friends are too judgmental or engaging in behaviors that would be best to be avoided. But, if they're excessively anxious for long periods of time and miss out on activities because of it, that may signal a bigger problem. Anxiety disorder symptoms include worrying persistently for weeks or months, trouble sleeping, frequent headaches or stomach aches, and avoiding school or friends. If you notice any of these symptoms in your child, contact your pediatrician. They can refer you to a specialist if necessary.

Students and Staff

Science Teacher Spotlight

By Kylie Donnelly, 8th-grade reporter

Mrs. Ewing is a science teacher at Morton Jr. High School. She was born in Los Angeles, California and was adopted. She has been teaching at MJHS for three years now.

While Covid-19 forced many changes for all of the students and teachers, some of the major changes happened in the science classrooms. Mrs. Ewing said, "A lot of the labs have to be online now. Students aren't able to do group work on labs, so it all has to be individual."

A lot of people around the world thought students would struggle with all of the regulations, but Mrs. Ewing reported that "students are handling Covid changes very maturely. I think they are doing a good job hand sanitizing and keeping masks on."

Many things have changed with Covid, but that doesn't mean that teaching and learning can't be fun.

Mrs. Ewing said some of her favorite parts of this year are that "everybody is staying sanitized and the support we are getting from the schools."

She continued, "I think it is worth it to be in person for school because there are experiences that can't be taught or learned outside the classroom. That being said, I would understand if we had to go back to remote for health reasons, but I definitely prefer to be here."

The current 8th-graders had their 7th-grade year cut short and missed a lot, but Mrs. Ewing wishes that they could have gotten to do dissection. She said, "Even though a lot of students don't think they will like it, they end up having fun in the end."

Overall, even though the coronavirus has had a big effect on life in the science classroom, teachers are still finding ways to help students learn.

Ways to Stay Safe During a Pandemic

By Addie Gosteli, 7th-grade reporter

There are many ways to stay safe during this pandemic, and sometimes we all need a little reminder of the ways we can contribute to keeping everyone healthy. The reason that we have to wear masks properly, put on hand sanitizer, and wipe down the tables and desks, is to protect ourselves and others around us.

Let's talk about masks. While no one loves wearing masks, they help so much. The reason we wear masks is to protect others. We wear masks so that all of our germs and hot air don't end up in someone else's respiratory system. A while ago, there was a TikTok video that Bill Nye made about masks that many people were watching ([here's the link](#) if you haven't seen it).

Putting on hand sanitizer may just feel like another thing that you have to do. However, putting on hand sanitizer is very important. When you put on hand sanitizer, it kills most of the germs on your hands. This means all the germs you picked up in math class are not going to end up in ELA. This stops the spread of germs, which means you and

your classmates have less of a chance to get sick.

Wiping off our tables and chairs is also very helpful for us staying safe. It is probably a big reason why we are not in remote learning for 2nd quarter. The teachers do this at the end of each class for our safety. They do it because they care about us. Maybe next time you see a teacher wiping down a desk or table, you can tell the teacher thank you and that you appreciate it when they take time to make sure the desks are clean.

If we continue to make good choices, hopefully we can last the whole year without going remote!

You can represent MJHS with a Clay the Potter mask!



Students and Staff

Remote Learning Experiences

By Holly Hixon, 8th-grade reporter

With a year like this one, most, if not all, parents and students have had to put up with multiple tough decisions, especially when it comes to choosing between in-person vs. remote learning. What are some differences about e-learning, and how will that affect students? Will there be available resources for the students to use to keep up with their fellow students at school?

Online learning allows for an overall safer learning environment, which is the main reason why many of those students chose to stay home. Sharon Chen, 8th-grade remote learner, said, "I did not want to risk the safety and health of my family." She chose online learning, allowing her to keep learning safely at home. Another 8th-grade remote learner, Myleigh Gage, also agreed and said that she would prefer to not wear a mask all day.

While there are some struggles like less socialization, the Apex program provides a lot of information in one lesson, allowing a good string of learning in one day. Most would agree that e-learning takes a good chunk of the day, almost 6-8 hours. It also allows students the freedom of breaks when they feel stressed over work and a longer lunch break. However, taking advantage of this privilege could cause problems.

Alena Lu, 8th-grade remote learner, said, "I fully understand that the teachers are also trying their best to help us in any way they can."

Whichever option students choose to do this year, whether that is e-learning or in-person schooling, students and families just need to keep in mind how it might affect them and their education.

White Team Student Spotlight

By Olivia Walraven, 7th-grade reporter

Our White Team Student Spotlight is all about 7th-grader Lauren Mulconrey this issue!

Q: Where were you born, and where did you go to elementary school?

A: "I was born in Peoria and went to Lettie Brown Elementary."

Q: What is your favorite color?

A: "Pink or red."

Q: What is your least favorite food?

