

Potter Pride Newspaper

Volume 5 ○ Issue 1 ○ October 2022

Newspaper Contents

Students and Staff
(pages 2-3)

Book Love
(page 4)

Clubs and Activities
(pages 5-6)

Sports
(page 7)

Games
(page 8)

Pumpkin Fest Brings Community Together

By Ava Dentino, 8th-grade reporter

Morton, Illinois is the pumpkin capital of the world. To celebrate this, we have what you know today as the Pumpkin Festival. Pumpkin Fest may seem like every other carnival to someone who does not live in Morton, but it has a much deeper purpose.

Pumpkin Fest is a week-long festival. It has carnival rides, lots of fair food, and activities for everyone and anyone to enjoy.

The carnival aspect is a big part of the festival. Based on a poll from the students of Morton Junior High School, one ride stood out as the most popular, "The Zipper." Coming in second and third were "The Rockstar" and "Rock-O-Plane."

According to the poll, the most liked traditional fair food was a funnel cake. Funnel cake didn't just win, though; it dominated all its competition and won by a landslide.

Although traditional fair food had a clear winner, when it came to vote on pumpkin-flavored food, there were a lot of different answers. The pumpkin treat that ended up winning was pumpkin donuts.

If you live in Morton or go to school in Morton, you are familiar with Pumpkin

Fest. The poll revealed that most students like to go with 3-5 other people when enjoying the festivities.

Grace Mulconrey is a 7th-grader and a member of the marching band who participated in the Pumpkin Parade on Saturday, September 17, 2022. She said, "I enjoyed the parade and all of the support from the people who came out to watch us."

The Pumpkin Festival brings together the community in a way that nothing else does. Although many people love the activities, the food, the carnival, etc., what makes the Pumpkin Festival so special is it brings the community together.



Band students at the Pumpkin Parade
Photo Credit: Mrs. Fitzpatrick

Writing Center Members

Katie Beckerdite
Ellie Beckler
Ava Dentino
Marley Elizondo
Rylee Maher
Grace Mulconrey
Adelyn Robbins
Anna Williamson
Grace Williamson
Advisor: Ms. Shore

Upcoming Events

NOVEMBER

Nov. 2: Early Dismissal
Nov. 8: No School
Nov. 11: No School
Nov. 23-25: No School

DECEMBER

Dec. 7: Early Dismissal
Dec. 21: Early Dismissal
Dec. 22-Jan. 8: No School (Winter Break)

JANUARY

Jan. 9: First day back from winter break
Jan. 9: Early Dismissal
Jan. 16: No School

Students and Staff

Faculty Feature – Mr. Ames

By Grace Williamson, 7th-grade reporter

One thing a lot of people already know about Mr. Ames is that he is the Careermaker teacher. Careermaker is a fun and educational class! You get to learn about different career paths like Nursing and Biomedical Engineering. A cool thing about that class is that it's very independent; Mr. Ames will help you, but you really go off and do your own thing.

Mr. Ames is a great teacher, so where did he go to school? He attended school at Bradley University and Illinois State University to get his degree in teaching. While in school growing up, he played basketball, baseball, and soccer.

Mr. Ames is a very talented teacher, and we are lucky to have him at Morton Junior High School!



*Students work on their modules in Careermaker.
Photo Credit: Mr. Ames*

Red Team Student Spotlight

By Ava Dentino, 8th-grade reporter

Haley Kaluza is in 8th grade on the Red Team and has lived in Morton her whole life. She attended Lincoln Elementary School. She is a great student and according to her teachers, “she is a hard worker”, “a friendly person”, and was even called “one of my favorite students” by a teacher.

Haley loves art and participates in the Art Club, which meets every Tuesday. She is also active on the Student Council. Haley’s favorite year-round class is ELA, and she enjoys reading over writing although she enjoys both. She has Miss Hasler for a teacher in 4th hour Accelerated ELA.

When asked what elective she was most excited about she answered “Art” without missing a beat or having to think about it. This makes sense since Haley is quite the artist especially when drawing digitally. Although since Haley is on the Red Team, she will have to wait a while for that class.

In the meantime, Haley’s electives are Future Readiness and Health. Haley is very active in sports; she

has been playing soccer since she was four years old and currently plays with Morton United Soccer.

