

# THE COURIER



VOLUME 88, NUMBER 4

WHITE PLAINS, NEW YORK 10605

APRIL 2012

*The longest running middle school newspaper in the United States!*

## Beautification Foundation Donates Tree to Highlands

By Alisa Thomas and Jennilee Mirtil

Trees are very important to everything in the environment. This year, a tree is being planted in Highlands Middle School April 27<sup>th</sup> 2012. A tree is being donated by the White Plains Beautification Program.

Why are we doing this, you may ask? We are doing this to celebrate Arbor Day. Arbor Day is usually celebrated on the last Friday in April.

Arbor Day is a holiday in which people are reminded to plant and care for trees. The first Arbor Day took place on April 10, 1872 in Nebraska. It was the idea of Julius Sterling Morton (1832-1902), a Nebraska journalist and politician originally from Michigan. Throughout his career, Morton worked to improve farming techniques in his state and throughout the United States when he served as President Grover



Cleveland's Secretary of Agriculture. His most important legacy is Arbor Day.

We celebrate Arbor Day to remind us that trees help us in many ways. For example, trees provide us with oxygen to breathe, homes for animals, and shade in the hot and dry weather. Arbor Day is a huge chance to spend the day and think about the life and magnificence of trees and how we can take better care of them.

## NYSSMA Music Festival Allows Students to Shine

By Moritz Otto

NYSSMA, or New York State School Music Association, is a great opportunity for young musicians to play before a judge and receive constructive criticism. Thousands of students sign up for a NYSSMA Evaluation Festival to get adjudicated each spring. Instruments evaluated range from voice, piano, and strings, to woodwinds, brasses, and percussion. Students can choose to play either a Level 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6, 1 being the easiest and 6 being the most challenging. Students then perform scales, a solo

or ensemble and then have to sight read.

Students get evaluated on a variety of topics. Vocalists get judged on tone, intonation, technique, diction, accuracy, interpretation and sight reading. Woodwind/Brass get judged similarly, only that diction is replaced by articulation. String players get judged on bowing techniques.

All in all, if you're a musician looking for a challenge, you should definitely consider asking your band, orchestra or chorus teacher about this amazing opportunity. It's a lot of work, but very rewarding.

## Eastview Community "Mixes it Up"

By Francisco Colmenares and Lukas Lora

On February 23, 2012 the Eastview campus celebrated a day that was designed to put aside student differences by putting students with other people outside of their normal groups throughout the day. For example, kids sat in different

sections and seats in the auditorium, and kids were also put in different seats at lunch. This let kids get to know other students outside of their normal friends. Mixing it up really helped the students at Eastview form new friendships while having fun. It was a very successful day.

## 2012 Presidential Race Promises to be Interesting

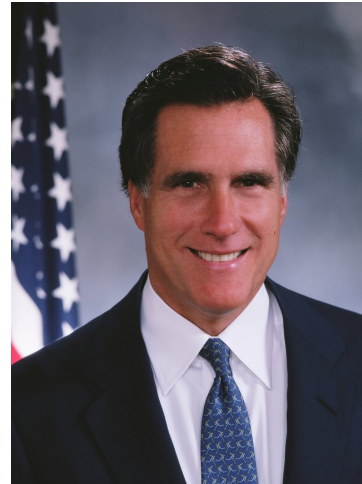
By Chris Kozlow

Many government officials have tried, but only one succeeds every four years. This time, five well-known people are running for the office of president. Republicans Ron Paul, Mitt Romney, Newt Gingrich, Rick Santorum, and Democrat Barack Obama pour out their blood, sweat and tears to do whatever they can to achieve the rank of Chief Executive of the United States of America.

The four Republican Party candidates all fight against each other with a battle of words and wit to see who will get the nomination for the Republican Party come August. The one who wins the nomination will try to defeat Barack Obama on November sixth. Barack Obama does not have to compete with the four Republicans because he is from the other party, the Democrats, and he is the incumbent President and he chose to run again. The four Republican candidates compete in primaries. Each state and its Republican voters vote for a candidate. The candidate with the most votes, or the popular vote, gets either all the delegates or only their portion depending on the state. The first candidate to

reach 1,144 delegates wins the nomination.

Overall, this election will be a tough battle of wits and whatever the result, it will affect our nation greatly.