A: "No least favorite, but my favorite food is watermelon."

Q: What is your favorite and least favorite mask?

A: "My favorite is the one with the metal nose, and I don't like the ones without wires because they fog up my glasses."

Q: What is your favorite project so far in school?

A: "My favorite project was the one about the scientific method."

Q: What instrument do you play?

A: "I play the violin in the school orchestra."



Students and Staff

Represent Morton Through Potter Apparel

By Hannah Strubhar, 8th-grade reporter

No matter the time of year, Morton apparel is always in season. From sports teams to Morton-themed sweatshirts, T-shirts, and more, you can always find what you need from the store at MJHS.

Mr. Carter, MJHS assistant principal, runs the store, and is eager to tell you all about it. "We started selling apparel to provide a service for families and help raise school spirit," Mr. Carter said.

The shop is currently in the cafeteria, and any students who want to can shop there. Money gained from the store goes toward buying more cool apparel for students. If you have time after school, check it out!



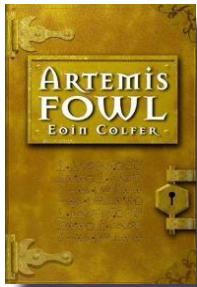
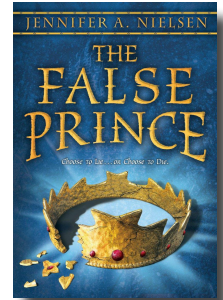
Book Love

Book Recs

By Lydia Smith, 8th-grade reporter

***The False Prince* by Jennifer A. Nielsen:**

The False Prince is an amazing book that keeps readers on the edge of their seats. This book is full of unexpected twists and turns. *The False Prince* is all about an orphan boy named Sage, as well as three other orphans who are taken by a man named Bevin Conner. Sage is skeptical of Conner's plan for the boys, which is to compete to impersonate a prince. Conner tells the boys one night that they could leave and not be a part of it. However, if they leave, there is a possibility of being tracked down with dangerous consequences. *The False Prince* states, "If I had to do it all over again, I would not have chosen this life. Then again, I'm not sure I ever had a choice." This book is very intense and impossible to stop reading!

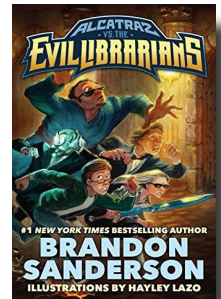


***Artemis Fowl* by Eoin Colfer:**

This is a more challenging book for readers who enjoy books that jump from different perspectives. Artemis Fowl is a 12-year-old genius who uses his knowledge to steal a fairy bible and capture an unwilling fairy named Holly Short. He holds her for a ransom of gold and plans to use the gold to restore his family fortune, with the assistance of Butler, Artemis' 7-foot bodyguard. Artemis' father is missing and assumed dead, but Artemis still has hope. His mother locked herself away when Artemis Sr. went missing and has gone mentally insane. Read the book to find out how Artemis' plan plays out!

***Alcatraz vs. the Evil Librarians* by Brandon Sanderson:**

This book is hilarious and is the first in a series of five. What's the difference between breaking something and destroying it? Alcatraz argues that destroying something means nothing is left afterwards. He breaks things; he does not destroy them. You might say Alcatraz breaks everything he touches, and that would be accurate. From doorknobs to chickens, Alcatraz has been breaking things and moving between foster homes his whole life. Read this book to learn with Alcatraz about his family and the real world outside of Hushlands.



Word Power

Compiled by Valerie Smith, MJHS Secretary

Word: pleth·o·ra

Pronunciation: /'pleTHə·rə/

Part of speech: noun

Definition

1: overabundance; excess
2: *Pathology Archaic.* a morbid condition due to excess of red corpuscles in the blood or increase in the quantity of blood.

Examples

The **plethora** of restaurants in the area made it a favorite destination.

The incongruencies in her story left us with a **plethora** of questions.

Book Love

First Chapter Friday

By Caela Myers, 7th-grade reporter

This issue for First Chapter Friday, the book being described is the first chapter of *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* by J.K. Rowling. For people who live in England, it's called *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*. If it sounds interesting, there are copies available to check out at MJHS!

The book starts out with meeting the Dursleys. They are very normal and have one kid named Dudley. When the dad, Vernon, goes to work, he notices some strange things. He notices that there are lots of people in the streets in funny clothes and celebrating. He also sees a cat who he thinks is reading a map and the street sign.

On his way back home, he realizes that all of the people are whispering the name Harry Potter. Vernon gets scared because he thinks they may be talking about his nephew. When he gets home, he asks his wife, Petunia, and she reveals that she does not have a good connection

with the Potters (Lily Potter is Petunia's sister). Albus Dumbledore then uses the Put-Outer to take out all of the streetlights. The cat that Vernon saw earlier approaches Dumbledore and then transforms into a human. She is introduced as Professor McGonagall. Dumbledore and McGonagall talk, and Dumbledore reveals that James and Lily Potter are dead.

