Pirate Pride

The Newsletter of the
Merrillville Community School Corporation
January 2020

Mark your calendars!

Jan. 16
Grades 7-8 Parent/Teacher Conference, 3:30-6:30 p.m.

Jan. 18
MLK Brunch, MHS Freshman Cafeteria, 10 a.m.-noon

Jan. 20
No school/Martin Luther King Day

Feb. 6
Susan Emig Contest Concert, MHS Reinhart Auditorium, 6:30 p.m.

Feb. 14-17
No school/President's Day

Feb. 21
4th grading period ends

Feb. 23
Black composer recital, MHS Reinhart Auditorium, 5 p.m.

Feb. 24
Grades 7-12 no students/teacher work day

Merrillville Matters: 'I count!'

The 2020 Census is coming, and it's nothing to be taken lightly.

Underrepresentation hurts communities: 1) we could lose representation in state and federal governments; 2) our state could lose federal funds, as much as $10,000 per person; 3) our access to valuable resources such as housing, jobs, equitable education and healthcare for families and children could be limited.

Each and every one of us counts here in Pirate territory. We want as much representation as we are entitled, and we want our "fair share" to make our community the best it could be.

On April 1, the nation will recognize Census Day to earmark the commencement of the new decennial census count of the total residing population as of this date.

The U.S. Constitution requires that the federal government count all persons living in the country every 10 years, regardless of age, race, ethnicity and citizenship status.

For the first time ever, the 2020 Census survey will be available to complete online, as well as by phone or paper

cont'd page 4



Merrillville High School Student Government sponsors a Holiday Wish List every year, identifying families in the corporation in need of holiday gifts. This year, the entire school corporation worked together to sponsor gifts for nearly 150 children, ranging in ages from 3 months to 19 years. Children are sponsored by offices, individuals, clubs, classes, programs and groups within the Merrillville Community School Corporation.When members of Student Government deliver presents to the schools, Santa comes along and greets and interacts with students.

Public invited to Jan. 18 MLK Brunch

Celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. by joining the Merrillville High School S.T.A.N.D. (Socially Together and Naturally Diverse) Club as they sponsor the annual MLK Brunch.

The public is invited to enjoy food, music, performances, guest speakers and fellowship from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, Jan. 18, in the Freshman Cafeteria of Merrillville High School. Enter through doors I or J.

Tickets are available at the door: $10 adults, $8 students; FREE children 5 and under.

"If you can't fly then run, if you can't run then walk, if you can't walk then crawl, but whatever you do you have to keep moving forward."

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
from his April 1960 address at Spelman College

Recital celebrates music of black composers

The orchestra program is performing a black composer recital in honor of Black History Month at 5 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 23, in Reinhart Auditorium. Enter Door M in the back of Merrillville High School.

High school students from all three levels of orchestra classes, MHS orchestra alumni and professional string players will perform classical and contemporary pieces by composers of color.

Ticket price is $5. All proceeds go to the John Bradford Scholarship Fund which subsidizes private instruction for talented orchestra students with limited resources.

The recital will also feature the third movement "Even Pirates Get the Blues" from the "Pirate Suite," music composed especially for the after-school jazz orchestra club by Charley Harrison, UCLA jazz professor and former assistant artistic director of the Chicago Jazz Orchestra.



Charley Harrison (right) visited with orchestra students in September and worked with the jazz orchestra club on the "Pirate Suite," music Orchestra Teacher Diane Rosenthal commissioned from him.

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We hope you've enjoyed this edition of Pirate Pride. If you have story ideas, questions or comments, please contact the Corporation's Public Information Officer at dstuckert@mvsc.k12.in.us or 219-650-5477.

Watch Robotics Team compete

Come out and cheer on the MHS Robotics Team at their only local competition of the year at Griffith High School, 600 N. Wiggs St. There will be more than 30 teams at this FREE event.

The event is set from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 18.

The team will have a minimum of five matches throughout the day, and they won't know the times until the day of the event.

Click here to order your spirit wear today and show off your PIRATE PRIDE!