She has always loved running and started running competitively in 6th grade. Although it hasn’t been long, she has made a lot of progress and is currently participating in cross country. She was a great asset to the girls track team her 7th grade year; she ran the two hundred, the sixteen hundred, and the four by four. She can’t wait to see what track has in store for her for her 8th grade year.

Haley describes her ideal work environment as a teacher who gets straight to a project or assignment rather than just talking in front of the class. She finds it helps her work when the teachers allow the students to listen to music while completing their assignments. Haley enjoys working in groups and partners.

Haley has multiple friend groups and many friends. She has around five friends that she is especially close with. She is a happy, very bubbly, and cheerful person who enjoys hanging out with her friends at her house.

Students and Staff

Faculty Feature – Mr. Parrott

By Rylee Maher, 7th-grade reporter

In this interview, Mr. Parrott (7th grade science teacher) had been asked five questions. Read on to learn more about Mr. Parrott!

1. What's your favorite season, and why? "Fall because it is a great crossover of the two sports I like the most, baseball and football. It's also the season where both of my boys' birthdays are in, and my own birthday is in fall too. Plus the best holiday...Halloween. Any excuse to dress up as someone else is great!"

2. Why did you want to be a 7th grade science teacher? "I had some young teachers fresh out of college during my high school years that changed my perspective as a teacher and got me to look at what a teacher was differently. Junior high is just perfect for my own personality compared to elementary or even high school."

3. Would you rather have a rewind button or a pause button on your life? "Pause Button. So many times would I like to just freeze things and take a breath or to be able to

just get things done. The things in the past shaped me for who I am, so I wouldn't change those things because that would be changing me and who I am."

4. If you were able to talk to your 7th grade self, what would you tell him? "Be yourself. I was so focused on trying to be the popular one and making sure that I was hanging out with the 'cool' kids that I missed out on things that I would have truly enjoyed and didn't tap into until college really. That is why I embrace my weird and nerdy side as much as possible because you got to just be you."

5. What is something that you would recommend to 8th graders who are about to go to Morton High School? "Do your work. Grades are going to start to matter starting freshman year. GPA is a thing and you can't really go back and correct it. Junior high sets the stage and we try to encourage those good habits, but you have to be the ones to finish the job. Try anything you can and get involved. There are more opportunities at the high school as far as classes go so try those things that you are interested in."

Counseling Corner

By Beth Spaniol and Danielle VanMeenen, MJHS counselors

Adopted from Middle Years, Resources for Educators, a division of CCH Incorporated, 2019

Q: My child sometimes makes decisions without thinking them through. How can I teach them to avoid impulsive decisions?

A: It is important to know that your teen's brain is still developing— especially the part of it that controls decision making. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, the "brain doesn't finish developing and maturing until the mid- to late-20s." The front part of the brain, called the prefrontal cortex, is one of the last brain regions to mature. It is the area responsible for planning, prioritizing, and controlling impulses. In the meantime, you can help them by pointing out that to make good choices, they need to consider the facts. For example, maybe they need to pick partners for a group project. Their first instinct may be to work with their best friend, but encourage them to think about who has good work habits and won't leave them doing all the work. Also, give them experience with making everyday decisions like picking out gifts for relatives or choosing the film for family movie night. As they choose, rather than picking the first gift that looks cool, ask them to consider your family's budget and each relative's interest. Bringing them into decision-making that considers options and consequences will provide the practice they need for that skill to transfer to all areas of their life.

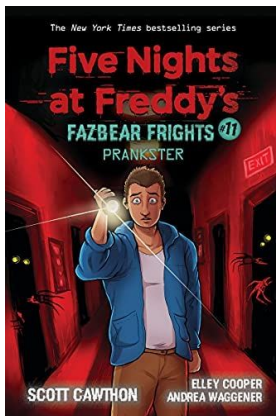
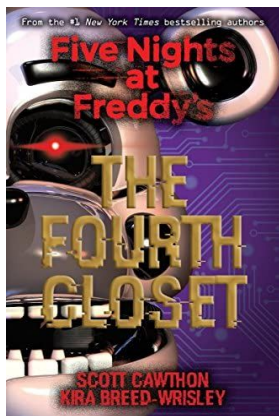
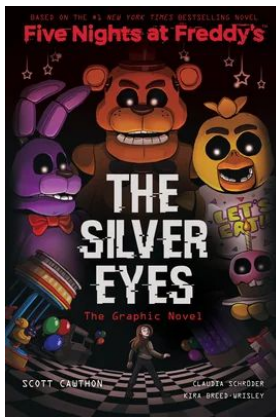
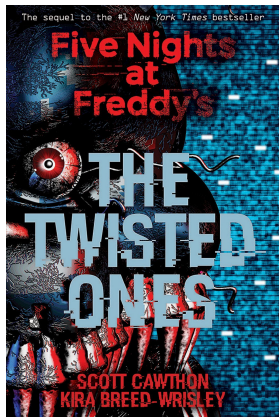
Book Love