Readers then meet Hagrid on his flying motorcycle, and he is bringing baby Harry. They all look at Harry and notice his scar that You-Know-Who gave him when he tried to kill him. They all say goodbye, and Dumbledore leaves him with a letter addressed to his aunt and uncle explaining what has happened.

Will Harry ever find out the truth about his parents? What will happen next? If you are interested in this book, there are copies in almost all libraries, including our very own at MJHS!

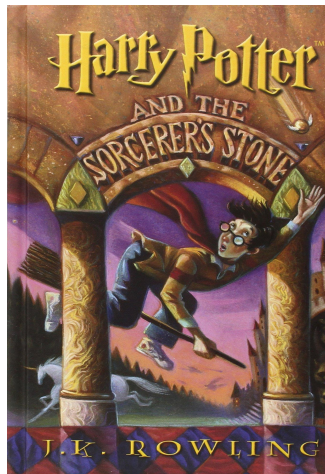
Book Quotes – *Harry Potter* series by J.K. Rowling

Compiled by Rachel Clauson, 7th-grade reporter

"Happiness can be found even in the darkest of times if one only remembers to turn on the light." -Albus Dumbledore

"It is our choices that show us what we truly are far more than our abilities." -Albus Dumbledore

"We are only as strong as we are united, as weak as we are divided." -Albus Dumbledore



"We must all face the choice between what is right and what is easy." -Albus Dumbledore

"Things we lose have a way of coming back to us in the end, if not in the way we expect." -Luna Lovegood

"Follow the spiders; why couldn't it be follow the butterflies?" -Ron Weasley

Book Love

Book Trivia: How Dystopian Are You?

By Melissa Kruse, MJHS Instructional Coach

Dystopian novels have become extremely popular among young adult readers, and for good reason! Utopias gone wrong, these books tend to revolve around government oppression, lack of freedom, and some C-R-A-Z-Y rules that must be followed...or ELSE. Of course...depressing storylines can't survive alone, so the protagonist is always there to save the day. Everyday Jacks and Jills rise up against their oppressors to free the population or to break the mold.

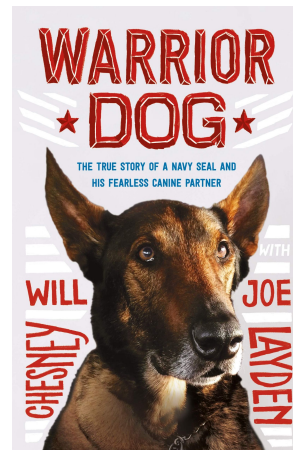
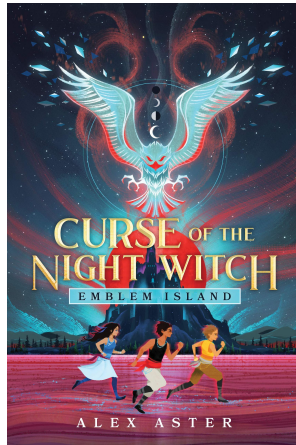
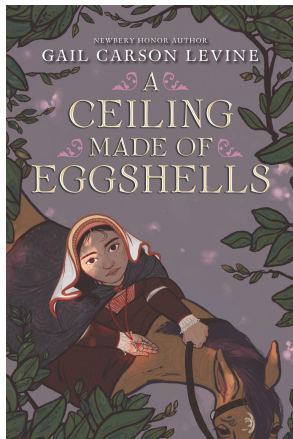
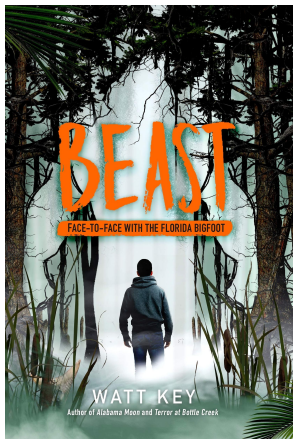
Even if you haven't read many dystopian novels, you're probably familiar with their attention-grabbing, high-intensity plots. Take a look at the first lines below (these are current Amazon best-selling dystopian novels for teens), and see if you can guess which book they come from! (Answers are at the bottom...but no peeking!)