Alumnus shares professional, college experiences with students

Markell Baldwin, a 2009 MHS graduate, returned to his alma mater to talk to students about his experiences after graduation.

Markell has been an engineer for Tesla for the last five years. He is a graduate of Purdue University in electrical engineering and recently accepted Purdue's Eaton Award in Design Excellence acknowledging his patent for the design of the self-capacitance electrode, mutual capacitance sensor, and the sendsion module in Tesla seats.

The advice he has for high school students today: don't limit your exposure; take different classes and try new things.

"If you limit your exposure, you limit your probability of being exposed to your potential path," he said. "The more exposure you have, the more probability you'll have. Don't just check off required boxes."

Markell talked about the process he took when he applied to colleges and for scholarships, and recommended, "Be early, be proactive, network and be systematic," he said.

He suggested getting on colleges' radars by emailing questions and creating opportunities to network and build mutually beneficial relationships.

Other tips he shared about the application process included: think big in your personal statement and don't let less than stellar GPA or SAT scores stop you. Most of the time, colleges are still willing to look at your application, he said.

"Reach out to them. Go the extra mile," Markell suggested.

When applying for scholarships, he said students should change their angles and not look at it as a handout.

"You are an investment worth investing in," he said. "Your payback will be as some contribution to the world."

For letters of recommendation, Markell recommended writing templates to be reviewed and signed by the references.

"Most people will support that you are being proactive," he said. "You have more influence than you realize."

Markell said when he was at Purdue, he tried to do as much as he could. Along the way, he had four internships and three study abroad experiences.

Markell said he realized he had a decision to make about what he wanted to do, and he actively chose every day to pursue new levels in his career.



MHS Building Trades Instructor Terrell Taylor and Tesla Motors Senior Engineer Markell Baldwin.

With each internship, he said he made less and less money.

"It wasn't about the money; it was about the impact," he said.

Thespians win regional competition

Congratulations to the Merrillville High Thespian Troupe who competed against five other schools at the recent NWI regional and came away with the Best Ensemble and Best Supporting Actor awards!

This is the second straight competition in which they have received Best Ensemble and the fourth time in the last five regional competitions that they have won Best Supporting Actor!



Thespian Troupe #1692 wins Best Ensemble and Best Support Actor Awards at recent competition.

The cast and crew for the show "Too Much Light Makes the Baby Go Blind," by Greg Allen, which they performed at regionals were Andre Cereno, Myia Dickerson (State Thespian Officer All-Star Award), James George (Best Supporting Actor), Priya Hildebrand, Jared Jaramillo, Andrew McKnight, Lauren Molenda, Merci Tan, Ja'Leah Walker, Zhanvie' Edmond (stage manager) and Jacqueline Lewis (crew).

On Jan. 24-26, the thespians will travel to Franklin Central High School for the State Thespian Competition, where students will compete with individual events in performance, technical theatre and design.

They will also attend a number of plays, participate in various workshops led by industry professionals, and audition for colleges and scholarships.

Merrillville Matters: 'I count!'

from page 1

form to be returned by mail. Residents should expect correspondence on how to complete the survey in March 2020.

It is vital that everyone take part in this civic duty; the survey is easy to complete, and every response is confidential!

Why is completing the survey important to Indiana residents and the K-12 school community? Here's the scoop:

1. The Census determines the apportionment to the states of the number of congressional seats. Survey information will be used for redistricting of the congressional and state legislative districts.

2. The count is used by the federal government to determine allocation of approximately $883 billion in federal funds, with $160 billion for programs to support children. This year Indiana will receive about $18 billion in federal funding with approximately $1 billion for K-12 programs.

3. An accurate count of young children in the 2020 Census will be critical to the child's and family's access to resources such as housing, jobs, equitable education and healthcare.

2010 Census Facts

- Children from birth to age 4 and those ages 5-9 were the two age groups undercounted.
- Black and Hispanic young children had the highest net undercount.
- One in five children was missed because their family did not return the form.
- Four in five lived in families that returned the form but didn't include the young child on it.

Families can help make sure that #EveryHoosierChildCounts by counting each child where they sleep most of the time.

