

The Pond Street Press

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April 2023 Issue



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School News

Crypto-Mining Operation Discovered in Our School Building

By Ciaran Bergen

In the very building where we go to school everyday, a crime was taking place for eight months without our knowledge and robbing our school of electricity. In December of 2021, a school janitor pulled up ductwork to find mass amounts of crypto mining computers adjacent to the gym. Officials arrived on the scene to find a small crawl space where the



crime took place. The accused, Nadeam Nahas, has pleaded not guilty for stealing almost \$18,000 of electricity. It is hard to imagine that a huge crime happened in our school and no one ever knew. The case has been going on for a total of 8 months, and Nahas is currently on trial.

Sources: (<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-64767178>)

MCAS SEASON

By Flynn Jansen

With the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) tests in April and May, they have become the topic of many student conversations. With the ELA test behind us, all sixth and seventh graders

have left to take is the math assessment on May 9th and 10th. The eighth grade, along with the math, has one more MCAS exam. On May 18th and 19th, they will be taking the science test, which is only required in fifth and eighth grade.

So why do we need to take MCAS? According to the official website of the state of Massachusetts, “MCAS helps teachers, parents, and students to know where students are excelling and where they need help” (mass.gov). The state website also said that it helps “The Commonwealth identify schools and districts that need additional support” (mass.gov). This means that if a school district is struggling, the state may take control of it, dictating the type of things the school teaches to make sure its students are making progress.

According to sixth grader Maddox Gustafson, “I think it’s good for the state to know, but I feel like they take it way too seriously.”

Sixth grader Thales Boyer had a similar opinion when he said, “I think it’s good for the state so they can see how good the school system is.”

Lastly, I interviewed sixth grader Riley who explained, “I don’t like it, but I think it’s good for the state.”

MCAS started in 1993, the idea being that the government needed a way to know how schools and kids were doing. This was partially due to the fact that Massachusetts was no longer near the top of the longstanding test, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). The MCAS was the perfect solution for figuring out what kids were struggling with and why. The NAEP is optional to take and volunteer students at our school take it every few years.

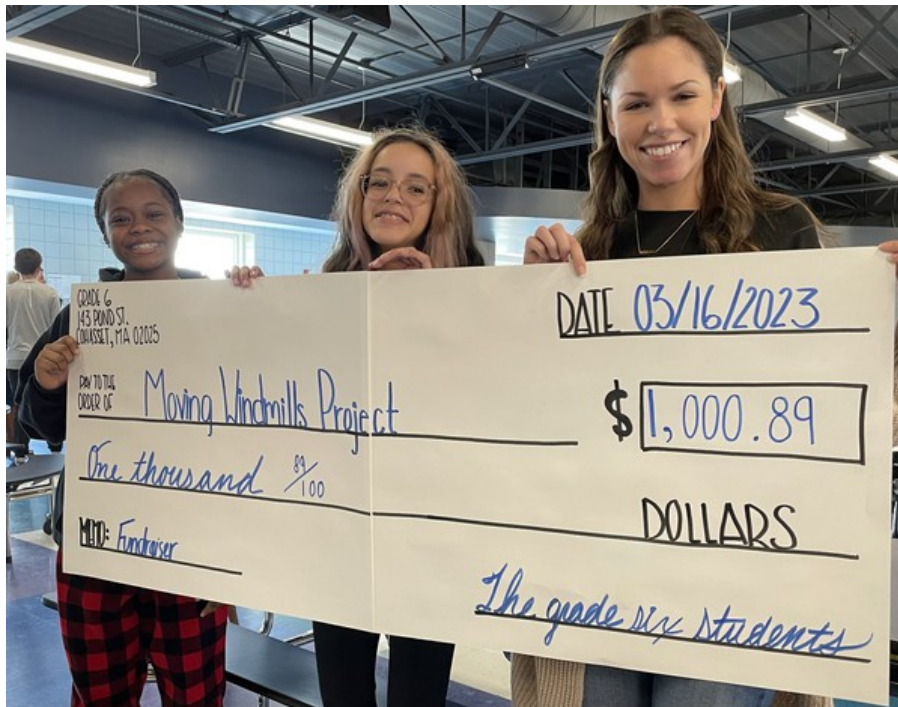
Sixth Grade Students Support William Kamkwamba with Change the World Campaign

By Isaac Stevenson

CMS sixth graders have continued the tradition of raising money for William Kamkwamba’s Moving Windmills Project through their “Change the World” campaign. The goal of the campaign is to empower children to

help build a better community for Malawi, which is a place in southern Africa where over 80% of people are subsistence farmers. Trying to share his country's story, Kamkwamba published *The Boy Who Harnessed The Wind*, a book that is read in the sixth grade.

The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind is an autobiography about Kamkwamba and his country (Malawi) and how they faced extreme famine and droughts. He had to drop out of school and work in the maize fields and watch his world slowly fall apart. The famine got bigger and bigger causing a depressing time for all. Then, Kamkwamba got an idea. He was going to create a windmill to provide electricity for his family's little house. He went



to the library, and read lots of books on electricity. He worked and worked, scavenging for spare parts and reading books from the little library. Despite the famine, drought, AND having to drop out of school, William managed to make the windmill. When

the famine was over, people began to notice William's invention, and realized he was a genius. He became famous and went to Dartmouth College in America. Now, he has started a non-profit organization called Moving Windmills.