Mitt Romney (R)



Ron Paul (R)



Newt Gingrich (R)



Rick Santorum (R)

## Seventh Graders Spend Time on Thin Ice

By Gabby Nobile

On Friday, February 24, Highlands teams 7H and 7F went to Ebersole Ice Rink for a fun treat.

We got to skate either all afternoon, 7H, or all morning, 7F. It was so much fun because almost our whole team went. We got to teach others how to skate and enjoy any snack from the Slap Happy Café or vending machines. Mrs. Staar and Mr. Reis did a great job organizing the details. Unfortunately Mrs. Staar wasn't able to make it, but Mr. Reis was skating with all the other teachers!

It was a great way to end the week. One student said, "It made up for not having winter break. We had so much fun." Hopefully we will be able to go on other awesome trips like this one!



## Sixth Grade Dance Delights

By Ally Lambert

The recent 6<sup>th</sup> grade dance was very exciting. The dance was really a great time for Eastview and Highlands students to meet up again. Lots of huge dance crowds broke out as confident dancers take the center stage.

But seriously the dance was basically one crowd to another (of course you have to add all the kids that were on sugar highs to make the dance complete). Any way once a crowd formed it felt like you could turn your head and there would be the same crowd. I swear, the gym was haunted by the transporting crowd.

So back to the kids on sugar highs, this was this one wacky kid who brought his soda to a crowd. Then out of nowhere he chucks the drink into the crowd! All you hear after that is the sound of squeamish girls screaming. I believe that the soda thrower got a personal escort by



Each year, every third through eighth grade student in New York takes New York State Tests. New York State Tests, also called standardized tests, are supposed to measure the overall performance of schools and teachers throughout the state. If most of a teacher's students do well on standardized tests, the teacher is supposedly doing a good job. If many of a teacher's students do poorly on standardized test, the teacher is supposedly doing a bad job. Students are tested in many subjects, including science, mathematics, and English language arts (ELA). Until recent budget cuts, students were also tested in social studies.

Many students and teachers think that standardized tests aren't an accurate way to evaluate students; they measure your ability to take a test more than your performance in a certain subject. Additionally, standardized tests are timed, which may not let students do their best on the tests. Standardized tests aren't an accurate way to evaluate teachers either. If many students do well or poorly on state tests, it may not be their teacher who is responsible for their grades. An excellent teacher might happen to have many students who aren't good at taking tests; a poor teacher may have many students who do exceptionally

well on tests.

Standardized tests can be unfair to students, too. Some students speak English as a second language, yet they are still required to take a state test after only a few years of learning English. These students may have trouble on questions they don't understand and are evaluated the same way as students who have been speaking English their whole lives. In recent years, the standards for students have been raised—making it harder to pass the test and meet so-called expectations. Overall, standardized tests put tons and unnecessary stress on teachers and students, pressuring them to perform well.

## Teacher Spotlight Mrs. Levin

Mrs. Levin

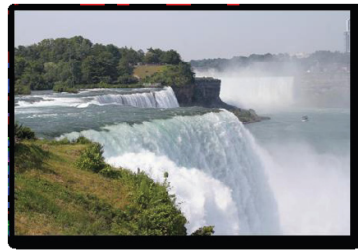
Mrs. Levin is a sixth grade teacher who teaches science on team X at Highlands. Mrs. Levin started teaching because "I always liked working with kids," she says.

Some of you may not know this but Mrs. Levin used to be a scientist that worked with technology. Mrs. Levin used to teach at other schools such as Post Road (White Plains), Daniel Webster (New Rochelle), and Fox lane (New Rochelle). Then one day our very own Highlands middle school needed a new science teacher so Mrs. Levin was

## Falls of Paradise

By Jordan Ferrell

Imagine mystical rushing waters, a magical boat ride, and a nature trail all combined into one. That's Niagara Falls. Niagara Falls is a tourist attraction near Buffalo and Ontario, Canada, that has been running since 1885. Every year, people from all around the world come to this tourist attraction. Niagara State Park includes Niagara Falls, the Canadian Horseshoe Falls, the Maid of the Mist boat ride, and much more. Every Independence Day, People set off fireworks at the falls. This creates a scene of amazing beauty that will leave you in awe. Summertime is the best time to go; the mist blowing in your face makes



90-degree weather a tropical paradise. There are many attractions within the Niagara State Park; the Watermark Restaurant a lovely restaurant that overlooks the falls; the Niagara Falls-Canadian Falls Maid of the Mist double-decker boat ride, which takes you up close to both the Niagara and Canadian Falls; and the Niagara Falls Gift Shop, where you can get all of your souvenirs. Niagara state park also includes the daring Caves behind the falls. In my opinion, going on the Maid of the Mist VI or VII boat ride, is an amazing experience. After going on myself, I couldn't wait to go back on. After one ride on Niagara River, I had to have another. The scenery was amazing and unreal. I rode on the bottom deck, in the back. I personally think it was the wettest spot to be, because you end up inches away from the Horseshoe Falls.