Senior citizens and disabled residents admitted FREE!

All senior citizen (ages 60 and older) residents of Ross Township and disabled residents of Ross Township eligible for social security disability or social security supplemental income are admitted to home student extra-curricular, school corporation sponsored, activity events without charge, except for post-season athletic contests.

Residents hoping to take advantage of this benefit must visit the school corporation central office, 6701 Delaware St., to obtain a pass verifying their status. Hours are 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Mondays through Fridays.



JROTC program earns awards at first meet

The Merrillville High School Air Force JROTC Drill Team placed first overall in their Nov. 16 drill meet in Anchor Bay, Mich.

The team brought home eight trophies: four first place trophies: Advanced Armed, Unarmed Exhibition, First Year Armed and First Year Unarmed; two second place trophies: Armed Exhibition and Advanced Unarmed; and two third place trophies: First Year Color Guard and Inspection.

Cadet Moran and Cadet Stroh also received individual drill awards.

"The students worked really hard over the past two and a half months to prepare for this competition," said Senior Master Sgt. Daniel J. Wrasman, MHS Air Force JROTC instructor. "My senior cadets were outstanding leaders, helping all the teams to be successful.

"I'm especially proud of our first year cadets who placed in every category," he added.



MHS first year JROTC cadets placed in every competition at their Anchor Bay, Mich., meet. Front row left to right: Cadet Dean, Cadet Schafer, Cadet Stroh, Cadet Moran, and Cadet Underwood. Second row: Cadet McKinney, Cadet Milton, Cadet Pena, and Cadet Johnson. Missing from photo: Cadet Ford, Cadet Renk, and Cadet Williams.

Fourth graders 'Too Good For Drugs'



John Wood Elementary School fourth graders graduated from the Hobart Police Department "Too Good For Drugs" Program. This is the second year for the program in the school, and John Wood, due to its location, is the only Merrillville School in the program. Over 10 weeks, Hobart Police Officer Erik Herbert met weekly with the classes. The program is designed to promote life skills, character values, resistance skills to negative peer influence, and resistance to the use of illegal drugs, alcohol, and tobacco. Not only does the program provide great information to students, Officer Herbert's visits help to build positive lasting relationships between children and the police.

GET ENGAGED!

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PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Grades 7-8
Jan. 16, 3:30-6:30 p.m.

Miller Elementary School

Third grade concert/Black History Wax Museum
Tuesday, Feb. 25, 5 p.m.

Iddings Elementary School

Eat at McDonald's
Feb. 4
1st Tuesday of each month
U.S. 30 @ Taney Pl.
4 -7 p.m. to support the PTO!

Wood Elementary School

Pop tab collection
Save your pop tabs and send them to school with your child to support Ronald McDonald House of Indiana.



DOWNLOAD OUR NEW APP

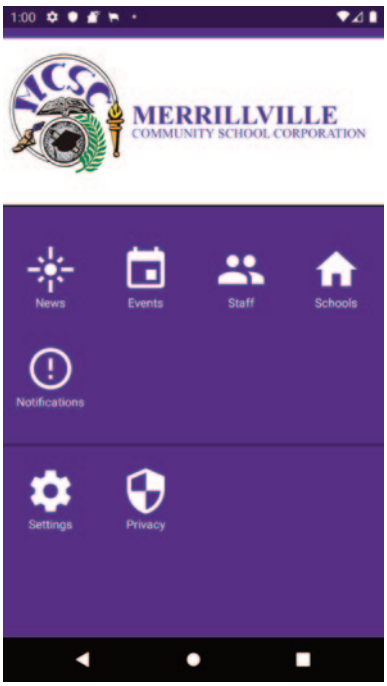
Merrillville school information is available at your fingertips.

Merrillville Community School Corporation launched a free app to make connecting to the schools easier than ever.

The app can be downloaded at the Apple and Google Play stores. Please be sure to download the version with the icon you see here.

You'll find links to all the schools, news, staff contacts and more.

Available on the App Store
GET IT ON Google Play



Salk Elementary School

Art 'n Craft Family Night
Feb. 11, 5-7 p.m.
Come out and make some Valentine-themed crafts.