1. "There is one mirror in my house. It is behind a sliding panel in the hallway upstairs. Our faction allows me to stand in front of it on the second day of every third month, the day my mother cuts my hair."
2. "When we got the letter in the post, my mother was ecstatic. She had already decided that all our problems were solved, gone forever. The big hitch in her brilliant plan was me. I didn't think I was a particularly disobedient daughter, but this was where I drew the line."
3. "Coriolanus released the fistful of cabbage into the pot of boiling water and swore that one day it would never pass his lips again. But this was not that day. He needed to eat a large bowl of the anemic stuff, and drink every drop of broth, to prevent his stomach from growling during the reaping ceremony."
4. "The scythe arrived late on a cold November afternoon. Citra was at the dining room table, slaving over a particularly difficult algebra problem, shuffling variables, unable to solve for X or Y, when this new and far more pernicious variable entered her life's equation."
5. "He began his new life standing up, surrounded by cold darkness and stale, dusty air. Metal ground against metal; a lurching shudder shook the floor beneath him."

Answer Key: 1. *Divergent*; 2. *The Selection*; 3. *The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes*; 4. *Scythe*; 5. *The Maze Runner*

New Books in the LMC

Compiled by Abigail Foster, 8th-grade reporter



Sports

Hit, Run, Score!

By Taylor Rice, 7th-grade reporter

The softball team of 2020, coached by Megan Hasler and Jessica Kerby, took home the regional championship on September 26, at Birchwood Park. The regional championship determines who is the best out of the area.

Lots of support came from family and friends. Katelyn Cantwell, a 7th-grader who played on the varsity team, said, "The support of my friends and family helped me through the game by pushing me to work harder." Some MJHS students even came to the game to cheer them on.

Cantwell also said, "I always practice with my dad and can't thank him enough for it. I truly believe that is why I am where I am today. I have some amazing friends that came to support me as well."

After the game was over, it meant the season finally had to come to an end. The whole team (players listed at the bottom of the page) learned and improved a lot during the season and dealt with the Covid-19 situation very well.

Riley Gashaw, an 8th-grader, said, "This year was definitely a great experience. It was under different circumstances, but we were grateful to have a season. We were not able to play as many games as usual, but that gave us more time to practice and work towards our team goals. Everyone was willing to work hard to improve, and I think that mindset helped us lead through our season."

Even if they could only play three games a week, that never stopped them as they continued to practice hard and get better. Even the girls that said they never thought softball was their sport had built up a lot of skill.

The team also can't thank the coaches enough for the time and effort they put into teaching them and helping them perform as better athletes.

Overall, the softball team for 2020 had great success and made an impact at Morton Junior High School.

2020 Team Members

Varsity:

Courtney Bunton***
Hannah Bankert***
Riley Gashaw***
Ava Haberland***
Anja Ruxlow***
Alyvia Springer***
Amelia VanMeenen***
Callie Winstead***
Sydney Brown***
Lily Smith***
Aja Oertle***
Taylor Rice
Haley Carpenter***
Julia Granger***
Avery Sullivan***
Allison Werries***
Katelyn Cantwell
Lydia Smith***

Junior Varsity:

Allie Anderson
Isabella Crider
Brielle Hopkins
Maybeline Schmidgal
Mahaela Hauter
Kelsey Tisdale

Key:

*** = 8th-grade



Sports

Cross Country: Refusing to Lose

By Emma Belsly, 8th-grade reporter

Ever since August, Morton Jr. High's own cross country team persevered through challenges to improve. With the many different personalities and people who participate in this sport, everyone at cross country thoroughly enjoys it.

There is so much to be enjoyed at cross country, from beating one's personal record, P.R., to the friendships and relationships one forms.

Christian Harris, 8th-grade captain, states that his favorite part about cross country is the "team aspect" because he "loves to run with his teammates."

Harris isn't the only one who feels this way. Despite other sports, interests, or preferences, so many students love cross country.

In fact, the cross country team had 105 runners this year, compared to last year's record of 80 runners. There were so many kids that the cross country team had to split into a Varsity and JV (Junior Varsity) team.

People don't have to enjoy running to do cross country. Charlotte Potts, an 8th-grade JV runner, said that she loves "being on a team and getting to encourage and motivate all of your teammates."

Despite the challenges from Covid-19, the runners were able to have a fantastic season. Both girls and boys won their sectional in Pekin, the boys getting a perfect score of 15 and the girls getting a close score of 17.

Both Harris and Potts would recommend trying out cross country to anyone who was interested. Next season, students should definitely consider joining this sport.

Hey Batter, Batter, Swing!

By Ella Grayson (7th-grader) and Olivia Huff (8th-grader)

It's going, it's going, it's gone! It's 17-0! It was a strong season for the baseball teams. This year was the third time in Potter history that boys baseball went undefeated.



Andrew Brooks, 8th-grader, said that everyone on the team enjoyed the season, and he along with the team are so grateful they were able to play this year—even though the season was cut short. His best game was 2-4 with a double, single, and 3 RBIs. He pitched 2 strikeouts and no walks, with the final score of the game being 16-2.

"Baseball keeps me motivated to work hard and do well on my school work because I love playing baseball so much. I try hard on my work to stay eligible," Brooks said.