If you are searching for vacation adventures where you can marvel at breathtaking views of one of the world's most beautiful natural landmarks, then wait no further. A visit to Niagara State Park will take your breath away and leave you memories that will last a lifetime.

## THE COURIER Toms: One for One

Hadar Arens

You may have seen or heard about the shoes, Toms, but do you know the story behind these comfortable and unique shoes? It all started in 2006 when a man named Blake Mycoskie and his friends visited Argentina and discovered that some children there play and walk around barefoot. This could possibly lead to diseases, and infectious wounds. Moreover, children who go to school that require a uniform—which includes shoes—are not able to attend because of the fact that they don't own a pair of shoes. This is a major problem because if they don't go to school, they do not have the opportunity to receive a proper education. That is why Toms were created. These shoes changed the world in a positive way. Whenever you purchase a pair of these shoes, the company gives a pair to people in need. Now, people who cannot afford a pair of shoes to keep their feet clean and prevent any foot diseases, can get a pair of Toms shoes. More and more, people are beginning to find out about Toms and are buying them, so now even more people can get a pair of shoes. Since these shoes are for a great cause, you should consider purchasing your own pair! On their website, toms.com, there is a myriad of shoes to choose from to match your style and personality.

## Knicks Fans Love Rising Star Jeremy Lin

By Steven Serna

Jeremy Shu-How Lin is the new rookie that has been playing for a couple of months on the New York Knicks. He plays as a point guard with his teammates Carmelo Anthony, Amar'e Stoudemire, Tyson Chandler, and Landry Fields.

Lin was born in Los Angeles, California on August 23, 1988. His parents are from Taiwan and they migrated to the United States in the 1970's. He came out of Harvard then had a contract deal in 2010 with his hometown Golden State Warriors. He was assigned to the NBA Development League (D-League) three times. He was on the D-League with Golden State, Houston Rockets, and the New York Knicks. In February 2012, he unexpectedly led a winning streak by New York while being promoted to the starting lineup, which generated a global following known as Linsanity.

His jersey is one of the most popular now. Hopefully he will continue to spark the Knicks all the way to the playoffs.


## Passover

By Ashley Smith

Jewish people celebrate many holidays. So do Catholics, Buddhists and all other types of religions. One holiday that the Jewish people recently celebrated is Passover. Passover lasts for 8 days, and it marks the beginning of the harvest season for Israel. Passover is celebrated world round. We celebrate it because it marks the escape of the Israelites/slaves from Egypt. This happened approximately in 122 B.C.E.

On the first night of Passover a Seder usually occurs. A Seder is a feast, in Hebrew it means order. You eat special food sing songs and do special games. At the Seder there is a Seder plate. The Seder plate is in the center holding six things: Bitter Herbs, parsley, a hardboiled egg, charoset, a shank bone and bitter vegetables such as horse radish. You do something special with each of things on the plate such as dipping the parsley into salt water. You also eat matzah. When the Jewish people were freed from Egypt the yeast didn't have time to rise, so they had to eat unleavened bread, thus creating matzah. The youngest child asks the four questions which lead up to the story of Passover. During the Seder after leaving the wine for Elijah the kids search for the afikomen, which is matzah wrapped up. Whoever finds the matzah first gets a little prize. During the days of Passover people only eat unleavened bread. At the Seder people sing songs that celebrate freedom such as dayenu.


We would like to wish a belated "Happy Passover" to all the Courier readers who celebrate. We hope you had a wonderful holiday.