Support the PTO
Portillo's Night, 5-8 p.m. Jan. 21
Culver's Night, 3-8 p.m. Feb. 25

MHS senior wins culinary scholarship

Xavier Thompson has his eye on starting his own restaurant someday.

The Merrillville High School senior was awarded a $17,000 scholarship from Johnson & Wales University in North Miami, where he will study culinary arts.

In preparing for graduation, Xavier took advantage of the many opportunities MHS offers through its CTE (Career and Technical Education) Pathways. He completed culinary arts classes, like nutrition and wellness; earned certifications, like ServSafe and culinary arts; and even received college credit through dual credit courses with Ivy Tech that will give him a jump start in the industry and Johnson & Wales.

His love of cooking started even before his high school career.

"One day I was cooking with my grandmother, as I had done before, multiple times," Xavier said. "I started to realize I kind of like doing this. I like it a lot. I like making food.

"As I got deeper and deeper into it, I came to realize I could do this as a career," he added.

He said Johnson & Wales University, where he will earn a bachelor's degree, was his first choice.

Xavier said he looks forward to learning how to make dishes from different cultures and participating in an externship at a place like Disney or another big restaurant that makes a lot of money.



Xavier Thompson

Kameron Priest achieves Master level certification

Once you've achieved the highest level, where do you go from there?

That's the question MHS senior Kameron Priest ponders after attaining the Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) Master level within the first two weeks of his informatics class.

"I know of no one else personally who has achieved this very difficult level," said MHS Business Educator Sharon Row.

According to John Syljebeck, territory manager for Certiport, certification exam provider for MHS, Kameron is a member of a very elite club.

"Just over 1,300 students earned MOS Master in 2019," Mr. Syljebeck said.

A more interesting statistic he provided was only 0.3% of candidates earned it worldwide. With those numbers, Ms. Row estimates that only about 30 to 32 students across Indiana achieved the Master certification in 2019.

Kameron earned his first certification, Microsoft Office Specialist in Access, last spring with Ms. Row in her database management class.

In two weeks' time this semester, he added Specialist certifications in Word and PowerPoint, then raised the bar successfully testing for the Expert level in both Excel and Word, qualifying him for MOS Master.

Under a pilot program for MOS 2019/365 in Ms. Row's classroom, he did them all over again with the new, enhanced software. He earned 14 certifications to date and upon completion of his IC3 next month, he will have 17 industry certifications.

She said each certification level propels a student further on the path to greater achievements and advancement.

"Having certifications is like having professional licenses," Ms. Row said. "With these certs behind you, you don't have to go to college to get a great paying job. And you don't have to go to college to get certs and pay the tuition, books and fees, because we offer them here at MHS to our students totally free.

"Microsoft projected that in 2020, more than 90% of all technology jobs in the world will require a MOS certification, particularly in Excel, she said.

"The students I have had who have applied for jobs during and after high school have all told me without exception that when they showed the prospective employer their certifications, they were immediately hired on the spot," she said.


MHS Business Educator Sharon Row and senior Kameron Priest.

As for Kameron, his recent achievement created a drive to conquer more.

"My aunt works in IT, and she said every company recognizes A+ certification," he said. "Might be my next step."

Kameron said he's been interested in computers since he was much younger and is planning a career programming computer games.

Intermediate students learn about engineering careers

Two speakers from NIPSCO visited fifth and sixth graders at Merrillville Intermediate School (MIS) Nov. 22.

Aaron Steinhilber, engineering supervisor, and Kent Chen, engineer, discussed careers in engineering and talked to students about how engineering affects everyday lives.

It took an engineer to help make gummy bears, according to Steinhilber.

"Someone had to design a barrel and calculate how much time the candy had to be in the barrel and how fast it would turn in order to dry the gummy bears," he said. "Someone had to do the math and calculations to figure that out."

Nichole Perez, MIS college and career readiness counselor, said the school is regularly bringing in professionals to talk to the students about career opportunities.

"It's part of an initiative to expose students at a younger age to careers besides the ones of which they would normally think, such as doctor, police officer, veterinarian, teacher, etc.," she said.