Due to Covid-19, baseball had to take necessary precautions. When the players were in the dugout or off field, they were required to wear masks, along with the umpires and coaches.

Brooks said that getting to be around the team is his favorite part about baseball because being around all of them is what actually makes playing baseball super fun and enjoyable.

Sports

Dance Team Offers New Opportunities

By Avery Studebaker, 7th-grade reporter

Once every year, Morton Junior High School has tryouts for the school's dance team. Bennett Spangler, 7th-grader, was one of the students who made the team this year!

She said, "Being on a dance team feels like a big new opportunity. You meet new people, you learn new things, and you experience more about yourself. Dance brings happiness to me. It's always been something that's never let me down; it has always been there for me."

Spangler, most likely, likes many types of dance moves, but she does have a couple of favorites. Her favorite move is a Russian leap, and her favorite acro trick is an aerial. She said, "My favorite style of dance is hip hop because it's really upbeat, and I also like jazz. Ballet is my least favorite because it's more boring and slow, but that's just my opinion."

She added, "When I forget a move, I just get back up and keep going. I look around to see what other people are doing just in case."

Spangler has dance practice every day. She has

a pretty busy schedule. Some of the things she brings to dance are her dance bag, jazz shoes, tennis shoes, ballet shoes, contemporary shoes, a water bottle, and a snack. She knows many people on her team, and some of her good friends who are also on the dance team are Ramsey Carey, Andrea Salazar, Julia Polhans, Caitlin Magnuson, and Izzy Crider.

Since this school year looks very different than normal, everyone on the team has to wear masks, like students and teachers do during the school day. Spangler said that wearing a mask while dancing tends to "take your breath away, so you have to dance harder and use more energy. After doing your dance one time, you're already sweating."

Dance team is a great opportunity to make new friends, learn new dances, and have fun in general! Tryouts were already held, but there's always next year. For all dancers, here's something to remember: "If you stumble, make it a part of the dance" (Anonymous).



The writing center is now available for tutoring! If you ever need help on a writing assignment for any class, stop by Ms. Shore's room (Room 212) Mondays after school (3-3:45 p.m.) or Thursdays before school (7:15-7:50 a.m.) for peer feedback from the students who created this newspaper. You can also receive online peer feedback by filling out [this form](#). The student writing coaches look forward to helping you get it *write*!

Photo Attribution: <http://clipart-library.com/clipart/n1596509.htm>

Sports

Cheerleading: Preserving Potter Pride

By Delanie Nichols, 7th-grade reporter

The cheer team at Morton Junior High School is a group of girls who cheer on teams, typically the basketball team, while the sports team is playing the game. They also perform at halftime by putting together a performance that includes tumbling, dancing, stunting, and cheers. The cheer team consists of eight 7th-graders and eight 8th-graders. Here's some insight from a few members on the cheer team and what the season will look like due to Covid-19 concerns.

"I don't know what the cheer season will look like this year, if we really get to have one at all. If we do, it will definitely be really different and weird if there's not a crowd there," said Blair Litersky, a 7th-grader at MJHS.

Because Covid-19 is still bad in some areas, MJHS does not find it as safe to have a crowd that fills the bleachers like they usually do. This will be a little bit different for the players and the cheer team due to the fact that the cheerleaders are there to get the crowd excited, while the players on the team are there to entertain the audience. Without the live audience, the cheerleaders are going to have to find another way to excite the fans, possibly through a screen.

The cheer team has been a place where many people can show off their talents for tumbling, dancing, and performing. But, most importantly, it's a place where students can make a lot more friends.

Litersky said, "I definitely recommend that new 7th and 8th-graders try out next year because it gives you a head start with new friends at the beginning of the year. It's so fun because you get to cheer on other teams with them and overall just get to know them better throughout the year."

Trying out for the cheer team is overall just a great experience, especially if you are super outgoing and want to make new friends. But, you also don't have to be outgoing to make the cheer team. Little to no experience is needed, according to Litersky, and it can really help boost your confidence for the school year.

As well as the experience with new friends, you can also learn a lot from the cheer team. Coaches teach members new things at practice, such as working on new tumbling skills, arm strength through stunting, performing,

and flexibility.

Natural human features can also come into play if you want to join cheer. If you are tall, you could be a backspot for stunting. If you are short, you could possibly be a flyer. If you are flexible from any other sport you play, you could have really good toe touches or hurdlers.

Most of all, the team is mainly meant to have fun. The cheer team has already had such a good experience, even though the cheer season hasn't officially started yet. There have been some group activities where the teammates can meet each other and become friends, which has been really helpful. All of the teammates definitely recommend trying out. Overall, trying out could be a really fun experience for you, so if you are hesitant about trying out and don't know if you should do it or not, definitely go for it!