Every year, CMS does their part to help his foundation by donating money to it. For several weeks, every student brings in their spare change to help the foundation. Every penny can make a difference! We beat the

previous year's amount of money, and have been promised a day to have fun.

As part of our celebration , we had Malawi day. On that day, we had windmill competitions, Malawian food, and we got to watch a movie. At the end of the windmill competition, teachers hand out awards for different windmills.

I also decided to interview the 6th grade ELA teacher, Mrs. McLaughlin who helped to start the fundraiser for the foundation.

Isaac: Can you confirm how much money was raised? Did we beat, or miss our goal?

Mrs. McLaughlin: The grade 6 students have beat their goal of raising over \$1,600.00. Our final total for our Change the World Campaign was \$1,745.50!

Isaac: How long have we been donating money to the foundation? Why do we donate money to this one and not others?

Mrs. McLaughlin: Grade 6 students have been donating to the Moving Windmills Project since before I even started teaching 6th grade! I would say they have been raising funds for this foundation for over 5 years! Students donate to William Kamkwamba's foundation because they are able to learn about the substantial need for resources in Malawi through their reading of *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind*. Throughout the novel, students learn about all of the challenges William faced as a young boy. William's story inspires students to do what they can to make a small impact on the lives of others. The goal of their campaign is to help students in Malawi receive the educational resources they need to be successful.

Isaac: Does Moving Windmills tell us how the money is spent?

Mrs. McLaughlin: This year's donation will go towards funding hands-on learning opportunities and classes at a community learning center!

High School Preparations

By Gabby Madden

For the past month, eighth graders have been preparing for high school, no matter how daunting it may seem. However, with things such as selecting new courses and creating a schedule, kids may be more excited with their new freedoms than they thought.

Now you may be thinking - selecting courses? Don't we do that every year? Well yes, but rising freshmen now have a wider array of options than ever before, as they now get to choose extra elective classes along with their normal leveled courses. Some examples of what electives students can take are photography, music theory, instruments, band, chorus, art history, design, and much more!

Rising freshmen's parents also got to meet with the high school staff on March 9 for "Curriculum Night" for an overview of the high school schedule, courses, and student resources. They were also able to meet with teachers and ask questions about the upcoming school year.

So, does high school still seem scary? With the amount of freedoms we now have unlocked, I certainly hope not! Just remember, high school is a beautiful part of our lives that allows us to express ourselves, so no need to worry!

<input type="checkbox"/> SchoolCourse > CrsNo	SchoolCourse > Description	Alternate?
<input type="checkbox"/> 111	English 9 A	N
<input type="checkbox"/> 221	Geometry A	N
<input type="checkbox"/> 231	Algebra II A	N
<input type="checkbox"/> 351	US History IA	N
<input type="checkbox"/> 404	Introduction to Physical Science	N
<input type="checkbox"/> 470	Introduction to Physics	N
<input type="checkbox"/> 6866	Spanish II A	N
<input type="checkbox"/> 715	9th Grade Wellness Program	N
<input type="checkbox"/> 814	Art I	N
<input type="checkbox"/> 846	Guitar	N
<input type="checkbox"/> 847	Band	N

A typical schedule for rising freshman next year.

CMS Student Council Sells Swag

By Claire Flaherty

CMS StuCo had this great idea to sell merchandise, so they opened an online store through Atlantic Sportswear for a few days, and it turned out to be quite a success! They raised about \$500 with 53 orders schoolwide, and held March Madness, a spirit day, on March 31st. On this special day, students could wear their merch and compete with other utilities to show the most spirit. The winners are Ms. Foley for 6th grade, Ms. Jewell for 7th grade, and Ms. Barry for 8th grade. Congratulations for showing the most spirit! The StuCo has also started planning another dance! Stay tuned for more details.

WEATHER PATTERNS EXPLAINED

By Flynn Jansen

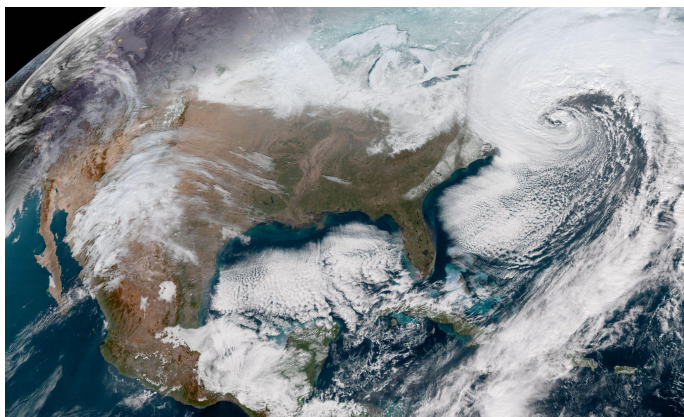
With winter behind us, many changes in the weather are imminent. Although it's very complicated in determining what we should expect this spring, we can take an educated guess based on past springs and how they compare to what ingredients in the atmosphere are in place now.