Kent Chen and Aaron Steinhilber from NIPSCO talk to 5th and 6th graders at Merrillville Intermediate School about careers in engineering.

Pierce Middle School educator named 'most inspiring'

The Crossroads Regional Chamber of Commerce held its annual Gala Nov. 23. At the event, the Chamber presented the Merrillville School Corporation with a check for $1,000.

In addition, three Inspiring Educator of the Year awards were presented to a teacher nominated by each of the school corporations. This year's recipient included Lauren Morando, who teaches eighth grade social studies at Clifford Pierce Middle School.

From her nomination letter, "Ms. Morando has innovating, creative lessons that engage her students in the curriculum and fosters their learning. She understands the interests of her students and integrates them into her lessons.



Lauren Morando

"Students are able to 'see themselves' in her lessons, and they become excited to learn and participate in her active, hands-on instruction. Ms. Morando also differentiates her lessons to meet the individual needs of students. She understands that she has a diverse student population and every student learns in their own unique way."

Community planetarium offers winter shows

The Merrillville Community Planetarium is gearing up to present its winter public program "The Inner Solar System."

The show will be presented at 7:30 p.m. Fridays, Jan. 17, and 24, and Saturdays, Jan. 18 and 25. The planetarium opens for seating 30 minutes before the show begins. No one will be admitted after the program starts.

This program explores the inner solar system, including the planets Mercury, Venus, Earth, and Mars and the asteroid belt. Weather permitting, an outdoor observing session will be offered following the program.



Admission to public programs is $4 for adults and $2 for children. Seating is limited and should be reserved by calling (219) 650-5486 or by completing this online form.

Large groups may arrange for a private show by calling the planetarium at (219) 650-5486.

The planetarium is located in Clifford Pierce Middle School at 199 E. 70th Ave.

Please park and enter on the south side of the building.

Choirs to show off contest material

The Susan Emig Contest Concert will showcase the 2020 ISSMA season contest repertoire for the choirs from Merrillville High School, Clifford Pierce Middle School, and Merrillville Intermediate School.

The public is invited to enjoy this event, which begins at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 6, at Reinhart Auditorium, located at Merrillville High School, 276 E. 68th Pl. The public should enter entrance M at the back of the school.

Admission is $3. Proceeds will benefit the Susan Emig Scholarship.

Susan Emig was a brilliant musician/educator, an inspiration to all who had the pleasure to work with her. Susan was the wife of retired MHS choral director Roger Emig.

When her valiant battle with cancer ended Nov. 24, 2002, it was decided to create a scholarship fund in Susan's name that would be awarded to a graduating Merrillville senior pursuing post-secondary education in music or the performing arts.

To date, $7,000 has been awarded to Merrillville Choir alumni continuing their education in music.

Local author visits Head Start



Local Author Aundrea Besst visited Head Start classes at Miller Elementary School and read her book "Little Girl, Big Heart" to the students.

Iddings 2nd graders offered French, Spanish lessons

Iddings Elementary School will partner with the Department of World Languages and Cultures at Valparaiso University to present the 2020 World Language Outreach Program.

Second graders will be able to learn French or Spanish through interactive after-school lessons tailored to the age group.

Six weeks of lessons in French or Spanish will be offered at no cost.

The university student teachers are volunteering their time for the credit, for the experience, and for their love of teaching languages.

The student teachers have gone through a selection process, background checks, and will complete preliminary training before the program begins.

Did you know?

In 2019, Merrillville Community School Corporation saved $140,000 by changing pharmacy benefits for its employees.

Award-winners recognized at football banquet

Congratulations to our MHS football team! They took us all the way down to Carmel for the IHSAA 6A Semifinal Playoff, giving us a successful and exciting season.

At the football banquet in November, our team celebrated the seventh regional title in program history.