Photo Attribution: <https://webstockreview.net/image/cheerleading-clipart-red/174193.html>

Clubs and Activities

MJHS Goes Into the Woods

By Lexie Dentino, 7th-grade reporter

Get excited for this year's musical! Starting October 14, in the choir room, 7th and 8th-grade students started auditions for this year's musical, *Into The Woods Jr.*

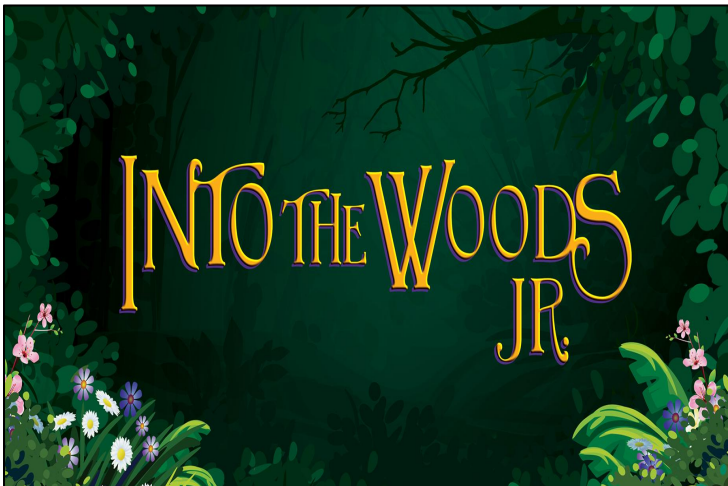
Mr. Beutel, one of the three directors, said, "*Into the Woods* is a famous Broadway musical that has become very popular in recent years. The music and story are super fun."

There is a total of 19 parts in this year's production, along with backstage help. To audition, students sang one of the pre-selected songs from the musical in front of the three wonderful directors, Mr. Beutel, Mr. Rocke, and Miss Millburg. If they did well in auditions, then they got the opportunity to be called back on October 16. There was also the opportunity for students to sign up for tech crew.

What gets kids the most interested in joining the musical? "Well, the students love the fact that they can work with their friends to sing, dance, act, and overall just have a great time," said Mr. Beutel.

If you love acting or even if you just want to try something new, consider this -- studies have shown that being in musicals 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. Even if you don't like to sing but you still want to show your creativity, consider signing up as the backstage crew!

The directors hope you come to this year's musical on February 5-7, 2021, and try out next year for another amazing opportunity!



This year's musical is Into the Woods Jr. and will be performed on February 5-7, 2021.



Limited Edition Overcomes Pandemic Obstacles

By Abigail Foster, 8th-grade reporter

Even with all of the changes due to Covid-19 this year, the singing group Limited Edition, directed by Mr. Beutel, has still started. Auditions were on August 20, and the first practice was on September 2. The group meets every Wednesday after school.

According to Mr. Beutel, the pandemic did not affect Limited Edition, or L.E., practices very much. He said, "Really the only differences are that we are wearing masks and spreading further apart to be safe."

However, the concert situation is very different this year. He said, "We plan to go to Bertha Frank and record our songs for the first couple concerts, so they will be virtual concerts."

Despite these obstacles, both Mr. Beutel and his students are having a great time singing together. Mr. Beutel's favorite part about teaching kids to sing is "seeing the kids light up when we make fantastic musical moments."

Charlotte Potts, who has been in L.E. for both 7th and 8th grades, said that she auditioned for L.E. to improve her singing skills. She also said, "I love the style of music that Limited Edition performs."

The first two songs that L.E. will be singing are "You're Welcome" from *Moana* and the jazz standard, "Sing, Sing, Sing."

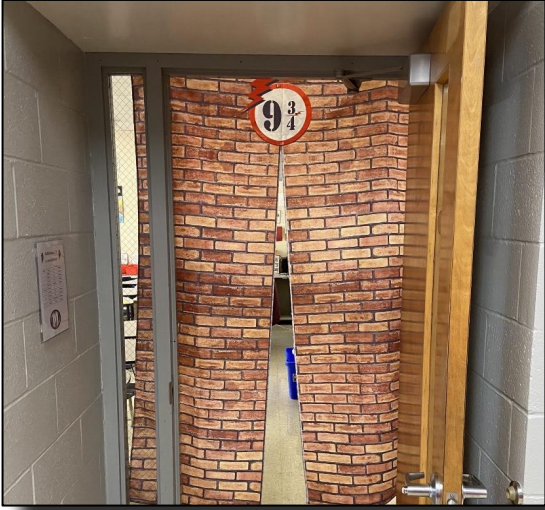
If you auditioned for L.E. and didn't make it, Mr. Beutel says that you should keep singing. "The more you sing, the more confident you will become in your voice. Also, voice lessons can be very helpful if you are very committed and really want to see quick improvement!"