Book Rec

By Marley Elizondo, 7th-grade reporter

Do you like horror-style video games but in a book form? Then check out *Five Nights at Freddy's: The Silver Eyes* and the rest of the series in the library. If it is not in there, you can always get it on Learning Ally, from the library, from Barnes and Noble, or anywhere that has books. *The Silver Eyes* is about a group of friends who meet again after a series of murders takes place in their hometown. They return to the abandoned pizza place where the murders happened years ago.

There are more *Five Nights at Freddy's* (FNAF) books like graphic novels and chapter books and even fun activity books and coloring books. Also, if you really love *Five Nights at Freddy's*, then there are plushies and toys and many more things!



Ways to Improve Literacy At Home

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?
What do you think about the front cover?
Have you read anything like this before?
What do you think this book will be about?
What do you hope to learn from this book?
What was your purpose in picking this book to read?

During Reading

What is happening in your book right now?
What does this book make you wonder about?
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?
What's the most memorable part so far?
Is this book realistic? Explain.
What is the setting of the book?
How do you see 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?

Clubs and Activities

String By String

By Katie Beckerdite, 7th-grade reporter

Orchestra is a great group to be a part of, and most students in orchestra can agree. This might sound stereotypical, but students can meet new people and make new friends in orchestra, too. Some people may not think there are very many instrument options in orchestra, but if you want to use a bow, you have a lot more choice than people think.

With the violin having a higher sound, it gets the melody most of the time. The viola is a bigger version of a violin and has a deeper tone. The viola harmonizes with the violins most of the time, along with the cellos, which are bigger instruments that rest on the player's knee while the musician is sitting down. Basses are instruments played standing up, and they provide structure to the orchestra.

Head director Mr. Martin said, "We work hard but also have a lot of fun in class!" He has been teaching 32 years and teaches orchestra along with Mr. Getz. Mr. Getz is

the head director of the high school orchestras.

Between playing games for prizes, game nights at Carper Field, Great Performance Fridays, fun concert themes, field trip opportunities to nearby cities, and occasional donut celebrations, orchestra really does have a lot to offer. Just know that it is never too late to try something new!



Photo from MPTV video of last orchestra concert

Connecting Cooks

By Grace Mulconrey, 7th-grade reporter

Many students get together to cook once a month in Room 215. They make delicious dishes and have a fun time.

Why was cooking club created? Well, Mrs. Hartzler and Mrs. Trilikis wanted to get students involved who maybe were not involved in anything else at school. They noticed a lot of students were interested in cooking and baking, especially after food days in World Language and the nutrition unit in Health.

Many delicious dishes are created in the cooking club. In the past, students have created a range of dishes from waffles, no-bake pumpkin pie, holiday desserts, scrambled eggs, and many different types of salads.

If you are wondering what cooking club is about, it is to teach students tools and techniques in the kitchen. Students get to learn how to read recipes and work together. When finished, they get to enjoy the amazing food they made.

The cooking club has a fee of 20 dollars for supplies and other items. It is very popular as many love to cook and bake. About 30 to 40 people join!

Cooking club hopes to have two field trips this year. They hope to visit the Cookery in Morton and also get an opportunity to learn from professional chefs.



Photo Credit: Mrs. Hartzler

Clubs and Activities

Morton Students Making Music

By Ellie Beckler, 7th-grade reporter

In Morton, band is kind of a big deal. You can start any time; it doesn't need to be 6th grade. There is a variety of instruments to learn and multiple smaller bands you can join. But what exactly does band entail?