Award winners included:

- MVP: Senior Peter Rodriguez, leading the team in rushing yards and touchdowns.
- Most Valuable Lineman: Senior Khris Walton, who was Duneland Conference Defensive Player of the Year.
- Most Valuable Skill Player: Senior Jeremiah Howard, who was Duneland Conference Offensive Player of the Year.
- Most Valuable Special Teams Player: Junior Austin Pupek, the team's punter and field goal kicker.
- Most Improved: Senior Darion Johnson, who went from a player that didn't play much on the JV as a junior to a defensive player that was very productive as a senior on the varsity for a good team.



Fall sports athletes honored at Nov. banquet

Athletes participating in fall sports including cross country, soccer, girls' golf, boys' tennis and volleyball were recognized for their achievements last November during the Merrillville High School Fall Sports Banquet.

Most valuable fall sports athletes were named: Cross country, junior Jeremie Lander and senior Michelle Gunnell; soccer, seniors Jacob Maldonado and Brisa Sanford; boys' tennis, sophomore Benzi Corrales; girls' golf, freshman Sincere Peterson; and volleyball, junior Raven Edwards.

Most improved fall sports athletes were recognized: Cross country, sophomores Zachary Dunn and Ciara Watson; soccer, seniors Adeleke Igbasanmi and Kaylee Conner; boys tennis, senior Anthony Williamson; girls' golf, freshman Bria Ealy; and volleyball, sophomore Saniya Spalding.

Athletes earning recognition for sportsmanship included: Cross country freshman Daniel Bravo and sophomore Merci Tan; soccer, senior Austin Vo and junior Aahliyah Moreno; boys' tennis, junior Micah Rayburn; girls' golf, junior Chanel Day; and volleyball, senior Taira Amisu.

Athletes recognized for leadership included: cross country, junior Jeremie Lander and senior Shamiya Beasley; soccer, seniors Jerry Walker and Maria Guardiola; boys' tennis, junior Noah Terpstra; girls' golf, sophomore Quiara Dortch; and volleyball, junior Madeline Langer.

Senior Niko Djukic received the Blanket Award for earning eight varsity letters.



Merrillville High School volleyball award winners, from left: Junior Madeline Langer, Leadership Award; senior Taira Amisu, Sportsmanship Award; sophomore Saniya Spalding, Most Improved; junior Raven Edwards, MVP.

Scholar award winners were recognized for their cumulative GPA of 3.5 or better: Girls' cross country, seniors Shamiya Beasley and Michelle Gunnell; junior Sierra Weaver; and sophomores Merci Tan, Hannah Villahermosa and Ciara Watson. Boys' cross country scholar award winners were senior Maurice Patrick; and sophomores Arturo Baranda, Cesar Franco and Caleb Robinson.

Girls' golf scholar award winners were juniors Zion Elliott, Siman McElroy and Tyzhae Romer, and sophomore Quiara Dortch. Boys' soccer scholar award winners were seniors Yulissa Gonzalez, Jacob Maldonado, Itzel Viramontes-Renteria and Austin Vo; junior Malik Hall; and sophomores Josh Krause, Zach Krause and Rame Sulieman.

Girls' soccer scholar award winners included seniors Maria Guardiola and Brisa Sanford; junior Miriam Velasco; and sophomores Diana Garcia and Katie Hyland. Junior Olusoji Oduneye Jr. was the scholar award winner for boys' tennis.

Volleyball scholar award winners were juniors Madeline Langer and Mia Unmisig; and sophomores Azariah Crosby, Yasmin Gonzalez, Saniya Spalding and Jordyn Thomas.

Seniors recognized for soccer achievements

Two seniors earned significant soccer achievements at Indiana Soccer Coaches Association Banquet and were recognized by the school board last month: Niko Djukic and Jacob Maldonado.

Niko Djukic was voted Honorable Mention All-State by the Indiana Soccer Coaches Association.

He received his All-State plaque, as well as his 1st Team All-District plaque.

Jacob Maldonado was voted 1st Team All-State by the Indiana Soccer Coaches Association.

He received his All-State plaque, as well as his 1st Team All-District plaque.



Niko Djukic (from front left), Coach Brian Past, and Jacob Maldonado. Back Board members (from left) James Donohue, Linda Jonaitis, Mark Lucas and Tom Bainbridge.