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White Plains Middle School

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Hadar Arens

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[WPMSCourier@gmail.com](mailto:WPMSCourier@gmail.com)



# WE ALL SCREAM FOR ICE CREAM!



## Häagen-Dazs

by Ally Lambert

This ice cream shop is a great place that will meet all your ice cream needs and more! Haagen Daz has thirteen different types of cones; some have sprinkles on the perimeter of the cone and some are covered in chocolate. At Haagen Daz there are sixteen dry toppings plus caramel and hot fudge. Some of the dry ingredients are marshmallows, sprinkles, pineapple, and straw berry. Haagen Daz also has twenty-four different flavors



including Vanilla Chip, Cookies and Cream, Mango Shubert, strawberry sherbert, and much more! Although each flavor has its own special taste they are all delicious! This unique ice cream store also has sugar free fat free ice cream. And let me tell you, for sugar/fat free ice cream, it was not bad at all!

Haagen Daz also sells baked goods such as a brownie with a small chocolate cookie on the top. This product is called The Button Brownie. Also, there is coffee sold at this store, but it is not yummy at all! Then there are the wacky, but so good, cookie cakes. Now don't even start to act like you have no idea what that is! Everyone is crazy about them! And Haagen Daz has eighty-seven different varieties of cookie cakes!

So remember when you want a delicious ice cream treat go to Häagen-Dazs!



## Longford's Ice Cream

By Anna Tender

If you are looking for a good ice-cream place in Westchester I highly recommend Longford's in Rye, New York. It is open Sunday through Thursday from 12pm to 9pm and Friday and Saturday from 12pm to 10pm. Longford's has a variety of 5 fresh cones. They have 13 dry toppings and 4 wet toppings including usual toppings such as sprinkles and more unique toppings. They have 36 delicious flavors out at a time. They are privately owned so their ice-cream is fresh and made in store so that you have the best ice-cream possible. Their ice-cream is silky, flavorful, and delicious. In fact, it was rated best chocolate ice-cream in the May 2011 issue of Westchester magazine by Frances Steenman owner of La Tulipe deserts. Longford's has scrumptious, mouth watering ice-cream that everyone can enjoy.



## Carvel

By Ally Lambert

Where can you get an ice cream cake celebrating any occasion from losing your first tooth to high school graduation? Carvel!

Carvel was created in 1938 by Thomas Carvel (born Athanassios Karvelas), a native of Greece, who started out by selling ice cream out of the back of his truck in Hartsdale, New York in 1934. Carvel has grown from a broken down ice-cream truck to a brand known all across the country. There are more than 500 Carvel stores and their products are sold in over 8,500 supermarkets nationwide.



Carvel has many flavors and two different types of cones. Their shakes are very well known.

Their Thick Shakes are just the ice cream flavor of your choice shaken in a cup. Their Carvelanches® are either vanilla or chocolate soft-serve ice cream blended with up to three toppings. Other drinks include Uptown Smoothies, Arctic Blenders and Carvelattes®. Their traditional Fudgie the Whale cake and Flying Saucers are also very popular.

When summer rolls around, you can be sure that Carvel will be able to satisfy your sweet tooth.



## Ben and Jerry's

By Ally Lambert

Ben and Jerry's is a very crazy awesome ice-cream shop in the Westchester mall. This shop is a little bit messy but the ice cream is quite a treat. They have eight Different types of cones, some are chocolate and some have sprinkles around the rim. The Ben and Jerry's ice-cream shop in the mall has 18 flavors, but everybody knows that Ben and Jerry are really famous for their many ice cream creations. Ben and Jerry's also appears to have a specialty topping; GUMMYBEARS! It's really

awesome, don't you think? They also have milkshakes and smoothies that are out of this world! SO remember, if you want a crazy-good scoop or two of ice cream go to Ben and Jerry's!



euro tart, orange, dulce de leche, cake batter, and even more simple flavors like vanilla and chocolate, you are sure to find something that you enjoy. My favorite flavor is the peanut butter. You can also mix flavors like orange and vanilla to make a cream-sicle or chocolate and peanut butter which I think is the perfect combination. The yogurt is also actually very healthy which parents will love!

There is a huge variety of toppings. There are many different sauces like chocolate, caramel and strawberry. They have lots of fresh fruit like strawberries and pineapples. There is a variety of chocolate like m&ms, reeses cups, chocolate chips and oreo. They have gummy snacks like gummy worms and gummy bears. There are also some really cool and creative things like these little balls that burst when you eat them and yogurt covered pop rocks. The sound gross but I think they are actually better than the regular snacks.