Potts advised 7th-graders who didn't make it into the group this year to audition again next year. She said, "Keep singing and don't be discouraged!" Auditions are closed for this year as the group members have been decided and rehearsals have started, but there is always next year!

Clubs and Activities

Hogwarts Express Takes First Trip of the Year

By Rachel Clauson and Caela Myers, 7th-grade reporters



Harry Potter Club members get to walk through Platform 9 ¾ at each meeting, just like in the books and movies!

Have you ever read the *Harry Potter* books by J.K. Rowling? If not, then you're missing out. If you want to get started, a great place to start would be the Harry Potter Club, a new club that has started this year. To join, you can either talk to Ms. Shore (the Green Team ELA teacher), Mrs. Ewing (the White Team science teacher), Mr. Stork (a Resource ELA teacher), or Mrs. Fitzpatrick (the band teacher).

At the first club meeting, students in the club were sorted into their Hogwarts houses in a sorting ceremony. Throughout the rest of the year, students will get to discuss opinions on different parts of the books, play Harry Potter trivia games, and much more.

All are welcome! It doesn't matter if you are a wizard, witch, or Muggle. And, if you don't know what a Muggle is, that is just one more reason to start reading the books. Check out the LMC if you want to check out any of the books in the series!

Sing Your Heart Out in Choir

By Olivia Huff, 8th-grade reporter

Let me hear you sing! Gabby Juarez is an 8th-grader and is part of the MJHS choir, where everyone is welcome to sing their heart out.

Juarez is part of the alto section in the MJHS choir. There are three parts that make up choir: the alto section -- mostly girls who sing mid-range and usually get the harmony; the baritone section -- mostly boys because they are the lowest and have the harmony; and the soprano section -- mostly girls because they have to sing pretty high, and they have the melody most of the time.

If you are interested in joining choir, here are some tips from Juarez that you should know: "First of all, don't be nervous. We are all very accepting, and it's a very fun group to be a part of. Second, take care of your voice. Don't do anything that could hurt it, especially not before a performance. Lastly, listen and watch the director."

The choir usually does four to five concerts a year, which Juarez believes is a good amount so they can learn and perfect the songs.

She has been in choir in 5th, 7th, and now 8th-grade. Some of the songs she has sung are "Here Comes the

Sun" by the Beatles, "The Lion Sleeps Tonight," "Happy Together," and "Dies Irae." She said that her favorite part about choir is "the environment, how everyone is so fun and chill, and all the good times we have. I've always loved singing, so I like how we get to perfect our singing."

The choir is always allowing more singers to join. Don't be shy to sing your heart out in the MJHS choir!



Opinion

Should Tennis Be a School Sport?

By Chloe Holland and Gen Reinhart, 8th-grade reporters



Should tennis be a school sport? Yes, it should be.

According to Charlie Garrison, 8th-grade Gray Team student, “There should be a tennis team because there’s not a lot of other sports to represent Morton.” Garrison also said he would join a tennis team.

Tennis can have several benefits, such as improving mental and physical health. Having a tennis team at school would also bring others together.

Haley Martin, 8th-grade Gray Team student, said, “I think there should be a tennis team because I know good players at the junior high and some teachers who I think would enjoy becoming a coach.”

A junior high tennis team would be good practice for the high school team. Martin also said, “Some benefits

would be that someone could start or continue to play tennis and get to experience it for high school.”

The Green Team science teacher, Mr. Parrott, provides somewhat of a different perspective. He said, “Sure, a tennis team would be great if there’s a spot where we can do it and it doesn’t interfere with other activities. The only problem is that there’s not a lot of other places in the area that have tennis as a sport. It would become not really playing against other teams at that point, just having a club rather than a team.” So, there’s a bit of a struggle with having an actual team, due to the IESA not having a tennis team.

The question still remains then: should there be a tennis team at MJHS, and if there were, would it be more of a tennis club instead of an actual team?

Photo Attribution: <http://clipart-library.com/clipart/983722.htm>

Should There Be Year-Round School?

By Ella Arthur, 7th-grade reporter

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to be in school all year? Year-round school is when summer break is swapped out for a series of shorter breaks throughout the year (edweek.org).

In the U.S., 3,181 schools go all year round. About 46 states have year-round education. Often, schools that go all year organize a schedule that keeps the kids on a “normal” schedule (niche.com).

Lauren Mulconrey, a 7th-grader on White Team, said, “If we had school all year, we would probably have higher IQs and be more ready for college and jobs in the future. We would also have more time to practice sports and do more involved activities like planting a school garden.”

Year-round school could benefit a lot of kids. Kids may feel more comfortable at school because they would be more familiar with the teachers and other students. It is important for kids to feel comfortable in their learning environment, so they will be more open to sharing their thoughts and ideas with the class.

Teachers might have more time to meet with students and discuss things that they may be struggling with. This could be helpful to kids who may struggle with certain things

in school.