Merrillville 6th graders top worldwide math contest

Four groups of Merrillville Intermediate School (MIS) sixth graders took on their peers around the world in math games, and one came out on top!

MIS team 6Red, with about 60 students, ranked first among 233 groups.

The top scorers on 6Red were three young ladies: Shu Jing Zheng, first place; Samantha Sampson, second place; and Erin Mukes, third place.

Of the other three MIS groups that participated, one team ranked 16; another 18; and the fourth, 36! Those groups had between 10 and 30 participants.

The competition on 99Math.com presented three rounds of math games, 30 seconds in each round, against competitors in 22 countries.

Once all the teams in all the time zones completed the rounds, teams were ranked globally.

"Another competition is coming up this spring, so we are excited," said MIS Math Teacher Zella Garron. "99Math asked us if we would try a new beta they added to the site, which is conversions. I'm excited to have our students test it out."

The website 99Math, based in another country, promotes fluency in math facts and offers fun and engaging ways for kids to practice math. The website is not just limited to school groups; anyone can play online.



MIS team 6Red

Reading Pirates begins at MIS

MHS basketball players and cheerleaders visited with students at Merrillville Intermediate School as part of the Reading Pirates Program, encouraging students to read more and meet their reading requirements.

They talked about the academic expectations and requirements it takes to be on a high school team, congratulated students who reached their goals, handed out certificates, and promised to return next month to check on their progress.



CNA program prepares students for medical careers

Students who are interested in pursuing careers in the medical field can get a jump start at Merrillville High School. The school, in partnership with Victory Training in Hobart, offers students the opportunity to become certified nursing assistants.

Eight Merrillville High School students recently completed the training program, and six students are currently going through the program.

The program takes as little as one trimester to complete. In order to qualify for the program, students must be juniors or seniors and must have at least a 3.0 GPA.

MHS senior Robyn Green completed the program and said the first few weeks consisted primarily of book work, learning RCPs (resident care procedures), labs and quizzes.

"The second half consisted of clinicals at St. Anthony's nursing home," she said. "We got to take care of a few patients and follow and help other CNAs with bathing, feeding and simple stuff."

Green said she enjoyed getting to know the residents there, being around them and helping them. She hopes to work as a CNA during the summer and transfer to a place near Indiana State University, where she plans to study nursing.

Senior Desirae Williams also completed the program.

"Overall it was a pretty good experience," Williams said. "It was eye opening. I got to see what nursing homes were actually about and how to interact with patients and residents.

"It was a good introduction into the nursing field," she said.

Williams hopes to use the certification to get her first job and work somewhere she enjoys.

Senior Ashanti Lenoir also plans for a career in the medical field.

"As soon as I graduate high school, I'm hoping to go to IUPUI and get a job at the hospital on campus," Lenoir said.

"I want to be a physical therapist, and I'm also interested in neurology," she said. "The CNA program is a great start to get my foot in the medical field door."



MHS students who completed or are currently participating in the CNA program, left to right: Malachi Williams, Dajanay Weaver, Bryanna Boone, Kimaya Thomas, Desirae Williams, Caroline Buckrop, Jordan McGee, Adrianna Carter, Evelyn Hernandez, Cheyenne Moton, Robyn Green, Ashanti Lenoir and Alexis Alexander. Missing from photo AAliyah Wright.

Honor Society, Builders Club hold fundraisers

National Junior Honor Society at Pierce Middle School raised $264 for cancer research. The proceeds were donated to the N.I.C.K. Foundation, a local organization that's dedicated to helping kids with cancer. Students collected money during the three lunch hours during the first week of November.

The Builders Club at Pierce Middle School sponsored a can good drive to help families in need last holiday season. The club placed a donation box in the office for students and staff to donate their items.

Mark your calendars for dentist visits

The mobile dentist will be visiting our schools, thanks to the nurses in our Health Services Department who coordinate this program. Here's the schedule:

- Fieler- Jan. 22, 23
- Iddings - Jan. 29, 30, 31
- Salk- Feb. 10, 11
- Miller- Feb. 12
- Wood- Feb. 21

HAPPY NEW YEAR!