## Delicious Licks

By Sarah Salino

Delicious Licks is a self-serve frozen yogurt store. It is located at 60 Mamaroneck Avenue in White Plains. It is a very exciting environment to be in. The interior design is very fun and futuristic. The swirly pink chairs, 3 dimensional walls, pink paint splashes on the floor, and the ceiling tiles hanging down at you are so cool. With the pink and purple color scheme it is both interesting for children and even adults who need a little bit of fun in their day. Outside, the vibrant Delicious Licks sign makes it hard to miss. The Rolling Stones "L" in Licks also makes it interesting and fun to look at. The yogurt at Delicious Licks is amazing. With flavors such as watermelon, red velvet,



They also have a variety of cereals to choose from.

Delicious Licks is a privately owned store (not a chain). They're opened on Monday- Thursday from 11:30 -9:00, Thursday-Saturday from 11:30 -12:00 (midnight) and on Sunday from 12:00 to 9:00. Their catchy slogan "fun for your tounge" also is very fun. When you go to Delicious Licks, the employee will give you a card that allows you to buy a certain amount of cups and get your next one free! Be sure to check out Delicious Licks!

## ...and pizza too!

### Pizzeria Uno

By Patrick Wynne

Have you ever been to Pizzeria Uno on Martine Avenue in White Plains? Well if you haven't then you should make it a point to go. There is nothing not to like



about this fantastic restaurant. The food is amazing, the servers are quick with the food, and it's a cheery and casual environment. Even better—on Tuesdays, kids eat for free if they order from the kids menu. Also, during happy hour, you can order the appetizers for half price. My family and I go to Pizzeria Uno whenever we get a chance. If you go there with your family, I would recommend getting the Muchos Nachos as an appetizer and get the Reese's peanut butter cup for desert. It is a delight for the whole family. I can assure you, you will enjoy your visit there.





**Spring**

By Anna Tender



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

**ANIMALS  
 BUTTERFLIES  
 OUTDOORS  
 RAIN  
 SUNGLASSES**

**BEE  
 FLOWERS  
 PARKS  
 SCREAMING  
 SUNSHINE**

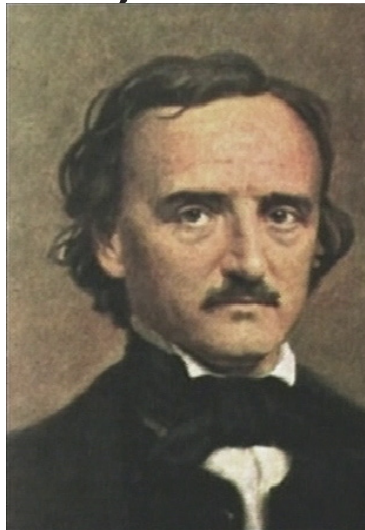
**BIRDS  
 GRASS  
 PICNICS  
 SPORTS  
 TREES**

Poetry Corner

Edgar Allen

Poe

By Elijah Colon



Edgar Allen Poe, one of the most notorious writers of all time, has both fascinated and shocked readers with his short stories and poems. Poe was born in Boston in 1809, to Elizabeth and David Poe. Both of them were traveling actors. In 1811, Poe's father disappeared, and his mother died of tuberculosis soon after. Poe was taken in by Mr. and Mrs. John Allen. He attended the University of Virginia and, even though he did well in school, he ran up gambling debts that John Allen refused to pay. Poe was forced to leave school. At 18, Poe joined the army, and did excellent in his duties. However, when John Allen refused to send Poe money, Poe neglected his duties so he would be dismissed. John Allen died in 1834, and did not mention Poe in his will. In 1836, Poe married his cousin, Virginia Clemm. Even more odd, he was 27, while she was only 13. At this point, Poe was able to sell short stories, poems, essays, and book reviews to a number of magazines and

newspapers, but they never made him money. Poe had always to find himself in poverty. He also had been suffering from alcoholism. In 1847, Virginia died of TB, the same illness that killed his mother. Two years later, Edgar Allen Poe was dead. His death, however, remains a mystery.

Although his life was marked by tragedy, today, Poe is considered a master in American writing. His tales, "The Tell-Tale Heart", "The Fall of the House of Usher", and "The Murders in the Rue Morgue", are classics in suspense and horror tales. His poems, "Annabel Lee", "Alone", and "The Raven", are also memorable. Poe's fame and popularity is rising today and into the future.