Arguably, the biggest change in the world of weather right now is a shift from La Niña to El Niño. A La Niña is when the central and eastern tropical Pacific are colder than average, while an El Niño is when they are warmer than average. Believe it or not, this has a major effect on our weather.

Right now we're in what's called a neutral phase. This is when we are in between an El Niño and La Niña, however we are getting closer and closer to an El Niño. It's impossible to tell when we will officially be in an El Niño, but forecasters and computer models are both agreeing that it will occur anytime from mid Summer to early Fall.

During an El Niño the jet stream is located over the southern part of the US while a La Niña causes it to sit over the northern US. The jet stream is

basically strong and narrow winds in the upper atmosphere. It carries storms and other weather systems from west to east. Because we're entering an El Niño we will likely see slightly drier weather than normal. Although it seems like bad news to us, it's nothing compared to the southern US. Having already seen multiple violent tornadoes including one EF4 that hit Rolling Fork, Mississippi with winds of 170mph, it's looking like many more of these storms will hit them.



Due to the El Niño, the Climate Prediction Center is forecasting above average temperatures for June, July, and August without favoring drier or wetter conditions. The biggest impact this El Niño will cause is an expected decrease in hurricanes in the Atlantic. Although it may not seem like it, New England is directly affected by tropical storms or hurricanes quite often. One of the more well known hurricanes to impact us was Hurricane Sandy in 2011. In 2021, Hurricane Henri made landfall in Rhode Island as a tropical storm and later that same year, the infamous October nor'easter that closed school for four days later was named Tropical Storm Wanda after developing tropical characteristics. This year will most likely see a 15% decrease in storms and for there to be 13 named systems versus previous years which saw up to 30. This furthermore decreases the risk of us having a severe tropical storm or hurricane.

One more thing that has become very clear to us now is why we saw so little snow this year. In the months leading up to an El Niño, we typically see less snow. This would explain why we had such an unusual winter.

All in all, we're only just getting started this year in terms of weather. With more severe weather likely in the coming months, this year will surely be an interesting one. Only time will tell but if history repeats itself we should see most if not all of these predictions come true.

(Photo above courtesy of NASA)

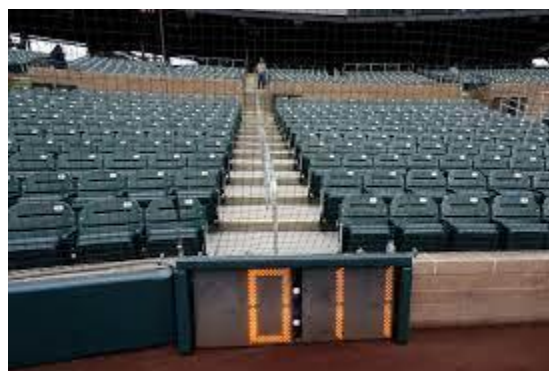
Sports

New MLB rule changes

By Matthew Banta

CMS Baseball fans are all talking about all the new Major League Baseball (MLB) rule changes. Some new rule changes are the pitch timer, defensive shift limit, and jersey regulation. What do these changes mean? Let me explain...

To speed up the pace of play, the MLB has added a pitch timer. The pitch timer is 15 seconds with nobody on base and 20 seconds with someone on base. It is supposed to make the game go by quicker. If the pitcher does not throw the ball in time, a ball is added and he can reset.



The defensive shift limit sets a limit on how far players can shift out of their position. Second base and shortstop can not move to the other side of second base before the pitch is thrown. If they violate the rule, the play stops and they have to go back.

The jersey regulation sets a limit on how many jerseys each team can have. As of now, teams can have 5 jerseys and a + 1 for a "city connect". Don't worry, the Boston Red Sox will not be affected; however, the Seattle Mariners are. They have 8 jerseys so now they have to slim down their closets.

Currently, the Cohasset Little League has not put any of these rules in place. I asked CMS student Thales Boyer if he thinks these new rules will

come down to little league. Thales said, “ I don’t think any of them will come down because it would put too much pressure on the players.”

(A picture of the pitch clock courtesy of ESPN.)

The Arts at CMS

Cohasset Rocks Band and Chorus Concerts

By Gabby Madden

Music has come to CMS and is here to stay! On March 22nd and 23rd,



along with Deer Hill and High School students, the Middle School performed the chorus and bands concerts for all to hear! Some of the notable songs in the chorus concert were “As it Was” performed

by the sixth grade, as well as “You Can’t Stop the Beat” performed by all grades.

Some notable pieces from the band concert include “Star Wars” performed by the eighth grade, “Mercy, Mercy” performed by the Middle/High school jazz band, and “Lean on Me”, performed by all grades. There was also the infamous “Stars and Stripes”.

Overall, it was a great display of what our students can do, and I look forward to the next concert!



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