Miss Millburg, the 7th-grade White Team ELA teacher said, “I think some advantages of year-round school would be a more structured and consistent learning environment. I would hope that achievement gaps would no longer increase if we did not have the summer off, and I feel we could spend less time reviewing at the beginning of the school year.”

There may be some disadvantages to year-round school as well. It may decrease the time children spend with their families. Social media has already started to take over society. Most teenagers can barely go one hour without checking Facebook, TikTok, and other social media apps. Students would not have the summer months to be home with their families.

Whether you think year-round school is a good idea or not, there are definitely both advantages and disadvantages involved. A strong case could be made for the support or opposition of year-round school. If it was up to you, which would you choose -- our current school schedule with summers off or year-round schooling?

Games

Word Search

Compiled by Lilia Volkova, 7th-grade reporter

Fall

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

APPLE
HARVEST
PUMPKIN
CANDY
GHOUL
TURKEY
CORN MAZE
FOOTBALL
SCARECROW
THANKSGIVING
LATTE

Jokes

Compiled by Lilia Volkova, 7th-grade reporter
Jokes from Boys' Life Magazine, "30 Funny
Back-To-School Jokes"

Luke comes home from his first day of school, and his mother asks, "What did you learn today?"

"Not enough," Luke replies. "They said I have to go back tomorrow."

Johnny: "Teacher, would you punish me for something I didn't do?"

Teacher: "Of course not."

Johnny: "Good because I didn't do my homework."

Stevie: "Hey, Mom, I got a hundred in school today!"

Mom: "That's great. What in?"

Stevie: "A 40 in Reading and a 60 in Spelling."

Would You Rather...

Compiled by Abigail Foster, 8th-grade reporter
Questions from ConversationStartersWorld.com

- Talk to animals OR speak all human languages?
- Be covered in fur OR scales?
- Have all the traffic lights you approach turn green OR never have to stand in line again?
- Go back to age 5 with everything you know now OR know everything now that your future self will learn?
- Be a reverse centaur OR a reverse mermaid?
- Have to read aloud every word you read OR sing everything you say?
- Wear a wedding dress every day OR wear a swimsuit every day?
- Have skin that changes color based on your emotions OR tattoos appear all over your body depicting what you did yesterday?

Brain Teasers

Compiled by Laynie Reed, 7th-grade reporter
Brain Teasers from Total Success Brain Teaser Quiz

1. MAN
BOARD

4. STAND
I

2. R|E|A|D||N|G

5. CYCLE
CYCLE
CYCLE

3. R
ROAD
A
D





Answer Key: 1. Man overboard; 2. Reading between the lines; 3. Crossroads; 4. I understand; 5. Tricycle

Games

Interesting Phobias

Compiled by Ethan Estes, 7th-grade reporter

If you have ever wondered about different types of phobias and what people can be scared of, then here is a list of interesting phobias!

1. Claustrophobia: Extreme fear of confined places
2. Beetle phobia: Fear of beetles
3. Hydrophobia: Extreme fear of water, especially as a symptom of rabies
4. Musophobia: Strong fear of mice and rats
5. Arachnophobia: A fear of spiders 
6. Anthophobia: A fear of flowers
7. Arithmophobia: A fear of numbers
8. Chromophobia: Fear of colors
9. Heliophobia: Fear of the sun 
10. Necrophobia: Fear of dying
11. Ecophobia: Fear of the household they live in
12. Gamophobia: Fear of marriage
13. Cyberphobia: Fear of computers 
14. Ephebiphobia: Fear of teenagers
15. Papyrophobia: Fear of paper
16. Nomophobia: Fear of your phone not being with you
17. Plutophobia: Fear of money 
18. Ablutophobia: Fear of bathing
19. Hippopotomonstrosesquipedaliophobia: Fear of long words
20. Podophobia: Fear of feet
21. Philophobia: Fear of love
22. Panophobia: Fear of everything

Clothing Trends

This month's clothing trend is ripped jeans! This is a staple in many people's closets. You can pair them with pretty much anything, and they will look great! Many people pair them with sweaters, tucked-in t-shirts, and anything else they think would look good. Ripped jeans can be more on the expensive side, but getting them at a thrift store or distressing jeans yourself is also a cheaper option. Happy shopping!

Fall-Themed Word Scramble

Compiled by Delanie Nichols, 7th-grade reporter

1. TGNANIHGSIVK
2. ALFL
3. RENTIW
4. NKPPMIUS
5. OLENLWHAЕ
6. SKYOPO
7. LESKONTE
8. OEZMIB
9. TCWIH
10. IRKCT RO TAERT

Answers: 1. Thanksgiving; 2. Fall; 3. Winter; 4. Pumpkins; 5. Halloween; 6. Spooky; 7. Skeleton; 8. Zombie; 9. Witch; 10. Trick or Treat