VIRUS

I'm a virus VIRUS can't you see

I go surfing through the web invading privacy

I don't want to be mean I'm just playing around

Zippping through New York, Europe, and China town

Don't mind me, I'm just surfing through,

Making your computer screen completely blue.

Don't kick me out with your "my clean PC"

Cause if you do there will be no home for me.

VIRUS—yeah!

Breaking rules on your computer's policy word!



Gregor the Overlander

By Ashley Smith

Almost all of you have heard of the fantastic series, "The Hunger Games" written by the amazing author Suzanne Collins. But most of you haven't heard of her other fantasy series "Gregor The Overlander" I have so far read he first book, Gregor The Overlander, and started in the second book Gregor The Overlander and The Prophecy of Bane and think they are pretty amazing. The first book is about an eleven year old boy named Gregor. Gregor has to deal with missing summer camp, doing all his chores and most of all missing his father who has been gone for over two years. Him, his mom, and his younger to sisters Lizzie, age seven, and two year old Margaret which they call her boots.

One day when Gregor

The Lorax  
 (Spoiler Alert)  
 The Hunger Games Book vs. Movie

By Aliza Waxman

The new movie, *The Lorax*, just came out on March 2, 2012! That's also the date of Dr. Seuss's birthday, too! Dr. Seuss is the writer of the story *The Lorax*. He turned 108 that day. He's dead now. *The Lorax* was created by the creators of *Despicable Me*. *The Lorax* is an epic story about a boy named Ted, played by Zac Efron. Ted wants to impress a girl in high school named Audrey, played by Taylor Swift. All Audrey wants is to see a real truffula tree. Their town, Thneedville, is all made of plastic—the trees and everything. You have to pay for air! The Once-ler, like in the book, tells Ted the story of how he caused the loss of the trees. Mr. O'Hare makes the air that they pay for and is very rich. He tries to stop Ted from finding out about them and from planting the last tree seed. They race all across town in a chase for the seed. In the end, the lorax comes back to a new, miraculous land and all the living animals reunite with the old, old Once-ler.

I recommend that you see *The Lorax* movie because I thought it was very interesting. It's very similar to the book with a few new additions that make it even more interesting. It tells a story that you should not cut down trees. It taught a lesson and showed what will happen if you do cut down trees. But in the story, you can't sell air in a bottle like Mr. O'Hare did. So once you cut down those trees, it's the end of it all. So, don't cut down trees, and see the new movie *The Lorax*!

By Elana Mariani

Before I saw the movie, I read *The Hunger Games* and thought that it was a fabulous book. To summarize, *The Hunger Games* is about a sixteen-year-old girl named Katniss who gets entered, along with 23 other "tributes" to compete in the Hunger Games—a fight to the death. She and the other tribute from her district, Peeta Melark, fight for their lives until the end, when they are both crowned as the winners. After seeing the movie, I realize that the movie was somewhat similar to the book, except for some minor details.

For example, towards the beginning of the book, Katniss receives a mockingjay pin from the mayor's daughter, Madge Undersee. Not only did this not happen in the movie, but Katniss obtained the mockingjay pin in a completely different way! In the movie, Katniss was at the Hob (main headquarters of the Black Market in District 12) and got the pin as a gift from a shopkeeper who had previously sold her some other items. Before the Reaping, Katniss gives the pin to her sister and tells her that it will keep her safe. Later on, Prim gives it back to Katniss for good luck in the upcoming Hunger Games.

Overall, I feel that "The Hunger Games" was a really wonderful movie with believable acting, costumes, makeup, visual effects, sound effects, and a great plotline. If you haven't already seen it, I recommend that you do soon!

goes down to the laundry room with boots. Boots loves to play with tennis balls and while in the laundry room Boot's tennis ball gets away from her and fall into a vent. Of course any curious little two year old would want to know where the ball went, so Boots crawls over to the vent. Gregor, just out of the corner of his eye, notices that Boots is about to fall into the vent and goes to save her. But while trying to take her, he gets sucked in and they both windup falling down into a mysterious world. In his journey through the underland, that is what they call it in the book, encounter some strange thing: Talking cockroaches, rats and bonding bats and humans. Many interesting things happen on his adventure, but if you want to know what they are and who he meets you have to read the book. I recom-