To put it simply, the band group almost becomes a family. It is directed at MJHS by Mrs. Fitzpatrick. Most start band in 6th grade, choosing between flute, clarinet, trumpet, trombone, or percussion.

In band, you learn your instrument and play songs. It's really fun and you learn some cool pieces. If you want even more content,

you can try out for jazz band, and once you get to high school you can do marching band and pep band, too.

However, marching/field band is a whole thing of its own. You go out into the field, or march along the streets playing music. In 7th grade alone, students have already marched to Jefferson, marched at the Pumpkin Parade, and marched on homecoming. By the way, definitely check out the high school marching band. They're extremely good.

Band is a great program to join if you're ever interested!



*Band students at the Pumpkin Parade
Photo Credit: Mrs. Fitzpatrick*

Sports

Falls Sports Overview

By Katie Beckerdite, 7th-grade reporter

MJHS sports have started up, and many are going well. Between cross country, softball, baseball, cheer, and dance, the Potters are showing what they're all about.

Cross country had a very successful season, with both the boys' and girls' teams piling up the wins. Mrs. VanMeenen, one of the coaches, said, "This has been an incredible season for the boys' and girls' teams. We have 86 members on the team and we have seen great improvements in their times throughout the season."

The baseball teams also had amazing seasons. The 7th-grade team ended with a record of 15-1, with 15 hard-fought victories. Mr. Parrott, coach of the 7th-grade team, said, "I believe what makes us successful is the

amount of time and effort we put into every practice. From the first day of tryouts until the last practice, we keep the same intensity throughout everything."

And as we all know, the 8th-grade baseball team ended with a second place finish at state! "Our whole team is strong. Nothing is done by just one person – it is a team effort," Brody Fritz, a player on the 8th-grade team, said.

The golf teams did well, too, with quite a few students advancing very far on the girls' and boys' teams. Disc golf has started and practices regularly now. Track will take place later in the year, and we can all assume both of these sports will go well. Go Potters!

Shooting Hoops to Win

By Adelyn Robbins, 7th-grade reporter

This year the girls basketball team is killing it. Coach Swearingen is super proud of the girls this year. He lifts the girls up when down by saying, "This game is really all about having you recover from the feeling that you're not always going to be good, you're not always going to win, you're not always going to make the shot. It's always just how you get back from that, that defines you." Wise words, Coach!

Coach Swearingen thinks his basketball players this year are awesome. He said, "The girls are really competitive and fun, but they're also super nice and hardworking."

The team intends and hopes to make it far this year. Be sure to come out to a game to support our Morton Potters Girls Basketball team!



Photo from MJHS Facebook Page

Games

Fall Word Search

Compiled by Adelyn Robbins, 7th-grade reporter



s y k a s h z c p m z j k m c
k e e v p c a a a a g e y q b
d h v l n b f v s p o o k y g
c w d a l w z x o p b m c n n
b a i v e o q r b r l l i a w
q w n l s l w j b e a v k a o
t s e v r a h v v d i y i o q
n x r u n m t n h g u d r z h
s m s d d a t i s m h a l z x
e m u t s o c k g l n e r n d
r d m t q z n p r g h i q y k
s h t m u a g m e z e m v g a
f j p m h a b u d s f b w q c
b w i t k t f p j z d d p c s
m b s f x n k q v u e r t w x

Autumn
Leaves
Red
Yellow
Costume
Orange
Spooky
Harvest
Pumpkin
Thanksgiving

Word Scramble

1. ALFL
2. SKYOPO
3. LESKONTE
4. OLENLWHA E
5. IRKCT RO TAERT

Answers: 1. Fall; 2. Spooky; 3. Skeleton;
4. Halloween; 5. Trick or Treat

Fun Facts

Compiled by Adelyn Robbins, 7th-grade reporter

1. “‘Jack o’lantern’ comes from the Irish legend of Stingy Jack” (10best.com).
2. “Candy corn was originally called Chicken Feed” (10best.com).
3. “The most lit jack o’lanterns on display is 30,581” (10best.com).
4. “The word ‘witch’ comes from the Old English *wicca*, meaning ‘wise woman’” (thepioneerwoman.com).
5. “Irish immigrants brought Halloween to the U.S.” (thepioneerwoman.com).